Dear Parents, Friends and Guardians

Mission Statement Review
We have had a tremendous response to our call for input into the review of our school's existing Mission Statement. Over the last two days our team of teachers who are working on the re-draft have been pouring over the huge pile of responses from our children, parents and staff. There have been some wonderfully insightful responses from all of these levels and I would like to thank everyone for this support. Our Writers Team – Therese Hockings, Leigh Yates, Whitney Reid, Helen Brosnan, Kathy Frost and John Jensen – has been meeting together with our external facilitator, John McArdle, in this time and he has led us through the process of drawing together the main themes of our responses. John has also been leading us through a process to ensure that our new document aligns itself with relevant Archdiocesan, Brisbane Catholic Education and government educational documents. We would hope to be able to present a draft document to our staff before the end of term and then finalise it for publication early in the second term. My congratulations are offered to our Writers’ team for their wonderful work thus far.

New Enrolments 2014 Information Meeting - Monday, 11 March
Next Monday we will be holding an Information evening for all parents who are looking to enrol their child with us in 2014. Parents who are existing families of the school need not attend but if you know of someone who is interested in sending their children to our great school please encourage them to come along. The meeting starts at 6.00pm in the Doyle Centre theatre and will go for around 45 minutes. This is not just for new Prep enrolments but also for families interested in all year levels. We would then look to start our individual interviews for classes for 2014 before the end of this term.

March P & F Meeting – Monday, 11 March
Our next Parents and Friends Association meeting is being held on this coming Monday at 7.00pm in our school's staff room. Members of our staff ‘Friendly Schools’ program committee will be joining us at the meeting to conduct a short information session on this new initiative which the school has taken on this year. The program is designed to provide the children, parents and staff with a common language and skills for working together. We have introduced this program across the school and it has been working well so if you would like to hear more about it please come along to next week’s meeting. We will also be discussing the expenditure of the P & F levy for this year as well as getting an update on the fete. Our meeting should be finished by 8.30pm.

Catholic Schools Swimming Carnival – Friday, 8 March
Our interschool primary swimming carnival will be held this Friday at the Pizzey Park sporting complex. Our best wishes go with the team for the day and our thanks goes to Paul Hill for co-ordinating our school team for the day. All of the children involved would have received a note detailing information for the day. If any further information is required please contact Paul through our school office.

P & F Trivia Night – this Saturday – 9 March
Our P & F Association is holding this exciting and fun-filled evening this Saturday in the Doyle Centre. Tickets for teams of 6 – 8 people can be ordered through our Parent Reception office with an entry fee of only a few dollars. There are some great prizes on offer through the night and a huge four-burner barbeque to be raffled. The theme for the night will be a St Patrick’s Day one which in itself is a little Irish as the real St Paddy’s Day isn’t for another week. There may even be some questions about Patrick! You don’t have to come in fancy dress but you can bring your own drinks and nibbles and enjoy good company. Paula, Anna, Tony and I from our office have put a team in but we don’t have great hopes unless there are lots of ‘sport’ questions. Best of Irish luck to all of the teams for the night.

Early Morning Arrivals
There has been a growing number of children being dropped off to school well before the normal start of the day and before our supervision times commence. Our teachers start their duties at 8.10am and as such there should not be any children around before this time unless they are here for a school-organised event like sports training. This is creating a very dangerous situation for us especially as many of the children are from our younger year levels. Children should not be at school before 8.10am and if this cannot be managed then they would need to be enrolled in our Outside School Hours Care unit. The contact number for this unit is 55 763 756. We will not be responsible for children here before this time.

On a brighter note the Rugby League season kicks off this weekend and this gives us something to follow other than the disappointing form of our Aussie cricketers. Maybe this will be Parramatta’s year!

Thanks for reading and enjoy the week.

Yours in Christ,
Greg Casey
From our Assistant Principal
Tony Barron

PREPARATORY ENROLMENTS 2014

We are now calling for enrolments for Preparatory classes in 2014. Many of our parents have already filled out an application form for their prospective Preppies, but there are still many not yet submitted. If you wish for your child to be part of our great school in Prep next year, please contact the Administration Office to complete and submit your Application for Enrolment form. Children eligible for Preparatory in 2014 need to have been born between 1 July 2008 and 30 June 2009.

Applications close at the end of Term 1, 2013

Online Safety with your Children

Do you really know what your child is doing online? Do you really know what they are downloading and sharing with other people? Do you really know what they do on their iPads, iPods, iPhones and other computers in your house?

I wonder how many parents actually go through and check their child’s accounts on a daily basis or watch everything they do.

Far too often, we in schools are forced to spend many, many hours dealing with online and social networking issues that have occurred at home after school, or on weekends. The internet, while an amazing tool, is also a very dangerous one if not monitored by parents and guardians. It is something that we rely on day by day, but in the hands of inexperienced users who are still learning life skills, it can have very dangerous consequences.

Facebook, Instagram, Skype, MSN, Twitter are all tools that are accessible to our children.

Facebook is a social networking tool with over 1 billion users, with users expected to have a minimum age of 13 to sign up (something that is strongly debated worldwide). Instagram is an online photo sharing and social networking service that enables its users to take pictures, use pictures from the internet and tag or comment on these photos. Instagram is owned by Facebook.

Having hundreds of friends or followers on these accounts seem to be a bit of a competition amongst our children. But seriously, how may 10, 11 or 12 year olds honestly know and speak with 500 “friends.” Do they even know who most of these people are?

I encourage you as parents, to talk with your child about these things. I encourage you to staunchly monitor everything your child does online. Check what photos they are using, check their online privacy settings, and ask is this all really necessary. Many of you may be surprised or even shocked at what you find….I know I am!!!

Have a great week

Tony Barron

Computer helpline?
Everytime I log onto the seven dwarfs website my computer screen goes snow white....

Band members enjoyed the Australian Army band concert last week at Robina Community centre.
I have now worked in catholic primary schools for over thirty years, and twenty-four of these in leadership positions. I have been privileged to work in country and city schools; large and small, and everything in between. Whilst I have seen many changes in curriculum, pedagogy and trends in education and schooling, some other matters have not changed over the years.

What remain unchanged are the core values of catholic schools and the roles of teachers and parents. The context in which we work and live has of course changed however, and this brings a new set of circumstances, challenges and opportunities. I regard both parenting and teaching as important and often difficult jobs and each comes with many highs and lows. No outcomes can be guaranteed and the road can be lonely and frustrating at times.

It is with some relief that my “baby” turned twenty-six yesterday and thus I was spared the arguments about technology tools and uses that are in existence today and which were not when my children were young. Sadly the ugly side of technology has once again come to the fore here at Marymount of late. Whilst such issues generally stem from out-of-school situations, they inevitably cross over to school. No matter where the misuse occurs, the damage is potentially very serious and long-lasting, and calls for immediate attention.

Well acclaimed leading Australian psychologist, Carr-Gregg in his book Real Wired Child (2007) writes of the current use of technology in children’s lives:

While many parents justifiably worry about technology in the hands of perverts, paedophiles and sociopaths, many fail to realise that perhaps the most immediate threat emanates from their children’s peers, as increasing numbers of kids use the internet to terrorise and alienate other students at school and at home. This new form of intimidation is proliferating as young people spend more time online, more often than not without any adult supervision.

One of the biggest problems with the use of technology is cyberbullying. Using technology, messages can be distributed to a huge audience and because aliases can be used, cyberbullies can be very difficult to identify. The true definition of other forms of bullying implies a power imbalance but with cyberbullying, there can be a levelling of power and indeed the perpetrator can even be younger or physically weaker. Also, the written word remains and can be re-read as many times as the victim chooses and thus can have an even more detrimental effect than the spoken word of the more traditional forms of bullying.

Cyberbullying can the take the form of:

- Text messages
- Picture/video clip via mobile phone cameras
- Mobile phone calls
- Emails
- Chatrooms
- Instant Messaging
- Websites

I would encourage all parents to discuss technology use with their children. With any tool of technology or multi-media, adult supervision is required to ensure that their intended benefits and use are the likely outcomes. One possible solution to allow children to enjoy the benefits of technology and yet hopefully remain safe is to have one password for the children that is actually “owned” by the parent (after all, who owns and maintains the equipment?). Children may protest that this is an infringement of their rights to privacy. However, I believe a parent has every right and actually, responsibility, to ensure safe passage as best as possible. If the child is concerned about parents “snooping” then there is usually a good reason that a parent should in fact be “snooping”! It’s not only acceptable but sometimes necessary to exercise your right as a parent and firmly maintain, “No.”

I pray for safe passage from childhood to adulthood for all our children.

P.S. Please have a look and discussion about our latest “Friendly Schools” YouTube clip put together by Belinda Norton-Smith and her class 5R and which was presented at this morning’s assembly. This can be found at: http://youtu.be/e6sAJh7fICPo

Annette O’Shea
Project Compassion
We move into the third week of Lent this week and our efforts for Project Compassion continue. This week, children have seen the story of Salma from Bangladesh. Before trained health carers were provided by Caritas, Salma relied on local mystics and elders for health care during pregnancy. The Safe Motherhood Program, provided by Caritas and funded by communities such as ours, is helping mothers and their young children in many countries where no health care was previously available.

So far, our fundraising efforts for Project Compassion have raised sufficient funds to provide a teacher for a community in South America, trade skills in Mozambique and bicycles in Cambodia.

Fried Rice Meal Deal - March 19 and Green Day - March 15
As part of our fundraising for Project Compassion, we have two exciting events in the coming weeks.

Today, your child will receive an order form for the Fried Rice Meal Deal. In many places around the world, children do not have the variety of food we may take for granted in our pantry or refrigerators. In many parts of the world families eat rice regularly because there is often little else available. In countries on Australia’s doorstep, huge portions of the population have no access to clean safe drinking water.

With this in mind, our meal deal on March 19 will include a serving of fried rice and bottle of water, as a reminder of what some communities have for sustenance on a daily basis and to remind our children that we do live in a very fortunate country.

Orders must be received by Monday 11 March. No late orders will be accepted and no other orders will be available on the day of the meal deal. Over the counter purchasing will still be available.

On March 15 students are invited to wear Green and be Irish for a day to celebrate the life of St Patrick and raise funds for Caritas. For a gold coin donation, students can wear their best Irish outfit, or just their favourite Green clothing.

Please encourage your children to support these initiatives generously and remember, everyone is Irish on March 17!

Best wishes for the week ahead!

Kevin Yates

GREEN DAY - Friday March 15
Celebrate St Patrick’s Day by wearing green on Friday March 15. Gold coin donation to Project Compassion.
SPORTS NEWS

FRIED RICE AND WATER
On Tuesday March 19 the Tuckshop will be holding a Caritas theme day. Available on this day for lunch will be fried rice and water. It is a day our children can learn of the meal so many less fortunate children would consider a treat. So I do ask you to give the coupons, pies and sambos a miss and order your child fried rice and water. All money raised will go to Caritas. Order forms will be sent home with your child today and MUST be returned by the due date of Monday 11 March. We will not be able to accept orders after this date. Thank you.

Tuckshop roster for next week.

Monday 11 March............Angella Savaurin
Tuesday 12 March............Sharon Lewers and Lisa Gallagaher
Wednesday 13 March.......Romina and Karen Wattman
Thursday 14 March..........Melissa Berriman and Beth
Friday 15 March.............Michelle Russell, Irene, Michelle Tonks

Help will be greatly appreciated on Tuesday 19 March for our Caritas Fried Rice and Water day. If you can give a hand please let me know.

Have a great week
Vicki Turner
GO THE BUNNIES!

Catholic Swimming Carnival
Best of luck to our Marymount swimmers competing at the Catholic Swimming Carnival this coming Friday, 8 March. The Carnival is due to be held a Pizzey Park pool Miami and involves all nine Gold Coast Catholic Primary Schools. All students involved in the carnival should have received a permission note, program and list of events. Any students who have not returned their permission notes please do so as soon as possible. In the event of cancellation or postponement a notice will be posted on the school website.

Cross Country
Training begins tomorrow at 7:45 a.m. As with previous years, sessions will be held each Monday and Thursday morning beginning at 7:45 and Tuesday afternoons until 3:45p.m. All session will begin at the Shed and children should be dressed in suitable shoes and running gear. Time is allowed after the morning sessions for children to change into their school uniforms and have themselves ready for the start of the school day. These sessions will take place regardless of the weather.

Regional Swimming
Congratulations to Tyler Gilbert and Conall Crowley who have qualified to swim at the State Championships at Chandler on 24-26 March. Tyler will compete in 50m Backstroke and 50m Freestyle. Conall will compete in 50m Freestyle. We wish both boys all the very best for this upcoming event.

Cheerleading
Congratulations to Chloe Evans and Amity Fairclough who have been selected to compete at the international cheerleading competition in Melbourne. The girls will be competing as part of the elite team from Zacs Zoo Allstars studios, and will spend five days in Melbourne competing at the event. Well done girls and best of luck.

Paul Hill

DENTAL CLINIC
Students in grades (Preps OM,OA,OR,OY,OP) have been provided with an offer of oral health care pack to take home. The pack includes:

- Child & Adolescent Oral Health Service Brochure
- Examination Card

If your child is enrolled in one of the grades listed above and did not receive an offer of care pack and you would like to arrange for your child to receive oral health care please contact the Oral Health Call Centre 1300 300 850. Monday to Friday 8.00 am – 4.30 pm Excluding Public Holidays. If your child requires disability access please identify this requirement with the Call Centre Operator.
FRIED RICE AND WATER Fundraiser - $4

Tuesday 19 March
There will be no other tuckshop lunch orders available on this day.

Return the order form below NO LATER than Monday 11 March. Late orders cannot be accepted.

Please encourage your child to be part of this important Caritas event.

Thank you for your generosity

ORDER FORM

PLEASE RETURN TO TUCKSHOP ALONG WITH BROWN PAPER BAG AND PAYMENT OF $4 NO LATER THAN MONDAY 11 MARCH.

NAME:__________________________________________

CLASS:__________________

Total amount: $4.00 enclosed. (exact money please)