The command I give you is this: that you love one another.

To remain in Jesus’ love is not to sit back and enjoy peace of mind and a sublime state of equilibrium that is untroubled by all that passes by. It is not a self-indulgent sense of the certainty of our own salvation without reference to anyone else. Jesus calls us to love as he did. That means a love that does not concern itself with our own wants, our own desires, our own emotions: it means a love that is willing to give of ourselves, a love that does not count the cost, a love that is extended even to those we would not normally want to love.

This is, truly, a love that is stronger than death.
Welcome to Justin Alley who as joined our school and is in Year 1. We welcome Justin and his mum Rebecca and family to our school community and wish you many happy years of quality education with us.

Please keep in your prayers the Morgan family following the death of Mr George Morgan, grandfather to Nicholas and Mia and father to Matt. We pray that the beautiful memories the family and friends share at this time will sustain them through their grief.

Please also keep in your thoughts and prayers the Brazier family as Charles’ grandmother (Karin’s mum) is very ill, and the Patterson family as Ben’s grandfather (De’s father) is very ill also. We hope both are comforted by family and friends and restored to good health.

Thank you to Tash Taaffe for her outstanding work as Vice P&F President. Tash has shared her great wisdom and optimism about the school in her role. She has attended and participated in all executive and general meetings and has had a wealth of ideas to bring to the table. Happily for Tash she has started a new job and we wish her all the best. Sadly for us Tash has needed to resign from her executive position on the P&F.

At St Joseph’s we always have a number of willing parents to take up the various roles on the P&F and I am sure someone will step up soon to take on the role of Vice President.

The Mother’s Day breakfast, shared morning Liturgy and activity time were again very well attended. Thank you to Mr Morris and the Year 6 leaders and parents for their organisation and manpower for this event. It is very important that we keep traditions such as this alive at school as it teaches the students about what we value as a school and a society. We indeed value the importance of the nurturing, love and maternal instruction of mothers, grandmothers and other significant women on the wellbeing of our young people both now and into the future. We also value and demonstrate the vital importance of showing gratitude to others. Mother’s Day, Father’s Day and Grandparent’s Day are very worthy traditions.

All children were given the opportunity to purchase a special gift for their mums on Friday. Thank you to Megan Towell for organising the Mother’s day stall. The students of all ages have an opportunity to deal with money, collect change, and select an appropriate gift for their mum and to participate in a ritual of gift giving to demonstrate gratitude to another.

In an effort to raise the level of Mathematics learning in our Primary schools the Catholic Schools Office has committed to identify and upskill a teacher from each primary school as a ‘champion’ or ‘leader’ of maths who will take the initiative in raising and sustaining the profile of mathematics teaching at the school. To this end, Miss Paige Farrow has been identified at our school and Paige has already begun a very powerful series of Professional development opportunities. Paige has returned from her first PD day with great enthusiasm and has already conducted a staff meeting at school where she has passed on her learning.

Principals and their executive staff met together with the Director of the Catholic Schools Office – Mr Ray Collins and Acting Assistant Director, Mr Paul Greaves at St Joseph’s School this week to share their journeys so far in becoming Professional Learning Communities. This was a tremendous learning opportunity for all present and afforded us the opportunity to demonstrate the great learning that is taking place collaboratively at St Joseph’s at both staff and student level.

St Joseph’s Merriwa was host to the Upper Hunter Lead teachers this week as the group evaluated their progress with collaboratively designing learning opportunities for both English and Numeracy across the region. Mrs Peebles and the visiting Lead Teachers also looked at how each school is targeting student need so that every student achieves a high level of learning.

Our new library has been fitted with most of the new furniture. The students will commence their lessons in the beautiful learning space this Wednesday. A special “Thank you” Lucy Johnson and Vic Shannon who helped Mrs Gilbey last Wednesday to put all the books back on to the shelves. We will celebrate the official opening of the library as soon as the remaining furniture is installed.
NAPLAN is being completed by all Year 3 and 5 students this week. This assessment program provides teachers with a great quantity of data to direct future learning opportunities. We look forward to analysing the results when they come back to us in September and combining these results with all other data we collect regularly about our students’ learning.

Congratulations to all our representatives who competed in the Diocesan Cross Country Carnival last week. We had 18 competitors and from the accounts of Mr Morris and the many parents accompanying them our students were tremendous sports and wonderful ambassadors for our school.

Well done Darcy Taaffe for qualifying in her race to represent our school at Polding level. From all reports it was a very exciting race.

On Friday I attended the Official Opening of the new learning spaces at St Joseph’s High School Aberdeen. I was astounded by the quality of the facilities there and the sense of love and pride which staff, students and families alike have for their school. There are over 650 students at Joeys and all of them were dressed beautifully and behaved impeccably for the ceremonies that lasted about 3 hours. I was met by a student when I arrived who showed me to my place and gave me a run down on how the day would progress. I was taken for a tour of the facilities by another two students. Many other students stopped and chatted as we walked around the school. It was very clear to me that the students love their school. I was very proud to know that this school is the top end of our K-12 education at St Joseph’s Merriwa and Aberdeen. Parents, I strongly commend St Joseph’s Aberdeen to you for your child’s High School education.

Why the campdraft and fete? On the first weekend of the July holidays each year, our school holds its annual Campdraft and fete day. This year this event falls on the 27th June. This is our major fundraiser and it is an expectation that all parents support the day in some form or another. We are very fortunate that our parent community takes this commitment seriously and many hands make the work quite enjoyable and very profitable.

Questions and answers about the Campdraft and Fete:

Q: Why does the school have a campdraft when this has nothing to do with education?
A: As a Catholic School there is a shortfall between what the government and parents pay us and what we need to offer our children the best education possible. The campdraft is a proven way of bringing people from outside the community into Merriwa to spend money. We get to keep this money to spend on our educational needs at school.

Q: What did we do for money before the campdraft and fete?
A: Our parents helped with street stalls each term, we worked the BBQ at the show and at the Festival of the Fleeces, we ran a Mother’s Day luncheon, we also sent raffle tickets, bulb orders, photo events and various other fundraisers home each year. We also ran a fete every second year. These events took up a great deal of parents’ time and added together, still did not make the amount of money that the current draft and fete make in one day.

Q: Who supported the idea of changing to the Campdraft fete Day?
A: The suggestion was explored 4 years ago and we ran it as a trial that year. The parents were then asked to vote on adopting the day as our regular fundraiser. When the parents realised that they didn’t need to do all the other fundraising events and that they could do all their volunteering over the course of this one event, they voted overwhelmingly in support of the Campdraft and fete Day.

Q: Why bother with the fete if the draft side of things brings so much money in from outside the town?
A: Many parents are not comfortable around horses but still want to help raise money for the school. The fete is a great opportunity for them. Many community members enjoy the social side of a fete and like to come along for the day. Many of our children enjoy the fun of a fete and this provides them with a special day to look forward to each year.

Q: Do we have to be involved?
A: Yes, all funds raised go to help ALL students achieve at a high level at our school. It is fair then for ALL students to have their family helping raise the funds. There are many jobs that need to be done for weeks in advance. If you know that you cannot be present on the day of the Campdraft and fete, please call the organisers and volunteer to do something beforehand.

Helen Whale
The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) collects data on children’s learning and development. It is used to measure the effectiveness of government policies at all levels and identify areas for improvement.

The Australian Government supports the AEDC to conduct a national survey of early childhood development and to measure how children have developed before starting their first year of full-time schooling.

The AEDC has already provided us with two rich data sets from 2009 and 2012. To date, the development of over 550,000 children – or more than 95 per cent of Australian children in their first year of full-time school – has been recorded. The Government is supporting a third data set in 2015 to complement the existing data.

During term 2 of this year, teachers from across the country will be asked to record information based on their knowledge and observations of each child in their first year of full-time school. That information will help schools, communities, and governments to better tailor services and resources to help young children and their families get the support they need.

The Government is pleased to support this significant and large-scale national initiative and I personally encourage schools and teachers to get involved in this year’s data collection.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the state and territory governments; the Social Research Centre; the Telethon Kids Institute, Perth; and the Centre for Community Child Health, Royal Children’s Hospital, Melbourne to the AEDC. I would also like to thank the teachers across the country who support the AEDC.

Senator the Hon Scott Ryan
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education and Training

Happy Birthday

Best wishes to the following members of our school community who will be celebrating their birthday in the coming weeks.....

Fiona Tomy
William Henderson
Nicholas Morgan
Lula Peebles
Arlia Parker

Awards

Kindergarten
Caitlin Harrison – for great work explaining how 3-D shapes will move down an incline.
Jeremy Hopkins – for great reading in Literacy Groups
Arlia Parker – great progress in reading
Lula Peebles – great progress in reading

1/2
Peter Hagley – for using his general knowledge to assist him in explaining the context of a story
Grace Booth – for always demonstrating a keen interest to learn and presenting her work to a high standard
William Luke – for fantastic work during reading activities
Ella Beaven – for great effort in spelling activities

3/4
Roy Lawler – for contributing great ideas to group discussions
Olivia Collins – for being a caring and cooperative member of our class.
Helena Parker – for great skills in linking multiplication and division facts using arrays
Axul Hourn – for using known facts to work out unknown multiplication facts

5/6
Rhys Turner – his amazing ability to add and subtract fractions
Chloe Towell – for demonstrating a sound knowledge of abstract nouns
Gaby Nicholls – for giving up lunchtimes to organise Mother’s Day Breakfast
Nicole Martin – for giving up lunchtimes to organise Mother’s Day Breakfast
Lauren Redgate – for giving up lunchtimes to organise Mother’s Day Breakfast
Emily Ninness – for giving up lunchtimes to organise Mother’s Day Breakfast

Playground Champion:
Jeremy Hopkins – for always taking time to return sporting equipment
Jonathan Keegan – for showing excellent leadership at assembly

Principal’s Awards:
Nicole Martin: for her impressive guidance of younger students to enable them to learn effectively.
Korey Halse – demonstrating increased independence
Darcy Taaffe – for a brilliant effort at the Diocesan Cross Country carnival.
Ella Beaven – for being responsible on the playground and for being punctual in her return to class after play.
Save the date and come and celebrate a special Birthday!!!

You are invited to attend the Birthday of the Church - otherwise known as Pentecost- see information below.

The celebration will take place on Sunday 24th May at 8:30am in St Anne’s Church Merriwa.

You are invited to stay for a cuppa and a piece of birthday cake.

Please wear something red to help celebrate this special feast day.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

What is Pentecost?

Pentecost is a very special time when the disciples and other Christians received the Holy Spirit.

Pentecost occurred 50 days after Easter Sunday or 50 days after Jesus rose from the dead. Jesus had already gone back to heaven so the disciples and new believers of Jesus were waiting to receive the Holy Spirit because that's what Jesus told them would happen. Plus, since Jesus wasn’t with them anymore the Holy Spirit would help bring them closer to God.

Just before Jesus was taken up to heaven he told them that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on them and they’d be his witnesses in the whole world.

Pentecost was a day to celebrate the end of the grain harvest. The people would offer two loaves of bread they had made from their crops and two lambs were waved before the Lord as a thanks offering. This was their special way of thanking God for the weather and for helping them get a crop for that year.

The disciples and other Christians had come together to thank God and suddenly a sound like the blowing of a strong wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Next they saw tongues of fire that separated and came to rest of each of them. When the tongues of fire came they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in different languages.

The Holy Spirit actually helps us in many ways; he comforts, teaches, helps us grow in our relationship with God and gives us strength to get rid of the bad habits in our lives. He also gives us power and helps us know when we’ve done something wrong. Of course, we need to want to grow, learn and change to be more like God for the Holy Spirit to really work with us.

Pentecost is a special time of celebration. It is because of the Holy Spirit that we can have the courage and the strength to spread Jesus’ message and live a life to be more like God.

Provide First Aid - HLTAID003 course will be run at the school by TAK Training on Thursday 28th May 2015 from 3.30pm until approximately 9.00pm.

If you are interested in completed or updating your first aid certificate, please contact Sally Gilbey or Cassandra McLaren at the school by this Friday 15th May.

There is an online component which needs to be completed prior to the course, so the earlier you register the better.

The cost of the course will be $110 payable prior to the day of the training.
P & F would like to thank our recent Canteen Helpers — Tash Taffe, Fiona Morgan, Clare Martin & Pauline Lawler

Please remember to check the bus roster for your turn to clean the Aberdeen bus. A copy was sent home to each family at the start of the year. It is also available on the school website. This once-a-year job for each family raises a substantial amount for our school and saves many hours of other fundraising activities.

St Joseph’s Campdraft & Fete

Save the date
Saturday 27th June 2015

Next meeting
6.30pm Tuesday 9th June 2015
at Merriwa RSL Club

We had a fantastic response at the last meeting. All coordinator positions have been filled and we thank the following for their generous willingness to assist:

Peter Holland - Fete Coordinator
Peter is looking for ideas for fun activities to run for the children. All suggestions most welcome!

Nat Hourn - Market Stalls Coordinator

Helen Whale - Coffee Stall Coordinator

Mel Bates - Canteen Coordinator

A roster will be out soon for you to nominate where and when you can assist with this great fundraising event.

De Patterson
Overall Coordinator

St. Joseph's P&F Association

P&F meetings for 2015 will be held on the second Monday of each month at 4.30pm in the MacKillop Room.

Next meeting - Tuesday 9th June 2015

If you would like to add an item to the agenda to be discussed at the meeting, please contact Kim Holland on 0422 035576 or email kimholland1369@gmail.com by the Monday of the week preceding the meeting.

Canteen Roster

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Volunteers Needed</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 May</td>
<td>Scott Beaven &amp; Bernadita Gabriel</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 May</td>
<td>Volunteers needed</td>
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<td>29th May</td>
<td>Fiona Morgan &amp; helpers needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Jun</td>
<td>Volunteers needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Jun</td>
<td>Sharee Baber &amp; Maxine Cronin</td>
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Bus Roster

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Family</th>
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<tr>
<td>9/10 May</td>
<td>Brazier family</td>
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<tr>
<td>16/17 May</td>
<td>Brown/Redman family</td>
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<tr>
<td>23/24 May</td>
<td>Collins Family</td>
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<tr>
<td>30/31 May</td>
<td>Volunteers needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/7 Jun</td>
<td>Cronin Family</td>
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Uniform Shop

Open each Tuesday morning 8.30 - 9.30 for ordering, pick up and payments.

Second Hand Items
Donations of second hand items to the uniform shop are always appreciated and sought after by parents. We do ask that parents are mindful of quality when donating second hand items. Clothing that is stained or torn cannot be resold so please keep this in mind when evaluating items for donation.

Many thanks

De Patterson
Assistant Uniform Coordinator

Pupil Free Day

Tuesday 2nd June

Merriwa Activity Centre will be open all day for families requiring child care. Please contact Nat Hourn at MAC on 6548 2083 to make a booking.