**March / April 2015**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 8</strong> 15/3</td>
<td>16/3</td>
<td>17/3</td>
<td>18/3</td>
<td>19/3</td>
<td>20/3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denman Horse Sports</td>
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<td>PUPIL FREE DAY</td>
<td>LIBRARY - SPORT - CANTEEN</td>
<td>Special Needs Info Day Mbk</td>
<td>Senior Citizens Concert RSL</td>
<td>Kia-Ora Concert</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Kia - Ora Music Camp</td>
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<td>Lenten Program 4pm</td>
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<td><strong>Week 9</strong> 22/3</td>
<td>23/3</td>
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<td>26/3</td>
<td>27/3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mass 8.30am</td>
<td>Upper Hunter Leaders Day Merriwa</td>
<td>LIBRARY - SPORT - CANTEEN</td>
<td>Lenten Program 4pm</td>
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<td>State Election</td>
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<td>Mass 6pm</td>
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<td><strong>Week 10</strong> 29/3</td>
<td>30/3</td>
<td>31/3</td>
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<td>2/4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ecumenical Way of the Cross Kilaben Bay</td>
<td>P&amp;F Meeting 4.30</td>
<td>Sacramental Program Session 1</td>
<td>LIBRARY - SPORT - CANTEEN</td>
<td>Cross Country Carnival</td>
<td>GOOD FRIDAY</td>
<td>EASTER SATURDAY</td>
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<td>Lenten Program 4pm</td>
<td>HOLY THURSDAY</td>
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<td><strong>SCHOOL HOLIDAYS 3/4/2015 TO 17/4/15</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Week 1</strong> 19/4</td>
<td>20/4</td>
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<td>22/4</td>
<td>23/4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mass 8.30am</td>
<td>Term 2 commences</td>
<td>Sacramental Program Session 2</td>
<td>LIBRARY - SPORT - CANT</td>
<td>Libraries</td>
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<td>ANZAC DAY</td>
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<td>TEEN</td>
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**Reflection**

Jesus Christ is the light for the World
A light no darkness can extinguish

With God on our side who can be against us? Since God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to benefit us all, we may be certain after such a gift, that he will not refuse anything he can give. Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen? When God acquits, could anyone condemn? Could Jesus Christ? No! he not only died for us – he rose from the dead, and there at God’s right hand he stands and pleads for us. (Book of Romans 8:31-34)
Catholic Schools Week (CSW) 2015 has been a wonderful celebration of quality teaching and quality learning at St Joseph’s Merriwa as well as the other 55 Catholic Schools in our Diocese which have seen record numbers of students enrolled and above average enrolment of students with disabilities and indigenous students.

The theme of the week is Educating Today and Tomorrow. CSW focusses on continuing need for the Church to support parents in the education of their children so that they might be better equipped to participate professionally in the social, political and economic life of their communities. It has also witnessed the wonderful effort our whole school community is making to ensure that the education of our children is a priority today and well into the future. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to this great cause.

Commitment to Serve: On Sunday we celebrated Mass in St Anne’s Church and the staff and leaders made their commitment to serve the school community in 2015. The church was full and the atmosphere was very positive. Thank you to all who attended.

Monday’s CSW assembly was enjoyed by the children and the P&F meeting that followed was well attended and very positive. Thank you to Anne Marie for giving up her time to babysit during the meeting.

Open Day showcased the many learning experiences made available to the young people in our care and was extremely well supported and parents and friends were able to enter the classrooms and see how the classrooms are organised and how students learn. The students loved having parents join their learning groups at this time.

Shared lunch was a hit with children, parents and grandparents also and a big “Thank you” to Mr Richard Magner for providing the beautiful watermelon.

The Parish - School dinner was again a wonderful occasion where parents and parishioners were able to share a great social evening and some trivia thrown in. Heartfelt thanks to Mrs Marie Scott and Mrs Sam Kerr for organising the evening for us.

Reading Helpers’ workshop was conducted at the school to emphasise the importance of literacy in all our lives and give parents a run down on how they can be effective reading helpers at school and in the home.

Do you actively and explicitly teach and monitor cybersafety at home?
Cybersafety is an area of increasing concern for our children as they increasingly explore the internet at school and at home. We teach cybersafety at school. In an effort to help you with this task we have engaged the services of Mrs Shannon Hall to run a parent workshop on cybersafety on the 4th May. Please see the brochure attached to this Newsletter.

Playground duty: I would like to advise parents that at the beginning of the 2015 school year, the staff of St Joseph’s Merriwa took on an extra lunch duty each day to ensure that there are two teachers on the playground supervising at all times. This is creating a great stretch on our human resources but the teachers are happy to take on the task to maintain support for all students during the breaks. All students are encouraged at school to see a teacher if there is a problem. The teachers are easily spotted in their fluoro vests. Students will be supported to make good choices in the playground. We appreciate your efforts at home to reinforce the safe and caring hands concept and teach the meaning of turn taking and fair play.

Emergency evacuation drills: Over the next couple of weeks we are planning to practise our drills and want you to be assured these are routine drills and if there is a real need for evacuation you will be duly notified. Due to the sighting of snakes around Merriwa lately we had a snake drill on Friday which went
very smoothly. As a result of a possible sighting of a snake near the sports shed we have purchased a Snake deterer to place outside the Sports Shed as a precaution. We encourage children to be vigilant at all times as snakes are a common reality in the country and we must all be sensible in our behaviours regarding them at home as well as at school.

Over the final 3 weeks of term we have a number of exciting events happening:

This Monday - Inaugural St Joseph’s Denman Horse Sports Carnival. Ten of our students will represent our school.

This Tuesday – Pupil Free Day: The teachers will be receiving Professional Development in the area of Professional Learning Communities on this day. We are excited by the benefits of this learning to ourselves as professionals and also to the learning of the students in our charge. Please remember that there will not be any school on this day.

This Wednesday – Friday: Kia-Ora Music Camp in Scone. 12 of our students will attend.

This Thursday -
⇒ the Special Needs Forum in Muswellbrook, for Parents to look at the services offered to children with special needs in the Diocese. All welcome.
⇒ Collaboration day for Stage 1 teachers in the region to plan English Teaching units

This Friday
⇒ Collaboration day for Stage 3 teachers in the region to plan English Teaching units
⇒ Senior Citizens Concert is being held this Friday and our students will be performing three songs for the seniors. They will be making a book mark for their homework this week and this will be presented to the seniors on the day.
⇒ Disaster Resilience training is being held in Sydney. I will be in attendance and look forward to reporting back to you and implementing any improvements to our systems if necessary.

Next Monday 23 March -
⇒ Collaboration day for Stage 2 teachers in the region to plan English Teaching units
⇒ Inaugural Upper Hunter Regional Young Leaders Day. St Joseph’s Merriwa will be hosting Stage 3 students from Denman here.

Sunday 29th March -
⇒ Palm Sunday
⇒ Ecumenical Way of the Cross: please advise on the return slip at the end of this newsletter if you wish to travel on our bus to the Ecumenical Way of the Cross on Sunday 29th March. There will be no charge for the bus. Our school will be re enacting the Last Supper.

Thursday 2 April
⇒ Last Day of School
⇒ Holy Thursday Liturgy 9am at the showground
⇒ Cross Country Carnival at the Showground.

This is the last week to purchase any “surplus to needs furniture” from the school. We still have a number of infants chairs, low tables, a two-door cupboard, a couple of desks and computer tables. Please call the office for details. All people who have already committed to buy please collect your goods with payment by Friday of this week.

Helen Whale

**Uniform Shop**

The uniform shop will be open
Wednesday morning at 8.45am this week instead of Tuesday due to the pupil free day tomorrow.

Please remember winter uniforms need to be ordered now to allow time for delivery. If you have any queries please contact Leanne on 0487 761253 or De 0416 194501.

Leanne Hunt
Uniform Coordinator
Last week I attended a Religious Education Assembly day with all the other RECs in our diocese. At this day we spent time looking at the data from the Year 6 Religious Education Test which is held each June. Just as we do with our NAPLAN results we looked at trends and results to see how we could improve our results. We were asked to come back and sit last year’s exam with Stage 3 (Year 5 and 6). Once the test is marked we are responsible for placing the students on a continuum of learning - much like what we do in literacy and numeracy and look at any areas of concerns and gaps in students learning and address them in the next few months in preparation for the Year 6 test this year. From this process we are hoping for improved results not only at the school level but also across the diocese compared to the rest of the state. Over the next few newsletters I will include some of the questions to give you some idea of the type of questions asked and also maybe to test your own knowledge! I will make sure I include the answers so you can check how you are going.

Anne Marie Peebles
Religious Education Coordinator
How to read with your young child – Reading Strategies

Teaching children about reading strategies is equipping them with tools to solve reading problems. Using reading strategies effectively will help children become confident, fluent and expressive readers who develop a love of reading.

Strategy Number 1: Look at the picture
Encourage your child to look at the picture to help them work out what the text might be. In simple books, the texts match the pictures exactly. As the books get more complex, the pictures still relate to the text but they do not always show everything that is written in the text.

Strategy Number 2: Get your mouth ready
This strategy is another great one for beginning readers. Using this strategy with the strategy of looking at the pictures will help your child think of a word that makes sense in the sentence. Getting your child to make the initial sound with their mouth will help the word “pop” out if they are reading in a smooth reading voice.

Strategy Number 3: Does it make sense?
The main goal of reading is for the child to comprehend (understand) what he/she is reading. They constantly need to be reminded that if they read something that doesn't sound right, that they need to have another go at reading it. Parents can help with this by asking them if what they read made sense. By the parent repeating what the child said, they will be able to hear that what they said does not make sense. This is a strategy that develops over time as their reading ability improves.

Strategy Number 4: Sound chunks
This is a strategy used to help the child look at the entire word to see if they can use any prior knowledge they have about the sounds that letters make together or prefixes (letters added to the beginning of a word e.g. un, dis, in) or suffixes (letters added to the end of words e.g. ed, ing, less) Parents can help the child locate these in an unknown word.

Strategy Number 5: Little words in a big word
A lot of words in our language are made up of smaller words. Children can look for known words in a larger word to help them work out the entire word. Using this strategy with the “Does it make sense” strategy can help your child work out a word.

Taken from http://creatingalearningenvironment.com/?p=18

Anne Marie Peebles
Lead Teacher

HOLY WEEK SERVICE TIMES

St Anne’s Merriwa ~ St Joseph’s Cassilis ~ St Bernard’s Denman

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merriwa</td>
<td>Mass of The Lord’s Supper</td>
<td>9.15 AM</td>
<td>Holy Thursday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denman</td>
<td>Mass of The Lord’s Supper</td>
<td>6.00 PM</td>
<td>Holy Thursday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Merriwa</td>
<td>Stations of The Cross</td>
<td>10.00 AM</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denman</td>
<td>Stations of The Cross</td>
<td>10.00 AM</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassilis</td>
<td>Stations of The Cross</td>
<td>10.00 AM</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merriwa</td>
<td>Celebration of The Lord’s Passion</td>
<td>3.00 PM</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denman</td>
<td>Celebration of The Lord’s Passion</td>
<td>3.00 PM</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Merriwa</td>
<td>Easter Vigil Ceremonies &amp; Mass</td>
<td>6.00 PM</td>
<td>Holy Saturday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denman</td>
<td>Mass</td>
<td>8.30 AM</td>
<td>Easter Sunday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassilis</td>
<td>Mass</td>
<td>10.30 AM</td>
<td>Easter Sunday</td>
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CyberSafety Workshop
What is CyberSafety and what does my child learn about this at school?
What resources are available for parents to access if they need some advice?
Come along to the workshop presented by
Shannon Hall – Education Officer (Learning Technologies) at the Catholic Schools Office

Event Details
Event Date: Monday 4th May, 2015
Time: 3.15pm
Where: St Joseph’s Primary School, Merriwa

Parents and carers of students at St Joseph’s Primary School are invited to attend a parent workshop on Monday 4th May at 3.15pm.
Come along and learn about Cyber Safety and resources that are available.
K
Archie Constable – for great work comparing the length of many objects and ordering them
Jeremy Hopkins – for recognising rhyming words in our story.
Jack Patterson – for great efforts in practising his writing skills
Caitlin Harrison – for great efforts in practising her writing skills

1/2
Ellie Holland – for displaying confidence in the classroom
Fiona Tomy – for showing a comprehensive understanding of length
Nate Brown – for a fantastic effort in homework with writing tasks and reading
Claudia Patterson – for making very grown up decisions and thinking about herself and others

3/4
Madelaine Thrift for collaborating well and sharing her opinions
Patrick McLaren – for being ready to learn at all times
Mia Morgan – for always putting in a big effort into everything she does.
Will Henderson – for a great understanding of 3D objects

5/6
Lauren Redgate – for always working to her full potential
Jorji Taaffe – for putting in a huge effort with homework each week
John Magner – for his vast knowledge of and wanting to know more about bushfires
Charles Brazier – for a super effort in completing his homework

Principal’s Awards:
Jeremy Hopkins: for displaying beautiful manners
Archie Constable: For his increasing school confidence.
Tilly Clark: for her enthusiasm for school and learning.
Amy Redgate: For being such a positive person ready, willing and able to help teachers and students in any way she can.

Playground Champion
Braeden Halse – for making great choices in the playground

Best wishes to the following members of our school community who will be celebrating their birthday in the coming weeks …..
Lateness to school is recorded as a partial absence and must be explained to the school the same way as other forms of absence.

Leaving school early or for part of the day, on a regular basis, is also disruptive to learning.

**Partial absences are recorded in the same way as other absences on the class roll.**

**Partial absences are cumulative and can represent ‘days’ of non-attendance.**

A two hour absence for example equals a half day of non-attendance.

If there is a continuing pattern of lateness or students being required to leave school early, this can become an issue that the school may look into. The Principal has the right to question parents or carers requests for their child to be absent from school if they feel the reasons are unsatisfactory or if a pattern of non-attendance occurs.

It is a requirement that students attend school for the full day as per the advertised school hours.

Contact the school for further details.
ECUMENICAL WAY OF THE CROSS

29 March 2015
3:00 P.M.
St Joseph’s Church and School Conference Centre Grounds

140 Wangi Rd,
Kilaben Bay

(picnic facilities available from 1pm)

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”
JOHN 3:16 RSV
P & F would like to thank our recent Canteen Helpers — Sheree Baber, Jane Clark, Scott Beaven, Megan Moore

CANTEEN ROSTER
Canteen volunteers urgently required!
18 Mar Mel Parker, Lisa Smith
25 Mar De Patterson, Tash Taaffe
1 Apr Fiona Wightman, Scott Beaven

BUS ROSTER
21/22 Mar Bates family
28/29 Mar Moore family
4/5 April Taaffe family

Thank you . . .
to the Peel and Baber families who gave up some valuable time to clean the Aberdeen Bus in recently.

ECUMENICAL WAY OF THE CROSS
Sunday 29th March 2015

We, the _____________________ family would like to join you on the bus to Kilaben Bay for the Ecumenical Way of the Cross on Sunday 29th March 2015.

There will be ____ (number) of us attending.

__________________ Signed

__________________ Date