Dear Parents/Caregivers, 5 February 2013

Welcome back to you all for 2013. It was great for us as staff to see our children returning so enthusiastically last Wednesday and also catch up with parents who had all appeared to enjoy the sun (in moderation) over the holiday period. We extend a very warm welcome to Guinevere Wilson (who has joined us in Room 3) along with her parents, Holly and Simon and two younger sisters, Bronwyn and Evelyn. We are also very pleased to welcome to our school community Jennifer Cherkun who also joins us in Room 3 along with her parents, Janean and Koysta and younger brother Stani. We wish both of these wonderful girls and their families happy times with us.

We also extend a warm welcome to Mrs Rebecca Barnett who joins us for 5 weeks before she goes on maternity leave. She is teaching daily in Room 2 during the afternoons and we are very happy to have her with us.

We are very excited to be piecing together a school production recapturing the history of St Mary’s School and Church. We are in the early stages of developing how this will be structured together and are looking forward to seeing this performance progress throughout the term to be presented late in Term 1 to celebrate the beginning of our school 100 years ago.

I am hoping to see as many of our wonderful children as possible in their fabulous sports uniforms representing us in all of the available sports this term, so please return sports notice forms or let Jacquie or myself know ASAP if your child is interested in playing Touch or Futsal this term as enrolments are due in by the end of the week.

Have a lovely Waitangi Day.

Ka kite ano

Richard Duffy
Learning at School
It is our aim for our children to make gains in achievement in their learning at school as well as provide learning experiences that interest and stimulate their thinking. We appreciate your input in keeping us informed of factors that you feel may affect your child/ren's ability to achieve to their potential with us. In cases you may have concerns, and we encourage you to express them to us as we value our parent community and want to ensure you are happy with the education we provide. If you feel your thoughts or concerns are not being addressed or are unsure of how to approach us in what you may feel may be a delicate matter, we have attached a copy of our Complaints Procedure for your information and guidance. A copy is on the office noticeboard as well.

Parents/people for tutor reading at school
We are looking to start Parent Tutoring in Week 4 (18th February). If you are able to assist with this wonderful programme in giving children an opportunity to gain more reading mileage. Please contact Richard or Jacqui with your contact details.
Many thanks

Contextual Learning Meeting
Contextual Learning is a big emphasis in our topical learning programme ie, the topics of Science, Social Science and Technology. We will be holding a meeting later this term around what contextual learning actually involves. Our first context will be a focus during term 2 as our production is our major undertaking this term. We felt therefore that it was more relevant to provide information on this learning approach closer to term 2.

Stationery
As in previous years we have done a bulk purchase of stationery to last your children the whole year!! You will not be asked for 20 cents here and there. This will be added to your school account, which can be paid off weekly if you wish. The total amount is $40, this consist of classroom sharing of glue sticks, erasers pencils sharpeners, crayons, felts and white board pens and other bits and pieces used for your child’s learning in the classroom.

Does anyone have, or know someone who has…
a push mower that they no longer use or want. We are developing our Sacred Space and want to keep the grass around this area well cut. If we can get a push mower some of our senior children will be able to mow this regularly.

Sports note (to be returned)
At this stage we are still hoping to enter Futsal and Touch teams in the term 1 Dunedin schools competitions. If you have any permission slips to return could we please have them by Thursday of this week.

There will be a tee ball practice this Thursday after school which will finish around 4pm.

T Ball: St Marys vs Saturday
(draw not out at this time)

Fluro Vests/Sports Uniforms
Fluro Vests will be issued today and the sports uniforms will come home early next week. TBall players will have theirs on Thursday. We have a number outstanding, so those children will not be issued with a new set for this year. A hire fee of $5 will be added to your school account to cover the cost of cleaning and fixing or replacing.

$25 will be charged if they get lost. This helps to cover the cost of replacement.
Last Friday we participated in a Mass that celebrated friendships and also welcomed Jennifer, Guinevere and Mrs Barnett to our school family.

This morning we had a Waitangi Day Liturgy to celebrate that we are all New Zealanders. We signed a treaty to try to always follow our school rules.

This weekend we have our School/Parish Mass, Saturday 9th February at 6pm. We would like everyone to be there. If you can’t make it, please send a note to school. Children will bring home words today if they have a ministry. Could these children please be there by 5.45pm. Remember children are to wear school uniform. Please join us for a cup of tea afterwards in Room 1, no plate required. This is a wonderful way to meet the new families to our school and join together as a school group. We really encourage our school families to support this once-a-term event.

At the moment in RE, the children are completing a Prayer Module.
Mrs Barnett is teaching Year 1 & 2 about what prayer is and how we pray
Mrs Deerness is teaching Year 3 & 4 about what it means to be a good friend, how to write prayers, and are planning a prayer service in our sacred space.
Mrs Hammer is teaching Year 5 & 6 about gestures and using mind and body in prayer.

Ash Wednesday is next Wednesday. We celebrate the beginning of Lent by participating in Mass at the Little Sisters. This mass is at 10.45am. We will be needing transport to and from church. If you are able to help, please let Jacque in the office know. Thank you

Dates for your Diaries
Family Mass
BOT meeting
PTA AGM
Little Sisters Mass
Goal Setting interviews
Walk and Wheel Week
Saturday 9 February @ 6 pm
Monday 10 February @ 7:30 pm
Tuesday 11 February @ 7 pm
Wednesday 12 February @ 10:45 am
Wednesday 27 February from 3:15 pm
Monday 4 March - Friday 8 March

Sausage sizzle/Ice Block
Our sausage sizzle last year was a wonderful fundraiser for our school, with most of the contributions going towards our ski camp last year. The sausage sizzle with ice block currently, or hot chocolate in the colder terms provides a hot food option that we can provide at school on a Friday. We had five or six fantastic parents who regularly undertook the task of cooking each week over the year. We desperately need your support to continue this in 2013. If you are able help please complete attached form and return to office by Friday 8th February.

I can help on Fridays Name ________________________

Sausage Sizzle Order
Name ________________________________

Number of Sausage/s $1.50 each ________________

Ice Block $1 each ____________ (only 1 per child)
Room 3 Reporter
From Summer Paulin and Sam Al-Balushi

In Room 3 we have got two new classmates Jennifer and Guinevere.

Our classroom has had a MASSIVE change. It is quite fancy and tidy now!

We have been doing lots of tests, like maths, reading and spelling, so already we have been very busy.

Room 2 reports

It was very hot. It felt like there were four suns in the sky. It made me hot and tired.
The path was burning my feet.
By Zachary Clinch

I was at the beach splashing in the water. I loved it!
By Caitlin Braithwaite

Parent Teacher Friends Association (PTFA)
Annual General Meeting Tuesday 12 February at 7pm in the staffroom

Do you enjoy making new friends and learning new skills?
Our annual meeting will be held in our school staffroom on Tuesday February 12 from 7pm.

Come and join our PTFA for 2013. We are a fun group of parents, caregivers and friends and family of St Mary’s school who meet together about once every six weeks. Our PTFA is an active fundraising and school support organisation.

We have a fun and busy calendar of events that span the year. Last year our main focus was our amazingly successful Gala Day. Help us share ideas on great fundraising events for 2013. Being part of our PTFA is a great way to become involved in the school, meet other parents and keep up to date with what is happening.

Help us create a strong sense of community and contribute to the quality of our children’s education at the same time. If you think this might be for you come along to the AGM or contact Bernadette on 476 2128.

BOT Elections 2013 – coming up

Board of Trustee elections are held nationally every three years. We have three board members who will be leaving our current BOT. Please give serious consideration to standing as a Board member. It gives you a real opportunity to have direct involvement in the development of our school’s direction at a governance level supporting us in moving forward.

Being a Board Member gives you an insight into meeting structures, strategic planning and financial management of a school, teaching valuable skills which can be transferred into other business or community interests you may have.

Health and Safety Policy

Our Board of Trustees has been reviewing our Health and Safety policy and the accompanying procedures. This policy is ready to view by members of our school community before being ratified by our Board at Monday’s meeting. You can view this policy on the main noticeboard in the office.