August 2016

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Let us rest from the busyness of our day and take some moments to quieten ourselves and to be present to this moment....

There where you are you will find God. Mary MacKillop 1871.

I am not a bit discouraged, and what is more, so clearly see the hand of God in all that is now happening to us. I do not pray more, nor indeed as much as I did, and that never was much, but feel calm and tranquil and so near our dear good God.

Mary MacKillop 19 Sept 1871
The reflection on the front of this week’s Newsletter was written by St Mary MacKillop over 100 years ago and yet it seems so applicable today. So with all the sadness and madness that is surrounding us at present it would be wise to take heed of St Mary MacKillop’s advice, especially as it was her feast day yesterday –

Let us rest from the busyness of our day and take some moments to quieten ourselves and to be present to this moment.... There where you are, you will find God.

Privacy of all members of our school community is treated with utmost respect. There are policy documents that dictate what we can and cannot do with information collected by us. I would ask you to extend the same courtesy to our teachers. In a small town the life of a teacher can seem like that of a fish in a fish bowl. Teachers’ homes and phones should remain private unless you are given permission by the teacher to use them eg on excursion etc. At all other times contact with your child’s teacher should be done at school or over the school communication devices. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

Counselling services at our school have been rather scarce this year as the CSO faithfully tries to engage a suitably qualified candidate. We have however secured counselling services in Weeks 4, 6, 8 and 10 this term. Please discuss with your child’s teacher if you would like your child to avail themselves of this service. Students who were seeing the counsellor previously will continue to receive this service.

Literacy Skills were put to the test recently as 4 of our Stage 3 students travelled to Muswellbrook to compete in the Regional Debating competition. After qualifying at class level, Patrick Magner, Jorji Taaffe, Chloe Towell and Madelaine Thrift participated in a debating workshop at St James Primary School and then proceeded to debate with students from St Cath’s Singleton. St Catherines’ students managed to defeat our team with their spectacular debating skills. Their word wizardry then saw St Catherines’ School defeat St James’ students in the final to be the 2016 victors. These students will now go on to Diocesan level while our students go back to class and pass on the tips of the trade to the students for next year.

A fantastic evening of Maths fun will be held at school on Tuesday night 23rd August. You are invited! Please see information flyer attached. This evening forms part of the Choose Maths program that we have running at school in conjunction with the Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute (AMSI). According to AMSI “Studies show that children who participate in Maths at home gain a significant advantage in the classroom. This family fun night will show you how.

The 2017 ASPIRE performance of Marvin McRae was held last week. We took a bus load of students, parents and grandparents to Newcastle’s Civic Theatre to watch this wonderful performance. Talented actors, dancers and musicians from school all over the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese worked together for several months to bring to their audience such a magnificent performance. Congratulations to ex-student Eliza Peebles who had her Aspire Debut this year.

Congratulations to Darcy Taaffe and Thomas Hunt who travelled to Newcastle last week to compete at the Diocesan Athletics Carnival. Thomas jumped his personal best in high Jump coming in 4th place. Darcy competed very impressively in Long Jump, 800m, 200m and 100m. She placed 3rd in the 100m and that has put her in the next level of competition – Polding. We have today been advised that Thomas will also compete at Polding in high jump. A great achievement for both students and we look forward to hearing about their experiences.

Back Yard League is coming to our Primary students (Years 3-6) over the coming weeks.
It’s a program over 3 weeks with students starting with basic skills in week 1, more advanced in week 2 and finishing week 3 with an in school gala day session. Once completed all students will receive a Steeden Backyard League football. Sounds like a lot of skill development as well as fun for the students.

There were parents and children aplenty here today for the first formal transition to school day for our new Kinders. Mrs Hagley provided parents will a lot of information about the reading process to help them help their children gain literacy confidence. Thank you to all those in attendance.

Merriwa Horse Sports is fast approaching and as usual our school is a great supporter of the Merriwa Central School in this activity. We look forward to a full report after the 15th August. Thanks Mrs Kerr for your services as team manager.

As part of our ongoing quality control as an education provider our school participates in the Continuum of School Improvement (COSI) each year. Our Curriculum Focus Day this year will examine our teaching of English and Maths. We look forward to this process providing feedback of affirmation and recommendation.

Book Week will be celebrated at our school on Wednesday 24th August with a parade for students. The theme of Book Week this year is Australia! Story Country and children will be dressing up as characters from the CBCA Book of the Year shortlisted books. The children have been discussing dress up ideas with Mrs Oldman and will continue to explore the new books over the coming weeks. We look forward to the families of the Merriwa Create & Grow Playgroup joining us on this day.

A Leadership Day for our 5/6 students will be held on Friday 19th August. This inspirational day will be organised and led by Sam Hill, our Diocesan Family Community Faith Coordinator. More details soon.

Kind regards
Helen Whale
**AWARDS**

*Congratulations to our award winners of Weeks 2 & 3:*

**Kindergarten**
- **Jye Bates** for working hard and cooperating well with others in Literacy Groups.
- **Annabelle Hunt** for recalling events from stories in the Bible.

**1/2**
- **William Collins** for a settled and mature approach to learning tasks
- **Claudia Patterson** for accurate setting out and enthusiasm in Maths
- **Mollie Beaven** for working hard to create interesting sentences
- **Aidan Hunt** for his great inquiry questions asked during Geography
- **Jeremy Hopkins** for presenting multiplication facts in an orderly array
- **Bethany Wightman** for justifying choices made by illustrators in Visual Literacy

**3/4**
- **Isam Arfan** for demonstrating great leadership skills when working in groups
- **Alister Fairfull** for always trying his best

**Cody Bates** for his excellent use of direct speech in his literacy task

**Paddy Wong** for his great understanding of patterns

**5/6**
- **Amy Redgate** for great skills with spelling and punctuation
- **William Henderson** for his mature approach to learning in PDHPE lessons
- **Patrick Magner** for always demonstrating excellent leadership qualities

**Playground Champion:**
- **William Luke** for being a hospitable host at Grandparents Day celebrations.

**Principal’s Awards:**
- **Axul Hourn** for showing great compassion and friendship.

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**Happy Birthday**

Best wishes to the members of our school community who will be celebrating their birthday in the next two weeks …..

*Mrs Oldman*
This week we ask that your thoughts and prayers are with Mark and Helen Whale and their family as they farewell Mark’s mother, Verlie Whale.

_Eternal rest grant unto her O Lord._

_And let perpetual light shine upon her._

_May she rest in peace. Amen._

**St Mary of the Cross MacKillop Feast Day** is celebrated this week (8th August). Mary MacKillop is the first Australian saint. Students attended Mass on Monday to remember this special lady who had a wonderful saying and chose to live her life by it. “Never see a need without doing something about it”.

Mary MacKillop was born in Victoria in 1842. She was the eldest child in her family and had 3 sisters and 4 brothers. Mary’s first job was as a clerk when she was 14; she then worked as a governess looking after her cousins and teaching them (and other farm children) their lessons. She loved children and later became a school teacher. In South Australia she met a priest named Father Julian Tenison Woods who also wanted to help poor children attend school. Together Mary MacKillop and Father Tenison Woods started the ‘Stable School’ in 1866. All of the children had lessons in reading, writing, math and singing. The girls also enjoyed learning to sew whilst the boys enjoyed woodwork. Mary and her sisters also taught the children about God and taught them to trust in Jesus.

In 1866 Mary MacKillop and Father Tenison Woods started the religious order of the **Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart** (the Josephites) and in 1867 Mary MacKillop became a nun - Sister Mary of the Cross. Mary and the Josephite nuns set up schools in Australia and New Zealand. They also set up houses for elderly women, young girls and women without jobs. They gave their life to people in need often giving comfort to the sick and dying and even visiting people in jail to give them whatever help they could.

At times in her life Mary MacKillop met people who made it hard for her to perform her good works but she never gave up and today the Sisters of St Joseph are still doing the work that Mary MacKillop started all those years ago.

The Sisters who have been long affiliated with Merriwa also belong to the Sisters of St Joseph.

**The Feast of the Assumption**
The Feast of the Assumption is celebrated on Monday 15th August. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was taken to heaven not only with her soul but with her whole body. This was a special favour that God gave to Mary as she accepted his request to be the mother of Jesus. This day is a holy day of obligation and the school will be attending Mass at 9:15am to celebrate this special feast day, asking Mary to guide, protect and care for us. _All are very welcome._

Anne Marie Peebles
REC
2016
19th Annual
Special Needs Mass

Come to the Table

St James’ Primary School Muswellbrook
together with Catholic schools of the Upper Hunter region and
the Federation of P & F Associations, Special Needs Working Party
Warmly welcome all to join with
principals, teachers, school staff and families and parishioners to
celebrate our Annual Special Needs Mass.

Tuesday 30 August, 2016 at 7pm
St James’ Catholic Church
65 Brook Street
MUSWELLBROOK

No RSVP required, however for further details, please contact:
Cath Garrett-Jones, Parent Liaison and Resource Officer
P 4870 1303 E cath.garrett-jones@mn.catholic.edu.au
Coding Club

What is coding?
Coding is what makes it possible for us to create computer software, apps and websites. Your browser, your operating system, the apps on your phone, and websites - they're all made with code. Coding, in the simplest of terms, is telling a computer what you want it to do, which involves typing in step-by-step commands for the computer to follow.

Aims:
The aim of the club is to engage children in Computer Science, and allow them to gain a practical understanding of basic coding. Using computers and tablets, students learn to write and sequence instructions using drag and drop programming and basic JavaScript. They create interactive games, stories and animations, and solve fun puzzles.
The benefits of learning coding at a young age are enormous and include the development of problem-solving skills, computational thinking, persistence, collaboration, and a deeper understanding of a range of mathematical concepts and language.
Most importantly for a lunchtime club, the children will enjoy it!

When?
Coding Club at St Joseph’s Primary School Merriwa is held when Mrs Ninness is available during the second part of lunch/recess. However, students can also log on to www.code.org at home.

Where?
Coding Club is held in the library.

Who?
The club will be managed by Mrs Ninness and caters for all interested students in years K to 6.

Resources?
Each student will need a computer, a computer login and access to the internet.

For further information contact Mrs Ninness.
**CANTEEN ROSTER**

10 Aug  Jade Brown & Lara Madden  
17 Aug  Peta & Andrew Luke

**BUS ROSTER**

13-14 Aug  Magner family  
20-21 Aug  McLaren family  
27-28 Aug  Bridge/Madden family  
3-4 Sep   Morgan family

**THANK YOU...**
to Lawler & Luke families who have given up some valuable time to clean the Aberdeen Bus in recent weeks.

**Uniform Shop**

It will soon be time to place orders for summer uniforms so now would be a good time to check your wardrobes to see what still fits!

Order forms will be sent home shortly.

De Patterson  
Uniform Coordinator  
0416 194501

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We have a number of pumpkins left which were donated to the P&F for sale at the Campdraft & Fete.

If you would like to buy one (or some!) contact the school office. Prices range from $2 - $5.

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Good for Kids good for life

**HEALTHY LUNCHBOX PICK & MIX**

For a healthy lunchbox pick and mix, just choose something from each category, 1 – 6!

1. **FRUIT**  
   Fresh, frozen or tinned

2. **VEGETABLES**  
   Includes legumes and beans of different types and colours

3. **MILK, YOGHURT & CHEESE**  
   Reduced fat options are best

4. **LEAN MEAT & ALTERNATIVES**  
   Meat, poultry, fish, eggs or seeds.

5. **GRAIN (CEREAL) FOODS**  
   Choose wholegrain and high fibre varieties

6. **WATER**  
   Tap, spring, mineral, soda and sparkling!

Source: Healthy Together Victoria  
PHONE 4924 6499
You are invited to the CHOOSEMATHS Family Night at St Joseph’s Primary School, Merriwa.

What you can do at home to help your child succeed in Mathematics.

Date: Tuesday 23rd August
Time: 6:30 to 8:30 pm

Why come? Because…

• As parents you are our key partners to ensure the academic success of your children; and

• Studies show that children who participate in maths at home gain a significant advantage in the classroom!

We’d love to see you there!

To RSVP by 17th August or for any questions please contact Mrs Helen Whale on 6548 2119.