Prayer for a New School Year

God of wisdom and might,
we praise you for the wonder of our being,
for mind, body and spirit.
Be with our children as they begin
a new school year.
Bless them and their teachers and staff.
Give the strength and grace as their bodies grow;
wisdom and knowledge to their minds
as they search for understanding;
and peace and zeal to their hearts.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Dear Parents, Carers, Staff, Students and Friends,
A very warm welcome to the 2016 school year! It has been a blessing to see happy, excited faces full of energy for a new year of learning.

This past week has seen a very smooth and active start to the school year. Students and staff have settled into their learning and are enjoying all of the new opportunities another year brings with it. It has also been wonderful during the week to catch up with many parents at the beginning and end of the school day as they drop off and pick up. Your presence gives our school a great buzz and your support of your children adds to the joy our vocation as educators brings to our lives. I look forward to working closely with you all to provide the best we can as a team for all of our students and families.

A very warm welcome to the students and families who have begun their school journey with us this year. We hope that the St Mary’s community is able to provide you with a positive educational experience. I have been impressed with the welcome other students have provided for our newcomers – they have displayed great enthusiasm and warmth.

**IMPORTANT DATES**

**FEBRUARY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon 8th</td>
<td>Parent Information Night 6.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 10th</td>
<td>Ash Wednesday Mass 10am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun 14th</td>
<td>Mass to celebrate the beginning of the school year @ 10.30am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs 18th</td>
<td>Sacramental parent meeting @ 7.00pm – NB change of date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 22nd</td>
<td>Hockey clinic Grades 1 – 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 24th</td>
<td>Pupil free day – Staff PD – Numeracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 29th &amp; Tues 1st</td>
<td>Learning Conversations</td>
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**MARCH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tues 1st</td>
<td>Golf clinic Grades 3 – 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 2nd</td>
<td>School Advisory Council @ 7.00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs 3rd</td>
<td>Division swimming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 4th</td>
<td>Zone Principals’ m’ing @ St Mary’s!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 7th</td>
<td>School Athletics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 11th</td>
<td>Reconciliation workshop (Sacramental Program) @ Dunworth Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSG meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 14th</td>
<td>Public holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 15th – Thurs 17th</td>
<td>Sacrament of Reconciliation</td>
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<td>Thurs 17th</td>
<td>District Aths</td>
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<td>Thurs 24th</td>
<td>End Term 1</td>
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There has been a very positive buzz throughout the school over the past week which demonstrates the enthusiasm and excitement of a new school year. The way this energy takes shape over the next few weeks will be vital in shaping the attitude to learning and growing throughout the year. My hope for the year is that students, staff and parents take every opportunity for growth available to them, not only for individual gain but also for the benefit of our school community.

Please remember that I am always more than happy to assist with any queries, concerns, ideas or just to be a listening ear. You are always welcome to contact me by phone at school or call in for a chat. If you would like to use e-mail to make a suitable time that would be great otherwise ring the front office to check my diary. The door is always open!

Thanks for a great start!
God bless you ☺
Jo-Anne

Attachments to this week’s Newsletter:
1. Family Fee Assistance Scheme
2. CSEF – financial assistance for parents
3. Travelling to and from school
4. Uniform pricelist
5. Canteen pricelist
6. Absent notes
7. Bookclub letter
8. Australian Catholics Magazine

Pupil Free Day
A reminder that Wednesday 24th February is a pupil free day for all students to allow staff to participate in a professional learning activity based on Numeracy. Students do not attend school on this day.

School Rules
This year we continue with our three main school rules:

Respect your school
Do your best
Help others to succeed

During our day, and in all that we do, we try to remember these rules and make choices that support our expectation to ‘treat others the way you would like to be treated’.

Student testing
Holidays were finally over when students undertook their Literacy testing last week. The data that we gain from this testing, as well as the Numeracy Interview at the end of last year, is invaluable in assisting the teachers to plan their programs in order to gain maximum teaching and learning from class time. Thanks for your support of these two programs by having your child attend punctually.

School Mass
As a Catholic community it is fitting that we begin our school year with the opportunity to celebrate the Eucharist together. In doing so we are able to give thanks for the many blessings provided for us in the world of education and learning and to ask God for guidance and energy to make the most of all that we have been provided with.

➢ All students are expected to attend our whole school mass and be actively involved in the celebration. Our mass to mark the new school year will be held on Sunday 14th February at 10.30am at St Mary’s Church.
➢ Students are required to wear their correct school summer uniform and sit with their class during the mass.
➢ Student leaders will be presented with their badges during mass.

Important Dates!
Please make sure that you keep up to date with school activities by placing relevant dates on your home calendar. This helps everyone to be prepared and supportive of each other. These dates are included and updated on the newsletter each week.

Consent Forms
Parental Consent Forms were posted to you during the holidays – yellow paper! The Parental Consent Form is completed and signed at the start of each school year. It provides permission for students to participate in activities outside of the school where it is possible to walk as well as other permissions. This note does not cover activities that involve bus travel or those that carry a higher risk factor – such as swimming. The form also ensures that we have current information for each student. Please complete one form for each student.

Family Summary Reports and green Bus Forms were also included in the mail out. Spare forms are available from the Office. A big thank you to those families who have already returned their forms.

Please return these forms to school no later than Friday 12th February.
A few reminders!
Please be aware of the following information regarding bell times and supervision. It is important that you support us in our daily routine so that we can ensure the safety of all students.

- **8.45** Organisation time
- **8.55 – 11.00** Learning time
  (fruit time @ approx. 10.00am)
- **11.00 – 11.20** Play time
- **11.20 – 11.30** Eating time

It is important that all students have a sufficient and healthy snack at this time. This food should sustain children and give their brain energy for the next period of learning. The challenge is not to send food that is high in sugar and preservatives as these do not provide our brain and body with the correct nourishment for optimal learning.

- **11.30 – 1.30** Learning time
- **1.30 – 1.40** Eating time
- **1.40 – 2.20** Play time
- **2.20 – 3.15** Learning time
- **3.15** Dismissal bell

- Supervision is provided by members of staff for students from **8.30am until 3.30pm**.
- **Students should not arrive at school before 8.30am.**
  - At least two teachers are on duty at recess and lunch times.
  - No child is to leave school before the dismissal bell unless permission has been granted. In these circumstances the student/s need to be signed out in the register at the Office.
  - All students are to wear their correct school uniform each day. The uniform shop is open each Wednesday after school. If a student is not able to wear their uniform a note addressed to their classroom teacher is required. Please remember that jewellery is not part of our uniform with the exception of a watch and small stud/sleeper earrings. Long hair is to be tied back at all times and ribbons and other hair decorations and earrings should be in the school colours. All students must have a school hat each day in terms 1 and 4. Our policy is ‘no hat – no play’. Your assistance and support of our uniform policy is greatly appreciated.
- A note of explanation is required each time a child is absent from school. It is a legal requirement of teachers to keep an accurate roll of student attendance. A sheet of absence notes is included with this newsletter for your convenience. You can also find these slips on the website or report an absence via e-mail to the Office.
- Please take careful note of the information provided in the ‘Travelling to and from school’ handout attached to this newsletter.
- The newsletter is our main source of communication with parents. It is sent home with students each Friday. It is also circulated via the Skoolbag app and e-mail (to those who have requested to be included on the e-mail list).

Information Night
Parents are invited to attend our Parent Information Night on Monday 8th February.

- Classroom sessions will be held in the classrooms and presented to parents twice on the night – 6.30pm and 7.00pm. Teachers will present information on content to be taught during the year, housekeeping news about their classroom and things you need to be aware of as your children journey through the school year.
- This allows families with more than one child to attend two classes. Apologies to those with more than two students. Any information provided as handouts on the night will be available for you.

Ash Wednesday
Ash Wednesday – marks the beginning of our Lenten journey. Lent is the time in the Church which lasts for 40 days and helps us to prepare for Easter. It offers us all a very special opportunity to grow in our relationship with God and to deepen our commitment to a way of life, rooted in our baptism. In our busy world, Lent provides us with an opportunity to reflect upon our patterns, to pray more deeply, experience sorrow for what we’ve done and failed to do, and to be generous to those in need.

Next Wednesday staff and students will attend Ash Wednesday mass at the Church at 10.00am. Preps and their parents/carers are welcome to come along on their rest day.

**FAMILY FEE ASSISTANCE:**
The Education Maintenance Allowance is no longer funded by the Government. However the Ballarat Diocese has maintained their commitment to continue the Family Fee Assistance Scheme. The scheme offers a tuition fee concession to families who hold a current Centrelink or Veteran Affairs concession card. Please note that students who are holders of Health Care Cards are not eligible.
Families who qualify for the scheme will pay $520 per annum for primary school tuition fees. The discounted fee covers tuition and capital fees only. It does not cover additional charges such as camps, student fees and excursions. Please find attached a brochure which outlines the details of the scheme. An application form needs to be completed and are available at the office. These forms, plus a copy of your current Centrelink card, must be received by Friday 19th February, 2016. If during the year your circumstances change and you become eligible for Centrelink, please come and discuss this with Helen.

Although a family may be eligible to receive a fee discount, families may choose not to apply for the fee discount and pay the full school fee.

**Camps, Sports & Excursions Fund (CSEF)**
The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) commenced in 2015 for four years and will provide payments for eligible students to attend camps, sports and excursions. Families holding a valid means-tested concession card or temporary foster parents are eligible to apply. $125 per year is paid for eligible primary school students, with $225 per year paid for eligible secondary school students. A special consideration eligibility category also exists. Payments are made directly to the school and are tied to the student. Application forms are available at the office. Please return these forms, with a copy of your concession card. Completed forms must be returned by Friday 19th February, 2016. If you would like further information please see Helen in the office.

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**Morning Fitness**
Morning Fitness will start again next week. It will be held on Tuesday and Thursday mornings this year from 8.55am - 9.10am. Term One will see a focus on athletics and catching/throwing.

**District Tennis**
Our first District event for the year is District Tennis Tryouts. They will be running on Thursday 18th February at the lawn courts starting at 1.00pm. If your child is in Grade 4-6, is playing regularly in an organised tennis competition, can competently play and keep score please contact us to enter them by Friday 12th February.

**Division Swimming**
Division Swimming is being held on Friday 10th March at Aquazone Warrnambool. We will be in contact with the students who have qualified for this event from our school swimming carnival in the next two weeks.

**School Athletics**
Our school athletics for Grades 1-6 will be held on Monday 7th March at Pedrina Park. District Athletics will follow on Thursday 17th March.

**Hockey Clinic**
A hockey clinic will be held at school on Monday 22nd February for students in Grades 1-4.

**Golf Clinic**
A golf clinic will be held at school on Tuesday 1st March for students in Grades 3-6.

We are thoroughly looking forward to a wonderful year of sport at St Mary’s. Please don’t hesitate to contact us if you have any sport related queries at school or email us at jferguson@smhamilton.catholic.edu.au or ecouchman@smhamilton.catholic.edu.au

Thank you in advance for your terrific support this year!

Mr Ferguson and Miss Couchman располагаем

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**Parents and Friends**

**Uniform Shop**
Opening time – Wednesday 3.20 – 4.00pm

**Canteen**

Please note the following changes to canteen for the next two weeks.

- Wednesday 10th February is Ash Wednesday so the following applies: Bolognaise will not contain meat, burgers will be with fish only, sandwiches will not contain meat.
- There will be NO CANTEEN on Wednesday 17th February, 2016.

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**The Sports Catch Up**
Welcome back to the new year! It’s already shaping up to be a busy term for sport.

**Physical Education with Mr Ferguson**
Mr Ferguson is taking PE lessons throughout the school this year! All lessons run from 12.30-1.30pm, to allow us to access Monivae’s Stadium when needed. The Preps are Monday, Grade 3/4 are Tuesday, Grade 1/2 are Wednesday and Grade 5/6 are Friday. The Term One lessons will focus on Athletics for Grades 1-6, then a hitting and striking unit including hockey and tennis. The Preps will be doing fundamental movement then a catching and throwing unit.
Canteen Roster
10/2/16         Volunteer required
17/2/16         Canteen closed
24/2/16         Volunteer required

Please note that if there are no parent volunteers there will be no lunch orders available on that day. If you would like to volunteer please put your name on the roster at the front office.

Bookclub
Orders due Monday 8th February. Please see letter from Jenny Taylor attached.

Parish News

MASS TIMES – 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>Saturday 6pm&lt;br&gt;Sunday 10.30am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dunkeld</td>
<td>Sunday 8.30am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glenthompson</td>
<td>Sunday 8.30am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Penshurst</td>
<td>Sunday 8.30am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Macarthur</td>
<td>Sunday 8.30am</td>
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The Australian Christian Meditation Community...

- is an ecumenical community committed to Christian Contemplative prayer
- promotes an ancient practice of stillness and silence
- is rooted in the teaching of Jesus on prayer
- leads to a personal encounter with the sacred
- loosens the grip of anxieties and addictions
- assists meditators to live more fully in the presence of divine love

Our parish group meets each Wednesday at the parish house at 7.30pm. All welcome, especially newcomers.

ST MARY’S PARISH
2016 SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

Parents of children who are ready to be fully initiated into the Catholic Community through the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist are invited to attend a meeting on

THURSDAY 18TH FEBRUARY in the DUNWORTH CENTRE at 7pm.

Children in Gr 3 are generally at a developmental stage where they have an understanding and a desire to receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. These Sacraments are celebrated in Terms 2 and 3 respectively. In order to prepare for these Sacraments the children will also take part in a Reconciliation preparation and celebration in Term 1, during Lent.

2016 dates:
Term 1
Parent Meeting Thurs 18th Feb @ 7pm
Enrolment Weekend 20th and 21st Feb during parish Masses.
Term 2
Confirmation – Pentecost
Sun May 15th - 10:30 am Mass
Term 3
First Eucharist
Sunday August 28th - 10:30 am Mass

Full Details can be found on St Mary’s Parish Hamilton website, www.stmaryshamilton.org.au
Enrolment forms are available; on the website, at the Parish Office or from St Mary’s School.

St Vincent de Paul

On behalf of St. Vincent de Paul Society I would like to thank all who donated in any way to our Christmas Appeal. Every year we have more and more families who need help at this time. Christmas for most is a very happy time with family and friends. However, for many people this is not so. Your generous donations of food etc. make our work a little easier.

I would like to especially thank the students, staff and parents of St. Marys School for the work they did for our hampers. Donating hams, decorations, (which made the hampers look very festive!) money (which the children won at the Expo and donated to St. Vincent’s) and a wonderful lot of toys. This meant we were able to ensure that no child, which we knew of, would wake up and find that Santa didn’t call.

So from all of us at St. Vincent’s a huge THANK YOU.

Irene Donne.
President St Vincent de Paul

Pastoral Care

Hello and a Happy 2016!
This year the Pastoral Care role will continue and I will be working:

Wednesdays - St. Josephs, Penshurst
- available for meetings 8.30 – 4.30

Thursdays - St. Josephs, Coleraine
- available for meetings 8.30 – 4.30

Fridays - St. Marys, Hamilton
- available for meetings 8.30 – 4.30

Some parents have mentioned the difficulties they have at bedtime settling their children, so I am happy to pass on the following information that I recently came across that may be of interest to some families.

PEACEFUL NIGHT

Bedtime can be an unsettling time for children and a challenging time for parents. In three steps, this CD by
Perth-based musician, Michael Done and his partner, Helen Thomas, helps settle children, preparing them to go to sleep feeling safe, peaceful and loved. Simple breathing exercises and soothing music assist children to begin to relax and unwind. An imaginary moonlight walk then offers children a safe and enjoyable way to overcome unsettled feelings and night-time fears. Finally, children are invited to imagine love surrounding them and flowing into their hearts and then out to others who are special to them. The CD closes with a gentle lullaby. Ages 3-11 years. **CD. 35 minutes RECOMMENDED PRICE: $26.00 OUR SPECIAL PRICE: $15.00 - VALID UNTIL FEBRUARY 29, 2016 Available on-line through www.openleaves.com.au**

I look forward to supporting the school communities as needed.

**Regards**

Lisa Gonnet - Pastoral Care Worker - 0400994032

**Music Lessons 2016**

Enrolments for music lessons at St Mary’s Primary are now being taken. Lessons in Piano, Electric Keyboard, organ, Voice, recorder and Guitar. For more information contact Tara’s Music School on 55723409 or 0427723409

**ST MARY’S BASKETBALL CLUB:**

St Mary’s Basketball Club is looking for new Children keen to play Basketball this year!! Children must be turning 8 to be eligible to play. Please email Secretary Cheryl Casey jenmoc@hotmail.com or call 0458567508. Teams to be finalised Monday 8th February.

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want to get your kids into tennis?

Professional tennis coaching will be available in Term 1 at The Hamilton Lawn Tennis Club with award winning coaches of Tennis Australia’s ANZ Tennis Hot Shots. Children from 4 years can learn the game with modified courts, balls and racquets. An extensive program will also be available for older beginners and accomplished players. Interested? Call 5562 6539

**Enrol in February and receive a Laptop!* Ask us how.**

*Conditions apply. For full terms and conditions visit the website below.