

## 2020 HSC HIGH ACHIEVERS ASSEMBLY

Good morning Br Sherrin, our College Dux and very special guest speaker, Mr John McKinnon, Members of the College Board, Mr Damo, Ms Janes, Mr Batchelor, staff, parents and students of St. Pius and our very special guests of honour, the Year 12 2019 HSC High Achievers. Welcome all.

I offer apologies from Mr Masters to the 2019 HSC group. He is on leave this year but especially contacted me to offer you his sincere congratulations and best wishes for the future.

The last time we gathered formally here in the Concourse was last year at the Year 12 Graduation and I spoke in honour of the class of 2019. Do you remember that I followed Tim McLaughlan's example and used a "word of the week" to describe 2019 Year 12? Do you remember the word that I used? "Unforgettable". You forgot didn't you.



**On that day I said this of them:**

But what has St Pius X College prepared you for?

In truth it must prepare you for a life ahead where you can contribute in service to the community and your family. Not for yourself but for the betterment of others. Not to be selfish and self-centered but to actively promote a better and more just Australia that is an Inclusive Community with Justice and Solidarity for the most needy founded on a Gospel Spirituality through Faith and Hard Work with true respect and dignity for all. No sense of entitlement but a social conscience to give back. To walk the walk.



**Their success in the HSC was no fluke and no surprise. They truly worked for it and they deserve the outstanding results they received. They have already begun their journey into their future. They are on the doorstep of their new future.**

**I do especially congratulate these 2019 High Achievers on not only their studies but on their involvement in the school. And they are humble in their success. Let me use the College Dux, John McKinnon as an example. He is a truly humble quiet achiever.**

**John worked at his HSC every day. John paced his studies and his results were beyond belief. We all thought he would do well but we had no idea just how well. He achieved first in State in Chinese Beginners and with an ATAR of 99.05, John deservedly is the College Dux. Absolutely outstanding! And so are they all.**

**I will leave a fuller description of their many achievements for Mr Damo to outline but among our HSC 2019 High Achievers you see very familiar names and faces. Some who can be here and some who have started their life with University, industry, ADFA and the like.**

**So what is the message here for you – without doubt it is about hard work and study but it is actually about everything you do. It is about being fully immersed in the community. About giving everything you have. Through this you develop in every way. It is working with your teachers to make the most of the opportunities that your parents provide for you. So many outstanding teachers. For me to highlight one teacher would be at the expense of another. I thank them all.**

**The HSC at St Pius is not only about a day by day persistence and commitment to study. It's about becoming a better person - faith, character, culture, sport, service, leadership and study. Working together with your family, your teachers and your mates.**

**Your learning each day and the learning tasks for completion build one block upon another. I congratulate and thank the 2019 HSC High Achievers and indeed all our HSC candidates. Please join with me in acknowledging their achievements.**

**School is certainly about learning in every way but it is not only about the HSC. I want to recall the question that I posed at Mass on Tuesday:**

## ***What do we stand for at St Pius X College?***

**I have reflected on this a great deal this week. The question is really about our school culture. What do we believe and do we live it out?**

*The answers lie in part in our motto - Fide et Labore - Faith and Hard Work. The answer is also in our core values of respect, justice, opportunity and excellence where we demonstrate and foster respect for all, true acceptance of difference, social justice and an awareness of injustice and we speak up, indigenous reconciliation, we do not accept intolerance and pride but promote inclusion, acceptance, understanding and humility. We promote an acceptance of sexuality, strive for genuine gender equity, respect for all and we value learning.*

**I said at Mass and repeat -** *We are no better than anyone else but we do strive to build a better world and make a positive difference. Let our actions, yours and mine, exemplify our faith, values and beliefs. Let us do what we say. No hypocrisy but true respect and value for the dignity of all.*

**Let all of us commit and renew, refresh our determination to be the best we can. This means how we speak of and to each other, how we treat girls and women, how we respect others and ourselves, our welcome for those with a disability and demonstrate our attitudes to people of different race, religion and beliefs. An Inclusive Community prioritises kindness, compassion and gratitude, promotes respect for each other's uniqueness and differences.**



**There are so many of our students from Year 8-12 receiving awards today and I am also so proud of each of you. For every student here, know too that you too can achieve great things. You only need to look at our students receiving awards today. I congratulate all today's Award recipients.**

**For 2020, the clear focus for all students:**

- **Study hard, work persistently and eliminate distractions (eg social media, off task technology)**
- **Improve your writing**
- **Get fully immersed in school life**
- **And above all show respect and kindness to everyone you come in contact with.**

**I say this at every Awards Ceremony and I repeat it 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 2020 and we ask God's blessings for our Guests of Honour as they enter the University Studies and the world beyond.**

**Go and serve others, make a positive difference in our world.**

**Work hard and keep the faith.**

***Fide et Labore!***