Dear Families

It was wonderful to see the three Sisters from the Good Samaritan order with us at Mass last Sunday as we celebrated the Consecrated Life with the parish. There were many families from St Mary’s in attendance assisting with altar serving and in the choir; thank you for your support.

Uniform Issues

It seems that we have an ever increasing collection of lost property at St Mary’s. Children are leaving jumpers outside and in classrooms and not taking them home each afternoon. The problem occurs when the jumpers do not have a name clearly marked on them. We are happy to hand back jumpers if named, but without names the lost property chest becomes overloaded. Could I ask that all families check to see if the names are clearly visible on jumpers and that your child has the correct jumper?

Hats need to be worn from this week as the Cancer Council has advised the school that August is Hats On month. The children have until the end of next week to be wearing their hats or they will have to stay in the shade at recess and lunchtime.

Illness

Over the last few weeks there have been a large number of children and staff away with flu like symptoms. Let’s hope the warmer weather is just around the corner and it spells the end of the flu season. I wish all those who are unwell a speedy recovery.

Happy News

I am pleased to announce that as of Monday morning I am a proud grandfather of Connor Michael who weighed in at 9lbs 2oz and is a massive 55cm long. Katrina and Luke were most appreciative of the well wishes from the St Mary’s community.

Building Progress

The Year 3 children have vacated their rooms and are now in different classrooms. The Year 1 children are enjoying being in their new classrooms. The library is now operational. I thank the staff and children for their patience and cooperation in what has been a very busy time for all involved.

Best wishes
Mick Lowe
Principal

Maths problem of the week!!!

Alice needs 1 hour to do a certain job. Betty her older sister can do the same job in half an hour. How many minutes will it take to do the job if they both work together at their given rates?
Gospel for this Sunday

The Gospel this Sunday begins with a report that the Jews complained about Jesus’ claims regarding his identity. They knew his family, and they knew he was the son of Joseph. They could not comprehend what Jesus meant when he said that he came down from heaven. Jesus responds to the complaints by saying that only those who are chosen by God will recognize him as the one that God sent. This is a recurring theme in John’s Gospel, that God has chosen those who will have faith in Jesus. In the verses that follow, Jesus talks more about his unity with the Father. He is the one who has seen the Father and, therefore, knows the Father. Those who listen to God will recognize that Jesus is the one sent from God. Those who believe will have eternal life. Jesus concludes with the central element of our Eucharistic theology. He promises that the bread of life will bring eternal life to those who partake of it, and he tells us that the bread of life will be his own flesh, given for the life of the world. In today’s reading, we hear Jesus say again, as he did in last week’s Gospel, that he is the bread of life. We also hear Jesus add that he is the living bread. Both of these statements help us understand better the gift that Jesus gives us in the Eucharist. We celebrate this gift of Jesus each time we gather for Mass. We believe that receiving Jesus in the Eucharist will lead us to eternal life.

School/Parish Mass

We thank the many families, friends and staff for celebrating Mass with us last Sunday as we prayed and gave thanks for those who have given their lives in service to God. We were fortunate to have three Sisters of the Good Samaritan Order celebrate Mass with us. The students from St Mary’s played a vital role by offering the Prayers of the Faithful and joining in the Offertory Procession. At the conclusion of Mass approximately sixty people gathered in the Presbytery for morning tea.

Year 4 Focus Assembly

A reminder that everyone is most welcome to join us in the PAC tomorrow morning at 9am when Mr Harpley and his Year 4 students will present their liturgy on Saint Mary Mackillop.

Year 2 Retreat

Mrs Johnsen and Mr Prow will travel with the Year 2 students to Tuross next Wednesday 12 August to attend their Reconciliation Retreat. The day will be led by Fr John and the teachers and is always a very enjoyable day for the students.

Whole School Mass

We will attend a whole school Mass next Friday 14 August at 9.15am in the Church. This Mass is for the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady into heaven. We warmly welcome all families and friends to join as for this very important Mass.

Congratulations

The Staff and students extend their warmest congratulations and best wishes to Mr and Mrs Lowe on the birth of their first grandchild, Connor Michael born on Tuesday morning. Great excitement in the Lowe household.

Prayers

We pray for Gavin Buttsworth who received serious burns to his arms after an accident on the weekend. Please keep Gavin, Kat, Moni, Issac and Ava in your prayers.

Loving God.

You are the giver of all we possess, the source of all of our blessings.

We thank and praise you.

Thank you for the gift of our children. Help us to set boundaries for them, and yet encourage them to explore.

Give us the strength and courage to treat each day as a fresh start.

May our children come to know you, the one true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

May your Holy Spirit help them to grow in faith, hope, and love, so they may know peace, truth, and goodness. May their ears hear your voice.

May their eyes see your presence in all things. May their lips proclaim your word.

May their hearts be your dwelling place. May their hands do works of charity.

May their feet walk in the way of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Have a safe and happy weekend
Marg Croese
Religious Education Coordinator
**Communication Corner**

**Skoolbag App Update**
Skoolbag are pleased to announce that Skoolbag is now available for Windows phones running version 8.1 of Windows, and Windows devices running Windows 8.1 or 10 (eg Surface tablet, Laptop, PC etc). This makes the app even more accessible then before to our parent community, with the ability to receive messages directly to a PC, laptop, or surface tablet running Windows 8.1 or 10. To install Skoolbag on your Windows device, look up “Skoolbag” in the Windows store, and install it. Once installed you can find your school, and pin it to your Windows Home Screen. Please note: You must be running at least Windows 8.1 on your device for the app to function.

**Early Learning Initiative**
Training for the Early Learning Initiative is well under way and I have learnt and been exposed to many fabulous and valuable Literacy ideas and strategies. I am looking forward to keeping our parent body up to date with many ideas and resources to help you foster a love of reading and writing with your children at home. I would like to begin by sharing with you a wonderful book called, "The Book Whisperer - Awakening the Inner Reader in Every Child" by Donalyn Miller. It is a very easy read that will stimulate many ideas that you could easily implement at home to show the value and rewards of reading for pleasure. I would highly recommend you get yourself a copy!

**Naidoc Week Celebrations**
Congratulations to Mrs Kerry Boyenga and Mrs Karen Hadley for a wonderful and event filled NAIDOC Week. The activities, guest speakers, and focus assembly were all beautiful. Congratulations to our Aboriginal students for the heartfelt Focus Assembly. It truly was a very special prayer thanksgiving.

**ICAS Mathematics Competition**
Our last competition - Mathematics is next Tuesday 11 Aug. Students from year 2 -6 who are enrolled will be participating.

Wishing God’s best for you,
Catrina Niddrie, Assistant Principal

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We are excited to be taking part in the Woolworths Earn & Learn program. You can help our school by collecting Woolworths Earn & Learn Points. Just collect Woolworths Earn & Learn Points when you shop at Woolworths between Wednesday 15 July and Tuesday 8 September 2015. We will redeem these for awesome educational resources for our school.

Simply pop them onto a Woolworths Earn & Learn Points Sheet and once it’s completed, just bring it back to school or drop it into the Collection Box at your local Woolies. The more we collect, the more we can redeem.

There are thousands of products available through the Woolworths Earn & Learn program, and we’d like to get lots of new gear! Products in the range include resources for mathematics, English, science, art & crafts, through to sports gear, library supplies and more.
Week 4 Class Awards

Congratulations to the following children who received class awards this week. It is great to see so many children working hard and receiving acknowledgment for their efforts - well done to all!

Kinder CK
Tyler C, Vivienne J

Kinder W
Baley D, Ewan C, Lorelai B

Year 1H
Bridie I, Annabelle P, Harrison K

Year 1O
Millie H, Tiarhna A, Mikayla C

Year 2JP
Lake H, Jack H, Jessica F

Year 2J
Ellie VW, Koby D, Avalon H

Year 3D
Matthew B, Matilda T, Ella K, Sarmaya T

Year 3S
Emily B, Lenny G

Year 4
Charlee P, Lachlan D, Jesse O

Year 5
Vivienne G, Taesha T, Emma N

Year 6
Sam H, Lily G, Gemma M, Annie H
Sports Report

Southern Region Athletics Carnival 2015

Last Thursday St Mary’s students participated in the Southern Region Athletics Carnival in Bega. I would like to thank all the students for the way they represented their school and conducted themselves throughout the carnival. It was fantastic to see you cheering each other on during events and displaying great sportsmanship. The students participated in a range of track and field events with many pleasing results. Thank you to the staff who supported me on the day and to the parents who gave up their time and kindly assisted on the day.

Congratulations to the following students listed below who will represent the Southern Region Athletics Team in Canberra at the Archdiocesan Primary Athletics Carnival.

Junior Boys:
- Bailey B
- Bobby G
- Zane B

11 Years Boys:
- Ryle S

Junior Girls:
- Chloe H, Chloe S, Claire M

11 Years Girls:
- Michala P, Abbey B

I would also like to congratulate the following student who was the Southern Region Primary Athletics Age Champion for 2015: Junior Boys - Bailey B

Justin Bateman
Sports Coordinator

Excellent results for St Mary’s ski team!

The School Snow Ski team had some magnificent results last week in Perisher. The division 5 team of Jared S, Emma P, and Alex C have been given one of only five invites to attend the State Championships. To top that both Jared S and Alex C have been given individual invites because of their exceptional performance in their individual specialised events, the Skier X for Jared and Snowboard for Alex. Normally only the top 10 competitors get invited to the State championships from the Southern region but in Alex’s case he was one of only six Snowboarders invited to go through to the State Championships. Unfortunately we did not have enough competitors to make a full team with Lawson H so St Mary’s did not score a result in Division 4. But that aside - well done guys - according to Mrs Croese this could be the highest sporting achievement ever attained by a St Mary’s sporting team!!

JAKE HARRIS (the proudest sporting co-ordinator this side of the Snowy River)

Berry Interschools Equestrian Championships
3-4-5 October 2015
@ Worrigee Equestrian Common

Would your child like to represent St Mary’s at the Berry Interschools Equestrian Championships? Entries for this annual event will open shortly.
Please contact Gen (team representative) on 0410504520 for more information.
Southern Region Athletics Carnival 2015

Thank you to Bernie Du field for the wonderful photos.
**SRC News**

Our first fundraiser for Semester 2 will be held tomorrow (Friday 7 August) as it is **Jeans for Genes day**. **Jeans for Genes** is the iconic fundraising campaign of Children’s Medical Research Institute. Each year, Australians unite by wearing their favourite jeans and outdoing each other with crazy denim outfits, and donating money or purchasing merchandise, to support genetic research. Every dollar raised on the day helps scientists at Children’s Medical Research Institute discover treatments and cures, to give every child the opportunity to live a long and healthy life. Students at St Mary’s can come dressed in their favourite pair of jeans or denim for a **gold coin donation** to support this cause.

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**Spotlight on the SRC**

**Tom W – Year 3D Representative**

When did you commence at St Mary’s? Year 1, 2013

What is one of your favourite school memories? Being elected on the SRC

One thing you love about St Mary’s: All of the people here.

One thing you would like to see the SRC achieve this year: Have a party day for the whole school.

Favourite book: Diary of a Wimpy Kid

Interests and hobbies: AFL, surfing and soccer

What are your dreams for the future? Be a famous football player.

Sophie O’Hehir

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**Mini Vinnies News**

Class teachers have nominated new representatives from each class in Years 3-6 that will work with me each week for our Semester 2 Mini Vinnies group.

Congratulations to the following people who have been selected.

Year 3D – Jasper Z and Ella K  
Year 4 – Chloe S and Luke M  
Year 6 – Ael H and Amelia B  
Year 3S – Isaac S and Rhianna B  
Year 5 – Vivienne G and Ryle S  
Year 5 – Christian Leader – Hugh C

Meetings will be held on Fridays in Miss O’Hehir’s classroom at 1:35pm. I am looking forward to working with the enthusiastic students this semester.

Sophie O’Hehir
Raising a critical generation

In a digitally literate world of 'likes' and social criticism Lakshmi Singh looks at how parents can foster critical spirit in a constructive, healthy and balanced way.

American keynote speaker, author and educator Tim Elmore recently penned an article observing a trend amongst kids dishing out careless criticism of processes, ideas and institutions.

From criticising classes to sports programs, the food offered on campus, administration or accommodation in some colleges and universities, students were increasingly displaying what Elmore calls, a 'critical spirit'.

Time magazine also ran a feature discussing the narcissistic tendencies amongst Millennials, contributing to a feeling of entitlement amongst youngsters.

So, is there a generational change brewing, where more kids go about criticising anything and everything, becoming self-absorbed in the process?

Experts say that a critical spirit has and always will exist in all of us, it is just that the nature of today's society and the easy accessibility of forums through which criticism can be provided that has given it more opportunity to be heard.

While experts say that cultivating a spirit of thinking critically about problems and situations is important, it is also necessary to foster a healthy decision-making process.

**The age of entitlement**

Parents have always wanted the best for kids, but taking the "you deserve the best, this/he/she is not good enough" mentality a bit too far can also be detrimental, says parenting and education expert Ronit Baras.

"The rules of education are very simple, judgmental parents will raise judgmental kids. Why? Because judgment is a coping mechanism to fight inadequacy. Judgmental people have weaknesses [and] judgment is their way of hiding. 'If I find faults in others, I will be able to hide mine.' If parents model this mentality, kids will adopt it."

Similarly projecting a "my child is special and they need to know that" vision by over-supplying them with activities, commodities and even praise can lead to an unhealthy sense of entitlement, says Dr. Ash Nayate, clinical neuropsychologist.

"Narcissism (i.e. a feeling of entitlement) is a sign of unhealthy self-esteem. Narcissistic people don't see themselves as equal to others, they see themselves as better than others - and the reason they hold this belief is to cover up their fear of 'not being good enough,' she says.

Judging people helps alleviate that fear, she says. To help stop the cycle, she believes parents need to lead by example.

"Developing a healthy self-esteem is critical. If as a parent you have low confidence and low self-esteem, your kids are going to pick up on that as well. If you want your kids to be resilient and confident, then you need to work on the confidence and self-esteem within yourself."

**Readily accessible forums to dish out criticism**

It is no secret that Millennials are more digitally literate than the rest of us. With most having access to their own mobile phone, laptop and social media accounts, the stage through which they can communicate with others is wide and always available.

"Social media encourages us to be more vocal about criticism. So instead of just judging people quietly, in our mind, we can do it aloud, behind the safety and anonymity of a computer screen," says Dr. Nayate.

more on page 2


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parentingideas.com.au
The privacy that social media affords also brings to the fore a trait that Baras calls a “brain fart”. “In my program we consider it a “brain fart” when you do not consider others or the outcome of what you say and only want to say it, at all cost,” she says.

She believes the problem is intensified in a society that values external standards and imposes them on the education system through set metrics. “Teachers use marks, tests [and] they flash with standards and rules and this is far away from teaching critical thinking. So, no wonder kids are learning that everything in their life needs to be judged.”

From teacher review sites to specialist groups and threads on social media forums, kids today can critique anything about their school, programs or individual people, making up their mind whether something makes the cut or not.

A culture that accepts criticism

With the prominence and popularity of reality TV shows comes the hard truth that our culture is now one of judgement and criticism. “People are evaluated on the basis of what they’re missing, how they’re not good enough or worthy enough, and what’s ‘wrong’ with them,” says Dr. Nayate.

To compound the situation, today’s society is more geared towards materialism and capitalism, she says.

With the aim of being ‘better’, ‘richer’ and ‘more successful’ comes the habit to indulge in self-criticism, another trigger for engaging in a dialog centred around “I am better than this guy because…” or “I am so hopeless at this compared to…”

“Self-criticism is the first step towards judgement of others. We can only judge others if we’re somehow judgemental of ourselves,” says Dr. Nayate.

Striking a balance

So, how do we turn all this ‘judgement’ into something that is more considered, evaluated and more respectful of the people and practices involved in the process?

By understanding the difference between informed decision-making or critical thinking and straight judgement, says Baras.

“Critical thinking is when we present kids with options and teach them to evaluate and consider the advantages and disadvantages between options. Criticism/judgment is considering yourself above others and rating them based on your own individual standard.”

The good news is that critical thinking skills can be developed without being critical of others says Dr. Nayate.

“It’s about adopting an attitude of open-mindedness and healthy curiosity. Just like a three year old who always asks “why” - the child isn’t doing it out of judgement or maliciousness, it’s simply a raw desire to learn more about the world.”

While critical thinking skills depend on the maturity of the child, Dr. Nayate believes parents can nudge kids in the right direction by role modelling it:

1. **Verbalise** the thought-process involved in everyday decisions – for example choosing healthier food options (“When I eat fries, I feel a bit sick in the stomach, and the next day I get a headache from all the salt and grease. And then I feel sluggish and lazy, and I just want to sit around at home all day instead of going to the playground with you.”)

2. **Assist** with decisions and evaluations – implement this as a two-step process, she advises: first, acknowledge kids when they have demonstrated critical thinking. For example: “that was a good decision to do your homework before you went to your friend’s house. That way, you can really have fun and you don’t need to rush to get home”.

Secondly, help them assess whether the decision they made was because they accept an idea or because it came from a person they accept. As an example, many teenagers tend to accept information as credible when it comes from their peers or celebrities more so than their parents.

3. **Help** them put their higher values in perspective – while some children may value hard work or aim for certain levels of achievement, they would also value acceptance, connection with others, happiness, fun and adventure, she says. For example, a child who values health and fitness highly might override them in favour of other values like fitting in with their peers who smoke and thus take up that habit. Encourage them to see when decisions are made based on what we value, rather than on impulse or what feels good at that moment.

Sources:
- Tim Elmore’s blog on ‘Curing a critical spirit in students’ - http://growingleaders.com/blog/curing-critical-spirit-students/
GIRLS AUSKICK IN MORUYA

We had a great turnout for the “Girls Only” AFL auskick, so we have extended an extra week.
There are still some spots available for girls 4 to 12 years in this fun, skills and fitness program.
Gundary Oval Friday arvo at 4 to 5pm, fun time assured!
Cost is $45.00 including Girl’s Football Pack.
Call Kate for further information:
0431 324 584