

# Newsletter

## Mary MacKillop Memorial School

Term 1 Week 8

Friday, 21st March 2025

Reception to Year 6 Co-Educational Catholic Primary School

5 Portland Street, Penola SA 5277

Telephone: (08) 8737 2902 [www.mmms.catholic.edu.au](http://www.mmms.catholic.edu.au)



*Inspired by Hope*

### UPCOMING DATES

#### March

- 24 Occasional Care
- 25 Annunciation of the Lord  
Occasional Care
- 26-28 SAPSASA Softball (Adel)
- 28 Playgroup  
2/3 Assembly
- 31 Occasional Care

#### April

- 1 Occasional Care
- 3 Caritas K Day Lunch
- 4 Sports Day
- 7 SAPSASA State Swimming (Adel)  
Occasional Care
- 8 Occasional Care
- 11 Caritas K Day Walk Lunch  
Playgroup  
Term 1 Ends 2:15pm
- 28 First Day Term 2  
Occasional Care
- 29 Occasional Care

#### May

- 1 St Joseph the Worker
- 2 Playgroup
- 5 Occasional Care
- 6 Occasional Care
- 7 Mother's and Special Person  
Afternoon Tea
- 9 Regional Cross Country  
(Naracoorte)  
Playgroup

## Class News

Year 4/5

### Unlocking the Power of Storytelling in English!

This term, our budding authors have been diving into the art of storytelling, discovering how to hook their readers from the very first line! With sizzling starts, they've been learning how to grab attention in just seven seconds—whether by throwing their reader straight into the action or beginning with a life-changing moment. But a great story doesn't stop there! Students have been crafting long and strong tension scenes using their senses to paint vivid pictures, making readers feel like they're right inside the story. Careful planning has been key to keeping their ideas unique and flowing. From mysterious portals to hidden treasures, our writers have been exploring the endless possibilities behind the simple prompt: The Gate. Through their narratives, they've uncovered themes of friendship, adventure, and new beginnings—who knows where their words will take them next?



**RAISING HEARTS  
AND MINDS**

*go with strength and courage*



# From the principal

Dear Families and Friends of Mary MacKillop Memorial School,

Inspired by Hope – Hope does not disappoint (Romans 5:5)



Lent is about opening ourselves to someone else, about stretching ourselves, so that we can become closer to God. I love Pope Francis' reframing of Lent which calls us from darkness into light. Pope Francis says "I invite every Christian community this Lent to set aside moments to rethink their lifestyles, times to examine their presence in society, and the contribution they make to its betterment."

At this time, we consciously and deliberately renew our commitment to Christ and his way of life as we renew our Baptisms. I remind the school community that we are in the season of Lent right up until Easter Sunday, which this year falls in the school holidays on 20th April, and as such we do not give out Easter Eggs prior to this time. From Easter Sunday we are in the season of Easter for 50 days which gives us more than enough time to hand out Easter Eggs and celebrate the joy of Easter, which we will be doing as a school community when we begin Term Two.

## Harmony Week



This week we celebrate Harmony Week. As a school we wore a splash of orange and participated in a special Harmony Day liturgy on Thursday. Being in harmony is part of our everyday values of living. We highlighted the cultural diversity of our nation and how to be inclusive to all. Money raised from the gold coin donation will go towards Project Compassion, assisting those in developing countries.

## Wellbeing at Mary MacKillop Memorial School



In the Week 6 newsletter I talked about wellbeing as an imperative at Mary Mac and the importance placed on making sure that our students are in a good place so that learning can take place.

Part of our continued work in this area has been to implement The Resilience Project as part of our wellbeing program for all students. If you have not ever read Hugh Van Cuylenburg's book, I strongly recommend that you do.



This initiative has come to fruition through a Commonwealth Grant received in June 2023. The Commonwealth Education Minister, Jason Clare announced that all schools in Australia would receive a one-off wellbeing 'boost' to support students' mental health and wellbeing. We are extremely excited that we have been able to use this funding to improve and help our student's wellbeing now and into the future.

Have a wonderful weekend,

Nicole  
Principal

*go with strength and courage*



# Catholic Identity

## News

### A Child's Prayer to St Joseph

It is with a heavy heart that I let you all know that Fr Olek will be moving on from the South-East at Easter time. He has been appointed as Assistant Parish Priest at Croydon Park.

I know that this news will bring much sadness to you all as Fr Olek has been a wonderful addition to the South-East Deanery and particularly popular with the staff, families and children at Mary Mac's. Please keep Fr Olek in your prayers.

## Feast of St Joseph: 19th March

As a school we celebrated the Feast of St Joseph with a whole school Mass. The original name of our school was St Joseph's of Penola and St Mary of the Cross MacKillop founded the Sisters of St Joseph. Therefore on this day we dedicate time to learning about this special saint.

Saint Joseph was the husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the foster father of Jesus. All we know about Joseph comes from the accounts of the nativity in the New Testament. Joseph married Mary and later discovered that she was pregnant. Knowing that this child was not his own but not wanting any harm to come to her, he sent her away. Joseph only brought her back when an angel came to him in a dream explaining that the child Mary carried inside of her was conceived from the Holy Spirit.

Joseph was a tradesman, commonly he is said to have been a carpenter, but it's possible he may have been a stone worker. He was said to have been a direct descendent of David, the great king of Israel.

Since Joseph is not mentioned in any accounts of Jesus' public life, his crucifixion, or resurrection, it is thought that Joseph died before Jesus started preaching.

St. Joseph is the patron saint of the Catholic Church, unborn children, fathers, immigrants and workers.

Despite knowing so little about Joseph, he still has two feast days in the Western church. In his capacity as the patron saint of Workers, 1st May was established as the Feast of "St. Joseph the Worker" in 1955.



St. Joseph, watch over me and care for me just as you cared for the child Jesus; and by your help, may I come to know your Son, and so grow in strength and wisdom and the favour of God.  
Amen.

## During Lent....

### Pope Francis calls us to....

- Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
- Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
- Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
- Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope,
- Fast from worries and trust in God.
- Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
- Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
- Fast from bitterness and fill your heart with joy.
- Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
- Fast from grudge and be reconciled.
- Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

### Veiled Images

If you enter a Catholic church at the moment during Lent you may notice that the images, crosses and crucifix's are covered or veiled in the Church. This is a tradition that is observed by many Catholics throughout the time of Passiontide, the last 2 weeks of lent. This act of veiling is 2 fold:

1. It heightens our awareness that we are close to the passion (the events from Jesus' agony in the garden through to His death on the cross) and that we should be looking closer at our Lenten journey and, for lack of a better term, ramp up our efforts in fasting, prayer and alms giving. When the veils are lifted on Good Friday (crucifix) and the Easter Vigil (images) it makes us notice these more closely.
2. It also signifies the fact that Jesus was now being searched for by the Jewish leaders. In the Gospel of John, 8:48-59 Jesus' teachings are found to be very confronting to the Jewish leaders and they went to take up stones to throw at him. Jesus then hid - this hiding is represented by the veiling.



# Catholic Identity

## St Joseph/Feast Day

On Wednesday we celebrated a whole school mass in honour of St Joseph Feast Day. Fr Olek reminded us that our school was once named St Joseph's of Penola. Upon reflection, students dedicated their time to learning about this special saint. Such learning deepened the students understanding of St Joseph, his life, deeds and legacy and how this can have an impact of us today.



St Joseph, who embraced truth and courage and was known by many titles including – the Dreamer; the Worker; the Protector; the Carpenter, and is the patron for the Josephite Sisters, founded by Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian Tenison Woods. St Joseph is also known as Joseph the Refugee, which highlighted his connection to the plight of asylum seekers and refugees. Joseph's story of flight as a refugee 2000 years ago was not dissimilar to refugee stories of today. Joseph chose to seek out asylum in another land and risked much to do so.



## Class Masses/Liturgies

Tuesday 6th June

Yr 6 Class Mass at 9.15am

Yr 2/3 Class liturgy at 10.30am

Tuesday 1st July

Yr 4/5 Class Mass at 9.15am

R/1 Liturgy at 10.30am

## Sunday Family Masses

Sunday 25th May

Sunday 22nd June

## Penola Parish

**Parish Priest: Fr Peter Zwaans**

SUNDAY 23rd March

Third Sunday of Lent

Gospel Luke 12: 1-9

## Whole School Masses Term One & Two

**All School/Parish Masses will take place  
in St Joseph Church.**

**Everyone is welcome!**

### TERM ONE

Tuesday 25th March Whole School  
Annunciation of the Lord Mass @ 9.15am

### TERM TWO

Please mark these dates in your personal  
calendars.

Friday 23rd May @ 9.15am – Mary Help  
of Christians

Friday 27th June @ 9.15am – Feast of  
the Sacred Heart



# Community News

## Counsellor's Corner

## Stronger Families: A Positive Parenting Conference

### Simple Ways to Build Your Child's Resilience

Building resilience in children is an important life skill. It starts at home, where parents play a key role in preparing their child for success—both in the playground and the classroom. Schools also reinforce this learning with support and encouragement from teachers and staff.

Help your child develop this essential skill with these strategies:

**Manage Emotions:** Teach them to name their feelings and practice calming techniques like deep breathing.

**Encourage Problem-Solving:** Ask, "What could you try?" instead of fixing things for them. Role-play social challenges.

**Embrace Mistakes as Learning:** Share your own mistakes and remind them that failure helps them grow.

**Boost Social Confidence:** Teach them to introduce themselves, join play, and use friendly body language.

**Promote Independence:** Let them handle small tasks and make daily decisions.

**Encourage Empathy:** Help them understand different viewpoints and explore social challenges through stories.

**Model Resilience:** Stay calm, solution-focused, and show them how to bounce back from setbacks.

Resilience can ensure a happy and fulfilling time at school and in other social situations 😊

Regards,  
Bec Baker



On Tuesday evening St Anthony's Millicent hosted the Catholic Schools Parent Association of South Australia's latest parenting conference.

Unfortunately, no families from our community attended, however, I can tell you that it was an exceptional evening with two incredible speakers who shared very valuable insights into parenting and the challenges that come with being a parent and supporting your child.

Madhavi Nawana Parker (google her!) spoke on "Helping Children and Teens Respond to Friendship Difficulties and Bullying" and Nathan 'Dubby' Want presented on "Navigating Inescapable Moments".

Here is a couple of takeaways from the evening... Madhavi's message around bullying was simple; it is always intentional, pre-planned, most likely occurs when there is a power imbalance between the parties, eg a child who sees another child with a lack of confidence, maybe not as academic, socially disadvantaged or physically challenged to name a few, and it is repetitive – not every once in a while, but daily, or at least every other day.

If your child is being bullied she advised to teach them never to be alone and vulnerable, to seek help and to tell. When your child is the bully focus on their goodness and look to support them to improve and repair.



# Community News

## Sports News

If your child is being bullied she advised to teach them never to be alone and vulnerable, to seek help and to tell. When your child is the bully focus on their goodness and look to support them to improve and repair.

Nathan focussed more on teens, however, all children become teens at some stage and adolescence can last up to the age of 25! Yikes!

A great topic of conversation was around mobile phones. Did you know that Australia is the leading country in the world for exploitation! That is frightening! The mobile phone advice from both presenters was – delay – delay – delay! A child's brain, frontal lobe, is nowhere near developed to cope with good decision-making that needs to be displayed when engaging in social media platforms. Should your child have a mobile phone, never in bedrooms, bathrooms and do the check ins regularly. They are vulnerable!

We thank Trish Jarvis, President of Catholic Schools Parent Association of South Australia for bringing this event to the South-East and for sharing her own challenges as a mother with two children, and to the St Anthony's Community for being wonderful hosts for this event.

If you would like to know more, just ask. Both presenters have written a number of short, simple and easy to read books that would benefit all parents.

Nicole

## Absentees

A reminder that if your child is absent from school, for any reason, it is important that this is communicated with the school. The Catholic Education system has advised all schools to follow up on unresolved absences with families. Your support and communication in this matter is greatly appreciated.

## Text Absentee Number

When texting the Absentee Line to explain your child's absence from school please make sure you put both their name **and reason** so it can be recorded properly.

**0459 799 596**

A special thank you to Rachel, Kellie, Jack and Beck for assisting at Millicent District Athletics Day on Tuesday!

We would like to congratulate the following students for their sporting achievements:

Congratulations to Oscar Rowland for qualifying for the Swim Team in Adelaide.

Congratulations to Levi Devlin who has made it to the next round of Regional SAPSASA Golf in Naracoorte.

## Professional Learning/Student Free Days 2025

**Term 1**  
Tuesday 11th March

**Term 3**  
Friday 5th September

**Term 2**  
Thursday 5th June  
Friday 6th June

**Term 4**  
Friday 24th October  
Thursday 11th December  
Friday 12th December

## House Points

**Cameron 398**

**McCormack 300**

**Woods MacKillop 307**

## Birthdays

We wish a Happy Birthday to those who celebrated in February. Poppy (16th), Rylee-J (18th), Elijah (23rd), Ted (25th), Otto (25th) and Bonnie (26th)

We wish a Happy Birthday to Amber and Brittany who celebrated their Birthday on the 7th of this month.





# WELCOME TO THE RESILIENCE PROJECT™

## Parents & Carers



### Why?



**1 in 4**  
adolescents have a  
mental illness.



**65%**  
of adolescents do  
not seek help.



**1 in 7**  
primary school children  
have a mental illness.



**1 in 5**  
adults will experience  
mental illness.



**Over 50%**  
of students are at risk of a poor learning  
mindset (anxiety + disengagement).

Source: National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare,  
Australia's Youth: Mental Illness

### About the program

TRP is committed to teaching positive mental health strategies to prevent mental ill health and build young people's capacity to deal with adversity.

We're proud to be implementing TRP's evidence-based whole school wellbeing program to support positive mental health in the classroom, staffroom and wider community.

Students will engage in weekly lessons to understand and strengthen their practice of Gratitude, Empathy, Mindfulness and Emotional Literacy, with regular opportunity for parent/carer involvement.



### Get involved with TRP@HOME

Scan the QR code or [click here](#) to find activities and resources to implement the GEM+EL principles at home.



### Evidence-based

TRP's School Partnership Program has been independently evaluated by [The University of Adelaide](#) and [The University of Melbourne](#).



Scan the QR code to learn more about how the program is significantly lowering the risk of mental illness.

### the imperfects

hosted by  
hugh van cuylenburg  
ryan shelton  
& josh van cuylenburg



### The imperfects podcast

[The imperfects](#) is hosted by Hugh van Cuylenburg, Ryan Shelton and Josh van Cuylenburg, celebrates just how imperfectly perfect we all are. Together, they chat to a variety of people who bravely share their struggles and imperfections alongside valuable learnings we can apply to our own lives and use to support the teachings of TRP in the classroom. Guests include Nathan Buckley, Grace Tame, Jack Steele, Zan Rowe, Michael Klim, Billy Slater, Lael Stone, Pat Cummins, Tim Minchin and many more.







# photo gallery

## School Board Community BBQ



## St Joseph Feast Day





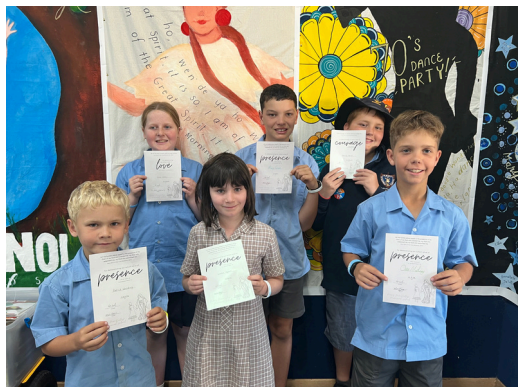


# photo gallery

## Harmony Day



## 4/5 Assembly







# photo gallery

## Icy Pole Day JAW Fundraiser



## Walk/Ride to School Day

