Dear Parents and Friends of our School Community

May we live our **vision**: A School with Altitude

May we embrace our **motto**: Strength in Gentleness

May we be guided by our **mission** that we share the Good News of Jesus Christ and promote the Kingdom of God; treat each person with gentleness, dignity and respect; strive to challenge each other to become independent creative co-learners through a self-disciplined search for academic, emotional, physical and spiritual fulfillment and develop each person’s unique gifts and talents so that our community and world can become a better place.

**This is our collective responsibility.**

Possibilities and challenges: those are the yardsticks as we stand at the gates of the new school year. This week we have particularly welcomed new Kindergarten children to the beginning of thirteen years of formal education. We are grateful for the close partnership that St Patrick’s has with the parents and families of these very young people. This is foundational to supporting Kindergarten children.

The welcome to the Year 7 students is equally important as they step up to growing responsibilities to be independent learners. As I spoke with these students, it was obvious that they were pretty comfortable with the transition to high school.

I, too, have had a very warm welcome to this community. Strength in gentleness is the essence of that welcome. There have been flowers on my doorstep and treats arriving with a smile. People are interested and naturally curious and I am keen to meet people. Although I loved the western plains, I am very happy to make my home in the mountains. In fact, I feel like I have ‘come home’ and the cooler nights are pure bliss, although I may not be so enthusiastic about those cooler nights in July. Time will tell.

The handover last week by Phil Stubbs was certainly gentle and generous. In his humility, he fondly, and with admiration, acknowledged the strength of the St Patrick’s community and the commitment of the teachers. Although he steps back from active involvement in the school, he will remain a member of the St Patrick’s family. For a short time, his retirement has been postponed, as he has been given another challenge to be the interim principal at Bombala, due to the resignation of the previous principal during the holidays. We wish him safe travelling.

When I asked Connor how much he loved school after one day, this is what he did. I hope that every student sees their schooling here at St Patrick’s in such a positive way. May 2014 be a wonderful year for us all.

Kind regards

*Mrs Frances Robertson*

Principal
Kinder arrives...
and Year 7 find a home in high school...

Welcome to the secondary campus

Some hints to making the adjustment to secondary school easier

- Use your timetable to pack your bag the night before so that you don’t forget anything in the morning rush.
- Always keep a school hat in your bag so it is there when you need it.
- Have a copy of your timetable above your desk or somewhere in your room for easy referral.
- Colour code your timetable for easy reading- for example colour in all your English lessons in yellow and your Tech lessons in blue. If you need a second copy of your timetable come and see me.
- Remember that you are not expected to remember everything in your first week - it is really important to ask questions.

I can be contacted on 64521721 if any parents have any questions or concerns.

Mrs Pam Fletcher
Secondary Coordinator
A message from the School Board

On behalf of St Patrick’s Parish School Board I would like to welcome all our existing families, students, carers, teachers and ancillary staff back to an exciting and challenging 2014 school year. The Board welcomes our new Principal, Mrs Frances Robertson to our school.

The Board looks forward to meeting the new developments and challenges that will further enhance our school in 2014, as well as nurturing and strengthening the new partnership between St Patrick’s Parish School and Mary MacKillop College in Isabella Plains, Canberra.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new families and students into our school. We hope your journey with St Patrick’s Parish School is an enjoyable experience for your families.

Erika Statham
Board Chair

The journey begins by living the sacred

Our school theme this year is: “The Sacred.” This theme follows well The Year of Grace and Faith. To have faith in God’s presence with us graces each moment of our lives. Recognition and awareness of grace means each moment, each situation is sacred.

Recognising the sacred, (the holy, the blessed) in our lives requires action or awareness on our part. We can easily take so much of life for granted. If we see all as sacred this transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary. Our conversations, listening, our work, teaching, parenting, experience of life and prayer - all become blessed. Our challenge in “Living the Sacred” is to really develop awareness and to share this with our families and community.

The media dwells where sacredness has been lost. It is seen in mindless violence, war, consumerism, environmental degradation and brokenness in lives.

Sacredness is the reverence for life, for one another for culture, for religious practice. It is an understanding that life, in all forms, is intrinsically valuable, and should not be mindlessly wasted or exploited. To live with sacredness is to live with a sense of meaning, gratitude and awareness.

This is what it is to recognize the sacred. It’s about awakening and awareness. It’s about becoming more whole, more loving, more compassionate and revering all of life as sacred. It’s about deepening our relationship with the living Spirit of God in the world to transform one’s life and one’s heart.

It’s about walking the Way that Jesus walked so as to be able to “live fully and love fully”. It’s a call for wholeness, a call for connection to meaning and a sacred experience of this life. It’s an invitation to trust God even in the face of life’s difficulties. A turning to the sacred is a turning to the grace and blessing of our loving God.

Paul Mackay
Religious Education Coordinator

and coming events....

Have you looked at the calendar on the school’s website?

There are important dates for swimming (long-distance and Primary and Secondary carnivals), school photos (K-6/family and 7-10 groupings), Year 7 camp, immunisations, School Opening Liturgy, K-6 Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences, Year 5-10 Police Liaison visit, Drama workshops, General School Board meeting...it’s all there! There are also quite a few notes arriving home relating to many of the above events and these often need a response from parents.