Dear Families

We didn’t do too badly in terms of weather for the running of our school sports last week. What a fantastic afternoon it turned out to be despite that little bit of rain right at the very end. I must pay particular tribute to our House captains who did a wonderful job taking control of the various stations and were a terrific example of leadership. For those of you who may not have noticed our House Captains took control of the various events allowing the class teachers the freedom to stay with their children as they participated in the various events. It was something new and different and worked a treat thanks to the responsible leadership of our Captains. Well done Captains! The consensus from staff and students is to do the same next year. Finally, a great big thankyou to Mr B who once again did a fantastic job preparing the children and coordinating the sports. Thanks Mr B, Great job! In case you haven’t caught up with the results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Lourdes</td>
<td>1383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>MacKillop</td>
<td>1264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Carmel</td>
<td>1255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Mercy</td>
<td>1213</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Congratulations to all those members of the Lourdes team. Well done! There weren’t too many points separating all the teams after all those events and even though Lourdes was the Winning team, you were all Champion Teams in the way you all displayed great sportsmanship and demonstrated our school values of Resilience, in having a go at everything, Respect and Care and Compassion for each other by encouraging fellow students and cheering them on, Responsibility when moving to and from the different events and listening to the captains as they gave their instructions and finally for Having a Go and Doing your best. Well done everyone.

Congratulations to all the hard working members of the Parents and Friends for putting on such a great Wine and Cheese Evening on Friday night. All who attended had a great evening. The venue, our new staffroom, was ideal and I see no reason why we cannot have more of these types of evenings in the future.

Monday evening’s Information session for our new families was once again well attended. The session was short and sharp and provided those parents new to our school with an insight into the way we operate here at St Robert’s. I do believe that all who attended left with a feeling of belonging and a sense of welcome.

**PLANS FOR 2015**

The year is quickly nearing an end and the Leadership Group and teachers have, for some considerable time now, been preparing for next year in more ways than you could possibly know. We are constantly thinking of ways to make teaching and learning most effective for all the children and over the years many successful initiatives have been introduced due to the thought provoking discussions that take place.

As is always the case a great deal of time is spent in determining the best possible scenarios that will have the greatest potential to meet all our children’s needs. As you would also appreciate, the classroom teachers, who have grown to know and understand the children in more ways than one over the course of the year, have a principal role in determining which class structure and mix of children is best, considering all circumstances and scenarios. As is customary at our school, teachers welcome parents to make contact with them to discuss any matter they feel would be relevant to class arrangements for next year. Whilst it is not a policy of the school to allow parents to select particular classes, student composition and class teachers for their children, we do listen to what you have to say and consider these thoughts when making our decisions. Some have taken up this invitation and have made contact with the class teachers. However, over the years, the majority of parents have elected to leave decisions in the very capable and professional hands of the teachers. Such faith in our capacity to make the best possible decision for the good of all is very much appreciated.

Teachers are currently working on the composition of class lists which will be ready by the orientation day on Tuesday 9th December. In keeping with our policy of letting you know things as we confirm arrangements, I can tell you our class and staffing structure for 2015. This information, which may present a few surprises for
some, will provide excellent opportunities for both students and teachers next year. Listed below, after a great deal of thought and discussion are our classes for next year and the assigned teachers:

Foundation JP: Julie Prendergast
Foundation CH: Chelsea Hardcastle
Grade One JB: Bridgett Henderson and Jenny Coverdale
Grade One YE: Yvonne Erwin
Grade Two KT: Krissy Thompson
Grade Two CC: Carolyn Colman
Grade Three NF: Nikki Fiesley
Grade Three KH: Kate Haas
Grade Four MA: Mandy Amezdroz
Grade Four MM: Marie Monea
Grade Five/Six DB: Deborah Boland
Grade Five/Six PB: Paul Broekman
Grade Five/Six SP: Sandra Presa
Grade Five/Six LO: Lucas Oddo.

So there you have it! A couple of surprises no doubt but what an exciting year 2015 is going to be. The obvious surprise is the decision to go with four Five/Six classes. Rest assured a lot of time and discussion has taken place to find the best fit for these two cohorts and the advantages of this scenario, for a wide range of reasons, social, emotional, academic and wellbeing, offer the strongest opportunities for rich and effective learning. The team of Paul, Deborah, Lucas and Sandra have already began planning for next year including the provision for the maintenance of the identity of our Senior Sixes within the Five/Six cohort and the things relevant and important to the children’s experience of their final year of primary school. The placement of Lucas in Grade Five/Six, Nikki in Grade Three and Carolyn moving to Grade Two will add exciting new dimensions to our Junior, Middle and Senior areas as will the new appointment of Chelsea Hardcastle in Foundation who will work alongside Julie P. Chelsea has spent some considerable time at St Robert’s as a CRT and has grown to know and understand the way we do things around here. We are very pleased to have her on our team.

Have a great week, God Bless. Mark

**ENHANCING OUR CATHOLIC IDENTITY**

*The Season of Advent*

Advent is the beginning of the Church Year and begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day. Advent is a time of expectancy as we prepare with joy in our hearts for the coming of Christ. The word Advent means “coming” or “arrival” and the whole focus of this season is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

The Advent season is filled with preparation and expectation. Everyone is getting ready for Christmas – shopping and decoration, baking and cleaning. In the midst of the hustle and bustle of the season, let us strive to keep Advent a season of waiting and longing, of faith and hope and of reflection of the incredible love of our God.

A symbol of Advent is the Advent Wreath. The circle of the wreath reminds us of God himself, His eternity and endless mercy which has not beginning or end. The green of the wreath speaks of the hope that we have in God, the hope of newness, of renewal, of eternal life. The candles signify the light of Christ coming into our world at Christmas.

Next Sunday, 30th November, is the 1st Sunday of Advent. In this first week of Advent we are reminded to ‘stay awake’ and be ready for the coming of Jesus. As we light the first candle on our Advent wreath Let us remember that Jesus is the light of our world. May we always be ready to welcome him into our lives. Our challenge in Advent is to consider how we might embrace the presence of God in our lives. This spiritual embrace means that we can seek to recognise Christ’s actions in the common, everyday moments when God actually breaks through into our world and this enables us to reach out to others.
ST MARY’S ADVENT MISSION

Fr. Richard Leonard SJ will present a three-day Advent Mission at St. Mary’s Basilica, 136 Yarra St., Geelong from Monday 1st December until Wednesday 3rd December, after speaking at all Masses at St. Mary’s on the week-end of November 29 / 30.

The daily programme will be Mass at 9 a.m., followed by the Mission Presentation at 9.30 a.m. with Morning Tea to follow. In the evening there will be a Para-liturgy at 7.15 p.m. followed by the Mission Presentation (the same as in the morning) at 7.30 p.m., followed by Supper. Topics are:

Monday: “Making the best choices in my life in the light of faith”
Tuesday: “Jesus Christ for us and with us right here, right now”
Wednesday “Liturgy: God’s great love meets our frailty”

Everyone is most welcome.

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!

INFORMATION RE: COMMENCEMENT OF 2015 SCHOOL YEAR

There seems to be a little confusion regarding the Student Assessment Days taking place on Thursday 29th and Friday 30th January. These two testing days apply to all St Robert’s students from Foundation through to Grade 6. The opportunity for families to log on and register a time for the assessment tasks will be made available online in the last weeks of this school year. It is our hope to accommodate families with multiple children in multiple grades at the same time. It is anticipated that the assessment tasks will take one hour to complete. More details on how to register a time, to follow at a later date.

WEDNESDAY 28th JANUARY Pay 1st Instalment payment of $450 on this day and collect books from, 11:30am until 2:00pm. (Uniform shop is not open on this day)

THURSDAY 29th JANUARY First Day of Testing 8:30am-3:30pm (Timetabled Students)

FRIDAY 30th JANUARY Second Day of Testing 8:30am-3:30pm (Timetabled Students)

MONDAY 2nd FEBRUARY First day of school for all children. (Prep-Six) (Prep children finish at 12:30 pm for Monday & Tuesday)

BEGINNING OF SCHOOL YEAR FOR PREPS

All Prep students, along with students from all other classes, will commence school on Monday 2nd February. Prep children will finish at 12:30pm on Monday and Tuesday. Wednesday will be a rest day. All Prep children are expected to attend school for the whole school day (9:00am-3:30pm) from Thursday 5th February with the exception of Wednesdays which is a recommended day of rest for all Prep children. This will continue for a period of five weeks. (The last rest day will be Wednesday 4th March). All prep children will be expected to attend full time – 5 days a week thereafter.

TERM DATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term 1</td>
<td>29th January – 27th March (Jan 29th &amp; 30th Student Assessment Days)</td>
<td>28th January – 24th March (Jan 28th &amp; 29th Student Assessment Days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students begin February 2nd</td>
<td>Students begin February 1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>13th April – 26th June</td>
<td>11th April to 24th June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td>13th July – 18th September</td>
<td>11th July to 16th September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 4</td>
<td>5th October – 16th December</td>
<td>3rd October to 16th December (TBC)</td>
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</tbody>
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A REMINDER TO YEAR 3 FAMILIES

Thank you for the positive response we have received to the ‘Year 4 2015 BYOD Pilot Program”. For planning purposes please return the slip that was attached to last week’s important notice by Monday 1st December 2014. We thank you and appreciate your support.
STAFF ATTENDING PARISH FAITH FORMATION MEETING
Please be aware that all St Robert’s staff will be attending a compulsory Parish session on Tuesday 2\textsuperscript{nd} December. As this session commences at 3:45pm it would be greatly appreciated if all our students could be collected from school by 3:35 pm on this day to allow staff time to arrive at the venue.

UNIFORM SHOP UPDATE
If you think you might require a larger kilt for next winter or a larger summer dress for the start of 2015, please visit the Uniform Shop to order them before Friday 12\textsuperscript{th} December. The Uniform shop will be closed after this date.
- The Uniform Shop is now selling Steigen sports socks at $10 a pair
- If any parents are able to volunteer one morning each month to assist in the Uniform Shop, please contact Lauren Watts on 0400 524 411. The shop is open Wednesday and Friday from 8:45am to 9:30am.

P&F WINE AND CHEESE NIGHT
Th P&F would like to thank all parents and teachers who attended the Wine & Cheese Night last Friday. The evening was held in the Staffroom and was a very relaxed and enjoyable evening.

The last P&F Meeting for the year will be held next Tuesday 2\textsuperscript{nd} December in the Staffroom at 7:30pm. All Welcome

SWIMMING PROGRAM GR 3-6
Our senior swimming program commences on Monday 1\textsuperscript{st} December and concludes on Friday 12\textsuperscript{th} December. Lessons will be conducted over a ten day period however, our Grade Six students will not swim on Tuesday 9\textsuperscript{th} 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.

GEELONG CONCERT BAND INC
From the start of Term 1 2015, the Geelong Concert Band will be forming a new workshop (or beginner) Band aimed at Grade 5 and 6 children, older students and adults who have the ability to concentrate for 90 minutes and who would like to play an instrument – no previous experience is required. You may like to play flute, clarinet, saxophone, French horn, trumpet, trombone, euphonium, tuba, bass guitar or percussion. If you are interested and would like to try out any of the instruments please attend an:

- Information Evening on Tuesday 2\textsuperscript{nd} December 2014 at 7:00pm
  At Robertson Hall, Geelong College Preparatory School, Minerva Road, Newtown

Rehearsals are held during school terms on Fridays between 4:30-6:00pm at Geelong College Preparatory School. The membership costs each Term is $95. For more information about the Geelong Concert Band organization visit http://gcb.zackdesign.biz/.

MAREE'S OPEN FAMILY DAY FAREWELL GATHERING
The Bond Street Committee extends an invitation to past and current families of Bond Street Kindergarten to an open gathering for our long serving Director and 4yo teacher Maree Merlo. This farewell event will be held on Saturday 6th December from 1 - 2.30pm at Bond St Kinder. We would love as many past and present families to come along and celebrate Maree’s career in early education, her community contributions and wish her well in her retirement.

LOOKING FOR A GOOD HOME
Rabbits - Dwarf Lop, 8 weeks old, various colours, used to being handled & cuddled. If you are interested, please contact Julie on 0412 647797.
STUDENT AWARDS
Congratulations to the following students who have received certificates this week for outstanding work.

Gr F CC  Nellie Watts
Gr F CC  Ignatius Gill
Gr FJP  Jayde Morrissy
Gr FJP  Chloe Fitzgerald
Gr 1YE  Summer Madden
Gr 1YE  Gus Walerys
Gr 1MC  Hamish Harendarz
Gr 1MC  Chris Johnson
Gr 2KT  Mackenzie Taylor
Gr 2KT  Millicent Eldridge
Gr 2LO  Matthew Johnson
Gr 2LO  Harry Hardy
Gr 3JS  Toby Osburn
Gr 3JS  Harry Peacock
Gr 3KH  James Burtt
Gr 3KH  Sophia van den Berg
Gr 4MA  James Gard
Gr 4MA  Abby Costa
Gr 4MM  Evie Adamko
Gr 4MM  Oscar Riccardi
Gr 5NF  Rebecca Maschmedt
Gr 5NF  Claudia Anglin
Gr 5SP  Isabel Higgins
Gr 5SP  Connor O’Sullivan
Gr 6PB  Isabel Waterhouse
Gr 6PB  Tayla Gartner

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

28th November  Eliza Dunell
1st December  Archer Richards
2nd December  Alexander Dunn

DATES TO REMEMBER

NOVEMBER
Sat 29th  St Mary’s Parish Mission
Sun 30th  St Mary’s Parish Mission

DECEMBER
Mon 1st Dec  Senior Swimming commences
Wed 3rd  St Mary’s Parish Mission
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 at St Mary’s

JANUARY 2015
Wed 28th  Payment of First Installment 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
Mon 14th  Foundation Photo Day

School Advisory Board Committee Members
Fr Kevin Dillon
fkld@stmarysgeelong.com.au  Website:  www.srnnewtown.catholic.edu.au
Mark Soldani  marks@srnewtown.catholic.edu.au  Anita Thomas  pryan40@bigpond.com.au  Fiona Fitzgerald  fionaf@ggs.vic.edu.au  Angola De Grandi  dominic.degrandi@bigpond.com  Sonia Mackay  mackays@7mail.com  Kym Brooks  kymgibson@ncable.net.au  Katey O’Sullivan  kateyos@bigpond.com  Louise Clatworthy  the.clat@bigpond.com