

A World Record!!!

Never given to thinking small, the boys at Riverview, inspired by social justice, came together on Wednesday to break a Guinness World Record for the largest human shape of a country. The project was proposed by Clayton Lie and Timothy Hurford in Year 10 as a result of a curriculum initiative in English entitled *Dignity For Dollars*, and aimed to raise money for, and awareness of, two Jesuit institutes in one of the most educationally disadvantaged regions of the world. The *Colégio de Santo Inácio de Loiola* (secondary school) and the *São João de Brito* (teacher training institute) have been funded by Jesuit ministries and schools from across Asia and they are developing educational resources in a region of the world that is so desperately in need of them. So, the Riverview boys in their khaki uniforms assembled with their teachers *en masse* on First Field in the shape of the proportionally enlarged boundary of Timor Leste to beat the previous record of 811 by 271, aggregating a total of 1087 boys. While the funds raised are of immediate benefit, by promoting the cause of disadvantage and the critical role that education has to play in the economic and social development of Timor Leste, our community can make a much more enduring contribution to the long-term prosperity of that nation. Sincere thanks are extended to all who overcame the logistics and the infrastructure issues to register a world record!!

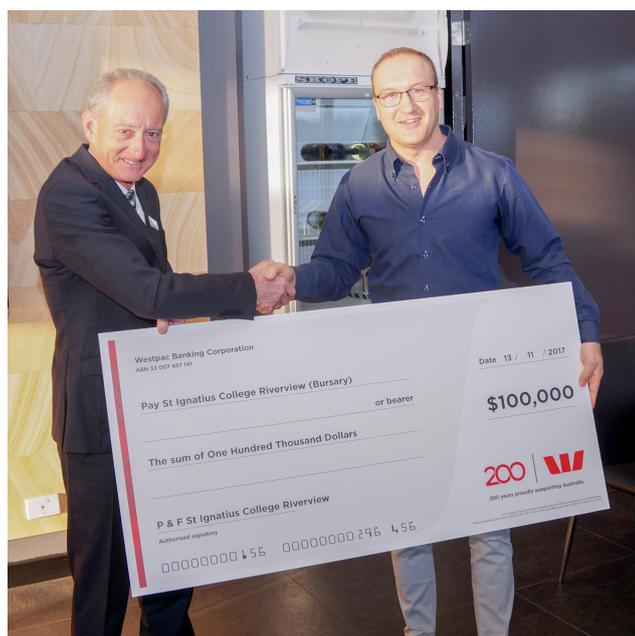


During weeks 4 and 5 of Term 4, Fr Ross and I travelled north to spend time with our many families and extended community who reside in Singapore, Hong Kong and Shanghai. Significant functions were held in Singapore and Hong Kong with large ex-pat communities, while more personal discussions were held with current families and Old Boys in Shanghai. As part of that experience, we also visited Macau where the very first Catholic church was established by the Jesuits in the early 17th Century and where St Joseph's seminary and church – both under the mission of the Jesuits, still minister to a large congregation. Asia is an interesting and at times confronting interpolation of cultures and customs: on the one hand, the ostentatious commercialism of the big cities that bustle and at times joust their way through frenetic travelling and business schedules, are yet supplanted by the graceful charm of the Orient – tea ceremonies, silks and brocades of immense beauty, elegiac tai chi routines and a Confucian order that promotes the virtue of values and scholarship. It is a healthy syncretism that has embraced east and west, just as the Jesuits have developed and accommodated their works and ministries over the last 400 plus years. As Australia's closest and regionally important continent, the need to develop links with our northern neighbour is so very important in an increasingly interconnected and porous world.

Over the course of the last week, Asia has come to Riverview. Delegates from Jesuit schools in Hong Kong, Macau, Japan, Taiwan, Indonesia, the Philippines, Micronesia and Cambodia, all part of the Asian Teachers network, joined senior staff at the College to compare and contrast the best in national education systems and in school innovation. Fifteen schools from seven different educational jurisdictions throughout the world spent a week in convocation exchanging views on pedagogy, research, student engagement, staff formation and of course, spirituality. It was instructive to hear the issues that surface in schools such as Micronesia and Cambodia which are so very different from those of some of the highly developed regions of South East Asia such as Japan and Hong Kong. Despite the differences, there was

and remains one central point of intersection and that is the importance of values and the formation of young men and women who can take their place in the world and make a meaningful contribution to it. This is a constant, be it in some of the poorer countries of the Asia Pacific or in those like Riverview that are endowed with significant resources.

Last Friday evening, the Year 8 Catholic Schools Debating Association (CSDA) comprising Seamus Quealy, Ryan Hogan, Toby Mills and Harrison Clubb (pictured above) travelled to St Gregory's College in Campbelltown for the CSDA State Championship Final. The boys competed against St Mary McKillop College from Bathurst and took the affirmative on a vexing and challenging topic: 'Technology does more good than harm'. In a spirited contest that saw a split decision of the adjudicators, the debate was awarded to Saint Ignatius' College. Congratulations to the boys on taking out the Championship Final, and along the way, special thanks are extended to coach Mark Rothery (OR2017 and Dux) and Dr Panos Diamadis who coordinated the events of the evening.



Among other things, it was the week of AGMs. The P&F met on Tuesday evening in Cova Cottage to review their affairs across a busy 2017 and on Thursday evening the Old Ignatians' Union (OIU) held their formal review of yet another busy year. In the case of the former, the P&F proudly handed over a cheque for \$100,000 which will be donated to the Bursary Program to provide opportunities for those boys who otherwise could not entertain the thought of coming to this remarkable school. The magnitude of this contribution, in full alignment with the primary mission of the College should not be underestimated, and it is one that we are truly grateful for. In the case of the OIU, the Presidency has been handed over from Tim Peisley (OR1997) to Charlie Pidcock (OR1987), both men of enormous integrity who have and will continue to make their own distinctive stamp on an expansive corpus of Old Boys who give so much to support the principles of Jesuit education in the College.

By any standards, it was another week 'Riverview style'. Between a world record, an international convention of teachers, a Debating Championship and the busyness of the final weeks with major outward bound activities and assessments, we move into the latter stages of the term.

Best wishes for the week ahead.