Dear Parents,

We have all had another very busy week. Thank you so much for your patience and understanding with our school closure last Friday. It was a hard and brave call by the CEO but it highlights, I believe, how highly they regard the safety of our children and staff. The weather reports certainly implied that anything could have happened, and it certainly did happen to the people Yeppoon and surrounding areas. Please keep them and those helping in the clean-up in your prayers as they fight to restore basic services and try to put their lives back together.

How relevant that this week’s readings focus our attention on Jesus’ time in the desert; His 40 days of suffering, temptation and despair. In this time we are reminded that we all have our ups and downs, good times and bad, times of light and darkness. It is often in the dark times that we fall into despair, finding it difficult to believe that God cares for us or even exists! Yet it is in these dark times that we, if we open ourselves to it, can experience God’s loving and compassionate embrace through those who care and those who are there with us.

Through the person of Jesus we are guided towards the light of hope and love and are called to share this same hope and love with others.

Sue Darby
Acting Principal

LEADERS’ ASSEMBLY: Our leaders conducted their first assembly last week and they did an excellent job. They presented our school swimming champions with their ribbons and medals. They also gave out our Premier’s Reading Challenge certificates from last year. Children receive these awards in Kinder, Year 1 & Year 2 for reading (or having read to them) 30 books from the Reading Challenge list; children in Years 3-6 must read (or have read to them) 20 books from the list. Special congratulations to Tom Colquhoun, Darcy Hartin, Ellie Thornhill, Jorja Gilbert and Star Darley-Brown, who received Gold Awards for completing the Reading Challenge 4 years in a row.

REPORT ON CARITAS VISIT: On Tuesday Jenni from Caritas came to visit our school. Caritas helps fundraise for people who aren’t as lucky as we are, and don’t have a good education, not enough food, and sometimes don’t have a roof over their heads. Instead of just giving people money, Caritas gives them a little bit of money and shows them how to grow food themselves and how to earn their own money. Jenni also helped think of ideas for the school leaders. She talked to each class about some things you could do to fundraise for poor countries. She has great ideas and she told us a bit about Nepal, and some people Caritas had helped out. With help Caritas and Jenni can help the poor and you can too. Jenni left some donation boxes to raise more money for Caritas, which will be sent home at tomorrow’s assembly.

Annie & Ben, Leaders of Faith

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER, which is open to all denominations, will be held at Sacred Heart Church at 2pm on March 6th (which is our pupil-free Staff Development Day). Our children have been invited to sing at this event. If you would like to attend or your child would like to sing and you are able to get them there please let Mrs Darby know. A small group has been practising the songs but more are also welcome. Normal school uniform (blue shirts) will be worn.

PUPIL FREE DAY: There is a staff development day on Friday 6th March. Teachers are travelling to Mary Help of Christians School in Sawtell to learn more about the new Mathematics syllabus.
SCHOOL CLEAN-UP: We will be having a school clean-up this Friday afternoon if weather permits, hosted by our Environment leaders, Tom and Connor. All are welcome! Come and share lunch and then join us for a mini clean up. Please bring garden gloves if you have them and hand-held garden tools might be useful. Some of the jobs we hope to complete include a general vegie garden tidy, weeding, planting some seedlings around the statue of Saint John, stacking the wood for winter warmers raffle, and potting up mondo grass which we intend to use to build a labyrinth later in the year, and giving the school a general clean up.

P&F MEETING: Our first P&F meeting for the year will be held this afternoon at 3:25pm (which is the time the majority of people who returned their surveys preferred). All are welcome!

LINK TO SCHOOL WEBSITE: http://moodle.dorism.catholic.edu.au/

PARISH MASSES: Sunday Mass – 10:00am. All are welcome.

STREET STALL: Our first Street Stall will be held next Wednesday 4th March. Many thanks to Kim Brady & Gwen Turner, who have volunteered to help man the stall. We are asking for donations of items to sell at the stall such as baked goods (these sell really well), garden produce, plants, craft items, books, good quality white elephant goods etc. Donations can be sent in to school in the morning or dropped off at the stall. Please support this P&F fundraiser!

MASS: Year 2/3 attended Mass today. K/1 will attend Mass next week.

MASS WITH FATHER JIM: Father Jim would like to come up and say Mass for the children one last time. This will take place on Friday 27th March and all are welcome. The children have been drawing pictures, writing jokes and sharing messages of thanks to Father Jim which will form part of a gift which we will present on his final visit. If you would like to add a message or photograph, please give it to Mrs Darby as soon as possible so she has time to put it all together.

CONFIRMATION: Please keep Angus and Cooper in your prayers as they prepare to receive the sacrament of Confirmation on Wednesday 18th March at St Mary’s in Bellingen.

LENTEN PROGRAM: This program will be held on Thursday afternoons at 2pm and go for about an hour. If you would like to be part of this program but can’t make it during the day, Liz Crane also runs a program on Monday evening in the Church at 7pm. All are most welcome – you do not have to be Catholic to participate. Please let us know if you would like to be part of this program.

THE “I WAS WONDERING…” WINDOW: Got a question relating to school, parenting or the Catholic faith? Write it up on our “questions window” outside the front office. Our aim is to try to get people in to provide parent education if we can find a common theme, but also when people are busy it might be easier to write a question up while you are waiting for your children in the afternoon or send them to Cathy via the school email if you can’t come in. Our goal is keep open and strengthen the lines of communication which are vital in a school / home education partnership.

ASSEMBLY: Tomorrow’s assembly will be held at 2:40pm and will be led by the Year 2/3 class. All are most welcome.

CANTEEN: Thank you to this week’s canteen volunteers, who are Tianaha Willson-Baker and Sascha Chong. A reminder that canteen volunteers should be at the school by 9:00am to tally up orders. If you are unable to do your rostered day, please organise to swap with another volunteer.

LEADERS’ AWARDS: Congratulations to the following students, who received awards from our School Leaders: Environment award – Cash Gibson – for showing great enthusiasm with helping out in the garden; Behaviour award – Payton Lawler – for good behaviour in the playground and classroom; Faith award – Darcy Martin – for Serving at the altar in Mass so respectfully; Learning award – Ryan Miller – for working really well in Daily 5; Sports award – Rylan Kahl – for joining in and having a good game of lunchtime cricket.

GOOD LEARNING AWARDS: Class awards went to Sierra Martin for always trying her best with learning tasks and having a great attitude towards helping others; Abbey Lawler for completing tasks neatly and for listening attentively to directions; Emi Gibson for adding to class discussions; and Darcy Capps for service to the school community and making mature learning decisions.

STUDENT ABSENCES: If your child is absent from school for any reason, please make sure you notify the school. This is a legal requirement. There are several ways you can notify us:
1. By phone
2. By email to msjpdorr@lism.catholic.edu.au
3. Via Skoolbag app
4. By written note

**SCHOOL CROSS COUNTRY:** Our school cross-country will be held on Thursday 12th March at 10:30am. Time to start training! We will need some parent helpers to assist with marshalling on the day – please let us know if you’re available to help.

**LIBRARY:** Thursday is library day. Students will need to bring a cloth library bag (an old pillowcase is fine) to transport their books to and from school. This keeps them protected from mishaps.

**ST PATRICK’S DAY:** Tuesday 17th March is St Patrick’s Day – St Patrick is the patron saint of the Lismore Diocese. All students and staff are invited to come to school wearing mufti with a St Patrick’s Day or “green” theme on this day; please bring a donation of a gold coin (or however much you can afford) which will go to Children’s Mission Partners. Parents and children are invited to write a limerick or St Patrick’s Day riddle to share at school, so get your (Irish) thinking caps on!

**YEAR 5/6 EXCURSION:** An advance notice to the parents of children in Year 5 & 6 – we are beginning the process of organising our bi-annual Year 5/6 excursion (combined with students from St Mary’s in Bellingen) to Coffs Beach School, which we anticipate will be held in Term 4 and will cost in the vicinity of $260 per student.

**COMING EVENTS:**

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<th>FEBRUARY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 25th</td>
<td><strong>Diocesan Swimming Carnival</strong>&lt;br&gt;P&amp;F Meeting, 3:25pm&lt;br&gt;Fri 27th&lt;br&gt;<strong>Pupil-free Staff Development Day</strong>&lt;br&gt;School Clean-up, 1:30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 4th</td>
<td><strong>P&amp;F street stall</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>St Patrick’s Day</strong>&lt;br&gt;Thurs 12th&lt;br&gt;Fri 13th&lt;br&gt;Term 1 school fees due&lt;br&gt;Fri 27th&lt;br&gt;Final Mass with Father Jim</td>
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<td>Fri 6th</td>
<td>“Macbeth” performance in Bellingen</td>
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**GFS KIDPLUS** meets every Wednesday during term time from 3-5pm in the Anglican Church Hall. There is food, fun, games, worship and craft. Students from Kinder through to Year 10/11 are welcome. Cost is $1 per session – new pupils always welcome.

Contact Rev Mike on 6657 2015.

**SAUSAGE SIZZLE AT ANGLICAN HALL:** Just a reminder of the family sausage sizzle with fun and games on Saturday 28th February from 4-6pm at the Anglican Church hall - All welcome.

**SHOP FOR SCHOOLS PROMOTION:** Shop for our School & Win a Classroom of iPads*!

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When doing your shopping be sure to shop at Park Beach Plaza for your chance to win big for our school! You simply need to shop at any store at Park Beach Plaza, present your docket to the Customer Service Desk located outside near Noni B and nominate Mt St John’s School. The value of the dockets will be added to our school’s point tally; for example if you spend $150 our school will receive 150 points. The schools with the highest point tally (divided by the number of families with students enrolled at our school**) will win 1st, 2nd and 3rd place and share in the fantastic prize pool of cash and goodies. Be sure to look out for shops displaying a “Shop for Coffs Coast School’s Triple Point Poster”. If you shop at these stores you will receive bonus triple points for our school’s tally to the value of your shopping docket! The winning schools will be announced in the Coffs Coast Advocate on Wednesday 18 March, 2015 and if we are lucky enough to win 105.5 StarFM will broadcast live and host a FREE breakfast from our school as we celebrate winning a Classroom of iPads* on Wednesday 18 March 2015!

* A Classroom of iPads can be transferred to $10,000 worth of technology available at JB Hi-Fi.
** Full terms and conditions can be found at [www.parkbeachplaza.com.au](http://www.parkbeachplaza.com.au)
Join us for the 2015 Family Retreat

Registration for Southern Retreat due by 13th March
on line at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1vKtQ-OMVn7q7lI4054cKxii7eqMQbn65N1cMlMl1u3J7xs/viewform?c=0&fsrc=mail_form_link
or email: parents@lism.catholic.edu.au

**Where**

**Choose from either date and venue:**

- **Southern Retreat** - SDA Convention Centre,
  250 Grassy Head Rd Stuarts Point - March 28/29
- **Northern Retreat** - Tyalgum Ridge Retreat,
  783 Tyalgum Creek Rd - October 24/25

**Fun**

- Evening activities
- Games for kids
- Relax and enjoy quality family time and activities
- Meet and connect with other families

- Fr Gerald O’Collins as Spiritual Director
- Meeting you where you are at on your faith journey
- Mass, reconciliation, prayer

**Information**

All costs covered by:

- Diocese of Lismore Catholic Schools
- Parent Assembly
- Parents in Partnership

For more information please contact your Parish School Parent Representative or your Parent Assembly Cluster Organisers:

- **Peta Rourke:** Hastings Macleay (m) 0400420614
- **Paul Edgar:** Clarence (m) 0427118122
- **Jo Kelly:** Richmond (m) 0407706454
- **Leanne Robbins:** Tweed (m) 0407143975