## February / March 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>20/2</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Swimming</td>
<td>Library</td>
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<td>Anne Marie - REC Assembly CSO</td>
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<td>Year 6 Leaders Day Lochinvar</td>
<td>Canteen</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>27/2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mass 8.30am</td>
<td>Andrew Chinn visit</td>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Sports Day</td>
<td>Mass 6.30pm</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Summer Liturgy Gungal 6.30pm</td>
<td>Canteen 4pm Sr Carmel Presentation - Mass &amp; our participation in it</td>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>Clean Up Australia Schools Day</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>6/3</td>
<td>7/3</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Blandford Horse Sports</td>
<td>Library &amp; Canteen Ash Wednesday - Helen - Director/Principal's Day - P&amp;F AGM</td>
<td>Sports Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>13/3</td>
<td>14/3</td>
<td>15/3</td>
<td>16/3</td>
<td>17/3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mass 8.30am</td>
<td>Count Me In Too training</td>
<td>Library &amp; Canteen Count Me In Too training</td>
<td>Parish/School Dinner</td>
<td>Sports Day</td>
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### Reflection

“God help us to change. To change ourselves and to change our world. To know the need for it. To deal with the pain of it. To feel the joy of it. To undertake the journey without understanding the destination. The art of gentle revolution.”

Amen.

### Coming up this term...

- **23rd Mar** - Pupil Free Day
- **23-25th Mar** - Kia-Ora Music Camp
- **25th Mar** - Seniors Concert
- **30th Mar** - Healthy Harold visit
- **8th Apr** - Last day of term
- **22nd Apr** - Good Friday
- **24th Apr** - Easter Sunday
- **25th Apr** - ANZAC Day
- **27th Apr** - Students return
From our Director of Schools Mr Ray Collins:
As Catholic schools we recognise the important role that parents have as the first educators of their children and our schools are established to support them in their role. Their involvement in the life of a school is thus an essential element of Catholic education.

Last Thursday I attended the Blessing and Opening of the Building the Education Revolution project at St Joseph’s Primary school at Merriwa. This school received $300,000 in the various components of the BER just two years after being the recipient of $800,000 in the Commonwealth Capital Grants program including a contribution from the Diocesan Family and School Building Levy. St Joseph’s has been transformed from a school desperately in need of refurbishment to a school that enjoys high quality facilities that enhance the learning environment of its students.

St Joseph’s is a great example of a Catholic community school which is strongly supported by its parent community, particularly the school’s Parents and Friends Association. Over the last three years St Joseph’s has enjoyed an increasingly outstanding reputation reflected in the growth of its enrolments. Central to this reputation has been the commitment and leadership of its Principal, Helen Whale, the staff of the school and the parent community. The passion the parents have for their school and their commitment to ensuring the quality of their school, are of the highest order. Our schools are special places when they evoke the level of parental support that is evident at Merriwa.

From the Assistant Director Mr Craig Wattam:
I am writing to offer my congratulations to you on the lovely opening ceremony for the new building yesterday. The children were wonderful ambassadors for their school and certainly looked and sounded justifiably proud of their community. Please pass on my thanks and congratulations to all of the staff at St Joseph’s Merriwa for their hard work in preparing for yesterday’s Mass and Opening Ceremony.

The Opening School Mass last Thursday was a beautiful occasion for all who attended. The theme of the Mass was Christ was the light of the world bringing hope to all people. We are all encouraged now to be that light for others. Our vision statement also challenges us to be a school that encourages hope for the future. The nine Year 6 leaders made their pledge to the community to assist the teachers in keeping this light alive through taking responsibility for leadership in the school. Fr Des blessed the leaders badges which were presented by the Assistant Director of Catholic Schools, Mr Craig Wattam. The singing and participation by students, parents and parishioners was wonderful. At the conclusion of the Mass a tree was planted by all students and staff who have joined us since last year’s opening Mass, and blessed by Father Des. The 27 newest members of the school will care for the tree and it symbolizes their growing relationship with our school community. This is now the third tree planted thus far and has become a very meaningful tradition.

Following the Mass we celebrated the opening of our schools BER projects. Special guests included Bishop Michael, Sister Loretta Baker, Congregational Leader of the Sisters of St Joseph, Sr Jenny who many will remember as the wonderful infants teacher back in the day when my children were at St Joseph’s; Ray Collins, Craig Wattam, Geoff Whitnall and Neil Thomas from the Catholic Schools Office; The Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon, The Hon. George Souris, Mr Steve Pryor and Councillor Ean Cottle representing the three levels of Government; my fellow principals Mr Aaron Moon and Mr John Tobin; as well as many parents, grandparents and parishioners. The ceremony was most enjoyable. The speeches were interspersed with songs such as the National Anthem, School Song and Let your Kingdom Come. The children sang all songs with enthusiasm and gusto. A PowerPoint presentation highlighting what students view as the characteristics that make our school the ideal school was very well appreciated by the large audience. I was so proud of all the children as you as parents should be too. Their level of self discipline and eagerness of participation in such an official occasion was awe inspiring. As many of the guests said upon leaving – “this is a school where the children are proud to be members”.

My heartfelt appreciation goes to all the teachers for their efforts leading up to the Mass and Opening and to Maria Cameron for the phenomenal way in which she mobilized the parent body to provide an absolutely sumptuous lunch following the ceremony. It is always commented by guests that St Joseph’s parents are among the best cooks in the diocese and this was definitely proven on Thursday. Thank you so much to the parents who were called on to assist with this task last week. Your generosity and culinary skills are appreciated by us all. To those parents who were not contacted this time, please don’t be offended – your turn will come next time.
Last Friday the Year 7 Students from Merriwa Central school visited us to attend an information session to help us with our Newcastle Herald submission this year. It is wonderful to see the two schools cooperating in this manner. We look forward to reading both schools’ submissions this year.

To Miss Sullivan I offer the condolences of the whole school community on the recent death of her dear Nan. Our prayers and thoughts are with you at this sad time Angie.

Our best wishes for a more healthy future go to Mrs Cheryl Halse who is recuperating at home after an operation and we wish a speedy return to health and happiness to Mr Darren Taaffe who had an accident last week landing him in hospital.

Thank you to the many parents who attended the Parent Information Evening in Week 2. Thank you also for your very honest and helpful feedback. This will help our planning for 2012. This year we took on board the feedback from last year which indicated babysitting was a problem. Two very fine ex-students of ours who now attend St Joseph’s at Aberdeen took on the babysitting task and managed to keep the young ones entertained for the duration. Thank you so much to Montana Kisi (Class of 2009) and Bethany Edens-Rosa (Class of 2010) for your great contribution to our school. We are very proud of you.

Many students and parents enjoyed a performance by the Upper Hunter Conservatorium of Music last week. We hope that this performance may inspire more students to take up learning a musical instrument. There is a great deal of research that links learning music to success in studies in other areas as well.

Today our leaders have travelled to Lochinvar for the second annual leadership conference. The school leaders from Catholic schools from all over the diocese will listen to inspirational speakers and discuss their role in schools as leaders and in the world as citizens. We wish them all the best.

Sr Carmel Pilcher is making presentations on the Mass and Our participation in it, at St Mary’s Meeting Rooms, Scone. Wednesday 23rd Feb: The people of god offer Christ’s sacrifice. Wednesday 2nd March: The people of God go forth to live the Mass.

Both sessions commence at 7.30 pm. Sr Carmel will visit Merriwa next Wednesday 2nd March to discuss the Mass with us also. If you want to learn more about the Mass please feel free to join us in the MacKillop Room from 4 – 6pm.

Continued on page 4 ……
Clean Up Australia Day will be held in conjunction with the Clean Up Australian Schools Day this year. Our school community will join with others in the community on Friday 4th March to clean up the Merriwa River Park area. Please join us in this very environmentally responsible activity and help role model good citizenship to our children. There will be a BBQ lunch to follow.

Many of our horse riding students will travel to Murrurundi on Monday 7th March to compete in the Blandford School Horse Sports carnival. We wish them all the best and know they will represent our school with pride. Our school has a very talented horse riding team and have attained a high standard in the past. Mrs Wendy Thomas will be in attendance on the day.

Andrew Chinn Concert: Andrew is an Australian religious songwriter and singer. Andrew’s songs, such as “These Hands”, “Rainbow” and “Together As One” are used in classrooms and liturgies around Australia, New Zealand, USA and Canada. Parents/parishioners and friends are warmly invited to be a part of the celebration of faith and fun. The concert will take place in St. Anne’s Church, at 10:00am Tuesday 1st March. We look forward to seeing you there.

AWARDS

Congratulations to our award winners for Weeks 2 & 3:

**Kinder**
- **Hudson Attenborough** - always sharing a wonderful smile
- **Rosemaree Nairne** - being a sensible class member
- **Darcey Priest** – trying hard in all areas
- **Hannah Parker-Olive** – great work in weekend recount

**Year 1/2**
- **Nicole Martin** - for a great effort in Maths
- **Charles Brazier** - for wonderful effort in Handwriting
- **Damian Jamieson** – for his outstanding effort during guided reading
- **Caitlin Porter** – for always applying herself in the classroom

**Year 3/4**
- **Clancy Moore** - for identifying missing 3 digit numbers on a number line
- **Brittany Attenborough** - for settling in comfortably to a new school
- **Eliza Peebles** – for excellent work in spelling
- **April Stanley** – For her positive attitude in spelling activities

**Year 5/6**
- **Kasey Cassar** – for his continued efforts in spelling
- **Callum Telfer** – for an impressive score of 100% in his spelling test

Others to be advised next newsletter

Principal’s Awards

- **James Hagley** – for being a responsible and helpful school leader
- **Claudia Parker-Olive** – for a very settled start to the new school year

A huge thank you to all our wonderful parents who have assisted with swimming lessons over the past three weeks:
- Kyle Thrift
- Megan Lean
- Amanda parker-Olive
- Amanda Attenborough
- Leanne Hunt
- Tanya Ninness
- Cassandra McLaren
- Steve Hourn
- Bronwyn Redgate
- Dimity Priest

Your help is very much appreciated!

CANTEEN ROSTER

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<tr>
<th>Workers</th>
<th>Afternoon Tea</th>
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<tr>
<td>Brooke Constable</td>
<td>Jamieson &amp; McNaught</td>
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<td>Amanda Attenborough</td>
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<td>Cassie Porter</td>
<td>Peebles &amp; Porter</td>
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<td>Dimitry Priest</td>
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<td>Kathleen Scott</td>
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<td>9 Mar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Megan Lean</td>
<td>Riley &amp; Taaffe</td>
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<td>Christine Riley</td>
<td>families</td>
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<td>Tash Taaffe</td>
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BUS ROSTER

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26/27 Feb</td>
<td>Cameron family</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/6 Mar</td>
<td>Martin family</td>
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<td>12/13 Mar</td>
<td>Cassar family</td>
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<td>19/20 Mar</td>
<td>Moore family</td>
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Thank you . . .

to the Cronin & Constable (Shane & Brooke) families who have given up some of their valuable time to clean the Aberdeen Bus.