



# Lighthouse

Volume 36 Number 4

8 April 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians, Students and Friends of SFX

## WELCOME TO HOLY WEEK

A pandemic certainly provides an interesting backdrop for the most important week of the Church calendar. As we close our borders, businesses, churches and parks, we resign ourselves to a time of deep isolation, uncertainty, vulnerability and potentially great loneliness. Socially, physically and spiritually we are challenged by the need to strip back the trappings of our lives and forced to embrace a different way of being.

The story of Holy Week provides a powerful reflection on the situation we find ourselves in right now. Heralded by the crowds on his arrival in Jerusalem, Jesus' journey takes Him from public accolades, to private assurances at His final meal, to the betrayal of those closest to Him, to being absolutely abandoned and isolated on the cross. Even God appears to have abandoned Jesus in His final hour as He cries, "*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?*" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34). His final, physical entombment is the end of hope...

Yet Jesus emerges... His Resurrection refuses to accept isolation and abandonment. It rejects despair and loneliness. It is a promise of life and hope.

As we move through this Holy Week enshrouded by the unknown, we are assured by Christ's Resurrection that we are never truly alone – that in our darkest moments God walks with us, ready to bring us to salvation. We are also challenged by this story to be people of Resurrection for all those we meet in our lives (even at a socially acceptable distance). We are called as Christians to give witness to the rising of Jesus Christ from the confinement of His tomb – from His absolute isolation to becoming the source of hope for all. We are called to be people of hope in these difficult and challenging times.

## LEARNING IN A NEW FRAMEWORK

I would like to acknowledge the many supportive emails, phone calls and messages that we have received over the last few weeks regarding the transition to online learning environments. We are very grateful that in the midst of such turbulent times, so many people have made the effort to acknowledge the work of the staff here at the College in bringing these necessary changes to fruition. It has been apparent that while the staff tend to share a similar frustration to the students in lamenting the capacity to interact in a real-world environment, both groups have engaged in some truly amazing work over the last few weeks. I have rarely seen so much focussed collaboration and creativity within a school context, and it has been remarkable to witness. I am grateful for the commitment of so many throughout the community (staff, students and families) in making such learning possible.

In general terms the online experience, whilst never the same as being physically present, appears to have been well received by students. Staff remain committed to ensuring that students retain a sense of being connected to the wider College whilst also providing essential learning materials. We have been pleased to see that most students have engaged consistently with lessons and interacted with teachers via the array of communication devices available. We are also thankful for the incredible support of families who are striving to maintain student motivation in less than ideal circumstances.

## TERM TWO

### Commencing Monday April 27, 2020

While nothing has been confirmed at this stage due to the ongoing developments associated with the pandemic, we are anticipating that next term will see a continuation of our current online learning scenario. The College will be open for students who need to attend, but the health advice is likely to suggest that this should only be the case in situations where it is impossible for students to remain at home. As a result, we are anticipating that the vast majority of students at a Stage 6 level will continue their studies at home in an online capacity. Similarly, in keeping with the advice of both state and federal governments, the staff onsite at the College will continue to be significantly reduced to minimise risk.

Our teachers have been preparing for this likelihood and are continuing to enhance their online skills, whilst also developing resources for these modes of delivery. Staff have been encouraged to explore a variety of different techniques in the online environment and will continue to use a number of platforms to engage students. Importantly, teachers will work in the online environment using methodologies that suit their particular style, just as they would in a regular classroom. Regardless of the teaching platforms being employed by individual staff members, it remains crucial that all students are provided with necessary learning materials, given clear direction in how to explore such resources, and continue to be supported through timely feedback on work undertaken. Please be aware that not all lessons will involve direct teacher input, as students need time to complete the set work. Rather, staff members will be available online during such times to assist students in their endeavours. All students should be engaging in their work according to their regular timetables so that good habits are being maintained (even if they do not always check in directly with their teacher in each lesson). If you are concerned about the online learning environment at any stage, please let us know. In saying this, I would ask for your continued patience as we still adjust to what has been a very sudden change to our way of operating.

## ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

One of the most difficult aspects confronting our students at the moment is the unknown. This is particularly true for our Year 12 students who will be hearing and reading a multitude of different perspectives about the HSC.

**Most importantly, all Year 12 students need to realise that the HSC will still occur in 2020.**

Students therefore need to be working consistently, studying, attending online classes and completing all set work.

## YEAR 12 ASSESSMENTS

NESA have now granted permission for schools to restructure their assessment schedules as necessary, and have been steadily releasing information to assist in this process. While not all of the required information has been provided yet, we now have enough details to pass on some basics to all of our students, which we will then expand upon early in Term Two. Assessment schedules are currently being adjusted and will be released once we have the next round of updates from NESA. We need to wait for these updates as they will focus on courses with Major Works, and any variations in these areas are likely to have a further impact on our planning. We are also awaiting updates on VET courses and will provide this information as it is released.

At this stage, NESA have advised schools of changes in a few specific courses including the abandonment of the Group Project in Drama, ensemble work in Music Extension and VET Work Placements.

Further to this, as a College, we have made the decision to **remove most assessments in Term Two with the exception of submission tasks that are already specified in programmes**. Effectively, this will reduce student assessments in most courses (usually from four tasks to three), and we will in turn redistribute the weightings for each task to maintain a relative spread. In many courses, students have fortunately already completed two assessment tasks, so they will now only have one to complete in Term Three (this will be the 'Trials' for most courses).

We are hoping, through this process, to reduce some of the stress on our students in their home environment next term, at a time when they do not have consistent personal access to their teachers. We are aware that this would have placed a significant burden on families to support the students. As a result of this determination, the other tasks will now carry a slightly higher weighting than previously anticipated, but we believe that this is a lesser concern given the already considerable pressures related to home study. It should be noted that the work associated with the formal assessment tasks normally occurring in Term Two, will still be covered within the context of regular teaching.

Once NESA have confirmed any further variations to courses with Major Works, we will provide students with an online version of their new course schedules. If you have any concerns or questions please contact your course teacher, the relevant Studies Co-ordinator or Mr Mulhearn (Dean of Studies).

## YEAR 11 ASSESSMENTS

In a similar way, we have made a determination to **remove all non-submission style tasks from the Year 11 Assessment schedule in Term Two**. This will have a significant impact on the assessment schedules for Year 11, who will now only have one or two formal tasks in most courses. The significant difference in Year 11 is that we are only required to send to NESAs an A-E grade for each student rather than an actual mark. These grades are always awarded based on the professional judgement of the individual teacher and are derived from a combination of both formal and informal assessment. This will not change this year. It is important to note that all work undertaken in Year 11 directly influences the awarding of the final A-E Rosa Grade, not just the formal assessment tasks.

Reporting in Year 11 will be reviewed, with the mid-course report reflecting an A-E grade, based on formal and informal tasks that have been undertaken. There will be no mark on this report. The final course report will once again display an A-E grade, and is likely to be accompanied by a final examination result and rank in each course. It is important to remember that marks in Year 11 do not carry over into Year 12, so overall learning remains our main focus with this year group.

## SCHOOL FEES

The Director of Schools, Mr Gerard Mowbray, sent a message via Compass to all families last week regarding school fees and support. Please ensure that you take the time to read his update. As a College we reaffirm our commitment to support all families who are in need of assistance.

## A FINAL WORD

Thank you once again for your exceptional support of our College. It has been a genuine privilege during this challenging period, to work in a community that clearly values and honours the importance of relationships. I hope that you have a restful and safe holiday period.

May God bless.

Greg Ptolemy  
Principal



# Wellness and Wellbeing

## The Show Must Go On!

‘Wellbeing’ has been the word on everyone’s lips. Whether this is staff, student or family Wellbeing, it is something that all members of the community are promoting and protecting.

The staff and students at St. Francis Xavier’s College have been promoting Wellbeing by offering community building activities throughout the College.



‘One Song Sing at SFX’ is a recent initiative that has been adapted from similar programs from the wider community. The premise of the program is for anyone to turn up to an allocated location at a certain time, and in a community bonding exercise, sing a popular song as a communal choir. The participants receive a copy of the lyrics and pending numbers, are allocated a harmony to sing. Once the song is complete, in true flash-mob style, everyone returns back to their normal routines. The idea is that you don’t need to be a great singer or mover but must enjoy a good sing-along. The outcome is to lift the spirits of a group of people all working together. And in this case, belting out a song.

The first ‘One Song Sing’ was scheduled for Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April in the College Main Yard during the lunch time break. Unfortunately, due to the current restrictions on non-essential gatherings and added restrictions put on schools, the event was on the brink of being postponed. However, through the powers of ZOOM Meeting technology, the first ‘One Song Sing’ was still a raging success. Staff and students received an email with an access code to a ZOOM Meeting with clear instructions of a time, to ‘dress up’

in groovy outfits and be prepared to sing their hearts out. With 50 participants for the first meeting, the lyrics to “I’m Gonna Be (500 Miles)” by The Proclaimers was belted out from people’s offices and homes on Friday afternoon. The joy on the participants faces when they saw everyone else singing along was truly uplifting. The St. Francis Xavier community will continue with the program in this formation next term and for the duration of the isolation period until when we can all meet again and chant a popular song in person.

Luke Baker  
Wellbeing Coordinator



# MOCK TRIAL



## Round 1 v Merewether High School

Round 1 was underway on Monday, 16 March at NewSpace Mock Court Room in Newcastle, where we were required to defend a charge of dangerous driving occasioning grievous bodily harm against the accused, Ariel Lauder (Emma Dwyer).

*Miss Lauder had been on her way to a business meeting when she took a wrong turn. Pausing to check directions, she collided with a motor scooter as she executed a U turn from the kerb. The victim suffered serious injuries.*

Our case, based on clear, accurate and consistent evidence from witnesses Emma Dwyer and Clair Broad, was that Miss Lauder had driven negligently, but not dangerously.

Our barristers Mitchel Tapera and Angus O'Connor were well briefed by trial solicitor Jacqui Dorian and argued our case impressively.

The magistrate was assisted most efficiently by Court Officer, Sara Muscat.

Unfortunately Miss Lauder was convicted, but we were able to win the points and the round 205 to 195. Well done to the team! Miss Lauder is yet to be sentenced.

Tony Stone  
HSIE Coordinator





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\* many Centrelink payments are eligible, please contact your local Coordinator for more information.

Saver Plus is an initiative of the Brotherhood of St Laurence and ANZ, delivered in partnership with Berry Street, The Benevolent Society and The Smith Family and other local community agencies. The program is funded by ANZ and the Australian Government Department of Social Services. Go to [www.dss.gov.au](http://www.dss.gov.au) for more information.

**Contact**  
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# ENROLMENTS FOR YEAR 11, 2021

## *Now Open*

### St Francis Xavier's College Hamilton



To apply for  
2021 Enrolment  
into Year 11

Please email

[admin@hamilton.catholic.edu.au](mailto:admin@hamilton.catholic.edu.au)

with the following information and an enrolment package will be posted to you.



- ✓ Student's Name
- ✓ Student's Current School
- ✓ Parent/s, Carer/s Name/s
- ✓ Parent/s, Carer/s postal address including post code
- ✓ Parent/s, Carer/s mobile phone number
- ✓ Parent/s, Carer/s email address



### St Francis Xavier's College

Address: 286 Parkway Avenue, Hamilton  
Office: Hebburn Street, Hamilton  
Postal: PO Box 300, Hamilton NSW 2303  
Telephone: (02) 4961 2863  
Email: [admin@hamilton.catholic.edu.au](mailto:admin@hamilton.catholic.edu.au)  
Web Site: [www.hamilton.catholic.edu.au](http://www.hamilton.catholic.edu.au)

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#### Switch/Reception

Hours: 8:00 am until 3:30 pm

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#### Finance Office

Hours: 8:30 am to 3:00 pm  
Email: [hml-finance@mn.catholic.edu.au](mailto:hml-finance@mn.catholic.edu.au)

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#### Student Services

Hours: 8:00 am until 3:15 pm  
Telephone: (02) 4961 2110  
Email: [hml-studentservices@mn.catholic.edu.au](mailto:hml-studentservices@mn.catholic.edu.au)

*All student related phone calls can be made directly to the Student Services.  
If the phone is unattended please leave a message.*

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#### Uniform Shop

Telephone: (02) 4962 4423  
Email: [stfrancisxaviers@alinta.com.au](mailto:stfrancisxaviers@alinta.com.au)

**Uniform Shop opening hours during school terms are:**  
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