**Principal's Message**

**Harmony Day 2015: Many Stories - One Australia**

This Friday March 20th

An important reminder that Harmony Day will be celebrated at St Mary’s this Friday March 20th. It is a day of cultural respect and celebration of diversity. Our Australian Story is diverse. We come from many countries around the world and we each make up the pages of the bigger Australian story that we share today. Our stories may be heart wrenching but also inspirational. To help celebrate Harmony Day we are asking that the children come to school in their “National Costume” representing the many colours and cultures of our School Community. If your child does not have a national costume we ask that they be dressed in the Harmony Day colour of “Orange”.

As previously advised the students will begin school at 11:30am this coming Friday.

The timetable for the day is as follows:

11:30am: School begins - students line up in the Quadrangle for flag raising. Children are to bring their lunch to school.  
**The canteen will not be open for lunch orders.** Throughout the afternoon all children will be entertained and will practise their dance steps in preparation for the evening family dance with our special dance artist Maria Keilty from the dance company “I Can Dance”. Maria will be teaching the children various cultural dances to be performed later in the evening.

3:00pm: All parents/families are invited to St Mary’s School for a special family activity in family groupings.

4:00pm: Harmony Day Prayer Service, in the Auditorium.

4:45pm: Students dismissed from their classrooms. All children will be dismissed from their class at 4.45pm and then be supervised by their parents for the Family dinner and dance. Please remember to bring your own picnic dinner if you haven’t put in an order for the “Sausage Sizzle”. The Parents and friends Association have organised the “Sausage Sizzle”. Order forms were sent home last this week. Tables and chairs will be set up in the Quadrangle (or in the Auditorium if the weather is unsuitable). Snacks and drinks will be sold by the Parents and Friends Association.

4:45pm: Dinner and dancing to begin in the Quadrangle.

6.30pm: Conclusion of Harmony Day.

* We would love some parents to help us set up at 11.40am after the parade.
House Cross Country
Congratulation to Gold House on winning the House Cross Country championship. It was wonderful to see all children from Prep to Grade 6 getting out and being so energetic and active. Thanks to our Physical Education Teacher Neesha Bateson, on her expert organisation of the House Cross Country championships.

School Review
As mentioned in previous newsletters St Mary’s School is currently undergoing a School Review. This occurs in all Catholic schools every 4 years. The process combines a structural approach to internal school improvement planning with a component of external assessment and accountability. Today we welcomed Mr John Renowden and Mr Paul Delahunty employed by the Catholic Education Office as external validators, here to begin the validation process. John and Paul visited all classrooms, met staff and will now go through our written documentation and school data as well as evidence of our school’s achievements over the last 4 years. John and Paul will return to St Mary’s on the 14th and 16th of April to meet with Fr Declan, parents, students, staff and the school’s leadership team to discuss their outcomes and set directions for our school for the next 4 years. I continue to look forward to working with all families in this important area of review, reflection and evaluation of our school’s operations.

Have a great week
Greg White, Principal

Centenary of ANZAC Day

This week the 5/6 community welcomed a guest speaker from the Dandenong Community. Ken Master’s, whose father Arthur Masters fought in WW1. Arthur travelled with the Australian Defence Force from Perth to Egypt in 1915. Ken treated the Year 5/6 community to some fascinating insights from his father’s war journal. Ken shared personal stories about his father’s experiences and helped us to understand some of what his father endured during WW1. It was a memorable and moving experience for all the children to hear the stories and entries from Arthur’s war journal.

Thank you Ken for sharing your family’s incredible history with us.
2015 Cross Country
St Mary’s Writing Competition #1 2015

Friday saw the announcement of our latest Writing Competition winners. Congratulations to David, Maria, Diana & Chanumi.

The words Hat, Summer and Rules had to be used in a piece of writing to emphasise the need for us to be SunSmart.

The writing competition runs once or twice per term to encourage children to write for a purpose.

Our “Easter” theme will be a persuasive writing piece.

Help Wanted!
A family at St Mary’s is looking for some help getting their child to and from school. They live in Dandenong. If you can help please let the Office know.

St Mary’s Parish Education Board
Chairperson: Father Declan O’Brien Parish Pastoral Associate: Mrs Cate Kavanagh Principal: Mr Greg White
Deputy Principal: Mr Terry Gardiner Religious Education Coordinator: Miss Amerall Blom
St Mary’s Teacher Rep: Miss Stephanie Meade Parent Rep: Miss Cathy Buchanan, Victor Brillantes, Chris Yugusuk
St John’s School Board Representative: Mrs Kerry Cronjaeger

St Mary’s News
Term 1 Issue 7

School Contacts
Principal: Mr Greg White Deputy Principal: Mr Terry Gardiner
School Secretaries: Mrs Sandra Higginbotham, Mrs Jane Merchant and Mrs Anissa Benson
School Office Hours: 8.30am - 4.15pm Phone: 9791-7650 Fax: 9792-4827
Email: principal@smdandenong.catholic.edu.au Website: www.smdandenong.catholic.edu.au
Uniform Shop The Uniform Shop is open each Thursday 8.30am –10.00am.

School Fees
Term 1 fees are due by the 20th March 2015. If you have any queries regarding your fees please contact Mr Greg White

The second hand uniform shop will be open next on:
Monday 13th April @ 9am.