



St Mary's School
Waverley
Founded 1888

JUNIOR SCHOOL NEWS

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The Singing Angels participated in the annual Sound of Children choral event held at the Linder Auditorium on Monday 2 October

FROM THE HEADMISTRESS' DESK

Dear parents

Last Thursday was International Teachers' Day. The school marked the occasion with a gift of three seed pencils for each teacher and a delicious tea in the staff room at break. The pencils, each one engraved with one of the St Mary's values (Love, Community, Integrity), came with the instruction to plant the stub in soil when it became too short to write with, to nurture it, and to watch it grow – an ingenious and uplifting tribute to the sustainability of education.

The day also received attention on internet and social media sites with journalists and members of the public commenting on teachers and the state of education all over the world. One CNN post looked at the value placed on teachers and teaching in different countries and the relative success of their education systems: according to a study surveying attitudes in 21 countries (excluding those in Africa and Latin America), respect for teachers is more evident in Asian societies than in the West, despite their low salaries (six out of the top 10 salaries for high school teachers are in Europe), and children are more likely to be encouraged to enter the teaching profession in China, South Korea, Turkey and Egypt.

As far as measurable student performance goes, the most recent Programme for International Student Assessment results placed the Asian education system ahead of the rest of the world; Canada (10th in Mathematics, third in reading, and seventh in Science) is the highest ranking non-Asian country; Finland (13th in Maths, fourth and fifth in reading and Science worldwide), wins the accolade, predictably, of the highest ranking European country.

What is interesting about the results is how vastly different teaching approaches and methodologies produce comparably successful students. The common variable, the article concludes, is the value these societies place on the quality of teaching and teachers, the process by which teachers are selected and the way they are treated, and the state's purposeful and generous investment in continuous teacher training and professional development. In summary, to borrow the words of OECD education director Andreas Schleicher, "It's not about pay, but the status of the profession is more a result of it being intellectually attractive to become a teacher." He adds: "If you want to make the job attractive, give them good support."

It is this seemingly simple advice that I think teachers and parents overlook in their search for the ultimate educational experience for their children. We should spend more time thinking about how we speak about teachers and teaching, begrudging the fees and time that support continuous staff development less, and encouraging our high achieving graduates to view the profession as a viable career option. Anything else, including well-meaning YouTube clips berating parents for not being more grateful to teachers for returning to work every day to do what is depicted as a highly undesirable job, does little to address the status quo ante and becomes nothing more than a sentimental distraction from the real issues at play.

DR SARAH WARNER
HEADMISTRESS: JUNIOR SCHOOL

FROM THE CHAPLAIN

Many of us are familiar with what we have come to know as the story of “Jonah and the whale”. Jonah’s choice to try to sail in the opposite direction to that which God purposed for him – to Tarshish instead of to Ninevah – such that God had to send a big fish to swallow Jonah and bring him back, is often referred to as a lesson to all of us that God will fulfil God’s purpose, even if it means “sending a big fish” to bring us back to God’s path for us.

However, this takes us only halfway through the story of Jonah, and it would be a great sadness if we went no further – the story is after all only a few pages long.

After Jonah repented (literally: “turns around” and turns back to God), he obeyed God’s instruction to tell the people of Ninevah to repent too. To Jonah’s horror, the people of Ninevah obeyed, leaving Jonah sulking (yes, really – read the story). It is important to note that Ninevah was the imperial city of Assyria, and the people of Assyria were “Enemy #1” to the Israelites. That the Ninevites could be forgiven by God once they had repented would have been unthinkable to the Israelites.

God caused a little bush to grow over the sulking Jonah to give him shelter, but then a worm ate the plant, leaving Jonah in an even bigger sulk. Finally, God gave Jonah a good talking-to:

But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry enough to die.” Then the Lord said, “You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labour and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?”

Jonah 4:9-11

God forgave Jonah after he had repented – as God forgave the Israelites,

and as God forgives us today. God, the Creator and Redeemer, gives the opportunity for forgiveness to all who God creates – even those we may consider our worst enemies. Who am I not to forgive, and not to seek reconciliation?

**REVD CLAUDIA COUSTAS
CHAPLAIN**



THE “HOPE” COMMITTEE - WHERE DIVERSITY MATTERS

“HOPE” would like to introduce itself to the St Mary’s community. Holding true to its name, Hearing Other People’s Experiences, the committee’s goal is to raise awareness and to encourage our parent community to engage one another in conversations with the purpose of understanding and embracing the very things that define each of us. By doing so, we hope to create a safe space where conversations can take place and diverse voices can be heard; all in the spirit of discovery and acceptance.

Through ongoing communication and informal engagement, HOPE intends to support, inform and align ourselves with the school and its diversity initiatives in our shared vision of helping to create an environment of inclusivity and contentment for all. We are a sub-committee of the PTA and our vision is grounded in the Anglican/Christian identity and aligned with the South African Constitution.

We have some exciting things in the pipeline, so please keep a look out for our news of upcoming activities and events in the school newsletters and on the school app.

To end in the spirit in which we intend to go forward, an excerpt from the book **Confluence** by Piers Cruickshanks: “I know your name but I don’t know your story.”

We look forward to meeting you and hearing your story.

The HOPE committee: chairperson – Melanie Steeneveldt, deputy chairperson - Debbie Lee, PTA representative – Bruce Patience, secretary – Clare Kerchho, marketing – Sarah Quiding and Malwande Dumeko, research – Gaynor Paradza, Junior School liaison – Chola Makgamathe, Other school matters – Melody Giwa-Nyahoda, Di Crossman, Verity Hawarden, Joy Payi-Dhlomo, Fredelene Elie, Buhle Masithela, Deanne King and Sarah Warner.

Below, please find a YouTube video on privilege:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hD5f8GuNuGQ>

FROM THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT

The Sound of Children

The Singing Angels participated in the annual Sound of Children choral event held at the Linder Auditorium on Monday 2 October. The event is sponsored in part by the Apollo Music Trust which aims to make music accessible by funding numerous musical events throughout the year.

This event is a very special one as the girls get to sing alongside other schools such as St Peter's, Kingsmead, Roedean and Auckland Park Preparatory School. The schools are accompanied by the Johannesburg Festival Orchestra, which is conducted by Richard Cock.

The evening also highlights a few young promising soloists who get to perform alongside the orchestra, and these showcases help to inspire our girls. I look forward to seeing one of our budding musicians up on stage next year.

The evening was a great success as music united us and our girls gave a strong message through their musical item:

*You are you, I am me,
celebrate variety.
Let love shine through.*

*You are you, I am me,
rich in our diversity.
Together we make harmony, Yeah!*

Thank you to all the parents, grandparents and special people who supported our girls at this concert.

Please see below for dates to diarise.

CAROL SHUTTE
JUNIOR SCHOOL HEAD OF MUSIC

Dates to diarise:

Date	Time	Event	Venue	
Wednesday 18 October	18h00	Little Saints Sings	The Edge	All Little Saints children
Monday 30 October	18h00	Senior Primary ensemble evening	The Edge	Junior School orchestra



FROM THE FOUNDATION

Love, integrity and community are three founding principles that St Mary's girls and the community uphold. The class of 1987 certainly demonstrated all three of these by gathering to celebrate their 30th-year reunion and paying it forward to the St Mary's Foundation.

"For our class, it was an unforgettable time of laughter, sharing memories, reforging bonds, some tears, lots of champagne and a loud abundance of 80s music.

"Some had not been back for 30 years. What we found was a better school (especially the boarding and facilities like The Edge!), but also each other again, and a rediscovery that we are all an integral part of a wider St Mary's family.

"I am immensely proud of my class for raising more than R30 000 for the Foundation, thus paying it forward." – Tara Turkington, class of 1987.

We are extremely grateful to the class of 1987 for their kindness and generosity in supporting education for young, less-advantaged girls at St Mary's. This gesture will make a contribution to changing the life of a young girl, enabling her to embrace an education and all that St Mary's teachers and facilities are able to offer.

There are currently 28 girls enrolled in St Mary's Senior School who receive financial assistance and who are truly grateful for the opportunity provided to them.

GILLIAN O SHAUGHNESSY
FOUNDATION MANAGER



FUN AT BAROQUE IN THE BUSH

For the second year running, Isabella Desfontaines (Grade 4) and her family attended the wonderful Baroque in the Bush. Unique in the world, this series of classical music concerts has been enjoying great success for many years. Baroque in the Bush takes place at Shingwedzi Camp in the Kruger National Park with several days of marvellous music with Dr Richard Cock and members of the Johannesburg Festival Orchestra (JFO). The midday and evening concerts are supplemented with Richard's amusing and informative talks on the pieces being performed, and the composers who created them.

Isabella described her Baroque in the Bush experience as the experience

of a lifetime. "I had a clarinet lesson from both Tim Roberts (oboist of the JFO) and Richard Cock. The orchestra played the most amazing classical music I have ever heard. It was very inspirational. I was very lucky to go there!" It is a pleasure and a privilege to teach such an inspired and enthusiastic young musician.

CERI MOELWYN-HUGHES
MUSIC TEACHER



Isabella Desfontaines with Richard Cock at Baroque in the Bush 2017



Isabella playing for oboist Tim Roberts



Isabella having a clarinet lesson

FROM THE SPORTS DEPARTMENT



TENNIS

All the St Mary's tennis teams have continued to fare well over the past two weeks. Well done to all the players who played in these league matches. Keep up the commitment and enthusiasm.

Results

28 September

St Mary's A lost to St Stithian's A	37-44
St Mary's B beat St Stithian's B	59-22
St Mary's C beat St Andrew's C	57-6

Well done to all the Grade 4, 5, 6 and 7 players who played in the friendly matches.

CECILE MURRAY
TENNIS COACH



The B tennis team:
From left: Robyn Stainforth, Samantha Pearson, Mahlatse Chocho, Tamsyn Parkes, Anna Patricios, Samantha Faber, Ella Babaya



Isha Madhu, Vicky Dahl, Josie Apps



Jessica Lansdown, Dani Grobbelaar, Georgie Hector

ATHLETICS

On Friday 29 September, St Mary's hosted the athletics meeting and these are the results:

St Mary's	437
St Peter's	356
St Mary's DSG	316
Kingsmead	306

On Friday 6 October, Brescia hosted the athletics meeting and the results were as follows:

St Stithians	456 ½
St Mary's	456
Brescia	318
Kingsmead	317 ½

ANTOINETTE MSHENGU
ATHLETICS COACH