



St Margaret Mary's School

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Newsletter No 5

Bulletin

Wednesday, 6th March, 2019

Diary Dates

Thursday, 7th March

- Primary Cross Country 9:00am—11:00am at school.

Friday, 8th March

Monday, 11th March

- Whole School Assembly and Prayer.

Tuesday, 12th March

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Wednesday, 13th March

- Year 2 and selected students attending Riverside Theatre Parramatta.

Open Morning

St Margaret Mary's will be holding an open morning on Tuesday 19th March from 9:00am—11:00am, for New Kindergarten 2020 families.

Change of Details

If you have moved house or changed your contact details, please notify the school office as soon as possible to update your details in case of an emergency.

Skoolbag App

All parents are encouraged to have the Skoolbag App, as this will be the main preference for communication to all parents. Our **School Name** for Skoolbag App is **SMMPM**.



Principal's Message



PASTORAL LETTER TO THE PEOPLE AND CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF PARRAMATTA

Dear friends,

The news concerning Cardinal George Pell and his conviction and incarceration on historic child sexual abuse crimes has dominated local and international media this week. Such news has caused a wide range of emotions in the community.

Even among Catholics, there is a sense of shame and anger at the betrayal that the clerical sex abuse crimes represent, and the hypocrisy they reveal. It is wider than simply the case of Cardinal Pell. We must respect the processes of the law and await the outcome of the appeal.

In the meantime, our primary concern must continue to be the care of the victims of sexual abuse. The revisiting of such grievous wounds has been difficult for many. As we approach Lent, may we, too, grieve with all those suffering intensely. Genuine hope begins whenever we listen to the story of another with an open heart.

Some, too, feel that in the marketplace the “brand Catholic” has suffered a grievous blow. Perhaps so. But we are not a market nor are we a popular cult. We are first and always a community of disciples following our one master, Jesus Christ. We are not the Church of one particular leader, be it Pope Francis or Cardinal Pell or any other bishop.

We are the living Body of Christ made up of saints and sinners.

We are challenged by Our Lord to reach out to all who are hurting, and to all victims of every abuse and sinfulness. We are to be the “field hospital” for all the marginalised as Pope Francis has asked us to become. We are to be in the messiness of life, not to run away into some “idealised future or romantic past.”

To be such, demands that we let go of our sense of superiority, privilege and power and embrace again our need for healing and forgiveness and to look again at the Suffering Servant leader who is our Lord Jesus. Many people may say these are only words and they would be correct. However, for us they are the words of Jesus and we are called to put our faith in Him and demonstrate it in our actions by our care for all in need.

This would mean changing the way we think and act so that all may feel safe and welcome in our communities regardless of what they believe, look like, or have, and regardless of their sexuality, gender or marital status.

The season of Lent summons us to a discipleship of humility, weakness and vulnerability, of dying and rising in Christ. We are challenged to remove our heart of stone and to have a heart of flesh instead. During this period of crisis and darkness, as the Church, let us pray that we have the courage to die to that which is contrary to the Gospel, and rise to be what Christ has called us to be.

Yours in Christ the Chief Shepherd,

+ *Vincent Long*

Most Rev Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv
Bishop of Parramatta
1 March 2019

Administration

Parent/Student/Teacher Interviews

Dear Parents/Carers of Years 1-6

Thank you to those parents who have booked their student/parent/teacher interview times. A letter was sent home last Friday for this process to begin.

If you have not booked, please go to:

www.schoolinterviews.com.au

then enter the following code: **q555d**

If you are having any problems, please see me.

Jennifer Veness

Assistant Principal

Excursions

It is important for all students and parents to note that all incursions and excursions are an important part of learning at STMM's. With regards to children attending (including sporting events), the school has a process whereby children with inappropriate behaviour may be unable to participate in these events. The decisions regarding students attendance is the responsibility of the Principal and Assistant Principal. The school will endeavour to consult and inform parents if there are concerns about a child's attendance at these events.

School Fees Statements

Catholic Education Office of Parramatta has advised the school that there has been a delay in the posting of 2019 School Fees Statements.

It is anticipated that all families will have received them by Friday 15th March. Should any family not receive their statement, please contact the school office.

Enrolment

Enrolments for Kindergarten 2020 are now taking place. If your child was born between 1st August, 2014 and 31st July, 2015, please collect an enrolment form from the school office. Interviews will commence at the end of May.

Building Update

Update 1: Greenline (Building company) are planning to come and start installing the grass on the tiered seating and the car pick up area from next Monday 11th March. They will be installing Terracotta-coloured grass on the steps and Green-coloured in the car pick up area. They will then move to the COLA area to complete their work.

Update 2: The renovations of the hall are nearing completion and the hall is expected to be ready to use in three weeks. The majority of the repairs and refurbishments have been supported by CEDP. These include the installation of a new fan, windows, kitchen and upgrading lighting and the stage. The P&F were given a brief tour after last week's meeting.

Internet use

In today's world more and more children are accessing movies, videos games and social media on tablets, phones, cromebooks and laptops. This allows their screen time to be a private platform where it may be difficult for parents to see what is being viewed. This is a challenge for parents and guardians to ensure that the screen vision is appropriate to the age of the child. To complicate this, is the recent activity where children can be frightened by pop ups occurring during normal software/videos/youtube and screen work. We ask that you monitor what your child is accessing and speak to them about internet safety.

Attendance Month

Attendance Month has begun!

As you are probably aware, attendance at school has a huge impact on a student's academic success, starting in Kindergarten and continuing through high school. Even as children grow older and more independent, families play a key role in making sure students get to school safely every day - they understand why attendance is so important for success in school and life.

We realise some absences are unavoidable due to health problems or other circumstances. However, we also know that when students miss too much school, regardless of the reason, it can cause them to fall behind academically. Your child is less likely to succeed if he or she is absent. Absences can add up quickly and if a student is absent one day a fortnight over the course of a school year they will miss 20 days of education, which is almost half a school term.

We know that research shows:

Attendance affects achievement. Every day counts.

Attendance in Year One is predictive of the pattern in future years.

The effects of absence accumulate over time.

Absence in one year affects future academic achievement.

Sporadic absence can affect academic achievement as much as consecutive days of absence.

Patterns of absence that cause concerns at school and office levels are:

- Unexplained absences.
- Partial attendance and lateness.
- Absence on certain days of the week.
- Frequent presentation to sick bay.
- Long holidays in school time.
- Frequent medical explanations that are not supported by a medical action plan.

We know that:

- Students that are absent between 20 and 40 days per year lose 1-2 years over 10 school years.
- Students that are absent between 40 and 60 days per year lose 2-3 years of schooling over 10 years.
- Students that are absent for 60 or more days lose more than 3 years of school over 10 years.

We know all our parents want their children to achieve their academic and personal development potential at school, and trust that all of our families will work with us to achieve high rates of attendance and engagement in learning, this term and in the future.

Congratulations to Kindergarten for topping the attendance so far this term on 95.3% attendance.

As a school St Margaret Mary's is in the top 10 of the Diocese at 92.4%.



Stranger Danger

Parents are reminded to talk with their children about the importance of Stranger Danger and how it can affect them and people around them. There have been reported cases of Stranger Danger in the area.



School Uniforms

All uniforms must be worn neatly and correctly. Our Sun Safe program requires students to wear our school cap or hat when outside: **No Hat No Play**. These hats and caps are available at the school office. Sleeper earrings and stud earrings may be worn. Simple signet rings may also be worn. No expensive jewellery is to be worn at school.

Faith Community

Year 5 Pancake Tuesday

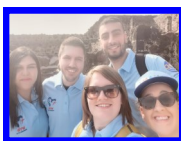
To prepare for Lent, Year 5 cooked and ate pancakes on Tuesday. The tradition comes from the old English custom of using up all the fattening ingredients in the house before Lent, so that people were ready to fast during Lent. It was lovely to share food with our friends during class time!



World Youth Day 2019



On the 15th of January, we embarked on a very special pilgrimage to Mexico, Panama and Texas. This was an unforgettable experience that would not have been possible without the support of our parents and families who are a part of our school and parish community. We were able to experience Jesus Christ in a range of ways with thousands of other young Catholics from around the world. We had a very special encounter



with Pope Francis - we saw him right in front of our eyes and were able to celebrate Mass with him! This journey certainly deepened our faith and gave us many opportunities to grow closer to God and our Mother Mary. Once again, we would like to

thank everyone for their ongoing support and generosity.

God bless,

Miss Tuma and Miss Fardella

Students Diary Yrs 3-6

It has been brought to our attention that there is an error with the readings for Lent and Easter in the students diary. If you would like a copy of the amended pages, which will need to be glued into the students diary, please collect them from the school office.

Personal Growth

Primary Cross Country

Dear Parents,



Every year the Parramatta Diocese holds a Cross Country Carnival at Eastern Creek at the beginning of Term 2. In order for us to select students to represent our school at the carnival we are holding our own Cross Country Carnival in our school playground on **Thursday, 7th March** beginning at 9am. Children from Years 3-6 will compete in this run.

The children need to wear their sports uniform, including their school hat. It is vital that all children wear sunscreen and have plenty of water to drink. If your child suffers from asthma, please ensure they bring their medication with them.

The students will be running within the school playgrounds as well as along the car pickup footpath and up Davies Street. If your child is turning 8, 9, 10 in 2019, they will be running 2km and need to complete the race within 13 minutes. If your child is turning 11 or 12 in 2019, they will be running 3km and must complete the race within 19 minutes.

Parents and friends are welcome to join us at this carnival.

Yours in sport,

Kellie Foley

Sports Coordinator

Personal Growth

'Executive Director's Summer Reading Challenge'

Congratulations to the following students, who entered the 'Executive Director's Summer Reading Challenge' over the holidays and received a certificate for their efforts: Marcus Caraan, Sophia Caraan, Janessa Georges, Serena Georges, Keisha Manalansan, Gabriella Mifsud and Kayla Mifsud.

Surprise Birthday Assembly

Do you know how old Mr Mills is? He is 60 years old!

As Mr Mills walked in, everyone was clapping and chanting his name. Even Fr Janusz was there! There were numbers

on the wall for students to guess how old Mr Mills was and big gold balloons saying HBKM. Students were

dressed as Mr Mills in black and orange for his beloved Tigers, button up shirts and some even wore suits. The whole school sang a special birthday song

and then the choir led us in a special blessing song where we all held out our right hand over Mr Mills. Presents and cards were given to Mr Mills on behalf of the school and the P&F, he really appreciated them. Throughout the day each grade had

approximately 8 balloons to deliver to Mr Mills' office every 5 minutes! By the end of the day his office was full of 60 balloons! We had a great day helping Mr Mills' celebrate his birthday and we hope that 60 is his best year yet.

Thank you for everything you do for us!

Thank You

I would like to say thank you to the StMM's school community for the lovely gifts and the assembly to celebrate my birthday. I felt very honoured and blessed to have so many well wishes from the students, parents and staff here at StMM's.

Mr Mills



BIRTHDAYS



Joseph Epenian

Yi Fan Jiang

Aluel Kondok

Jeremias Ezenwa-Ndukaku

Hayden Yip

Ebenezer Dorcha

Matthew Boustani

Jay Shrestha

Tia Khouri

Nicholas Fares

Jeslyn Lee

Clarissa Stanley

Meklit Tadesse

Patrick Baini

Fatimah Abd

Ella Khairallah

Avaan Shrestha

Acheel Majock

Gabriel Akle

Isaac Heredia

Ivan Alkhoury

Madeleine Clark

Emilie Clark

Natalie Dannoun

Priscilla Gergies

Vanessa Ibrahim

Congratulations to all those children who celebrated their birthday

Partnership

NRMA Road Safety

Monday was NRMA Science and Road Safety Day! Danny Lam from the NRMA spoke to us about how road safety is very important. We learnt several safety strategies including why you need to wear your seatbelt. Your seatbelt is important because if you're in a car crash, your seatbelt will save you. You need to wear your seatbelt

over your collar bone and hip bones because these are your strongest bones in your body. Other things Danny spoke about was the front seat of a car. The best place for your child is to sit in the back seat, because if you sit in the front seat and you are in a crash, the airbag in front of you will come out and it will most likely hurt some parts of your upper body. If the back seats are full of younger children, then you can sit in the front seat. Safety strategy: When you are sitting at the front, push your chair as far back as possible. Danny spoke about other different things like look out before you step out,

wearing bright clothes when you cross the road so the people driving past in cars can see you or turning off your electronic devices when you cross roads. It was very informative and we will definitely use these safety strategies in our lives.

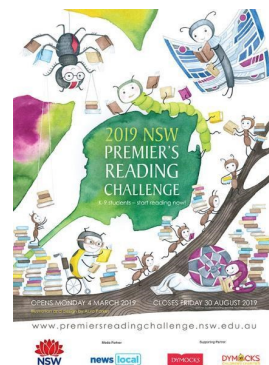
By Media Team



Premier's Reading Challenge (PRC) 2019

"The Premier's Reading Challenge aims to encourage a love of reading for leisure and pleasure in students, and to enable them to experience quality literature." (PRC)

It is a challenge for students to read more and read widely, not a competition. Any child, K-6, wishing to participate in the Premier's Reading Challenge (PRC) this year, may begin to do so online, by going to eLibrary or the PRC website: <https://online.det.nsw.edu.au/prc/home.html>



Any new students, students who have not previously participated in the PRC or students who have forgotten their Username and/or Password, please see your class teacher or Mrs Balogh-Caristo in the LARC.

The students at St Margaret Mary's have until Friday, 30th August, to complete the PRC online. You must read the required number of books from the Challenge to complete the PRC.

All students in Kindergarten, Year One and Year Two will read the required number of books to complete the PRC at school, but are welcome to complete the Challenge at home as well.

PARENTS PLEASE NOTE: Children who complete the PRC will receive a certificate for their efforts towards the end of the year and their name and school only may appear in the PRC Honour Roll.

If you DO NOT WISH your child in Kindergarten, Year One or Year Two to receive a certificate and have their name appear in the PRC Honour Roll please let your child's class teacher know by Friday, 15th March.

If you have any queries or problems, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mrs Balogh-Caristo (Teacher/Librarian)

P&F News

P&F Meeting

Thank you to everyone who attended our first meeting for 2019. We would like to welcome Mrs Natalie Georges as President of the P&F Committee for 2019.

Fundraisers for Term 1 and Term 2

Easter

Monday 11th March: Students will receive Easter raffle books.
Thursday 11th April: Student to bring in and Easter Egg for the raffle.
Thursday 11th April: Easter Basket Wrapping and Raffle will be drawn on this day.



Mother's Day

Thursday 9th May: Mothers Day Gift wrapping.
Friday 10th May: Mother's Day Stall.
Monday 13th May: Mother's Day morning tea after the morning assembly 9am.



Reminder

Parents are reminded not to park across or stop in driveways in Henson Street, Chetwynd Road, and Davies Street. Our neighbours, and the school, can and will notify police of parents parking across and in driveways.

