Dear Families,

A warm welcome to our 2015 school year at St Martin’s; a special welcome to any new families who are joining the school and parish communities.

At the beginning of the year it is timely to revisit our school motto:

**St Martin of Tours School - ‘I do not refuse the task’**

*Embrace Life’s challenges*

May we develop a positive mindset with all aspects of school life so that when the unexpected comes our way, we are able to focus on dealing with it and avoid blame and negative connotations.

**A New Year’s Resolution**

Each year we think about making changes to improve our lifestyle. We consider setting goals and/or New Year resolutions. The following quote from a psychologist is a valuable consideration for our daily actions.

“Schedule a pleasure activity DAILY! I have way too many clients who tell me that they do not have time in their days to do something for themselves! A pleasure activity may be as simple as sitting in the sun while eating breakfast (or for me it is watching my fish "play" in the mornings). A spray of perfume, watching a television show, painting your nails, using your "good" crockery, going for a walk, or even cleaning out a cupboard. If these activities give you pleasure, then make a CONSCIOUS decision to do one of these every day!”

Another idea I heard was a priest in his homily asking for us to look for the sacred in others, even the person who appears to have made life difficult for us. Tough order when our plans are affected, but we are “embracing life’s challenges”.

**Before School Supervision**

Top Yard gates and the side gate in Dobson Ave are opened at 8:30am each morning. Top Yard is supervised from 8:30am each morning. All children remain on Top Yard until directed by a teacher. All children need to be on the school grounds by 8:50am when they will enter their classrooms. It is important for all children to be seated in their classroom ready for meditation at 8:55am (Tuesday to Friday), whole school assembly is held each Monday on Top Yard.

**After School Pick Up**

All children going home via Bottom Yard are to be collected by parents from Middle Yard
near the BBQ area. Children will not be permitted to leave this area without a parent. Children walking home via Dobson Ave gates will continue to do so via the path past Junior Adventure. Parents are reminded that Adventure playgrounds are unsupervised by teachers and are out of bounds for students before and after school. Preps are collected after school from their dots. Parents are asked to keep this area clear to alleviate any anxiety.

**Parent/Student/Teacher Interviews Tuesday, 17th March—Students Dismissed at 1pm**

Two sessions, one on 17th March and one on 8th September will be held for parents, students and teachers to meet to discuss students’ progress. The focus of the March interview is to set goals for your child/children in line with their testing results. Children are encouraged to attend these interviews. Details on how to complete your online booking will be included in the school newsletters nearer to the dates.

**Prep Parent Information Evening, 7pm Tuesday 10th February**

All prep parents are invited to an information session facilitated by the prep class teachers.

**Open Classrooms for Year 1 to Year 6 Students**

All parents are invited to visit their child/children’s classroom between 3 and 5pm on Tuesday, 10th February. Formal presentations by teachers have been replaced by open classrooms with a handout about classroom operations to be distributed by classroom teachers. This short informal visit is an opportunity to see your child’s classroom, meet their teacher and so that you won’t be left wondering, check out your child’s work space and arrangement of stationery items.

**Welcome to New Staff Members**

Ms Jessica McGrath, 3M class teacher, Mr Jamie Atherton, 5A class teacher, and Ms Theresa West, school music teacher have already made great impressions. They will be wonderful members of our school staff.

A complete list of staffing for 2015 is enclosed in the newsletter.

**eCommunication**

Parents are reminded that the school newsletter is sent electronically each fortnight. The school app is used to send reminders and to convey important messages. It is important for parents to check the newsletter for diary dates and for details for any online bookings for parent/teacher/student interviews and Sacramental bookings.

**Capital Works for Junior School, exciting news!**

Last year both leading electoral parties promised to give half the costs for major renovation works for the Junior school. Prior to the State Government elections, both Liberal and Labor parties were made aware of the school’s Capital Grant Application. The estimated total costing for this project is 3 million dollars, works include 9 classrooms and an art room.
Three days before Christmas an email arrived advising that the Catholic Education Office has agreed to provide Supplementary Capital fund assistance. The email also requested final plans and cost estimates are forwarded to the Catholic Education Office, in a timely manner as the expectation is that this project will be tendered in 2015.

Many thanks to Michelle, mother of Caleb (6C) and Lauren (5A) and Gerard Smith, Smith and Tracey Architects, for their support with the Capital Grant application.
Progress details will be communicated via the school newsletter.

Parents and Friends Association / PFA
The first meeting for the PFA is on Tuesday, 3\textsuperscript{rd} February at 7:30pm in the school staffroom. All parents are invited to this meeting. Members of the PFA work tirelessly to support the school with social and fundraising activities.

PAC (Parent Advisory Council):
Welcome to the parents who are joining this group for 2015. Kylie, mother of Thomas 6C and Holly 3C, Freda, mother of Daniel 6C and Keira 3C, Annette, mother of Tom 1MB and Gabriel, father of Imogen (3C ) and Ethan (1C). The PAC acts as an advisory board to the Parish Priest and Principal. I am most grateful to have a group of parents with whom I can discuss management and educational issues. Feedback from meetings will be included in school newsletters.

Preps start Monday 2\textsuperscript{nd} February.
In order to assist with a seamless entry for our precious preps into school on their BIG first day, Year 1 – 6 classes will go directly to their classrooms at 8:45pm on Monday 2\textsuperscript{nd} February. Top yard will be free for Prep parents to wave off their child/children.

Tea and Tissues are being provided by PFA members for all families on Monday 2\textsuperscript{nd} February in the GECCO following student drop off. This event is especially relevant for all prep parents and younger siblings to mingle with other parents who are entrusting their child to the St Martin’s school community for the all-round education of their child/children.

Looking forward to working with you to do what’s best for your child during 2015.

Regards

Trish Stewart
Principal.