

2019 hardly seems to have settled into its rhythmic cadence and yet, the enrolment cycle for 2021 is well underway. In some senses this seems such a far off and distant thought, but the reality is that the outcomes of the future will be in due proportion to the plans and the energies that are entered into in the metaphor of today. The College has been so very fortunate to attract a very large number of families with congruent values who clamour for access to an Ignatian educational program. Over the coming weeks, hundreds of families will be interviewed by a team of senior staff at the College, each being assessed for the degree to which they accord with the enrolment criteria. It is a time of exhilaration for those families to whom offers are made, while it can be a time of deep disappointment for those who, despite many admirable qualities and legitimate claims to entry, cannot be offered an enrolment. The number of applicants far exceed the enrolment numbers available. I am mindful that decisions regarding the families who are accepted for entry over the coming weeks will translate to the boys who form the graduating classes of 2026 and 2028, respectively. As we move towards the latter stages of the term our sightline is often consumed by the immediacy of the current picture, but, the truth is that the legacy of the decisions surrounding enrolment will be played out with such importance over the decade ahead.

Congratulations are extended to the boys who, over the summer months spent hours in dedicated training and fitness regimes on the Lane Cove River, and who performed magnificently at the Head of the River last Saturday. The 1st IV took line honours and secured the Yaralla Trophy for the first time in 54 years, and as part of that, the team broke their personal best time by 10 seconds!! The 2nd IV won the Alan Callaway Trophy for the second time in successive years while the 3rd and 4th IV also finished on the podium in Second Place. This was a true vindication of the efforts of the boys, who have given so much across a demanding season. In the 1st VIII events, the Shore School were simply too strong and while the Riverview boys were disappointed at the end of the race, they can be very proud of their performance on the day. And, as the bats and balls are stored for the next summer, so also are the oars and the boats. Nearly 1,600 boys have competed in a variety of codes and endeavours and done so in a manner that has promoted spirited competition and fair play. Over the coming weeks, training for the winter season will come into effect with balls of different contours and colours, along with more protective attire that is the corollary of a greater level of physical contact. May the season ahead be as enjoyable and successful as the one that we have just concluded.

This week seems to have zipped past. There has been a multiplicity of events on every day, from NAPLAN trials and Elevate Study Skills sessions, to UMAT testing for Year 12 boys who are seeking entry to Medicine in 2020. A range of excursions associated with Business Studies, Legal Studies, Engineering, Latin and History provided outward bound learning for the boys in a range of contexts. In the Performing Arts, musical rehearsals were conducted for the School Musical, The Addams Family, while the boys in Year 8 performed their plays, Dancing With The Olympians and 10 Ways to Survive the Zombie Apocalypse, with considerable proficiency and palpable zeal. Tonight, the GPS Swimming Team compete in their final events for the year and at this stage are well placed to take out the shield. We wish them well. As always, the social justice agenda featured prominently with immersion preparation evenings already underway, particularly those associated with Borroloola in June and Cambodia in early December. In both instances, quality time is required to ensure that the boys are fully prepared for the enriching mixture of confrontation, learning, personal growth and the deepening call to justice. This is just an ordinary week, and all pressed into four days on the Senior Campus, while the boys on Regis had their own consuming fill of activities and events.

To complete the week, the Athletics Carnival was held amid some magnificent autumn skies on First Field. On a number of occasions throughout the day, I stopped and thought that it was two weeks ago today that the peace and the joy of life in Christchurch was so brutally disrupted; the pain and the sense of loss linger on. While our boys ran, hurdled, jumped and competed in the confines of a warm community setting, others continue to mourn their grief. Let us give gratitude for the life endowments that are provided: for the opportunity to forge the future through enrolling families with similar vision, for the graces to compete in inter-school competitions at the highest level and for the weekly activities that provide engagement for all – be they in the classroom, on the stage or on the field. And let us continue to pray and reflect on the sense of loss that is so demonstrably apparent in other parts of the world.