



SAINT JOHN
the Evangelist
—
CATHOLIC PARISH DAPTO



ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

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St John's Journal

Term 1, 2026

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...

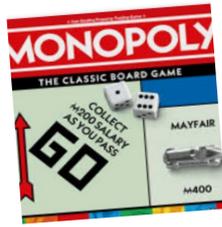
“Heavenly Father, we pray that we may value the journey each of us takes, as we walk together in Christ. May each of our journeys provide nourishment, encouragement and inspiration that help us connect, so that we may strengthen our faith and build a living community, founded in your love for each of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

Amen



Boston F
(5 years old)

Interviewed by Valentina K (Year 5)



<p>Tell us about your grandparents.</p>	<p>I really enjoy spending time with my grandparents because they are kind and always give me treats. We often play games together and I especially enjoy board games because I think they are really fun. I also love going to parks with them where I get to go on the flying fox and run around outside.</p>
<p>Tell us about your family pets, if you have any.</p>	<p>I don't have a family pet at the moment but if I could choose one, my dream pet would be a dog. I would love to feed it, pet it and take it for walks. I think having a dog would be lots of fun and very special.</p>
<p>What are your hobbies?</p>	<p>Some of my hobbies include playing outside with my best friend and spending time with my family playing Monopoly. I also enjoy playing soccer with my friends outside of school. Being active and playing games is something I really love.</p>
<p>What is your favourite cartoon character?</p>	<p>I like the Grinch because he is really funny and cheeky especially when he tries to steal Christmas. I also love the movie because it's all about Christmas and Christmas is one of my favourite times of the year.</p>
<p>What is your favourite meal?</p>	<p>I don't have a favourite meal but my favourite food is grapes. I like both red and green grapes because they are sweet, juicy and delicious.</p>
<p>What is your happiest memory?</p>	<p>My happiest memory is playing with toys and making up stories in my room with my younger sister.</p>
<p>What do you want to be when you grow up?</p>	<p>I would like to be a firefighter when I grow up because my dad is a firefighter and I think it is a brave and important job. I want to help people and keep them safe just like he does.</p>
<p>What is the best thing about school?</p>	<p>The best thing about school for me is writing. I especially like writing stories about lightning because I find it really interesting and exciting.</p>
<p>Tell us about your best friend at school.</p>	<p>My best friend's name is Eliot and we enjoy playing together outside on the climbing equipment. We have a lot of fun running, climbing and imagining games together.</p>
<p>What is your favourite bible story or story about Jesus and why?</p>	<p>My favourite Bible story is the story of Creation because God made everything and I think that is really amazing. I like learning about how God created the world and all the animals, plants and people.</p>



Zoe R

Interviewed by Aaliyah M (Year 5)

(6 years old)



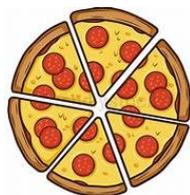
Tell us about your grandparents.	When my grandparents come over, I love baking all kinds of cakes with them. We have so much fun together in the kitchen, and the cakes always turn out delicious. My favourite cake to make and eat is chocolate cake.
Tell us about your family pets, if you have any.	I have a dog named Johnny who is named after my brother. If I could get another pet, I would like to have a fish. I would take good care of it and make sure it has everything it needs.
What are your hobbies?	I like playing with Barbies because it is really fun to use my imagination and make up stories. Sometimes I get a bit lonely playing because my brother doesn't like playing Barbies with me.
What is your favourite cartoon	My favourite show is Full House. I like watching it because the characters are funny and it is a fun show to watch.
What is your favourite meal?	My favourite meal is the pasta that my parents make. It tastes so good that I wish I could eat it every night.
What is your happiest memory?	One of my happiest memories was when I accidentally broke a toy at preschool. It was funny at the time and made me laugh. Another very special memory is when my baby brother Max was born. He is turning one on Easter Sunday.
What do you want to be when you grow up?	When I grow up, I would like to be a doctor because my mum is a doctor and I think it is an important job that helps people.
What is the best thing about school?	The best thing about school is seeing my friends and playing with them.
Tell us about your best friend at school.	My best friends at school are Eli and Chris because they were in KB with me. We had the best time together and we like playing and having fun.
What is your favourite bible story or story about Jesus and why?	My favourite Bible story is the story of Creation. I like learning about how God created the world. My favourite thing that God created is the flowers because they are beautiful and colourful.



Annabelle W

Interviewed by Logan B (Year 5)

(9 years old)



Tell us about your grandparents.	My grandparents live in Unanderra and they are very funny. They were both born in Portugal, which is really interesting. I have never been to Portugal, but I would love to visit one day and see where they grew up.
Tell us about your family pets, if you have any.	I don't have a family pet right now, but if I could choose one I would like a bunny or a dog. I would like a bunny because one of my relatives had a bunny and I really liked it. I would also like a dog because my cousins have one and I enjoy patting and playing with their dog when I visit them.
What are your hobbies?	My hobbies are gymnastics and Oz-Tag. I really enjoy gymnastics because I like doing cartwheels and flips. I like Oz-Tag because it is a fun sport and I enjoy running around with my teammates.
What is your favourite cartoon character?	My favourite character is Moana. When I was three years old, I even had a Moana themed birthday party. I like Moana because she is brave and goes on an exciting adventure.
What is your favourite meal?	My favourite foods are pastizzi and pizza. I especially enjoy pizza because it tastes delicious and there are lots of different toppings you can choose from.
What is your happiest memory?	My happiest memories are spending time with my siblings Joseph, Christian, and Elijah. I love playing games with them and having fun together.
What do you want to be when you grow up?	When I grow up, I would like to be a nurse like my mum because nurses help people and care for them. I would also love to be an Olympic gymnast because I really enjoy gymnastics.
What is the best thing about school?	The best thing about school is that I get to learn new things that will help me in the future when I get a job. I also enjoy seeing my friends every day.
Tell us about your best friend at school.	My best friend is Gabriela. She is funny and very respectful. During playtime we like to play games together and have fun.
What is your favourite bible story or story about Jesus and why?	My favourite Bible story is about the Ten Commandments because they teach us important rules about loving and respecting God and being kind to one another.



Filipe W

Interviewed by Ely M (Year 5)

(11 years old)



<p>Tell us about your grandparents.</p>	<p>I have a Nan who lives in Canberra, and we visit her regularly. Every Christmas we go to Canberra and have a big lunch together with my cousins, uncles and aunts. It is always a really fun time because we get to spend time together as a family. I also have two grandparents who live in Brazil. We try to visit them about every three years and I really enjoy spending time with them when we are there.</p>
<p>Tell us about your family pets, if you have any.</p>	<p>I do not have any pets at the moment, but I would really like a dog. I think dogs are fun to play with and it would be like having a best friend by your side all the time.</p>
<p>What are your hobbies?</p>	<p>I love playing sports and I try to play it whenever I can. In my free time, I also enjoy playing FC Mobile which is a football (soccer) video game. I play lots of sports including basketball, soccer, swimming and running.</p>
<p>What is your favourite cartoon character?</p>	<p>My favourite cartoon character is Catboy from PJ Masks. I used to watch the show a lot when I was younger and I always liked Catboy the most.</p>
<p>What is your favourite meal?</p>	<p>My favourite food is lamb chops. I love the taste, and eating them always makes me happy because they remind me of my dad. We both really enjoy eating lamb chops together.</p>
<p>What is your happiest memory?</p>	<p>My happiest memories are spending time with my grandma at Christmas in Canberra and visiting my grandparents in Brazil. I love being with my family and celebrating special times together.</p>
<p>What is your favourite holiday destination and why?</p>	<p>My favourite holiday destination is Brazil because that is where my grandparents live. When we visit, we usually have breakfast with them and spend time together. I also love playing soccer there.</p>
<p>What do you want to be when you grow up?</p>	<p>When I grow up, I want to be a soccer player because I love the sport and I think I am really good at it. My dream would be to play for FC Barcelona because it is a famous club with a lot of history and it would be amazing to play for a team that recognises my talent.</p>
<p>What is the best thing about school?</p>	<p>My favourite thing about school is recess because I get to spend time with my friends and play with them.</p>
<p>Tell us about your best friend at school.</p>	<p>I don't really have one best friend, but I have lots of friends that I enjoy spending time with at school.</p>
<p>Who is someone you personally know, and you really admire? Why do you admire them?</p>	<p>I really admire soccer players because I love the sport. My favourite soccer player at the moment is Lamine Yamal because I enjoy watching him play and score amazing goals.</p>
<p>What is your favourite bible story or story about Jesus and why?</p>	<p>My favourite Bible story is the Good Samaritan because it teaches us to help others and be kind. The Samaritan helped the injured man even though Samaritans and Jews were supposed to dislike each other. I think it is a great lesson about caring for everyone.</p>



St John's Primary School: Staff Member

Mrs McEntee

Interviewed by Liana D (Year 5)



Where did you grow up or go to school?	I grew up in Dapto and attended St John's Dapto. I always enjoyed going to school because I loved learning and discovering new things. My positive experiences at school helped me develop a strong appreciation for education and the important role it plays in helping students grow and succeed.
What was the best thing about school?	The best thing about school for me was having three close friends. Our school uniform was a Bison Territory dress, and wearing old clothes for special days was a tradition.
Family members?	I am married to Brendon, and we have two children, Lara, who is 14, and Blake, who is 11. My parents are Marcos and Inmaculada.
Tell us about your family pets.	When I was little, I had two poodles named Sooty and Sweep. Now I have a grey cat named Pumba, who we got because my son loves cats.
What is your happiest memory?	One of my happiest memories is going on a family holiday to Disneyland in 2019. The best parts of the trip were the rides and all the amazing food, especially trying the Blue Milk from Star Wars, which my husband loved because he's a big Star Wars fan. I also treasured being there with my children, Lara and Blake, sharing in their excitement and seeing the joy on their faces throughout the whole adventure.
What are your hobbies or	When I was little, one of my hobbies was Spanish flamenco dancing, which I enjoyed from the age of 5 until I was 16. I have also always loved reading, spending time with my family and speaking a little Spanish.
Did you always want to be in the job you have now? Was there another job you wanted to do?	I never wanted any other job. I have always wanted to be a teacher, even when I was little. I used to play 'Schools' as a child because I loved helping others and that passion has stayed with me ever since.
Do you volunteer anywhere?	I volunteer at my daughter's school and help out with her dance activities in Thirroul. I supervise backstage, assisting with outfit changes and helping with makeup.
How important is faith and religious beliefs in your life?	Faith is very important to me because it helps me become a better person and shapes who I am. My children and I are Catholic, and my husband is Christian.
Who or what inspires you and why?	My mum inspires me because she is a strong person who always wants to help others. I also think of her like Mother Mary, especially because of her name, Inmaculada.
What is your favourite bible passage, verse or story about Jesus and why?	The Gospel of John teaches us to "love one another," which is something I see reflected every day at St John's School. I also think of the story of the Prodigal Son, which reminds us of the importance of showing love, forgiveness and compassion to others. Both the Gospel and this story encourage us to care for those around us and to treat everyone with kindness and understanding.

St John's Catholic Church: Parishioner



Mr Steve Leonard



I was born in the north of England. I enjoyed a great childhood and loved school, but the employment prospects for my dad were not good and my parents brought us to Australia in 1963, when I was 8. We lived at Berkley Hostel where my youngest sister was born. Eventually we were able to move into a Housing Commission house in Warilla, where I went to secondary school.

I am very happily married to Ernestina...40th year this year. She is an amazing woman. We have two grown up sons, Paul and Mark, and we are very close. Neither sons live in Wollongong, but the distance does not matter.

My happiest memory is becoming a dad for the first time. I had a great trip to Everest before I got married and have had lots of great holidays since. More importantly, I have learnt that the greatest joy is to be found in simple daily events...those interactions with friends and family and kids at school.

I read a lot. I play guitar and I try to stay fit by riding my ancient bike. More recently, I have tried my hand at writing poetry.

I have worked in retail, government and at BHP, before beginning teaching in my late 20's. I swapped from an Arts/Law degree to Teaching and that was a good choice. I have taught from Kinder to Year 12 and have also tutored undergraduates at Notre Dame University. I still work a few days a week at Holy Spirit College, Bellambi. Teaching is still a great source of joy.

I have tried to give back to the community. I had a long coaching stint with Dapto Junior Soccer Club and I try to stay useful in the Dapto Parish.

I am inspired from many sources. I am inspired by my parents. The Gospel accounts of Jesus continue to intrigue, challenge and support me at the same time. Also, perhaps my favourite book character is Frodo in the Lord of the Rings. He is the reluctant hero who has no quality at all, other than his incorruptible heart.

Probably my biggest challenge was coming to terms with the sudden death of my much-loved dad when I was 11. I was totally at sea in how to come to terms with this loss and for a few years I really struggled at school and got into trouble with the police. That event eventually taught me much about making the most of every day, being an active dad and being able to discern what really matters in life. Every now and then I recall the quote, "dance like no one is watching, love like you'll never be hurt, sing like no one is listening and live like it's heaven on Earth."

My faith is what keeps me anchored. The Resurrection taught me to transcend difficulties and to not get to self-congratulatory when things go well...stay grounded and authentic.

Perhaps my favourite bible quote is from Matthew 5: 13-16. It tells us who Jesus wants us to be. He calls us to be light for the world and salt of the earth, and to give glory to our Father who is in heaven.

Editor's Note:

Enjoy reading our first edition for 2026. Time seems to rush on by, with one season flowing very quickly into the next, which is why it is so important to remember to pause, reflect and set our compass correctly. Hopefully you can do that as you take a few minutes to read this edition.

Thank you again to the team at St John's Primary School who support in making each edition of this journal possible. Special thanks to the new group of interviewers, who have skillfully provided much of the information for this edition. Thank you also to those who were interviewed because your stories help us in our own journey.

May all our readers have a very happy and Holy Easter this year.

Warmest regards to all.

Liz Negro



Student Reporters:

Year 5: **Valentina K, Aaliyah M, Logan B, Ely M and Liana D**

St John's School Co-ordinator:

Mrs Alana Stoligo

Food for thought...and sharing!

With life feeling busy, hobbies are a welcomed opportunity that are participated in for a variety of purposes and benefits. They can be creative, active, intellectual and collecting, as seen by the responses from our interviewees this edition. What is your hobby? Find time to enjoy your hobby and be grateful to God, for the joy it brings.

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.