



St Mary's School  
Waverley  
Founded 1888

# SCHOOL NEWS

4 DECEMBER 2019



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Marketing girls getting ready for the carol service

## FROM THE HEAD'S DESK

*Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury has written:*

*"Church schools are as concerned as any other school to equip pupils for lives marked by rapid change, global competition and insecurity. But Church schools know in their viscera that this is not just about acquiring skills and good examination results. It is about forming people who have the moral strength and spiritual depth to hold to a course and weather ups and downs."*

I often return to the above quotation because it points directly to the principles that guide us at St Mary's School. The school and our community have certainly experienced ups and downs over the course of the year but we hold our course, standing firm in our faith and our vision for educating girls.

As the year draws to a close, we look to what another year will hold for our school. The examination period has been a calm and quiet time and we expect to announce good Matric results from the class of 2019. We anticipate welcoming many new families to our school, and several new staff members in January. I am looking forward to a new leadership team with the internal appointment of two deputies. Phumzile Sithebe and Felicia Tobias have been appointed as deputy heads with the portfolios of pastoral care and diversity, and academics respectively. They will join Ros Howell and Tinhiko Nkuna in leading the Senior School. Phumzile has held management positions in the school, as HoD African languages and head of Transformation and Diversity. Felicia has

served many years as the successful HoD of English and, more recently, has held the position of head of Student Life. I believe that this team will bring a dynamic energy to the school through the range of strengths that they offer.

To end this year, we say farewell to Robyn Hoffe who has been an influential and well-loved teacher in the Mathematics department. Simone Meyer leaves our administrative team after five years of service at St Mary's. We also say farewell to Zelda Siphenuka, marketing assistant. At the end of February, we will bid Penny Mullan farewell after many years of her excellent leadership. In the Junior School, we say goodbye to Fungayi Dendere, recently appointed HoD of Mathematics and much-valued teacher and colleague in the Junior and Senior Primary; and Tracey Wood, our head of sport in the Junior Primary, who leaves us after 22 years of dedicated service. We also say farewell to Grace Banda who has completed a three year internship.

My Christmas card message this year reads:

"... and the world was filled with Light, Love and Restoration."

I wish all our girls and families a peaceful and happy holiday with God's blessings at Christmas.

DEANNE KING  
HEAD OF SCHOOL



# FROM THE CHAPLAIN

Sunday 1 December, Advent Sunday, marked the beginning of the season of Advent. Advent is a season of waiting in anticipation for God to come on earth in the form of a baby, at Christmas. It is also a season of preparation: we prepare with Mary and Joseph and indeed with God the Father, for the arrival of Immanuel, of God-with-us.

Particularly as we come to the end of the school year, I find Advent is necessarily also a time of reflection. How have I spent every moment of this year – not only times set aside for prayer and for worship – in preparing for the arrival of the Christ-child? The season of Advent for Mary, surely, is the culmination of nine months of waiting. What of the other eight months in our own lives? It is because of the reflective hue to this season that the liturgical blue of Advent is so close to Lent's penitential purple.

As we come closer to Christmas, the air tingles in anticipation, and children are the first to sense this. Our waiting takes on a yearning, which grows as the time nears. With all that the news has held in our country and in the world, in the past year, perhaps our yearning has begun much earlier in the year.

As we wait, what is it that we wait for? To celebrate time-honoured personal, family and cultural traditions – yes. And so much more. The O Antiphons, one chanted each night of the last week preceding Christmas, help give form to our yearning:

O Wisdom, coming forth from the mouth of the Most High,  
reaching from one end to the other mightily,  
and sweetly ordering all things:  
Come and teach us the way of prudence.

*Sirach 24:3; Wisdom 8:1*

O Adonai, and leader of the House of Israel,  
who appeared to Moses in the fire of the burning bush  
and gave him the law on Sinai:  
Come and redeem us with an outstretched arm.

*Exodus 3:2; 24:12*

O Root of Jesse, standing as a sign among the peoples;  
before you kings will shut their mouths,  
to you the nations will make their prayer:  
Come and deliver us, and delay no longer.

*Isaiah 11:10; 45:14; 52:15; Romans 15:12*

O Key of David and sceptre of the House of Israel;  
you open and no one can shut;  
you shut and no one can open:  
Come and lead the prisoners from the prison house,  
those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

*Isaiah 22:22; 42:7*

O Morning Star,  
splendour of light eternal and sun of righteousness:  
Come and enlighten those who dwell in darkness  
and the shadow of death.

*Malachi 4:2*

O King of the nations, and their desire,  
the cornerstone making both one:  
Come and save the human race,  
which you fashioned from clay.

*Isaiah 28:16; Ephesians 2:14*

O Emmanuel, our King and our lawgiver,  
the hope of the nations and their Saviour:  
Come and save us, O Lord our God.

*Isaiah 7:14*

I invite you to use these antiphons in your own prayers, each night in that last week prior to Christmas. May you and your families be blessed as you rest these holidays, and especially as we await in hope and sure faith, the joyful coming of Christ at Christmastide. Come, oh come, Immanuel!

REVD CLAUDIA COUSTAS  
CHAPLAIN

