The School
St Mary’s Primary School is a vibrant Learning Community and is a member of the Wagga Wagga Diocesan system of schools. St Mary’s provides Primary education to students from within the Yoogali Parish. Students also travel to St Mary’s from Yenda, Bilbul, Beelbangera, Hanwood and Griffith. St Mary’s is supported by an enthusiastic, progressive School Council and an energetic Parents and Friends Association. Our village is situated on the outskirts of Griffith an area rich in cultural diversity with a wide range of agricultural and commercial industries. Our school believes in striving for quality education in a safe and caring environment, in all aspects of the children’s growth and development.

Our vision for St Mary’s
We strive for St Mary’s to be:

- A vibrant Christ-centred parish school, based on Gospel values;
- A dynamic learning community, educating for lifelong learning: body, spirit, heart and mind;
- A positive, welcoming environment, where the skills and talents of each individual are valued and developed, so that each person reaches his/her full potential.

Sacramental Programs
St Mary’s has become rather well known for its powerful and moving liturgies, especially on major sacramental occasions. In 2005 we continued this fine tradition. First Reconciliation took place on the evening of July 28. The First Communion candidates received the Eucharist for the first time on September 4 working closely with our Parish Priest Father Jim McGee. The dedication of the teachers and the faith filled responses of the children was an inspiration for us all as we journeyed through the sacramental programs with the children.

Liturgies
Throughout the year classes prepare the First Friday liturgy for our parish. These masses are a joyful celebration of our faith, alive with music, drama, art and liturgical movement. The theme for each mass reflects the children's current focus in Religious Education. We are fortunate to have Father Jim McGee as our parish priest and also Father John McGee who regularly celebrates mass with us.
Children's Masses
To celebrate our place as a parish school, once per term St Mary's school hosts the Sunday mass in our parish. Families from within the school band together to take on roles in the liturgy and organise morning tea after mass. We see it as an opportunity to build fellowship within our parish community.

The Wider Community

Mission Week
At St Mary's we believe it is important for the children to understand that they can help others through their actions. During Mission Week in October a mini-fete was held. All classes provided a stall and $821.05 was raised for disadvantaged children in developing countries.

Demaris our Sponsor child
Since 2001, St Mary's has been sponsoring Demaris Mwangi through World Vision. Demaris, a young girl from Kenya, is now eleven years old. Through fundraisers such as the 'Wear Your Footy Colours Day' the children raised funds to meet our financial commitment to Demaris. Caring for Demaris and taking part in Mission Week activities helps us to actively live our faith and maintain our commitment to being thinking, caring, global citizens.

Creative Arts
St Mary's students have the opportunity to express themselves creatively in a variety of ways. The children engage in Visual Arts, Music, Dance and Drama. These skills which are showcased in a variety of ways such as whole school assemblies which are held every three weeks, masses, paraliturgies and participation in the Leeton Eisteddfod.

Success at the Leeton Eisteddfod
During August four classes took part in the Leeton Eisteddfod. Kinder, Year One and Year Two formed a combined choir and took part in the Infants Verse Speaking Group. The children's hard work and polished performance was rewarded with First Place. This was also the case for the Year Six Verse Speaking Choir. Mrs Marin's class also presented a confident and impressive performance and were awarded First Place. Much credit for the children's creative and dramatic performances on the day must go to their dedicated teachers.

Sports Report
2005 was a great year for St Mary's sport. As well as our successful Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country Carnivals, we were also lucky enough to have the children attend tennis lessons in Term Two with Margot Dal Broi. This was the first time lessons had been offered to our school and as it was successful and fun for the children, we will be running it again in 2006. In Term Four the Year One and Year Two children participated in a ten week Learn to Swim programme at the Aquatic Centre. The children of St Mary's have represented our school in various gala days and sports try outs. The soccer try outs were a popular choice as many children from our school play soccer on weekends during winter. In representative sports, we had many children represent our school. In Athletics we had 15 children, in Swimming we had 11 and in Cross Country we had 11 go on to the next level. There were 6 students who represented the school in all three carnivals. It just goes to show that we have some very strong sports people at our school who have a go and achieve well in all sporting fields.

Linda Spiers

Kindergarten Orientation
We see Kindergarten Orientation as a vital tool in ensuring a successful transition from preschool to primary school.
Features of the 2005 Kindergarten Orientation program were:

- three sessions with Kindergarten teacher Miss Brady allowing the children to experience school at different times of the day
- Year 6 students as buddies for the new Kinders during each orientation session
- An information session with the principal and Parents and Friends Association president
- A chance to get to know other parents at a morning tea supplied by the Kinder parents of 2005.

**Diocesan Policies**

The diocese of Wagga Wagga has established a Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy, as well as Pastoral Care, Student Welfare policies implemented by all schools in the Diocese. The full text of these policies can be found at:

http://www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au/policies.htm

The implementation of these policies is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

**School Policies**

At St Mary's the staff, have worked to ensure that we have a thorough understanding of our roles, responsibilities and procedures. To facilitate clear and open understandings the staff annually reviews St Mary's policies. Our Pastoral Care policy is the foundation of our interactions with each other. Staff and children set norms at the commencement of each year in keeping with our belief that positive relationships underpin our school. Policies on discipline and student welfare (including bullying) have been formed to respect the dignity of each individual.

**New report for St Mary's**

During 2005, with the support of Bernadette Gibson from the Catholic Schools Office, the staff of St Mary's finalised a new report form for 2005. The purpose of this change was to more accurately reflect the teaching and learning that is taking place in our school. The new report format was shared with the parent community for the first time just before the June reports. Following parent and staff feedback, changes were made in the December report. The parent community's response to the new report format has been overwhelmingly positive. I thank the staff for their dedication to this important project.

**There were four different reports in 2005.**

Early Stage One (Kindergarten)
Stage One (Year One and Year Two)
Stage Two (Year Three and Year Four)
Stage Three (Year Five and Year Six)

It takes two years for the children to complete the syllabus requirements for stages one, two and three.

**OUR CURRICULUM FOCUSES IN 2005**

**Mathematics**

Mathematics was a particular curriculum focus at St Mary's in 2005. In addition the following staff training and policy development took place.

- Throughout the course of 2005 current practices in Mathematics were recorded as our Mathematics policy was updated.
- On October 26 this policy underwent curriculum review involving diocesan personnel. This process proved to be an affirmation of our practices in the teaching of mathematics.
- The staff was inserviced in the teaching of Creative Arts by Sharon Milsome.
- Our policies and practices in Creative Arts were reviewed and updated.
- Information Technology
All staff took part in a workshop with Michael Vineburg focusing on the 'Myclasses' application of Myinternet. Training in how to best use this technology in the classroom was the focus of a staff training day conducted by Michael Vineburg, Diocesan Information Technology Education Officer in Term Three.

Our focus in 2006 will be a major hardware upgrade with in the school to best meet the needs of classes. We continue to agitate for the speedy provision of Broadband in our village.

**SPECIALISED ITALIAN PROGRAM CONTINUES**

In 2005 all classes at St Mary’s participated in the Italian language program. Infants classes took part in 30 minute lessons each week whilst primary classes engaged in the Italian language program for 40 minutes each week. Mrs Eleonora Taranto, a specialist Italian teacher visited St Mary’s one day per week to implement this program. Mrs Foley and Ms Quarisa are both qualified to teach Italian and instructed Year 5 in Italian. The Italian language program is partially funded by Co.As.It, the Italian Association of assistance and will continue in 2006.

**Students with Special Needs**

In the diocese of Wagga we believe that every child must be given the opportunity to achieve their optimum level of learning. During 2005 five students received funding for additional assistance to support their learning. Funding is provided by the diocese of Wagga and both federal and state governments. This funding enables us to provide individual assistance to students to address their particular areas of need. In addition four students were funded for extra assistance from within the St Mary’s budget.

**Student Achievement**

The students in Year 3 and Year 5 undertook the Basic Skills test on August 4 and the Primary Writing Assessment task on July 28. These state-wide assessments provide diagnostic information to parents and the school about literacy and numeracy achievements. These tests form a part of our overall assessment data and help to provide direction for planning to meet the children's academic needs.

A high level of skill in Mathematics was evident in the children’s results in the Basic Skills test in both Year Three and Year Five.

Overall a trend towards weakness in grammar and punctuation in writing was apparent in the 2005 literacy results. This will be a whole school focus in 2006.

St Mary’s aims to provide quality education and this is evidenced in the children’s results in the Basic Skills test.

**Staff Achievement**

The Staff undertook a variety of inservices throughout 2005 to keep them up to date with best practice in education. These included:

- Literacy Learning and Teaching in the Classroom
  
  On Friday June 10 Mrs Marin graduated from the Literacy Learning and Teaching in the Classroom course. This twelve month course, run across the Wagga Diocese was designed to provide teaching staff with refined skills in the teaching of Literacy. Mrs Marin is to be commended for her dedication to this course.

- Mathematics - documenting school practices and creating school policies to support teaching

- Myinternet - training of staff in functions and features of the new diocesan intranet, how to best use Myclasses to aid student learning

- Harrasment and Privacy Legislation - Child Protection - Caitlin Grant
C.P.R update
Creative Arts - Workshop Inservice with Sharon Milsome as facilitator

Redevelopments at St Mary's
Successful Block Grant Application
In March 2004 St Mary’s applied to the Catholic Block Grant Authority for a grant for refurbishment of our school.

The application included a proposal for a new administration area, library and canteen and for refurbishments to the staffroom. The projected cost of this project is $361,567. The Catholic Block Grant Authority provides 70% of the projected project amount to successful applicants. We were informed early in 2005 that our application had been successful. *St Mary’s is to receive a grant of $253,097.00*

We are indebted to the St Mary’s School Council and Diocesan Financial Administrator, David Shaw for their input into this application. These redevelopments were a major focus for St Mary’s in 2005. With the support of the St Mary’s School Council and in consultation with the staff and school community, planning took place to maximise the potential of the grant funds.

The architect firm Jovaris Westland Partnership were employed. Doug Westland was engaged as architect and project manager. A building sub committee was formed consisting of Michael Zalunardo, David Taylor and Mary Jane Simms. The sub committee met regularly with the architect to ensure that the new areas are functional and will meet the needs of the school now and into the future.

Following consultation with the staff and parent community plans were set and tenders called for in November 2005. It is anticipated that the project will commence early in 2006.

### Student Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>LBOTE*</th>
<th>Indigenous</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>71</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Language background other than English.

### School Enrolments

St Mary’s enrolments are currently following an upward trend.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>St Mary’s Yoogali School Enrolments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Wagga Wagga has established an Enrolments Policy which is implemented by all schools in the Diocese. The full text of this policy can be found at:

http://www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au/policies.htm

### Staff Profile

The NSW government requires that this report detail the number of teachers in each of the following categories:

a) Have teaching qualifications from a recognised higher education institution
b) Have qualifications from a recognised higher education institution but no formal teacher education qualifications

c) Have relevant successful teaching experience and appropriate knowledge but no formal teacher qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Class Structure**

Since 2004 St Mary’s has provided 7 single stream classes.

- Kinder: 20 students
- Year 1: 17 students
- Year 2: 30 students
- Year 3: 19 students
- Year 4: 16 students
- Year 5: 27 students
- Year 6: 26 students

**Financial Statement Summary**

The data shown below is a summary of Diocese of Wagga School System income and expense and includes income and expense of all system schools.

**2005 Parents and Friends Report**

What a fantastic year 2005 proved to be. It all commenced in Term One with our famous Lamington Drive which once again raised over $7000.00. This was followed by a successful Easter fundraiser held at West End Wines wherein our school provided a BBQ and drinks stall to the large crowd in attendance. By the end of Term 1 we were well on our way to meeting our fundraising target. Once again this was a testament to our dedicated and hardworking parents. In Term Two our school accepted a challenge from St Therese School, Yenda for a Trivia Night. This was closely contested and St Mary’s eventually came away with another great win. Having already raised half our quota, we took a step back from fundraising in Term Three. Term Four presented us with the offer to cater at another two venues, these being the Festival of Gardens at De Bortoli Wines in October and a BBQ at the Griffith Motor and Leisure Show. Together with these last two fundraisers and the canteen profits P & F exceeded it’s 2005 fundraising target by $9000.00 enabling the purchase of two new air conditioning units to service our classrooms. Our successes in 2005 would not have been possible without the generosity and support of our St Mary’s families who are all to be congratulated on our achievement. A special mention must be made of our 2005 Canteen Committee. Their endless work, effort and dedication to our school was to be commended. The
Parents and Friends Association looks forward to another very successful year in 2006.
Louise Vardanega
President
St Mary’s Parents and Friends Association

**Focusing forward**
St Mary’s focuses for 2006 are as follows:
- Construction of new library, administration area and canteen, refurbishment of staffroom
- Continued development of computer facilities; including hardware software and staff training
- Submit Creative Arts Policy and supporting documentation for Curriculum Audit
- Take part in MIA Writing Project with the aim of improving the writing skills of students
- Begin to document current practices in literacy
- Undertake staff training in the marking of Basic Skills Test Writing in preparation for St Mary’s to be a Marking Centre for the BST writing papers.

Clearly another exciting year of collaboration and learning is ahead as we prepare today’s children to become tomorrow’s adults.

**About this report**
I wish to acknowledge the following members of the St Mary’s community for their contributions to this report, Linda Spiers for supplying the Sports report, Tamie Bugno for her input regarding Religious Education at St Mary’s, Louise Vardanega for providing the Parents and Friends report and finally Tricia Marin for her support with proofreading and editing.

**Principal’s Message**
The purpose of this annual report is to provide an open account of 2005 at St Mary’s School Yoogali. My thanks to every member of the St Mary’s community for making 2005 such a successful year. To the skilled and dedicated staff, who worked so tirelessly in the interests of the children’s education; congratulations on a job well done. To the parent community whose enthusiasm for supporting St Mary’s never wavers and can be seen in evidence in so many ways from the tuckshop, to working bees, fundraising and reading groups; thank you all.

2005 at St Mary’s clearly shows when we work together towards a common goal, great things are possible.

Mary Jane Simms