



20<sup>th</sup> February  
2024

# NEWSLETTER

Te Reo o te Kura o Hato Hoani  
The voice of St John's School

Kia ora whanau,

It has been a busy couple of weeks at school. Last Tuesday the children elected their house leaders for Terms 1 and 2 and on Tuesday evening, the teachers joined teachers from all Catholic schools in Auckland for a Dedication Mass celebrated by Bishop Steve at Christ the King church, Owairaka. On Wednesday, as well as farewelling our Year 5 students as they headed to camp, we gathered together as a school for our Ash Wednesday liturgy, a beautiful and reflective way of beginning the Lenten season.

## YEAR 5 CAMP

Mrs Perry and I were fortunate to visit the Year 5 group at camp. The children had a fabulous time at Peter Snell Youth Village in Whangaparaoa and were blessed with good weather. I would like to thank the Year 5 teachers, Mrs Blind and Mrs Moss, for all their hard work and effort in the organisation and running of the camp. I would also like to thank the parents who gave so generously of their time and energy. Without this support this experience would not have been possible.

## BEGINNING OF THE YEAR SCHOOL MASS – 22<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY, 11:00AM



This week we look forward to our first school Mass of the year where we ask God's blessing on the year ahead and we induct our Term 1 and 2 student leaders; our House Leaders and Young MacKillops. You are all warmly invited to celebrate Mass with us this Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, at 11:00am in St John's Church.

## TERM 1 AND 2 STUDENT LEADERS

There are many opportunities for all our Year 6 students to become active leaders in our school and I look forward to seeing this group of Year 6 leaders take up this leadership. In such roles the students are invited to lead their peers and demonstrate and develop responsibility for both themselves and others. As leaders they are in position to, through their own words and actions, influence, motivate and guide others to become the best they can be and grow closer to God.

As part of the Beginning of the Year Mass on Thursday we will induct and commission our House Leaders; elected by their peers to lead our four houses. They provide a valuable student voice to the Senior Leadership, their mandate is to KNOW what is right, to STAND for what is right and to LEAD others in that direction.

For **Keegan** House; Fynn Pollock and Meesol Tak  
For **Liston** House; Hara Kang and Molly-Kate Smith  
For **Pierce** House; Martina Mena and Isaac Reade  
For **Quinlan** House; Olivia McKewen, Johnathan Murphy and Mason Sayegh.

We will also commission our Young MacKillops; selected by Mrs Mountjoy and their teachers. They provide a student voice around social justice and work with Mrs Mountjoy as our Director of Religious Studies to support and promote the Special Character of our school, particularly through leadership in liturgy.

The young MacKillops for Terms 1 and 2 are Ava Burdett, Samantha Chow, Spencer Drury, Avigail Fernando, Sophie Hayward, Ashton Miles, Isabella Mitchell, Marika Perera, Teresa Rotaecche, Trinity Soriano, Annabel Vink and Erin Wiles.

We also are looking forward to the PTFA Family picnic this Friday and hope to see you all there.

God bless,  
Marina Binns - Principal

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - LENT



During the season of Lent we are given time to reflect and make time for God. As a family, we can try to connect with God by doing activities that foster our relationship with God and with one another. It doesn't have to be something major, even something small can significantly and positively impact your relationships and spiritual growth.

Here are some Lenten ideas for your family:

**Solitude in Nature:** The ideal first activity would be to get out of the house and into a new atmosphere that fosters interior silence and reflection. Nature was created for us to enjoy, replenish and give thanks to God for what he created! Just the sight of its beauty and silence can make it easier for us to hear God and enter into conversation with Him. Jesus was the first to enter into the desert to speak to our Lord and open himself up to his will.

**Quality Time & Attention:** As the days come and go it can be easy to stick to a rigid routine and hurry to get 'me' time (if that exists) and straight into bed. But what God asks of us is *heroic virtue* with simplicity. Instead of getting the kids bathed or finishing up sandwiches, maybe try and sit with your child, however old they may be, and just offer an ear. Listen attentively, open your heart to their world and what they want to share with you, if anything. Most of the time children don't need advice they need to be heard.

**Read and Pray Together:** Taking a moment each week, or even each day if your schedule allows, for the family to sit down to read or pray together can make a huge impact in the life of your family. If reading won't work, saying a family rosary or listening to an inspiring podcast could be more appropriate.

**Lend a Hand:** Lastly, do some form of charity work. It can be in your parish, diocese, neighbourhood, etc. Get creative! What are the needs you see around you? Love and charity should blossom with creativity.

Cara Mountjoy – Director of Religious Studies

## GARDEN TO TABLE



It's been a hot dry summer in the garden but we still have some plants thriving and producing vegetables. The Year 4 children have had their first sessions and introduction to the garden, as well as learning some basic knife skills for the kitchen.

As always, when the year starts, we ask if anyone may have anything to donate to our programme. Maybe you have some stakes lying around that are no longer used or some wood, barrels or even an old bath that could be used for garden beds. You may know of a producer of honey, eggs or produce that may be interested in donating to our programme. Anything would be appreciated.

Ange Moore – Garden Specialist

## PTFA EVENTS

### PTFA ANNUAL FAMILY PICNIC – This Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> February

Come on down to the school field between 5:30- 7:30pm.

This picnic is a wonderful informal gathering of our school community where you are invited to bring a picnic, chairs, rugs and beverages and the children have the option of bringing their togs for a swim in the school pool (under your parental supervision of course!).

The PTFA will provide a sausage sizzle (\$2 a sausage), Juicies (\$2 each) and cold drinks (\$2 a can) so you can simply turn up and be fed and watered. This is a wonderful opportunity to get to know your fellow parents and a great way to start our year.



**AGM**  
Annual General Meeting

**Everyone is welcome.**

### AGM AND FIRST PTFA MEETING FOR THIS YEAR

This will be held on Tuesday, 12th March at 7:00pm in the staffroom. As it is the first meeting of the year, and the AGM, this is an in-person meeting. Future meetings will also be available via a virtual link for those who wish to attend, but cannot meet onsite.

We are currently calling for nominations for the positions of Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. If you would like to nominate someone for one of these roles, please email these to the secretary by 12:00pm, Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March [ptfa@sjmb.school.nz](mailto:ptfa@sjmb.school.nz)

## MORNING SCHOOL DROP OFF

We have noticed a few instances of parents driving into the front car park (off Penzance Rd) to drop children off in the morning. For health and safety reasons, this area is for staff parking only as this entrance is also a pedestrian access way to the surrounding streets.

Students can be dropped off in the circular turning circle, with parents stopping to let children out onto the footpath. Parents wishing to park and come into school can park at either the school carpark off East Coast Rd or in the church car park off Hastings Rd.

## ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

Covid has resurfaced within the school. Current advice and guidance is that if your child tests positive for Covid, it is recommended you isolate for at least 5 days, even if you only have mild symptoms.

Please keep an eye out for the symptoms of Covid and test if necessary. Covid can look different for different people. Symptoms can include one or more of the following:

- a new or worsening cough.
- sneezing and runny nose.
- a fever.
- temporary loss of smell or altered sense of taste.
- sore throat.
- shortness of breath (this is a sign of possible pneumonia and requires immediate attention)
- fatigue/feeling of tiredness.

We appreciate your support in minimising the impact of Covid within the school community.

## KĀKAHU O TE KURA – SCHOOL UNIFORM

Friendly reminder that hair must be worn off the face and tied back if longer than the bottom of the collar and be a natural hair colour. This is for health and safety reasons and to keep hair off the face while working in class.

Dyed hair or haircuts with distinctive cut or shaved lines are not permitted.

Ribbons, head bands and bobbles of the school colours (red, navy, blue or white) are the only hair adornments permitted.

Watches and plain silver or gold studs are the only form of jewellery to be worn.  
Nail polish is not permitted.

## CELL PHONES AT SCHOOL



You will have heard talk of new legislation around the use of student cellphones in schools. As we already required students to hand in their phones on arrival at school, there is no change to our procedures, however, we would like to take this opportunity to remind our community of the procedures around students and phones at school.

Schools must ensure students do not use or access a personal phone (including watches and other digital devices that can send and receive calls and texts) while they are attending school, including during lunch time and breaks. This includes students who are on a school course or visit outside the school grounds. Our approach is “away for the day”, meaning the device should be turned off, and handed in to the office to be locked away during the school day.

We strongly recommend students do not bring these devices to school with them. If a student does bring their cellphone for emergency contact or health reasons, these must be handed to the office on arrival at school to be locked. This includes when the student is attending activities offsite such as sporting or EOTC trips.

It is important to note that if students do make the decision to bring a digital device, including cellphones, to the school grounds, they do so at their own risk. The school is not responsible for any loss or damage caused to any device.

We understand that some parents like their children to have a phone to communicate with them after school, cellphones will be available for students at 2:50pm. If a parent or caregiver needs to contact their child urgently during the day, they should call the school office.

### **Appropriate usage**

There may be times when students may be able to access and use their cellphones. However, this is the exception and will always be monitored by teaching staff.

### **Exemptions**

An exemption will be granted if the principal decides that a cellphone is needed for special circumstances. Exemptions may occur where ākongā - student requires a phone to support their health or learning needs. In matters related to students with additional learning needs who may benefit from the use of cellphones in class to increase or improve their ability to participate and learn, a parent or caregiver can apply at any time to the principal for a period of exemption (e.g., use of cellphone as assistive technology if an alternative is not available).

In matters related to a student's immediate health and safety concerns, a parent or caregiver can apply at any time to the principal for a period of exemption (e.g., medical conditions or protection issues).

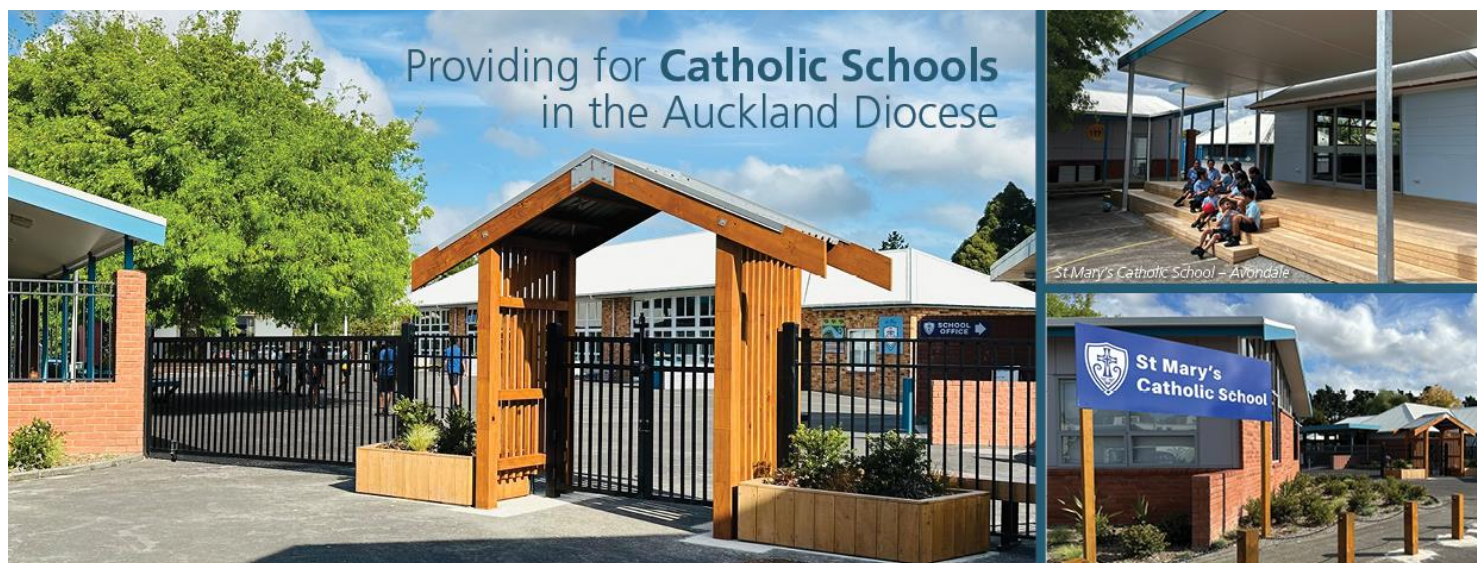
## Inappropriate usage

If we see a student using a cellphone inappropriately or without permission during the school day, it will be confiscated. After the student locks the device, we will place it in the office to be collected at the end of the day.

Breaches of the cellphone rules include (but not limited to):

- using the device when not permitted
- any sort of bullying, including online bullying
- taking photos or videos of other people without their permission
- forwarding inappropriate messages or content.

Please note with all exemptions and exceptions appropriate usage guidelines and other relevant school rules still apply.



## ATTENDANCE DUES

Attendance Dues are used to pay for building related costs at Catholic Schools in the Auckland Diocese.

Paying Attendance Dues is a condition of enrolment for all students attending New Zealand Catholic Schools.

Attendance Dues are compulsory – there is a legal requirement for parents and caregivers to pay Attendance Dues under the Education and Training Act 2020.

### ATTENDANCE DUES ARE:

2024	PRIMARY STUDENTS	SECONDARY STUDENTS
per year (incl. GST)	\$516	\$1,016
per term (incl. GST)	\$129	\$254

### For more information:

<https://www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz/catholic-schools-2/>

Phone: (09) 360 3040

Email: [acfl@cda.org.nz](mailto:acfl@cda.org.nz)



Mō tā tou, ā, mō ngā uri ā muri ake | For us, and our children after us.

# Catholic Special Character Contribution

SUPPORTING CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN OUR SCHOOLS



The Catholic Special Character contribution is used to fund the staff and services provided by the Catholic Education Services Board who are responsible, on behalf of the Proprietor, for safeguarding and strengthening the Catholic Special Character of our schools.

The contribution is \$15 per term per student or \$60 per student per year.

The contribution is tax deductible and a 33% refund can be claimed from the IRD.

**For more information:**

[www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz/catholic-education-services/](http://www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz/catholic-education-services/)

**Phone:** (09) 3603091 **Email:** ces@cda.org.nz

## NORTH HARBOUR SOFTBALL

We will once again be hosting North Harbour Softball lunchtime sessions. They will take place on Thursday lunchtimes on the school field and will run for 6 weeks, beginning on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> February.

Registration is directly with North Harbour Softball [www.sporty.co.nz/viewform/285498](http://www.sporty.co.nz/viewform/285498)

### Softball Fundamentals - St Johns School

6 week Programme - Term 1

Years 0 to 6

**Starts** Thursday, 28th February 2024

**Time:** Lunch time on school field

Participants are to wear running shoes and bring water and school hats.

Cost \$55.00 invoice will be sent from North Harbour Softball directly after registration complete.