

A New Term...

Another term beckons, and with it the potential for so much growth and development of each and every boy in the College – academically, socially, emotionally, physically and of course, spiritually. Among other things, the term will see HSC Examinations, Year 11 students move into their HSC, the Year 9 Challenge, final preparations for immersions to India, Cambodia and Nepal over the summer, end of semester assessments and reports, the beginning of the summer sport program as well as Reflection Days across a number of year levels. In the case of the latter, such days will provide a spiritual focus on the experiences that have transpired across the year and countenance key priorities and goals as they relate to 2018. All of this is testament to the integrated and holistic education program that is synonymous with a Jesuit school, be that in Australia or in the dozens of countries across the world that form the international network of the Society of Jesus.

Over the break, a number of activities complementary to the educational program were conducted. The immersion to Micronesia saw 10 students, under the watchful eye of Ms Kate Hilyard and Ms Terry-Armstrong, spend time in one of the most underdeveloped regions of the Western Pacific. By volunteering in the schools, spending time with students from the local villages and pursuing a deeper understanding of environmental ecology with islands that are affected by climate change, the boys gained an acute insight into the daily realities of life for those who have little by way of material goods, disposable income and access to education.

Another of the highlights was the Italian Language Tour which, while focussed on developing linguistic proficiency, also took in the sights, the sounds and the colour of some of the great cities of the world, including Rome, Siena, Milan and Venice. Be it visiting the Ancient city of Pompeii, spending time in St Peter's Basilica and the Sistine Chapel in Rome, or joining families for homestay in Empoli, the boys were immersed in the life, the language and the culture of the Rome of yesterday and the Italy of today. A particular highlight of the immersion was the visit to the *Gesu, la Chiesa di Sant' Ignazio*, the mother church of the Jesuits and where St Ignatius lived in the latter stages of his life.

Closer to home, the Jesuit Basketball Tournament, which was held in Melbourne, saw the four Jesuit schools compete in the biennial competition in their usual spirit of cooperation and goodwill, despite the vigour and intensity of games on the court. While Xavier took line honours, the boys from Riverview played extremely well and were outstanding ambassadors of their College. Not unimportantly, prior to the Jesuit competition members of the Open Basketball Team volunteered to support the Special Olympics Basketball, which was held at Riverview in the early part of the holidays. Our own SEIP boys fielded a team and participated with vigour in a number of games. Just one of a number of emails that arrived at the College captured the spirit of these young men and what they were able to achieve:

There were many highlights but the standout for me was the SEIP boys and the Open Basketball Teams who volunteered for the full two days, who didn't stop helping, timekeeping, scoring and assisting seriously disabled athletes as shadows on the courts. The involvement of all made such a difference and gave real energy to the Special Olympics. PM

Congratulations young men.

While there was much to give thanks for over the break, there was also tragedy and sadness. The mass shooting in Las Vegas saw the largest casualty rate from a single shooting in American history – 59 killed and nearly 500 injured. This comes on the back of 273 mass killings in the United States in 2017 alone – a 'mass killing' being defined as incurring four or more deaths in the one incident. In Catalonia the demonstrations for independence saw over 900 injured through police brutality and the simmering tensions rage in a country torn by the twin turbines of separatism and nationalism. Terrorist attacks remain a daily threat in so many different parts of the world, with dozens of casualties in countries from Somalia

and Nigeria in Africa to Chile and Columbia in South America, not to mention the Middle East that sees so much suffering on a daily basis. To have the grace to live in the relative safety of Australia is a blessing to count as we return to school and the rich opportunities that lie ahead over the next nine weeks of the term.

During the week, the Year 12 leaders announced their motto to the College community: *Many wolves, one pack*. It ostensibly sounds a little edgy, perhaps given to aggression and a mob identity that compromises individuality. I have been reminded many times over the years that sometimes students have a wisdom beyond their years, and this is one such. The concept of the many dates back to classical philosophy, where each is supported by the other in their different endeavours. Certainly, the wolves are a prominent feature in the Ignatian story and they adorn the Riverview crest as part of the foundational story and the current identity of the College, and the image is likely to form the seraphic on the north east face of the Therry building. A quick glance at nature reveals more: each and every wolf is different yet they have an unquestioned fealty and loyalty to the group. They are particularly social animals and the object of marvel from many who study the animal kingdom for the way that they look after each member – even the weakest of the group. So the theme and the motto hold much symbolism and relevance. Let them guide the affairs of this College and the graduates of 2018 as they work to ensure the common good of all in the school, and by extrapolation, to all they will come into contact with over the months ahead.

Best wishes for the term ahead.