



Transcript of the Principal's Message – Alumnae News Winter 2021

Hello, good afternoon and welcome to this edition of the Alumnae eNews. I wanted to take this opportunity to send all my very best wishes to each and every member of our Ex-Student community. I hope that from wherever you are reading this edition of eNews and wherever you might find yourself, that you and your families are keeping healthy and safe. For those of us here in Sydney, of course, things have progressed and developed very quickly in the last couple of weeks, and just today, so much more is changing across in other states too, and I do pray and hope that you find yourself well, healthy, and safe.

As I was saying, so much has happened in the last couple of weeks, it's quite extraordinary. We've had our first week of remote learning here, and I'm very proud of the way in which our teachers have mobilised onto that platform and have done everything they can to be prepared and well-planned for the week of remote learning, which we know now will go on for a couple of more weeks with the extension of this lockdown and I'm extremely proud as always of our girls and the ways in which they've responded to that challenge and are engaged with their learning across all elements of our FACE curriculum and are keeping their spirits high. I was able to speak with a few of them for different occasions throughout the week, and that was always reassuring to see.

It was lovely to see so many ex-students at the end of term two when we were finally able to have our Music Festival at the ICC. Thank you to those of you who came along and it was a beautiful, I guess, explosion of felicities, the only way in which I can describe it in such a treasured moment in time for our community to have been together again in that way and definitely one that I hope is keeping us all buoyed over these last couple of weeks as well. So for those of you who were able to come along, it was lovely to see so many of you and I say thank you for showing your support as well. It really does mean a lot to the girls when they look out and see such an engaged audience and appreciative audience, who's enjoying the music and the performances as we did that night.

For those of you who weren't there who might be a little bit curious, the winning House Choir was Mornane this year and Spirit Cup went to Mulhall, so congratulations to those ex-students who were from Mulhall and Mornane, and look out for some of those photos in the gallery as well in the news that's coming to you.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to extend my sincerest thanks to each and every member of our community who donated and made a contribution, a really generous contribution to our bursary fund through our annual giving campaign and through other means over the last couple of terms, and truly did heed that call that the time is now. Through those generous donations of our community and through various events where the proceeds went towards the bursary fund, we've been able to raise just over \$130,000 this year for our bursary fund and I'm truly grateful to those of you who've been able to donate.

On behalf of all those families and students who will be recipients of those funds, I say my sincerest thanks. It really does go on to change the lives of individuals, of families, and indeed



of our whole school community when we're able to make this education accessible to those who find themselves in necessitous circumstances.

Of course, the Year Group Challenge is still up and running and it's wonderful to know there are 32 Year Groups who've accepted that challenge. Thanks once more to the Ex-Students' Association who has generously agreed to match or didn't agree, offered really, and to match every \$1000 with a donation of \$1000. 10 of those 32 year groups have so far raised \$1,000 or more so that challenge is there and you can find it through the Normo Network and others means, no doubt, if you still want to rally your Year Group around that challenge and keep that going there.

There are few initiatives that I'd like to speak with you a bit about and invite you to take part in. But just before I do, I'd like to extend the congratulations of the whole school community to our few members, and you can read the full stories through the Normo Network and through this edition of the eNews.

I'd like to extend our warmest, congratulations to Sister Deirdre Browne IBVM on having been awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for her service to community as religious sister through music, education, and liturgical arts. Many of you would know Sister Deirdre personally, would know of her works undoubtedly, and I'm sure that you would agree with me in saying that the fruits of her beautiful creativity really do bring us all so much joy and are able to transcend, allow us rather, to transcend the moment in time when we engage with those beautiful arts, and her contribution to education is something that I'm humbled by truly.

Congratulations also to Kate Eastman of the Class of 1984 on being awarded a Member of the Order of Australia for her service to law, human rights, and professional organisations. Congratulations, Kate, and we commend you and your work and all that good work that you do in the pursuit of justice, and, in particular, in that pursuit of human rights for everybody and really carrying on that distinct commitment that a Loreto education gives us to pursue justice and to act as instruments for justice as well.

Best wishes and congratulations to Ellen Roberts of the Class of 2009, and Liz Clay, the Class of 2012. Both Ellen and Liz are competing as part of the Australian Olympics team at the Tokyo Olympics, which launches next week. I'd like to take this chance to thank Ellen and Tahli Moore, Tahli of the class of 2012, who also trialled for that softball team. Ellen and Tahli came in and spoke with our girls last term and I can't tell you just how much motivation and inspiration your talk left on there and the impression it left on our girls. We wish you well, Ellen, for that first game next Wednesday. Even before the launch of the actual Olympics, Ellen and the softball team will be competing and we'll be right behind you, and Liz's first race, I believe, is the 31st, with all the details here in the Normo Network and in the eNews, and you can get behind them and we most definitely will be mobilising the 1,100 girls here and staff and parents, and reaching out to the ex-students as well to really get behind Ellen and Liz as they pursue their personal dreams, the dreams of their teams and, of course, the dreams of our whole nation.

In times like this, we can easily fall into a moment of being insular, of going into self, and we can easily fall into a trap that causes us to not be grateful for all we have and can sometimes put up



those blind spots into not thinking of others. But as people for others as we are as Loreto people, it's really important that we keep the most vulnerable in our community forever in the center of what we do, and always in term three we launched an initiative at school that's called Wrap with Love, where we get the girls, the staff, and this year I'm extending it, we're extending it to parents, past parents, to ex-students to really get behind Wrap with Love.

There's lots of instructions in the eNews that you can discover about where effectively what we do and what we're calling on is for everybody to knit or crochet a small square that then is sewn together to make a beautiful blanket for the most vulnerable and the most isolated in our community. We thought that given so many of us are in lockdown and houses are full of people and things to do, and if you're experiencing working from home and having children in remote learning as well, you probably are also looking for time away from screens.

So I really encourage you to get on board and get behind Wrap with Love. All the instructions are there. For the moment while we're in lockdown, just keep knitting and crocheting and then we'll have directions as to how to get the squares back here to the school and how we'll then mobilize the community once more to stitch them or knit them together ... I'm really showing my ignorance in this field ... to stitch them into the beautiful blankets that then can be donated to the most vulnerable. While we're in the depths of winter, despite the glorious sun that's out this afternoon, let us never forget that there is so many without the warmth of family and without the material warmth of shelter as well.

The other initiative and project that we're launching this week is a Loreto Normanhurst Cookbook Project. It's part of the celebrations that we will be having next year when our beautiful school celebrates 125 years since its foundation in 1897. Now, of course, there'll be lots of information next year about those celebrations, and we will, of course, start with a whole school mass, et cetera, but one of the themes that we're looking at is this notion of stories and of food and of coming together. We know that when we do and when we share recipes, we share meals, we share the time that it takes to create the meal and to then eat and enjoy the meal, we also share a part of who we are. We share a part of tradition. We share a part of our own stories and backgrounds.

Over these 125 glorious years of educating young women here at Loreto Normanhurst, I can't even imagine all the layers and all the threads that there are between the relationships and the stories that have been formed. So we're really looking to bring our whole community together through that layer of storytelling of food and people and family. So I invite you to get on board that project.

It's a project being led by the PAL, by the Parent Association of Loreto, in conjunction with our community engagement team here, and I pray and hope that it's one that brings us all together. Again, it's another one of those good little projects for a lockdown period where we might well be dusting off old recipes or looking at what to do on weekends when some of those usual activities are no longer allowed for us in this short-term.

So I do hope and pray, as I said at the outset that you and your families are all keeping well. Know that this community is always your community, and we look forward to those moments in



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time when we might be able to come together again for different celebrations. I was thrilled to have been able to have hosted the Golden Jubilarians last term and we had an opportunity with Lunch and Lyrics to have a small concert for those ladies and to also share a light lunch together, and may we have other opportunities in the future to come together again.

But in the meantime, hopefully you can get behind a couple of those projects and it will help those of you who are in lockdown, those of you who are perhaps reading this news from quite afar, to feel connected again with this beautiful community.

So go well, everybody. Take care of yourselves and until we see each other again. Goodbye.

Ms Marina Ugonotti

PRINCIPAL