

Newsletter

Mary MacKillop Memorial School

Term 4 Week 8

Friday, 6 November 2024

Reception to Year 6 Co-Educational Catholic Primary School

5 Portland Street, Penola SA 5277

Telephone: (08) 8737 2902 www.mmms.catholic.edu.au



*go on with strength
and courage*

UPCOMING DATES

December

- 9 Early Learning
End of Year Thanksgiving Liturgy
Awards, Farewells and Graduation
- 10 Ceremony (5:30pm)
- 11 **LAST DAY OF TERM 4**
Assembly (2:30pm)
- 12 Student Free Day
- 13 Staff Professional Day

January

- 20 Office Open
- 27 Australia Day Holiday
- 28 First Day of School
Morning Tea (9:00am)
- 31 Playgroup
Beginning of Year Mass

Class News

Year 5/6 Class

On Monday, the year 5/6's baked some Christmas biscuits to give as a gift to the residents and staff at Pinchunga. On Tuesday we delivered the biscuits along with a handmade card and gift to Pinchunga, and we spent time connecting and Christmas colouring with everyone to spread the Christmas spirit in our local community.



**RAISING HEARTS
AND MINDS**

go on with strength and courage

from the principal

Dear Families and Friends of Mary MacKillop Memorial School,

As we approach the end of 2024 and look back on the year, I am truly inspired by all that we have accomplished together. My heartfelt gratitude goes out to our school community for your unwavering support and kindness. A special thankyou to our incredible staff for their dedication and hard work in creating meaningful and enriching learning experiences for our students. To our enthusiastic, motivated, and committed students - you have shown remarkable determination in both your education and personal growth, learning so much about yourselves academically and emotionally.

Christmas Carols and Songs

On Wednesday night we celebrated a wonderful Christmas Celebration and Community BBQ. The atmosphere of festivities and Christmas joy was certainly felt by all. It was wonderful to see so many families stay afterwards for the BBQ.

The R/1 Nativity set the scene and reminded us about the true meaning of Christmas. All Classes then entertained us with some beautiful and fun Christmas songs. Our School Captains Laura and Ben certainly did an outstanding job of compering the evening. Congratulations to all!

Farewells

As the school year draws to a close, we prepare to bid farewell to some cherished members of our community with a mix of emotions. To our Year 6 students, we extend our heartfelt best wishes as you approach the final weeks of your primary school journey. We are immensely proud of all you have accomplished and look forward to seeing the bright futures that lie ahead for each of you. They celebrated today with a 5/6 Mass and a Pool Party. On Tuesday evening there will be a special Graduating ceremony and with a final farewell at our End Of Year Assembly on Wednesday afternoon.

We also extend our gratitude and farewell to the families whose youngest child is completing their time at Mary MacKillop Memorial School. It has been a privilege to work in partnership with you in the formation of your children. Your dedication and commitment to our school community over the years have been deeply valued, and we thank you sincerely for the trust and support you have given Mary MacKillop Memorial School.

We say goodbye to the following leaving families; Kain, Gruetzner, Bullock, Bowen, Badger, Barnes, Harding-Colliss, Kidman, Hayward, Ennis and Pitt and thank them for their contribution to our school over the years. May they forever hold fond memories of their time at Mary MacKillop Memorial School.

Finally, we farewell staff members Ali Smith, Ainsley Gillings, Sasha Reilly, Amy Boyd and Sam Baxter who will not be returning to Mary MacKillop Memorial School in 2025.

Mrs Alison Smith has finished her time at Mary MacKillop Memorial School and we thank Alison for her extensive service, and her investment in the care and commitment to all students. We wish her all the very best for the future.

We thank Miss Amy Boyd for all that she has contributed to our school. Amy has been instrumental over the past two years in preparing our senior students for secondary school. She has left a lasting impression on our students and our staff with her genuine care and concern for all, and with a drive to support all students to grow in their learning and socially and emotionally. We wish Amy all the very best as both Kane and Amy take on their new role as parents very soon!

go on with strength and courage

from the principal

The Giving Tree

We wish Sasha Reilly all the very best. Sasha has taken on the role of PE/Health teacher this year with enthusiasm and dedication providing all students with fantastic sporting experiences. We look forward to hearing about the new addition to Sasha's family in the future as she too ventures into the new grounds of parenthood with Brad, her partner.

A big thank you to Leah Kuiper, who has worked at Mary MacKillop Memorial School in the capacity of Occasional Care educator, TRT and classroom teacher this term. We have appreciated the way in which you have fitted in to the Mary Mac team, and worked with the students, enabling them to succeed.

Best of luck to Ainsley, our wonderful admin trainee. Ainsley has spent the year doing a terrific job in the front office undertaking many tasks, including helping out in our Occasional Care.

Finally, we farewell Mr Sam Baxter. Sam and his beautiful family came to Penola from the city, and we were fortunate to have Sam in a variety of roles at Mary MacKillop Memorial School over the last 3 years. Sam has made a significant contribution to the teaching and learning at our school within his role of Leader of Learning. He has also dedicated time and effort to our Catholic Identity as a school through his role as Religious Education Coordinator. Sam brought a wealth of knowledge and a genuine love for the students and assisting them to flourish. We thank Sam for his incredible work and commitment to our school and wish him all the very best as his leadership journey takes him to St Anthony's in Millicent as Assistant Principal Religious Identity and Mission.

We will miss all of these amazing students, families and staff and wish them God's blessings for the future.

The Giving Tree is looking great, but there's still time to contribute! I've extended the deadline for donations until Wednesday, the 11th, for anyone who wishes to support the Vinnies Christmas Appeal. Donations of toys, new clothing, toiletries, and more can make a real difference, helping those facing challenges this year enjoy a joyful and blessed Christmas. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!



Looking back on 2024, I am deeply inspired by the numerous achievements, successes, and learning milestones accomplished by our students and staff at Mary MacKillop Memorial School. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to every member of our school community for their invaluable contributions throughout the year. Your support, in every form, has been instrumental in making this year a truly remarkable one.

May you and your family have a blessed Christmas.

Nicole

go on with strength and courage

Catholic Identity

Mary MacKillop Memorial School Values

This year, we embarked on an important journey as a school community: to reflect deeply on our values and ensure they are visible, memorable, and truly representative of who we are.

The process began in 2023 when we reviewed our vision, mission, and values statements. We quickly realized that these statements, while meaningful, were not well-known by our students. This discovery inspired us to dive deeper into the values of the Josephite sisters—the order founded by Mary MacKillop—and to explore how these values are lived out in our school community.

Guided by the Josephite tradition and the Gospel message of Jesus, we refined our focus to four core values that reflect the teachings of St Mary of the Cross and the people we strive to be:

- **We love**
- **We are courageous**
- **We serve**
- **We are present**

These values were intentionally written as 'we' statements to emphasize that they are more than just words—they are actions we can take to create a better world for all.

To bring these values to life, we engaged in meaningful research and dialogue throughout the year. We explored the life and legacy of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, collaborated with the Sisters of St Joseph, and most importantly, listened to our students. Their insights were invaluable as they shared what these values mean to them, how they see them in action, and the ways they live them out every day.

This journey has been nothing short of inspiring. As a staff, we have been moved by the ways our students embody these values in their words and actions. Whether it's through acts of kindness, moments of bravery, or simply being present for others, our students continue to remind us of the power and purpose behind these principles.

As we continue this journey together, we remain committed to making these values a living, breathing part of our school culture. They guide not only what we do but also who we aspire to be—both as individuals and as a community.

We love. We are courageous. We serve. We are present.

Christmas

As Christmas approaches, it's easy to get swept up in the hustle and bustle of the season. But at its heart, Christmas is a time to reflect on the profound gift of faith. It's a reminder of God's love made visible in the birth of Jesus—a light of hope for all.

This season invites us to embrace the values of love, kindness, and generosity, sharing joy with those around us. Whether through quiet prayer, family traditions, or acts of service, let's centre our celebrations on the true meaning of Christmas: a faith that unites and inspires us to live with purpose and compassion.

Wishing you and your family a joyful and faith-filled Christmas!

I encourage you to watch the following clip with your families to re-familiarise yourself with the Christmas narrative stories from the bible.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPRaYnm12OQ>

Penola Parish

Parish Priest: Fr Peter Zwaans

SATURDAY 16th December at 4:30pm

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

GOSPEL: Luke 3:10-18

Catholic Identity

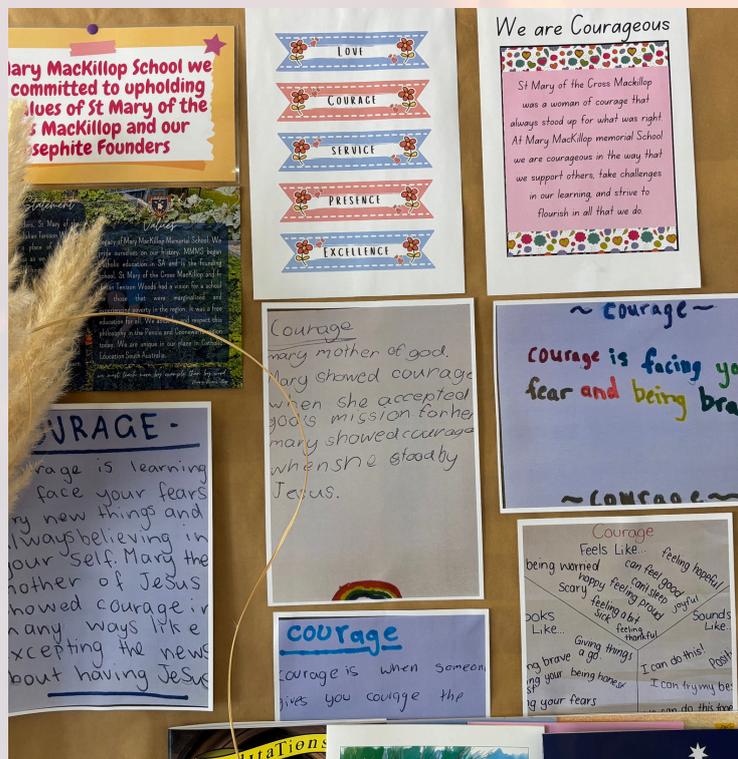
Thankyou

I would like to take a moment to formally say farewell and express my heartfelt gratitude to the Mary Mac's community. My time here as a teacher, and in various leadership and coordinating roles, has been incredibly rewarding. It has been a privilege to get to know the families and students at this wonderful school. I am deeply grateful to everyone for making both me and my family feel so welcomed into the community.

I will miss my daily walk to school, the dedicated staff, and most of all, our amazing students. They are joyful, compassionate, and truly care for one another. While I look forward to my new role at St. Anthony's, I'm excited to return to Mary Mac's as a parent in 2025. Thank you again for everything.

God Bless

Sam Baxter



Masses and Liturgies for Term 4 EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

WEEK 9 Wednesday 11th December
End of Year Thanksgiving Liturgy at
5:30pm

ADVENT LITURGIES

WEEK 9 Monday 9th December
Advent Liturgy: Joy and Love - 8:45am in
the Hall



Community News

Birthdays

We wish a Happy Birthday to Piper, who will be celebrating her birthday in week 9 on the 13th of December. We also wish a Happy Birthday to those who will be celebrating throughout the Christmas Holidays. A Happy Birthday to Niamh (19th), Winnie (24th), Matthew (26th), Levi W (28th), and Saige (30th).

Text Absentee Number New Phone Number

When texting the Absentee Line to explain your child's absence from school please make sure you put both their name **and reason** so it can be recorded properly.

0488 280 771

House Points

Cameron 25

McCormack 31

Woods MacKillop 14

Flourishing Awards

Last Friday we congratulated 6 students who received Flourishing Awards. Congratulations to Ruby, Alice, Levi D, William, James, and Noah. Well done!



Christmas Items for Sale

At the Mary MacKillop Interpretative Centre, there are various Christmas items for sale. On the table are Nativity sets, Christmas cards and more! Come take a look.

Celebrations and Farewells

A reminder of the events for the end of the year.

Tuesday 10th December

Thanksgiving Whole School Liturgy, Awards, Farewells and Graduation Ceremony starting 5:30pm, St Joseph's Church

Wednesday 11 December

End of Year Assembly at 2:40pm followed by guard of honour farewell for Year 6s

End of Year Reporting

Reports will be sent home on Monday 9th December. The End of Year Report is a summary of your child's learning throughout the year. If you have any questions about your child's report, please contact your child's class teacher.

Absentees

A reminder that if your child is absent from school, for any reason, it is important that this is communicated with the school. The Catholic Education system has advised all schools to follow up on unresolved absences with families. Your support and communication in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Community News

Counsellor's Corner

Children's University

Keeping a Routine during the Christmas Holidays

With only 2 weeks of school left for the year, the Christmas holidays are approaching fast, it's such a fun and exciting time, but without school routines, children can sometimes feel unsettled. A little structure can help your child feel happy and secure while still enjoying all the holiday magic.

Why Routine is Important

Routines help children feel safe and in control. They also support good habits, like getting enough sleep, eating well, and having time to play and relax.

Easy Holiday Routine Tips:

- **Stick to Bedtimes:** Let bedtime be a little later than school nights but try to keep it regular so your child stays well-rested.
- **Plan Fun and Relaxing Time:** Mix exciting activities with quiet moments for rest and creative play.
- **Keep Mealtimes Steady:** Balance festive treats with regular, healthy meals.
- **Enjoy Screen-Free Activities:** Encourage outdoor play, reading, or family games to create special memories.

By keeping a simple routine, your child will feel their best and be ready to enjoy a happy and safe holiday season. This will be my last article for the year, and so I wish your family a wonderful Christmas filled with joy and laughter, and look forward to seeing your children's happy faces in 2025!

Regards,

Bec Baker.

Our school has proudly been part of the Children's University program for many years. This innovative initiative aims to inspire and engage students in learning beyond the traditional classroom, offering primary school children the opportunity to explore a wide variety of extracurricular activities in fields such as science, arts, sports, and cultural experiences. The program fosters curiosity, critical thinking, and a genuine love of learning.

Students earn credits for each activity they complete, which are recorded in a passport. These credits culminate in a special graduation ceremony.

This year 12 students participated in the Children's University program. On Tuesday the 28th of November the graduation ceremony was held in the Naracoorte Town Hall. The students dressed in their graduating gowns, hats and tassels and received their certificates. Congratulations to Niamh, Juliet, Lilly, Darcy, William, Levi, Matthew, Max, Sophie, Freya, Paige and Rylee in achieving your hours and graduating this year.

I was incredibly impressed by the dignity, confidence, and the respect our students demonstrated when receiving their awards on stage, as well as the consideration they showed for their fellow graduates.

Our school is excited to continue participating in the program in 2025. Information about enrolment will be distributed in Term 1 next year. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Rachel at rmanninen@mmms.catholic.edu.au.



Community News

Beachport Surf Lifesaving Day

Last Friday the whole school ventured to Beachport for our Surf Lifesaving Day. It was once again a very successful day with all students engaging in both water and beach activities to further develop skills and knowledge about the beach and ocean. We value this day as many of our families venture to the beach over the summer holidays and it reminds students about important beach and sea safety. We thank the Beachport Surf Lifesaving Club for their continued support and for the many volunteers who give up their time to provide this important day for us. We are truly grateful.

Sport SAPSASA Tennis

Earlier this term, Josh, Charlie, and Lizzie competed at the SAPSASA Tennis Carnival representing the Mid South East team. Josh played in the number 1 spot throughout the carnival, making an impressive start by winning his first match and decisively. Charlie saw significant improvement in the strength of his serve, while Lizzie was thrilled with the progress she made on her backhand.

Overall, the students relished the camaraderie and the opportunity to see their skills grow throughout the carnival. However, they didn't quite share the same enthusiasm for the sweltering heat of the Northern Adelaide plains.

Transition Afternoon

On Monday all students will spend the afternoon with their class and teacher for next year. We especially look forward to Mrs Chloe Fry visiting our school and getting to know her students for 2025 and the wider Mary MacKillop Community. We extend a very warm welcome to Chloe.

School Captains

Congratulations to Charlie and Camilla who will be taking on their role of School Captains for MMMS in 2025. We wish them the very best as they prepare to lead the school next year.

Thankyou to Laura and Ben for their outstanding leadership in 2024. They have led with integrity and respect, modelling the values of the Josephite Sisters in their words and actions.



Snaps from Beachport Surf Lifesaving Day





photo gallery

Founders Week



Early Learning Week 8 Christmas Reindeer Biscuit Making



@marymackillopmemorial



Mary MacKillop Memorial School



Class updates on Seesaw