### November / December 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 8 22/11</strong>&lt;br&gt;Mass 8.30am&lt;br&gt;2.40pm Liturgy/Assembly&lt;br&gt;10.00-12.00 Hunter Prelude Parent Play workshop</td>
<td>23/11</td>
<td>24/11</td>
<td>25/11</td>
<td>26/11</td>
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<td>2.40pm Liturgy/Assembly&lt;br&gt;10.00-12.00 Hunter Prelude Parent Play workshop&lt;br&gt;P&amp;F AGM 6pm RSL</td>
<td>Library&lt;br&gt;No Canteen&lt;br&gt;(ice blocks will be for sale at lunchtime)</td>
<td>Swimming&lt;br&gt;(Summer uniform)</td>
<td>Swimming&lt;br&gt;(Summer uniform)</td>
<td>Mass 6.00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 9 29/11</strong>&lt;br&gt;2.40pm Liturgy/Assembly&lt;br&gt;10.00-12.00 Hunter Prelude Parent Play workshop</td>
<td>30/11</td>
<td>1/12</td>
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<td>3/12</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.00-12.00 Kinder transition&lt;br&gt;Prelude Parent Play workshop</td>
<td>Library&lt;br&gt;No Canteen&lt;br&gt;(Summer uniform)</td>
<td>Swimming&lt;br&gt;(Summer uniform)</td>
<td>Swimming&lt;br&gt;Carnival&lt;br&gt;Canteen&lt;br&gt;(Sports uniform)</td>
<td>Mass 6.00pm</td>
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<td><strong>Week 10 6/12</strong>&lt;br&gt;Mass 8.30am&lt;br&gt;2.40pm Liturgy/Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.40pm Liturgy/Assembly</td>
<td>Year 6 Retreat&lt;br&gt;~ Library <del>&lt;br&gt;</del> Sport ~&lt;br&gt;Presentation Night 6pm School of Arts</td>
<td>Year 6 Retreat&lt;br&gt;~ Library <del>&lt;br&gt;</del> Sport ~&lt;br&gt;Presentation Night 6pm School of Arts</td>
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<td><strong>Week 11 13/12</strong>&lt;br&gt;No assembly 6pm End of Year Mass&lt;br&gt;Year 6 Graduation Dinner</td>
<td>14/12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mass 8.30am</td>
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<td>Mass 6.00pm</td>
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**Pope Francis’ five finger prayer guide.**

1. **The thumb is the closest finger to you. So start praying for those who are closest to you. They are the persons easiest to remember. To pray for our dear ones is a “sweet obligation.”**

2. **The next finger is the index. Pray for those who teach you, instruct you and heal you. They need the support and wisdom to show direction to others. Always keep them in your prayers.**

3. **The following finger is the tallest. It reminds us of our leaders, the governors and those who have authority. They need God’s guidance.**

4. **The fourth finger is the ring finger. Even that it may surprise you, it is our weakest finger. It should remind us to pray for the weakest, the sick or those plagued by problems. They need your prayers.**

5. **And finally we have our smallest finger, the smallest of all. Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. When you are done praying for the other four groups, you will be able to see your own needs but in the proper perspective, and also you will be able to pray for your own needs in a better way. (By praying for others we can begin to see our own needs in greater perspective. It is an important lesson, one that pops up in Catholic Social Teaching quite often.)**

World of Maths Day was held last Tuesday. All students joined into small collaborative learning groups to work through 15 mathematics work stations. The buzz in the room was electric as students discussed the problems and worked together to solve them using and strengthening their maths skills. The students have begged to have the day again next year! Our presenter “Mr Ed” was full of praise for our school and its students.

Swimming lessons this year are showing good improvement in skills since last year’s start. It is essential that we all work together to ensure our students can survive if around water and that they can swim with competence. Thank you to Mrs Peebles for organising the swimming lessons and to all the staff and parent helpers who make the lessons run so smoothly. The assistance given enables all children to receive maximum instruction and also in a timely manner so that the children can return to lessons at school. The swimming program concludes with our annual carnival and we look forward to every student taking part to demonstrate their learning so far.

Our fundraiser for Dom Punch was a great effort. The students had yet another opportunity to do something to help another even though they will not benefit in a material way, personally. This is such a great Christian expression of our mandate to “Love one another”. The students got into the black and white spirit and raised $144.00. The diocesan total now stands at $15000.00. Thank you to Miss Farrow for organising this event.

The end of year school Mass will be held on Monday 14th December as per the school calendar. All families are urged to attend this Mass. Unlike the school calendar advice, there will not be the usual assembly on that day at school.
The Annual General Meeting of the Parents and Friends Association will take place on the 30th November. Please see the P&F news for details. The P&F is the parents’ group where you can contribute to the life of the school, meet friends and discuss relevant educational issues. Please make an effort to attend. You will not be coaxed into a position that you do not want to take on.

School Academic Reports will be going home with your child on Thursday 3rd December. We will provide an opportunity for parents to meet with the teachers if you have concerns highlighted by the reports. This opportunity will be in Week 10 on Tuesday 8th December. Please contact the school office if you would like to make an appointment. It is not an expectation that all parents attend these meetings. There will be opportunity in Term 1 to meet with your child’s 2016 teacher as well as the informal interview at the end of Term 1 and the formal interview at the end of Term 2. As per usual any request for an interview at any time throughout the year will be accommodated to the best of our ability.

Presentation of Awards Evening will be held on the 9th December at the School of Arts. The evening will commence at 6pm and conclude with supper. Please mark this on your calendar.

Transition to School program is drawing to a close. Our last session will be held next Tuesday 1st December. We invite all parents with Kinder enrolments to attend this session as it will give important information on all you need to know for next year.

Hunter Prelude conducted the second of its ‘Play Workshops’ here at the school yesterday. The organisers were very pleased to have 17 children attend, accompanied by 11 parents and everyone appeared to enjoy the morning immensely. The next session will be held here at the school on Monday 30th November from 10am - 12 noon and will focus on ‘Early Literacy - how to support this through play’. All workshops are free and morning tea is provided.

STOP PRESS!!

Four members of our 5/6 class travelled to Newcastle today with Miss Foran to attend the Newcastle Herald School Newspaper Competition award ceremony.

We’ve just received the exciting news that our school has once again performed very well and received an award for ‘Highly Commended in Best News Story’ published in our competition entry earlier this year.

Congratulations to John, Darcy & Damian and to all of the 5/6 class for producing yet another quality newspaper.

We wish to offer a heartfelt thank you to the staff, the students, and the St Joseph’s school community for your love and support on the passing of John Kaye, our husband, father, and son-in-law. From John’s wife, Kathleen Oldman, John’s children Max, Connor and Annalise Kaye and John’s parents-in-law Colleen and Geoff Oldman.
**What is Advent?**

I have included a fun clip for you to watch which will answer that question. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSsMq6UXXwo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSsMq6UXXwo)

Why not make a special advent wreath to have in your home.

**What do you need?**

1 wreath: It is usually traditionally green, however, if you have a Christmas Wreath (decorated) this can be used as well. Place on the dining room table or somewhere prominent in the house.

Five candles
- 3 x purple
- 1 x pink
- 1 x white (Christmas Candle for the centre of the wreath.)

**Each week of Advent light a candle:** week 1 - one candle, week 2 - 2 candles, etc until Christmas morning when all the candles are lit especially the white one in the middle for Christmas.

Dinner time may be a good time to light the candles each night. Someone can light the candle and then each person think of something that we would like to thank God for that has happened during the day.

Advent marks the final four weeks leading into Christmas, so now is the time to get ready.

Remember Advent begins on the 29th November this year. When we have our Christmas trees up we would like to invite students to take a photo and add it to our sacred space in the Joey’s room.

Anne Marie Peebles
REC

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**2016 P&F AGM**

**Monday 30th November 6:00pm at the Merriwa RSL**

A sausage sizzle dinner will be provided from 6pm

AGM scheduled to begin at 6:30pm

A pamphlet outlining role statements for each position to be filled for the P&F committee will be sent home for nominations to be made

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Fete and Campdraft Committee Meeting
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The 2016 St Joseph’s Fete and Junior Campdraft Committee will be formed following the completion of the AGM.

A teacher will be present on the night to supervise children in the back play area of the RSL
AWARDS

Congratulations to the following award winners.

**Kindergarten**
Mollie Beaven – for demonstrating her understanding of alphabetical order
Archie Constable – for using positional language confidently
Emma McLaren – for recalling and identifying different symbols of Advent
Jack Patterson – for explaining many different places he knows

1/2
Grace Booth – for showing a deep understanding of Advent
William Collins – for developing a creative limerick
William Luke – for planning the construction of his bridge with accuracy
Peter Hagley – for working hard to collaborate with all members of his group and include their ideas in the construction of their bridge
Nate Brown – for explaining the use of informal units to measure the capacity of different shapes
Aidan Hunt – for using great technical language in the construction of his group’s bridge

3/4
Jack Shannon - for showing a good understanding of time.
Axul Hourn - for demonstrating a good understanding of road safety
Jock Grady - for his enthusiasm towards our science experiments
Korey Halse - for his excellent use of positional language

5/6
Chloe Towell - for being a whiz at ordering decimals
Darcy Moore - for his mature approach to all tasks
Nicholas Morgan - for his outstanding results in spelling assessments.
Damian Jamieson - for being an efficient worker in literacy and numeracy tasks.
Jemma Grady - for her tremendous results in spelling assessments.

**Principal’s Awards:**
Olivia Collins - for fantastic book work in maths
Madelaine Thrift - for fantastic book work in maths
Patrick McLaren - for fantastic book work in maths
Sam Grady - for his great scientific knowledge and ability to reason
Roy Lawler - for his interest and love of learning
Emily Wright - for accepting difficult challenges without complaint

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Happy Birthday

Best wishes to the following members of our school community who have or will be celebrating their birthday in the coming weeks.....
A month ago Vanessa, our social media manager put a post on the Parentingideas.com.au Facebook page that had one of our biggest engagement rates ever. It begged the question- “What is bullying? Do we mix it up with Teasing and other forms of mean behaviour?”

It’s an important topic that I’d like to help clarify.

**Bullying** is a term that’s wrapped in emotion. For many people it’s associated with bad childhood memories. It’s been estimated that around 40% of people have experienced bullying in the past. It’s something that we don’t want to happen to our kids.

But I fear it’s being overused at the moment and confused with teasing and rudeness.

**Rudeness** refers to thoughtless behaviours and thoughtless words. Kids often do rude things to each other without thinking their actions through. Examples include breaking wind in a child’s direction; joking about the colour of a child’s hair in front of others; failing to share possessions and neglecting to acknowledge someone. Rudeness is usually about selfishness and thoughtlessness. Taken on their own many rude behaviours can be seen as an element of bullying but when looked at in context they are more about thoughtlessness, lack of consideration and poor manners rather than a deliberate attempt to hurt someone.

**Teasing** refers to annoying, hurtful behaviour that is used to get a reaction from someone else. Teasing can be persistent in nature; but not always. It’s generally an attempt to get under a person’s skin. It can involve name-calling; it can be personal and hurtful in nature. It can also infringe on another person’s rights. But generally teasing doesn’t have the key ingredients that make up bullying.

**Bullying** is the selective, uninvited, repetitive oppression of one person or group by another. It involves three elements – intent to hurt or harm; power imbalance; and repetition over time. It takes many forms and guises including physical aggression; verbal abuse; emotional aggression (or blackmail); intimidation and harassment and exclusion.

The new cyber-dimension to bullying has moved the goalpost for many kids. In the past children and young people could escape bullying behaviours by being at home. Cyberbullying means that children can’t escape bullies like they once could.

**Why the distinction?**

I hear the term bullying misused a great deal in the media and when talking with parents. We run the risk of “The Boy Who Cried Wolf” Syndrome where we become so desensitized to the term that we (or teachers) ignore it when children really are the victims of bullying. We also run the risk of failing to skill our kids up to manage rudeness and teasing if we categorise every awful behaviour that kids experience as Bullying.

Our ability to be discerning about bullying is as important as the action we take when we are sure that our child is on the receiving end of Bullying behaviour. These actions include: dealing with feelings; providing emotional coping skills, getting others involved; building up a child’s support networks; and building self-confidence that can take a battering.

Bullying needs to be taken seriously. But we also need to be discerning about bullying behaviours.

*There’s plenty more information to help parents support children when they are bullied in Parentingideas Club. [Find out more](http://www.parentingideasclub.com.au)*
Merriwa Activity Centre will be open on the last two days of term - Thursday 17th December and Friday 18th December from 9am - 5pm. These are pupil free days at St Joseph’s Merriwa.

Contact MAC on 6548 2082 for bookings and further information.

Sport and Recreation’s Swim and Survive lessons

Australian summers usually involve plenty of fun in and around the water, but no parent should forget how important it is to make sure children stay safe.

Sport and Recreation’s Swim and Survive classes for preschoolers and school-aged children help youngsters learn important ways to be safe and enjoy our pools, rivers, beaches and lakes.

The intensive nine-day programs provide wonderful results, and are great fun as well. Plus, family discounts make our program affordable for all the children in the family.

Sport and Recreation runs Swim and Survive classes in pools throughout regional NSW.

Our instructors are nationally qualified and screened for their suitability to work with children.

Prices for nine lessons are $69 for school-aged children and $49 for preschoolers (prices exclude pool entry fee).

For more information or to make a booking, visit sportandrecreation.nsw.gov.au/swimandsurvive or phone 13 13 02
Thank you... to the Redgate & Shannon families who gave up some valuable time to clean the Aberdeen Bus recently.

P & F would like to thank our recent Canteen Helpers — Peta Luke, Scott Beaven, Lizzie Hagley & Bronwyn Redgate.

Next meeting - AGM Monday 30th November 2015
6pm sausage sizzle at RSL followed by the meeting.
All positions vacant
Please consider how you can help and be more involved in your child’s education.

Canteen Roster

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>25 Nov</td>
<td>No canteen. Ice blocks only for sale</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Dec</td>
<td>Swimming Carnival - Lisa Smith, Mel Parker + extra helpers please</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 Dec</td>
<td>TBA - dependent on volunteers</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 Dec</td>
<td>Moore family</td>
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Bus Roster

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<tr>
<td>28/29 Nov</td>
<td>Smith family</td>
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<td>5/6 Dec</td>
<td>Telfer family</td>
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<td>12/13 Dec</td>
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<td>23/24 Jan</td>
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Ginny The simplest way... to add veg to a barbecue.

The weather is warming up and so are the backyard barbecues. But it need not be an entirely meat affair. Here are some ideas for adding healthy veg to the barbie:

Kebabs - capsicum, zucchini, eggplant and mushrooms work well. Add to pork, chicken or lamb.

Chips - slice potato or sweet potato, and grill on the hotplate.

Salad – grab some green leaves and toss in tomato, cucumber, carrot, beans, capsicum or whatever takes your fancy!

Veggie sticks and dip – chop up carrot, cucumber, and celery sticks to dip in yummy hummus, or an eggplant or beetroot dip.

For more information visit www.eatittobeatit.com.au or join us at facebook.com/eatittobeatit

Good for Kids good for life

Tips to Encourage Drinking Water

We all know that water is the best drink for children however sometimes it can be difficult to persuade them to choose water over sugary drinks.

Here are some tips to help encourage water intake:

- Always have water available and accessible e.g. have a jug of water in the fridge or provide bottles of water for outdoor play
- Remove temptation by not storing sugary drinks such as soft drink in the house
- Keeping water cool or using a water filter may better suit your child’s taste
- Try flavouring the water with lemon or lime slices. You can even add herbs such as mint
- Explain to your child why it is important to stay hydrated and why water is the best choice