

ST MARK'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Seek and you shall find



Newsletter

10 November 2023

Kia Ora, Welcome, Hello, Nǐ hǎo, Talofa Lava, Hallo, Salut, Namaste, Bonjour, Bula Vinaka, Guten Tag, Shalom, Cìào, おはよう (Ohayoo), 안녕 Ahn Nyeong, Olá, Privet!, Xin Chào, Kia Orana, Malo e Lelei, Fakaalofa Lahi Atu, Sat Shari Akal, Melo Ni, Halo Ola Keta, Mauri, Fakaalofa Atu, Salam, Welkom.

KEY DATES

| Date | What | Details |
|---------------|---|----------------------|
| Fri 17 Nov | Sancta Maria College Orientation morning for students attending in 2024 | |
| 16 - 17 Nov | Yr 5 and 6 BIKE NZ programme | Details TBC |
| Wed 22 Nov | Weetbix Tryathlon | |
| Friday 24 Nov | CURRICULUM REFRESH DAY | SCHOOL IS CLOSED |
| Sun 26 Nov | Christ the King Feast day/Parish food festival after the 10.30am Mass | |
| Tues 28 Nov | BOT meeting | 7pm in staffroom |
| Wed 29 Nov | Thanksgiving Mass | 6pm in Parish Church |
| Friday 1 Dec | Welcome to summer tabloids/athletic sports fun day | |
| Wed 6 Dec | Christmas concert, nativity and special awards from 1.15pm in the Church | |
| Thurs 14 Dec | Summer mufti and teddy bear picnic (shared lunch) | |
| Frid 15 Dec | Last day of school for 2023 - school closes at noon/ reports emailed home | |
| Wed 20 Dec | 2024 stationery and class lists emailed home | |
| Thurs 25 Jan | School office open from 10am - 1pm for general enquiries | |
| Tues 30 Jan | School office open from 10am - 1pm for general enquiries | |
| Wed 31 Jan | First day of 2024 school year | |

STAFF-ONLY DAY - Friday 24 November 2023

A reminder that the school will be closed on this day for staff Professional learning. SKIDS care is available. Places must be booked in advance - stmarks@skids.co.nz

THANKSGIVING MASS - Wednesday 29 November at 6pm

This is a whole-school Mass for our community to come together in prayer to give thanks for the year that's been. There is the expectation for ALL children to attend in the correct school uniform. At this special Mass, our Year 6 graduates will be formally thanked and farewelled. Families of Year 6 graduates are invited to bring a small plate of finger foods and join together for a light supper in the Parish centre after the Mass.

SPECIAL CATHOLIC CHARACTER - a message from Mrs Dias-McAllum, DRS

How quickly the year has flown by and we find ourselves grappling with end of year preparations like our Leavers Mass for the Year 6 students, Advent and the Nativity.

Across the school classes we are now learning about the **Communion of Saints, O Te Kotahitanga o Te Hunga Tapu**. Saints are ordinary people who did extraordinary things. Some are living, while others that have passed are on their journey to God. Collectively these inspiring holy people are called the Communion of Saints.

NOVEMBER PRAYERS

On November 1, we had a Liturgy of the Word and prayed for the souls in our whanau. The butterflies that you sent with the names of the dearly departed are now in a special box at the altar and are being remembered at every Mass.

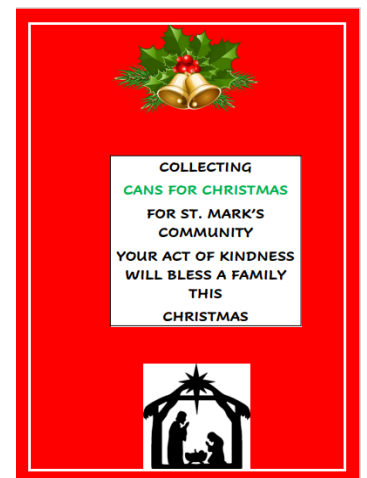
Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.



Cans for Christmas

We are encouraging and accepting donations of non-perishable food items, toiletries and Christmas treats for the St Mark's Parish Food bank. This is a way to support many local families who are struggling and may have to go without at Christmas time. We will continue to collect items until Friday 8 December. Thanks in advance for your generous support. .

The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor - Proverbs 22:9



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

It's been an action packed fortnight with swimming programmes; the Yr 5 and 6 retreat; cricket coaching; liturgical celebrations (All Saints and All Souls Feast days); PALs activities and the choir festival.

I would like to extend gratitude and appreciation to the many family members who have given their helping hands to ensure the safety of our children in the change rooms after swimming lessons. The Kitea team enjoyed their lessons at the Lagoon pools and I hope you will take your children swimming, or to the pools to develop water confidence, on a regular basis, especially over the summer months. We are blessed with two fantastic swimming facilities on our doorstep: Lloyd Elsmore Pools and Panmure Lagoon Pools.

The choir festival was a real treat and we are so pleased to see this event back on the calendar after 3 years of covid interruptions. Special thanks to Mrs Furivai for her leadership of the school choir and to the children for representing St Mark's with mana and pride.

Our PALs (physical activity leaders) have been facilitating lunchtime games and activities. Chess has been a real hit this term and we are already exploring ways to extend the PALs programme in the new year. A grant application to *Te Manawa Active Aotearoa Local Fund* for play equipment was successful and we have been awarded \$10,000. We will be using some of this funding for outdoor play kitchens, huts and water troughs as we develop our junior play spaces.

I'm delighted to advise that we have appointed two wonderful and experienced teachers to our team for 2024:

Ushanthi Leaver: Ushanthi is a past-pupil of our school and is currently teaching at Cornwall Park School

Rinloo Davey: Rinloo's children attended St Mark's and Rinloo is currently teaching at Pakuranga Heights School. It's great to be in a position to be fully-staffed for 2024 and I'm sure we will look forward to welcoming the newest teachers to our community.

The PTFA is preparing to support end of year events and is already planning for 2024. The Family Fun Night is pencilled in for Friday 1st March and there are discussions to have a St Mark's Celebration Day on Sunday 5th May (with a gala type event/car-boot sale after the 10.30am Mass). Getting involved in the PTFA is a great way to meet other parents and families of the school and the invitation is always open.

For next year's Year 5 and 6 children and families, I can confirm 2-4 November as the dates for our school camp at Lakewood Lodge. Camp is always a highlight for 'kiwi kids' and we will be seeking parent volunteers to assist with day and overnight supervision. More information will be shared about camp in the new year.

You will sense that we are already focusing on the year ahead. We do encourage BYOD (bring your own device) across our Year 4-6 classrooms as we use more technology for learning in our senior classrooms. A simple chromebook is ideal and generally has a really great shelf-life if looked after well. This may be something to consider when Christmas shopping.

On a final note, St Mark's Parish Mission Council is organising a food festival after the 10.30am Mass on Saturday 26 November in the Parish Centre. This is the special feast day of Christ the King and the last Sunday before the advent season commences. Please mark this date in your diary and if you can, get along to support our Parish.

Ma te Atua koutou e manaaki e tiaki - May God bless and care for you all

Tracey Kopua

ENROLLING NOW FOR 2024 AND BEYOND

NEW ENTRANTS: If you, or anyone you know, has a child and/or children turning 5 in the next year or so, please do connect directly with Kerrie Hunt in our school office to lodge an expression of interest and to collect an enrolment pack.

LIMITED SPACES AVAILABLE: We are also accepting enquiries and enrolments from families who may be seeking schooling for their child/children across different year levels. Limited spaces are available so register your interest quickly to avoid disappointment.

For all enrolment enquiries, please contact Kerrie Hunt: admin@stmarks.school.nz

MITEY in 2024

Sir John Kirwin Foundation's Mitey programme is a New Zealand specific, Years 1-8 approach to embedding mental health education. It's evidence based, aligns to our school's culture and values and is supported by a wide range of curriculum based resources. St Mark's has commenced the MITEY journey with scoping staff Professional development led by our dedicated coach, Moey Fatialofa who will work in our school for the next 18 months. We look forward to implementing the MITEY programme with our tamariki in 2024. For more info, please visit: <https://www.mitey.org.nz/>

UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

Uniforms help create a feeling of oneness and belonging. The St Mark's uniform is an integral part of our school's proud Catholic identity. Please ensure your child wears the correct uniform items to school every day. This includes shoes - black school shoes or the option of school sandals in the summer. Hats are compulsory in the summer terms too.

If you require uniform items, you can purchase on-line here: <https://stmarks.nzuniforms.com>

SECOND HAND UNIFORM

Second hand uniform donations - we are always seeking donations of pre-loved uniform items that are in good condition. Donations can be handed into the school office.

Volunteers required - St Mark's PTFA runs the second hand uniform shop. Currently we only have a couple of volunteers to oversee the shop's operation and this restricts opening times/hours. Can you help? If so, please let the school know by emailing Tracey Kopua who will pass information to the PTFA exec: tkopua@stmarks.school.nz

HEALTHY LUNCHBOXES/ LITTERLESS LUNCH

Primary-aged children require a balanced, nutritious diet for energy and overall health. We all know that too many highly processed, sugary treat foods carry 'empty calories' and affect oral health. The little snack packs in many lunch boxes also reap havoc with the environment as they are not compostable and end up as land-fill waste. Please consider what you put in your child's lunch box each day and think about practical ways to reduce waste by using reusable containers/ wrappings.

PARKING SAFETY

We are very fortunate to be able to park so closely to the school and to have access to a large parking area. When entering the site, please remember to drive slowly (5 -10kms) and to be patient as others reverse into, and exit from, individual parking spots. Please also remember that the shared driveway with the retirement village is a one way system - no-one should be driving up this driveway at any time. During school drop-off and pick-up times, all traffic exiting the shared driveway, should turn left as this assists traffic flow and is much safer for everyone.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." JEREMIAH 29:11

Making Magical Memories at St Mark's



Following in the footsteps of Jesus At St Mark's Catholic School

Learners at St Mark's are reminded to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. To encourage learners to do this, we reference our school's ABCs and 3Rs.

ABCs: A - AROHA; B - BELIEF; C - COURAGE
3Rs: RESPECT; RESPONSIBILITY; RESILIENCE

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