

2017 HSC HIGH ACHIEVERS ASSEMBLY

PRINCIPAL'S SPEECH

Good afternoon Br Sherrin, College Dux and very special guest speaker, Mr Stuart Ross, Mr Damo, Mr Batchelor, staff, parents and students of St. Pius and our very special guests of honour, the Year 12 2016 HSC High Achievers. Welcome all.

I'd like to take you back to one of the greatest speeches of this school. It is Liam Houlihan's (here today) inaugural speech as College Captain at the Leaders Investiture in October 2015. Liam said:

"Fairy-tales. Everyone loves to hear them. They have dragons. They have knights. They have quests for gold. ...our HSC journey will spark some of the greatest moments. It will be an epic adventure. ... there will be colossal challenges.

These challenges include every test, every early morning wake-up, every late night cram every pop up out-of-nowhere quiz, every single maths class – everything."

Liam was of course referring to his own 2016 HSC group and what prophetic words. These young men have met their HSC challenge brilliantly. They slayed the dragon.

Let me particularly congratulate the 2016 High Achievers on not only their studies but on their involvement in the school. Let me use the College Dux, Stuart Ross as an example. Picture Stuart Ross at first violin in the College Orchestra, as a Duke of Edinburgh Award winner, as a Physics mentor to other students, as an Athletics Silver Award winner and CIS representative for the school. As the academic master of "The Standard Model of Matter". Stewart the College Cultural Prefect and Performing Arts Captain. Stewart, like all these High Achievers, involved himself in every aspect of College life.

You see – it is not about only doing your study but about everything you do. It is about being fully immersed in the community. About giving everything you have. All these High Achievers before you excelled in their chosen endeavours such as Zac Tomaszewski's photographs entitled Coasts nominated for Art Express. Simply amazing. And consider Liam Houlihan's intricate drawings.

The beautiful voice of Nektary Kotlaroff who shared his gift at our liturgies and of course the Twilight Concerts. Nektary is congratulated for his nomination to HSC Encore. For these men gave of their talents as shown on the Sporting Field, the musical and dramatic performances. The extraordinary public speaking and debating skills of Josiah Lising and Keenan Smith. Eucharistic Ministers. Edmund Rice Society. Men for others. Men of leadership such as Captain Liam Houlihan and Vice Captain Nick Parker recently returned United Nations Young Diplomat from the International Tour. Nick and Liam were both Musicians, Athletes, peer support leaders and Edmund Rice Leadership Award winners.

No surprise really to see last year's strong Academic Prefects Kane Eden, Harry Heaney and William Moran are here. Harry trekked the Kokoda Trail with Hamish Book who is here with his fellow 2016 Mission and Identity Prefects who were Hamish Book, Keenan Smith and Josiah Lising. You see - concentrating on your studies complements leadership, cultural pursuits, faith life and of course sport and good healthy exercise.

Look at Morgan Ling here - a true allrounder in study and sport.

From among these High Achievers came the establishment of The St Pius Writers' Club with Declan Warn, Pat McKenzie and Andrew Chiu being founding members. Add to these such great Mathematicians as Sam Calamos, Stuart Ross and Leo Carnivale. And what about here on this very stage where we met Pat McKenzie as Captain Craig! So many musicians and leaders. Matthew Ross, Stuart's equally brilliant twin brother was the Co-Captain of the

Performing Arts as an accomplished musician. Two more of this group - Sean Crotty and Alex Silvanian are both capable musicians who gave much of themselves.

The Robotics experts - Ben Rigby, Adrian Talarico, Kane Eden and Zac Triantafillis. These are also humble men who are quite achievers -generous and genuine men - Francis Cho and Alex Harris.

These men involved themselves in Sport too. Alex Silvanian received a College Blue in Tennis. Kane Eden's outstanding Rugby performances as fly half and winner of the Rugby Club Player of the Year. It was a balanced approach for Mathematician Sam Calamos who played basketball and was awarded an Edmund Rice Leadership Award as a Peer Support leader, Peer mentor and Outdoor Education (Warrumbungles and Snowy Hike). So many of this group did those Hikes too.

Sam is just the tip of the iceberg and an example of the student empowerment team who worked hard to promote well-being. Thanks to, , Jonny Williams, Sam Bronk, Sean Crotty, John Davie, Herman Fung, Kirk Georgian, Zachary Triantafillas, Stewart Ross and Liam Houlihan. All HSC High Achievers and here present.

So, young men of SPX 2017, what do you draw from all this? The HSC is not only about a day by day persistence and commitment to study – it is about giving everything you can to all your school life. Faith, culture, sport, service, leadership and study. Working together with your family, your teachers and your mates.

I congratulate and thank the 2016 HSC High Achievers and indeed all our HSC candidates. Please join with me in acknowledging their achievements.

Know too that you too can achieve great things. You only need to look at our students receiving awards today. I congratulate all our Award recipients for 2016.

Thank you Mr Damo and Mr Casey, the Musicians and Ensembles and the Year 12 2017 Academic Prefects who have hosted today.

Anyone can achieve and receive these recognitions. Aim to make a personal best this year.

Let us all now commit ourselves to give our personal best for 2017 and we ask God's blessings for our Guests of Honour, the 2016 HSC High Achievers as they enter the University Studies and the world beyond.

Go and serve others for God, your community and family – work hard and be faithful to the Gospel.

Fide et Labore!

Mr John Couani
Principal