Peace Joy Love Hope

These are the enduring messages for Christmas celebrations. Just as we look both ways when we cross the road, Christmas is a time for looking both ways; not just left and right, but back to the past and then forward to the future.

Advent is the time to slow down a little, prepare, reflect on what has been and to be hopeful for what is to come. It is a time to remember the first Christmas, humble and unassuming as it was. The urgency of modern Christmas preparations means that we can forget that a baby was born. That baby's birth means our lives have been changed for over two thousand years. And we can have peaceful, joyful, loving hearts and we can look to the future with hope.

This time of year is also the time to look back over the achievements of the year; as students, as staff and as a school. We can hold our heads high in so many quarters; a building project is underway, there are improved NAPLAN results in both Year 3 and Year 5, significant community service has been undertaken by students, there has been consolidation of the pathway to MacKillop College for senior years, success in sport is evident, we have held numerous parents' and grandparents' forums, our first Shakespearean performance enlivened the ‘secret garden’, and we have the continuing wonderful commitment by parents with fund-raising events including an inspiring Art Show, a record-breaking community Fair and catering that leaves people asking for more...

It’s been a very good year. And it gives us hope for the future for St Patrick's.

Yours sincerely

Frances Robertson
Principal
**Student Leadership**

Leadership is the responsibility of everyone; whether this is accepting personal responsibility, working as part of a team or using organisational and communication skills to bring about a good outcome for others. Ultimately, it is about service. Therefore, we applaud every young person who puts up their hand for this purpose.

It is a real privilege to be part of the process for the appointment of the student leaders for the coming year. The process for student leadership involves the nomination, the speech, voting and interview.

Nominations determine if a student proceeds to making a speech, and voting determines if a student is invited for an interview. The votes are counted, and both staff and student votes have equal weight.

The interview is a chance for a student to practise this important skill, as well as to help ‘split’ a pair of candidates if the voting is very close. It is normal to go with the ‘voice of the votes’. An interview is also a chance for a candidate to shine in a different forum.

In the end, a representative must be just that; representative of the students and have the support of the student body and staff. Because voting was reasonably close, all candidates had the opportunity to have an interview this year.

**The Primary Leadership Team will be Ava Barrett, Molly Brabham, Tomas Carton and Jack O’Donnell**

**The Secondary Leadership Team is Anna Behr, Tilly Thomas and Caitlin Hain, Damian Fletcher, Dom Holgate, and Thomas Hain.**

**The School Captains for 2016 will be Caitlin Hain and Thomas Hain.**
Dear Parents/Carers and Students

We have been informed of the sports dates for 2016 by Catholic Education. You will notice that our carnivals will be arranged around these dates.

Mr Lawley is the coordinator of all external sport in 2016. If you have any questions related to participation in external sport please direct these to Mr Lawley.

Unfortunately, sometimes dates can change due to the weather or other emergencies. If this is the case, we will inform the school community as soon as possible.

February
12 - Primary summer trials for basketball, cricket and tennis (Young)
16 - Primary Southern Region Swimming (Narooma)
22 - Secondary Golf Championships (Batemans Bay)

March
1 - Primary Archdiocesan Swimming (Queanbeyan)
4 - Secondary Archdiocesan Swimming (Goulburn)
7 - Primary Canberra-Goulburn Winter Trials (Queanbeyan)
31 - Catholic Primary Schools Swimming (Sydney)

April
27 - Combined Catholic Colleges Swimming (Sydney)
29 - Secondary Archdiocesan Football trials and gala day (Canberra)

May
3 - Primary Southern Region Cross Country (Cobargo)
4 - Primary and secondary touch trials (Cootamundra)
13 - Secondary Canberra-Goulburn Teams Tennis Championships
18 - Primary and Secondary Archdiocesan Cross Country (Canberra)
27 - Secondary Canberra-Goulburn Basketball Championships (Canberra)

June
6 - Primary Rugby Union Trials (Yass)
17 - CPS/CCC Cross Country (Sydney)

July
28 - Secondary Canberra-Goulburn Netball Championships (Canberra)

August
18 - Primary and Secondary Archdiocesan Athletics (Canberra)

September
16 - Secondary CCC Athletics (Sydney)
19 - Primary CPS Athletics (Sydney)

Regards

Mark van Ommen
Assistant Principal
Canteen News

Volunteers - Thank you!

Thursday 10/12, 9.15am Sara Souter
Friday 11/12, 10am Sue Bottom
Wednesday 16/12, 10am Linda Quodling, 1.15pm Howard & Elsa (Mini-canteen)

This Friday’s meal deal: Beef Pie + Drink = $5

A reminder that all IOUs (staff and students) need to be paid before the end of the term. Please contact me if you need to!

Wishing you all a safe and happy festive season, thank you to all of the families, volunteers, staff and students who have supported the St Pat’s healthy school canteen in 2015

Caroline Blyton
Canteen Manager

Thank you, thank you, thank you

A huge thank you from the P&F executive team to all the parents and friends who helped with the Cooma Races catering last Saturday. Our cleaning team on Friday was lead by Ruby Curtis, with Sue Bottom, Ann-Maree Madden and Marlene Bottom assisting. Thanks to Tammy Byrne and Marjorie Revelant for organising the logistics of food and equipment. On Saturday a band of willing volunteers worked from 8.00am until 6.00pm. It was great to see so many volunteers, as this ensured people only had to work for a couple of hours. Special thanks to Father Mick for cooking up a storm on the BBQ over the busy lunch period and Tammy Byrne for coordinating the day.

A fantastic profit of $3700 was raised for the day, which go towards outfitting the new facilities in the Secondary.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the P&F Executive team for 2015 for their tireless work throughout the year: Vice President Tammy Byrne, Secretary Brian Williams, Treasurer Sara Souter, Catering Coordinator Marjorie Revelant and other key members of the P&F team, Ruby Curtis, Melinda Barrett, Kylie Schultz, Marlene Bottom & Lucinda George. Also a big thank you also goes to the parents and friends of the school who contribute in so many ways through offering their time to assist at events, baking when necessary, working on the BBQs, helping at Mother’s and Father’s Day stalls, the Inspired Art Show and Bazaar Fair Committees (two amazing events this year). The list is endless, along with the gratitude.

On behalf of the P&F Executive I wish each and every one of you a very Merry Christmas and successful 2016. Enjoy the school holidays with your children.

Karen McGufficke
President P&F 2015
### In the service of others

On Thursday 3 November a number of students volunteered to help out at the Senior Citizens Annual Lunch at the Ex-services Club.

The students firstly had lunch together in the bistro and then received instructions on table service. The students spent the afternoon serving the elderly their roast ham and turkey lunch and their Christmas pudding dessert. They also spent time chatting to people and sharing laughter.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon and learnt new skills. The staff at the club showed support, friendliness and care in welcoming us as part of the team.

Below were the students involved, Matilda Thomas, Anna Behr, Caitlin Hain, Bas de Ruiter, Damian Fletcher, Thomas Hain, Lucianna Clarke and Dominic Holgate.

Matilda Thomas

### St Vincent de Paul Thanksgiving Prayer Service

Last week students participated in our annual Thanksgiving Prayer Service. Thank you to students and families who were supportive with gifts and donations. Your support was appreciated by the Saint Vincent de Paul Society. Ruby Curtis, George Dykes and Clare Nowland were present to receive the gifts. Students sang carols and reflected on the Christmas story. The message of love was conveyed through story, readings and images. Students gave thanks for the many blessings received throughout the year.

Thank you to one and all for your generosity.
Although we have recognised only a sample of our students on this page, there are many more who can feel a sense of pride and satisfaction that they have met or surpassed their personal goals this year. Without the hard work, dedication and professionalism of our teaching, support staff and relief teachers, many of these achievements would remain only a dream.
Minnie Vinnies Social Justice Day

On Friday 27 November the St Patrick’s Minnie Vinnies group travelled to the Australian Catholic University in Canberra to participate in the inaugural Minnie Vinnies Social Justice Day. There were around 170 primary school children from schools all over our Diocese. The group heard stories about evidence of Social Justice throughout the world.

We also put together simple hampers of toothpaste, tooth brush and soap. We designed happy bags that were to be distributed by the ‘Night Van’ throughout Canberra. We also learnt that St Vincent de Paul in the ACT takes about 23 000 phone calls per year, requesting help of some kind.

During the day we also got to play some fun interactive games with other students and had HUGE muffins for morning tea. Finally, a huge thank you to our parents who transported our students to this event.

Some thoughts from our students who attended the Minnie Vinnies Social Justice Day:

“I realised that there are a lot of people on the streets doing it tough and that St Vincent de Paul does a lot of good.” – Tom Carton

“I realised that there were a lot more people volunteering to help the homeless than I thought.” – Lucy Thornton

“I learnt that St Vincent de Paul doesn't just focus on the homeless, but also on people who struggle paying electricity bills.” – Ivy McGufficke

“It was really good meeting other kids our age and hearing their thoughts about Minnie Vinnies.” – Nowell Utrush

“I learnt that the night patrol van handed supplies to anyone who turned up.” – Julia Bottom

“I learnt that someone raised money for Minnie Vinnies by sleeping in his car for 103 days.” Lilly Janota

“I learnt that even people who aren’t homeless can have a chat with the people on ‘Night Patrol’, because sometimes just having a chat with someone can make a big difference.” – Natalie Revelant

“I found the day was inspirational, listening to the guest speakers. I learnt that social justice is about everyone being treated equally and having a fair world.” – Georgia Rumball

“It was exciting to find out how many people were in Minnie Vinnies and to know that they really cared for other people who weren’t as lucky as we are.” Chloe Hemphill

“I learnt that St Vinnies have a Night Patrol van that helps people who are homeless. Also there are a lot of kids in Minnie Vinnies in our Canberra Goulburn Diocese that care about homeless people.” – Annalese Buckley
Advice for parents on holiday reading for younger students

There are many excellent children’s books that students can engage with over the school holidays. The Children’s Book Council of Australia (CBCA) Book of the Year Awards 2015 is a good starting point for recommendations, or try their previous award winners.

When parents are selecting a book, the most important advice is to choose one that will generate enthusiasm for and an interest in reading, leaving the student with a feeling of achievement and motivated to read another book.

Remember:

- ensure the book is at a recreational reading level for the student (5 or more words on a page that the reader is unsure of or does not know indicates it is too difficult)
- identify a suitable genre, theme or topic that is interesting to the reader
- suggest books where there are other books by that author. This will make finding the next book easier
- speak to the local librarian. They are experts in children’s literature and will be able to make recommendations specific to each child. They also know the most current popular books.

Uniform Business

Got a spare uniform no longer needed? Drop in clean uniforms to the school and we will use them in the 2nd hand uniform shop.

Need another uniform? St Patrick’s second hand uniform shop will be open on Saturday 12 December 12-1pm. (Please park in Vale St and walk down to the shed, so as not to block driveways in the lane.)
Martin Schoo Basketball Competition for Year 7 and 9

Over the last two weeks St Patrick's has been competing in the Martin Schoo basketball competition against Monaro High School. This *is an annual event that is played in memory of Martin Schoo, a past student from both schools*, who had a love of basketball.

This year saw the level of competition amongst the eight teams improve again with a number of very close games played. **Congratulations to our Year 7 girls team that won their game 39-36**, whilst the St Patrick's Year 10 girls lost in a thrilling match 24-22. The Year 7 boys also showed great promise with their score line of 49-27 not doing justice to how well the students played and how close the game was. **Congratulations to Monaro High on winning the shield again this year.** All students from both schools demonstrated great sportsmanship and friendship between the teams and that is fantastic to see. Mr Lawley would like to thank all of the students for their commitment and participation, Mrs Rachael Schouten for coaching the Year 7 boys team, students Olivia Barron and Erin Pearce for their coaching of the Year 7 and Year 9 girls teams and Ms Daley for her help during the competition. A very big thank you also must go to the friends and family that came to support the students.

Mr Lawley
Progress with the new Visual Arts and TAS Building

First ‘Cooma crop’ graduating from St Mary MacKillop College
Drumbeat at Celebrate Ability

Year 5 students supported “Celebrate Ability” last Friday with their drum circle in Centennial Park. It was a great day with many different community groups represented. Students, through drumbeat, have experienced teamwork, working in harmony, rhythms of life, aspects of co-ordination, chant and percussion and return to the safety of “home-base.” They shared their skills with the community and others were invited to sit down and join them as part of the drum circle. Congratulations to Year 5 with your involvement in drum-beat this year.

Student Artscape 2015

The Student Artscape exhibition opened on Saturday at the Raglan Gallery and was a great success with lots of positive feedback.

Our students’ artwork is featuring there, alongside students from other local high schools.

This is an annual exhibition support local young artists.
Colour Day commemorated the life of former Visual Arts teacher, Sabina Kovats. Sabina was instrumental in setting up Relay for Life in this area and all money raised on this special day will go towards that charity. Year 10 students were keen to involve all students throughout the school and they organised many activities.
The focus of this year's survey was to establish what young people perceive to be the main barriers to success at school and at work.

Nearly 19,000 young Australians aged between 15-19 years took part, sharing their thoughts and opinions on the issues that matter to them.

The survey revealed that more than half of young people believe there are barriers which will prevent them from reaching their goals after school, citing academic ability, financial difficulty and lack of jobs as the main barriers to success.

It also showed that young people have become increasingly concerned about alcohol and drugs, equity and discrimination. Young people continue to report coping with stress and school/study problems as their two biggest personal concerns.

In an environment of high youth unemployment and a rapidly changing job market, the results of the survey are invaluable. **Young people have a huge stake in the future. It is critical that we listen to their fears for the future and that policy makers respond accordingly.**

**Readings Eggs**

Please continue to nurture a love of books and reading by reading with and to your child over the holidays. You will be providing an invaluable service to the educational life of your child by doing so.

If you have a subscription to Reading Eggs/Reading Eggspress, please have your child continue their reading journey by using this site. Reading Eggspress has a range of reading material for your child to use and enjoy. The subscription is valid until June 2016.

Happy Holidays and Happy Reading!!