



High School Update

Dear Parents,

Welcome to our Term 2 high school update. Covid matters have continued to dominate and students and teachers alike have continued to have to isolate. Thankfully our new video link system allowing students to join classes virtually has been working fairly well, minimising disruption to our learning.



For the first time ever, we have entered our students into IGCSE externals for English and Mathematics in the May/June series of examinations. This trial is an opportunity for us to try teaching the AS (senior) level courses over six terms rather than three. We believe this will give our seniors a chance to achieve higher grades in their A level examinations which are important in determining what tertiary courses they can take. While sitting the IGCSE externals in June does mean our students have to be prepared for these examinations earlier, we are confident that they are well-prepared to achieve excellent results nonetheless.



Term 2 also allows our seniors to take stock of their progress toward their A levels. Examinations take place in week 7 and will cover a good percentage of the total course content. Results will be indicative of current understanding and hopefully a motivation to increase efforts as the externals in October loom.

Information Evening for Year 8 Parents (Wed 29 June 7.00pm)



It is time for our annual information evening for parents of Year 8 students. This meeting is an opportunity to find out about MCS high school and ask questions to determine if it is the right fit for your child. Entry to the high school is not automatic, so at least one parent should attend if you wish to enrol your child in the high school.

At this meeting, we will outline what our high school is like, the type of learning that takes place and how suitable it would be for your child. Enrolment forms will be handed out at the information evening. If you know of friends who are looking to enrol their child in our high school for 2023, encourage them to attend this meeting.

Please mark your calendars now: **Wednesday 29th June at 7.00pm** in the high school—Room 202.

Autumn is Time for Ploughing

Sometimes we get the impression that the Christian faith is ethereal or other-worldly. Even mature Christians can become confused and think that the spiritual life is something that is opposed to the physical realm. The book of Proverbs is an answer to an other-worldly Christianity. It's earthy and practical. Wisdom begins in the fear of the Lord, but isn't limited to the Sunday service, our private periods of devotion or our prayer meetings. Instead, it calls out in the streets, the marketplace and the city gates (Proverbs 1:20-21). It's found in the public places where life happens.

Proverbs is a book of particular relevance to young people, as it is written by a father to his son which is why we love to share Proverbs with our students. One that we recently shared with some of our students is Proverbs 20:4.

***The sluggard does not plough in the autumn;
he will seek at harvest and have nothing.***



What does this mean? After the harvest, one must prepare for the next harvest by ploughing. Before the ground becomes too hard, the soil is turned up, loosening it and allowing aeration for the plants of the next season. In this Proverb, Solomon identifies the sluggard, a lazy man, who does not want to plough after his harvest. It is hard work, and he does not want to do it. Nevertheless, the sluggard expectantly looks forward to the next harvest, but is disappointed. The message Solomon has for his son is clear. If you fail to put in the preparatory work necessary for a good harvest, there will be no harvest.



This is a general principle in God's world. Instantaneous success and reward is not a part of God's creation order. Think about fruit trees. You can buy a young sapling at a nursery, take it home, prepare the soil where it is to be planted with sheep pellets and fertilizer, but it is often years before you will taste fruit from that tree. The same is true of human endeavours. If you want to run well, you must train over time before you see an improvement. If you want to play the piano well, you start with frankly boring tunes, and have to learn scales and arpeggios. Your fingers gradually grow in dexterity and muscle memory develops, enabling you to play more and more complex and beautiful melodies.

The same is true when we think about the teenage years. What a young man or woman is doing is ploughing the ground in preparation for a future harvest. Obviously, this is true in the academic sense. Developing minds are wrestling with more and more complex content in preparation for future vocations. Perhaps less intuitively this is true on the level of character.

Autumn is Time for Ploughing continued

Teenagers have to wrestle with many character issues. Persevering under difficulty (or avoiding it), performing tasks that are not enjoyable (or refusing to do them), owning up to sin or mistakes (or denying responsibility), developing the practice of serving others (or remaining self-centered): these are choices that need to be made every day. They are opportunities to prepare the ground for a future harvest as a godly and mature man or woman.



A failure to plough here reduces future usefulness to the kingdom of God. Paul puts it this way, *“God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.”* (Galatians 6:7). As teachers, we encourage you to talk with your teens about this principle. The everyday decisions they make will become habits that will have repercussions in their twenties and beyond.

Scott Kennedy

MODULES Year 12 & 13: Science Demo for Juniors

We are privileged at MCS to have a school that provides education from Year 1 to Year 13. A Year 3 student climbing on the playground can look across the field to see the senior students they will one day become, and senior students are afforded the unique opportunity of interacting with and being role models for children who are at much earlier stages of their educational journey. The yearly Science Demo for Juniors module is one such opportunity – or as **Pazia Ng** said, “The science module gave our group front row seats of what it feels like teaching!”

“At the start of Term 2, the Year 12s and 13s prepared a series of exciting science experiments to present to the juniors,” explained **Samantha Whyte**. “We had to reflect on what the juniors would find exciting, and what scientific concepts they would understand, which turned out to be quite a challenge since we couldn’t remember how smart we were at their age.”

Unfortunately, not everything went as planned, which is a learning experience in itself. “A key insight from the science module is that sugar, potassium nitrate, and fire do not go well together harmoniously,” stated **Ming Chen**. **Preston Gillett** put it even more bluntly when he said, “To call my journey in the science module a trainwreck is quite the understatement. The fiery passion I had went up in smoke when I ACCIDENTALLY bombed the lab. This incident stripped me of all experiments that used fire, so about 75% of experiments were banned for me.”¹



Above: Ruth and Bethany

¹One might question the validity of Preston’s stated percentage.

Year 12 & 13: Science Demo for Juniors continued



Above: Jessica and Stephanie

Despite some setbacks, including last-minute changes to experiments and several sick seniors, the demos took place on the pre-determined day and time. Groups of senior students were assigned to different primary school classes. “On Friday the 27th of May, Jessica Kaur and I went to the Year 1s to show them Science,” said **Stephanie Simons**. “We were met by delighted faces and excited children – and we were just as enthusiastic. During our time slot, we demonstrated diffusion using skittles, showed them how to make slime, and explained how to test for hydrogen and oxygen using fire. We all had a great time and gave the juniors a taste of what it’s like to do science class in the high school.”



Above: Harmandeep



Above: Sanya and Harmandeep

“We had the Year 5s and 7s,” added **Harmandeep Kaur**. “They were all engaged, answering the questions we put forward. Ours went boom!”



Above: Ming and Luke

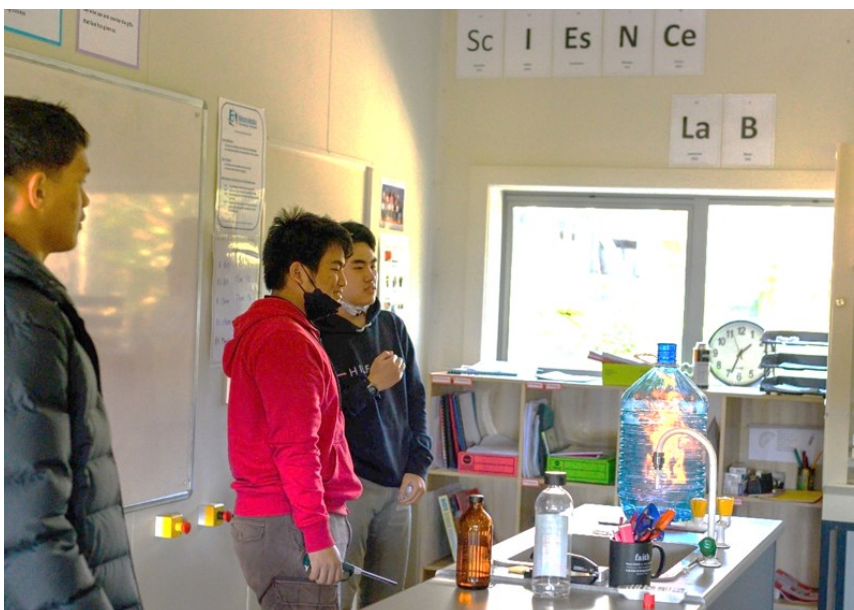
You have to commend the senior students for their effort in this module. Many of them found the experience of presenting in front of an entire class quite nerve-racking. Furthermore, some classes were easier to work with than others, which provided the Year 12s & 13s with yet another hands-on learning experience. As **Nasia Ng** admitted, “Despite the struggles of trying to control a certain class. . . our experiments were a success! All the students were eager to learn more, which is a good thing to see.”

Year 12 & 13: Science Demo for Juniors continued

Luke Shallard elaborated on the challenges involved, stating, "The day of the experiment was full of stress and anxiety, with everyone rushing around making sure their experiments would all work properly, finding test tubes and pouring chemicals. When the time came for my experiment, Ming and I showed the Year 8s some cabbage solution, processing the acidity and basic nature of multiple test examples. Then we ended it with a bang, shooting our plasma popper and knocking a bottle over, with little to no reaction from the class." (When a Year 8 was questioned about this they said, "Yup, that's our class. Miss K sometimes says she sometimes gets tired of how unresponsive we are.")



"Overall, I think the module went really well," claimed **Pakawat Phoncha**. "Each group came up with a creative idea to demonstrate to the younger ones. Some experiments were chemically explosive, some were colourful and some were incredibly fun to watch. Our group made a rocket out of a burning bottle. Kids went crazy for it. It was an amazing moment."



Above: Tsidkenu looking on at Pakawat and Kenny



Above: Kenny

MODULES Year 11: Chess

“Check and Mate!” Vinayak’s words created a dramatic pause throughout the room. “Oh wait... no never mind,” he added shortly after, much to the room’s amusement. While our chess module certainly didn’t transform us into professionals, it provided an opportunity to those who had never played the game to learn the basics while the more ‘experienced’ of us tested our skills through duels with our classmates.

The four-week module culminated in a bracketed tournament, with each of us going head-to-head to find out who was the true ‘Chess King’ (or Queen). Though the finale was a close-match, full of struggle and tension, **Oliver** finally bested Thomas and won the competition. Despite only spending half a term on this module, we have all undeniably learnt something from it, and it has without a doubt inspired us to learn openings, practice our techniques, and challenge others to matches of chess. **By Matthew Shallard**



Above: Matthew Shallard (right) plays against the ultimate Chess Champion Oliver Kuik (left).



*Right: The finale, which was won by **Oliver Kuik***

MODULES Year 10: Drama!

The Year 10 drama module so far has definitely been entertaining. When we weren't laughing or making paper throwing stars and testing them out, we were adapting a script, assigning roles, and practising our lines. So far I have really enjoyed the drama module, it's been lots of fun. It has been really great to have the opportunity to build our confidence and have fun with our classmates. **By Eva Jones**



Above: Samantha and Eva (right) on Culture Day



Above and below: Drama module script writing

A note from Mrs Maney:

I want to thank the Year 10s for the amazing work they put into the recent drama module. Not only did they coordinate the costumes and play the roles, but they also wrote the script! It is very intimidating to stand up in front of your peers with a persona that is not your own. Yet that is what the Year 10 class did during the recent High School Assembly. The additional challenges of absences from the dress rehearsal, changes to the script, and having to learn lines while studying for exams did not deter them, and for that I thank them from the bottom of my heart.



Right: Drama Rehearsal

MODULES Year 9: Study Skills

During modules in the past four weeks, we, Year 9s, have learnt how to study efficiently and effectively. We all have filled many pages with notes and skills which we can consult, making the books more useful than ever before! We, as a class, have learnt how to stop procrastination, how to stay focused, ways to remain alert and active in class, how to effectively spread out responsibilities throughout the week, studying in a way that you will remember what you just spent the past three hours reading, and helping us all find our ideal study environments.

We were taught all this by a very knowledgeable Miss Dhinakar (Miss D). This information has been very valuable and useful to me more than anything else I have heard about the topic, and for this I hope we continue this module. She taught us these skills using many sheets which had in-built questions and greatly helped us all by saving lots of time in writing.

Thank you for reading, and goodbye! **By Aarya Ahlowalia**



Above: Aarya Ahlowalia (right) on Culture Day



Above and below: Study Skills module



Study Skills

THE FOUNDATION FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

Open Letters

At the conclusion of their brief Letter Writing Unit, the Year 9 English students each wrote an open letter to their teachers. Open letters are a form of communication intended to be read by a wide audience, or they might be written to an individual but nonetheless widely distributed intentionally.

One could make the argument that modern open letters are the descendants of the ancient epistle, such as those found in the New Testament. Epistles were also letters typically intended for a wide audience. However, while epistles were traditionally didactic in nature, modern open letters frequently focus on a complaint or critique, often followed by an appeal.

The Year 9's open letters could be written to: their teachers, the principal Mr. Slaney, or the Trust Board. These letters have been on display in Room 204 for any passing teacher (or student!) to read. While many students took the opportunity to appeal for a longer lunch break or more PE hours, the student whose letter appears on the right, had a rather unique request.

(Date) Tuesday 5th April

(Greeting - e.g. Dear English Teachers)
Dear Teachers,

(Introduction, body and conclusion of your letter):
My purpose in writing this letter is to convince you that pictures are ~~are~~ not necessarily the best method in capturing magical moments. Firstly, more often than not, students find that they look rather awkward in photographs. By this, I mean am referring to frizzy hairdos, goofy grins, and outfits with clashing colour schemes. It is little details like this that make many of us want to curl into a tight ball when we see how horribly a camera lens can present us.

Secondly, how interesting would it be for us students to discover the artistic capabilities of our teachers? That way, even if ^{some} students appear awkward in a particular picture, everyone would have the chance to feel uncomfortable together, depending on how abstract they are drawn. Another substitute for photography could be to snap a picture and then add various filters and to mask areas of self-consciousness. Perhaps a sheep filter to mask that sheepish grin?

My final point to ~~se~~ convince you of my concern is regarding privacy. My point here is simply that it matters. What would be done if one of these pictures wound up in the hands of a child abductor? Hopefully nothing, as this unlikely scenario can easily be prevented, and that is by putting an end to picture-taking.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice the unease that many feel during picture-taking.

(Sign off) Kind regards,

(Name) Priscilla

Below: Priscilla John (second from left) looking quite lovely with frizzy-free hair on Culture Day.



Brief Reflections on Culture Day



Despite still being tired, both mentally and physically, I came back to school from COVID isolation on Culture Day. It honestly felt quite odd to disappear for a week only to return in a ghagra choli, but I was just happy to be back. Watching the cultural performances and enjoying the variety of food was a lovely way to be welcomed.

Kanak Ahuja, Year 13

Left: Kanak (left) and Opal Ahuja

My first Culture Day was one to remember. I enjoyed seeing everyone in their colourful outfits and the extensive variety of delicacies. The dances were full of energy and excitement and were executed brilliantly. **Lilly Peka, Year 9**



Right: Keira Shallard (left) and Lilly Peka (right)

Culture Day Message from the Student Leaders

The following message was written by the student leaders and delivered on Culture Day by Tsidkenu Levae (one of the writers). It has been slightly abridged for publication.

Galatians 3:28

[28] There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (ESV)

Culture Day is a day where we can come together and celebrate multiculturalism and diversity because of God's design in the world and His beautiful work in His creation. Multiculturalism in the Biblical sense is a good thing. It is where we can be diverse and different in our ethnicity and cultures but also be one in Christ. We can have unity in Him because we have been reconciled to Him. This idea of reconciliation is key. It means the healing and restoring and fixing of a relationship and the bringing together of separated things.

Unity/Reconciliation with Christ

After the Fall, there was a separation between God and man and our relationship with Him was torn apart. A great repairing of our



Tsidkenu Levae

Culture Day Message continued

relationship with God was necessary in order for us to be saved and brought back in a loving relationship with Him. This radical repair came in the form of Christ's death on the cross. The cross reconciled us back to God, and God counted our sins against Christ rather than against us. So, when God looks at us, He sees Christ's righteousness. The apostle Paul often used the word 'reconciliation' to describe God's movement towards humanity – an end to the broken relationship.

Unity/Reconciliation with man

Not only did the Fall break our relationship with God, but it also created a divide between mankind. Conflict began, and humans now sin against each other as well as against God. Sin entered the world and negatively affected all of life and human nature. We see the first example of this with Adam and Eve in the Old Testament when they started to blame each other for sinning against God.

One of the key ways we see sinful humanity being divided against each other is division based on ethnicity. People either take sinful pride in their ethnicity, or they have problems with guilt or shame because of what their culture or ethnicity is. But in Christ, we are all made equal. We can't take sinful pride in our ethnicity because we are all sinful before God. We have missed the mark and crossed the line of who God is – righteous and just. However, we don't have to carry guilt and shame because Christ took that away on the cross. Christians now aren't equally sinful before God, but equally saved and covered by Christ's righteousness. There is no ethnic division. Our unity in faith is what reconciles us to each other. We recognise that we are all made in God's image and we are to treat each other based on this.

Application

However, the world will have you believe and think that we need to treat each other differently because of skin colour and ethnicity. Instead of loving each other as God has commanded, the world makes us think in terms of oppression and power – that some ethnicities and skin colours oppress and bring down others' ethnicities and skin colours. For example, white people are forced to



Culture Day Message continued

apologise for being white and are being silenced for speaking up. Multiculturalism is a good thing, but we see the world today fighting for cultural separation.

But if we are to be “united in mind and thought” as *1 Corinthians 1:10* says, why is there a need for so much animosity, division and separation between different ethnicities? It is important that we know that before we are Samoan, Tongan, Māori, European, Indian, Chinese, African, Arab or so on, we are Christians. Our identity in Christ comes before what our culture is. It’s more important. This is why Christian culture is the most inclusive culture. Christianity gives us the foundation to be able to celebrate our cultures as a good thing. We should all feel guilt for the sins we have committed but never for what God has created us to be. If you are white, don’t be ashamed and feel bad that you are white. If you are brown or black, don’t be ashamed and feel bad that you are brown or black. You are God’s creation.

We can be ethnically diverse and still be one in Christ. We have all sinned and through Christ’s death been reconciled to God and now share a common salvation. That is what unites us. Christ is what unites us.



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