



Many Minds

One Heart

# Our Lady of Lourdes School

## Dardanup

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## ***End of Year Awards Night and Year 6 Graduation Principal's Report – 29 November 2018***

Good evening and welcome to our End of Year Celebration, Awards night and Year 6 Graduation. I am so happy to be here with you all tonight. When I was first diagnosed 6 weeks ago, one of our Year 6 students said to his Mum, 'What about our Graduation? Will Mrs Hegney be able to come to that?' It has been one of my goals to try and make it here tonight. Thank you for your support so far in my cancer journey. I had surgery five weeks ago and started chemotherapy last week, with 7 treatments to go, two weeks apart. I appreciate the prayers and kind wishes, it really helps! I look forward to finishing treatment and being back to full health hopefully early next year, after I get over this speed bump in the road of life.

Thank you to Fr Wayne for our presiding over our Liturgy tonight and special thanks to our Choir, under the guidance of Miss Barbera, for delighting and entertaining us with their beautiful singing. Our choir has worked hard towards preparing for several performance opportunities throughout the year, including our school ANZAC day service, MJR assembly, other assembly performances and on the big stage at the Bull and Barrel festival. They just keep getting better and better! Please join me in congratulating them again.

It is hard to believe we are at the end of another school year, and are saying farewell to another group of much-loved students as they continue their educational journey to high school. Tonight is tinged with sadness but also with optimism and excitement as we await what the future holds for our senior students and their families. This year we have 14 families leaving our OLOL community as their youngest child finishes their primary school education. Some of these families have been with us for as many as 15 years as they have had several children progress through our school. We sincerely thank them for their contribution to the life of our school over their time with us. Our school is a better place due to their presence and involvement. As Nelson Henderson said, "Happy are those who plant trees under whose shade they will never sit" – you may not reap the rewards of the work you did while you were here, but future students and families will hopefully appreciate your contribution.

Once again, it has been another incredibly busy year, with many achievements and accomplishments of which we can be very proud. The year began with a Welcome Mass under the trees near our amazing Nature Play Area. This was a lovely way to begin the school year together in prayer, and finishing with a picnic tea and lots of catching up. This was also the beginning of our Sacramental Program for the year. With Fr Wayne going away for his well-earned long service leave later in the year, we managed to fit (or should I say 'squash') our entire three sacramental programs into the first semester of the year. We really missed Father while he was away and welcomed him back a couple of weeks ago. It was with great excitement that we recently received the news that the Bishop has appointed him to continue to lead our Parish and school faith communities for another 6 years. We are so pleased that he will be continuing to build on the good work he has started, and we offer him our love and assurance of ongoing support.

In March we officially blessed and opened our Nature Play area, with a prayer service and cutting of a massive ribbon with giant scissors. This was a well-attended evening, and was a good opportunity to celebrate and thank all who contributed to our community engagement project and celebrate what we achieved together. I think you will agree, what we have achieved to support creative play for our students with minimal budget and maximum involvement is a credit to our community. We also commemorated 25 years since the expansion of our school from the original red-brick school house. In 2020 we will celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our school, with plans being made next year for celebrations at the beginning of the following year. Please let us know if you would like to help out on a planning committee.

We celebrated two significant days in collaboration with our friends at Dardanup Primary School – Harmony Day and NAIDOC Day. This collaboration remains an important part of our community involvement which also extends to our P&F involvement in the local Art Spectacular and the Bull and Barrel Festival, and our contribution towards the community ANZAC Day celebrations. We are also fortunate to be able to promote our school events and activities in the local Dardy Times each month.

In May, we celebrated Mother's Day with a Mass, power point presentation and special treat morning tea and raffles in the Thomas Little Hall. So many Mums, Grandmas and other Mothering figures were able to join us. For the first time this year, we held a Father's Day breakfast which exceeded our expectations with so many Dads and Grand-dads attending and joining in a very competitive Kahoot Quiz. We plan to continue both of these activities next year.

With our factions named last year, honouring historical role models, we held a Faction Fun Day each term to build team spirit and encourage student leadership. Our Senior students certainly took this on as a way of showing great leadership. They organised pizza and juice orders each term, set up faction flags and organised fun activities for their groups during lunch time. The team spirit that has been growing was evident at our Sports Carnival this term. Congratulations to Finnegan for being the champion faction this year.

Involvement with other schools continued this year with staff collaboration and professional learning with St Mary's in Bunbury and St Michael's in Brunswick. The annual Winter Carnival with St Mary's Donnybrook and St Michaels was a great day of football, netball and soccer with many of our ex-students coming back to umpire. Our inter school athletics carnival was another fantastic day of great sportsmanship and competition. Our Year 6 students combined with other schools for Leonardo Day, celebrating Science learning and together with Dardanup Primary School, we participated in 'Count us in', singing together at the same time as other schools across the country.

Our school was asked to prepare a submission for 'Banners on the Terrace' to represent the local area of Dardanup in the banner display on St George's Terrace. Our design was on display for a month and has now been returned to the Shire.

We had a number in Incursions and Excursions, such as Dino World, Kaboom Toons, Steve Heron Author, World of Maths, Constable Care, Scitech, a visit to Treendale Wood Gallery, Ngilgi Caves, and the BCC production of 'Beauty and the Beast'. Highlights again this year were the Year 6 adventure camp and Year 5 MJR Surf camp. We had Science Day and Italian Afternoon and we entered two teams in the Optiminds creative and critical thinking challenge. We are lucky to have so many opportunities to take learning out of the classroom. We also had class Assemblies, Book Week Assembly and costume parade, MJR Assemblies each term and our annual Fun Run. We were successful in receiving Sporting Schools grants again for clinics and resources in soccer, Australian rules football and netball.

A highlight for this year was being recognised by Catholic Education WA in being awarded a LEAD Award for Excellence in the Learning area for our STEM initiative. We are very proud of this award. It is amazing to be acknowledged by our system for excellence in learning, as we have worked hard to develop Science as a specialist learning area and integrate Design Technologies as well. The award was presented at a special

breakfast in Perth, and as well as a certificate and trophy, included \$4000 to continue our initiative in the school.

Our P&F Executive had another busy, successful year, with many community building and fundraising events which led to generous contributions towards school resources. A highlight each year is the Disco. Other events include supporting our Nature Play opening with tea, coffee and ice-creams, Mother's Day morning tea, Dardanup Art Spectacular, fruit platters on Fun Run day, setting up and cleaning up for Sacramental celebrations, Father's Day Raffle, Father's Day breakfast, Bull and Barrel Parking and 'Sweet Landings' game, morning tea and lunch for Sports Carnival, morning tea for the staff on World Teachers Day, Movie Night and Christmas raffle. The money raised this year contributed significantly towards our library upgrade with much-needed shelves replaced and updated and modernising with some cool furniture, cushions and mats. Our library is a colourful, inviting resourceful space for our students to use to support their learning. Each year, the P&F provide for teacher 'wish-lists' of resources for classrooms, contributions towards the Year 6 and Year 5 camps, Bibles as gifts for leaving students and usually anything else that they are asked to support. This year, the P&F supported the purchase of iPads for teachers to use to help with their integration of the digital technologies curriculum. Without the ongoing dedication of our P&F and contribution towards school projects and resources, as well as the building up of community through social events and involvement in the local community events, our school would not be the same. Our dedicated, hard-working executive, Yvette Duane, Kirsty Frontino and Jenelle Commisso have come to the end of their term. Together with Tania Barnes, who moved to Perth earlier in the year, Emma Tyrrell as Board representative among other duties, and Alison O'Rourke taking care of uniforms, they have worked tirelessly this year. We sincerely thank the executive and everyone else who contributed throughout the year. Not only through the P&F, we also had volunteers for busy bees, Book Club, excursions, classroom help and sporting events. We could not do without this valuable contribution to the life of OLOL. Thank you, one and all.

Our school Board embarked on a building project this year to provide safer toilet facilities for our students. This project was completed in September and was fully funded by the school. The Board are currently seeking a change in registration status for our school from the Minister for Education to add another year level being a three-year-old kindergarten, planned to commence during next year, once we get our registration. I would like to thank Graham Parton for 6 years of dedicated service to the School Board. During his time on the Board, he has been a trusted sounding board for me, always willing to go above and beyond, for example data collecting for parking surveys, spending days on the whipper snipper or sander in the nature play area, deck building, a willingness and interest to be on a finance sub-committee and input on two strategic plans. He is a good contributor at meetings and a kind friend to all. Together with partner, Donna, and two daughters Allegra and Florinda, they have been an important part of the OLOL community for the last 14 years. We wish them well as they leave our community as Florinda graduates from primary school tonight. Thank you to all our Board members, who are continuing in their leadership roles next year. I appreciate the time and dedication they give to their roles and look forward to working with them again next year, and also look forward to welcoming our two new members, who were announced at the Annual School Community meeting last week.

Our school was audited this year, which was a through process involving a visit from CEWA representatives who checked through all our school policies and procedures. I am happy to say that we had a very positive outcome from the audit process, with only a few minor follow-up actions. The financial audit process has been centralised with all Catholic schools now using the same auditing company. Together with a change in school accounting structures, this has been a huge learning curve, and I thank Leanne Depiazzi for her work in this area.

Being in my third year as Principal at OLOL, I was due to take part in a Principal Review process. This is part of my ongoing professional learning and growth as well as system and school accountability. Once again, CEWA representatives visited the school for two days and spoke with me, staff, Board and P&F representatives before making their recommendation that my contract be renewed for a further 5 year term, which I am very happy about.

The Board, P&F Executive, Staff and other interested community members have been involved in Strategic Planning this year, looking at planning for the next 3 years, setting goals and looking at the future direction for our school.

Our school goals this year were once again based around the Catholic Education Strategic direction of LEAD, with continuation of best practice in literacy dedicated time and the teaching and assessment of reading, an ongoing focus on Science incorporating Design Technology, integrating the Digital Technologies curriculum into all learning areas, exploring feedback and improvement processes for teachers and structuring the MJR program so greater opportunity exists for students to reflect on their faith development around the belief that we are the image of Jesus to all around us.

Next year, the teaching staff are participating in 'The Literacy Collective' professional learning, which is a literacy based, whole school approach based on the work of Dr Lyn Sharratt, highlighting best practice in Literacy Dedicated Time, explicit Learning Intentions and Success Criteria, Instructional walks, data focus and shared responsibility for all student learning. We are joining with other south-west schools for this learning and are very excited to have Lyn's wisdom to draw upon, as we work together with a common goal. You will notice a change in the structure of our pupil-free days next year. Twice in the year there will be two consecutive pupil free days. This is to enable Lyn to travel from Canada to present to south-west staff.

We would like to acknowledge and thank staff members who are leaving us. Thank you to Caroline Scott, Education Assistant across a few classes and learning areas. Caz was always willing to help out wherever needed throughout the school. Addy Godwin is leaving us after 11 years of dedicated service, teaching middle and upper primary classes and taking on various other roles over the years. She will be missed as she takes on a full time teaching position at BCC. Sandra Hearne is also leaving to take up a full-time position at BCC. Sandra has been teaching Music to all year levels for a number of years and we thank her for sharing her love of Music with our students and for the wonderful Music assemblies. We wish them all well in their new roles.

I would like to show appreciation for the efforts of all our staff throughout the year. We are blessed with a dedicated group who are always prepared to put in the effort to prepare learning experiences for our students that challenge and support them, taking into account best practice, current educational theories and incorporating new technology and innovation. Reporting on the Digital Technologies curriculum for the first time this year was a challenge embraced by the staff, who met regularly before school to share knowledge and help each other at Techy Brekkys. We enjoy supporting each other, and whether it is by bringing cakes for each other on birthdays, baking for morning tea as a form of weekend procrastination, being in a Friendship quilt group together, playing sport, meeting up after school for coffee or on weekends for a walk, or dressing up for a Murder Mystery night, we are there for each other, and this collegiality extends to our work life.

I extend my thanks to Leanne Depiazzi and Clair Panetta in the office. I acknowledge that the work load seems to increase as the years go by and we struggle through some busy times. Thank you to my Assistant Principals, Jenny Maslin and Luke Vine for their attention to detail and behind the scenes work this year. I thank them for their ongoing support. I would also like to sincerely thank Mrs Jo Paini for stepping in at short notice and leaving behind her school in Busselton during a very busy time of the year to act as Principal in my absence. It made a huge difference in my recovery from surgery and the progression of my treatment knowing that the school was in Jo's capable hands.

We will start next year with 204 students, with the expectation of increasing that number with the introduction of Pre-Kindergarten as the year progresses. It is always a privilege to interview new families and I ask what brought them to explore enrolment at OLOL, and mostly it is because they know of someone who attends, or have heard good things about our community. This reputation is something of which we can be very proud.

To our Year 6 students, there are only 21 of you here tonight, but it is quality not quantity that we are celebrating. You have been great role models for our school, particularly during this year. It has become a tradition at OLOL that our senior students assist with a work of art displayed in the school, as something to leave behind in their final year of primary school. This year, it is a series of canvas pieces, depicting memorable elements of their school journey, arranged around a school crest in a rainbow of colour. It is on display permanently in the school hall, and is a bright reminder of their time with us. Check it out when you are next in the hall.

For some of you, tonight is the end of an eight year journey through Primary School. Some of you have been coming here for even longer than that, as you had older brothers and sisters attend OLOL before you. You have experienced lots of learning, inside and outside of the classroom environment. You have learnt to read and write, count, add, subtract, multiply, divide, measure, and countless other things. More particularly over the last few years you have learned how to observe and record your observations, how to create, how to get along with each other and you have come to understand the importance of taking care of our world. Over the years, as you worked and played, you have experienced joy and disappointment. Through all these experiences you have come to be the people you are today. You have developed the foundations here in primary school upon which your future learning will be built.

I first met you when you were in Year 4, and I noted the way you had a real drive to learn and you guided and pushed each other to strive in your learning. I know this has continued in your last years of primary schooling and will assist you in your transition to high school. It is my sincere hope that you feel ready to cope with the transition from the familiar faces and surrounds of OLOL to the new routines, teachers and classmates of your high schools.

I feel confident that you are ready because I know the good work that all your teachers have done to support you over many years. I have seen the great leadership you have shown and I got to see you first hand managing yourselves at two camps, last year's surfing camp and this year's adventure camp. The encouragement and support you gave to each other (and scared staff tackling the big swing! – remember Mr Vine's 'singing'!!) are very good signs that you are ready for new challenges.

This is a nostalgic night for parents, too, particularly for our 14 families who are with us at an end of year celebration at OLOL for the last time. Being a parent myself, I know first hand how quickly the years seem to pass in a blur of homework, sports training, dance lessons, washing, messy rooms, birthday parties, drop-offs, pick-ups, uniforms, tears and laughs. Being a parent these days is harder than ever with social media and the connectedness of our world that we didn't have to deal with as teenagers. I encourage our parents to remain interested in your child's friends, engage actively with their learning and remain firm in your modelling of values to your children. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "What lies behind us and what lies before us are small matters compared to what lies within us." Know that all that you have instilled in your child through your love and example will guide them on the right path.

Thank you to all our Year 6 students. We are so proud of you! Saying goodbye to a great bunch of students is hard, but we know you are ready and we wish you every success for high school and beyond.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all our students, who are the reason why we are here tonight. Each and every child plays a part in the fabric of OLOL, and I thank all of our students for giving meaning to our vibrant tapestry. Whether it be being given a cup of 'coffee' in the mud kitchen by a pre-primary child, listening to reading in Year 1, students bringing good work to show, getting a high five from a Year 6 student after going on the 'big swing' at camp, or the smile of a certificate recipient when they notice that Mum is there to see them receive their award, there are so many memorable moments in the life of our

school. We are so blessed to be sharing this educational journey together. I thank God every day for the gift of leading our community.

I am so grateful to have the opportunity to acknowledge our students tonight and to conclude the year in prayer and celebration with all of you.

I wish you all a festive season filled with joy, family and friends, happy holidays, safe travels and time to recharge. I look forward to seeing you back at OLOL in 2019.

Thank you

Angela Hegney  
Principal