Dear Parents, Carers, Staff, Students and Friends,

Thanks! Thank you to all who are reading this for the interest you show in our school community and for the wonderful contribution you have managed to make throughout the year. St Mary’s is very blessed with amazing children, fantastic families, passionate staff and wonderful friends. I am very grateful for the support and care you have shown to our school this year and for the hard work you have given to help us all to grow.

Thanks for being partners in education, for valuing and supporting the work of those who work with your child and for instilling in your child a love and passion for learning.

May God’s love surround, God’s grace abound, And heavenly peace be all around. With blessings for this Christmas Season.

Merry Christmas!
learning. Your commitment to your school – your children, your community – is appreciated. A big thank you to our staff who have worked together to provide a learning environment which is considerate of each child. The commitment demonstrated by teachers, aides and administration staff is commendable and highly valued.

Farewell to our Grade 6 students as they head off into the exciting world of secondary education. I hope that the spirit of St Mary’s is carried with you and inspires you. Best wishes for all that you commit your effort and enthusiasm to in life!

It is also fitting to farewell families who have seen their youngest child complete their Primary schooling. To these parents – thank you for your valuable contributions to St Mary’s during your time with us.

This year we wish Sherree Gallagher and Annie Forrest a sad farewell as they leave our teaching team.

Over the last three years we have loved having Annie as a member of our staff. Her contribution to the life of our students and our school has been highly valued. She has a strong sense of collaboration and a strong work ethic in all that she does. We wish her the very best for the adventures ahead of her!

Sherree and her family have been a part of our school family for the last fifteen years. Sherree is a highly skilled and talented teacher who has a wonderful sense of student wellbeing. The work she has undertaken in her many roles have made a significant difference to St Mary’s and we wish her, Ben and the girls every blessing as they explore new possibilities next year.

Finally, I would like to wish all of our St Mary’s staff, students, parents, families and friends a very holy and peaceful Christmas. Please take the time to enjoy being in each other’s presence and celebrating the real meaning of this beautiful liturgical season. It is a time of year that should bring us new strength and hope in ourselves, each other and all that we hold close – especially our faith.

In the busy schedules of your lives please take the time at Christmas to reflect on the story of Jesus’ birth and the gift that his life and teachings provide for us. Mass times in our Parish for Christmas are included in this newsletter. Your presence would be warmly received! If you are going away for Christmas check out the local church – their celebration times are bound to be displayed.

Please keep safe over the holiday period and I very much look forward to seeing you back at school in 2018 refreshed, energised and ready for another year of teaching and learning!!

Thanks for a great year! God bless you! @ Jo-Anne

Attachments:
- Literacy appointment times
- Hamilton 3x3 Basketball flyer

End of Year Mass
Thank you so much for your attendance and participation in our mass to celebrate the wonderful school year we have enjoyed. It was a very special way to give thanks for the opportunities provided to us and the people who make up our community.

Helpers Morning Tea
Thanks to the parents and friends who came along to our Helpers Morning tea on Wednesday. For those who could not make it, thank you so much for your time, energy, support and friendship during 2017. We have truly appreciated all that you have done.

Swimming Carnival
What a glorious day we had for our Swimming Carnival last Friday. Elise Couchman did an amazing job of organising a great day and the perfect weather! Congratulations to all students who participated – I was very impressed with your enthusiasm, sportsmanship and have-a-go attitude. Thank you so much to the large number of parents who came along to help and to cheer. Well done to Rosaria for winning the shield! (Next year Loreto!).

Congratulations!
Congratulations to Griet Rowe who was baptised and received the sacraments of Confirmation and First Communion last Friday! What an exciting celebration!

And Xander McIntosh is a very excited big brother again! Congratulations to Brendan, Cindy, Xander and Dex on the exciting arrival of Sebastian!

Office hours
Please note our office will be closed 4pm Thursday 21st December, 2017 and re-opening 8:30am Tuesday 30th January, 2018.
Literacy Testing
- Letters to indicate appointment times for Literacy assessments are attached to this newsletter.
- Reminder letters will be posted during January and will also include forms to be returned and additional information.

Learning Journals
Student journals are being sent home today. These documents are a wonderful keepsake of the learning achieved by your children throughout the year.

School Mass
Mass to celebrate the start of the school year will be held on Sunday 4th February at 10.30am at St Mary’s Church.

Grade 6 students for 2017
Each year Grade 6 have their Sports T shirt printed with each student’s name and the teachers of Grade 6 on them. The cost for printing will be $10.00 each. It would be appreciated if the money can be handed in with the clearly named T Shirt. These can be handed to the office by Thursday 21st December, at either of the Literacy testing days or the first week back in 2018. We will not be able to accept late shirts.

Library News
- All books and other items borrowed from our Library Resource Centre are now due to be returned.
- Sincere thanks to those of you who have searched for these overdue items.
- We still have some books that have been overdue for some time.
- Please spend some time at home, during our summer break, looking through your book collection and in unusual places and return any items that have our school barcode on their back cover, when school begins in 2018.
- Items that are being returned, can be placed in the Blue Tub in our Library Resource Centre. It has a sign on it that says ‘Please place all returns here’. No questions will be asked.
- Thank you in advance for your co-operation. (Miss Stevens)

SEESAW JOURNAL
If you would like to download a copy of your child’s “SeeSaw” work and photos, please follow this link. Be advised that the work may not be available next year. Go to: https://goo.gl/Nr1hQA

Assembly
Assemblies are held every second Friday in our Learning Street @ 2.40pm.
Our next assembly will be Friday 9th February.
All welcome!

Parish News

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MASS TIMES – 2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton: Saturday 6pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday 10.30am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dunkeld: Sunday 8.30am</td>
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<td>Glenthompson: Sunday 8.30am</td>
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<td>Penshurst: Sunday 8.30am</td>
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<td>Macarthur: Sunday 8.30am</td>
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Monivae College Open Day dates 2018
Open Day Sessions:-
- 20th February
- 1st March and
- 18th March.

Spend the Day at Monivae
- 20th March.

Parents & Friends

Christmas Expo!
With a huge thanks to Tamara Milne and Helen O’Brien the money is counted and (most) of the accounts paid. This year’s St Mary’s Christmas Expo realised a fundraising amount of $10,000 for our school. The money raised continues to be targeted for an all-weather cover over our basketball courts with an architect to begin drawings early next year.

A Sparkling Christmas Expo.
Celebrating 25 years

Parade
In our Christmas Expo. summary last week two important people were overlooked. So today, we would like to sincerely thank Bernadette Hurley and Glenda Boag, previous members of staff who were at St. Mary’s for our First Christmas Expo., who travelled back to Hamilton to judge this year’s Parade. It was wonderful to welcome them back and they thoroughly enjoyed returning to Hamilton, renewing friendships, viewing and judging the Parade entrants and fully immersing themselves in our annual event and all it had to offer.

Canteen Roster
Canteen can not be offered to our students without our volunteers. We will track the volunteer roster during term 1 next year to determine whether we can continue to offer this service. If you are interested in helping out please let the school office know.

Uniform Shop
Please note that from Monday 15th January all St Mary’s uniform items can be purchased from Accurate Clothing in Gray St.
Thank you to Kristi Lewis, Anna Osborne, Rebecca Hill and Cass Young who have volunteered their time and energy to open our Uniform Shop each Monday.

**THE SPORT CATCH UP**

**Swimming Carnival**

We had a fabulous Swimming Carnival on Friday. Everyone gave their events 110% and there were terrific displays of sportsmanship across the day. It was certainly a wonderful day to be a part of! Thank you to all the parents, carers, grandparents and other family members who came on the day, it was fantastic to have so many supporters! Thank you to all the staff who made sure the day went swimmingly. A special thank you to Matt Dunn, Jessica Beattie, Corrine Raymond, Jonathan Rowe, Alisa Houlihan, Kylie Pearce, Vicki Button, Carolyn Collins, Casey Rook, Kylie Tonissen, Sarah Byron and Kris Fox for all their help, support and expertise on the day!

Rosaria for the second year in a row won the Swimming Carnival Shield on 187 points, followed by Lourdes on 146, Fatima were 3rd with 137 points and Loreto came in at 4th with 95 points!

**Our Swimming Age Champions for 2017 were:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9 Year Boys</th>
<th>9 Year Girls</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Tiago Gaio</td>
<td>1st Holly Rook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Seamus Bryon</td>
<td>2nd Griet Rowe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Jack Sobey</td>
<td>3rd Chloe Wormald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Year Boys</td>
<td>10 Year Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Hugh Fitzgerald</td>
<td>1st Grace Cleaver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Josh Gardner</td>
<td>2nd Amy Shelly</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd Koby Slattery-Fisher</td>
<td>3rd Bridget Mailes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Year Boys</td>
<td>11 Year Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Clay Fitzgerald</td>
<td>1st Stella Raymond</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st Chris Wormald</td>
<td>2nd Macey Bowie</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd Felicity Watson</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12 Year Boys</td>
<td>12 Year Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Rafael Gaio</td>
<td>1st Libby Fox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Bailey Cooper</td>
<td>2nd Sophie Button</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd Hugh Mailing</td>
<td>3rd Sienna Maddocks</td>
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**SUMMER BY THE SEA FESTIVAL to hit South West region**

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning’s annual Summer by the Sea festival kicks off on Tuesday 2 January with hundreds of coastal activities on offer for the Victorian community to enjoy. With around 300 events held across Victoria and almost 50 of them here in the Barwon South West Region there’s something to suit everyone. Activities this year include rockpool ramblings, whale talks, fishing clinics, Mutton Bird viewings and many more. All activities are free over the 25 days of the program (to 26 January) so jump onto https://summerbythesea.vic.gov.au/ and see what’s happening near you.

**NGV KIDS ON TOUR 2018**

**FREE SCHOOL HOLIDAY WORKSHOPS**

Discover the fun of contemporary art and design with free workshops at Hamilton Gallery!

**Thursday 11th and Friday 12th January 2018**

**workshops will be held at 10.30am and 2.30pm on both days**

**10.30am 'Who Lives Here' (maximum of 10 children/session)**

Create an animal and its habitat using specialty collage papers

**2.30pm 'Nonsense' (maximum of 15 children/session)**

Draw your own incredible nonsense creature. Then, cut along the dotted lines to mix-up the heads, torsos and toes!

Suitable for ages 5 - 12

All sessions run for 1 hour

Bookings essential

The NGV Kids program is generously supported by the Truby and Florence Williams Charitable Trust. The NGV gratefully acknowledges Canson Australia as the Official Supplier of NGV Kids Summer Festival and NGV Kids on Tour.

**CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES**

**CHRISTMAS EVE - Hamilton – 6pm (family focus) & 8pm Vigil**

*Carols – ½ hr before Christmas eve masses.*

Dunkeld – 6pm Vigil
Penshurst – 7:30pm Vigil
Glentompson – 9:15pm Vigil

**CHRISTMAS DAY – 25 Dec. Hamilton – 9am**