

# BETHANY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Term: 3 | Week 4 | Friday 6th August, 2021

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



Dear Bethany Families,

On Monday 26th July, the Church celebrated the feast of **St Joachim & St Anne - Mary's parents and Jesus' earthly grandparents**.

We know very few facts about St. Joachim and St. Anne. Tradition says that after years of childlessness, an angel appeared to tell Anne and Joachim that they would finally have a child.

Anne promised to dedicate this child to God. They performed their parenting responsibilities exceptionally well as they raised their daughter **Mary** in faith, humility and love.



The celebration of **Grandparents Day** has become an important community event in Catholic schools. Sadly, we were not able to mark this day together on our school grounds this year. However, many still marked it in other ways.

For grandparents, one of the greatest joys in this stage of life is being able to put time into nurturing a special **relationship** with a grandchild. As society changes, the role of grandparents changes. But some things about grandparents are constant and timeless.

They play a pivotal role in **imparting wisdom** and **common sense**. They are equipped to do this because they have lived longer, have had greater experience, and have noticed the cycles and patterns of life.

They help grandchildren better understand who they are by **transmitting the Faith** as well as **family values** and teaching about **family traditions** by **telling stories** about their parent's childhood.

As a child, I never tired of listening to my grandparents tell stories of their lives and lessons for living – I carry these with me to this day.

The role and positive influence of **grandparents and grandparent-figures** particularly during this time of uncertainty is so important in providing children with encouragement, hope and perspective.



"Nonna"

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE CONTINUED

We also know that this relationship is reciprocal. Grandchildren love and admire their grandparents or grandparent-figures with a sense of wonder, appreciation and love that is unconditional.

The feast of **Saints Joachim and Anne** provides us with an opportunity each year not to be missed - to give thanks for the treasures that are grandparents and grandparent-figures. As St Matthew tells us, **“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”** (Mt 6:21).

May God continue to bless all grandparents and grandparent-figures - whether they are **on Earth or in Heaven**.

NB: This year Pope Francis instituted the celebration of **World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly**. It will now be held each year on the fourth Sunday of July, close to the feast of Saints Joachim and Anne. The theme of the First World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly was - **'I am with you always'** (Matt:28:20).



# PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE CONTINUED

**Saints** are a diverse group of characters with varied and interesting stories. The Church recognises more than 10,000 saints most of whom we don't even know. All have one thing in common - during their earthly life they dedicated themselves to **the service and the mission of Christ**.

## So which saint do you know best?

I would imagine that the answer to this question for most would largely depend on perspective, experience and situation.

- If you have misplaced your keys, it may be **St Anthony**.
- A traveller would say **St Christopher**.
- For teachers it could be **St Thomas Aquinas**.
- Nature lovers would look to **St Francis of Assisi**.
- Lost causes - **Saint Jude**.
- Australia's first saint.....



The early local Church didn't know Mary MacKillop as a person who would one day be recognised as a saint. It chose **Mary Help of Christians** as its first patron. The main reason for this was that during the early days of settlement the Mass was not widely celebrated in Australia. Rather it was the Rosary that kept the faith alive during this time. This changed in 2010 when **St Mary MacKillop** was officially recognised as Australia's first saint by the Universal Church.

## So what makes St Mary of the Cross special for Aussies?

One possible answer is that she mirrors back to us something about ourselves, our character as a people living in this remote and ancient *Great South Land of the Holy Spirit*.

Like all who have come to settle in Australia, Mary was a daughter of immigrant parents. The year that Mary was born, her father, **Alexander MacKillop** became bankrupt and had difficulty in providing for the family due to his sometimes erratic and argumentative personality and his propensity to want to help others - often at the expense of his own family. So at the age of fourteen, Mary had to go out to work to help support her family. Mary's life was chequered with many amazing graces but also with difficulty, disappointment, illness and tragedy. Her love of God and neighbour was formed out of **empathy through adversity**.

## So what makes St Mary's story one we can look to and learn from today?

Mary's greatest legacy is that she started **Catholic schools** for the poor and marginalised through her *Sisters of St Joseph (The Brown Joeys)*. The first school being in a stable in the small town of Penola in South Australia. *She saw a need and she did something about it!*

# PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE CONTINUED

**Mary never held a grudge.** Even when she was excommunicated from the Church she loved, she treated those who persecuted her with **mercy**. Her belief that God was a “good God” and that He worked for the care of all in His own time, was her guiding principle. She believed everyone deserved **respect, love, dignity** and **forgiveness**.

In a world that is often reactionary her **strong, quiet** and **constant** message of **Christian Love** and her unstinting belief in the **goodness of God** (God’s Providence) can seem to our cynical modern hearts to be naively idealistic.

This example of her faith provides inspiration and hope for us all - particularly in these most challenging of times.

Until next time,

Sergio Rosato  
**Principal**

- ▶ The Feast of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop - Australia’s First Saint is celebrated on Sunday 8th August.
- ▶ The Feast of Mary Help of Christians - Australia’s Patron is celebrated each year on 24th May.



Mr Rosato at the School House in Penola SA 2016



## ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this past month has allowed you to find some “silver linings” amongst the new routines of lockdown, remote learning and working from home.

Our school goal this year at Bethany is focussed on improving reading and comprehension for all students. The staff and students have worked hard during Term 1 and 2 and will continue to focus on this area for the remainder of the year.

Kaye Lowe wrote an article for parents published by PETAA (Primary English Teaching Association Australia) one of the largest associations for primary educators in Australia. Here she shared a parent’s guide to help children with reading and writing at home.

*You make a difference to your children’s reading journey. Your role as an advocate for your children’s reading success cannot be overestimated. It has a direct impact on the ease and confidence with which they pursue their reading and writing.*

*It is the joy and love of sharing a good book on a nightly basis that sets the foundation for their reading success, and ensures that reading is given the priority it deserves. Reading regularly with someone who cares is the inspiration that all readers deserve.*

*As parents and carers, you create the home context for reading and set the tone for how reading is valued. Fear, anxiety, stress and humiliation have no place in the reading experience. The ‘payoff’ for reading together has to be worth coming back to night after night after night. When reading together is the best time of your children’s day and the best time of your day, it is worth turning up. The right book infused with fun, laughter, and love goes a long way in creating life-long readers who in thirty years’ time recall with joy being snuggled on the lounge with you and their favourite book.*

### **The proven benefits of reading with your child**

*Parents and carers who read aloud with children in a secure, safe and comfortable context motivate their children to read. Parents’ perceptions, values, attitudes, and expectations play an important role in influencing their children’s attitudes toward reading, and subsequent literacy development. When children share a book with someone who makes them feel special, the attitude that reading is pleasurable is transferred to other reading encounters.*

#### **Relationship building**

*At the core of reading is a relationship and it is the bond between children and parents that is enhanced through reading together. It only takes ten minutes a day to build this relationship.*

#### **Children’s reading improves**

*The research is conclusive: When parents successfully support their children’s literacy learning from an early age, everyone benefits. When teachers and parents work together to support children’s reading and academic success, learning outcomes for all children improve.*

# ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE CONTINUED

## *Children read more*

*Students who read with their parents are better prepared for school. They begin school with knowledge of book language and familiarity with concepts of print. They understand how books work and have many more exposures to text types and vocabulary.*

## *Children's self-esteem improves*

*Knowing someone cares enough to take time out of a busy schedule to give you undivided attention around a book makes a significant difference to how students perceive themselves as learners and readers. When parents show an interest in their children's learning, children respond positively.*

## *Reading unites families through shared stories*

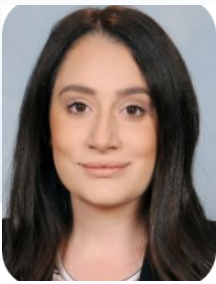
*When a family reads together, stories form a common ground for communicating. Stories bind families and help students make sense of where they fit in the world.*



**If you do nothing else during remote learning except some form of reading everyday - you have done enough!**

Go gently,  
Rebecca Lloyd  
Assistant Principal

**Mrs Lloyd**



# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



In Week 2, parent communication was distributed via Skoolbag of a notification from Bishop Vincent to pause the implementation of the draft new curriculum for Religious Education, 'Living Life to the Full'. This pause will not impact student learning that has already begun in Religious Education at Bethany for Term 3. Throughout the remainder of Term 3, students will continue their learning journeys by exploring and celebrating significant feasts and people in our Catholic faith.

The first feast that is encountered will be celebrated this Friday, August 6: the feast of The Transfiguration of the Lord. Bethany students will be invited to celebrate this via Seesaw/ Google classroom on Friday. Parents are invited to join with their children in this celebration.

On Sunday 8th August, we celebrate the feast of Australia's first saint, Saint Mary of the Cross Mackillop. Students at Bethany have begun to learn about the life of Mary Mackillop and will celebrate her feast via Seesaw or Google Classroom on Monday 9th August. You are invited to participate celebrating this feast in prayer with your children.

Below are the lyrics to a Peter Kearney song about Mary Mackillop that students in Years 1-6 may recall was sung in 2020 by Mr Rosato, Mr Green and Miss Joseph. This song provides a glimpse into the life of Mary Mackillop as a child.

## **MARY WHEN YOU WERE A GIRL by Peter Kearney**

Oh Mary when you were a girl  
The city of Melbourne was more like a town  
And you knew the joys of the world  
In the days when you were a girl.

**Born in Australia, a child of the sun  
The bush never far away;  
There were horses to ride and creeks you could swim  
And God was in everything.  
Yes, you knew the joys of the world  
In the days when you were a girl.**

Oh Mary, when you were a girl  
Your Dad lost his job and the family was poor  
And you knew the cares of the world  
In the days when you were a girl.



# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**The eldest of eight, you grew up so fast  
Your mother depended on you  
And your father was sad, so often away -  
There was much you had to do.  
Yes, you knew the cares of the world  
In the days when you were a girl.**

**Oh Mary when you were a girl  
You were plain but beautiful, deep were your eyes  
And you knew the dreams of the world  
In the days when you were a girl.**

**You stood on the beaches and watched as the waves  
Melted the castles of sand  
And you trusted that God was caring for you  
And reached for a guiding hand.  
Yes, you knew the dreams of the world  
In the days when you were a girl.**



In following weeks, our students will celebrate the feast of The Assumption of Mary (August 15) and Saint Padre Pio (September 23).

**Mrs Baldacchino**



# LIBRARY

## Students in Years 3-6



Many of you had accepted the challenge to read 20 books by 20th August.

Great news! Due to the current circumstances, the date for you to finalise your reading log has been moved to **Friday 3rd September**.

Remember you can go to <https://online.det.nsw.edu.au/prc/home.html> and use your PRC Username and Password to log the books you have read.

If you have forgotten your PRC login name and password, you can email Mrs Emmett through the Bethany office to obtain these.

While you are unable to borrow from our school library, you can go to

[https://ceop.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en\\_GB/13988](https://ceop.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en_GB/13988)

and work through the Google slides to borrow **ebooks** from our **elibrary**.

If you are a member of Penrith Library you can also login to their website to find the many **e-resources** that you can borrow during this "stay at home" time.

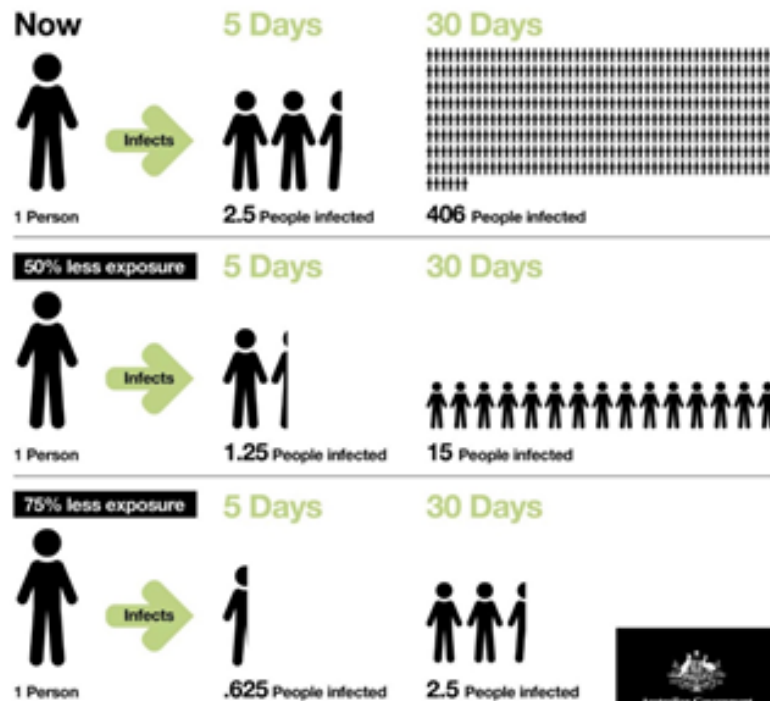


**Mrs Emmett**

# STAYING SAFE

## Why social distancing matters

Social distancing of 1.5 metres decreases the exposure of coronavirus (COVID-19).



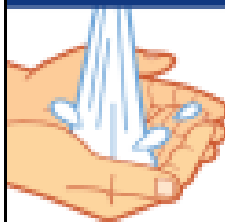
coronavirus.nsw.gov.au

## Practise simple hygiene by washing hands regularly

1 Wet hands

2 Apply soap

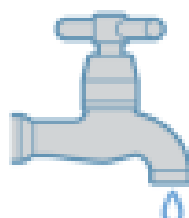
3 Lather & scrub



4 Rinse hands

5 Turn off tap

6 Dry hands



Spend 20 seconds washing your hands.

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