

Meri Kirihimete

Nau mai , Haere mai we are looking forward to seeing you all at our Mass of Celebration on Friday night. **We would like everyone seated between 6-6.15 p.m. and we will start as soon as the church is full.** This Mass will be the last time that Mr Mills and our band will be performing together. The Year 6 will be blessed as they get ready to move from our school to Intermediate and Aquinas. Following on from Mass we will have a very short prizegiving - National Anthem, Principal's farewell to Year 6, Speech by Board Chairs, Farewell to teachers who are leaving, Dance item by Mrs Mills' dance group, Head heart and hands awards for each year level, presentation of the cups and awards, Choir item from Year 6 and the Irish Blessing. We expect that Mass and the prizegiving will be over by 7.30 p.m. at the latest. The parents of students who will be receiving Head (Academic); Heart (Special Character) and Hands (Service) awards have been notified by Jane to ensure you don't miss out on the ceremony. Year 1+2 students from Mrs D, Mrs Dustin and Mrs Morgan's classes are exempt from attendance because we know how tired they are. Only the award winning students will need to attend from Pipi team.

Every students needs to be in the school uniform. This will be the last time we will see the school in the polo shirts - next year we launch our exciting new polo shirt. Thank you to parents who have filled in a pre-order form so we know how many shirts to get in for Day One. Jane will be putting dates and times on facebook for people to come in prior to the start of school to collect uniform and stationery etc.

Last week we sent out our newsletter with school reports. In that newsletter there was an introduction to parents which highlighted the new staff we are welcoming in the New year.

I might have caused a little bit of confusion saying that Mrs Robertson was going to Kenya next year on mission with Bethlehem College. Yes she is going- but only for three weeks, one week of school and two weeks of the holidays- she will be back. So for the parents who thought there would be a change of teachers part way through the year in the Paua team....NO there won't be any changes. Mrs Robertson is employed for the whole of 2019.

I am reprinting the section sent out last week for the people who may not have received the information. This newsletter is the thank you newsletter. We have a lot to be thankful for at our school.



Mr Mills has been on our staff since 2005. He came across from Hamilton where he taught at Tamahere School during his first year. He was single at that time and was looking forward to the Mount surf. Anthony has developed into an excellent classroom practitioner- so much so that he was appointed Across schools co-ordinator this year travelling all over the region helping Catholic teachers to integrate science and maths to improve student achievement.

Anthony is very musical and he has great talents with the arts. He has developed a student band which plays at Masses and liturgies- many of our students who are in Aquinas now have been inspired by his leadership in music. Anthony attended the Science Teaching and Leading programmes in the footsteps of Mr Webster in 2016. This was a great opportunity to dive, to learn about marine ecology, the Rena and the environment below the sea. Alongside these real life experiences Anthony learned how to inspire students in science...and we saw yesterday how many of our Year 7-9 students are achieving great results in science. Mr Mills and Mr Webster were our Rippa

Rugby coaches for several years and they were as successful as Warren Gatling! From small beginnings

our school has reached the top of the competitions in Rippa and there are so many more children involved these days because of the enthusiasm of their coaches.

The Mills family has grown. Amie-Lee (Mrs Mills) is a very valued teacher and staff member at St. Thomas More. We knew how much potential she had when Amie-Lee came to the school for practical experience during her training year at Bethlehem Institute of Education. Fortunately for us Mrs Mills has promised to stay on this side of the bridge along with Sienna and Geneva – so we will see Amie-Lee back on our teaching staff again in the future I'm sure. We are pleased that Anthony is taking up the Assistant Principal position at St.Mary's, Tauranga next year- recognised for the excellent teacher, communicator and Catholic role model that he is.



Mrs Lees has been part of our staff since 2002 when she moved from Napier-Henry Hill School – to the Bay. Sylvia's two daughters Charmaine and Kayleigh were pupils of St. Thomas More. Mrs Lees began her career here tutoring one of our beginning teachers and quickly proved to be invaluable to our staff of five, taking on responsibility for sports, assemblies and the organisation of students. This work led to Sylvia becoming the Deputy principal when our staff reached six teachers, a position she held for almost seven years. Sylvia has always had a soft spot for the children who have to battle through life. Coming from South Africa where she taught in primary schools in Durban, Sylvia soon showed that her heart was in caring for others. The word which comes to mind to describe Sylvia is compassion. Sylvia has taught at all levels of the school from new entrants to Year 6. She has been team leader and professional development leader during her time at St. Thomas More. Most recently she has been our SENCO (Special needs

co-ordinator) working with our teacher aides and students who need the most support.

Mrs Lees starts her new teaching position at Kea Street Special School, Rotorua, next year working with four students in the new entrants part of the school. We would like to thank Sylvia for her service to the school and for her generosity of spirit which has contributed so much to building our special character here at St.Thomas More.

Our support staff



During 2018 we have had fabulous people working behind the scenes helping our teachers to teach and supporting students to reach their full potential. Cath Robson is very popular in Paua, always keen to do whatever she can to help all the students in the team. She is Austin's assistant and she is the go to person for the seniors. Cath has a great sense of humour and she inspires students to try new things, never giving up when things get hard.

Linda Oxenham has been based in Paua this year, partly as Ashton's assistant and also supporting our children who are learning the English language. Linda has been a teacher aide at our school for at least eight years and is moving into the PIPI team next year. Linda has a great understanding of maths and reading- she often reads with groups and assists with extension maths.

Simone Beattie has been supporting Orlaith in Kina this year and most recently working alongside Mrs Pirini as visual assistant. Simone has a great sense of humour and really has a great heart for children who sometimes struggle. Simone is moving to Tauranga Intermediate for term 1, working in a team of teacher aides specifically supporting Year 7 and 8. We wish you the very best for next year Simone and thank you. Our teacher aides are fully qualified first aiders - they are always on call for children who need first aid and can be relied on to make the right call whenever there's a possibility of a broken arm or heavy bump on the head.

Thank you to Sarah Collett who is returning next year to work in Kina team and Nicole Anderson who is working part time in Pipi team.

Pipi Christmas concert

Today we were very privileged to share the Pipi Christmas Concert. It was wonderful to see so many parents and grandparents here supporting the little ones and their teachers. What a great end to the year. Thank you Mrs Dustin, Mrs Morgan, Mrs Dragovich and Mrs McHugh for brightening up our day with such happy sounds.

If your little PIPPI or TUATUA is getting tired, easily upset and excited- and you are able to keep them at home tomorrow it might be a good idea. Monday and Tuesday will be lots of fun including ice creams for Green House and the Red House on Monday at 10.00 a.m. It's Pompallier's celebration of the first time Mass was celebrated in NZ at Christmas and Green House have worked so hard to get the most points for the year so they can celebrate too.



At the start of the year the whole school will be swimming on Tuesdays in Term 1.

We will run each class for 30mins starting Tuesday 5th February, finishing on Tuesday 9th April 2019.

Classes will run from 9.30am and finish at 1.45pm, with a 15min break for our instructors at 11.30.

Children will need to bring their swimming gear, one towel and goggles to each lesson.

Further information will be sent out at the start of next year.

Calendar Art:

This year has been an absolute disaster- same firm as usual but different ordering has caused chaos not just at our school. Some children have 8 calendars instead of one and others have cards instead of calendars. It's a real mess. Jane is going to liaise with the company concerned to figure out what to do. We apologise that people will be let down and we will do all we can to fix things where it is possible to make a change.

Jane will be coming into school on January 23rd & January 24th from 9am to 12 noon. Stationery packs and new uniforms will be on sale. Stationery packs are \$35 each- no increase from last year. If your child has started school in the last term then they won't be needing any more stationery - don't worry.

Our last day is Tuesday 18th December at 12.30.

The final assembly is at 10.45 so please come along to farewell our students and teachers.

Thank you to our Board of Trustees who meet at least twice a term to govern our school for the benefit of the whole community.

Matt Adsett and Janine Bollee- joint Chairpeople; Maria Mooney, Caroline Schweder, Carla Robertson, Father Stuart, Colin Heeney, Cathy Bywater-Lutman, Therese Ford-Cartwright, Richard Webster, Kerry Duncan along with myself (Kath Joblin).

CODING CLUB 2019

We are holding coding club in Kina space on Monday lunchtimes next year. If you are interested in continuing for coding or want to start please read the pamphlet that is attached to this newsletter.

Thank you to all the members of our PTFA who have been very ably led by Kyra Ormsby, Kirsty Warner, Rachel Plunkett and Bridget O'Connor this year. Thank you for the special events and fun times for the children as well as the social events for the parents. Thank you for your fundraising which has netted almost \$18,000 this year. You have contributed so much to the extras which benefit the children and which we need here at St.Thomas More.

Presenting the Tuatua and Pipi teachers: Year 0-2.



Starting with the Tuatuas....**Mrs Dustin** is teaching the new entrants in the Tuatua classroom and she is starting with 12 children on day one. Mrs Anderson and Mrs Oxenham will be assisting at different times during the day. Mrs D is retiring for the time being. She is stopping teaching to assist her husband with the new businesses they have established. We are going to miss Mrs D, such a gentle, happy soul. Any child who has had Mrs D is very fortunate.

Mrs Dustin has had plenty of experience as the new entrant teacher at St.Thomas More. She is one of the most popular teachers our school has ever had. Whenever past pupils drop in they always try to catch up with Liz. Thank you for being our new entrant teacher for 2019.



Mrs Rachelle Hodgson or Mrs H is joining us from Northland. She is an experienced junior teacher with wonderful knowledge of playbased learning, PMP, junior curriculum and in particular literacy. Mrs H is looking forward to being the homeroom teacher for 24 little Year1+2 children in the PIPI space.

Mrs H has taught in several regions including Waikato, Bay of Plenty and Northland. She brings a depth of knowledge and understanding of the early stages of literacy and mathematics- ideal for her classroom and for sharing with others. Mrs H will be working alongside Miss Ashton.



Ms Courtney Ashton has just completed her teaching degree and is looking forward to working in our collaborative school, having the chance to share in our special character and our family focussed values.

Ms Ashton will be teaching Year 1+2 in our PIPI space. She particularly likes maths and wants to share her love of maths with her students. Later on in the year Ms Ashton's son will be joining our Tuatua class.

Ms Ashton has been coming in each Wednesday morning and spending time getting to know her 21 students. I know how excited she is to start next year. Welcome to

our school family Courtney.

Presenting the Kina teachers : Year 3 and 4

Miss Kath Fielden is teaching the new entrant class at Omanu School this term. She is returning to St.Thomas More next year as teacher of Year 3 in Kina. The last time Miss Fielden was here was 2002 when she was a student in Year 6. When she was Year 7 she moved to Aquinas where she was a foundation pupil. It is wonderful for us to be able to work alongside such a calm, conscientious teacher – a graduate of our school and a person who values everything we hold dear. Miss Fielden has had a varied career including cheffing at Nosh and working in accounts at Omanu School. Miss Fielden absolutely loves maths (can you see a theme emerging?), cooking, growing your own food, and travelling. Miss Fielden has spent a day in our school getting to know our children and how things happen here. It was a weird feeling I'm sure walking around the places she used to play in- but was all different too. Welcome back, Kath.





Alongside Miss Fielden in Kina will be **Mrs Donna Eckstein**. Originally from Rotorua, Mrs Eckstein has travelled the world teaching in international schools in the Middle East and Indonesia. Most recently Donna has been teaching in Nelson and she's spent two days here at St.Thomas More getting to know the children in Year 3+4 a little better. Mrs Eckstein has a Masters in Educational Leadership and has a particular interest in maths, having been lead curriculum developer in her International school in Indonesia. Donna was a chef in a previous work life and absolutely enjoys the arts- dance, drama and creating. Mrs Eckstein was involved in creating masks with her Year 3 and 4 class so they could participate in a wonderful mask parade in Nelson this term. Welcome to the team, Donna.

What about Paua? Year 5 and 6.



Mr Richard Webster is continuing his inspirational work with the integration of science in maths and literacy. This year our senior students have been involved in estuary studies, data collection, tree planting and conservation, biosecurity activities, water testing and so many more science based experiences. Mr Webster really always challenges his learners to push themselves out of their comfort zones and into new territory. We were so fortunate this time to have Mr Webster in camp all week keeping things ticking over. He was in his element, especially in the bivouac challenge, and here is a comment from the Camp Administrator and Senior teacher (Gerry)..." **Richard and Marie were fantastic and you can be proud of your kids. Awesome Parents as well.**" Thank you for a great year Richard. Mr Webster will be teaching 25 students next year.



Mrs Maree Thomas has just accepted a position as Across Schools Co-ordinator for our Kahui Ako (Community of Learning). What does this mean? Using her skills in data analysis, cultural awareness, accelerating student achievement and digital integration Mrs Thomas will be coaching teachers two days a week in our own school as well as the other eight schools in our Kahui Ako. Mrs Pirini will be teaching Te Reo Maori, The mantle of the expert (inquiry through drama) and core curriculum subjects in Mrs Thomas' learning space on Tuesdays and Wednesdays throughout the year. Congratulations Maree on being recognised as an excellent teacher. Mrs Thomas will be teaching 23 mostly Year 6 students next year.

The question on everyone's minds is who will be joining Paua as the third teacher?

We are fortunate to have Mrs Pam Robertson in Paua next year. Mrs Robertson is from Whakatane St.Joseph's where she was teaching and leading a team of Year 5+6 teachers. Mrs Robertson is bringing her guitar with her and her love of outreach. Pam is planning on travelling with the Bethlehem College group back to Kenya at the end of Term 3 (just for 3 weeks- one week of school and two weeks of holidays). They will be returning to the village and school that was supported by the College until recently when there was a traffic accident which killed one of their students. Pam and her husband are travelling to Kenya as part of their mission and our students will be able to follow their journey as well as gain a sense of mission in another continent. Pam has also spent two days in our school getting to know us and our students.



Mrs Robertson will be teaching 24 students mostly Year 5 and some Year 6. I know she is very happy to be joining our team for the year. Curious fact: the Robertson live on a yacht in the Marina so they have a Matapihi address 😊



As I mentioned before **Mrs Elicia Pirini** will be teaching all our students during the year. On Tuesdays and Wednesdays you will find her in the Paua space sharing Te Reo and her drama/inquiry skills and she will also be spending a day a week in Kina supporting Mrs Eckstein and Miss Fielden. There will also be a day a week when Mrs Pirini visits Pipi and Tuatua.

Mrs Pirini has been chosen as our **Within school teacher for the Kahui Ako** which means that she will be coaching and mentoring our teachers on how they can develop their teaching practice even further. She will be working alongside Mrs Thomas in this role and will network with other Within school coaches in our community.

Mrs Pirini has developed several expertise in very advanced digital tools for improving teaching and learning. We are very fortunate to have her support going forward.

Mrs Deanna Morgan is going to be teaching in all classes throughout the year in her role as Classroom release teacher two days a week. She is looking forward to being able to join Mrs Dustin in the new entrant space when our enrolments reach a level to establish a new class later in the year. Thank you very much Deanna for your care and encouragement for the students in Year 1 this year and for assisting Mr Mills with the Director of Religious Studies role.



Mrs Kerry Duncan will be continuing her role as Deputy Principal with a particular interest in Year 0-3. Mrs Duncan is assisting me in our work for the Kahui Ako by taking on the responsibility for the school at least two days a week so that I can continue my leadership role of the Kahui Ako.

What are the benefits of belonging to our Faithbased Kahui Ako/Community of learning?

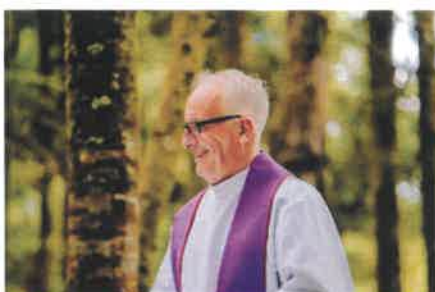
Our school is staying at the cutting edge of education reform through our connection with the Kahui Ako. We interact with eight Catholic schools from Rotorua, Tauranga, Opoitiki, Putaruru and Tokoroa, building our special catholic character as well as raising the bar of student achievement for our schools.

We are putting the Common Good and social justice into action through the support we give to our COL schools- students and teachers- as well as being able to gain benefits for ourselves in professional development. Transitioning our students from St.Thomas More to Aquinas means that they are more confident and resilient when they leave us to take on their next educational setting.

We also know from comparison and discussion between schools that our standards of achievement are set higher than the national expectation so that our 'above standard' students are at least a year level



ahead of their peers and our students who meet the standard at St.Thomas More are very capable students in Aquinas College. "The St. Thomas More students stand out at Aquinas College because they are grounded, confident and connected to their faith." (from an Aquinas teacher). This year Lilli Scott was named Dux of the College. Jess Phayer was head girl and Leon Castle was Deputy Head Boy. What a great affirmation of everything we do here. **Many Christmas Blessings to you all, from Kath Joblin-Principal.**



Thank you to Father Darren, Father Stuart and Deacon Henk for your contribution to our school faith life this year. We wish you a peaceful January after the business of the Christmas celebrations. We're looking forward to seeing the Christmas lights after our prizegiving on Friday!

And most important of all **THANK YOU JANE!!!!!!!!!!** For a great year.