

# St Mary's Catholic School

58 Main Highway, Ellerslie, Auckland

Principal Mrs Saira Boyle



Issue #8 | 6 June 2018

We provide a Catholic education for the whole child

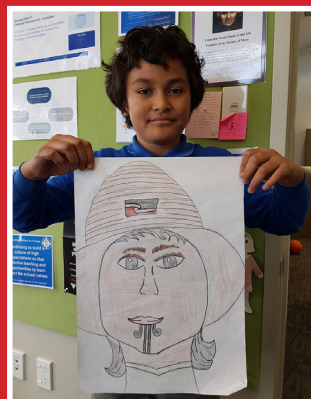
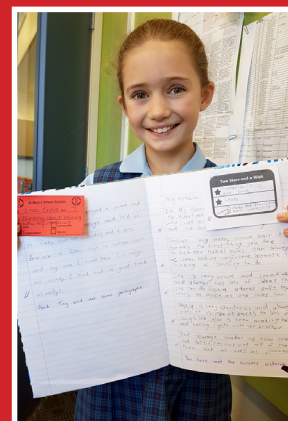
## Assessment for Learning

We have spent time in every classroom observing teaching practice and learning experiences over the last two weeks. We are delighted to share the progress we can see in deliberate and clearly executed teaching and the learning taking place.

After each round of observations, the Senior Leadership Team speak to learners from each classroom about their learning. Our learners are increasingly able to describe what they are learning, why they are learning it and how they know when they are successful.

When learners can articulate these things we know we are starting to see Learner Agency (a term which is often used in education and not often fully understood). We are working hard to support teachers to draw down specific Learning Intentions from the Literacy Progressions and the Numeracy Framework, and develop these into clearly shared learning experiences, where learners understand the content, process and purpose of what is to be learnt. If learners can do this we know agency is being developed.

Each fortnight we will share a little piece about our Assessment for Learning practices and how this contributes to Learner Agency to build a shared understanding of this between home and school.



St Mary's Walking School Buses reduce traffic and improve child safety at our school.

Find out more about our Walking School Bus options, contact

Anita Hanna (021) 907 311



## Parish

### Sacramental Programme 2018

Classes are well underway and the candidates are looking forward to receiving their First Holy Communion and Confirmation on 17 June at 1 pm. Please bless and keep them in your prayers as they go through this journey. Thank you, from Lisa Moor.

### Parish Pot Luck Dinner

**Saturday 7 July after 5:30pm Mass**

All are invited and welcome! Entertainment provided and fun guaranteed! Please bring a plate.

### Parish Food Festival

**26 August – 10am**

More information will follow closer to this date.

## Principal's Post

*Nau mai haere mai – Greetings – Tena Koutou – Kamusta – Malo e Lelei – Talofa Lava – Namaste – Ni Hao – Hallo – Kia Orana – Bula – Fakaalofa Atu*

Dear Parents and Whanau, Kia Ora!

As you know we have four Values, based on Gospel and inspired by our founding order, The Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions; Mission, Communion, Contemplation and Zeal. Our Term 2 Value is that of Communion; coming together, in the name of Christ, as a community. It has been an exciting couple of weeks as we have witnessed the community and school working in rich partnership to support the learning of our children.

The Senior Leadership recently hosted a Parent Partnership Hui where an excellent number of our parents attended and firstly heard the messages about the new Religious Education Bridging Document, which is a step towards the new and future focused Religious Education Curriculum. We then went on to take part in a hands on workshop illustrating the ways in which your children learn maths. The feedback from all those who attended was exceptionally positive and when we hear this as well as see close to 60 parents in attendance it makes the work and late nights worthwhile for all involved.



# Gospel Reflection

Taking your children to Mass, especially on Sunday is a rich and faith nurturing activity for families. It is a special time to support your child's faith development and nourish your own spirituality. When children are of primary school age it is something they are more willing to do and this is a great time to connect.

## Gospel Reflection for Sunday 3 June 2018 Corpus Christie Mark 14:12-16, 22-26

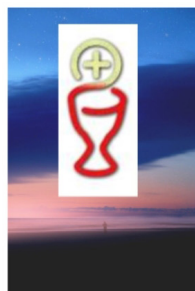
Asking why Jesus left himself to us in bread and wine, body and blood we might say that like all food it was to give substance and energy to our souls in following him. A preacher once asked 'what are the most important words of the Mass?' People said the consecration of the great elevation. After many years of celebrating and receiving the Eucharist, he now would say that the most important words are the last words, 'glorify the Lord with your lives' or 'to love and serve the Lord'. The purpose of the Eucharist is not to adore Christ but to get food and energy to follow him in service. The Eucharist only makes sense when it becomes Eucharist in action.

When we celebrated the feast yesterday, it is to give thanks for the help for our lives that the Eucharist is. Like bread and wine, it is in the ordinary that we serve Jesus. In care for family especially the child and the elderly; in caring for the poor, sick and different people who live in poverty; in being kind, compassionate and friendly in ordinary life.

This is not always easy; going to Mass means that in hearing the word and receiving the Eucharist we are strengthened like ordinary food strengthens our ordinary lives. Any of our Eucharistic adoration and devotion is with that in view, to become more like the servant Christ who gives us his body and blood. Thank you Lord for the help you give us in the Mass, to live our daily lives in your love and service.

"Every celebration of the Eucharist is a ray of light of the unsetting sun that is the Risen Jesus Christ. To participate in Mass, especially on Sunday, means entering in the victory of the Risen, being illuminated by his light, warmed by his warmth." *Pope Francis*

With whom do we share that warmth?



## Principal's Post continued

I have noticed that we do see many of the same faces at most of our events, such as PTA meetings, Parent Partnership Hui, sports coaches and other events. I have done some calculations and of the 380 learners and close to 300 families in the school that must make around 220 parents, caregivers and whanau with whom we are not familiar or regularly in contact. We would love to take the opportunity to get to know you a little more and encourage you to become involved in our community if you can. We are keen to hear if there are things you would like to be involved in but we do not offer yet, and also if you have any feedback on ways in which we could ensure we are more inclusive and provide opportunities for you to contribute to the wider life of the school. At the same time we offer thanks for your ongoing trust and support.

As we start planning for succession in our school PTA, I encourage new parents to watch out for opportunities to become involved with this group as some of the key roles become available later in the year. As Principal, I am keen to work closely with our PTA looking for ways to continue to develop robust and strategic relationships. It would be welcomed to see this group expand and even a wider range of cultures representative of our growing community be represented here.

It was wonderful to see and meet families with whom we have not worked closely previously, through our recent Samoan Language and Cultural Week celebrations. Two weeks prior to the official event we called a Fono and met with some of our Samoan community. These parents and whanau did a phenomenal job, working in close partnership with the school, sharing their expertise to result in a fantastic week of learning for all. Thank you. Our newly established Samoan cultural group will be carried on through the school year, and we know it will continue to flourish under the leadership of Miss Tasi.

Every three years The Board and staff of the New Zealand Catholic Education Office, which is Wellington based, host a Catholic Education Convention in the Capital. The 2018 Convention will bring together Catholic educators, Bishops, priests, school trustees and a range of others associated with our national Catholic education system.

Our Catholic schools make up 8.4% of the total schooling provision for New Zealand children. We educate some 66,000 children. It is a high achieving sector closely aligned with the mission of the Church. Five of our school leaders will be attending this year. At the Convention we will have the opportunity to be strengthened by our sense of community and renewed in a sense of mission.

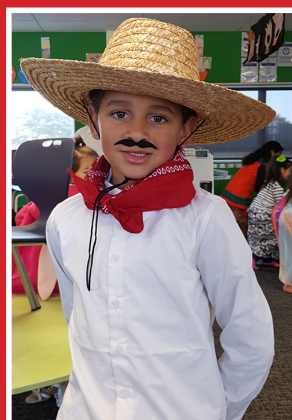
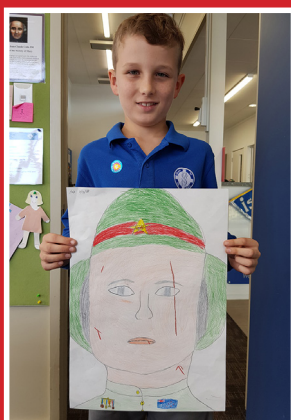
The theme of the Convention is Te karanga ta te Karaiti: kia arohaina, kia ora, kia tina – Christ's call: to love, to be, to do.

International and national speakers will support and challenge us. Meeting and sharing with colleagues from other schools will complete the Convention experience. We are also really proud to be able to share that this year, we too will be among the presenters. Last year, amid all of our developments I submitted a proposal, which was chosen. This is:

*Drilling Beneath the Culture of Niceness to Bring About the Kingdom of God; Striving for Excellence with the Learner at the Centre ~ A learner-centred approach and authentic Catholic curriculum is the foundation to bringing about the Kingdom of God in any Catholic school. This is a story of courageous leadership and disruption in which we will share our practical ideas, challenges and successes!*

We are looking forward to sharing our journey with the wider Catholic sector and will also endeavour to plan an evening where we can share this presentation with you all on our return.

*Yours in God's Love*  
**Saira Boyle**  
Principal





## Curriculum

### Digital Technologies

It is very important that your child and as parent/caregiver that you sign the ICT/Digital Technology Responsible Use Agreement for Students. As part of the new Digital Technology curriculum it is expected that all students will be learning the new curriculum from year 1-10 and this will include the use of devices.

We promote cyber safety at our school and our Board of Trustees has a Governance Policy requiring the same. Please read the responsible use agreement and read it to your child. It teaches your child how to be a cyber safe student and appropriate use of it at school.

### Samoan Language Week 2018

Last week was Samoan Language Week and what an amazing week we had! Our Samoan whanau helped our school experience and learnt all about their Samoan culture. Our learners learnt about:

- Samoan stories
- Samoan language
- Samoan dance and music
- Samoan traditional culture and artefacts
- Samoan independence day
- Samoan food
- And so much more!

All of this learning only happened over a period of five days and we feel so blessed to have had the opportunity to have been able to learn everything that we learnt. A huge, heartfelt thank you to our Samoan school community, this week was so very special to all of us. We are already looking forward to Samoan Language Week 2019!

## Special Catholic Character

*from the Director of Religious Studies*

A huge thank you to you all for your wonderful generosity towards our St Vincent de Paul food collection. I had the privilege of informing Evelyn Leech we had over five large containers full of food items to be delivered to the Mt Wellington Food Bank. Evelyn told me that recently the demand for assistance has increased, with over 250 food parcels delivered in the month of April, so I know these donations will have been gratefully received.

On Thursday 31 May, we celebrated our school feast day, The Visitation. It was a wonderful occasion, in which we acknowledged the essence of this feast - service to others. The day began with a shared breakfast for the teachers, together with an invitation to the Sisters and we were delighted to have Sister Mary join us. Our Feast Day coincided this year with Samoan Language Week, so it seemed fitting to incorporate elements of the culture and language of Samoa into our mass and culminated in a beautiful mass with a high level of student involvement. In the middle block of the day, the learners met with their buddy classes for some fun Visitation inspired activities. Finally in the afternoon, the teachers planned some service-based activities. It was both interesting and heartening to see the wide range of activities that went on throughout the day. The service element included things such as picking up rubbish, cleaning the classroom for the cleaners, contributing to a homeless project, making thank you cards and creating rosaries to give to families, to name just a few. It was a fabulous way to encourage the learners to look away from themselves and give to others selflessly – something we should all do more often.

From 13–15 June, the Senior Leadership team will be heading to Wellington to attend the Catholic Schools Education Convention. Our team is presenting on the first day, so that will be a new (and daunting) experience. Being in Wellington, there is a section of the convention dedicated to the Venerable Suzanne Aubert. She will be New Zealand's first saint which is quite exciting for us.

I have had some great feedback after our parent evening where Margaret Fitzpatrick from the CSO explained the new Religious Education curriculum document. As a staff, we will participate in ongoing professional learning development in this area over the next few years and will keep the community informed along the way as this new document is implemented.

Learning from the Church Strand has now begun. This will run through until the end of this term. Church Strand covers subjects like "Belonging", "Celebrating" and "Gathering". It also covers the Sacraments of Initiation and the Church as a Pilgrim People. Your child's teacher should be sharing the AO's (Achievement Objectives) for this strand with you and your child at the beginning of the teaching. Please take the opportunity to korero (talk) with your child about their learning in this area. You will be amazed what they come up with - we are constantly left speechless by our students' deep spirituality!

*Rachael Hill*

## Key dates \* all welcome to attend

6 Jun	Newsletter published
7 Jun	Puberty Talks Y6
12 Jun	Trees for Survival Planting
13–15 Jun	Puberty Talks Y6
15 Jun	Class Mass (Rm 7, 15 & 16) 9am*
19 Jun	Parenting Place John Cowan Evening
20 Jun	Newsletter published Paid Union Meeting
22 Jun	Class Mass (Rm 6, 8, 13 & 14) 9am* Learners Assembly (Rm 11 host)* School Disco
25 Jun– 6 Jul	Life Education Caravan
28 Jun	BOT meeting
29 Jun	Learners Assembly (Rm 2 host)*
3 Jul	Y6 Parent Camp Meeting
4 Jul	APPA rehearsal Newsletter published
9–20 Jul	<b>School Holidays</b>
23 Jul	Footsteps Dance (Yr 3-6)
30 Jul	Footsteps Dance (Yr 3-6)
30 Jul– 1 Aug	Dental Van
1 Aug	Newsletter published

## Student Wellbeing

### Year 3/4 Hockey

On 15 May the two St Mary's Mini Sticks (Year 3 and 4) Hockey teams had a local derby – it was a very tight game played in great spirit. In the end the Jellyfish just pushed past the Zebras 3-2.

A great time was had by all.



## Parent connections X is for eXplore

Children are naturally curious about many things. Providing opportunities to explore their interests is a great way to help them learn.

- Encourage children to seek answers to their own questions
- Buy books that capitalise on their interests and help them learn more. (Even better, visit the library)
- Support hobbies by providing supplies and complimenting their efforts. Better yet, join in the fun!
- Visit museums and other places of interest



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## From your PTA *Fun and social, caring and capable!*

email: [stmaryspta@gmail.com](mailto:stmaryspta@gmail.com)

### OPTIONAL BRANDED SPORTS/CASUAL HOODIES



The final day to place your order and make payment for your St Mary's Hoodie is Thursday 7 June. These sweatshirts are \$45 with no surname on the back or \$55 personalised.

The boutique will be open until Thursday 7 June both morning and afternoons to view sample sizings and to finalise your order.

For more details and an order form, please refer to the email from school (dated 29 May) or click [here](#) for the post on the school Facebook page.

### PTA EXECUTIVE ROLES

A number of our PTA executive team are finishing up at the end of this year as they have been involved for 3 or more years so it's time to get some new people on board. If you are interested in knowing more about what is involved in being part of the executive then please contact: [stmaryspta@gmail.com](mailto:stmaryspta@gmail.com) and we would be happy to let you know what's involved. The roles that we have available are: Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and general help with events etc

### CARING COMMITTEE

Our Caring Committee has been working hard supporting a few families with meals over the last couple of weeks. Thank you to you all for all the delicious looking donations. Everything has been most gratefully received. As a result our stocks are a little low. If any members are able to help us replenish with either baking or meals that can be frozen please contact Erin on [erinhogan@hotmail.com](mailto:erinhogan@hotmail.com) or Cathy on [grotto@orcon.co.nz](mailto:grotto@orcon.co.nz). Of course new members are very welcome to join too!

### UNIFORM BOUTIQUE

The Uniform Boutique is open briefly before and after school daily until the 7 June for orders for our new Hoodies so why not have a quick look at the other secondhand uniform while you're in! The rest of this term it will be open as usual 2.15–3.15pm on Fridays. Payment may be by cash or online banking. Donations may be left at the office anytime and are gratefully accepted. We also have child size new umbrellas for just \$10.

### SCHOOL DISCO – Friday 22 June in the Parish Hall Years 0 to 2: 5-6.15pm, Years 3 to 6: 6.30-8pm

THEME – OLD SCHOOL. We still need parent volunteers for both discos, but especially Years 3-6. If you are able to help on the night please contact the PTA at [stmaryspta@gmail.com](mailto:stmaryspta@gmail.com). A reminder that Year 6 parents are asked to help with cleanup at 8pm.



### QUIZ NITE – Saturday 1 September

If you can help with organising or have prizes to donate for the silent auctions, please contact Nikki Sleeman on email: [sleemanhouse@icloud.com](mailto:sleemanhouse@icloud.com).

### SAUSAGE SIZZLE

Thank you to everyone for your support of the Sausage Sizzle Wed 30 May and special thanks to Nick Temm and his team of Dads for helping out with this. \$697.70 was raised, what a great result!

### MARY HOUSE MASS MORNING TEA

Thank you to those who provided morning tea and helped out at the recent Mary House Mass morning tea.

### FUN-A-THON

Luckily the weather held out for an hour and we could finally hold our Fun-a-thon! Thanks to the teachers and parent helpers for a successful afternoon. The activities were completed with enthusiasm and smiling faces, with all children completing 10 stations. Please ensure your donation money is received by Monday 11 June by dropping it into school or depositing in the PTA bank account, 12-3060-0221896-00.





Over the last few weeks there has been some discussion in the community and the BOT around the recent changes and increases to the fee / donation structure at St Mary's. We have been complimented by the Catholic Diocese of Auckland for the way in which we have structured these changes, the process we have been through to come to this decision and also the way in which this has been communicated to our community. We do however, stand corrected on one minor matter. In a letter dated 8 May 2018, we stated that the increase in Attendance Dues was set by the Catholic Schools Office; this was in fact set by The Catholic Diocese of Auckland / The Roman Catholic Bishop of Auckland at the Bishops Annual Conference.

We would like the community to consider that whilst the donation part of the fees are optional, they are a necessary contribution to enable our school to function to the excellent standard to which it does. Some schools raise between \$45-\$65 thousand each year through their gala which is, in full, given to the school to supplement their Operational Grant from the Ministry of Education, some schools request a contribution which is more than ours and some less. We have been informed by some Principals of those schools whose contributions are less, that they are struggling to provide what they want to provide for learners and are planning on increasing contribution requests. All in all, for our community, for our school, and the standards we provide and plan to continue to provide we do need all families to contribute their donations to our school. Consider it like a family picnic. If only half of the members of the family provided food, yet all family members turned up and those who did not contribute ate all the food, how would one feel?

When we choose a standard of education and choose a school for our children we need to understand that to contribute to this is an essential component of being a member of that community. All school's who provide a high standard of learning, in and outside of the classroom require contributions from those whom pass through the school. On recently talking to a state school Principal and complimenting her on the excellent facilities in their grounds, I learnt, '...we have high fees and donations, we expect our families to pay them, they do and in turn we can afford to provide these facilities..'

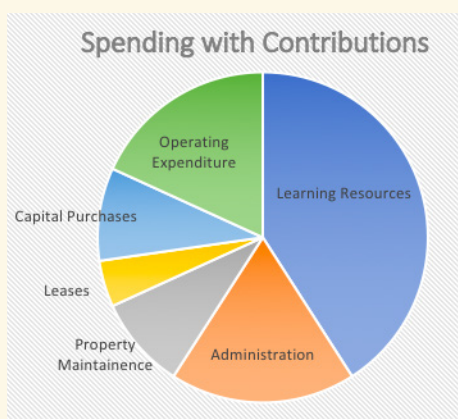
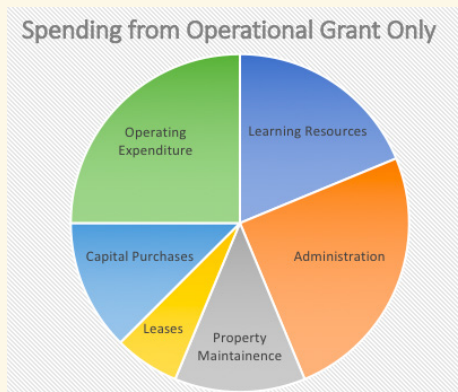
The Ministry of Education provides an Operation Grant to each school. This grant is prudent to say the least and the types of things we spend this money on are:

- Administration (including support staff salaries)
- Property Maintenance
- Learning Resources
- Leases
- Operating Expenditure
- Capital Purchases

We are working on ways to try to ensure that the proportion of this spending is most heavily weighted in the Learning Resources piece of the pie. We have recently changed accountants, cleaners and photocopier leases, all in the effort to trim funds off our administration. We are looking at further ways to support this and the change in accounting practices will also support with this, giving us more transparency into spending patterns.

Some examples of resources we purchase in the Learning Resources part of the pie are; Mathematics textbooks, Science textbooks, Religious Education resources such as bibles, prayer books, values story books, library books, writing resources, Reading resources, equipment for learning such as scales, meter rulers, tens frames, 100s boards, phonics programmes, wall displays such as alphabet freezes, number lines, coins, abacus, counters, skipping

ropes, balls, bats, sandpit toys, fractions wheels, playing cards, magnifying glasses, globes, magnets, forces and pulleys, robotics kits, education outside the classroom, reading book sets, a vast array of specialist equipment (science, art, music), paper, card, paint, glitter, dyes, rollers, paint brushes and so the list goes on and on. As an example, one Mathematics Materials kit for one classroom is \$1989 and this is just one part of the equipment for this learning area. There are in total seven curriculum areas plus Religious Education. The pie charts below are a crude example of the portion we have to fit all of this into if we rely only on the Operational Grant and then if we are blessed with the contributions.



Receiving all of the contributions in addition to the support received from fundraising relieves the pressure and opens up the proportion of money we have for spending on Learning Resources.

This year the BOT are working closely with the Principal and Senior Leaders to develop a property plan. This plan includes general maintenance (which includes looking after roofing, gutters, drainage and general property upkeep), cyclical maintenance of painting interior and exterior and property development. The funds we receive and are saving in our newly opened property account will go towards projects such as refurbishment of the girls' bathroom, astroturfing the courts, developing a New Entrant and Junior play based learning space, further development of the Sustainable Learning area, upgrades on playgrounds, refurbishment of the library into an Information Centre and more. We are also keen to gather information from you, the community, as to which projects you feel this money could benefit. Watch out for the survey we will be sending out before the end of this term.

We thank you for all you contribute and look forward to continuing this journey of partnership.

*Roger Shearer*  
BOT Chair

# Board of Trustees

Examples of the ways in which some schools have improved their property to support learning.

