Dear Parents

I had the opportunity to attend a Principals’ Retreat on Monday night and all day Tuesday at Galong. In our reflection we were focussing on the Eucharist and in particular the Gospel of John. John likens the giving of Eucharist to the basin and the towel. In other words, we are called to be people of the Eucharist through our service for others in our community and immediate family. The towel and the bowl are symbols that Jesus used at the Last Supper to reinforce the message of service to others. It was a great reminder for us as we approach this Sunday when a large number of our children will make their First Eucharist at Mass on Sunday at 10.00am. Please keep the children and their families in your prayers.

**Book Week**

We have had a wonderful celebration of Book Week this week culminating in the dress up day today. My thanks to all involved and in particular to Jo Matthews, Shellie, Julie and Janet for their work with the Book Fair and all things related to Book Week. The children looked amazing in their well thought out costumes (not to mention the staff) during our parade today. Thanks to all those families who have purchased books from the Book Fair. A commission is paid to the school on the number of books sold during the Book Fair and we appreciate the number of donated books from families to the library.

**Meetings**

Today we welcome Principals and CE staff from the South Coast to St Mary’s. The Regional Principals’ Meeting is held each term and we are hosting the meeting here for Term 3.

**Fathers’ Day**

Next weekend we shall celebrate Fathers’ Day and at St Mary’s we invite all our dads to a free breakfast on Friday September 2nd from 7.30am. Bacon and egg rolls, juice and a hot drink will be the order of the day. Juice and cereal will be available for the children. There will be a stall selling special gifts for Fathers’ Day that can be purchased by the children.

Thanks to those brave dads who have contacted the office about our first sleep out. I will write to each of the families involved with basic organisational points to ensure a smooth camp out.

**St Mary’s has Talent**

The finals of the Talent Quest will be held next week on Thursday September 1st at 6.00pm in the PAC. The children are very eager to show off their talent and all families are most welcome to attend. The show will be about 45 mins long.

**Andrew Chinn**

We are fortunate to have the gifted song writer and musician, Andrew Chinn visit St Mary’s in two weeks. There will be a concert for parents to attend on Wednesday 7th September from 1.35pm until 2.35pm.

**Staffing Matters**

Tony Ward will be away from school for the next 4 weeks as he will be in hospital undergoing surgery. Tony was expected to be away last term but his surgery was cancelled. We welcome Alicia Hampson (Monday and Friday) and Jess White (Tues, Wed, and Thurs) as they take KW for the remainder of this term. Please keep Tony in your prayers as he recovers.

**School Lateness**

This is a gentle reminder to all families to have their children at school before the first bell sounds at 8.50am. It appears we have a large number of children coming late to school on a regular basis. The beginning of the day is important and we do not want children missing out on important classroom activities due to lateness. We understand the occasional late arrival of children but lateness should not be a regular thing.

**Learning Journeys**

In Week 8 on Tuesday September 6th parents are invited to come into their child’s class for a learning journey. Children will guide you through some of their work in the classroom. Parents can attend from 8.15am until 8.45am and again from 2.00pm until 4.00pm. Please try to come along as the children are always excited to showcase their work.

Best wishes

Mick Lowe
Principal
Religion News

Gospel for Sunday
Meals played an important role in the society in which Jesus lived. More than a time for sharing nourishment, they were a time to share ideas and to model different aspects of social relationships. In Luke’s Gospel, the places that a person ate, the people with whom a person ate, and the place that a person sits while eating are all important. The narrator says Jesus tells a parable, but it is really wise advice to both guests and hosts about finding true happiness at the heavenly banquet. Jesus warns guests to wait before taking their places at the table lest they be asked to move if someone more important arrives. This is advice on how to find your true place in the Kingdom of God. Jesus advises hosts not to invite people who would be expected to repay them to dinner but to invite those who could not repay: the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. This is where real blessings can be found. In these sayings, Luke gives us not only advice on how to approach the end times but also on how to live according to Jesus’ vision of a good society. Luke’s Gospel also advises us how the Church must be part of bringing about this society. This is a fitting reading for this Sunday as students receive Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time.

Focus Assembly
The focus assembly presented by the students in Year 3 last Friday was a beautiful celebration of the Last Supper re-enacted by the children. The readings and prayers were read confidently by class members. This prayer liturgy was reverent and engaging and finished with a liturgical movement by all students in 3D and 3B. We thank Mrs Devonald and Mr Bateman for their excellent work in preparing the children. At the conclusion of the liturgy, the students enjoyed a day of fun and further learning about the Eucharist at their retreat at Carroll College. We especially thank Mrs Belle Barling and her Year 9 students for their wonderful preparation and leadership on the day.

Celebration of First Eucharist
All families are invited to join us at Mass this Sunday when 24 students will receive the Eucharist for the first time. Please keep these students and their families in your prayers. We thank the parishioners who have taken a card to pray for one of these children. The children are very excited and are looking forward to Sunday. All families, friends and parishioners are most welcome to stay for morning tea after Mass.

Andrew Chinn
The Staff of St Mary’s is excited to announce a fantastic day of music workshops followed by a school concert led by well-known singer and composer Andrew Chinn. Andrew will be at St Mary’s on Wednesday 7 September. During the day he will conduct workshops with each stage, followed by a workshop with the school choir. From 1.35pm-2.35pm there will be a concert to which everyone is invited. Please add this date to your diary.

We keep our families, friends and parishioners in our prayers.

Have a safe and happy weekend
Mary Croese
Religious Education Coordinator

Year 3 Focus Assembly
First Eucharist
Communication Corner

Helping your child READ- after Predictable Books comes Bridging Books, then comes Independent Reading

**WHAT IS INDEPENDENT READING?**

The term Independent Reading implies that children are actually choosing something to read that is at a level of difficulty they can read fluently and understand what they are reading. It is something that children can do, by themselves at any time of the day or night in any discipline, rather than just occurring once a day.

**Why is Independent Reading so important?**

(Novels)

Once your child can sit still for 20 minutes of read-aloud time and understand what is being read, you can slowly introduce them to read-aloud chapter books. There are many benefits to starting the reading process with a read-aloud. Reading aloud to your child helps with listening and comprehension skills, helps build their vocabulary, improves memory skills and teaches life lessons through discussion. Novels are perfect for this!

**Independent reading**

Once your child has transitioned from bridging texts to more advanced readers, they will more than likely be ready to explore the world of chapter books - Novels. A chapter book series is the perfect place to start. As your child finishes one book, they will be eager to read the next book in the series. Allowing your child to continue reading out loud to you, even chapter books, will make a world of difference. Again, it’s all about making it fun while enjoying books together!

**How can you help if your child is reading Novels**

Continue to read to your children as they grow. Bedtime read-alouds will become something your children look forward to no matter how old they are. It will become a memorable and precious part of their childhood. Take advantage of the valuable time you have with your children, enjoy good books, start great discussions and let their imaginations soar.

The challenge, of course, is to find time in our already full days to linger over books together. “Lingering over texts” does not appear to be a priority in this day and age, but when families make the effort to select a novel to read together it reinforces your values, that you believe reading is important. Your actions of making the time and reading together enforces this and builds on the love and joy of reading for pleasure, passing this precious gift on to your children. It creates a very special bond between you and your children when together you are crying, lingering, giggling, huddling, predicting, anticipating and enjoying chapter books – planting the seeds in your child’s imagination and waiting to see how their ideas will grow.

Father’s Day Stall

The annual Father’s Day stall will be available to all students throughout Friday 2 September. Students are asked to bring their money to school in a wallet/purse from Yrs 3-6 and a zip locked bag with their class and name clearly printed on it from Kinder to Year 2.

Learning Journeys

On Tuesday 6 September we are opening our classrooms from 8:15-8:45am and 2:00pm-4:00pm for parents to come and look at your child’s classroom, school books and work. This is an occasion to talk and discuss with your child the fabulous work they are doing.

Wishing God’s best for you

_Catrina Niddrie_
Assistant Principal

Mrs Niddrie with some of her gumnut babies at the Book Parade!
What a FABULOUS day!

2016 BOOK WEEK Character Parade was a huge success. Thank you to all the wonderful parents who assisted with making this years BOOK WEEK Character parade such a memorable one. The students looked fabulous in their “Australia Story Country” themed outfits. The characters portrayed were fabulous! Here are a few snapshots of the characters that came to our school today.
A Message from Fr John ...

The Eucharist is at the centre of our lives who seek to enter into a relationship with Jesus. This is not just simply a matter of receiving him in communion but by becoming what we receive. This is not just a reward for the good but a way in which we are called to come alive in Jesus. His flesh and blood is called to course through our veins. This is where we can struggle to be ourselves. We often think that either we have to be someone else or that we are not worthy of such a gift. We can start to play games with God. We can try to hide ourselves from this gift, we can walk away from what is on offer or we can pretend that we do not need this gift. Even when we are present to God in the Eucharist we can tend to distance ourselves from what is offered to us. We tend to sit at the back of churches for fear that the relationship may become too real or too demanding. We arrive just in time and leave as soon as we can. Yet if our Eucharist is the source and summit of our lives it calls all people to a deepening relationship with God and each other. It calls us to see Jesus not only in ourselves but also those who seem to be far away from Christ. Eucharist changes the way we see life and how we are called to live. No longer is it centred solely on what we want but on what God desires for us: to be in communion with God and with each other.

Archdiocesan Athletics

Congratulations to all our St Mary’s students for a wonderful effort representing the Southern Region team at last week Archdiocesan Athletics Carnival. It is exciting to see so many students have progressed to the next level of competition where they will represent the Canberra-Goulburn Athletics squad at the MacKillop Athletics at Homebush on Monday 19 September. Fantastic effort everyone, the school community is very proud of you.

We wish the following students all the best at the next level of competition in Homebush: Avalon H, Chloe S, Zane B, Zac W, Cameron M, Jared S and Bailey B

Thank you to Bernie Du Field and Catherine McMahon for the photos.
Week 6 Class Awards

To be presented at assembly: 2.30pm, Monday 29th August

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 W:** Dusty I, Morgan D, Ruby M  
**Kinder C:** Jemma H, Ashton G, Pema K  
**Year 1K:** Oscar B, Bianca B, Elliebeth B  
**Year 1/2J:** Charlie H, Zara H, Lucas B  
**Year 2S:** Zac VW, Ellie H, Millie H, Roy E  
**Year 2D:** Max C, Jessica F, Ethan Q  
**Year 3B:** Ellie VW, Chloe H, Nash G  
**Year 3D:** Kye Z, Taya B, Shea CM  
**Year 4W:** Charlotte W, Rhianna B, Kody G  
**Year 4JP:** Brendan M, Sam W, Kiearra T  
**Year 5:** Held over until next week

Help Needed—TYPING POOL

With the children engaged in daily writing and frequent publishing of their stories we are asking for parents who may be able to assist classes with the typing of children’s stories. You do not need to be a touch typist but just able to give some time to your child’s class to assist with publishing. We are attempting to create a typing pool of parents to come to school on Fridays to assist with publishing stories. If you can help please contact your child’s teacher.

Medical Alert

A case of Scabies has been reported within the school.

**Symptoms**

- Itchy skin, worse at night. Worse around wrists, armpits, buttocks, groin and between fingers and toes.

**Do I need to keep my child at home?**

- Yes, until the day after treatment has begun.

**How can I help prevent spread?**

- Close contacts should be examined for infestation and treated if necessary. Wash linen, towels and clothing worn in the past two days in hot water and detergent.

White Flowers Needed

Our flower ladies are requesting any white flowers you can donate to help decorate the church for the First Eucharist celebration on 28th August in the Sacred Heart Church. Flowers can be left on Thursday afternoon or Friday morning (before 10am) in the church foyer.

Thank you for your help.

Catholic School's Netball Carnival

Training for the Catholic School's Netball Carnival will commence next week. We have entered four teams in the carnival – Year 2/3 division, Year 4/5 division and two Year 6 teams. The carnival will be held in Canberra on Sunday October 30, leaving us 7 weeks to train. While two teachers will be there on the day, we would love to hear from any parents or teenagers who could assist us with coaching, umpiring or managing a team. Thank you to Sarah Cowen who has already offered to help.

Please contact me at school as soon as possible if you can support us in anyway.

Karen Hadley
Mini Vinnies Winter Appeal

WOW what an amazing effort St Mary's with the Soup Can Line for the Winter Appeal! The Mini Vinnies group are astounded at the number of soup cans that were collected on Friday from each class. Thank you to everyone in the St Mary's community who brought in one or more cans to help those in need. It's important for the students to be involved in the Winter Appeal and know that they can make a difference in the community. The cans will provide the homeless in our region with something warm and comforting to eat on a cold winter's night. Congratulations to Mrs Johnsen's 1/2 class who won the competition. Check out the amazing can lines below!

Results:

KW - 96
KCH - 37
Year 1 - 131
Year 1/2 - 170
Year 2 - 81
Year 3B - 35
Year 3D - 35
Year 4JP - 31
Year 4W - 56
Year 5 - 38
Year 6 - 31

 TOTAL - 741 cans

ITEMS NEEDED for the Fathers Day Stall

We would greatly appreciate donations for our annual Father’s Day stall. Suitable items include small gifts for Dads that can be purchased by the students. Items can be left at the front office.

THANK YOU!
NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK TRIVIA CHALLENGE

WINNERS!

AH! REFRACTION!
KINDER AND STAGE 1
DESIGNING AND BUILDING ROBOTS
STAGE 2 BUILDING STRAW TOWERS
STAGE 3
DESIGNING AND CONSTRUCTING STRAW BRIDGES

Straw Tower Winners
Year 3
Max Load: team 1 – 302g
Year 2
Max Load: team 1 & 2 – 108g
Max Load: team 3 – 91g
Max Load: team 4 – 69g

Straw Bridge Winners
Year 1
Max Load: team 1 & 2 – 154kg
Max Load: team 3 – 154kg
Max Load: team 4 – 155kg

PicCollage
Show Us YOUR TALENT

YEAR 6 LEADERSHIP TEAM PRESENTS...

ST MARY’S

TALENT QUEST FINAL

THURSDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER
PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE
DOORS OPEN @ 6PM
BRING A YUMMY PLATE FOR SUPPER
TEA, COFFEE & REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED
GOLD COIN DONATION ENTRY
As a society we often debate about the ‘right’ amount of screen time, and with the introduction of personal screens over the last decade, to add to TV, laptops and desktops, the focus on a single task has slowly ebbed away. The British Psychological Society found that too much screen time (more than their recommendations of no more than 2 hours per day) could unintentionally cause permanent damage to a child’s still-developing brains. Impacting the capacity to focus, to concentrate and to give attention to tasks.

Distraction is often managed through the delicate art of re-direction or encouragement to combat the ‘but I just can’t do it!’ However, has this brave new world of binge watching TV, entertainment on demand and socialisation via hand held devices created kids that always have options for tasks that require some stubborn determination? If so how might this new way of living and challenging environment and our kid’s capacity to stick with a difficult task when they have a world of entertainment at their disposal?

Dr Daniel Goleman, an award-winning psychologist and TED speaker, emphasises the need for people to engage in skills that foster emotional intelligence. Goleman’s belief is that ‘kids learn best when they can maintain sustained attention, whether to what a teacher is saying, their textbook, or their homework. The root of learning is keen focus; distractions kill comprehension.’

But the new normal for young people continually interrupts their focus with distractions.

Neuroscientists tell us that the more a young person can practice keeping focus and resist distraction, the stronger and more richly connected this child becomes. By the same token, the more distracted, the lesser. Rebecca, a NSW schoolteacher who is passionate about the topic, finds that the evidence is clear in our own homes and in classrooms ‘we now have young people who are experts at ‘fitting’ from one device to another’ and she refuses to take a defeatist approach because without refocusing those ‘flitters’ to ‘focusers’ who risk the next generations creative or scientific masterminds we risk losing children who are able to ‘sit still and agonise over a task long enough to see it through to its marvellous end’.

**Tips for helping kids maintain focus and attention**

1. **Build your child’s focus**
   As with all tasks the aim is to start small and build your child’s capacity to master the concept of ‘sticking with it’. Cath, a school counsellor, finds that she can use the same strategies with the teens she works with and her primary school aged children when she gets home: ‘it’s all about breaks and rewards. Set a timer between breaks and then on a break they need to do something active like a push-up. Then there is a little reward for staying on task for a particular amount of time’.

2. **Remember it’s all about the journey**
   Parents and researchers agree that understanding what can be gained from being focused is the key to engaging your ‘fitting’ child. Our solution driven society is often focused on what we receive at the end rather than the process to get there. Teaching your children to tolerate the unexpected can have wonderful benefits, as can sitting with something that may have previously been viewed as unachievable.

3. **Keep calm and focus**
   Use calm methods to encourage children who become distracted: breathe, relax and high five each other when working alongside your child or when with a group of children. Talk about what might be achieved at the end and make it a fun process.

   Screens, for all their negatives and benefits, are here to stay. Many argue that they provide complexity and new experiences to our children’s world by identifying exciting technologies but they also provide avenues to ‘opt out’ of the hard yards.

   Reaching what you thought was unattainable by engaging in a single focus and ‘sticking with it’, can provide lifelong lessons.

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Want more ideas to help you raise confident kids and resilient young people? Subscribe to Happy Kids newsletter, my FREE weekly email parenting guide at parentingideas.com.au. You’ll be so glad you did.

parentingideas.com.au

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Ccooks @ Corrigans

Is Hosting a

Dine at Mine

Camp Quality

On 17th September

Tickets are $50 a head

with a...

$10 donation directly to Camp Quality

Includes champagne on arrival

2 course dinner

Dancing

Lucky Door Prizes and a major raffle on the night

To book a table

Jennie Marsh on 0409826593

Krys Wise on 0424712779