



SAINT JOHN  
*the Evangelist*  
—  
CATHOLIC PARISH DAPTO



### ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

**Parish Priest:** Fr Francis

Phone: 4261 1315

Parish Office Hours: Tues–Fri 9am – 4pm

### ST JOHN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

**School Principal:** Mrs Michelle Rodwell

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# St John's Journal

## Term 2, 2025

A joint school and parish project –  
working together to create a thriving Catholic Community.

### Matthew 5:16

“...let your light shine...and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

### Let us pray...

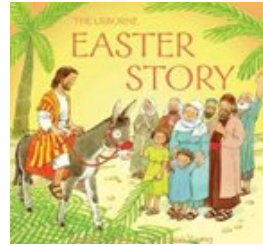
“Heavenly Father, we pray that we may value the journey each of us takes, as we walk together in Christ. May each of our journeys provide nourishment, encouragement and inspiration that help us connect, so that we may strengthen our faith and build a living community, founded in your love for each of us.”

**Amen**

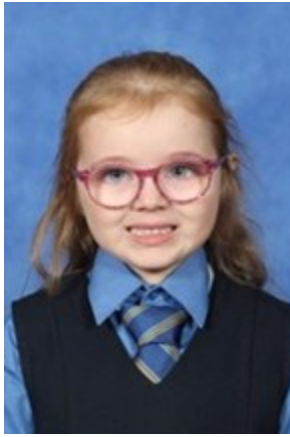


**Alivia H**  
(6 years old)

Interviewed by Lily T (Year 6)



Tell us about your grandparents.	I have a Nan and Pop and a Grandad.
Tell us about your family pet, if you have any.	I have a dog and a cat. My dog Neve is a golden retriever, and my cat Haddy is black and white.
What are your hobbies?	I love drawing and colouring. I also do swimming lessons.
What is your favourite cartoon character?	Sam and Cat is my favourite Tv Show but I don't have a favourite character from them.
What is your favourite meal?	Spaghetti Bolognese is my favourite dinner.
What is your happiest memory?	When my new baby cousin Koda was born.
What do you want to be when you grow up?	I want to be a vet, because my mum is one.
What is the best thing about school?	I love doing Discovery Time in the Kindergarten corridor, and especially playing with the vet station.
Tell us about your best friend at school.	Camila is my best friend. We play games during recess.
What is your favourite bible story or story about Jesus and why?	The Easter Story because Jesus rose from the dead. The story starts sad, but then has a happy ending!



**Zoey H**

Interviewed by Ruby M (Year 6)

(6 years old)



Tell us about your family pet, if you have any.	I don't have one. If I did though I would want a dog and I would call it Lizzie
What are your hobbies?	Gymnastics. I love doing gymnastics at school for sport. My favourite thing to do at gymnastics is the bar.
What is your favourite cartoon character?	I really love Lizzie from the Lizzie McGuire show. She's super cool!
What is your favourite meal?	Pizza. I love pizza with pineapple and pepperoni on it.
What is your happiest memory?	When my brother Bailey was born. I am a good big sister to him.
What do you want to be when you grow up?	When I grow up, I want to be a teacher, because I want to be able to help children learn.
What is the best thing about school?	Playing with all my friends, especially Rylee, Lottie, Millie, Ada and Evelyn.
Tell us about your best friend at school.	My best friend is Rylee. We are in different classes but we both love the Lizzie McGuire show and the movie and we also like to play together.
What is your favourite bible story or story about Jesus and why?	I like the story of when Jesus goes into heaven (The Resurrection) because it makes me happy.



**Harry T**

(8 years old)



Interviewed by Alyce B (Year 6)



Tell us about your grandparents.	I have a grandpa, grandma, nanna and pa. Nanna and Grandma are Italian. Grandpa and Pa are Australian.
Tell us about your family pet, if you have any.	We have a greyhound. He is black and his name is Raven, which is cool because ravens are black too.
What are your hobbies?	I like to play soccer, go swimming, play Minecraft and ride my motorbike
What is your favourite cartoon character?	I like toothless from How to Train your Dragon
What is your favourite meal?	I love cheese toasties
What is your happiest memory?	When I got my Nintendo switch!
What do you want to be when you grow up?	I would like to be a professional motorbike rider when I grow up.
What is the best thing about school?	I like it when we do sport and PE. I like anything where I get to move.
Tell us about your best friend at school.	Rowdy is my best friend because we both like to play soccer.
What is your favourite bible story or story about Jesus and why?	My favourite bible story is the story of Pentecost, because the tongues of fire intrigue me.



**Lachlan P**  
(10 years old)



Interviewed by Annie C (Year 6)



Tell us about your grandparents.	My grandparents are very brave. They had to run away from the war in Vietnam, so they got on a boat. The boat was shot at, and my grandad got shot in the foot. Thankfully he survived. He still has the scar on his foot from the bullet.
Tell us about your family pet, if you have any.	I have a dog, it's name is Teddy, Teddy is fun to play with.
What are your hobbies?	I really like gaming.
What is your favourite cartoon character?	Tom from Tom and Jerry because he is super cool and a bit cheeky.
What is your favourite meal?	I love spring rolls!
What is your happiest memory?	My favourite memory was when I got to go to Queensland when I was three years old.
What is your favourite holiday destination and why?	My favourite holiday destination is Queensland. I went when I was three, I loved it because I went to thre different theme parks. I like thrilling rides.
What do you want to be when you grow up?	I would like to be a plumber when I'm older
What is the best thing about school?	I love the free time
Tell us about your best friend at school.	My best friend is Jake, we have a lot in common and we love playing video games together. I love how we just bond together and our friendship is easy.
Who is someone you personally know, and you really admire? Why do you admire them?	I really admire my sister Lily because she is really clever, intelligent, and wise. I look up to her.
What is your favourite bible story or story about Jesus and why?	I like the Parable of The Lost Sheep because it is an inspiring story that is full of hope.



## St John's Primary School: Staff Member

**Mrs Rodwell**

Interviewed by Isla P (Year 6)



Age or Age Range	Over 50 years of age
Where did you grow up or go to school?	I went to school at St John's Dapto for primary school, and St Joseph's High School, Albion Park.
What was the best thing about school?	Meeting new people and making lifetime friends and being taught by amazing teachers.
Family members?	I have a husband, and two children.
Tell us about your family pet, if you have any.	I have two dogs. They are both cavoodles. One is named Oakey, and the other is named Dash, and they are just loveable.
What is your happiest memory?	It is spending time with my family.
What are your hobbies or interests?	It would probably be travelling and catching up with friends.
Did you always want to be in the job you have now? Was there another job you wanted to do?	I've always wanted to be a teacher, that was because of the wonderful teachers that taught me.
Do you volunteer anywhere? Please give some details including the importance of service in your life?	I volunteer at my Parish, which is Immaculate Conception, Unanderra. I also am a reader at St John's in Dapto. Volunteering provides me with an opportunity to help those in need, and to be part of a Catholic community.
How important is faith and religious beliefs in your life? Add any appropriate information you are willing to share?	Catholic religion and faith are important in my life because they ground me in a deep sense of purpose, tradition, and spiritual connection. Through the teachings of the Church, the sacraments, and prayer, I find strength, guidance, and peace. The values of love, forgiveness, and service shape how I live and treat others. My Catholic faith reminds me of God's presence in every part of my life.
Who or what inspires you and why?	I would have to say Saint Mary of the cross MacKillop, who was a woman of great faith, and trusted in God. Her leadership inspires me to do my best, as a Catholic leader.
What is your favourite bible passage, verse or story about Jesus and why?	The Sermon on the Mount is a message from Jesus, and it is found in the Gospel of Matthew. It is a message of love, compassion and selflessness.

St John's Catholic Church: Parishioner

## Mrs Kay Norington (nee Smith)



I was born in 1939 at Coonabarabran, and recently celebrated my 86<sup>th</sup> birthday. When I was 5, my family (Mum, Dad and younger sister, Denise) moved to Thirroul, which is where I started my schooling at St Michael's Parish Church in Thirroul – before the school was built! Students in Kindergarten - Year 3 had their lessons at the back section of the church. My teachers were nuns. Some were a bit cranky and some were very kind. I remember Sister Judith used to skip with us. The nuns were very devoted and I have a great respect for them. I got to finish my primary school years in the brand-new St Michael's Catholic Parish Primary School. I have such fond memories of my primary school years. I remember that mass was said in Latin and that I loved the stories from the bible. In fact, I still have my Religious Histories textbook from when I was in primary school.

For high school, I went to St Mary's in Wollongong and then worked at the telephone exchange at Thirroul, which was next to the Church. My job required me to connect people making 'trunk' phone calls to the person they were calling. I enjoyed working there and stayed for 10 years.

I got married to Bernard and had 2 children, Karen and Wayne. We made our home in Kanahooka. Bernard died many years ago. I have always remained living in the Dapto area, and I am very pleased that my family live fairly close to me, especially since I have 3 beautiful grandchildren. I love spending time with my family.

I have had many hobbies and interests in my life. My mother had told me that I have had a pencil in my hand since I was 2 years old. I enjoy doing creative things. I especially like painting, and I also love music and dancing. I did many types of dancing (tap, ballet, highland and Dutch dancing). In fact, if music is playing, I feel like I can't let a good song go to waste and that I should get up and dance. I have always been active and in my youth I played basketball and did athletics.

I have always been a volunteer throughout my life and even now in my 80s, I am happy to still 'have a crack at anything'. I have been a member of the Catholic Women's League since the 1970s and at one point I was President of the Dapto branch. Most of my volunteering has been in an artistic way. Some of the things I recall are: face painting, creating school play backdrops, embroidering altar cloths and contributing to church bulletin artwork, acting in the parish 'Stations of the Cross' and painting artwork for that (the tomb and the face of Jesus). I have drawn many images of several churches in the area and at times have sold these, with the proceeds going to St Vincent de Paul. I made a Christmas crib and Nativity Scene and placed it in the foyer of the Port Kembla Hospital every Christmas for many years. I've also had my own Art Shows and donated paintings for fetes, schools, charities and churches. One special artwork I did was a huge painting (1.2m x 1.8m) of Mary McKillop for the centenary of her starting the convent at Dapto. The remains of the convent are now part of the St John's School office space. Currently, I sing with the St John's Choir at Mass on Sundays.

I love going to mass each week and I have many wonderful memories of being part of the Dapto Parish. I am so grateful to have Father Francis as my parish priest. He is someone I admire and he inspires me. He has overcome a lot of hardship in life and does wonderful work in our parish. He is also very creative, and I like that a lot. I get so much joy from looking at what he visually creates in our church. I photograph all of his displays, and I connect deeply with them.

I cannot imagine life without my faith. I am so happy that I am Catholic. Whatever hardships I have faced, my faith and friends from the parish have supported me and helped me in my life.

## Editor's Note:

Winter is here, but we have been blessed with some beautiful, sunny days. We have just passed the winter solstice, so daylight hours will be a bit longer again.

Hopefully you and your loved ones can enjoy outdoor time together and make very happy memories. Indeed, in this edition we see that often the happiest memories people have, involve their families. So, enjoy time together, because time seems to move so fast.

Thank you to all who contributed to this edition. You have enhanced our Dapto Parish.

Warmest regards to all.

Liz Negro



## Student Reporters:

Year 6: **Lily T, Ruby M, Alyce B, Annie C and Isla P**

## St John's School Co-ordinators:

Mrs Kate Wilkins and Miss Alana Stroligo

## Food for thought...and sharing!

We all have happy memories and sometimes it is hard to pick our happiest. Share yours with a family member, or friend, and give thanks to God for the special times in your life.

This journal is digitally available via the school and parish websites. Limited paper copies are available at the school and parish offices, and in the church foyer.