Welcome to St Gregory’s College

A Catholic School
A Marist School

God loves you.
You are special and unique.
We should love one another.
The Good News of God is that His Kingdom is right here on earth.
God forgives those who are truly sorry.
Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Christ referred to himself as the beginning and the end of all creation. You will see these letters used a lot in Catholic Church tradition. They are inscribed on the Easter candle which you will see in your Catholic Church.
Preface

Now that your son is coming to a Catholic school, this booklet may help in understanding some of the traditions, beliefs and stories which make up the Catholic faith.

Whether you are new to Catholic schools or quite experienced, very familiar with the Catholic Church and its rituals, or a bit out-of-touch with your local Church, I hope you find something of interest and much reassurance in the pages which follow.

You are encouraged to read the pages of this booklet with your son. As the year progresses, there will be tasks set by your son’s Homeroom teacher and his Catholic Studie’s teacher. I encourage you to enter into discussions with your son about your beliefs and your understanding of the Catholic tradition.

Please know that we are here to answer any questions you may have. Just call, leave a message or send an email and we’ll do our best to get back to you. No question is too hard or too simple.

Mrs Clarke
Director of Mission
What Catholics Believe

The Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God the Father almighty, 
Creator of heaven and earth, 
And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, 
Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit, 
Born of the Virgin Mary, 
Suffered under Pontius Pilate, 
Was crucified, died and was buried; 
he descended into hell; 
on the third day he rose again from the dead; 
he ascended into heaven, 
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; 
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, 
the holy catholic Church, 
the communion of saints, 
the forgiveness of sins, 
the resurrection of the body, 
and life everlasting. Amen.

The Trinity

- The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
- All three are God; all three are one.

The Father is our Creator God.

Jesus Christ is the Incarnation, God become man.

The Holy Spirit is God active in our lives and in each of us.

As Catholics we believe in forgiveness and salvation.
Rules Catholics live by

The Great Commandment

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, 
with all your soul, 
with all your strength, and with all your mind; 
Love your neighbour as you love yourself.” (Luke 10:27)

Jesus’ Law of Love

“Love one another as I have loved you.” (John 15:12)

The Ten Commandments

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods.
2. Do not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Keep the Sabbath holy.
4. Honour your father and your mother.
5. Do not kill.
6. Do not commit adultery.
7. Do not steal.
8. Do not bear false witness against your neighbour.
9. Do not covet your neighbour’s wife.
10. Do not covet your neighbour’s goods.

The Beatitudes

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 
Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 
Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. 
Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. 
Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. 
Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God. 
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God. 
Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, 
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Matthew 5:3-10
The Story of Jesus

Jesus is God.

Jesus is fully human.

Jesus is the Saviour.

Jesus is the Son of God.

Jesus Christ was born over 2000 years ago. As Catholics we believe that while Jesus was a man, he was also the son of God. For his first 30 years he lived a traditional life, working as a carpenter. He had a father called Joseph and a mother called Mary and he was a good Jewish man.

In his thirties he began to preach, telling the people of Israel about God, his Father. He performed miracles and told stories to teach the people about God’s love for them. Over a three year period, despite his efforts to keep a low profile, Jesus’ reputation spread nation-wide. The rulers of Israel did not like the fact that he had so many followers and was becoming very powerful. As a result of this and to fulfil the prophecy, Jesus was crucified. Three days later he rose from the dead and appeared to his disciples.

The Jewish people had been promised a Messiah. Jesus is that Messiah. He brought the new religion now known as Christianity. The Catholic Church is the Church begun by Jesus and entrusted to his disciples. He left them with instructions to go out and preach the Good News. As disciples of Christ, we too are called to do this work in our time.

Titles of Jesus:

Jesus of Nazareth
Son of Mary
The Messiah
Son of God
Son of Man
The Good Shepherd
Mary, Mother of God

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, ‘Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.’ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.’

Luke 1: 26 - 33

Mary was born in Nazareth, a small village located close to the major trade routes. She would have had a quiet childhood but still able to meet a wide variety of people who stopped by during their travels. Mary would have spoken Aramaic and possibly a little Greek as well. Her days would have been busy, taken up with farming, spinning, weaving, cookery, and the education of little children. Mary would have been educated in Hebrew Scripture and skilled in pottery, textiles and cookery.

Mary’s family were not rich landowners, but they had enough to survive comfortably. Judaism was her faith and she would have participated in the synagogue in Nazareth. She would also have travelled to Jerusalem to attend major religious festivals.

The Canticle of Mary

This is a greeting prayer spoken by Mary to her cousin Elizabeth while Mary was pregnant.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
My Spirit rejoices in God my Saviour
For He has looked with favour on His lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed:
The Almighty has done great things for me,
And holy is His Name.

He has mercy on those who fear Him
In every generation.

He has shown the strength of His arm,
He has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
And has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things,
And the rich He has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of His servant Israel
For He has remembered His promise of mercy,
The promise He made to our fathers,
To Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.
Amen.
The Sacraments

The Sacraments are signs of God’s relationship with us. They are both a gift from God and a request from him for us to serve him and each other.

There are seven Sacraments in three groups:

Sacraments of Initiation

1. Baptism
2. Eucharist
3. Confirmation

Sacraments of Healing

4. Reconciliation
5. Anointing of the Sick

Sacraments of Love and Service

6. Marriage
7. Holy Orders

Grace is the gift of God’s presence. Through the Holy Spirit, God is active in each of us. When we pray or celebrate the sacraments we are filling up our stores of grace and becoming stronger in faith and the ability to live a good Christian life. At St Gregory’s, we offer all boys the opportunity to undergo instruction in the Sacrament of Initiation and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. They can then make the decision to receive one or all of these sacraments. This is done in our Chapel with a local priest as celebrant.
Things Catholics Do

The Sign of the Cross
We make the Sign of the Cross to show that we belong to the family of God and that God lives in us. Touching our forehead shows that everything we think and say should come from God. Touching our chest is a symbol of God's love for me, and my love for others. Touching our shoulders says that everything I do should be what God wants me to do.

(Just before we read the Gospel we trace the sign of the cross on our forehead, lips and heart to show our wish that the Word of God will be in our thoughts, our words and our actions.)

Genuflect  Genuflecting or bending the right knee is a sign of reverence. We genuflect towards the tabernacle when entering the Chapel, especially when the red light is lit. This light shows that the Body of Christ is present.

(The tabernacle is the place where the consecrated Eucharist is "reserved" (stored). It is normally made of metal, stone or wood, is lockable and secured to its altar to prevent it being removed. The tabernacle is a place of attention for meditation and prayer.)

Bowing    Bowing is also a sign of reverence. We do this at different times during our liturgies, but especially before we receive communion at Mass.

Standing  When we stand, we are showing that what we are doing is important. We always stand as the priest enters and while the Gospel is being read.

The Sign of Peace  Shaking hands is a sign of friendship. During the Mass it shows that we are united in our beliefs as a community.

Incense  During our Masses we sometimes use incense. This special smell helps to remind us that the place we are in is sacred. It is used to honour people, places and things.

Receiving Communion  During communion we receive the Body and Blood of Christ. When we take the consecrated host, we do so with our hands one above the other. We then place the host into our mouths. If we are not Catholic, we cross our arms in front of our chest as we approach the Minister so we can be given a blessing.
The Mass
Catholics attend Mass regularly as it allows them to pray as community, to hear the Word of God and to receive the Sacrament of Eucharist. Sunday is the day that Jesus Christ rose from the dead after his crucifixion, so Catholics are asked to attend Mass on this day. We have a Boarders’ Mass every Sunday evening at 6pm, except during holiday periods and on Boarders’ free weekends. All are welcome to attend.

The parts of the Mass include:

1. The Gathering
   This includes a welcome, a prayer where we ask for forgiveness for any mistakes we may have made and an opening prayer of the community.

2. The Word
   We listen to some readings from the Bible, a homily reflecting on the readings, we recite our creed, our statement of belief, and pray some prayers of the gathered community.

3. The Eucharist
   We offer gifts of bread and wine and then, during the consecration, the priest, with the power of the Holy Spirit, changes these into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. We then receive Christ in communion, usually in the form of bread, but sometimes also in the form of wine.

4. Sending Forth
   We are sent to live out the words we have heard and to be the hands and feet of Jesus in the world.

At St Greg’s
Our Motto:   As you sow, so shall you reap

St Gregory
A doctor of the Church, St Gregory lived in the 6th century. In his youth he studied philosophy, grammar, rhetoric and law and at 34 became the chief magistrate of Rome. He founded six monasteries in Sicily and the monastery of St Andrew in Rome which he joined a year later. He became Pope in 590AD. Learning that the Slaves of Britain were still pagan, he sent St Augustine to convert England. He also enforced the prohibition on the marriage of priests and introduced the style of singing in churches which is now called Gregorian chant. During his lifetime, Gregory made a significant contribution to the Church in its teachings, organisation and discipline. With St Gregory the Great as our patron, the boys are encouraged to follow his lead in being prayerful, enjoying academic pursuits and of course, enjoying and participating fully in the music of liturgy.
Ministry
All students are encouraged to be a part of our liturgies through their prayerfulness, speaking of responses and singing. Extra ministries which the boys are invited to join include servers, readers, processions, hospitality, Ministers of the Eucharist, music and cantors.

Prayer
Boys are encouraged to make prayer a part of every day. It is encouraged at the beginning of every lesson. Prayers are included in the diary or the boys can make up their own.

Attendance at Friday Mass is encouraged. The Chapel is available for use at any time. If it is locked, a key is available. A book of intentions is in the Chapel and all boys are encouraged to write their prayers for themselves, their family or friends or the extended community as they wish. These prayers are offered as intentions at Friday Mass.

At St Gregory’s we celebrate the following occasions with The Mass:

- Opening of School Year (Week 2)
- Founder’s Day - Feast of St Marcellin Champagnat (June 6)
- Feast of St Gregory (September 2)
- Year 12 Graduation (Last week of Term 3)
- Christmas (Last day of Term 4)

We also have smaller Masses in the chapel at 8am each Friday morning. At other times of the year, we celebrate with liturgy. A liturgy is different to a Mass. During a liturgy, we come together as a community to pray and celebrate but there is no consecration and so no communion. Our extended family of parents and friends is always welcome to join us for these times of prayer. Our special liturgies include:

- Mothers’ and Sons’ Day (First week in May)
- Grandparents’ Day (Last week in May)
- Easter (Changes each year)

Social Justice
Students at St Gregory’s are encouraged to join with their Marist brothers and sisters in Solidarity and support of those who are less fortunate. They can do this in many ways:

- Support of the Lenten Appeal
- Joining in the activities of Champagnat Day
- Collecting for the Salvation Army and St Vincent de Paul Appeals
- Contributing to the Christmas Hampers for the Claymore community and Matthew Talbot Hostel, supported by St Vincent de Paul
- Supporting the Solomon Islands Immersion
- Volunteering to attend Claymore Homework Club
- Joining the Community Service Project


**Being Marist**

When we speak about spirituality, we refer to that fire that burns within each of us as we live our lives. As Christians, we believe that God is the spark of this fire.

Marist spirituality is in the tradition of Marcellin Champagnat who followed Christ in a particular way. Marcellin was a priest in southern France who, in 1817, established the Marist Brothers as a group of men to teach poor rural children about God and to give them a sound education. His spirituality was based around his relationship with Jesus and with Mary. It has been developed and passed on by the Brothers who have followed in his footsteps. At St Gregory’s we refer to the five characteristics.

**The Five Characteristics of Being Marist:**

- Presence
- Simplicity
- Family Spirit
- Love of Work
- In the Way of Mary

At St Gregory’s we also hope to form, in partnership with parents, *Men of strong mind and gentle hearts*. The Brothers the boys meet will model this and we hope that each of our young men will grow to live this too.

Each year Marcellin Champagnat, the founder of the Marist Brothers, would place the names of all the Brothers in a heart-shaped locket which was then put on a statue of Mary in the Chapel of L’Hermitage in France. Following the tradition, the names of every boy and staff member of the St Gregory’s College community are included within this locket.

*We place ourselves, with trust, in the hearts of Jesus and Mary.*
The Bible

The Bible is our Sacred Scripture.

The Bible is divided into two parts:

1. The Old Testament, also called the Hebrew Scriptures, and

There are 39 books in the Old Testament, beginning with the creation story in Genesis and then tracing the story of the Israelite people throughout history. There are many types of writing in the Old Testament including law, history, poetry, wisdom and prophecy.

The New Testament begins with the birth of Jesus and contains 27 books. It tells the story of Jesus’ life and death and the early Christian Church. The writings include the Gospels, letters (most of them written by St Paul) and the Book of Revelation dealing with the return of Christ and the end of the world.

How do I find a Scripture Passage?

To look up a passage, you need a Scripture reference, for example, Romans 15: 1-13.

Firstly you look up the book (Romans) using the index.

Next, you look up the chapter (15) and then the verse (or verses) in that chapter (1 – 13).

It’s a bit like looking up a street address. Romans is like the suburb; Chapter 15 is similar to the street name and Verses 1-13 is similar to the house number.
Some Prayers

Our Father

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, Full of Grace,
The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit
of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners now,
and at the hour of death. Amen.

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen.

Sub Tuum

This is a special prayer to Mary, the Blessed Mother of God.
As a Marist school, we pray this prayer regularly and sing it as our College Song.

**Sub** tuum praesidium confugimus,
Sancta Dei Genetrix. Nostras
deprecationes ne despicias in
necessitatibus, sed a periculis cunctis
libera nos semper, Virgo gloriosa et
benedicta. Amen.

**We** fly to thy patronage, O holy
Mother of God; despise not our petitions
in our necessities, but deliver us always
from all dangers, O glorious and blessed
Virgin. Amen.
**Special Places**

**St Gregory’s College Chapel – The Chapel of the Annunciation**

One of the first things Thomas Donovan did when he planned a school for boys was to build a chapel. The first chapel stood on the site of the Brothers’ House but in the 1950s this was considered too small. The present chapel was opened in 1952, and in 2012 celebrates 60 years.

**St Mary’s Cathedral Sydney**

The Mother Church of Australia, St Mary’s Cathedral is located next to Hyde Park in the city. All families are encouraged to visit this Cathedral and perhaps attend one of the liturgies there. They are very special.

**The Hermitage Mittagong**

This is the Retreat Centre of the Marist Brothers. Originally home to the young Brothers in training, it is a beautiful place with a wonderful history. All boys will visit here at least once during their time at St Gregory’s. Families are welcome to visit. It is a working farm and a large vineyard occupies much of the property. The Cellar Door, open on weekends, is worth a visit and a tasting. Hospitality is a special strength of the Marist Brothers.

**St Francis Xavier’s Cathedral**

The St Gregory’s community belongs to the Diocese of Wollongong. Our Cathedral is located at 36 Harbour Street – Wollongong. Mass times there are: Saturday Vigil 6pm, Sunday 7am, 9am, 10.30am and 5pm. The Bishop for our diocese is Bishop Peter Ingham.
Parishes of the Wollongong Diocese include:


Quotes

“Love one another as I have loved you.” (John 15:12)

Yes!” Mary, Mother of God

I leave you in the sacred hearts of Jesus and Mary Champagnat

“Allahuia! God is God. There is none like him. He is our God. We are his people. The whip master’s hand comes and goes, the sun never fails to rise. Stronger than our ability to raise barriers to the sun, the light still pervades our world. Look. There he is. Above our city. He is there. Waiting. He will always be there; the door is open.”

Earnest Larsen 1977