Dear Parents,

There is something magical happening at St Mary’s and that is the Virtues Project. As mentioned in last week’s newsletter, the teachers participated in a day of training with Mojgan Tosif, Virtues Master Facilitator last week and during this first week they have been busy acknowledging the children for virtues such as purposefulness, respect and co-operation. The focus virtue for our first and second weeks has been Friendliness and the children know lots about what friendliness is, why friendliness is important and how they can practise friendliness. We have also been calling the children to virtues, particularly orderliness and cleanliness as we focus on keeping our playground clean, tidy and welcoming. The children have been responding beautifully! As time moves forward and the children learn about more of the virtues, we can look forward to building upon the already positive and cooperative school climate we enjoy at St Mary’s.

We urge parents to join us in implementing the Virtues Project at home too. Please read the information about the virtue of the week in the newsletter each week and reinforce these behaviours at home. The most powerful thing you can do is to acknowledge the children for the virtues they show and remind them when a particular virtue needs to be more evident. Hopefully Mojgan will be able to return later this year to offer a Parent Workshop and we look forward to giving you this opportunity very much!

2015 Opening Mass
This Friday 6th February, we will be celebrating the 2015 Opening Mass at the St Mary’s Parish Church. Children Year 1 – 6 will be attending and parents who drop their children at school are asked to transport their child to the Parish Centre instead of school that morning. Staff will be on duty to supervise from 8.20am and Mass is scheduled to commence at 9.15am. Parents are very, very welcome to join us as we give thanks for the safe return of staff and students after the holidays and pray for God to watch over us and guide us through another positive and successful school year. Our leaders will be inducted and receive their badges. The children will be bused back to school immediately after Mass.

Making a Great Start!
Parents received the Welcome Letters from teachers on Friday and we trust that you are now feeling fully informed of the procedures and expectations for your child’s class. Teachers are looking forward to meeting with parents next week for the Parent and Teacher Conferences so if you have any questions this will provide the opportunity. Parents also received a Parent Survey. We would really appreciate it if you could please take some time out from your busy lives to complete and return this as this feedback will be so helpful in providing your child with a good start and with optimum conditions for learning. Please return completed survey’s by Wednesday directly to the class teachers. Thanks! We appreciate that this task takes some time and we look forward to your feedback.

Parents will receive slips this week from class teachers with appointment times for the Parent Conferences.

Birthdays
Happy Birthday to the following students who celebrate their birthday this week
Chelsea House
Nicholas Vu
Daniel Smith
Max Doldissen
Dean Starling
Liam Jewitt
Welcome Back Family Fun Night
Part of making a great start back at school is making new social connections and renewing existing ones and we would like to encourage St Mary’s families to join us for this event. This is an annual event (though at the end of the year in the past) and is always a friendly, relaxed and happy evening! The Community Council invites all our St Mary’s families to join us at the Young Aquatic Centre on 19th February. I am sure you will agree that this is a great way to start the year and will give us the chance to welcome new families to the community and give returning families the chance to catch up after the break.
Do watch out for the flyer in your child’s bag on Friday and due to be returned on Monday.

School Procedures – Update - Keeping the Children Safe
Please read the following paragraphs which outline the procedures for keeping the children safe at drop off and pick up times. Thanks to Sarah Sullivan and Emma Taylor for putting this guidance together so clearly!

Pick Up
If you are picking your child up from the classroom, please wait at the play equipment. This is a change from last year and has been implemented to alleviate the ‘bottle neck’ as children Year 4-6 cross the area below the Kindy rooms to make their way to the bus lines. In the event of wet weather, please revert to waiting under the Kindergarten building.

Carpark
This is where your child will meet you at the bottom playground (basketball courts) if you remain in your car to ‘drive through’. We ask that you remain in your car to assist with traffic flow. If you are getting out of your car to pick up your child, you will need to park your car in the middle of the basketball courts. The teacher on Car park duty will ask the children to remain with them until your vehicle has stopped in front of the pickup point. PLEASE do not ask children to run through the car park to your car. We ask that this be the only point you pick up your child if you are remaining in your car. There is no parking on Boothby Street or Elizabeth Street. Please do not ask the children to cross these streets to meet you.
Please note, the car park is in use until 2.50pm so no car should enter before that time.

Bus
Please notify us if your child is catching a bus home. We would like to keep a record of what bus your child will be catching this year.

Laneway
If your child walks to and from school, there is a teacher who will escort them down the through the Staff Car park to Blackett Avenue and help them to cross the road. Once the children have crossed the road, they are by themselves.

Punctuality
It is essential that the children arrive at school by 8.50am (preferably a few minutes before) and that they do not leave until 3.00pm. Please respect this request as otherwise it is very disruptive to your child’s learning and to that of the other children in the class.
THANK YOU IN ANTICIPATION OF YOUR COOPERATION WITH THE ABOVE REQUESTS!

After - school Care
St Mary’s is 100% committed to offering after-school care for our families. PCYC and St Mary’s have been working hard to achieve the approval and there are just a couple more hurdles to jump! We hope after-school Care will commence this term and definitely by the beginning of next term. In the meantime, there are places available at PCYC and the children will be able to switch to St Mary’s as soon as we get our approval. That will certainly be something to celebrate!
Indonesian at St Mary's

In 2014 Indonesian was introduced to St Mary's with great success! The advantages of learning a second language are well documented and we are very fortunate to have a talented Indonesian teacher in Mrs Barbara Granger who makes the language come alive through active, engaging lessons.

Thank you to the parents who returned the slip sent out several times at the end of last year and the beginning of this year opting in or out of Indonesian. It seems we have over 50% of children Year 1-3 signed up to continue Indonesian. These children will be taught in Year level groups and those who opted out will do busy work with one of the teachers during Indonesian time.

Unfortunately there are a number of families who have not returned the slip so we are unsure whether your child is to participate or not. You have been billed on the school fees and we would appreciate it very much if you can let us know as soon as possible whether your child is participating or not so that the school fees can be adjusted if necessary. Please call the office to let us know. Thank you.

The fee for the Yr 1 – 3 children participating is $30.00. This together with the grant the school has received from CEO to offer the programme will enable us to continue for 2015. All the Kindergarten children will participate free of charge for the first two terms. After such an enthusiastic start last year, 2015 promises to be a fantastic year for Indonesian at St Mary's.

Lost Property

This year, all lost property will be kept in tubs at the canteen area allowing easy access. Lost property will be put on display every Friday at assembly so that children can collect lost belongings. Thank you Mrs Albert for arranging this.

An even better solution is to clearly mark all your children's belongings and then we can make sure anything found is returned to them promptly. Thank you!

Parent Direct

Last year Jenny Newell introduced a new fund raising initiative to the school called Parent Direct. Jenny has just informed us that, thanks to your support, we have over $700.00 to spend on school resources! Thank you so much to everyone who participated! Thank you Jenny for all your work coordinating this initiative! Do keep an eye out for the catalogues which will be available over the coming weeks; your support is greatly appreciated.

In Conclusion...

St Mary's is a busy and dynamic school and already there are a number of events on the horizon. As well as the Opening Mass (Years 1 to 6), Parent Conferences and the Welcome Back Family Fun Evening, we have the Swimming Carnival to look forward to on Wednesday 11th February for children 8 years and above. Do please watch the newsletter for further details. Year 5 parents and parents of children new to Year 6 are asked to keep the evening of 12th February clear to attend the very important iPad meeting at 6.00pm in the Hall. It is essential that every child attends with a parent or carer as the iPads can be distributed only to those families present.

Finally, this week parents will have received a flyer inviting you all to the St Mary’s School Ball. This event happens only once every two years and from all accounts of the great night enjoyed in 2013, it is not to be missed! Please sign up as soon as possible; we are looking forward to a great night!

With best wishes,

Louise Grant
principal
Heart Matters

Success at school
We can help our children succeed at school by sharing our own experiences and goals with them, because children tend to adopt our ideals. They need to know how we feel about making an effort, working hard, and planning ahead. Establish realistic, consistent family rules for work around the house so our children can develop schedules and stable routines. Children need limits set even though they will test these limits over and over again. **Children need to know what they can depend on - and they need to be able to depend on the rules we make.** Encourage our children to think about the future. Our children need realistic, reasonable expectations, and they need the satisfaction of having some of these expectations met. They need to take part in making decisions (and to learn that sometimes this means sacrificing fun now for benefits later) and they need to find out what happens as a result of decisions they have made. (Dorothy Rich - Kidsource.com)

Friendly Friday: Our first Friendly Friday will be held next Friday 13th February, after Assembly at 9.15am in the Prayer Room. Everyone is welcome to come along for a cuppa and a chat.

Assembly next week: The first of our Friday morning assemblies will be led by 6B in the school hall from 8.50am to 9.10am on Friday next week (Friday 13th). All are welcome to come along to enjoy the presentation.

ASTHMA PLANS: If your child suffers from asthma and uses a puffer
**PLEASE CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:**
Puffers need to be stored in the sick bay at the front office and not in the children’s school bags
The school requires an **ASTHMA PLAN** for each child diagnosed with asthma – These plans need to be prepared by and in consultation with a doctor.
The plans will be displayed in the sick bay for use by school staff.
Plans need to be reviewed **EVERY 12 months.**

School of Music Programme: This year we are again working with the Young Regional School of Music to provide our students with the opportunity to be involved in specialised areas of Music. The range of opportunities include individual tuition by accredited and accomplished teachers in vocals, and specific instruments such as the violin, keyboard, drums, and guitar. Further to the individual tuition is the opportunity to be part of the school band and choir. The YRSM did commence proceedings last week, with our choir and drum corps gathering for the first time, as well as individual keyboard tuition. If you are interested in individual instrument tuition or involvement in the drum corps for your child please contact the YRSM (see below.) Information regarding the school choir and the school band will be provided this week. **Representatives** from the YRSM will visiting the school this Thursday to provide information to the students from Years 2 to 6.
Years 2 and 3 will be held in the hall from 1.00pm – 1.15pm, and Years 5 and 6 from 1.15pm– 1.30pm

**YOUNG REGIONAL SCHOOL OF MUSIC:**
Phone: 02 6382 5735; PO Box 566;
15-17 Campbell St
Young, NSW 2594. Email: info@yrsm.org.au
Office Hours Mon - Fri 9 AM - 5 PM
Teaching Hours Mon - Fri All hours

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FOCUS ON FAITH

Opening School Mass: Our Opening School Mass for Years 1 to 6 will be celebrated at St Mary’s Church, this Friday, 6th February. The Mass will commence at 9.15am and students are asked to go directly to the Church to start the school day. Children will place their bags in class lines in the Parish Centre. Buses will bring all students back to school after the Mass. We will acknowledge our School Leaders during the Liturgy. They will make their pledge of service and receive their leadership badges. Kindergarten children will come to school as usual and enjoy their first morning play on the quiet playground.

MJR: Our focus Virtue this week is “Friendliness.” Every week our school will focus on one virtue and the many aspects in which it is modelled. Teachers and staff are working very hard to model virtues every day, but honing in on one particular virtue for our school-wide study helps students to solidify what that virtue means in their daily lives.

The virtue for Week 2 is friendliness. We chose this as our first virtue of focus for Week 1 and 2 because our students are meeting many new friends, and reacquainting themselves with others after the holiday. Our staff, teachers and parents are all getting to know one another and now is the time to reach out and make new connections. Cultivating an atmosphere of friendship and compassion helps to ease the stress caused by these transitional moments.

Virtue of the Week

We define friendliness as something more than just a smile (though those are always welcome). At St Mary’s, friendliness is taking an interest in the well-being of those around us. “Friendliness is taking an interest in other people, being warm and courteous to others. When you are a friend, you share the good times and the bad times together. Friendliness can be shown in a warm smile, a gentle touch, or a kind word. Friendliness is caring without being asked to care. It is the best cure for loneliness.” -from the Virtues cards (http://www.virtuesproject.com/virtuesdef.html)

Take some time to reflect on how you model friendliness in your life. Discuss the importance of acting with friendliness towards friends and strangers. Share with your child how this virtue impacts your everyday interactions and can affect your mood. When you see someone performing a friendly act, such as holding the door open for another or picking up an item someone has dropped, point it out to your child. In drawing attention to the positive action of others, you show your child that these traits are desirable and appreciated.

From the Parish:

Sacramental Programme 2015: Information from Fr Tom…There will be a general information night for PARENTS ONLY regarding ALL SACRAMENTS and it will be held on the 25th February 2015 at 7pm in St Mary’s School Hall. At this meeting the dates and times of the parent nights for each sacrament will be advised as well as the dates of the School of Religion classes to be held for each sacrament. On this night parents will need to be present to enrol their child(ren) for the specific sacraments they wish them to receive this year. If you want your child enrolled you need to be at this meeting.

Children’s Liturgy in the Parish of St Mary’s: Children’s Liturgy requires a new co-ordinator. The job involves compiling the roster, recruiting new facilitators, keeping worksheets and resources up to date and generally overseeing the smooth running of this popular programme. If you are keen and interested, even if you want to work on this as a team, please phone Suzie Duff on 0427 825 363.

Readers and Altar Servers: A roster will soon be prepared for the period 2nd March to 29th June 2015. Anyone who would like to be rostered as a reader or altar server or who would like to change to another Mass or wants to be removed from the roster, please contact Brian Hislop either by either by email bhislop2@bigpond.com or phone 6382 3288. Also please, list any dates in this period that you are unable to be rostered.

Prayer moment

“A person who has friends must be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.” Proverbs 18:24

Blessings,
Jeannette Albert (REC)
Nominations are now open for any Year 5 and 6 students who are interested in trialing for the following summer sports:
- Basketball (Friday 13/2)
- Tennis (Monday 16/2)
- Cricket (Friday 13/2)
- AFL (Wednesday 25/2)
- Softball (Friday 6/3).
Nomination forms with all information required can be collected from the office and are due back with payment by Thursday 5th February.

**Years 3 to 6 Swimming Carnival - Wednesday 11th February**

A few important reminders for the day:
- All students can be dropped to the pool from 8.30am onwards. Those traveling by bus to school will be bussed down.
- All students must report to their teacher on arrival. Any Year 2 students attending will need to report to Mrs Challen. Mrs Flannery’s class is to report to Mrs Grant on arrival.
- The carnival will begin at 9.15 sharp and we hope to finish by 2pm.
- **Any students who wish to remain at the pool or walk from the pool at the end of the day will need a note otherwise they will be bussed back to school.**
- Please ensure students have their hat, sunscreen, recess and lunch. There will be a canteen in operation on the day. PLEASE ENSURE THE STUDENTS HAVE PLENTY OF FLUIDS FOR THE DAY!
- Competitive 100m events are scheduled first in the programme followed by the 25m and across the pool events. The non-competitive swimmers are able to be collected by parents at the end of these events. **It is essential parents inform the class teacher on the day if they are taking children home early.**
- Students are permitted to dress up in their house colours – please no coloured hair spray or crepe paper.
- If students have nominated for an event and they decide on the day to withdraw their nomination they must go to the marshaling area when their event is called and report to Miss Fisher.
- **If any parents are available to help on the day could you please email Miss Fisher by Friday with the time you are available to help. Any help would be greatly appreciated. Please email emma.fisher@cg.catholic.edu.au**
School Fees
Please be advised that on Monday all families received a fee statement, even families who pay by Direct Debit. We will be sending them to all families at the beginning of each term to show what has been billed.

For Sale
Girls Summer Dresses $5.00 each, size 8, 10 and 12
Boys Summer Shirts $2.00 each, sizes 8 and 10
Sports Jackets & short and long sleeve shorts, $3.00 each
Phone 0421775431

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St Mary’s Gala Ball
Dancing like a Star
Saturday 14th March 2015
Young Services Club - 6pm for 6.30pm start
Finger Food - 2 course Meal + 2 drink tickets
Tables of 10
Entertainment - Back to the 80’s
Special Guest: Julianne Horsman,
Associate News Producer
Chanel 9 - WIN Television
Auctions throughout the evening
Dress: Formal
Cost: $90

Reply Slip Gala Ball Tickets
Name_______________________________________
Eldest child’s class____________
I would like to book _____table/s of 10 @ $900 a table
I would like to purchase _____ tickets @ $90 each
$____________ enclosed amount

Kindergarten students will not be attending the school Mass this Friday 6th February. Kindies are asked to come to school as normal.

School Notes Reminder
A reminder to parents to please return student forms to school office that were sent home in the first week of school.

Canteen Roster
Thurs 5 Feb Teresa Bamford
Friday 6 Feb Bec Smithers & Bec Hewson
Monday 9 Feb Catrina Richens
Tues 10 Feb Shannon Brown
Wed 11 Feb Megan Coddington

Cade 0439822132  and Rhett 0408494119