Dear Families

Looking out the window of my office and seeing a beautiful blue sky and brilliant sunshine, how could it possibly be that people in the St Robert’s school community still tend to reorganise their gardening watering roster around the time of the school sports. Even people from outside the community can’t help having a “dig” as was the case this week with one of the groundsmen from St Joseph’s. When dropping off a high jump mat on Monday, he couldn’t help but say to his assistant, “Remind me to remove the sprinklers on the main oval on Thursday morning, St Robert’s have their school sports so we won’t need the sprinklers on that day!” I suspect the fact that probably around 10 out of the past fourteen school sports have had to be rescheduled due to rain may have something to do with it. The pattern is that the days leading up to sports days are generally good, not too different from today, but for some inexplicable reason things generally turn sour on the day itself and it rains. Guess what? The forecast for tomorrow is for afternoon showers. Can you believe that! Well, afternoon could mean any time from 12pm to 6pm and while those pessimists will be thinking the rain will be here at around 1.30pm, I am however, an optimist, and am looking forward to fantastic school sports under sunny, slightly cloudy, blue skies. Perfect! As certain as I am that the weather will be fine it will most probably become evident by 12.00pm as to whether or not we will go ahead with the event. In case it needs to be cancelled we will notify all parents via a text and parents can make the necessary arrangements for normal pick up at 3.30pm.

Our information night for new families will be held this coming Monday the 24th November and I am anticipating another fantastic turn out of new families. The session will be short, sharp but most informative with teachers and special presenters providing an insight into what goes on at St Robert’s both inside and outside the classroom. It is a busy time for staff at the moment with testing and report writing taking up much of their time so I am grateful for their efforts in coming along as presenters. Thank you!

Don’t forget The Parent’s and Friends Wine and Cheese Open evening at the school on Friday night. I think tickets are still available so if you haven’t got a ticket yet it is not too late. It will be a very enjoyable evening and opportunity to move around the school to see first hand the great things the children are doing in this great school facility. Hope to see many of you there.

Have a great week, God Bless, Mark

The Passing of Monsignor Murray

It is with great sadness that I inform you all of the passing of Monsignor Murray. “The Mons” as he was affectionately known throughout the Geelong community died on the weekend at the age of 90. He will be sadly missed but remembered as a hard-working, long serving Parish Priest at St Mary’s. I can’t begin to imagine how many people he has baptised and married over the years. He was truly a remarkable man who made time for everyone particularly those most vulnerable and had an enormous impact on not only the members of St Mary’s parish but the community in general. I was proud and privileged to work closely with him in the early years of my appointment as principal at St Robert’s. I will never forget the evening he rang to give me the good news of my appointment and will be forever grateful for the opportunity he gave me to work with so many wonderful people at this fantastic school. A tribute to “The Mons” was on page two of Monday’s Geelong Advertiser. If you haven’t read it yet please do if you get the chance. He is with God now looking down and watching over us all. Monsignor Murray’s funeral will be held at St Mary’s Basillica on Monday 24th November at 11:00am.

CONGRATULATIONS

We extend our congratulations to Suzi and Bryan Mc Leod on the safe arrival of ‘Fletcher’ brother for Gregor (In Heaven) Alice, (Gr Foundation JP) and Bridgette.
ENHANCING OUR CATHOLIC IDENTITY
St Mary's Advent Mission

It’s a bit of a conundrum. Easter and Holy Week are really the “pre-eminent” Christian feasts, but from a popular perspective, Christmas seems to receive a lot more attention. Yet the Lent, as the “season of preparation” for Easter, is given much more attention and participation than the preparation season for Christmas - that is, Advent.

Most likely that’s because there is so much competition for the time and attention of people during those first three weeks of December. End-of-Year celebrations, school and work break-ups, holiday preparations, searching for and buying Christmas gifts, sending cards - they all are part of what are arguably the three most frantic weeks of the year. So how do we fit in “Advent” as any sort of spiritual preparation for Christmas, and indeed as a means of preparing for a New Year at the end of the month? This year at St. Mary’s, we are fortunate to have someone with us who can help us truly recognise Advent, and in doing so give Christmas itself and the New Year a valuable and helpful perspective.

Fr. Richard Leonard SJ conducted a four-day Mission at St. Mary’s last year which drew very large attendances, and even larger gratitude and recognition from the many people, from our parish and beyond, who attended. With an engaging personality, a treasure trove of meaningful stories and illustrations, Fr. Richard’s message spread quickly over his four days at St. Mary’s, with each day drawing larger audiences “as the word got around”.

Notwithstanding the busy-ness of the pre-Christmas schedule, it is expected that the Basilica will be a better venue than the Pioneer Room, which was “packed to the rafters” last year. The Mission can make these four days (Nov. 30 to Dec. 3) a special time of preparation for Christmas, but will recognise that attending will not unduly compromise the precious time we all need for the many other demands and celebrations of such a hectic time of year. Indeed, as those many people who valued last year’s Mission would readily acknowledge, time spent with this remarkable and multi-talented Jesuit priest may well provide the best preparation possible to make Christmas 2014 a truly memorable one - and for all the right reasons.  

Fr Kevin Dillon

CATERING REQUIRED FOR PARISH MISSION
The St Robert’s School community have been asked by the Mission Committee to provide supper for the Mission attendees on Wednesday 3rd December. Catering is required for approximately 100 people for this supper. If you are able to assist with sandwiches, cakes or slices, it would be gratefully appreciated. Items can be dropped off at St Robert’s kitchen on Wednesday 3rd December or at the Hibernian Hall, at the Parish Office. Every contribution will be appreciated. Thank you!

Advent Mission - Daily Schedule 9:00am Mass, 9:30am: Presentation, 7:15pm Liturgy, 7:30pm Presentation, Hospitality in Pioneer Room after Presentations

- **Monday 1st December:** “Making the best choices in my life in the light of faith”.
- **Tuesday 2nd December:** “Jesus Christ for us and with us right here, right now”
- **Wednesday 3rd December:** “Liturgy: God’s great love meets our frailty”

INFORMATION NIGHT FOR NEW PARENTS
Next Monday 24th November we will be conducting our usual information session for parents of children beginning school at St Robert’s next year. The session is designed to familiarize new parents with the school’s procedures and policies and provides a valuable insight into some of the wonderful things that happen around our school and parish. Primarily directed at new families, all existing families are more than welcome to attend.

CONGRATULATIONS
We extend our congratulations to Simone and Tony Segrave on the safe arrival of ‘Billy’ brother for Harry (Gr 2LO ), Charlie and Oliver.
TERM DATES 2015

Term 1
Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January to Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March
Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January Book Collection Day, Payment of First Instalment ($450) and Planning Day
Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January Student Assessment Day 1
Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January Student Assessment Day 2

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February Students commence
Easter 3<sup>rd</sup> April to 5<sup>th</sup> April

Term 2
Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April to Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June

Term 3
Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July to Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September

Term 4
Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December

ST ROBERT’S ANNUAL SPORTS DAY
The 2014 St Robert’s Annual Sports will be held tomorrow, Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> November. Our sports will commence at 1:30pm and conclude around 4:30pm. Children will participate in year levels eg. all preps together etc. and will remain in these groupings throughout the events and be released to their parents at the conclusion of the sports. Children are to wear sports uniform and their school hat. Please provide sunscreen.

Families are reminded that for safety reasons; pre-school children, older siblings and parents are not permitted on the oval at any time while the sports are in progress. Also the taking of photos from the centre of the oval is not permitted. We would appreciate your full co-operation in this matter and look forward to seeing all families at our Annual Sports. For your convenience a ‘Coffee Van’ will be on site from 1:15 onwards.

It is important that all students are aware of what is acceptable in terms of coloured accessories and zinc. As for previous years only year sixes have been allowed to wear zinc. We are going to continue this policy this year, however all students will be allowed house coloured ribbons in their hair. Let’s try to keep these ribbons not too crazy! As for the year six students, teachers will allow a maximum of 2 stripes of zinc on each check. There is also to be no hair colouring on this day. Thanks for your co-operation, Chelsea Osburn and Isabelle Auld on behalf of all sports captains.

SWIMMING PROGRAM GR 3-6
Our senior swimming program commences on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> December and concludes on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December. Lessons will be conducted over a ten day period however, our Grade Six students will not swim on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December due to their whole day of orientation at secondary school. It is anticipated that all children will walk to and from the Geelong Aquatic Centre unless the weather is inclement.

Families are reminded that this program is a compulsory component of our curriculum and as such it is essential that all students from grade 3 to 6 participate. If your child is unable to participate in the swimming program a medical certificate is required stating the valid reason and then an exemption can be given. The parents of children in Group 3 who wish to collect their child from the pool at 3:10pm will need to inform their class teacher and complete the sign out form at the school office prior to or after collection where an Early Pass form will be issued. An Information Letter, Helpers Form and Permission Forms were sent home last week. Please read carefully and support our teachers by returning the completed forms to school by Friday 21<sup>st</sup> November.
Congratulations to the following students who have received certificates this week for outstanding work.

Gr F CC  Flynn Spowart  
Gr F CC  Zara Massey  
Gr FJP  Jakob Kristiansen  
Gr FJP  Sebastian Norman  
Gr 1YE  Jaziah Mason  
Gr 1YE  Georgia Caracella  
Gr 1MC  Zara Goodall-Wilson  
Gr 1MC  Hailey Gsatler  
Gr 2KT  Oscar Hart  
Gr 2KT  Samual Washington  
Gr 2LO  Freddy Gill  
Gr 2LO  Henry Stephens  
Gr 3JS  Olivia Gsatler  
Gr 3JS  Blake McMahon  
Gr 3KH  Thomas Afford  
Gr 3KH  Mark Kim  
Gr 4MA  Zara Madden  
Gr 4MA  Maya Lazzaro  
Gr 4MM  Jude Ryan  
Gr 4MM  Indigo Irving  
Gr 5NF  Alex Burtt  
Gr 5NF  Scarlett Hanneyssee  
Gr 5SP  Joshua Appleford  
Gr 5SP  Lizzie Dowling  
Gr 6DB  Clarissa Walker  
Gr 6DB  Georgia Woods  
Gr 6PB  Grace Kelly  
Gr 6PB  Nicholas Baric  

The St Robert’s School community wish to congratulate the following children on the celebration of their birthday this week. Happy Birthday to:

19th November   Georgia Caracella
23rd November   Molly Green

DECEMBER
Mon 1st Dec   Senior Swimming commences
  St Mary’s Parish Mission
  Werribee Zoo Excursion, Gr 1

Tues 2nd   St Mary’s Parish Mission
  P&F Meeting 7:30pm

Wed 3rd   St Mary’s Parish Mission
  Foundation Prayers in Pyjamas, 6:30pm

Thur 4th   St Robert’s School Advisory Board Meeting

Fri 5th   Parent Helpers Thank You
  Morning Tea, 11:00am – 11:45am
  End of Year Reports distributed

Tuesday 9th   Orientation Day, grade 6 students attend their 2015 schools, other students in 2015 classes
  Foundation 2015 session 2

Wed 10th   End of Year Mass, 6:00pm

Fri 12th   Senior Swimming concludes

Mon 15th   Grade 6 Farewell Dinner

Tues 16th   Grade 6 Excursion, Adventure Park

Wed 17th   Christmas Sing A Long 9:15am
  End of Term 4 at 3:30pm

JANUARY 2015
Wed 28th   Payment of First Instalment of 2015 Fees, 11:30am until 2:00pm

Thur 29th   First Day of Testing, 8:30am – 3:30pm, timetabled students

Fri 30th   Second Day of Testing, 8:30am – 3:30pm, timetabled students

FEBRUARY
Mon 2nd   First Day of School for all children, Foundation to Six, Foundation children finish at 12:30pm for Monday & Tuesday