Welcome to Year 4 – our learning year is well and truly underway! Below is an outline of our units this term:

**Religious Education**
The modules we will be studying this term are: God’s Forgiveness and Healing, Lent and Easter. There will also be a focus on the Year of Mercy in the Catholic Church, and this will be reflected in classrooms throughout the year.

**God’s Forgiveness and Healing**
This module explores both the sacrament of Penance where we celebrate reconciliation with God, with ourselves and with each other and the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick which heals, frees and prepares us to continue our journey of life towards God. Students will acknowledge that sometimes in relationships there is hurt which requires healing and forgiveness. Students will retell stories of forgiveness and healing in the New Testament. Students will recall the ways, in which the Church helps them to forgive and to be forgiven, and gives, peace and courage to those who are ill, suffering, or frail through old age.

**Lent**
In this Lenten unit students will explore the themes of Lent and Easter in a creative and integrated way firstly, through the study the Gospel reading for the Fourth Sunday of Lent: ‘Jesus cures the man born blind from birth’ and explore its themes of faith and spiritual discernment in relation to Baptism and the celebration of the Season of Lent.

Through participation and involvement in the module as well as in whole school Lent and Easter activities and celebrations, students will gain an awareness of the stories, actions and symbols of Lent and Easter. By exploring the significance of Jesus washing the disciples’ feet they will reflect upon their understanding of the new meaning Jesus gave to the sharing of bread and wine at the Last Supper and to relate the Church’s celebration of the Eucharist to its hospitality and service to all.

Finally, students will explore the Emmaus story and how the risen Jesus brings hope, peace and joy to disciples who are sad, confused and/or afraid. Jesus’ resurrection is not viewed as simply a story but as a reality. Students will consider how they can bring the peace of the risen Christ to others and hopefully understand that the Emmaus journey is essentially as a story about discipleship.

**English**

**Literacy Groups**
Children are grouped and work independently or cooperatively while the teacher is instructing a focus group. Children also take part in modelled, shared and independent reading daily.

Some of the aspects we will be looking closely at this term are:

- Reading a variety of texts
- Developing strategies for reading unknown texts
Comprehension strategies with a focus on linking to what we already know (self, other texts, global)
Listening while teacher models reading using a big book or serial reading

**Spelling**
Children will continue to use the *Sound Waves* spelling program to focus on phonemic awareness (sounds in words). Children will focus on a different sound each week and how that sound relates to a number of spelling words. There is also a regular focus on spelling rules. Individualised weekly spelling lists will be based on the weekly sound, thematic words and tricky words determined from children’s own writing. Proof reading and editing skills are an important part of the writing process and are a focus for Stage 2.

We are continuing to demonstrate engaging ways to explicitly teach five core spelling strategies. We want children to think about patterns in our language as well as gain an awareness of what strategies they use.

- **Sound** – focusing on sound
- **Visual** – focusing on how words look
- **Meaning** – thinking about word meaning
- **Connecting** – making connections with other words
- **Checking** – using live, print or electronic resources

**Handwriting**
Students in Year 4 are continuing to refine the correct formation of all letters in joined Foundation style handwriting. Children have focused handwriting lessons each week based on the scope and sequence presented in the *Handwriting Conventions* text. Correct posture and pencil grip are encouraged at all times. Students in Year 4 are able to receive a ‘Pen Licence’ when they are writing fluently, legibly and consistently with joined letters. We expect a high standard of bookwork from the children.

**Writing**
In class the children are involved in construction of shared and independent texts. There will be both class and small group focus to examine how we compose texts. Grammar conventions and punctuation will also be taught. The types of texts to be covered this term are Informative texts and Imaginative texts.
**Mathematics**
Over the whole of Term 1, Year 4 will be covering the following mathematical strands in numeracy:

**Number and Algebra (Whole Numbers)**
Students will count, order, read and record numbers up to five digits.

**Addition and Subtraction**
Students will use mental and written strategies for addition and subtraction involving two, three, four and five digit numbers.

**Chance**
Students will describe and compare chance events in social and experimental contexts.

**Data**
Students will select appropriate methods to collect data and construct, compare, interpret and evaluate data displays including tables, picture graphs and column graphs.

**Length**
Students will measure, compare and record lengths, distances and perimeters in metres, centimetres and millimetres and measure, compare and record temperatures.

As part of a whole school initiative, students will be focusing on **Counting** strategies throughout the term. Your child will have some activities to complete as part of their homework each week. Please see the homework book and mark these off as they are completed.

**History**
Our History focus for Terms One and Two is called **“First Contacts”**. The students will be researching the following areas this term:
- What was life like for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples before the arrival of the Europeans?
- Why did the great journeys of exploration occur?

In Term 2 we will continue with this topic
- Why did Europeans settle in Australia?
- What was the nature and consequence of contact between Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and early traders, explorers and settlers?

Students will be guided through investigations as well as choosing specific areas of interest for them to research and present their findings to the rest of the class. We will be looking at a variety of thinking strategies as we work through this unit.

**Science and Technology**

**Which Came First? (Plant Focus)**
This unit focuses on observable features, change and growth of living things to the concept of life cycles, as students observe first-hand the stages in the life cycle of a plant. Students develop and evaluate an information product based on their research into how changes in the environment could affect the life cycle of a plant population.
**Personal Development/Health and Physical Education**

**Positive Relationships** including...

**Understanding Bullying**
This unit focuses on identifying the behaviours that constitute bullying, identifying positive strategies for dealing with bullying situations and understanding the role of the bystander in a bullying situation and how he or she can help a person being bullied.

**Positive Thinking**
This unit focuses on developing children’s positive self-image and self-esteem by exploring the following topics:
- Feeling good about myself
- Using positive self-talk
- Understanding teasing
- Taming teasing
- Building self-esteem
- Friendship and cooperation

**Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)**
Cyber Safety is a prime area of focus as we start the year, and all children have engaged in interactive activities in the classroom discussing appropriate behaviour and information that should be revealed on the web and how to protect their privacy and safety. Our PBL lessons will cover the rule CARING FOR SELF and focus on rewarding children positively with Reasons to Smile awards and class incentives. Children will also look at modeled behaviours that assist classroom learning, playground behaviour and caring for others in our school community.

**Creative Art and Practical Arts**
This term our creative arts will correlate with our History unit on First Contacts, as well as other Key Learning Areas. There will be a focus on drawing techniques throughout the term. Students will be using a variety of mediums in visual arts and participating in a weekly music/drama lesson.

**Homework**
Homework will be given to the children weekly. It is given on a Friday and is to be returned on the Thursday of the following week. Homework will include nightly reading, maths and spelling activities. Home reading can be from books of the students’ own choice and pages read should be noted nightly in their diaries. Other learning experiences may include research, physical education activities and social skills. Throughout the year there will be a particular focus on mastering times tables (1-12) as this is expected by the end of Year 4. Parents are asked to check that the homework is complete and sign the diary. The diary can also be used as a form of communication between teachers and parents.

**Reminders**
- Sport is held on Fridays for both 4B and 4N with Mrs Michelle Kerr
- Sport (extra PE lesson) is on Tuesdays for both classes
- Library is held on Tuesdays for both classes with Mrs Melonie Harrison
- Music/Drama is held on Fridays for both classes with Ms Susan Rudd

Children are to wear sports uniform on Tuesdays and Fridays.
Dates for your Diary

- Opening School Mass - Friday, 5th February, 9:15 am
- Meet the Teacher Sessions – Tuesday 9th February – 6.00-6.30 and 6.30-7.00pm
- Ash Wednesday Mass, Wednesday - 10th February, 9:15 am
- Swimming Carnival - Thursday 11th February
- 4B Reconciliation – Wednesday 17th February
- 4N Reconciliation – Wednesday 24th February
- Yr 4 Class Mass – Wednesday 2nd March 9.15am
- Welcome BBQ – Friday 4th March 5.00 pm
- Holy Week Liturgy – Thursday 24th March
- Soccer Gala Day - Tuesday 5th April
- Yr 4 Family Mass – Saturday 5th November

What a busy term! We look forward to a wonderful period of learning and growth in Year 4.

Mrs Caroline McNally, Mrs Chris McBryde and Mrs Janelle Pitcher