

**Student Leadership Investiture**  
**24<sup>th</sup> October 2016**  
**MR JOHN COUANI'S SPEECH**

Br Paul, Mr Casey, Mr Masters, Br Sherrin, special invited guests, parents, students and Year 12 2017 – Good afternoon all.

I won't ask you to put your hand up but for those who have visited my office – not all for bad reasons too I might add - you might recall that there is a word I have in timber letters in a very prominent spot.

Can any of you recall what that word is?

It is **DIGNITY**.

I wonder what people think when they see that word in my office. Rarely – if ever – has anyone asked. Let me tell you that it is there to remind me of the Dignity of every person I meet. To respect their dignity, to acknowledge that they are a reflection of God's love and that my goal is to contribute to building their dignity, self-esteem, learning, and well-being. In how I speak to them and of them.

You are all aware that I have recently been to India and that I met with many leaders from Edmund Rice Educational Communities world-wide. I visited some of the poorest yet most vibrant places in India. While they may have been poor in material terms, their spirit and personal being was in every way the same as mine (and yours). Circumstances and God's providence have placed all of us in a most privileged and affluent position - living in Australia and being educated at St Pius X College.

We are in a position of great opportunity. The opportunity to learn and achieve to our potential. Students in Australia and more specifically here at St Pius X College can complete their HSC with the real prospect of further education, training and employment. Year 12 it is for you to make the most of your God given talents and the opportunity given you by your parents and the school.

The final year of your education at St Pius X College should be one where you give everything you can. Your maturity in approach to study, leadership and service should now shine. It is for you to think about others in the service of your leadership. So what will make your group as unique? How will your leadership be characterised.

I urge you with today's very reading from St Paul to the Ephesians: St Paul says

*"Be kind to one another, compassionate,  
forgiving one another as God has forgiven you...  
So be imitators of God.....  
now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light."*

In every way you are a group with incredible talent which will follow our fine tradition in the school. A balance of intellect, culture, sporting and spirit with the potential to succeed in all aspects of our school. Your group is unique.

I congratulate every student in Year 12 2007 and pledge not only my support of all staff of the College. To the Leadership Team lead by:

**Captain:** Joseph Unwin  
**Vice Captains:** Angus Dingley and Daniel Butler  
**House Captains:** Barron – Joshua Thrum  
Purton - Daniel Greenland  
Rice - Sam John  
Treacy - Brodie Jones  
**Prefects:** Dermott Beattie, Rory Beattie, Jacob Crisafulli,  
Alex Graffeo, Matthew Hall, Andrew Jackson,  
Peter Maniatis, William Maniatis, Anthony Maras,  
Nathaniel Panozzo, Alec Vinci and Daniel Warren

I pray that your leadership enriches the life of the College and supports each student in Year 12 and throughout the student body. Your leadership must be characterised by service, compassion, humility and care for others. Build school spirit and take special care for those in most need. Work hard, learn and keep the faith.

As I have said, all Year 12 are leaders and there are opportunities for all of you to do this not only in formal peer support and mentoring, interactions with other students, being the leading learners, in community days such as Founders Day in outreach projects and school representative honours but especially by your daily example. Every Year 12 student has received a leadership Badge today and every one received a Year 12 Tie. Wear them proudly and lead the school well.

Year 12 2017, congratulations as you embark on this journey through the HSC as the school celebrates its 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year in 2017. Respect and build the dignity of every person you are in contact with. I wish you every success and blessing as you lead this great school.