Dear Parents/Carers,

Last Sunday, the Parish Children’s Choir joined our Parish community to lead us in song at Mass. Whilst the group of students was small, they should be congratulated for their ongoing commitment to service in our parish through Music Ministry. Special thanks also to the staff who were in attendance.

On Monday members of the School Band and Choir assisted in celebrating the Centenary of the Kempsey Railway. The students should be very proud of their efforts. Special thanks also to Mrs Capararo for her support. The students performed beautifully.

It is that time of year again when we ask your support to help those less fortunate than ourselves. The Annual Vinnies Hamper Appeal is on and the students of Mini Vinnies are asking for your support to contribute non-perishable items through the classes. Thanks for your support.

Book Fair: This week was the final week of our Annual Book Fair. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Horner and Mrs Micallef for all their efforts in providing this service to our students. Thanks also to our families for their patronage. A proportion of funds generated through sales go directly back into the Library for new resources for our children. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Over the next two weeks students across K-6 will participate in Rewards Day activities to celebrate positive behaviour and achievement throughout the year. Staff have organised activities for different Stage groups.

Some of the activities include a visit to Tabatinga and the park, a Beach Day and a Pool Day. Thanks to the staff for their organisation of these activities for our students.

Next Monday from 9.00am, we will host our Kindergarten Orientation for 2018. We look forward to seeing our new students and their families at this important time in their transition to big school.

We wish to announce that the Kindergarten Teachers for 2018 are Miss Louise Daley, Miss Danica Hawkins, Miss Annie Dillon and Mrs Karly Edwards.

All the best for the week ahead.

Many Blessings

Melissa Turner

WEEK 9

MON, 4th Dec
- Kinder Orientation - 9.00am
- Important Information Session for Kindergarten for 2018 - 9.15am School Hall
- Beginner Keyboard Group - 12.20pm
- Advanced Keyboard Group - 1.00pm
- Band - 1.40pm
- Choir - 2.10pm

TUES, 5th Dec
- Ice Breaker Day – Lunch - $1 each
- P&F Christmas Dinner - 5.30pm

WED, 6th Dec
- Year 2 Swimming for Sport - No charge

THURS, 7th Dec
- Years 5 & 6 Swimming For Sport - $3.00

FRI, 8th Dec
- 10.30am Assembly Prayer - 4D
- Years 3 & 4 Swimming - No Charge
- Years 1 & 2 Reward Day - Tabatinga $5.00 per student
KB VISIT RESIDENTS OF VINCENT COURT

KB had a great time at Vincent Court this week. We sung a Christmas song, read the residents a book, and gave them a picture we drew.

Pictured below is Marley reading to one of the residents.

DIOCESAN SUMMER SPORTS TRIALS

Well done to the seven children who were selected to trial at the Diocesan Summer Sports Trials held in Coffs Harbour last Friday. All were mixed with other children from our Zone to compete at that higher level.

Congratulations to the following who progressed to the next representative level, the Polding Trials, to be held in 2018 at Newcastle:

- **Softball**: Blake Bullen
- **Cricket**: Chelsea Hackenberg

TENNIS WORKSHOPS

Students from Year 2 to Year 6 took part in a Tennis Workshop on Tuesday and Wednesday at the Sea St Courts. Well done to all students for their cooperation and participation. All had a good time practising the fundamental tennis skills. Thank you to Jeff the Tennis Coach, Mum, Jody Crilley who volunteered, Teaching Assistants who helped with BBQ and supervision and the teachers who took activity groups.

THE WAR ON WASTE SERIES CONTINUES

The new series will be televised this Sunday at 7.40pm on ABC (or catch up show on Monday at 1pm).

A must to watch (or record)!

FREE TO GOOD HOME

Old Newspapers! Great for the vegie garden, worm farm etc. Contact the office.

KEEP COOL ON ICE BREAKER DAY

Next Tuesday, 5th December Year 6 will be selling pre ordered Ice Breakers at Lunch One for $1.00

CHRISTMAS HAMPER APPEAL

It is that time of year again and Christmas is just around the corner. Mini Vinnies ask the St Joseph’s School community to donate items for the annual Christmas hampers.

These hampers are donated to the St Vincent de Paul Society and are then redistributed to families in our local community who may be in need this Christmas. Items that could be donated are non-perishable items, such as tin food, packets of chips, Christmas treats, chocolates and long life milk.

There is a basket in each classroom for donations. Let’s see the St Joseph’s Christmas Spirit!

Thank you from the Mini Vinnies Team.

A REMINDER TO ALL STUDENTS

That they must at all times wear seat belts on buses.

There is no exemption to the law for buses.

CURRICULUM IN MY CLASSROOM

Year 3 students are investigating properties of materials in Science and Technology. As part of their learning they designed a sandwich wrapper to hold their sandwiches. To add to the fun and engaging learning activity, students also made their very own butter to put on their sandwiches.
STUDENT BIRTHDAYS

Madelyn Lipscombe
3rd December

Tahni Riordan
4th December

Holly Edwards
5th December

Audrey Collins
6th December

Maddison Martin
7th December

Limited Spaces still available for our December/January Vacation Care Program
Call Linda on 0407 406 433 to secure your spot!

END OF YEAR EVENTS

KINDER ORIENTATION
Monday, 4th December
9.00am

2017 SCHOOL AWARDS CEREMONY
Tuesday, 12th December
10am
School Hall

BLUES SPORTS AWARDS
Tuesday, 12th December
12.00pm
School Hall

YEAR 6 GRADUATION MASS & DINNER
Wednesday, 13th December
6pm
Church

END OF YEAR WHOLE SCHOOL MASS
Thursday, 14th December
10am
Church

PARENT HELPER MORNING TEA
Thursday, 14th December
11am

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS
Thursday, 14th December
11.40am
School Hall

ADVENT BLESSINGS OF PEACE & JOY

The word “Advent” comes from Latin and means “coming”. Its purpose is to look forward to the coming of Christ to Earth; it is a season that focuses on waiting. So, “Advent means something new is coming. The dawn of a new and better era.” This is really what the Christmas season is all about. It is the celebration of the ADVENT of a new era.

Prayers for lighting the Advent Wreath Candles

FIRST WEEK OF LENT

All powerful God, increase our strength of will for doing good that Christ may find an eager welcome at his coming and call us to his side in the Kingdom of Heaven, where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God, forever and ever. Amen.

The Advent wreath is a traditional centerpiece of the Christmas season. A candle is lit on each of the four Sundays preceding Christmas. The first candle (violet) represents hope, the second (violet) peace, the third (rose) joy, and the fourth (violet) love. The central white candle is lit on Christmas Day and represents Christ. The wreath itself is also symbolic. The circle of evergreen in which the candles are placed represents everlasting life. The seedpods, nuts and cones used to decorate the wreath are symbolic of life and resurrection, the laurel signifies victory over persecution and suffering, pine and holly signify immortality, and fruits (such as apples) represent the nourishing fruitfulness of the Christian life.

Christmas Calendar

Christmas Eve
24th December
Both the Children’s Masses with the Placing of the Baby Jesus in the crib & the lighting of our Christmas Candle
6.00pm Kempsey
6.00pm South West Rocks
Children’s Mass

Midnight Mass
12.00am Smithtown

Christmas Day
Monday 25th December
9.30am Kempsey
9.30am South West Rocks

Church Locations:
Kempsey
Cnr Kemp & Marsh Street
All Saints Catholic Church
West Kempsey

South West Rocks
Our Lady Star of the Sea
Gregory Street
South West Rocks

Smithtown
Main Street
St Patrick’s
Smithtown

Crescent Head
Main Street
Crescent Head
Willawarrin

Willawarrin
Main Street
St John’s
Willawarrin

The " means we have at the following services:*

Reconciliation
Kempsey
5.00 - 5.45pm (Saturday Vigil)
Tuesdays 5.50pm to 6.20pm
South West Rocks
7.00am-7.20am every Sunday
Smithtown
Before 8.00am Wednesday Mass
There are loads of fun ways to practice gratitude. Here are a few to get you started:

1. Understanding that someone has purposefully done something to benefit them.
2. Awareness that taking action to provide you a benefit cost that person in some way.
3. Awareness that the benefit of that person.

Supporting your child to become more grateful begins with teaching three fundamental ideas:

- 1. Awareness that someone has purposefully done something to benefit them.
- 2. Understanding that the benefit of that person.
- 3. Awareness that taking action to provide you a benefit cost that person in some way.

Benefits of a grateful mindset

The science tells us that compared with those who don’t, people who practice gratitude are more enthusiastic, more determined, perform better at school, are more likely to avoid risky behaviours, experience less depression and envy, are more kind and helpful, sleep better and are 25 per cent happier.

Adolescents with a grateful mindset are more optimistic and experience greater social support, which is essential to their health and happiness. They experience more fulfilling friendships and family relationships, are more content in themselves and with their school, have higher grades and are less focused on material possessions.

There’s simply no down side!

Practicing gratitude is a sure-fire way to boost happiness, something we absolutely want for ourselves and for our children. In addition, teaching our children genuine appreciation helps them develop strong relationships over the course of their lives, and we know that strong relationships are critical to our overall happiness.

Gratitude isn’t just good for the giver either. It’s wonderful for the recipient too. Do you remember how you felt the last time sincere gratitude was expressed to you? It lifts our spirits, boosts our mood and inevitably strengthens our relationship with the person expressing their thanks.

Where do I start?

The best way to teach gratitude is for us as parents to role model it. When you’re feeling grateful, tell your kids and explain why. If you do something kind for someone to thank them for helping you, share your story over the evening meal. Like all values we want for our kids to embrace, it’s ‘monkey see, monkey do’.

Different families teach gratitude in different ways. The trick is to introduce a gratitude practice that doesn’t feel like a chore. Even if there’s a little resistance at first, don’t give up. It feels good to be grateful, so it should eventually become something that doesn’t need too much of a nudge.

Supporting your child to become more grateful begins with teaching three fundamental ideas:

1. Awareness that someone has purposefully done something to benefit them.
2. Understanding that the benefit of that person.
3. Awareness that taking action to provide you a benefit cost that person in some way.

There are loads of fun ways to practice gratitude. Here are a few to get you started:

- Regularly express sincere gratitude to your partner and to your children, explaining why.
- Prompt your kids to note things they’re grateful for in colourful textas on poster paper on the fridge.
- Paint a wall in chalk paint for your family to artistically (or not!) express their gratitude using chalk.
- Ask each family member what they’re thankful for each evening at dinner.
- Stop to savour and appreciate the little things like a beautiful flower or a colourful sunset.
- Find the silver lining in difficult circumstances.
- Relive happy moments together.
- Hold hands at the dinner table and thank the person who prepared the food.
- Ask the kids to take photos of the things they’re grateful for.
- Keep thank-you notes at the ready and let the kids know when you write one and why. Encourage them to do the same.
- Encourage a contribution from your kids’ pocket money towards something they want.
- Start a gratitude journal and invite the kids to make contributions.
- Encourage your kids to help others.
- Help your kids reflect on what they’re grateful for, last thing at night.
- Start a gratitude jar and each weekend spend time reading over the notes within.

It’s really about finding the right fit for your family. You may need to try a few different ideas. You don’t even have to do it everyday, even just a few times a week works well, though it is good to get into a routine with it.

Lastly, Associate Professor Jeffrey Froh, a leading authority on gratitude in young people, tells us that "the deepest sense of gratitude in life comes from connecting to a bigger picture, to an issue that matters to others, and doing things that contribute to society down the road.”

Knowing this we can also be on the lookout for opportunities to fan the flames of our children’s passions and yearnings to make a difference in the lives of others. Step-by-step, day-by-day, we can raise grateful young people who are happier because of their perspective, and who lead rich and fulfilling lives because of what they do for others.