Dear Parents,

This week sees many opportunities for parents to be active members of our community. On Friday, the Parents and Friends are hosting the annual Welcome Drinks from 6pm-10pm. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet new families and staff in a social environment, and not in the rush of a school drop off or pick up. I hope the baby sitters are booked!

On Saturday if tidying or fixing is more your passion, the Working Bee is the place to be! Thank you to those families who have nominated to spend a couple of hours on Saturday afternoon to tidy the school grounds. Staff have received numerous comments over the last month on what a wonderful first impression there is when walking down the driveway into the school. This is due to the work put in by families during a working bee.

On Monday there is a chance to model to our students that we are all lifelong learners. GAFE – what is it? is a family workshop being held on Monday from 7pm. You should have received an email with a link to RSVP. Please do so! The evening will include a presentation by Anthony Speranzo, who is the ICT Learning & Teaching Leader at St. Mark’s Primary School in Dingley. He is a Certified Google for Education Trainer and Innovator, and the 2014 DLTV Educator of the Year, as awarded by Digital Learning and Teaching Victoria. Anthony has worked with a wide range of students, teachers and schools on getting the most out of Google Apps for Education. He is an avid speaker and facilitator at the local, national and international level. There will also be presentations from teachers of St Mary’s and students. I look forward to seeing as many families as possible there.

Today, 32 students represented St Mary’s at the Dendy Swimming Carnival. There was a mixture of nerves and excitement as they prepared to leave this morning. There was also a commitment to do their best and be proud of themselves for making the St Mary’s squad. I look forward to sharing their results next week.

I hope everyone has a good week.

Sharon Daujat

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Parish Education Advisory Board (PEAB) news

Last year the PEAB reviewed the Grievance Policy. After much work, this was ratified as the Positive Relations Policy and is now available for you to read on our website at:


Members of the PEAB for 2016 are:
Luke Kenealy (Chair person); Caroline Redman, Michael Elsworth, Michael Hegan, Mark Gustincic and Amy Burns. Fr. Bill and Acting Principal, Sharon Daujat, are ex-officio members.

Learning and Teaching

SUPPORTING READING AT HOME

Research shows that good readers use a variety of strategies when successfully reading and comprehending a selection of texts. Reading and comprehension strategies are explicitly taught in class at school and can be reinforced at home. You’ll find some handy hints and weekly suggestions like the one below within our weekly newsletters. Have a go using them at home with your child/children to assist them with their reading.

Example questions/statements
This story reminds me of a holiday to my grandfather’s farm. This character has the same problem that I read/saw/heard in another text.
I saw a program on television that presented things described in this text.
Does this remind me of something?
Has something like this ever happened to me/you?

Making connections

Description
Learners make personal connections from the text with:
• something in their own life (text to self)
• another text (text to text)
• something occurring in the world (text to world).

Thank you to all those who contributed to the Earn and Learn scheme in 2015. We have now received our resources, which included a weather station, thermometers to be used in the classroom, globes, a model of Earth’s internal structure, compasses, magnetic counters and number lines. Thank you to Caterina Palman for coordinating this.
Jesus had begun to teach his disciples that he was destined to suffer grievously, to be rejected by the elders and to be put to death.

This was altogether too much for Peter. He argued against it. But Jesus persisted. It was time now to make it clear that the path to be trodden, as disciples, was not one of glory, celebrity and acclaim. The disciples had become committed to Jesus and now had to learn the full consequences of that commitment. It was a long way from what they had expected.

Several times more Jesus would have to renew his prophecy of what he would have to endure. But before that he gave them a glimpse of the glory that would be his.

He took his three closest disciples, Peter and James and John, and in their sight became transfigured. His clothes became dazzling white – it was a moment of unimagined joy and wonder. In this vision of Jesus transfigured he was seen, whatever dreadful suffering lay ahead, to be the fulfilment of all their hopes and dreams.

Peter with his usual impetuosity was delighted and wanted to hold the moment for all time. He burbled away, suggesting a tent for each of the persons seen transfigured. And then as suddenly as it had all happened it passed away. 'When they looked round, they saw no one with them any more but only Jesus'. The glory had departed; they stood on the bleak hillside with no one but the familiar figure of Jesus.

Living in the plains and valleys, we are called to journey to the mountain top, here to the altar of God, to again experience his transfiguration.

To bring with us our joys, our sorrows, our pain and our darkness, here to the celebration of the Divine Liturgy – the Eucharist - to experience the presence of Jesus – to be transformed – to glimpse for a moment the Divine – so that we can again be strengthened to walk back down the mountain – down to the ordinariness of our lives – taking Jesus with us so that he can share the weight of our cross – so that together we can carry it on its journey through life to the glory of Easter Day.

But it’s not just about you! Just as the gospel story is not just about the transfiguration of Jesus. It’s about asking the question: How can you, together with Jesus, transfigure the world; transfigure the lives of people around you? How can you make the lives of others light up, smile, laugh, glow, dazzle in glory with unimagined joy and wonder.

Surely this has a lesson for us. The world we live in can at times be very terrifying with so much cruelty, so much injustice, even so much physical, emotional and psychological pain. It should be no part of our Christian faith to deny all this and to pretend that everything is lovely and beautiful. It isn’t!

And yet they were not alone. Jesus was with them. The familiar Jesus but all the same Jesus their hope and inspiration – and they had each other.

Surely this has a lesson for us. The world we live in can at times be very terrifying with so much cruelty, so much injustice, even so much physical, emotional and psychological pain. It should be no part of our Christian faith to deny all this and to pretend that everything is lovely and beautiful. It isn’t!

And to say that it is, is rather like Peter’s reaction to what Jesus had to tell him of the future. He protested, but he had to be told that his thoughts were not God’s thoughts.

We may sometimes have moments of exaltation, times when everything goes in our favour. But at other times a kind of bleakness descends. Our human reality is that much of our ordinary daily lives can be touched with pain, frailty, aloneness, darkness and burdens of one kind or another.

We can often stand on the bleak hillside of our life, and there is no one there but only Jesus.

But this ‘only Jesus’ is our hope and our salvation; not a triumphant conqueror but a man of sorrows like ourselves; but a human being who is also God. The Christian faith holds that extraordinary assurance! For even now, we are called out of the frailty and darkness of our lives to the mount of transfiguration.

Living in the plains and valleys, we are called to journey to the mountain top, here to the altar of God, to again experience his transfiguration.

It is our journey – our journey through life until we reach the heavenly Jerusalem.

And as we make that journey together think about how you can be transfigured. What can change in your life? What do you want Jesus to change in your life? What would it take to make you glow like the sun? For together with Jesus you can be transfigured.

But it’s not just about you! Just as the gospel story is not just about the transfiguration of Jesus. It’s about asking the question: How can you, together with Jesus, transfigure the world; transfigure the lives of people around you? How can you make the lives of others light up, smile, laugh, glow, dazzle in glory with unimagined joy and wonder.

From this altar, our mount of transfiguration, you are called to go out and transfigure others – through love, through mercy, through forgiveness, through kindness, through joy – go out and dazzle others – just as Jesus dazzled the disciples.
Easter Raffle

The much anticipated St Mary's Easter Raffle is here!

Join the fun of Easter and help St Mary's by donating goodies and purchasing tickets for our Easter Raffle.

BUY RAFFLE TICKETS
10 raffle tickets will come home to each family in the week starting February 29. Tickets cost $1 each. More tickets available at the office.

DONATE EASTER GOODIES
Donation boxes for Easter eggs, craft and themed goodies will be in the school foyer from February 29.

THE RAFFLE WILL BE DRAWN ON THURSDAY, MARCH 24
Community

Congratulations to Nicole Lane and Adrian Wong on the birth of Oscar. A brother for Harry (FS)

ST MARY’S EAST MALVERN NETBALL CLUB

Apologies - The information regarding Net Set Go in last week’s newsletter was incorrect. Registrations are not open yet but the program commences on 30 April 2016. Bookings will be made through the WDNA website. We will advise further once registrations open.
Extend OSHC at St. Mary’s Primary School

Weekly Recap

Last week was another yet successful week at OSHC. On Monday the children made their own kites and decorated it with their own pattern and design (unfortunately it was not windy enough to fly!). This week the arts and crafts table was another success as the puzzle activity was hugely popular. The children designed their own puzzle and then put it to the test with their friends.

Outside sports such as touch football and relay races were popular amongst the children.

I look forward to seeing you again next week.

Lenore, Team Leader.

Our Extend Superstar is...

Alexandra Siricusa for settling into OSHC extremely well and for always bringing her smile J

Next week’s activities:

Monday 29 February:
Cooking: Tiny Teddy Racing Cars

Tuesday 1 March:
Arts and Crafts: SMM Extend Family Banner

Wednesday 2 March:
Marble Paintings

Thursday 3 March:
Funny Face Biscuits – decorate your own biscuit

Friday 4 March:
Hacky Sacks: Balloon rice sacks

PARENT PORTAL: extend.com.au
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