



St Michael's Catholic College

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17th December

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to thank you all for your support as we come to the end of a successful but nonetheless challenging autumn term. It has been a year like no other in the history of St Michael's Catholic College. I recognise that during this difficult period for both our country and our community, you have continued to place great trust in us to care for and educate your child. I know you will have no doubt been worried about their safety and wellbeing and I am very proud in the way in which we have all worked together to ensure the students have returned successfully and safely.

It has been a huge undertaking and achievement to reopen the college fully and to deliver the full curriculum to all students, despite the additional health and safety constraints and ongoing changes to guidance as well as national and local restrictions. We are incredibly impressed with our students and the exemplary manner in which they have returned to full time learning and the way in which they have demonstrated Salesian values by taking a cheerful and resilient approach to their education. I am also grateful for both their and your understanding and patience on the occasions when they have been required to isolate and learn from home in order to keep our community safe. Despite a recent slight increase in Covid-19 cases we have been fortunate to have only had a relatively small number in comparison to local and national figures. I believe this is in large part due to the rigorous health and safety procedures we have implemented and insist upon.

As a result of the careful planning, hard work and creativity of our staff, our students have also been able to continue to take part in a wide range of enrichment activities in addition to their studies. These have included house competitions, fundraising, virtual liturgies, acts of remembrance, sports and music clubs, Black History Month activities, virtual lectures/talks from guest speakers, photography competitions and anti-bullying week and student voice activities. Our new student parliament, student leadership team, house captains, prefects, 6th form chaplaincy team and diversity ambassadors have all taken up their roles and the faith in action group and mental health Ambassadors continue to contribute very positively to the life of the college.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of the St Michael's staff, the senior leadership team, teachers, support staff, premises and cleaning staff for going the extra mile every day in order not just to reopen the college for all students, but to keep it running to the highest standards in the face of many challenges. This has often involved staff working additional hours after school and senior leaders sometimes working during evenings and weekends, when contract tracing has been required. I am very fortunate to work with such a committed and dedicated team who are all determined to ensure St Michael's is a successful, caring and positive place where your child can thrive and achieve their potential.

We know that some in our community have been directly affected by the pandemic, either through the serious illness or death of a loved one due to coronavirus or as a result of losing their job because of the impact of the pandemic on the economy. We will be praying for them at our end of term liturgy and I ask that you also remember them in your prayers.

I appreciate this year that it will not be possible to celebrate Christmas in the usual way and that many of us continue to be kept apart from family and friends. I do however urge you to do all that you can to keep yourselves and your families safe over the Christmas period and to ensure you are following

the guidelines. How you choose to behave and celebrate during this break will have a direct impact not only on the education of your child but on all of the students and staff at St Michael's in the new year. We can only remain open and deliver a full curriculum if all of our students and families show consideration for the health and safety of all in our college community and our city.

I would like to conclude by sharing a poem with you that features in our Christmas liturgy. It reminds us of the benefits of remaining positive and joyful and to remember that in our time of need God's light will guide and lead. This is an important message as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus this Christmas.

Poem on Joy (based on Proverbs 17:22)

A joyful heart knows,
all about God's goodness
it knows His presence
in all of its fullness.

It knows it's not alone,
in this thing called life
it knows He'll deliver it
from its earthly strife.

A joyful heart knows,
God has for it a plan
it knows the power
of His righteous hand.

It knows to cry to God,
in its time of need
it knows by His light
He will guide and lead.

A joyful heart knows,
God, it will never leave
it knows onto hope . . .
it needs to always cleave!

May the peace and blessings of Christmas be yours; and may the coming year be filled with love, happiness and good health.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Yours faithfully



Ms F. Corcoran
Principal

