

JUSTICE LITERARY EVENT SPEECH

Last Wednesday a few members of the years 9, 10 and 11 along with a few girls from Mercy, were lucky enough attend the Edmund Rice Justice Literary event held at Santa Sabina College.

Whilst period one had commenced in school, we were well on the train venturing into the depths of western Sydney lead by the glorious social justice warrior Mr Adrian Brannon.

Apart from some slight navigation issues due to bad map reading from Mercy we got there just on time.

Walking in the door to a wide open gym hall similar to ours, we were quickly overwhelmed by the sea of countless school uniforms from all across Sydney.

The 20 of us took our seats and the rest was history.

Hit by a wave of knowledge and wisdom of the world which I know has deeply influenced me.

The justice literary event is essentially an opportunity for people in the arts to present how themes of social justice, human rights and eco-justice in literature, music song and art can powerfully raise awareness in society, and build the capacity for change.

I'm almost certain that that definition flew in one ear and flew even faster out the other.

It means we don't understand these issues, or we simply don't care.

And that, is plainly unacceptable.

This is exactly why the topic has to be explained.

In my opinion, if you can't explain how something works to a child, you don't understand it well enough.

One of Australia's most famous authors, Mem Fox was one of the many speakers at the event.

She does exactly that, writing picture books for 3 year olds which teach them about racism.

She also said "whoever you are, someone's words, actions, looks, and views may be different, but their heart is the same as yours".

We are all human, born under the same sun, and let free into this vast world which we all live in, where we aren't just neighbours with each other but family members too.

And this is what it comes down to, you men each wearing the crest symbolising this exact idea.

Because whenever call of duty sounds, true hearts don't only take a stand, but defend the rights where culture is required.

Then.

The fact that we live in a world which sleeps at night knowing that people are left to die, because they don't have the money for doctors, it's outrageous.

In a country where the culture of our native Indigenous Aboriginals isn't even recognised in the constitution, but we still pat ourselves on the back for being so multicultural.

We practically kicked down their door, killed most of them for fun, tried to breed them out cause of their skin, and said sorry a hundred years later.

We can't change the past, but wow, we sure can learn from it.

Racism is just a part of the social justice picture.

And if you will all take something away from what I say, is that this world which you are all standing upon, will be that same world you inhabit and deal with till the day you die.

And once you are released from the domains of St Pius, what you have gotten out of the school, everything you've come to be, will be all that you have for the rest of your life.

Boy's get involved, do everything you can to develop your values and make a difference, and if you don't know what to do, just ask.

Because that great wall of values you uphold as a human being doesn't ever tumble, but gets taller, and stronger with others.

Thanks Oli.