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Wednesday 04 May, 2022

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# ST. MARY MACKILLOP PRIMARY SCHOOL



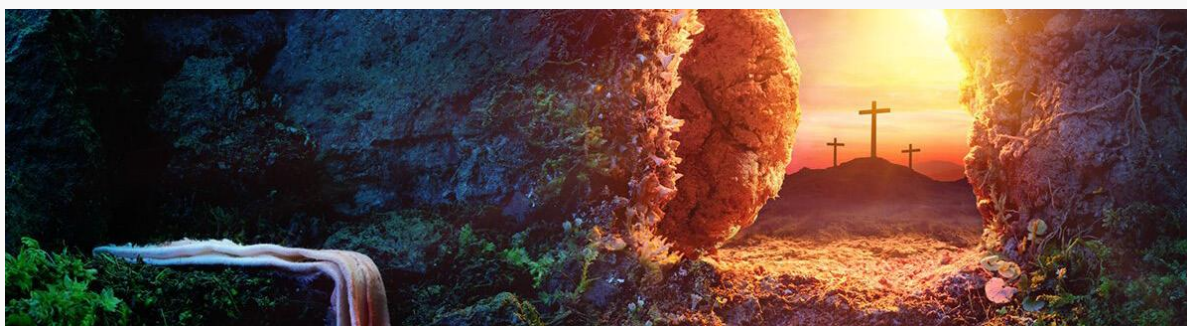
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## *Staying Connected No. 8, 2022*

Dear Community,

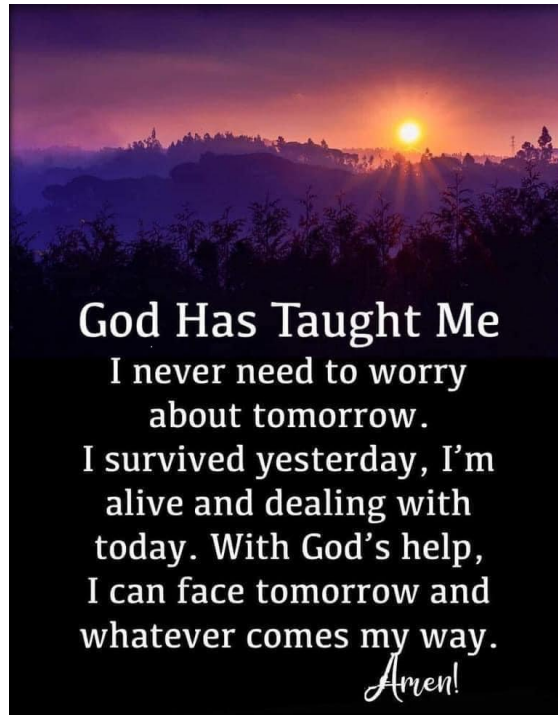


Whilst we celebrated **Easter Sunday** a few weeks ago, the Church is still very much in the Season of Easter. In fact, the **Easter Season** lasts through until **Pentecost Sunday**, which is June 5 this year.

As Christians, we believe Jesus is still with us in a very real way. The belief that the light of resurrection shines in the darkness and will not be overcome is at the core of our Christian faith. The Spirit of the Risen Jesus is part of our human journey that inspires us to be the best people we can be. Jesus suffered and died, but has shown us 'hope' by his Resurrection. **Our faith is one of hope.**

**So, in a spirit of hope, I wish each and every family the blessings of the Easter season; confident that the Lord will provide.**

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And in this Season of Easter, we look to our Holy Father the Pope, who, with so many people worldwide, laments the suffering caused by the invasion of Ukraine and encourages the faithful to pray a Rosary every day for peace.

The Pope said his thoughts went immediately to the city of Mariupol, the “city of Mary” which has been “barbarously bombed and destroyed”.

Pope Francis said he wondered whether peace really is being sought amid “a macabre regression of humanity.” He asked if everything possible is being done to “silence the weapons”. Our Pope has called for a path of dialogue and peace, as we commit the people of the Ukraine and Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

As Christians we are called to pray in hope for peace.

**It is a big term at SMMPS...**

## **SCHOOL REVIEW**

We have a number of school closures and staff meetings set aside, so as to review our school, which all schools under MACS are obliged to do every four years.

**Our first school closure, as previously advertised is this Friday 6 May.**

I believe the process we are undertaking, under the facilitation of Mark Workman and staff from MACS, will be an excellent way in which we might come to understand where we are as a school across the five spheres of schooling being:

- The Religious Dimension
- Learning and Teaching
- Student Well-Being
- Leadership and Management
- School Community.

We also have to do an incredible amount of work for the Victorian Regulations and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) who have strenuous compliance demands and policies that must be in place and operating effectively. I am confident we are doing well, but the work must be done, whereby we can demonstrate what policies we have and how we implement them.

Mrs. Mary Lovelock, our MACS appointed independent reviewer, will come into our school in the first week of Term Three and look at the work we have done to map out our school and then she will meet with leadership, staff, students and parents and map out where she thinks we are at, based on evidence. The 'beauty' of this process is; it is not school leadership saying where we are at; it is not staff saying where we are at and it is not just the reviewer offering their opinion. It is a team effort.

Together with students and parents, we are going to affirm practice, identify challenges and map the way forward for the next four years, as we develop a School Improvement Plan for that period.

Our last review in 2018, proved to be outstanding and was something to be very proud of. A great deal has moved since then; changes in leadership, staff changes, compliance demands, expectations from MACS and the massive impact of COVID will bear weight on this review.

As Principal, I am very committed to the findings of this review. I am most determined to ensure that SMMPS works with dedication and commitment to school improvement. Our school will rise and be the best it can be and then, never resting on our laurels, we will work to be even better again.

## **PARENT ENGAGEMENT**

As we move into our somewhat post- COVID normal world, we are keen to see parent engagement happening.

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Today we have parents helping with our Mother's Day Stall. It's great to see a sense of normality happening again!

This afternoon, Tuesday, **The Parents Group** will 'kick' off again. We look forward to the support this group of volunteers will offer our school; fundraising, possible social gatherings for parents, lunch days and treats for the children. Kellie Doherty and Connie Simile will be the staff reps on this group.

SMMPS inaugural **School Advisory Council (SAC)** will meet for the first time on **Tuesday 24 May**. I am excited about the possibilities of having a SAC and how it might serve and support our school.

***Congratulations and thank you to these generous parents who will form our inaugural School Advisory Council:***

- *Narelle Galea*
- *Ana Iacobaccio*
- *Emma Langoulant*
- *Michelle Nathanielsz*
- *Laura Sacchetta*

## **BUILDING PROGRAM**

We had a very busy period over the term break, whereby the Prep portables and Library were relocated to another school and/or demolished. The site is now cleared and we await the builders to commence construction. We have signed the contracts; hence we would expect them onsite before the end of the month.

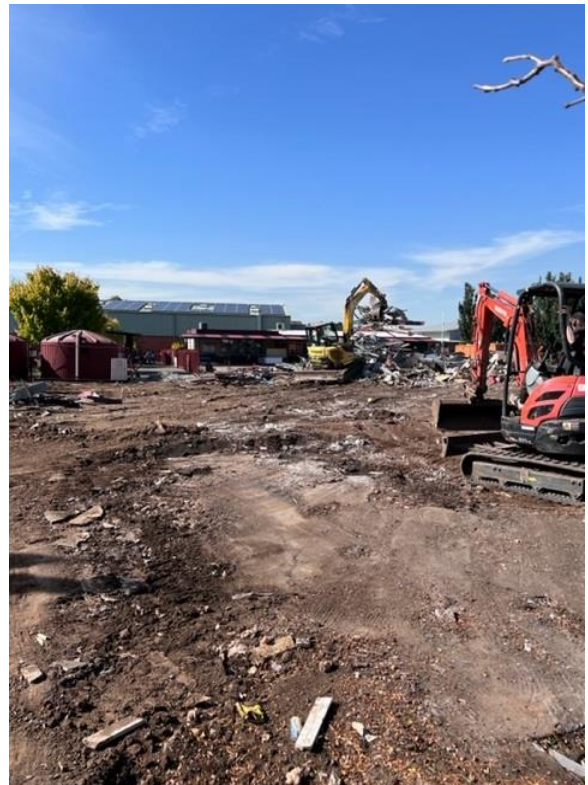
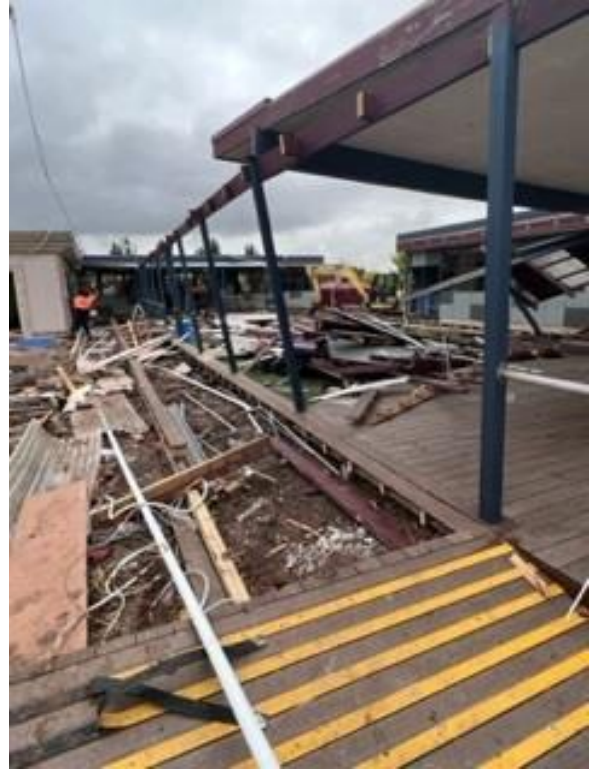
We will notify you of plans for the use of the school grounds and parking, once a few things have been further ironed out!

Just for your interest, we donated a number of portables to Cana Primary School in Hillside. We demolished the remaining portables and surrounds. They looked okay, but the portables rattled in the wind and leaked if it rained. They were quite substandard and not what I want to offer as spaces for your children to learn.

All iron and metal products were sold to a recycler, in an effort to promote some sustainability. The Merbau decking was removed and recycled as were other materials. We are grateful to our demolisher who went to the trouble to sort materials for recycling, thus minimising waste.

Our new, Library, Visual Arts Studio, and Digital Technologies Studio will provide our community with a wonderful place to gather and to learn.

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## COVID

Despite politicians telling us to take our mask off and the loosening of restrictions; COVID is still very much a reality in our community and in our school. **Currently, we have 19 children and 7 staff out with COVID.** I am not sure of how many children had COVID over the holidays. I know a number of our school staff did, myself included.

We have access to only three emergency teachers and they are not always available. Hence, some programs and plans may have to be cancelled, postponed or altered, as staffing is a severe problem. We have not had to split grades as yet. We will work hard not to have to do so, but no promises. It just depends on how many staff are out.

My suggestion; wear masks and appropriately socially distance. Whilst COVID is a fact of life, we still need to minimise risk.

Under State regulations, vaccinations rules are mandatory and they will be enforced at SMMPS. All staff and volunteers must be triple vaccinated.

As always thank you for your support. You are a generously kind community, whom I personally and sincerely appreciate.

**We ask St. Mary MacKillop to pray for us and look to her for inspiration. In the words of St. Mary MacKillop,**

*"How good God is to us all." (1869)*

Here's to a successful and productive term Two at SMMPS, always aware of the goodness of God.



**Anthony McCluskey**  
**Principal**

**SCHOOL ATHLETICS CARNIVAL HAS BEEN CANCELLED TODAY**

We have too many staff absent with COVID to manage and staff it. The carnival may be postponed to later in this school year.

**SCHOOL CLOSED TO ALL STUDENTS THIS FRIDAY 6 MAY**

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# Year 4 First Holy Communion



On Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> of April, the Year Four students celebrated their First Holy Communion. We congratulate all the communicants on this important milestone in their faith journeys.

## **Upcoming Events-Term 2**

**Thursday 5 May**

9.30am Prep 2023 Informal Info Session and Tour

**Friday 6 May**

**School Closure**

**Tuesday 10 to Friday 20 May**

Year 3 and Year 5 Naplan

**Wednesday 11 May**

2023 Enrolments Due

**Monday 16 May**

2023 Enrolment Interviews commence

**Tuesday 24 May**

**School closure**

**Saturday 28 May**

Year 3 First Communion

12.00pm and 2.00pm

**Friday 24 June**

Last Day of Term 2-children finish at 1.00pm