



# St Marys Special Character Newsletter



## Term One

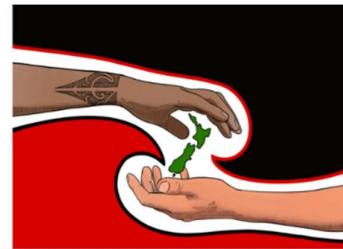


Ni sa bula tale, Nau mai hoki mai, फिर से स्वागत है, Phir se swāgat hai,  
Maligayang pagbabalik

### Waitangi Day 6<sup>th</sup> February

Gracious God,

We thank you for Aotearoa and for the gift of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.  
Help us to walk together with respect, to listen with open hearts, and  
to act with justice, peace, and kindness. Guide us to honour one  
another and to care for our land and all people. Amene



### St Valentine – 14<sup>th</sup> February



St Valentine was a priest who showed courage and kindness by caring for others and sharing God's love. He reminds us that true love is shown through compassion, service, and putting others first.

#### Valentine's Day Blessing

May God fill our hearts with love, kindness, and compassion.

May we show care for others in our words and actions today and always.

Amen.



#### Term One: Baptism: Becoming Part of God's Family

Starting Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 5.30pm – 6.30pm St Marys Parish, Whanganui

Baptisms will be completed at Easter, the most meaningful time of the Church year, when we celebrate Christ's resurrection and the gift of new life. For this reason, the Baptism Celebration will take place on **Sunday 19th April**, reflecting the deep connection between Baptism, new life, and the risen Christ. If this date is not suitable then a date can be made for you after Easter weekend.





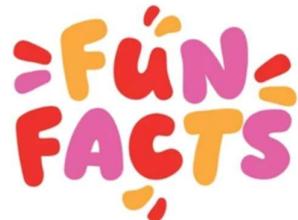
If you chose to have your child complete any of these sacraments, please contact Jo at the Parish office: 06 345 3872 - email: [admin@cpow.co.nz](mailto:admin@cpow.co.nz). Alternatively come and see me or message: [Heatherl@stmarys.ac.nz](mailto:Heatherl@stmarys.ac.nz)

### Term 2: Reconciliation

### Term 3: First Holy Communion

We are here to walk alongside you and support both you and your child on their faith journey.

- Did you know the Bible has 66 books: 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament?
- Did you know the Bible was the first book ever printed on the printing press, by Johannes Gutenberg around 1455?



### School Mass Dates for 2026:

Term 1: Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March - Mass @ School  
Term 2: Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June  
Term 3: Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> August  
Term 4: Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November



**Pancake Tuesday**, also known as **Shrove Tuesday**, is the day before Ash Wednesday and the start of Lent. Traditionally, it was a time to use up rich foods such as eggs, milk, and sugar before the Lenten season of fasting and simplicity began. Shrove Tuesday reminds us to prepare our hearts for Lent by saying sorry, forgiving others, and getting ready to turn back to God.

Families are warmly invited to join us for our School **Ash Wednesday Liturgy** in the hall on **Wednesday 18th March** at 11.45.

**Ash Wednesday** marks the beginning of Lent, a 40-day journey of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving as we prepare our hearts for Easter. On this day, ashes are placed on our foreheads as a sign of humility, reminding us to turn back to God, seek forgiveness, and renew our commitment to live with love, compassion, and faith.



**Lent** is a special season in the Church that lasts for 40 days, leading up to Easter. It is a time for reflection, prayer, and growing closer to God. During Lent, we are invited to make positive choices through prayer, fasting, and acts of kindness, helping us prepare our hearts to celebrate the joy of Jesus' resurrection at Easter.

Hear the Voice, Answer the Call  
Whakarongo ki te Reo, Whakahokia te Karanga.

Families are invited to join Caritas on a six-week journey of faith, learning to listen to God's voice and respond with love and action.



### **Term 1: Ā Tātou Whakapapa - Our Story**



Students learn about God as Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and come to understand that God is a loving mystery who cannot be fully explained. They learn that God the Father is Creator and the source of life, calling us to respect all people and care for creation. Through Jesus, God the Son, students learn about love, forgiveness, and how to build a personal relationship with Christ, who is alive and present with us today. Through God the Holy Spirit, students discover how God works in our lives, guiding us to live with truth, justice, and love as we serve others.



#### **In Christ I Can: Term 1: Inclusion Āpiti**

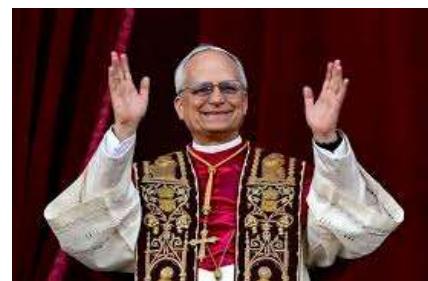
The second commandment is 'Love your neighbour as yourself'

There is no commandment greater than these. Mark 12: 31

### **Pope Leo XIV's 2026 Message: Compassion, Peace, and Unity**

Pope Leo XIV invites us to focus on key values at the heart of Christian life: love of neighbour, compassion, peace, and unity. These themes encourage families and communities to grow closer to one another and to God. Together, these values call us to:

- Show kindness in practical ways, especially to those who are hurting
- Build peace in our relationships and communities, beginning at home
- Stand united in faith and service with people around the world



This can be lived each day through simple actions — listening with care, helping those in need, and choosing peaceful, respectful ways to resolve challenges.

*Blessings*