



Dear Parents and Friends of St Mary MacKillop Primary School,

### LENT... A TIME TO STOP, LOOK AND LISTEN!

Last Sunday's Gospel tells of the Transfiguration of Jesus, in which Jesus invited Peter, James, and John to climb a mountain, and join him in prayer. During this prayer the apostles got a glimpse of the divinity of Jesus, and a clarification of the Mission entrusted to him from his Father. They heard the Father's voice announcing *'this is my Son, the Chosen One. My favour rests on him, Listen to him'*. Mountains, in the scriptures, are places of revelation and places of deepened insight and prayerful stillness. I am sure that there have been times of 'stillness' in your own lives, when the feeling and sense of being with God enabled you to know, that there is light at the end of the tunnel, and that we are not alone. We do not need to climb mountains physically to experience this, if we allow ourselves to hear what is being said to us in the stillness of the moment. Do you have a special place, or a Sacred Space, in your home where you experience stillness from your busy life?

Hopefully, this second week of Lent will encourage us to see once again, the need and time for 'prayer' in our lives, and to satisfy our hunger for the Scriptures to nourish us. The biggest challenge is finding the time and space to do it! It is only when we, **STOP** and **LOOK**, can we really **LISTEN** and see the saving hand of God in our lives. These silent moments can enable us to be changed or transfigured in reverence, respect, forgiveness and to love each other in a renewed way.

### QUALITY CATHOLIC SCHOOLS SURVEYS

2014 is the third year that all schools in the Diocese of Parramatta will be participating in the Quality Catholic Schools (QCS) Surveys. The QCS Surveys help schools inform planning by identifying areas in which we are excelling and areas that require further attention. The aim of the survey is to collect valuable information about our school's cultural behaviour, relationships and learning community. Over the next two weeks all children in Year Five and Six, all staff members and sixty CEDP randomly selected families have been invited to participate in the QCS Survey. The results of the QCS Survey will be made available to schools in Term 2. If you have any questions regarding this survey please contact myself or Mrs Gillard (QCS Survey Facilitator) at your earliest convenience.

### MY SCHOOL WEBSITE

Earlier this month the 2013 NAPLAN results were released on the My School website at <http://www.myschool.edu.au>. The My School website enables us to search detailed profiles of Australian schools simply by entering a school's name, suburb or postcode. On this site, you can quickly find statistical information about schools of interest to you and then compare their resources and performance with similar schools across the country.

National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) Executive Director, Ross Fox, said that NAPLAN results are only one measure among many of student learning - parents and carers should consider how they work with teachers and principals to address the learning needs of children. The 2014 Catholic schools week theme reminded us that Catholic schools and students are much more than just test results and that NAPLAN results are a small part of the story of the development of the whole child. "The appropriate place of My School is as a reference point on a school's academic achievement, alongside the emotional and moral development of all students through their learning journey," said Mr Fox. It is important that NAPLAN results are considered in an appropriate context that informs teaching and learning and how parents can be partners in the learning of their child. If you have any questions regarding NAPLAN 2014, which children in Year Three and Five at SMMK will complete early Term 2, please contact your child's teacher or stage leader.

### Thought for the Week

*"Could you briefly describe to me your lived relationship with God to this point in your life?"*

*Sherry A Weddell*

Have a Blessed Week

*Mr Michael Siciliano*  
 PRINCIPAL



## Religious Education News

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### The Season of Lent:

As we reach the half-way point in our Lenten journey it is the opportune time to reflect on our personal preparation for the resurrection of Christ at Easter. We ask ourselves: Are we growing in our relationship with God through regular prayer and works of love? We acknowledge that we are human and make wrong choices, but are comforted by the knowledge that we are unconditionally loved by God. I offer you a little recipe to help us through the season of Lent.

### A Recipe for a Lenten Garden:

First plant five rows of peas - *preparedness - promptness - perseverance - politeness-prayer.*

Next plant three rows of squash - *squash gossip - squash criticism - squash indifference.*

Then plant four rows of lettuce - *let us be loyal- let us be unselfish - let us be truthful - let us be faithful.*

No garden is complete without turnips - *turn up for mass - turn up with a smile - turn up with a new idea- turn up with real determination.* Then see what a wonderful garden you can grow!

### Project Compassion:

Our first Social Justice Initiative for the year is well underway and the Children are giving generously to this important cause. Project Compassion, Week 3, brings you the story of Archie. For Archie from the Philippines, the threat of weather-related disasters such as typhoons meant that his house was no longer a safe or secure place to be. Now living in a new home away from the flood-prone Plaridel River, Archie is able to resume his education and gain a sustainable income thanks to a livelihood program. Your donation to Project Compassion enables families like Archie's to live happier and healthier lives.



Project Compassion, Week 4, brings you the story of Martina. The Solomon Islands are often threatened by weather-related

disasters such as earthquakes, floods, tsunamis and cyclones. Martina is a primary school teacher, and is teaching her students how to stay safe during disasters, which often happen when they are away from their homes. The program has had great success, and is soon to be expanded to other countries in the Pacific Islands which face similar risks, so that just like Martina and her students, others too are able to live without fear when disasters strike. Your Project Compassion donation is saving the lives of children who are among the most vulnerable to natural disasters. [www.caritas.org.au](http://www.caritas.org.au)



### The Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Many of our students are currently preparing to receive the Sacrament of First Reconciliation on Tuesday 1 April. I ask you that during their time of preparation you keep them in your thoughts and prayers. Each term Father Mathew will offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation to our primary students at school. Yesterday, Wednesday 19 March Father Mathew celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation with the students of 5G. Years 3, 4, 5M and 6 will receive the sacrament at school throughout the remaining terms.

### Social Justice Initiatives:

Throughout the school year the St Mary MacKillop community is involved in many Social Justice initiatives. These initiatives compliment the Religious Education Programs taught in each grade and aim to foster in the students a deep desire to help others less fortunate than themselves. The Social Justice activities that we will be involved in this year are: Project Compassion, St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal, Penrith Community Kitchen, The Mary MacKillop Institute, Catholic Mission and St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal. Social Justice programs allows Christians to reach out in compassion and unity to those who are most in need – it is truly living the message of Jesus.

### Easter Celebration:

Please join us in the hall on Wednesday 9 April at 9:30am for our celebration of Easter. Our celebration will focus on the last week of Jesus' life as the students dramatise the events of Holy Week. After we return from the school holidays we will gather together to celebrate the Resurrection and ANZAC Day.

Mrs Leesa Gillard  
Religious Education Coordinator

## Do You Speak Maths with Your Kids at Home?

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Many of us feel completely comfortable talking about letters, words and sentences with our children – reading to them at night, etc. But, speaking about mathematics using mathematical terminology? Not so much. Studies show that “number talk” at home is a key predictor of young children's achievement in math once they get to school. Try developing the habit of talking about numbers as often as we talk about letters and words. Here are some ideas:

- Note numbers on signs when you are walking or driving with children: speed limits, building addresses, sale prices etc.
- Ask children to count how many toys they are playing with, how many books they have pulled out to read or how many pieces of food are on their plate.
- Use numbers when you refer to times, dates and temperatures: how many hours and minutes until bedtime, how many weeks and days until a holiday, the high and low the weatherman predicts for the day.
- With older children, math can become a part of talking about sports, science, history, video games or whatever else they are interested in. (*Benjamin Rossen*)

## Kiss and Drop

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A reminder to parents about our Kiss and Drop policy in the mornings before school. Parents may Kiss and Drop their students off at the school front gate or if needed, walk their students to the gate adjacent to the front office. We ask that you do not stay within the school playground whilst children are arriving and playing or walk children to classrooms unless you have an appointment to see the class teacher. This makes supervision of the students by the teacher on duty more manageable and also alleviates some separation anxiety that may exist with some of our younger students. Also, please familiarise yourself with the separate attachment to this newsletter about road signage around schools.

## Library News

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It's another busy year in the Mackillop library; the students have settled in well and are keen to make use of the learning space and the resources available to them. Most students have remembered to bring their library bags to school on their allocated day; I would ask that parents encourage their children to borrow books **EVERY** week, and read **EVERY** day, as they become independent readers. The library is open Monday to Thursday at **lunchtime**; students are welcome to come and participate in quiet activities such as reading, drawing, playing board games and puzzles. Our Kindergarten students have been very keen to come to the library and enjoy choosing their books to take home to share with their families. Congratulations to those students who completed the **Summer Reading Challenge** during the holidays, certificates were presented during a recent assembly.

The 2014 **Premier's Reading Challenge** has started, students are encouraged to start reading and recording their books now. For more information about the challenge go to <https://products.schools.nsw.edu.au/prc/home.html> Once again, our Kindergarten students will complete the challenge at school with their teachers; they will be registered at school. Students in **Years 1-6** wishing to participate in the challenge who have **not** been registered in previous years will need to let Mrs. Eisenhuth know so they can receive their login details. Student's logins remain the same as last year; these will be available from class teachers, as well as the library. As part of our **May 18** fete activities this year, we will be hosting a **Book Fair** in the St. Mary Mackillop library, which means more great resources for our students and teachers, so let's support this wonderful initiative. More details to follow in the next few weeks.

Maree Eisenhuth  
Teacher Librarian

## P & F News

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### Parent Representative Council (PRC) Meeting - Wednesday 26 March 2014:

This is a meeting for parents and carers with children in Year 6, 7 and 8 who are looking to enhance their child's early high school experience. "The Transition to High School: Helping your child to build resilience & navigate change" meeting is taking place at **St Paul's Catholic College, 198 Old Prospect Rd, Greystanes**. For more information or to confirm your seat please email Selina on: [prcparrapresident@gmail.com](mailto:prcparrapresident@gmail.com).

**Zooper Dooper Days:** The following days Zooper Doopers will be sold to the students during the 1:30pm recess. Prices are 60c for a whole and 30c for half. **March:** Thursday 20, Monday 24, Wednesday 26 and Friday 28.

### BUNNINGS FUNDRAISING BBQ - Saturday 19 April 2014:

We are blessed to have been offered the Easter Saturday Bunnings Fundraiser BBQ spot for 2014, which is the busiest day of the year for Bunnings. Notes went out last week asking for volunteers to help out on the day for this event as this day would not be successful without the selfless efforts of parents and friends from SMMPS. If you can spare a couple of hours to help out, please let the front office ladies know. Thank you in advance.

### SMMPS Autumn School Fete Sunday, 18 May 2014 - SAVE THE DATE:

**SHOWBAG orders due: THIS FRIDAY 21 March 2014:** Showbags are selling at 1 for \$8, 2 for \$15, 3 for \$20. Orders are due by 3:00pm on Friday 21 March 2014, so please if you haven't done so already, send in your order soon and be in the running to find a GOLDEN TICKET. **RIDES WRISTBAND orders due: 28 March 2014:** Place in your order early to avoid the extra cost on the day of the fete as wristbands will be sold for \$25 each. **BOOKSTALL Donations:** Keep dropping those wonderful books in!! We are receiving and loving the huge variety. Please place your books in the box located in the student foyer with the label 'BOOK DONATIONS' and thank you for your support.

### MUFTI DAY - Wednesday 26 March 2014:

On this day we are organising a Mufti Day in exchange for donations to make up our Chocolate Wheel hamper prizes for our fete. We would appreciate everybody's help with this day as these successful prizes won't be fantastic without your generosity. A note will be sent home on Monday listing the themes of prizes each grade can donate. Thank you kindly for your support.

### NO PARKING/ NO STOPPING SIGN

Safety of our families and friends is everyone's concern. Please find attached to the KIT information provided by Penrith City Council that details road rules and signage around schools. Penrith City Council have also advised that their Rangers will be monitoring the flow of traffic around peak drop off and pick times at the school. Please be aware that parents and visitors not obeying the road rules and signage will be fined. For more information about road traffic laws and parking /no stopping signs, please refer to the RTA handbook [http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/licensing/downloads/road\\_users\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/licensing/downloads/road_users_handbook.pdf) Thank you and

God Bless

Liz Whalen - President-On behalf of the P&F Executive Team

## Sport News

Congratulations to everyone who participated at our Annual School Cross Country last Friday. Thank you to our parent helpers who came and assisted on the day. Thanks to the parent helpers, our students and teachers it was a very successful carnival. Congratulations to our winning House Team.

1st Thoruna  
2nd Uluru  
3rd Carramar  
4th Girralong

Congratulations to the following students who will be representing St. Mary MacKillop at the Diocesan Cross Country Carnival on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> May at Eastern Creek.

**12 Year Boys:** - 1<sup>st</sup> Anthony F, 2<sup>nd</sup> Matthew F, 3<sup>rd</sup> Samuel D, 4<sup>th</sup> Danny R, 5<sup>th</sup> Luke W, 6<sup>th</sup> Caleb E, Reserve- Liam K.

**12 Year Girls:** - 1<sup>st</sup> Alison G, 2<sup>nd</sup> Emma McC, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ella M, 4<sup>th</sup> Larissa D, 5<sup>th</sup> Mia M, 6<sup>th</sup> Sophie H.

**11 Year Boys:** - 1<sup>st</sup> Logan D, 2<sup>nd</sup> Jack B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Rick J, 4<sup>th</sup> Marco P, 5<sup>th</sup> Benjamin B, 6<sup>th</sup> Cooper H, Reserve-Joel C.

**11 Year Girls:** - 1<sup>st</sup> Tayla G, 2<sup>nd</sup> Kailah S, 3<sup>rd</sup> Laura C, 4<sup>th</sup> Lila A, 5<sup>th</sup> Ella T, 6<sup>th</sup> Tayla-Jade B, Reserve-Emma B.

**10 Year Boys:** - 1<sup>st</sup> Cody D, 2<sup>nd</sup> Thomas O'M, 3<sup>rd</sup> William S, 4<sup>th</sup> Malachi L, 5<sup>th</sup> Issac T, 6<sup>th</sup> Francesco L, Reserve- Oscar T.

**10 Year Girls:** - 1<sup>st</sup> Samantha G, 2<sup>nd</sup> Isabelle C, 3<sup>rd</sup> Georgia Y, 4<sup>th</sup> Lily L, 5<sup>th</sup> Fiona W, 6<sup>th</sup> Elise F. Reserve- Abbey K.

**8/9 Year Boys:** - 1<sup>st</sup> Brock S, 2<sup>nd</sup> Mitchell H, 3<sup>rd</sup> Marcus B, 4<sup>th</sup> Liam H, 5<sup>th</sup> Riley B, 6<sup>th</sup> Reyce A, Reserve- Kye R. (will now be attending).

**8/9 Year Girls:** - 1<sup>st</sup> Sienna C, 2<sup>nd</sup> Amy J, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ella G, 4<sup>th</sup> Abigail F, 5<sup>th</sup> Sienna M, 6<sup>th</sup> Jessica G, Reserve- Emma Dunn

### NSW CPS Swimming Trials:

Congratulations to our Senior boys team who will be competing in the Swimming trials on Friday 28 March. Best of luck to Tyson G, Ben B, Joel C and Samuel D.

### Diocesan Team Sport Trials:

Over the last few weeks we have had some of our Year 5 and 6 students trial for the Football (Soccer), League and Netball. We have 2 students who have been selected for the Parramatta Diocesan Netball Team. Congratulations to Alison G and Laura C, in Year 6. They will be going to Canberra on 9 May. This is an awesome achievement and we wish the girls the best of luck.

### Stage 3 Girls Soccer Gala Day:

Mrs Bizzanelli held trials this week to select a team to enter into the Stage 3 Parramatta Girls Soccer Gala Day. The team will be announced later this week. The Gala day is on Tuesday 1 March. Thank you to Mrs Bizzanelli for offering to coach this team.

## Dates for Your Diary Term 1 - 2014

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT
Friday	21 March	9:15am	Year 3 Liturgy
Monday	24 March	2:15pm 7:00pm	5M Assembly 2015 Kindergarten Parent Information Evening
Friday	28 March	2:30pm	NSWCPS Swimming trials @ Homebush Whole School Assembly-Multi Purpose Centre
Monday	31 March	2:15pm	3W Assembly
Tuesday	1 April	7:00pm	Sacrament of Reconciliation @ St Nicholas
Tuesday	8 April	10:45am	Year 6 ANZAC Day Service @ Penrith Paceway
Wednesday	9 April	9:30am	Easter Celebration
Friday	11 April		Staff Development Day-Pupil Free Day Last Day of Term 1

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY - FRIDAY 11 APRIL**  
**PUPIL FREE DAY**