



St Mary's School
Waverley
Founded 1888

WHOLE SCHOOL NEWS

30 April 2021



Tel: 011 531 1800 | info@stmary.co.za | www.stmaryschool.co.za



Mountain view photo taken by Quix during the April school holiday

FROM THE HEAD'S DESK

Welcome back to school, and to a wintery term. As usual the winter uniform of red skirts makes a visual impact.

We begin this term with the co-curricular programme gaining momentum and with mid-year examinations in mind. I want to stress that this should not be a cause for anxiety but rather an opportunity for the girls to show their ability. The focus should be on a sound study routine, a healthy lifestyle and gaining enjoyment from learning. Process is what counts in education rather than product and if the process has been a good one the outcome should be pleasing.

I am pleased to welcome Bronwen Roberts (Senior School), an experienced English teacher and locum Music teacher, Joanne Sequeira (Junior School) to our staff. I also extend a warm welcome to the girls who are new to St Mary's. Unfortunately, it is also for me to announce that Revd Claudia Coustas has resigned from fulltime ministry and the chaplaincy of St Mary's School. Revd Claudia has decided to return to work in the field of Industrial Psychology. Claudia has played a significant role in upholding the Christian Anglican ethos of our school and in providing pastoral care to our community for the past five and a half years. We will say farewell to Claudia after half-term, which is before she leaves us at the end of June.

Lastly, I would like to wish you all a happy Workers' Day tomorrow. May we all take time to reflect on the progressive nature of social justice and the challenges that are faced by working people and the less fortunate in our country which continues to undermine sustainable human development in developing countries.

DEANNE KING
HEAD OF SCHOOL

FROM THE CHAPLAIN

[Jesus] went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, "Do not weep." Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, rise!" The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen among us!" and "God has looked favourably on his people!" This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

-Luke 7:11b-17 (NRSV)

Welcome back to school for the second term of 2021! We return amidst the season of Easter, waiting as the disciples of Christ today, in prayer. Our reading reminds us of Christ's acts and teachings prior to his death and resurrection, as we await his ascension (which the Church celebrates on Thursday 13 May).

A reminder that another way of rendering the intention behind the word "fear", in the Bible reading above, is by the use of the "awe". Our Bible reading thus serves as a reminder to us to come into this new term with an expression of awe at how God has worked in our lives, so that our senses do not dull to the spark of God's presence in each moment of our day. I pray that this term may be one in which we are aware of being inspired by God's Spirit, in the ordinary and the extraordinary, in the difficult moments and in those which are exciting.

I begin this term with a heavy heart, yet with an attendant sense of excitement. These next few weeks mark the end of my journey at St Mary's as chaplain to this community, as on 1 July, I will return to consulting to industry and to the corporate world as an Industrial Psychologist, fulltime. I am already reminded, several times a day, of all that I will miss and that I treasure, within this community.



Photo taken by Quix

REVD CLAUDIA COUSTAS
CHAPLAIN

LESSONS FROM THE ACADEMY

There are many things to celebrate after a long and pleasant April holiday: at school we are all returning physically to campus and to the fun and creativity of an enhanced co-curricular programme for the first time in a year. The national Covid-19 vaccine roll-out is now taking shape. In the creative sphere, South African filmmakers Pippa Ehrlich, James Reed and Craig Foster won the Oscar for Best Documentary Feature at the 93rd Academy Awards on Sunday 26 April.

As South Africans we can all bask in the reflected glory of *My Octopus Teacher*, a "Proudly South African" film conceptualised, produced and edited in South Africa. There are many things to celebrate about this cinematic masterpiece which documents the relationship Foster established with a common octopus in False Bay. The film captures the majesty of South Africa's kelp forests and our spectacular marine landscapes, reminding us of the often-hidden beauty of our country. It reflects on the unexpectedly joyful and poignant interactions between a curious human being and an octopus which turns out to be remarkably playful, resilient and intelligent - not so common after all.

At its heart *My Octopus Teacher* is a film about learning valuable lessons in a rather uncomfortable environment from an unusual teacher. While the chilly and turbulent waters of False Bay might seem to have little in common with the placid suburban context of St Mary's, I hope that the two settings are more alike than they first appear. Many lessons will be taught by the St Mary's teachers this term. Some will take place in conventional classroom settings and others will occur during conversations, mentor groups or chapel services. Some of these lessons might include concepts which are difficult to grasp, intellectually challenging or even discomforting. But often the best learning occurs when we are urged and empowered to leave our comfort zones. Of course, not all the teaching will be done by our expert teachers – as a community we will learn from one another during the many encounters with new ideas and fresh experiences that this term offers. Let us make the most of the wintry weeks which lie ahead.



FELICIA TOBIAS
SENIOR SCHOOL DEPUTY HEAD: ACADEMICS