Dear Families,

This weekend begins the season of Advent in our Church year. The four weeks of Advent allow us time to ponder how Jesus came into the world in such a stunningly humble way. As we contemplate His birth in a bed of straw in a messy stable, perhaps we see our own life as being a little messy too. Our life is often distracted, self centred and sometimes leaves us wishing we were better people. But if we can slow down and refocus our attention, we might realise that God is there, waiting to love us even though we have so many unfulfilled good intentions.

**ADVENT: WAITING IN JOYFUL HOPE**

Sometimes it seems as though we spend our lives waiting. Daydreaming about an upcoming holiday, worrying over a medical test, preparing for a birth, waiting for important news - our days are filled with anticipation and anxiety over what the future holds.

As Christians, we too spend our lives waiting. But we are waiting for something much bigger than a trip, bigger even than retirement or a special occasion: we are waiting for the return of Jesus in glory. Advent heightens this sense of waiting, because it marks not only our anticipation of Jesus’ final coming, but also our remembrance of His arrival into our world more than 2,000 years ago.

Overwhelmed by the demands of the season, we can wait for Jesus in a state of anxiety, or cynicism, or harried indifference toward the miracle that is upon us. Or we can take our cue from the prayer we hear every Sunday and ‘wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ’. Welcoming Jesus into our homes and our hearts, full of hope and joy, prepares us to properly celebrate Jesus’ birth and anticipate his return.

The stories of Advent help us strike the right note for our wait: the prophecies of Isaiah and John the Baptist, full of their own stern hope; the pregnancies of Mary and Elizabeth, each as joyous as it is unexpected; the miracles, cures and other signs pointing the way to the Saviour.

Let us try and focus on the real meaning of Christmas as we lead up to this special celebration. It is important that we don’t get caught up in the commercial side of the Christmas season and forget about the reason for our celebrations.

“It’s sharing your gifts, not purchasing gifts. It’s not wrapping presents, it’s being present and wrapping your arms around the ones you love. It’s not getting Christmas cards out on time, it’s sending any card, anytime, at the right time. It’s not having the best Christmas light display, it’s displaying the Christ light that comes from your heart. It’s not Santa coming down the chimney, it’s Jesus coming down from heaven and giving us the gift of himself.”

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**ST JOSEPH’S CORAKI PARISH WEEKEND MASS TIMES & WOODBURN ALTAR SERVERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Servers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.00 pm</td>
<td>All Saints’ Church</td>
<td>Eamonn Wilde, Tara Blunn</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.30 am</td>
<td>St John’s Church,</td>
<td>Jasmine and Hannah McClure</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.15 am</td>
<td>Coraki</td>
<td>Liana and Lilly Davidson</td>
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LEADERSHIP THANK YOU AFTERNOON
Reminder that our thank you afternoon tea for our School Captains, Vice Captains, Sports Captains, SRC members, Mini Vinnies’ leaders and Parish Altar Servers is on Tuesday, 10th December from 3.30 pm to 5.00 pm. Afternoon tea will be provided.

THANK YOU LITURGY AND MORNING TEA FOR SCHOOL HELPERS
We will have a liturgy and morning tea to say thank you to the many parents, carers, grandparents and friends who assist us in so many ways around our school. Without their generosity in giving up time and energy our children would miss out in so many ways.

We invite everyone who has assisted our school community in any way throughout 2013 to come along to our liturgy at 10.45 am on Tuesday, 10th December in the library, followed by morning tea (provided).

LIBRARY
Please note that there will be no Library borrowing for the remainder of the term, allowing Mrs Feros to upgrade our library system in preparation for next year.

Please return any borrowed books to school next week.

SRC AND MINI VINNIES FINAL FUNDRAISER
Thank you to our Mini Vinnies, SRC representatives and our Year 5 and 6 students who organised and ran our Spring Market last Friday. This was great fun with all students getting into the spirit of the day. The face painters, make-up artists and hairdressers all did a roaring trade as did the ice-cream and food stalls. Please see attached photos.

ST JOSEPH’S CHRISTMAS CONCERT
Our school Christmas Concert will be held on Monday, 16th December. The evening will begin with a BYO picnic tea at 6.30 pm followed by the concert at 7.45 pm. The concert will conclude with the draw for the Parent Forum Christmas Raffle and communal Christmas carols.

MINI VINNIES CHRISTMAS HAMPERS
Just a reminder that all classes are helping to prepare a Christmas Hamper for families in need in the Parish. If possible, could students bring along to school suitable items for their class Christmas hamper box. Thank you in appreciation of your generosity and support.

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CAROLS - WOODBURN AND EVANS HEAD
Thank you to the children who have indicated that they are available to perform at Carols by Candlelight. All children who are participating in the Carols by Candlelight at Woodburn and Evans Head are asked to wear their sports uniform. Children who are singing at the Woodburn Carols will need to meet teachers at 7.00 pm. Children singing at Evans Head Carols will meet teachers at the Surf Club at 7.00 pm. We have very small numbers attending these carols at the moment. It would be greatly appreciated if you would consider your child/children becoming involved in these community events and let us know by Monday.

PARENT FORUM NEWS

SOCIAL EVENING
Thank you to the twenty parents who came along on Tuesday evening to our dinner at the Rod n Reel Hotel. It was great to see our parents supporting this night.

CHRISTMAS RAFFLE
Raffle tickets were sent home last week for the Parent Forum Christmas Raffle. Tickets are $2.00 each or 3 for $5.00.

1st Prize: Bar-b-que
2nd Prize: Christmas Hamper in Wheelbarrow
3rd Prize: $50.00 Coles Voucher
4th Prize: TBA

Please return tickets to school, sold or unsold by Thursday, 12th December.

The raffle will be drawn at the Christmas Concert on Monday evening, 16th December.

LANA’S MEMORIAL
Yesterday we had a prayer service to dedicate a special space in our garden in memory of Lana. We planted two shrubs below a memorial plaque. This will be a place where students can sit, remember and reflect on their special memories of Lana. Parents and friends are very welcome to come and visit when you are at school.

GOD MOMENTS
A God Moment is when you see Jesus reflected through that person or event or scenery. Very often it happens when you think back on your day.

Charlie Hennessey—for caring about the environment and for cleaning the playground without being asked.

Charlie Hong—for playing with a friend who looked lonely.
CORAKI PARISH CHRISTMAS MASSES - CELEBRATING JESUS’ BIRTHDAY

All over the Christian world at this time, people are taking part in Nativity plays and pageants. One of the best ways for children to become familiar with the Christmas story – even ‘fall in love with’ the story – is for them to play a part in re-enacting the scene. The Coraki Parish is endeavouring to re-enact the story out at each of the Christmas Parish Masses. Mrs Boyd is co-ordinating the children for Woodburn Christmas Eve Mass at 5.30 pm at All Saints’ Church. All children who would like to take a part in acting the Christmas Gospel this year, please let Mrs Boyd know by returning the form in this Newsletter by Thursday, 12th December, indicating that they will be attending. If children are coming to either of the Christmas Masses at Evans Head (Christmas Eve—7.30 pm and Christmas Day—8.30 am) Fr Richard has asked that the girls come dressed as angels and the boys as shepherds and everyone will be involved in the story.
ST JOSEPH’S SWIMMING CARNIVAL 2013

A reminder that the Swimming Carnival will be held regardless of weather at the Evans Head Aquatic Centre on Friday, 13th December 2013 starting at 10 am. A teacher will be in attendance at the pool from 9.45 am for those students who arrive by private means. A full program will be sent home before the Carnival. Thank you to all parents who have offered to help at this year’s Carnival.

A note will be sent home outlining your job for the day. Nominations are due back by Friday, 29th November.

Infants children in Kindergarten and Year 1 will remain at school on Friday.

Pool entry for students will be $3.00 to be sent to school with the Swimming Carnival Permission and Travel Note below and needs to be returned to school by Friday, 6th December.

Spectators who are coming to the pool will be charged $2.20 to be paid on entry.

BOOK CLUB

The final Book Club orders for this year are due back at school by Monday, 2nd December. We thank Kim Bell very much for volunteering her time to be our Book Club Co-ordinator. It has been very much appreciated by all. Kim has volunteered to co-ordinate Book Club again in 2014.

ST JOSEPH’S SWIMMING CARNIVAL 2013: Travel & Pool Entry

Please return by Friday, 6th December

My child/children__________________________ will be travelling by bus to the Evans Head Pool on Friday, 13th December

YES NO (please circle)

OR

My child/children__________________________ will be travelling privately to the Evans Head Pool on Friday, 13th December

YES NO (please circle)

OR

Other arrangements:______________________

I enclose $_______ ($3.00 per child - pool entry) Please ensure money accompanies the note.

Name:______________________________ Signature:__________________________

SWIMMING CARNIVAL ASSISTANCE

Please return by Friday, 6th December

I am able to assist with the Swimming Carnival on Friday, 13th December by:

Timekeeping YES Please circle

Ribbon writing, etc YES

Name:______________________________ Phone Number:__________________________

CORAKI PARISH CHRISTMAS MASS NATIVITY PLAYS

Please return by Thursday, 12th December

My child/children__________________________ will be attending the Christmas Eve Mass at 5.30 pm at All Saints’ Church, Woodburn (Tuesday, 24th December).

YES NO Please circle

Parent Name:______________________________ Phone No:__________________________