

Laureate Assembly Speech

Thank you, Fr Matthew,

Good morning all staff, students, parents, friends, and guests.

I know many of you here will be wondering about the meaning of today's assembly – the laureate assembly. You might not even know what laureate means. Well, a laureate is “a person who is honoured with an award for outstanding creative or intellectual achievement”. It has roots to the awards given in Ancient Greece, when winners were congratulated with a laurel being placed on top of their head. A laurel is a symbol of triumph, victory, and achievement. Today we celebrate the amazing achievements of students throughout the year and recognise the priceless contributions they have made for our school community. Our school community which is the epitome of diversity, diligence, and devotion. The diversity in which we have the widest range of cultures, all being able to flourish in the school and feel comfortable and welcomed. The diligence in which breeds attentiveness and studiousness in students, offering us the means to develop an impeccable work ethic. The devotion in which we have with our service for the school, and one another, in prayer and in ensuring we are all vibrant members of the community, being punctual and proud of the ways we present ourselves.

The awards given out today reflect upon many different talents of students, varying from their service to the school community, their leadership, sport achievements and commitments, or their outstanding academic performances. These awards directly relate to our Dominican four pillars of prayer, service, community, and study. Students with exemplary applications of the four pillars throughout their school life and beyond are sought out to be congratulated. We as a school aim to recognise these students because as they excel in their respective fields, they are role models for all of you here today, forming the unique embodiment of our school identity. But in being recognised one must not become complacent, as the saying “don't rest on your laurels” is God's precaution to us. Shoot for the stars and keep looking forward in how all of you can make yourself that little bit greater.

Although many of you here may not be receiving an award, I want you to all know that you have something, something that sets you apart. The range of talents at our school is what makes us so amazing. We're all skilled and we probably all deserve an award, but I'm sure you don't want to be here until Christmas. 2018 is the year of youth so what better year is there to set yourself apart? We are the future, and we all hold an astonishing amount of potential, a potential so exciting that you decide the true extent of it. One thing we mustn't do is throw it all away. I, for one, amidst the business of 2018 have actually left my part time job – at Maccas albeit - so that I can really push myself this year not only in my study but for my service to Blacks as head prefect. Although I have made this rather large compromise for school, there are so many small sacrifices everyone here could make to make your achievements here that much more fulfilling. Instead of hopping on fortnite after school why don't you smash that maths homework out that is due first thing the next day? Those Saturday mornings spent in bed until dinner is served? Put your name down for a co-curricular and have fun! Whether it be footy or chess, there's always a spot for you. It's all about applying yourself and doing your best, the rest will be history.

The comradery here at Blacks – “once a black's boy, always a black's boy” is solidified with the connections we make between our class mates. In amongst these awards being handed out the true meaning of our journey through this fine school is the fun we have and the friendships we create. Friendships that will undoubtedly last generations.

For those students sitting here in the crowd that will be here for years to come, I urge you to aspire and work at whatever makes you happy and push to be the best that you can be. These awards seek to recognise you and as Henry Ford once said, "If you think you can or think you can't, you're right", so just believe in yourself! It may be you coming up here, being recognised and applauded for your hard work, talents, leadership, and creativity one day.

Thank you