

Across the Globe

Over the weekend, a delegation of students and teachers from Fordham Prep and Boston College arrived at the College as part of an international exchange program between Jesuit schools in the United States and Australia. Located in New York and Boston, respectively, these schools were visited by Riverview boys last year where bridges of understanding were built between Jesuit Colleges in opposite hemispheres of the world. Such a program enables the global reach of the Society of Jesus to be fully appreciated and the situational context of the schools to be appropriated and celebrated. The students from the East Coast of America will attend classes during the first week of their stay and will then join Year 10 boys in their Service Week placements over the final days of the term. In September of 2018, Riverview boys will fly to the US and immerse themselves in the schools, undertaking a reciprocal program as the relationship is consolidated into the future. We wish the boys well as they absorb the experience, one that will stay with them as an indelible part of their education and formation.

Companions on the Journey, was the title of the Year 9 Reflection Day that saw Year 11 students lead various activities to assist the younger boys in guided meditation and reflection. Beginning with imagery of God, the boys moved to consider their own core values and strengths and how they equip them to handle the sometimes stormy and challenging vicissitudes of life in a mature and faith-filled manner. By focussing on such matters, the boys can develop their emotional core, so that when times of duress arise, they have some tools to draw upon to assist them through the adversity and hardship. The day ended with the prayer *Footprints*: a timely reminder of God's companionship and friendship. The boys are to be commended on their thoughtful participation in the day and thanks are extended to the Year 11 boys and the staff who worked intensively to support the Year 9 boys throughout the process.

There was a buzz around the Regis campus in the early part of the week as the boys in Year 6 made their final preparations for their Canberra trip. This annual event sees the boys participate in an educational program that brings with it an appreciation of some of the nation's treasures including the Australian War Memorial, the Houses of Parliament, the National Museum, the CSIRO, the Museum of Australian Democracy, Old Parliament House, and much more. This is an education in citizenship as the boys learn about the institutions of their country and the processes of the bicameral parliament. To see these in the flesh and to nuance the role that they have played in the political and historical affairs of the nation is an experience that our young men benefit from enormously. Special thanks are extended to the teachers who accompanied the boys across the three days in Canberra.

The subject selection process is in full swing at the present time. Last Friday evening a very sizeable gathering of Year 10 boys and their parents attended a two-part evening that began in the Ramsay Hall and proceeded to outline the significance of subjects that are chosen across the HSC. For those encountering this for the first time, it is complex web that involves subjects, unit values, scaling, aggregation as well as external agencies such as the University Admissions Centre (UAC) and the calculations associated with the Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR) score. Being familiar with all aspects of the framework of the New South Wales Education Authority (NESA) is essential if one is to maximise performance, which for the boys in Year 10 will find its consummation towards the end of 2019. Further down in the secondary school, the boys in Year 9 are considering their electives over the coming 12 months, those that will be factored into the timetable as classes are staffed over the coming term. Like all endeavours, the quality of outcomes will be in due proportion to the efforts made to respond intimately to the process in advance by making the most informed choices along the way.

Last Friday evening the Fr McDonald Cup was hotly contested at St Aloysius College, as it has been since 1992. The best debaters from both schools faced off in the cut and thrust of public oratory on a challenging topic: *That Majority Government Is Preferable To Minority Government*. With an arguable topic that held its own challenges to define, Charlie Hoffman, Michael Byrne and Jesse Gray performed admirably to win the debate with a split decision of the adjudicators. The McDonald Cup honours the life

and the memory of Charles McDonald (OR1945), who went on to become a Jesuit and a highly successful teacher of English and a Debating Master at St Aloysius College (1953-55) and Saint Ignatius' College, Riverview (1962-81). As this represented the 25th Anniversary of the Cup, it was a cherished result and one that the boys should feel particularly proud of.

As we move towards the latter stages of the term, the assessment regime bites hard in the senior secondary with major tasks being undertaken in English and Mathematics. In many ways this is a precursor to the second half of the year as the graduates confront a 'holiday' period that will be used to make intensive preparation for the HSC Trial Examinations, which will be confronted in the middle of the coming term. In effect, the year is fading quickly for those at the top end of the school so as many are looking forward to a break in the not too distant future while others are intensifying their efforts.

It is worth keeping the boys in Year 10 in our thoughts and prayers as they respond to their week of service to round off their term.