

## In The Service Of Others

•



One of the significant assemblies of the year was held on Wednesday to profile the cause of service, a spirit and an impulse that lies at the very heartland of Ignatian spirituality. It is one of the most distinguishing features of the educational program in Jesuit schools. Oscar Davies, Captain of the Regis campus spoke with poise and insight about the efforts made by the boys to raise funds for charities which are in desperate need to support all manner of causes. At the recent walkathon, the boys sought sponsorship for their labours and were successful in raising over \$25,500 in support of the Kasait Project: the Jesuit school founded in East Timor, which is one of the most educationally debased countries in the world. This is a truly astonishing sum and an outstanding effort that will assist in rebuilding the educational resource in a country that has suffered so deeply over the recent decades.

For the first time, the *Patrick Rodgers Memorial Award* was presented to honour an Old Boy whose service beyond the years of school has been particularly meritorious. Named in honour of Patrick Rodgers (OR2011) who died suddenly while working to support the cause of some of the most disadvantaged in Cambodia last year, the award aims to encourage boys to embrace an ethic of service and civic duty as they take their place in the world. The *Patrick Rodgers Memorial Award* recipient, Joe Wehbe (OR2012), has undertaken remarkable work in Nepal over the last two years, formally establishing *From the Ground Up*. This project focusses on the importance of building houses, schools and community centres that aim to improve the quality of life for those who live in poverty. For one so young it is inspiring to see the impact that zeal, vision and a deep regard for the other can have. I suspect that Pedro Arrupe SJ, the founder of the phrase 'men for others', would be mightily impressed with such a dedicated commitment to the poor of South East Asia, one that has brought so many tangible benefits to communities through addressing basic needs such as housing, water and education. James and Liz Rodgers, Patrick's parents, presented this inaugural award on behalf of the family.



- 
- *James and Liz Rodgers present the Patrick Rodgers Memorial Award*

*Award recipient Joseph Wehbe*

As we enter the final weeks of the year we move into the twilight zone, although there is much that needs to be accomplished before the curtain comes down on 2018. Just one of the many indications that we are moving towards the latter stages is the formal completion of the HSC Examinations, after the rigorous demands of recent weeks. On Thursday the booklets were closed and papers submitted for the last time, and subsequently ferried off in high security to NESA headquarters. The invigilators were thanked for their strenuous efforts to ensure the integrity of a process that will see over 70,000 students across New South Wales judged against objective assessment criteria and against each other, relative to subject and cohort performance. And now, examiners go into deadlock as they work intensively to keep abreast of the marking schedule and the complex business of Grade Band allocations and final subject and cohort judgements. The release of this pressure will be made manifest at the school level with the Blue & White, which will be conducted in the Exhibition Hall amid much fanfare and celebration this evening. It is a time

for families not only to relish the completion of a challenging year for their boys, but a chance to look back on all that has transpired across the many years of enrolment at the College, ones that have seen so much by way of formation and growth.

While one chapter closes for 244 young men and 171 families in Year 12, a new one opens for many young men who move to the next stage along the educational continuum. The boys in Year 6 are preparing for their transfer to the 'big school' that will involve specialist subject delivery, an integrated timetable and the speed that accompanies the expectations of the secondary environment. They are well prepared for what lies ahead, but the calibration of goals and the necessary adjustments will need to be made as part of the process. Close on 250 new boys join the College in 2019, most in the large intake cohorts of Year 5 and Year 7, in addition to an appreciable number of boarders across the secondary school. Transition arrangements are firmly in place and many of the boys have already been issued with uniforms and effects that will see them ready for action on day one. These are moments of expectation and apprehension, moments of anticipation and uncertainty. All part of the heady stuff that is the corollary of new frontiers from which growth in its manifold forms is experienced.

The bio-chemistry of the grounds has changed dramatically over the last week with the departure of Year 12 and the Year 9 boys who have moved into The Challenge. Thankfully, the weather – while warm, has been kind and activities, be they in the bush or in the city, have proceeded in a very even and engaging manner. It was pleasing to hear that the boys who spent the week out in the canoes and on mountain bikes responded with great vigour and endeavour to the challenge of paddling 70 km and riding 120 km, respectively. To be expected, there was some tired and aching muscles, not to mention some spirits which on occasions were tested, but such is the nature of The Challenge. Over the next three weeks, the boys will move progressively through the program, undertaking a range of personal development activities that we see them immersed in goal setting, teamwork, community building and skill acquisition.

Please keep Alex and the Noble family in the forefront of your prayers and intentions, in the aftermath of our community prayer service and liturgy last week.