



Collecting their NSC transcripts on 3 January: Katleho, Rethabile, Njabulo, Katlego, Veneka, Shreya

FROM THE HEAD'S DESK

Welcome back to school! To our new families, a warm welcome to St Mary's.

It is always reassuring to begin the year with the knowledge that the matric results of the previous year were excellent. I congratulate the class of 2018 on their achievements both as a group and as individuals. The bar has been raised by them.

There has been much review and discussion in the media since the release of matric results, with many attempts to identify the contributing factors that create an environment of excellence. Most educational experts will agree that it is the organisation and functionality of a school that create a context of effective teaching and learning. At St Mary's, our teachers pay attention to time on task, preparation, detailed feedback and high expectations. In addition, knowledge of the individual pupils and good relationships with pupils also adds to academic success. The girls at St Mary's excel because all facets of education are valued. These aspects include: foundational literacies (the application of core skills to everyday tasks); competencies (the way in which the girls approach complex challenges) and character qualities (how the girls approach their changing environment).

The celebration of matric results often focuses on the top candidates and we certainly are very proud of the girls who achieve excellence

and mentions as top candidates nationally. We are also in a privileged position as a school where all our girls achieve enviable results. The celebrations of teachers, however, are often about the achievements of individuals who despite personal difficulties and learning barriers have overcome challenges to achieve bachelor's degree passes. Worthwhile achievements also include those girls who have been fully involved in the co-curricular programme, which has demanded significant time and commitment over and above their studies and yet they excel academically.

I welcome the following teachers to St Mary's and I look forward to the unique contribution that they will bring to our academic programme: Learning Facilitator, Ms Simone Braude; Life Sciences, Mr Michael Harvey; and History, Dr Fabio Zoia. I also take this opportunity to welcome Ms Zimkhitha Raolane back from maternity leave. Mr Themba Ndimande also takes on a new role as a member of the Project-based Learning team.

Another academic year promises our teachers and pupils an opportunity to collaborate and create a significant time of learning and an exciting year of possibility.

DEANNE KING
HEAD OF SCHOOL

MATRIC RESULTS

Matric Results 2018

HIGHLIGHTS

100% Pass

99% Bachelor Degree Pass

423 Distinctions (80%+)

81 A+ symbols (90%+)

27 Placements in the Top 1% in a subject

47 Pupils (47%) with an average of 80% or more

71 Pupils (70%) with an average of 75% or more

83 Pupils (82%) with an average of 70% or more

23 Pupils (23%) obtained 7 or more distinctions

FROM THE CHAPLAIN

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ² Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. ³ When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."⁴ And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come."⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."⁶ Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷ Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸ He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. ⁹ When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom ¹⁰ and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now."¹¹ Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

– John 2:1-11

We welcome our girls and staff back to school, and pray that 2019 may be blessed year for all in our community.

We return to school in the liturgical season of the Epiphany – a season in which we celebrate Jesus' identity as God's Son. Epiphany runs from the last day of the Christmas season through to Ash Wednesday, and in this season, the Gospel readings highlight Christ's miracles and the instances in Jesus' life by which Christ's deity is revealed – such as Christ's turning water into wine, in John 2. During the Epiphany, we are also reminded that God dwells among us in the here-and-now, in each moment and in every situation.

There is a profundity to beginning our school year during Epiphany. As we begin the term, let us remember to expect, and therefore to look for, signs of God present with us, in both the ordinary and the extraordinary. Let us also ask God to work within us, to be conscious of allowing Christ within us to be revealed to each person with whom we interact.

REVD CLAUDIA COUSTAS
CHAPLAIN