



GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST

LUKE 2:14

Be on guard.
Stand firm in the faith.
Be courageous.
Be strong.

1 Corinthians 16:13

NEWSLETTER
TERM 4, 2020

For the Whole of Their Life



A MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING PRINCIPAL'S DESK

Mr Cameron Johnston



It has been a challenging year for all parts of our society and the education sector has certainly experienced its own difficulties due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It has brought about unexpected adversities but at the same time has also brought about new opportunities. It would be very easy to look back at the year and reflect on all the problems, all the lows and all negative experiences, because there have been plenty and they have been significant. If we reflect, however, on the whole year, there have also been many things that we can be thankful for and celebrate. The recent Presentation Day ceremonies are evidence of such things to celebrate and I congratulate each student that has achieved in their respective areas, and also every student this year who has persevered under such trying circumstances.

We have learned a lot this year. We have seen the professionalism and flexibility of our staff as the College transitioned to a world of online learning in a matter of weeks. We have seen the students demonstrate resilience and perseverance as they adapted to a new style of remote learning from home. We have seen parents need to add the role of tutor to their job description as they supported their children through lockdown, and suddenly, worldwide, the work of teachers received much more appreciation for the important role they play for the students. Familiar words have taken on new meanings for us this year such as 'zoom'. We have overused words such as 'unprecedented', and we have all experienced embarrassing moments where we have either had the mute button on when it should have been off, or off when it should have been on! We have all learned through the isolation period that speaking, and interacting, with other people face to face is extremely important. Technology, through FaceTime and Zoom, can replace and support

lots of things, however, nothing will make up for that person to person interaction in the real world. The reunions that the students had with their Year Group when they returned to school after our period of lockdown was evidence of this fact. Relationships are important to humans and it is this element of education that can certainly contribute to a student's ability to flourish in the classroom.

Despite all this change, and despite all the frustration or concern that has arisen from the year, we understand that there is a God who is a constant behind it all. A God that does not change, even though all that is familiar might become a distant memory. A God that desires to be in personal relationship with us. He knows how important that relationship is, so much so, that he sent his one and only son Jesus to come into this world. He is a God that assures us that he is in control and that he can overpower any obstacle. He reminds us of this in John 16: 33b where Jesus says "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." Great words of assurance from our creator and sustainer.

Jesus can make this claim because he has entered the world, physically, and this is what we remember at Christmas time, that Jesus is the greatest gift that we can receive. Even though there has been great change and uncertainty this year, I pray that you will know the unchanging, all-knowing, all-powerful, and ever-present God who loves you so much that he sent his Son Jesus into this world so that he would bring you into a right relationship with him.

I hope you all enjoy a safe and refreshing holiday break, and that the 2020 Christmas will be one that is full of joy as you reflect on Jesus' birth with your family and friends. Merry Christmas!



Our College Core Values

- 1. Christ First** - we want to honour Christ in all things.
- 2. Serve One Another** - we want to appreciate the unique God-given potential of each person.
- 3. Strive for Excellence** - we want to aim to continually do our very best in our learning and serving.
- 4. Do What is Right** - we want to always behave in a Christian manner.
- 5. Build Community** - we want everyone to know they belong.

Our 2020 Scripture

Be on guard.
Stand firm in the faith.
Be courageous.
Be strong.

1 Corinthians 16:13 NLT

Our College Prayer

Almighty God, whom truly to know is eternal life,
Grant us perfectly to know Your Son, Jesus Christ,
To be the Way, the Truth, and the life.
That following in the steps of your Holy apostle, St Philip,
We may steadfastly walk in the way that leads to eternal life,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen!

2021 Dates

Term 1 28 January - 1 April
Term 2 19 April - 25 June
Term 3 19 July - 17 September
Term 4 5 October - 8 December



A MESSAGE FROM OUR HEAD OF JUNIOR SCHOOL

Mrs Lynda Humphries



GRATITUDE

Sometimes, when you are entrenched in a community, it is easy to feel that what you have before you is the norm. I think that our Junior School is outstanding and I would like to share my fresh perspective on why I believe that this is so. As I walk around the Junior School, I find myself feeling blessed to have joined this community and I thought that I would share some of the reasons why I feel this way.

Over the last 8 weeks, I have been astounded by the community that is St Philip's Christian College, Gosford. I am overwhelmed by a sense of gratitude for the opportunity to work in this place and to care for your children. There is a broad depth of research around the benefits of gratitude. Dr. Robert A. Emmons of the University of California, and Dr. Michael E. McCullough of the University of Miami, have conducted many studies on gratitude. Whilst even researchers find it difficult to agree on a definition of this term, they do all seem to

concur that deliberately choosing to embrace gratitude can have a strong positive impact on our overall well-being and happiness. In fact, the research says that even when we are feeling low, it can actually help to 'fake it till you make it' with regard to gratitude. Deliberately choosing to look for the positives in a situation can help us to become better and better at finding the good. However, as Christians, this is not new information to us! Throughout the Bible we are regularly encouraged to give thanks and show gratitude to God for all that we have been given. The Psalms are full of gratitude. So, I would like to share with you some of the things that I am grateful for as I have settled in to St Philip's Christian College, Gosford's Junior School.

I am grateful for happy students. As I walk past classrooms or through the playground, there is a joyful atmosphere in the Junior School. I see children who are enjoying being with each other, children who are embracing learning opportunities and children who

are happy to be spending time with their teachers. Of course, this does not mean that they are happy all day everyday as that would not be a realistic view of life. We all have good and bad days but there definitely seem to be many more good days for our students than bad, and I am so appreciative of that! I love the fact that these children are happy to see me or any of the staff. As I walk through the playground, even after just one Term in the school, I am often followed by a chorus of children calling out to me and saying hello. Often, they want to tell me what they have been doing or sometimes they want to give me a drawing that they have done. These are the signs of children who are happy in this place. What a blessing this is!

I am grateful to be working with the amazing Junior School staff. Recently I have had the opportunity to read every student's report and to spend time with the staff, having deliberate conversations where we look at the progress of each student. This wonderful, dedicated group of teachers spend time tracking each and every child's progress. Not only are they outstanding educators, but they are so focused on providing the best learn

ing outcomes for all students. As I walk around the classrooms, there is a sense of calm. I am so impressed with how well these teachers know their students. When you drop them off to school each day, please know that your children are well cared for and nurtured in this place. Finally, after the year of Covid-19, I am grateful that we have had opportunities to hold some of our events this term. Our Book Week celebrations were full of joy and wonder. The children's costumes were spectacular. The Sports Day was also a highlight. All around the school, children were working together, being active and, most importantly, having fun. It was a wonderful atmosphere. Despite the fact that we were unable to invite parents into the school, these were still celebrations and we probably had a greater sense of appreciation for these opportunities than we would have had before this year.

It has been such a strange time to join the community. I am also grateful for the chance to meet, ever so briefly, with many of the parents as I help the children to alight from their cars each morning. However, I look forward to a time when I will be able to speak with you face to face and welcome you back into the school.





NEWS FROM OUR ACTING HEAD OF MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mr Peter Muddle



Well, it has been a frantic Term and we have arrived at the finish line for 2020! And what a crazy year it has been. What will you remember about 2020? Bushfires, floods, a global pandemic, online learning at home, a 6 period timetable to a 4 period timetable and back to a 6 period timetable, teachers learning how to teach via Zoom and iLearn, students learning how to complete their studies in one hour blocks and submitting their work online to their teachers and so on. New challenges, new opportunities, and our students have thrived under trying circumstances. This year has been the Year of Courage at St Philip's Christian College, and didn't we need to exercise some courage in meeting all of the challenges that the year has delivered?

Our Principal Michelle Cairelli believed that God gave her a vision back in 2010 for a World Class School, all for the Glory of God, by 2020. I am sure that she didn't expect 2020 to look the way it has, but we have seen

great resilience from our students, their families and our staff as we have navigated our way through all that this year has been, and brought us.

I have enjoyed time in each of the different sub schools at SPCC Gosford this year, and I have really enjoyed my short time as acting Head of Middle School as we have rounded out a very full year. In recent weeks we have enjoyed Surf Survival training for Year 8, Middle School Orientation Day, Kenya Help Week, Presentation Day Celebrations, Activity Day, Examinations and Reporting, Orienteering for Years 7 and 8 Geography in our beautiful bushland, the Christmas decoration challenge in Year 6, and a number of other activities.

Last week I conducted a few school tours and new student interviews. One of the things I like to do on these tours is to ask current Middle School students to tell us what are the things that they enjoy best about be-

ing a student at St Philip's Christian College, Gosford. A common refrain is that students enjoy the great sense of community within the Middle School, where the students feel valued and known by other students and the staff.

And so while it has been busy, the one thing that has inspired me the most during my time in Middle School, has been my interactions with the staff. Amazingly dedicated teachers who have gone above and beyond for their students, providing excellent learning opportunities inside and outside of the classroom. It has been a privilege to work alongside them as they have sought to give every student the opportunity to thrive inside and outside the classroom – and all of this at the end of an exhausting year where teachers have needed to re-imagine teaching and help their students to learn within a new paradigm.

These wonderful teachers have been ably led by Mrs Bronwyn Fahey, who is heading on a new adventure in the Northern Territory at Sattler Christian College in Darwin in 2021. We are thankful for everything that Mrs Fahey has achieved in and through her Middle School team, and will be praying for her, her husband Andrew (Woody), Sarah and Daniel as they adjust into their new life up north.

Finally, a massive thank you for your support throughout this year. We made it! I will be praying for you as you rest and enjoy time with family and friends this Christmas and New Year period, reflecting on Christ Jesus – the best gift of all!





A MESSAGE FROM OUR HEAD OF SENIOR SCHOOL

Mr Cameron Johnston



For many, the year of 2020 will have flown by, while for others, the holidays couldn't have come quickly enough. It has been a difficult year; one where students and staff have been challenged in ways that no one could have thought would happen. I have been teaching for twenty years and it has never occurred to me that we would ever need to learn how to teach remotely. Yet in having done so now through the lock down period, it has opened my eyes to a number of possibilities for the future of education, both in where students can learn from (e.g., other parts of the state) and how they might learn (with greater independence for those desiring such an environment). This pandemic has challenged and disrupted the status quo within the education sector and it is exciting to explore new opportunities for our students and their learning as we move into 2021 and beyond.

This Term has been a short and yet compact one. Below are a selection of different events that the students have been involved in throughout the Term.

NEW STUDENT LEADERS

At the beginning of the Term we inducted the new House Captains, College Prefects and College Captains. Since that time, both groups of students have grown in their knowledge of themselves as leaders, as well as how to best support the students around them in their respective roles. The House Captains have already been busy organising a House Challenge which culminated in all of Senior School coming together to watch the final challenge of the egg drop. Sim-

ilarly the College Prefects have been organising and planning different activities for this year and next year. Last week the students organised an activity in the Hall at lunchtime for the students to play Ping-Pong and many students enjoyed this opportunity to do something different at lunch. It has been great to see the student leaders serving and building community in this way. The College Captains have also had a busy schedule speaking at different College events either live or on a recording. They have all done exceptionally well and the student leadership is in a strong position for 2021.

CHRISTMAS IN PASTORAL CARE

This Term the Pastoral Care Teachers came together to have a competition of their own. For the first time the Pastoral Care Classes challenged each other to decorate their rooms for Christmas. There were some creative designs, including one Pastoral Care class decorating their virtual classroom (on Minecraft) in honour of the virtual classroom that the students enjoyed this year. The winning Pastoral Care was Meros Girls with a very festive celebration with great attention to detail. Well done to all the Pastoral Care classes for making it such an enjoyable event.

YEAR TWELVE

Throughout the Term, we supported the Year Twelve students through their COVID styled HSC. Students needed to be checked in each day, declare that they were not unwell, use hand sanitiser, while also being prepared to do their HSC in an offsite location should the College be closed. The Year Twelve students have done

extremely well this year. The final year can be stressful regardless of any worldwide pandemic, but they have come through it all with such strength and resilience. They enjoyed their formal at a different time of year and we were able to celebrate with parents which was a rare treat this year! We look forward to seeing them again on the 18th of December when their HSC results arrive. Congratulations Year Twelve on completing this challenging year in such a positive manner. My thanks to Mr Muddle for supporting the students through the HSC process and to Mr Boyce for being their amazing Year Advisor throughout the year.

YEAR TEN

During the last week, our Year Ten students enjoyed the opportunity to experience what life might be like after school by doing work experience. Students went to a great variety of places ranging from vet clinics, through to Church, and a range of different local businesses. The students all represented the College extremely well and my thanks to Miss Carr for providing the students with this opportunity.

VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL TRAINING (VET)

This Term we have launched a new subject for our current Year Ten students to enjoy. Educational Support is a program whereby students will finish the course with a Certificate III. Students were involved in their own work experience last week where they joined the College staff at school and supported the student learning in Junior School or helped in the Administration Office amongst other areas of the College. The students really enjoyed this opportunity. This course joins a number of other VET courses that we offered this year such as Outdoor Recreation, Early Childhood Education and Care, Information and Digital Technology, Christian Ministry and Theology, and Hospitality.

PRESENTATION DAY

As the year comes to a close, Presentation Day has also been impacted by COVID. Unfortunately, we were unable to celebrate with all the families in the Hall, but we were able to acknowledge and recognise the achievements of some of our students. Congratulations to all prize winners, and also, a special mention to all the Senior School students for overcoming such adversity this year with your studies. A truly remarkable effort. My thanks also to all the staff for their amazing hard work, support and care for our students. We are blessed to have such a brilliant group of teachers who invest so much into the lives of the students.

This will be my last newsletter piece as Head of Senior School. I have been in this role for the last seven years and next year I will be taking on a dual role of Deputy Principal (Welfare and Operations) and will also be Acting Head of Middle School until we find a suitable replacement. I have enjoyed my time as Head of Senior School. It has been a privilege to work with the Senior School staff and students each day, serving and supporting them. Next year Mrs Danielle Crook will be the new Head of Senior School. She is a passionate educator and I know the Senior School will be in good hands into the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the parents and students for your support and to wish you all a safe, refreshing and blessed holiday break as we celebrate the birth of our saviour during Christmas.



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