Last Sunday the Church celebrated the great feast of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended on Mary the mother of Jesus and the Apostles, enabling them to begin their mission of preaching the Good News to all nations.

Pentecost is sometimes referred to as the birthday of the Church as the Apostles who, from the time of Jesus’ death and despite his Resurrection and Ascension, had been confused and frightened of the Jews. Following the descent of the Holy Spirit they began to preach their message with enthusiasm.

The Spirit moves in the Church in different ways and one of the key means of spreading the Gospel is through the provision of Catholic Schools. As Director of Schools I see our schools and the staff that take on this responsibility, doing so in so many different ways on a weekly basis. In this last week I have witnessed our Catholic schools as part of a diocesan community living out this call to spread the Good News….

…..Inspired by the Holy Spirit we are all called to take every means we can to spread the Good News in our work and in our daily lives. It is certainly comforting for me to witness so many ways in which our schools carry out this responsibility and the extent to which they are supported by the wider diocesan community.

Ray Collins
Director of Catholic Schools
Practice makes perfect
In August my husband Mark and I are going overseas for a holiday. Part of the motivation for this trip was to give myself a clear goal to work towards in my physical fitness. When we leave, it will be three weeks short of 2 years since I had my horse riding accident where I smashed one of my vertebrae. I will need to be able to sit for an extended time on the plane and I also need to be fit enough to walk the 155kms of the Camino de Compostela pilgrimage in Spain. So the exercise/fitness program has kicked into gear. Each day I follow a homework schedule of regular exercise and each weekend Mark and I go for an extended practice walk, usually between 10 and 15kms. I can’t begin to explain how good I am feeling. I now look forward to doing what I used to consider a real chore. The repetition of a difficult task over time has made the task easier and what I used to loathe is now something I look forward to. Why? Because I am getting better at it. My skill set is improving. I can see results and I am proud of myself for the effort I am putting in. Isn’t this so often the case? Isn’t this what we all would love our children to do with the tasks that they loathe, with the skills that they lack?? Perseverance in school work should be just like this – a troublesome skill is practised repeatedly until it becomes easier. The students then feel proud of their achievement and they begin to enjoy the work. On the weekend we had so many wonderful examples of children and teachers performing very well in their chosen sport. There was State Equitation for Mrs Kerr, football and netball for many of our students and polo cross for others. Last fortnight there was dance, bull riding and pony club. All of these activities require discipline and hard work practising the skills required. Our students are very capable of practicing skills to get better and better at what they do. Let’s use these examples as motivation for all our students to help them put in the practice they need to be better and better at reading and maths.

St Joseph’s school as part of St Anne’s Parish celebrated Pentecost Mass on Saturday night
It was a beautiful celebration of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Thank you to all the families that celebrated with us. At this Mass the parents and parishioners also joined with the students who are preparing for their sacraments this year to commit to supporting each other on this important journey. Thank you to Mr Lannen and Mrs Peebles for helping us to prepare for the Mass and thank you to Sr Brigid who helps us to prepare the children for their sacraments.

We thank God for the blessings we have received this fortnight.
We are particularly blessed to have baby Isla Moore back in good health. We continue our prayerful support for Mr Morris, Mrs Frampton and Mr Keegan who are sick at present.

Spelling has been one of the target areas that teachers are working on with our students.
I was so pleased to see such high quality performance from our finalists at the Spelling Bee last Friday. Thank you to the parents, grandparents and friends who were able to attend on the day and provide an audience for the children.

Mother’s Day was a wonderful celebration at St Joseph’s!
Thank you to all the teachers and parents who helped to serve, cook and wash up. The liturgy that followed was beautiful and the shared activities with our mums were very much enjoyed by the children, their teachers and their mums. Thank you for being a part of this day.

Yesterday three students from Stage 3 participated in a Forensic Science Day at St Catherine’s College Singleton.
Eliza Peebles, Hannah Riley and Clancy Moore all worked hard to find scientific evidence to help them find clues to solve the
mystery of “Who stole the principal’s hair?” Thank you to Mrs Christine Riley for transporting the children on the day.

National Partnerships focus this term is on teaching good comprehension skills. At the staff meeting last week the teachers were given an introduction to a program of professional development in this area. We are looking forward to honing these skills and seeing the results in our students.

The Merriwa Festival of Fleeces is held on the long weekend in June. I remind parents that we will not be manning the BBQ on this day as we are putting all our energy into parent help at the St Joseph’s Campdraft and family day on the first Saturday of the holidays, 29th June. We will still participate in the street parade and ask all students to make an effort to parade with our school community on this day. We will also have a school display up in the Merriwa Newsagency window. Thank you once again to Neville, Leanne and Stephanie Hook for making the window available to us at this time. We are very grateful to the Hooks for their ongoing support of St Joseph’s.

The new homework policy was launched at the last P&F meeting and was included with the last newsletter. If you would like to comment on this policy please feel free to forward your thoughts on to me.

The St Joseph’s Athletics carnival will be held on the 5th June. Please look out for the note regarding this and consider being a volunteer on the day. We need all the help we can get to ensure the carnival is a success for our students.

The Regional Cross Country was held last fortnight and 14 of our children represented our school very well. Congratulations to Darcy Moore, Clancy Moore, Emily Ninness, Ty Riley, Hannah Riley, Oliver Towell, Chloe Towell, Bailey Telfer, Caitlyn Porter, Charles Brazier, Damien Jamieson, Piper Cropper, Tamara Sormaz and Britnee Attenborough! Thank you to the parents who helped with transportation on the day.

Thank you to the wonderful parent helpers who have been noticed around the school lately. The children love to see their parents here and we love your assistance too. I have seen helpers in the library, reading in class, helping with the Mother’s Day stall and with the Book Fair, in the Uniform shop, transporting children to carnivals and excursions, as well as in the canteen and cleaning the bus. You will have the added bonus of tickets in the P&F termly raffle for parent helpers.

The Solar Eclipse would have been a sight for sore eyes had Helena’s father not taught us about the eclipse and how to view it safely. Thanks to Adrian, the infants classes were able to view this fabulous physical phenomenon.

The enrolment period for 2014 is certainly well underway. As I need to give the Catholic Schools Office an idea of numbers for staffing purposes could you please send in application forms if you have a child ready to start school in 2014.

Helen Whale

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**SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR**

Thank you to all the families who so generously supported our Scholastic Book Fair. The commission raised from the sale of the products will allow us to purchase lots of exciting new books for our school library.

The book fair will be packed up tomorrow so if there are any last minute purchases you would like to make, tomorrow morning 8.30 – 9.00 will be the final opportunity.

I cannot express how grateful I am to Emma Henderson and Vic Shannon for helping me set up and run the fair last week. Thank you so much ladies ... your help is truly appreciated!

Sally Gilbey
Book Fair Coordinator
Our school, along with the rest of the Diocese are in the process of implementing new Religion Units. Currently we are implementing Stage 3 units. These units have been designed to create a deeper understanding of the Catholic faith and bring it into a world which makes it accessible and relevant to the students in our classrooms today. The idea is that students are challenged to explore their own faith and encouraged to question and work through their questioning to develop a deeper understanding of their faith.

One example of content being covered in the ‘Jesus’ unit, currently being taught in 5/6 is to look at Jesus as a role model and the qualities of Jesus. The students were asked to list qualities of Jesus such as Leadership, Service, Compassion, Forgiveness, Acceptance, Courageous, Patience and Humility. After this they looked at artwork depicting Jesus in a variety of different ways and compared these to the qualities they had already identified. Here are some images of Jesus. These are not typical of what we usually see but give us a different insight into who Jesus was. From this point they will work towards looking at their own life as a role model and how they can use the qualities of Jesus they identified.
AWARDS

Congratulations to the following students who received awards in weeks 2 and 3:

Kinder
Harry Cook – for his contribution to discussions about the weather
Sienna Baber – for showing great compassion in the classroom and playground
Annalyse Blyton – for her consistent effort in all learning activities
Phoenix Dening – for his improvement in group activities.

1/2
Kiesha-Lee Taylor - for showing good understanding of words and how they are made up
Hudson Attenborough - for a great effort in completing work in the classroom
Jack Shannon - for showing a very detailed drawing of his ideal house in HSIE
Patrick McLaren - for showing great responsibility in caring for our class wormery

3/4
Damian Jamieson – for his excellent work in subtracting 3-digit numbers
Nicole Martin – for her great work in demonstrating her knowledge of volume by constructing a 3D model
Chloe Towell – for her great effort in the school Spelling Bee
Jorji Taaffe – for her great effort in the school Spelling Bee
Lauren Redgate – for her great effort in the School Spelling Bee
Darcy Moore – for making it through to the Upper Hunter Spelling Bee

5/6
Ty Riley- for putting in a great effort in Literacy and Numeracy
Eliza Peebles - for always putting in a conscientious effort in all aspects of her learning
Oliver Towell - for an outstanding effort in the school spelling bee
Tamasyn McNaught - making a concerted effort in all classroom activities

Principal’s Awards:
Audrey Gill – working very hard in class and being helpful and friendly at all times
Hannah Riley – being a very good leader and trying to set a great example to others
Lauren Redgate for a fantastic effort in practising to spell words correctly and for having the confidence to perform in front of an audience in the spelling bee
Emily Barwick for her confident manner in the Kindergarten section of the school spelling bee

Here’s our Top 10 tips:

1. **Children copy you.** Eat healthily and they are more likely to too.
2. **It takes 10-20 tastes.** New takes time, so keep trying!
3. **Start sweet.** Pumpkin, carrot, capsicum and snow peas.
4. **New with old.** Introduce veg with a meal they already love.
5. **Let kids choose.** Ask them to pick a new veg to try.
6. **Start raw.** Some children prefer it to cooked.
7. **Help other parents.** If a tip has worked tell your friends.
8. **Encourage self-service.** Put a bowl of veg or salad out with the meal.
9. **Grate veg additions.** Add into favourites like bolognaise.
10. **A handful of spinach.** Throw leaves into favourite dishes.

For more information please visit www.cancercouncil.org.au/eatittobeateit
Last week we received exciting news from the Catholic Schools Office that they are going to continue to fund our learning support needs at their current level, despite budget cuts and increased pressures on the education dollar. Their reasons for this are because they recognise the extra effort the school is making by allocating its own money to provide extra learning support and they are also acknowledging the great work we are doing in Learning Support implementing the programs such as Minilit and Multilit.

We are very grateful to the Catholic Schools Office for this and look forward to maintaining and improving the support we are able to offer to students who require extra assistance with their learning.

Tanya Ninness
Learning Support Teacher

School Spelling Bee Final 2013

The SJM school spelling bee final was held Friday 17th May 2013, in the Mary MacKillop Room. Four finalists from each stage competed against each other for the title of Champion Speller of the Stage for 2013.

The finalists were:
Kindergarten- Emily Barwick, Toby Jamieson, Cody Bates and Braeden Halse
Stage 1 (Year 1 & 2)- Korey Halse, Patrick McLaren, Thomas Hunt and Madelaine Thrift
Stage 2 (Year 3 & 4)- Darcy Moore, Jorji Taaffe, Chloe Towell and Lauren Redgate
Stage 3 (Year 5 & 6)- Oliver Towell, Eliza Peebles, Hannah Riley and Britnee Attenborough.

Congratulations to all the finalists who did a great job and tried the best they could! Mrs Whale presented all the finalists with a certificate at yesterday's assembly.

Many thanks to Mrs Whale and Mrs McLaren who were our official pronouncers on the day and also to Clancy Moore and Hannah Riley for being our MC’s. It was also great to see so many parents and friends supporting and cheering the finalists.

The Spelling Champions for 2012 are:
Kindergarten- Emily Barwick
Stage 1- Korey Halse
Stage 2- Darcy Moore
Stage 3- Hannah Riley

These students will now compete in the Upper Hunter Regional Spelling Bee which will be this Wednesday 22nd May 2013 at St James Muswellbrook at 5:30pm. We wish them all luck and look forward to hearing how they go!

Tanya Ninness
Forensic Science Day 2013

On Monday 20th of May Hannah Riley, Clancy Moore and Eliza Peebles travelled to Singleton to attend the Upper Hunter Primary Science Day. Mrs Riley transported us and was our teacher for the day. When we arrived, the science teacher greeted us and told us what we would be doing on the day. The presenters who were also the acting criminals took us to their classes. While we were in their class we had to get as much information as we could to find out who stole the Principal, Mr Lacey’s, hair.

Firstly, we went to finger printing where we looked at all the different finger patterns.

Secondly we did soil analysis. We got 20ml of water, and some hard clay, basic soil, soft clay or wood chip in and mixed them together. It turned into an acid or an alkaline. An acid colour is red, yellow or orange. An alkaline is purple, blue or green.

Thirdly we did fibre analysis in clothing. We used a microscope to see all the fibres in the cotton, silk and polyester.

Finally we did ink analysis; we used special paper and felt tip pens and drew a letter, then rolled it around a pen and put it in the water. The water bled up the paper to reveal the different colours in the ink of each felt tip pen.

So with all the techniques we had to find out who stole Mr Lacey’s hair. There was a desk set up at the front; the desk was Mr Lacey’s desk. With the techniques that we had learnt, we figured out who stole Mr Lacey’s hair. We got the correct criminal in the end—it was Miss Duggan, the Assistant Principal, who wanted his hair for her husband!!

P.S: This was not a real crime. Mr Lacey’s hair has disappeared over time through natural causes!

Written By Eliza Peebles & Clancy Moore
Student Reporting K-10

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle seek to:

Recognise the individuality and dignity of each person and foster the development of each one’s unique potential and spirituality

Develop a challenging, authentic and inclusive educational environment that encourages lifelong learning

The process of reporting and providing meaningful feedback to students and parents is an integral part of teaching and learning. Reporting opportunities provide information, both formally and informally, about the process of student learning and achievement. The reporting process should seek to meet the reporting requirements of parents and teachers whilst maintaining the dignity and respect for the child and the integrity of the curriculum. Your school uses a variety of ways to report to you about student achievement during the year including parent/teacher meetings, discussion about work samples and interviews, as well as written student reports.

In addition to the written report from your child’s school, you also receive reports on your child’s achievement in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 through the National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).

Since 2006, student reports have complied with Commonwealth and State Government requirements as part of funding regulations. A report for primary schools, from Years 1-6, was developed by the Catholic Schools Office to meet government requirements and is used by all diocesan primary schools. The report contains a common grade scale A-E that is detailed below. Diocesan secondary schools 7-10 have developed reports to address these requirements.

As part of Commonwealth requirements about student reporting, a written report will be provided by your school twice a year that summarises your child’s progress. The report will include comments in plain English about your child’s achievements and identify some areas where she/he may need help, and how she/he can improve. The report also provides information about your child’s work and learning habits and social development. A report about your child’s progress is confidential.

Years 1-10

The written report will include an overall achievement level for all of the Key Learning Areas or courses against state-wide syllabus standards using a common grade scale A to E (see below). This common grade scale will be used in all schools in NSW, and the descriptions of the grades are common to all schools from Year 1 to Year 10. The allocation of a grade is based on a
collection of a student’s work that takes into account what has been covered to date. A comparison of your child’s achievement with that of other students in the same Year group is available from the school on request.

The written report will be followed by an interview opportunity to discuss your child’s progress. Your school will provide you with the interview schedule mid-year and end of year.

Students with special needs have the opportunity of receiving this report (with A-E grades) or this report with the addition of information (Individual Plan, IP) which indicates progress against specific learning goals. Parents are invited to speak to their child’s teacher about which report they would like to receive about their child’s progress.

Students in Kindergarten classes have the opportunity of receiving a report without an A – E grade. A report has been developed by the Catholic Schools Office that provides you with information about your child in the first year of school, Early Stage 1, in relation to his/her progress, learning habits and social development. Your school will also provide you with information about interviews during the year for Kindergarten children.

Common Grade Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>The student has extensive knowledge and understanding of the content and can readily apply this knowledge. In addition, the student has achieved a very high level of competence in the processes and skills and can apply these skills to new situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>The student has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content and a high level of competence in the processes and skills. In addition, the student is able to apply this knowledge and these skills to most situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>The student has a sound knowledge and understanding of the main areas of content and has achieved an adequate level of competence in the processes and skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>The student has a basic knowledge and understanding of the content and has achieved a limited level of competence in the processes and skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>The student has an elementary knowledge and understanding in few areas of content and has achieved very limited competence in some of the processes and skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information, please contact your school.
St. Joseph’s P&F Association

Next P&F meeting
3rd June 2013 at 4.30pm
Please come along and have a say in your children’s school life. Babysitting by a teacher in the classroom at school is available on the nights of meetings.

CANTEEN ROSTER
22nd May Emma Henderson & Mel Bates
29th May Scott Beaven & Patricia Jancovich
5th June Jodie Wilton & Scott Beaven

BUS ROSTER
25th-26th May Grady Family
1st-2nd June Constable Family
8th-9th June Henderson & Sormaz Families

THANK YOU . . . THANK YOU . . .
to the Cook and Gill families who have given up some of their valuable time to clean the Aberdeen Bus in recent weeks.

P & F would like to thank our Canteen Helpers from 8th May—Vic Shannon and Patricia Jancovich and from 15th May —Karin Brazier and Tash Taaffe.

St Joseph’s PS Merriwa Campdraft, Sporting & Fete Day
Saturday 29th June 2012

FETE MEETING
With our St Joseph’s Junior Campdraft & Fete fast approaching we need to organise our Fete. With this in mind I would like to hold a meeting Thursday 23 May at 6pm at the Merriwa RSL Club in the Fletcher Room. I apologise for the late notice. We will be discussing ideas for stalls / games that we think might be successful on the day. We will also be discussing what worked and what didn’t work at the last Fete / Market day, so your feedback and input would be really appreciated.
If you are unable to attend the meeting please feel free to phone me on 0487761253 with any ideas that you may have or any ways that you may be able to help out in.
Many hands make light work – I hope to see you all there.
Thanks
Leanne Hunt
Fete Co-ordinator
Organisation of our fundraising Campdraft, Sporting and Fete Day is well under way.

Book the date in your diary and come along and help out for a while and enjoy a great social day out.

Help on the day
Of course we will require lots of help on the day to ensure everything runs smoothly. Remember more hands make light work! We have had many offers of help from people from outside our school community. We are hoping that everyone from within our school community will be able to assist at some stage: cooking and preparations prior to the day, set up Friday, throughout the day Saturday or pack up Sunday.
A letter went out last week from the P&F asking for help. Please make sure you have completed this and returned it to the school. Help will be needed in the second ring running sporting events; the campdraft ring - helping in the yards with cattle, scoring and time keeping; in the canteen, on the bbq, running a fete activity, selling raffle tickets etc. There will be something for everyone!

Sponsorship
We have had a positive response from our sponsorship letters with businesses from both outside and within the Merriwa community being very generous. If you know of anyone who would be willing to sponsor our event or if you would like to sponsor our event yourself, please contact me at stephen.ninness@bigpond.com or phone 65485185. We have great sponsorship packages to meet everyone’s needs.

Campdraft & Sporting
Campdraft entries open on Monday 27th May 2013. We have had numerous phone enquiries. If you have a child who is intending to participate in the horse events remember you must be a financial member of the ABCRA. You can sign up for day membership on the day at a cost of $15 for children under 17 or $40 for adults or checkout the ABCRA website to sign up for the year. Further enquiries regarding anything to do with the campdraft or sporting can be made to Roger Moore 0427153446 or Stephen Ninness 65485185 or 0429691105.
Fun Day

Leanne Hunt is in charge of our Fete Day side of things. If you have any ideas or are willing to help please contact Leanne on 0487761253.

Raffle

The raffle is currently being organised and raffle tickets will be sent home to every family in the next week or two! These will need to be returned to the school sold or unsold by Monday 24th June 2013. The raffle will be drawn on Saturday 29th June 2013.

Silent Auction

We have a stallion service fee donated to the school which we will be offering for sale to the public in a silent auction. The stallion is Seligman Spin owned by Peter Gessler. Further information on Seligman Spin can be found at www.seligmanspin.com. If you are interested in bidding on this stallion ring Tanya or Stephen Ninness - 65485185.

Market Stalls

We are interested in having Market Stalls at our day! We have had several stall holders interested in coming. Do you know someone who has a market stall and would be willing to come to our day? Site fees are very reasonable. If so please contact Leanne Hunt: 0487761253.

Canteen/BBQ

Emma Henderson is the organiser of the canteen/bbq.

Thank you to our sponsors so far:

- Australian Quarter Horse Society
- Anthea Wright
- Harvey World Travel Scone
- Maurice Irvine Tullymore Stud
- Merriwa Post Office
- Precious Pieces
- Merriwa RSL Club
- Tash Holden Communications
- CDF Newcastle
- Merriwa Pharmacy
- Hunter Valley Tentpegging
- ABCRA Hunter Zone
- Mitevite
- Aaron Henry
- Merriwa Bushmen’s Campdraft
- Stan Bowd Custom Made Saddlery
- Australian Reptile Park
- Landmark Merriwa
- Williams Concreting
- Jamie & Sarah Edmonds
- RM Williams
- Makenrugsto you
- Peter Gessler
- Gordon Martin
- Throwley Pastoral Company
- Hair Indeed Merriwa
- Dianne Mitchell
- Davis and Sons Livestock Transport
- Bill Reynolds