Message from the Principal

Dear Parents,

What an exciting week it has been at St Mary’s! Last Thursday our squad of 32 swimmers represented the school in the Dendy Swimming carnival. For the first time, we were overall winners, as well as winning the percentage trophy. This is a tremendous achievement for our school, as we compete against schools larger than us. Thanks to Mr. O for providing extra training for the squad.

Most importantly of all, thank you to those swimmers who all did their best on the day to achieve this wonderful result!

Eleven of those swimmers now go on to compete at the Beachside Division carnival next Friday. We wish Hugo Baker, Remy Duane, Claudia Johnstone, Mila Palacios-Banay, Isabella Claney, Charlotte Eabry, Max Lighthbody, Miles Regan, Darcy Dowson, Jemima Fay and Joshua Miles all the best at this next level of competition.

Friday evening was perfect weather for Welcome drinks. The new setting and the on site wood-fired pizzas were a tremendous success. Thanks to Nerissa McLean and Ruth Hynes for coordinating the event and to all the parents who helped set up, enjoyed the evening and then helped pack everything away.

The working bee was another hive of activity as bushes were cut, tan bark put on the playground and tidying up occurred. Bridget was again the chef on the barbecue.

Thank you for supporting our GAFE night on Monday. It is exciting times in education as we continue to help students gain life long skills around collaboration and communication. Please read further on in the newsletter for the link to the slideshow if you were unable to attend.

I hope you all have a great week!

Sharon Daujat
Google Apps for Education

Thank you to those who came along to our GAFE information night on Monday.

Our guest speaker, Anthony Speranza, spoke about Google Apps for Education, explaining that these tools have been designed for the classroom to not only help the teacher, but also our students feel engaged and love learning. Anthony spoke about how these tools encourage our students curiosity, enable them to work together collaboratively and to explore and create.

I have attached a copy of the slides so that you are able to read through them if you could not attend the night:

http://bit.ly/1VNzSDP

Thank you to our Grade 5 students who spoke about the ways in which they are using these tools in the classroom and the benefits they have experienced with GAFE.

We look forward to working with you in partnership as we continue to educate our students with these tools to enhance their learning

Julia White
Leader of Elearning

SUPPORTING READING AT HOME

Good readers use information from graphics, pictures, text and experiences to anticipate what will be read, viewed or heard. They actively adjust their understanding of the text whilst they are reading, viewing and or listening.

Example questions/statements

What do I think will happen next?
What words/images do I expect to see or hear in this text?
What might happen next? Why do I think that? What helped me?/you make that prediction?
Were my/my predictions accurate? How did I confirm my/predictions?
Have I read/seen/heard about this topic anywhere else?

and then...

Predicting
St Mary’s Primary School will soon be turning 100!

30th June 2018 marks 100 years since the laying of the memorial stone for what became the first permanent school. The school is looking to create a committee to spearhead the planning of our centenary celebrations. If you are interested in being part of this committee please contact the school on:

office@smmalverneast.catholic.edu.au

It is so lovely when parishioners take the time to pass on positive feedback about students. I received this last week:

“The attended Mass today (25/2). The teachers of year one are to be commended for their guidance and nurturing of the children in Mass this morning. The children’s quietness, their genuflecting in front of the Altar, their participation in listening and understanding the Gospel with Father Bill and then to hear them praying the “Our Father” so loudly and proudly. Seeing and hearing the children is a Blessing. Keep it up and thank you.”

Thank you to staff and parents!

Today’s gospel taps into the vexing and common question: ‘Why do bad things happen to good people?’ The question implies that God is punishing good people. Surprisingly, this attitude continues and you only have to watch news coverage of a tragedy to hear someone ask, ‘How could God let this happen?’

It is asked of the Nazi holocaust, bushfires, cyclones, earthquakes, falling towers, disease, vicious murders, car accidents.

For some, as in the gospel, the obvious answer is that the victims are sinners and these events are God’s punishment - that is not a God I want to believe in - nor is it the God of Jesus.

The very question suggests a belief in a God who interferes in our lives and manipulates human and natural events. Jesus, however, acknowledging that God has given us (and in some mysterious sense the whole of creation) free will, suggests that tragic events are not punishment from God, however the accidental, deliberate or natural event does provide us with a reminder and an opportunity to recognise our frailty and mortality - that out time is short, so take stock, examine your own life, take the opportunity of being shocked by tragedy to turn your life around and live lives that really matter.

When Jesus is asked about the deaths of some Galileans and some residents of Jerusalem, he also seizes the opportunity to remind his audience that their obsession with the ‘sin’ of the victims is misplaced. Stop worrying about the sins of others and worry about your own. He challenges all who are listening that unless they repent, they will all perish in a similar fashion. This would have been very confronting to those in the audience who were ingrained in the thinking that ‘bad things only happen to bad people’.

The Jewish purity codes of the day stated that if one maintained purity of action – obeying the religious Law and respecting the prohibitions on certain actions – then one was fulfilling one’s duty and maintaining right relationship with God.

Jesus chastises the people for this attitude and tells them that they all must ‘repent’. For 1st Century Jews, the word ‘repent’ had a greater depth of meaning than our current understanding. Rather than simply ‘being sorry’, to repent meant to completely turn life around – both individually and as a society and nation. His injunction to repent would be seen as a challenge to question motives and actions and set a new direction.

To follow this up, Jesus tells his audience a parable about a fig tree that has not borne fruit after three years. There are many interpretations of this parable and it is often interpreted in isolation from the gospel passage that immediately precedes it. Given the challenge to ‘repent’ that is given so strongly, we can see the parable as an example to the listeners that their time for repenting is running out.

God is prepared to be patient with us and will work with us on changing our lives, our attitudes, our preparedness to be people of mercy and compassion, committed to our faith journey and the worship of the God who saves us - but time and patience are not eternal. Time will run out and we do not know the day or the hour when our time will come to an abrupt end as it did for the victims upon whom the tower of Siloam fell.

The one year reprieve for the fig tree is an indication to the listeners that their change of heart and change of spirit had better take shape in the very near future. Don’t keep putting it off just because you cannot see the end times.

Allow Jesus to be your gardener. Allow him to dig into your soul, prune you, and fertilize you. The call to ‘repent’ is a call to complete conversion of heart – to turn around and face the other direction.

Let the Gardener fertilize you with the Word of God. Listen to the word of God - don’t just let it roll over you without challenging you - challenging your thoughts and words and deeds, challenging your attitudes, your opinions, your perspective, your ego.

Then make the Gardener proud: bear him fruits of mercy and compassion - a new heart and mind - that allows you to see the world and people through his eyes - repent - turn around and set off in a new direction.
PRESIDENTS REPORT

Well haven’t we as a little community ‘hit the ground running’!! Even with the ‘extra’ day, February has just zoomed by. I trust it has been a month of friendship, fun and feeling welcome for many – especially our new families.

We closed out the month with a great night at Summer drinks. It was great to see so many teachers and new families present. The feedback I have received both about its location within the school yard and the ‘earlier’ shut down has been very positive and encouraging. It also seemed to work well having the Working Bee the next day to cover the ‘cleanup’ which was simple and quick... so some good food for thought with our planning for next year.

With Good Friday only 25 days away (at the time of typing), March will be short and sweet.

Meanwhile, the P&F members are busy ‘DOING’....

Already, I note the Easter Raffle boxes in the foyer awaiting you donations towards this fun and ‘fun’-draising event being organised (and very well so – might I add!!) by our Grade 1 reps.

Rick Cullinan and Paul Clancy having been ‘chewing the fat’ with Mr O over potential sport programs and sporting requirements that a very successful SMPL3 can consider funding... not in the least will be a new portable AV system for use at our various swimming carnivals and at various other social settings including the school kids depiction of the ‘Stations of the Cross’ in the lead up to Easter.

*Emil has kindly allowed us a ‘test run’ of one of his systems at our forthcoming Athletics Day on 21st March (Goodness, Mr O you won’t know yourself!!)*

Meanwhile; Amy, Sharon, Fr Bill, Mr O and myself have also met with Emil (Director of Sublime Audio-Visual) on a couple of occasions to consider our options regarding the overhaul of the AV system in the Hall. We are currently at quotation stage. These will be presented at our forthcoming meeting on the 7th March. We will of course keep everyone informed as decisions are made.

The US ladies (not to be confused with Hillary or Michelle! but uniform shop) are reviewing their current operation model and are in discussions with local business regarding its potential ‘outsourcing’. With such benefits as greater flexibility for purchase of business and commission on purchases made to the school, it’s definitely a conversation worth having!

Grade 3 Reps are busy sorting their first grade event - a family afternoon of tennis and will then quickly back this up with organising a sausage sizzle for the Grade 3 children at their Reconciliation reflection day on the 9th March.

A core group met recently at mine to review the P&F funding of our various events. Our deliberations are currently being typed up for presentation at the forthcoming meeting and will be advised to the greater parent community.

Ben Hall, (Father Convenor 1 alongside Andrew Wilson FC2) has commenced preliminary planning with Kirsty Robbie for our Football/Netball day in May – actually locked in for 30th April this year...so be sure to diarise.

Meanwhile over in the ‘mothers hubbards cupboards’ Kaz and Rache are looking at the possibility of going ‘on-line’ with their inventory and booking system... actually, come to think of it, I may not have mentioned this to them yet...Mmmm, so I guess they will read this report and learn as you read this report and learn LOL! (Cont’d)........
VP’ Sarah Rainbird is currently working alongside Mary Nadalin/Grima (CDF Student Banking Agent 2015) to review the dormant and existing accounts currently held and to manage the ‘housekeeping’ process required with the transfer of responsibility for these accounts from school to parent.

Liz Carney is keeping all our ‘i’ technology obsessions at bay with the recent distribution of book club catalogues into school bags. So be sure to check these out with your kids.

The first of the Saturday night family Masses is being held this Saturday night (5/3). As part of the 2 schools – 1 Parish Initiative to combine our community celebrations, it will be held in union with the senior school children and families from Holy Eucharist. Icy Poles will be distributed by volunteer St M Grade 5/6 parents to all the kids at the conclusion of Mass.

Speaking of Mass, all our Altar Servers are looking forward to their day of celebration on St Patrick’s day at St Patricks Cathedral. Very fitting, I know. This has become a tradition where Altar Servers all over Melbourne gather as one for Mass in our great Cathedral followed by some fun in a carnival type atmosphere across the road in Fitzroy Gardens.

And speaking now of carnivals (I just love those rare occasions when my paragraphs just flow...) At our last P&F in February, it was recognised that last year (as wonderful as it was!) presented somewhat of a ‘social-volunteer-expectation’ overload with the three ‘big ticket’ items all ‘eventing’ (not sure if that’s a word!) within 12 weeks of one another. In light of this, it was proposed that we move the concert to a non-fair year and that we lock the school social in as fixed date to the first weekend of June every year. It has been agreed by the both the teachers and the parent body (courtesy of your representation by the P&F) that both these proposals be passed. I would very much like to express my gratitude to the teachers and in particular, Megan Bishop (Performing Arts Teacher) and Catherine Stansfield-Smith (Arts Teacher) for accommodating the necessary changes for this proposal to take effect. Whilst ‘on paper’ this might seem simple enough to do, with my own background in academia and curriculum development, I know it is certainly not that simple – so teachers, again thank you.

Now... having said that, because of First Communion already locked in for the first weekend of June this year, this social date will commence as of next year. The logistics of the concert and its timings are still to be confirmed, so stay tuned.

Finally, ‘Secretary’ Kate is busy finalising our contact list, so it shouldn’t be long before we are one big happy community not just on the ground but in cyberspace too!!

Happy days

Bridget
Summer Drinks, with a perfect weather forecast, new location in the upper, background music & Woodfire Pizza the scene was set, we had a crowd of 200+ wonderful St Mary’s parents. Thank you to Father Bill and the wonderful teachers that made the effort to join us on your Friday night, we love seeing you. Thank you to those that helped set up/ clean up and throughout the night we couldn't do it without you, your assistance is much appreciated.

Thanks
Nerissa & Ruth

On another Social committee topic, if your keen to join our team we will be in full swing come term 2 organising this years Social and we’d love you to join the committee no matter how small or large a roll you’d like, every bit helps.

Grade 3 — serving up the fun this year!

Grab the kids, your racquets and runners.....
And join us for some family fun on
Sunday March 6th
4pm - 7pm
Eastverne Tennis Courts
(at school)

BYO Drinks & snacks or
Picnic dinner

Any questions or to RSVP, come have a chat with your Grade reps  Carlie Hall, Letitia Anderson, Sarah Flanigan or Vanessa Murray
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 HAVE COME HOME TO EACH FAMILY.

TICKETS COST $1.00 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.

LAST DAY FOR DONATIONS AND TICKET SALES IS THURSDAY, MARCH 17

THE RAFFLE WILL BE DRAWN ON

THURSDAY, MARCH 24
Extend OSHC at St. Mary’s Primary School

Weekly Recap
AUTUMN HOLIDAY PROGRAM BOOKINGS ARE OPEN AT A SCHOOL NEAR YOU!

Book by the deadline to take advantage of lower rates!

VIC & QLD booking deadline: Friday 18 March

We have heaps of fun activities planned these school holidays and can’t wait for you to attend! Create a diorama of the Amazon jungle, mould an autumn leaf dish out of clay, and participate in lots of group games including a time challenge and secret agent maze! Join in on all this and more at Extend's Autumn Holiday Program.

To check out what’s on and where your local program is, visit our website at extend.com.au and book via the Parent Portal.

Weekly Recap

Last week was another fun-filled week. On Monday the children participated in water coloured painting. Cooking chocolate truffles was a huge success as we cooked lots of chocolate truffle balls to take home to our families! On Thursday we used recycled toilet paper rolls and made racing cars and then had a race. One child made a truck out of toilet rolls which was popular amongst the children once completed.

I look forward to seeing you again next week.

Lenore, Team Leader.

Our Extend Superstars are...

Ella Colston for always lending a helping hand to those who need it.

And

Azella Hall for including everyone in your games and for making sure no one is left out.

Next week’s activities:

Monday 7 March:
Egg Carton Monsters

Tuesday 8 March:
Stained Window Art

Wednesday 9 March:
Design your own monster

Thursday 10 March
Cooking: Making pancakes

Friday 11 March:
Team Soccer

PARENT PORTAL: extend.com.au
St Mary’s sponsors

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