

NEWSLETTER



FROM THE PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents and Members of the School Community,

We have reached the end of yet another busy but productive year. Thank you to all the parents, students and teachers of the school community for your hard work and dedication this year. You have all earned a well-deserved rest.

Advent

As many of you will know, the term Advent comes from Latin and means 'coming'. Jesus is coming and this means that Advent is a time to prepare for his coming, much like Lent is preparation for Easter. It is not as strict as Lent and there are no laws governing what we must do; however, prayer, penance and fasting are appropriate. We should also remember to take opportunities to give to those in need during this time through the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

Just as working diligently during a term means that we can enjoy our holidays more, having a good preparation during Advent means that we are focussed on the true meaning of the upcoming season of

Christmas and enjoy it all the more when it arrives.

The culture in Australia means that Santa and Christmas decorations come out in September and 'Christmas' parties take place in Advent. We should resist this culture and begin the restoration of true Catholic Culture in our own homes through living the Catholic seasons as they ought to be lived. The helpful article on page 4 gives 10 Catholic Activities for Families.

I wish you all a very happy and holy holiday and am very much looking forward to working with you all again next year.

God bless,
John Burton
Primary Principal



Primary Teacher's Awards

- Foundation: Alvin Tony
- Year 1/2: Bridget Bell
- Year 3: Chloe Heffernan
- Year 4: Jonathan Gilespie
- Year 5/6: Adriana de Castro

AROUND THE CLASSROOMS

Foundation: learning about shapes in Mathematics and narrative writing.

Year 1/2: Finishing Laura Ingalls Wilder's story 'Little House in the Big Wood'. Also rehearsing our simplified Irish dancing.

Year Three: Preparing for assembly and finalising the small plays which we will perform in groups next week.

Year Four: Completed our book on Ned Kelly which initiated great discussion. We are now collating a chronological history of his life.

Year 5/6: Learning 'How Soft Upon the Evening Air' and 'Silver Stars' - two Christmas songs - for performance at Presentation Night.

Term 4 2017

Thursday, Dec. 7th. Presentation Night Beginning at 7pm. Students arrive 6.50pm.

2018 SCHOOL YEAR

Students return: 31st January.



Thank you, Miss Michalski for your wonderful teaching!

News

Congratulations to Miss Caitlin Long who was married earlier this month to Kristian Girling.

COINS FOR A CAUSE:

Over \$400 raised, with Year 5/6 class as winners. We now have an impressive amount of funds for next year.

The *Terracylce* was covered by the Daily Advertiser. Thanks to all voters and the recyclables!



OUR VISIT TO THE YARRANGOBILLY CAVES



Last Thursday night was a sleepless night for many Year Three children as they eagerly awaited Friday's excursion to Yarrangobilly Caves and Thermal Pools.

The excursion was relevant to the study of topics such as erosion for Science and national parks and biomes for Geography.

The day began at 5:45AM when Year Three boarded their bus with much nervous expectations. For some children, this would be their first major trip away from their parents. The trip took around 2.5 hours and the children were entertained by a scavenger hunt which they completed along the way. Sightings of rare animals such as emus, deer and echidna also added to the entertainment.

At around 9AM, we arrived at the Visitor Information Centre where we met our guide, Monica. Monica was full of interesting knowledge about the secret life of caves,

and was a highly engaging guide for the children. As the tour began, we soon noticed that it became very cold. Monica explained that the cave was a chilling 10 degrees Celsius all year round. As the tour continued we were fascinated at the stalactites and stalagmites, and even held old ones.

After saying goodbye to Monica, we began our short trail walk by the river (see top two photos) on our way to the 27 degree thermal pool. We walked, ate lunch, swam for around half an hour, got changed packed our bags and headed for car park. The car park was 750 meters up a steep and winding hill. We finally arrived at the top of the hill exhausted and ready for air conditioning and a nap on the way home (via McDonald's of course).

The day was extremely educational, exhausting and, of course, immensely fun. Thanks to Sajani (Shenoli's Mum) for coming along for the day. We will never forget our adventure to Yarrangobilly Caves.

Some Art Features



*Oiln Pastel Sun Clock.
Lucy Newcombe*



*Tree in blossom
Niya Maria*



Paper Art Flowers - Several Year 2 girls.



*Paper Mosaic Tree - Ben Morton
3D Bird - Alvin Tony.*

Thank you Fr Ryan!

Father Gerard Ryan CCS spoke to all classes in two groups about the importance of Our Lady, and the way the apparitions at Fatima 100 years ago can remind us of the essential aspects of the Faith.



Secondary School

Coordinator’s Column

Dear Parents,

It’s hard to believe we are preparing to say farewell to our classes for 2017 already.

In the midst of completing courses and preparing for the holidays, it was a delight to host our Year Seven class of 2018 for an orientation day yesterday. Six current and two new students will make up this cohort. They are a bright, positive and enthusiastic group of young people who I’m sure will fit in very well in the Secondary School.

At the end of this academic year, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you all for your support. It’s been a very enjoyable learning curve for me personally as Secondary Coordinator, and I am conscious of how truly blessed I am to work with so many wonderful and faith-filled families. Pope St John Paul once famously said, “as the family goes, so goes the nation, and so goes the world”. While all our staff at SMMC are conscious of our role in influencing the next generation, it is only in partnership with our student’s families that we can truly hope to contribute to the formation of young people of true virtue.

May God bless you and all your loved ones over the Christmas Season.

God bless,

Steve



A Word about Academics

We are often asked about the academic quality of our secondary school, and it is wise to have some facts ready to explain your answer.

In Top 100 in NSW

As the academic data for 2017 is not yet on the internet, *Better Education Australia* has ranked schools academically using HSC scores, ATAR, NAPLAN marks and other ratings from 2016.

Out of the best 220 Secondary School in NSW, Saint Mary MacKillop College, Wagga Wagga rank **No. 67**.

To give you an idea of the honour in being in the top 100, Kincoppal - Rose Bay School of the Sacred Heart was listed 64th and The Scots School, Albury, is 97th.

Saint Mary MacKillop College, Wagga Wagga was the only school in our area to make it to the top 100.

Priorities of Our School

We all know how important character formation is to a life of virtue; it determines our eternal salvation! This holiness is an overriding priority for our school, and an aim which calls for continual renewal and personal effort by students and staff. However, this life of virtue helps us use our God-given gifts in our class and homework, so it’s a plus for academic formation.

Year Seven of 2018!

The Year 7 Orientation day occurred this Wednesday for Year Six students entering into our Secondary programme next year!



Breakfast with the Mayor

Our captains, Emily Drum and Bede Funnell, had the opportunity to meet and speak with our city Mayor at a breakfast for school captains. The event was covered by WIN News.

Yearly Reports

Sent home 7th December
Term 1, 2018
Students return 31st January.

St Mary of the Cross, thank you for another blessed year!

FAREWELL TO DON ‘THE BUS MAN’



A former worker of a local bus company, Don Gregor, who has been a long time supporter and friend of SMMC, retired this year. A big thank you is extended to him from all the school community. Don has been of great help to the school since its establishment on many bus related matters. His friendly and personable manner will be greatly missed by us all. Earlier this year, Don said about Saint Mary MacKillop Colleges:

“I came in contact with the school six months before the school commenced operations, and I assisted in the transport negotiations before the school opened. Over 20 plus years I have seen a deterioration in behaviour standards, generally speaking in schools. It is refreshing to see how the students from this school behave. I feel it is due to them being taught better values and a more Christian approach to life.

“I’m really concerned that the school goes forward, and that the public support the school. Young people who attend this school will, with the quality of education here, go on to achieve well in life and do great things.”

Thank you Mr Gregor and God bless you!

10 ACTIVITIES FOR CATHOLIC FAMILIES IN DECEMBER

1. Visit West Wagga’s ‘Come to Bethlehem’.

Adults and teenagers are eagerly wanted to help the Confraternity of Christ the Priest – lots of easy jobs which help transform the place into a real Christmas missionary venture.

2. **Pray for missionaries** all over the world who are spreading God’s Word. Send a donation to Aid to the Church in Need. (St. Francis Xavier’s Feast Day is Dec 3rd.)

3. **Attend confession as a family.** A lot of churches have confessions during Advent. (Feast of the Holy Family – 1st Sunday after Christmas)

4. **Have an Advent wreath.** Don’t overcomplicate this. The simplest Advent wreath will do. Put your wreath together, then light the first candle during family prayers each evening and let it burn down a little.

5. **Put out a Nativity set.** Put it front and centre in your home. Up on the mantel is a great choice. Learn a hymn, like ‘Silent Night’, to sing together Christmas Eve.



6. Choose an activity that will **help babies**, such as donating to a crisis pregnancy centre, praying for babies in danger, or even just spending time with a special baby in your lives. (Feast of the Holy Innocents is Dec 28th).

7. Wait to **add Jesus** to your Nativity scene until late Christmas Eve.

8. Try to **use holy Christmas cards** to combat our secular worldview. Add your parish priest, your teacher and some lonely elderly people you know to your Christmas card list.

9. **Attend Mass** on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception (Dec 8th), Christmas Day (Dec 25th), and the Solemnity of the Mother of God (Jan 1st).

10. **Plan to give a gift to Jesus** this year to celebrate His birthday. Jesus taught us that when we help those in need, we are helping Him. Find a way to give a Christmas gift to someone who is particularly in need this year. The Missionaries of Charity take donations for the needy in Wagga Wagga.

© Mary’s Little Blessings 2013 (Adapted)



PRESENTATION NIGHT

Once again, we thank the Wagga Show Society of Kyeamba- Smith Hall who has welcomed the opportunity to be our host for our Presentation Night on Thursday, Dec 7th. They offer the chairs free of charge, and the hall at a very reasonable rate, and we thank them for facilitating our needs. The evening begins at 7pm. Students must arrive by 6.45pm.

CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR YOU!



Well done to these students who achieve their First Aid Certificates earlier this term.

A6, quality cards will be for sale at the Presentation Night!