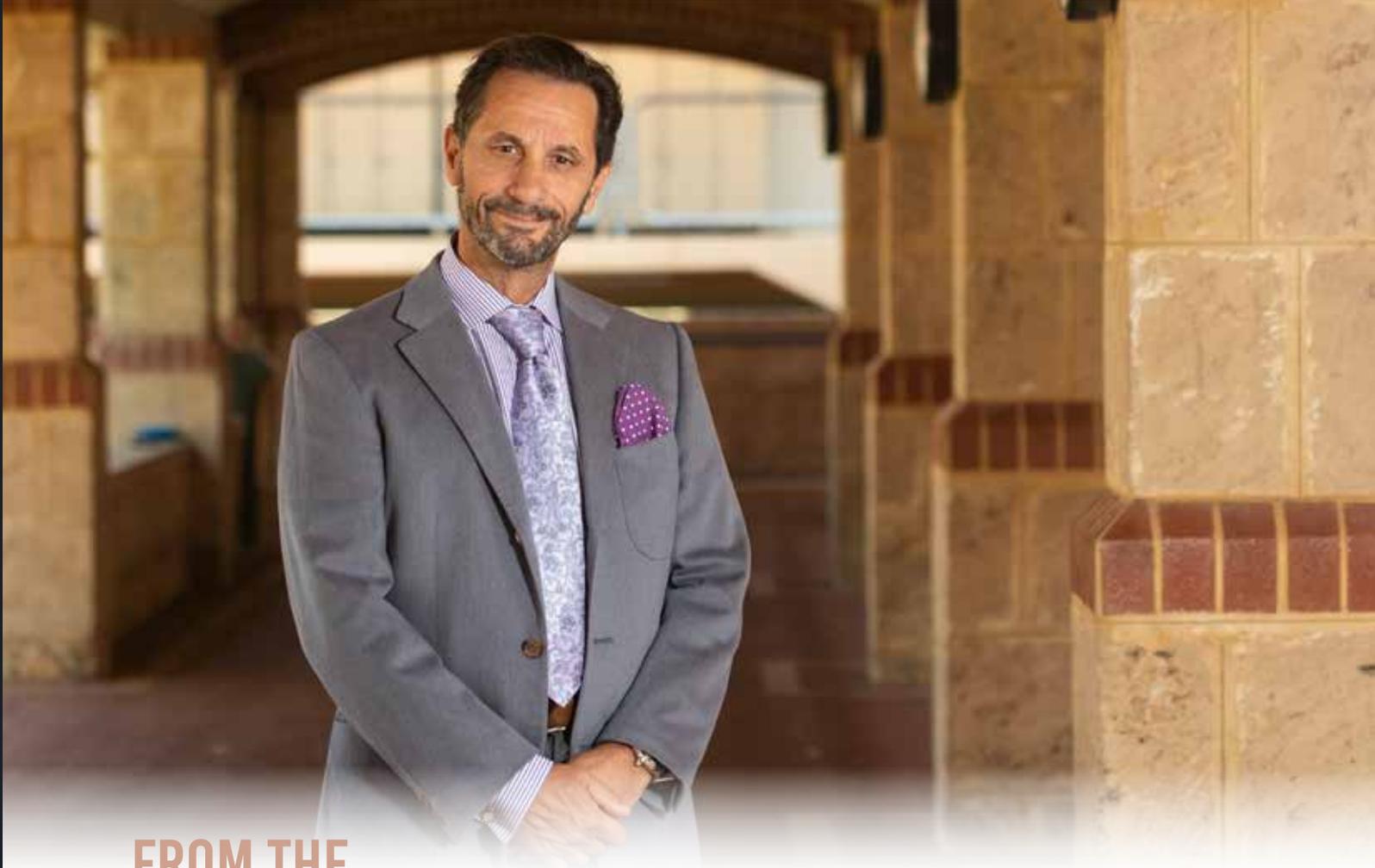


**THE ATTRIBUTES OF A
CBC GENTLEMAN**

Today's boys...
tomorrow's
gentlemen



FROM THE PRINCIPAL

At CBC Fremantle, we embark on a shared journey with the families of the College in the development of their sons from today's boys into the gentlemen of tomorrow. With one eye firmly on the young man who will graduate, the CBC journey is carefully planned in a rites of passage context to foster a sense of belonging and identity, encourage personal excellence and develop each young man from a boy's way of thinking to an adult psychology.

Our graduates should be distinguished by the following characteristics:

- Tomorrow's gentleman forms attitudes and actions based on Gospel Values,
- Tomorrow's gentleman strives to be his best and understands the inherent value of doing so,
- Tomorrow's gentleman is accountable, resilient and prepared to face and overcome challenges,
- Tomorrow's gentleman is selfless by nature and able to form positive, mutually-beneficial relationships
- Tomorrow's gentleman recognises and values the 'other' in his life

From 2015 to 2020 the characteristics of a CBC gentleman were individually addressed in the Principal's Graduation speech, providing an inspiration to the fine young men gathered with their families for their final formal occasion in their College. The pertinent section from the speeches are gathered here in one publication to illustrate and celebrate the attributes that typify tomorrow's gentlemen.

Mr Domenic Burgio
Principal

TOMORROW'S GENTLEMEN FORMS ACTIONS AND ATTITUDES BASED ON GOSPEL VALUES

I have previously discussed the third and fifth of these characteristics but on this occasion I would like to go back to the one we intentionally placed first: tomorrow's gentleman forms attitudes and actions based on Gospel Values...

No lesser authority than Pope Francis recently said that, "a credible witness to truth and to gospel values is urgently needed." In the same vein, we know as parents that if we don't pass on our values to our children, then someone else will surely pass on theirs.

However, as often as the term 'Gospel Values' is used, it is still valid to say that many people are not exactly sure what it means. In the simplest possible terms, Gospel Values are derived from what Jesus said and did during his life. In an attempt to make the concept even clearer, may I offer the following far from exhaustive list:

- Respect for the life and dignity of each individual,
- Honesty,
- Compassion,
- Forgiveness,
- Mercy,
- Leadership based on service,
- Equity,
- Justice,
- Peace, and
- Love.

“Gospel Values have great currency and provide the foundation for good living which is so important to the young men educated at this College.”

I mention love last because it is the greatest gift which accompanies our faith and because it underpins all of the others.

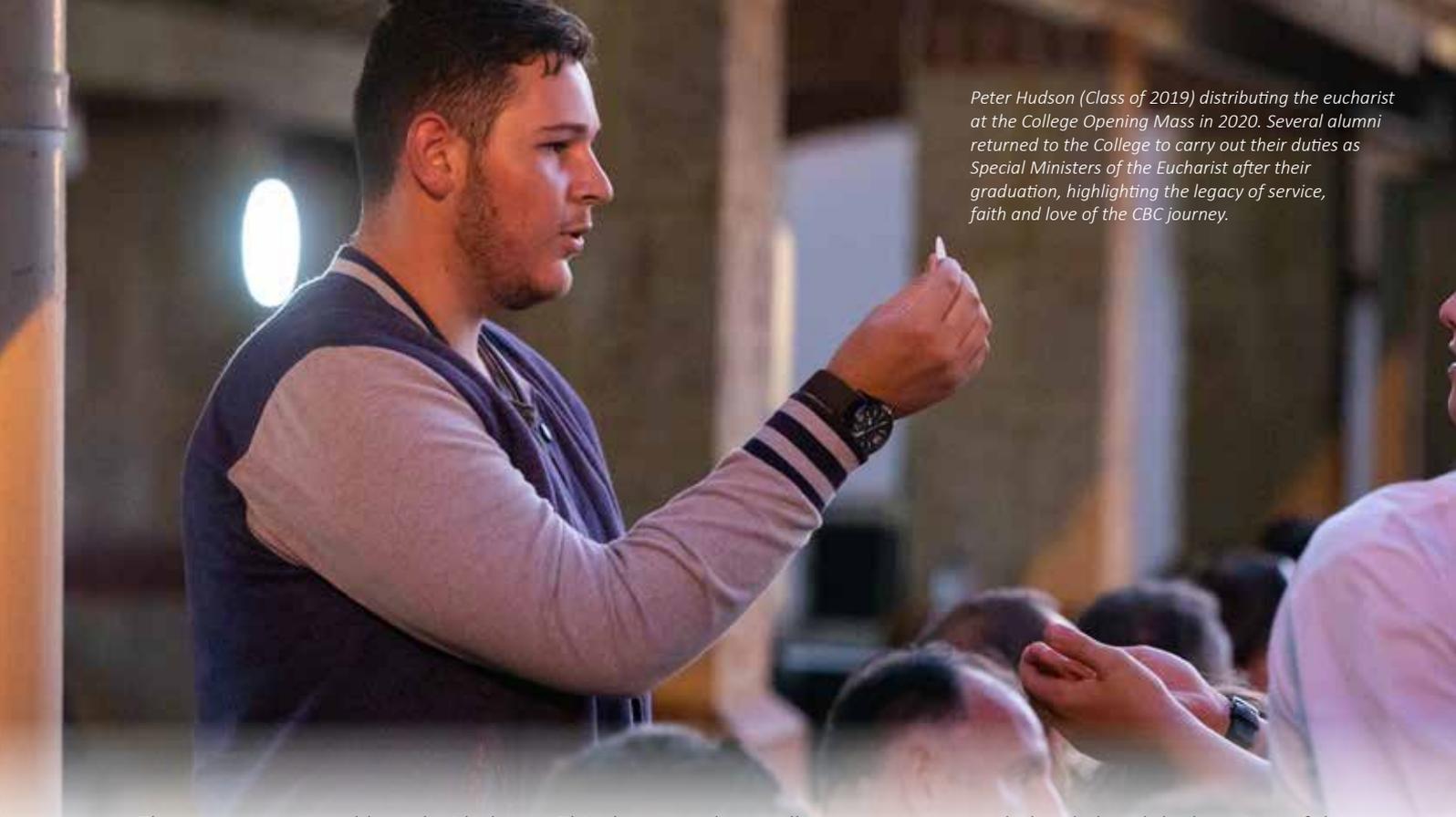
There are two further salient points I would like to make about Gospel Values. The first is that they are immutable. They have not changed over time nor are they changeable into the future. They are unyielding despite the pressures applied by our rapidly

evolving secular society. Gospel Values have great currency and provide the foundation for good living which is so important to the young men educated at this College.

The second point is that Gospel Values are equally applicable to people of all faiths and even those of no faith. Compassion, forgiveness and the expression of love for the other are not the exclusive domain of

Christians. We are simply distinguished because we seek to adopt these values through the lens and the modelling of a man who walked this earth 2,000 years ago. His perfect expression of them provides us with inspiration, hope and joy.

CBC Fremantle has been a gift in my life for the last seven years. There have been many occasions when, as part of my daily interaction with members of this community, I have been humbled by the expression of one or more of the Gospel Values which has either enriched my life or served to inspire me. Selecting one such occasion from my experience has been problematic but that is exactly what I have done.



Peter Hudson (Class of 2019) distributing the eucharist at the College Opening Mass in 2020. Several alumni returned to the College to carry out their duties as Special Ministers of the Eucharist after their graduation, highlighting the legacy of service, faith and love of the CBC journey.

Three years ago I was blessed with the opportunity to visit one of our sibling Edmund Rice schools in Kenya. The Ruben Centre to the East of Nairobi is a school with an enrolment of over 3 000. It is situated next to Mukuru, one of the worst slums in the world with a population of over 600,000. All of the students at the school come from this slum. My memories of my time in this place are a confusion of impoverished surroundings, exploitation, hope and the biggest smiles I have ever seen.

Two things need to be mentioned to give context to what you are about to read. The first is that all of the students at this school are given one meal a day. It is always the same and comprises a bowl of corn boiled in a large vat. For some students, on some occasions, this is all they will eat for the day. The second thing to relate is that the nuns at the retreat centre where I was staying prepared lunch for our group each day which consisted of two sandwiches, one with a slice of cheese and the other with a slice of ham. These were accompanied by a banana and a boiled egg and placed in a brown paper bag; always the same and always ready for us.

This short anecdote really concerns one of the students at the school. His name is Johnson Evans and at the time of my meeting him, he was a boy of about 9 or 10 years old. During my visit, he told me that he was the fastest runner in Kenya and he followed me around during every break at the school. On the last day of my visit, I had eaten all I wanted of my lunch and had one sandwich left. I asked Br Frank, the Principal, if it would be all right for me to give the sandwich to one of the students and he said that would be fine. As I left the room in which we were eating, the first person waiting for me was Johnson and his face lit up as I offered him the sandwich. What happened next is what I find unforgettable. He walked a short distance away from me and as he did so other children appeared from everywhere. As they gathered around him he began to break the sandwich into small pieces giving each one to the person closest to him. They took this and wandered off eating their gift. When he had only one small piece left, all of the remaining children simply moved away without fuss or recrimination. Then Johnson looked back at me,

smiled and placed the last piece of the sandwich in his mouth.

I have not seen him since and I doubt he has ever given much thought to that day, but I think Johnson formed his attitude and actions based upon Gospel Values. I think he understood and reflected the need for justice, a respect for the life and dignity of each individual and the call to love others.

It is so important that tomorrow's gentlemen do the same as a result of their education at our College.

In the universal search for truth that engages each of us, we must never hesitate to let the light shine through the stained glass windows of our minds. Thank you to all of the parents who provide a credible witness to the worth and durability of Gospel Values in their own lives and to the boys who seek such goodness for themselves.

TOMORROW'S GENTLEMEN DOES HIS BEST AND UNDERSTANDS THE INHERENT VALUE OF DOING SO.

This evening it is the turn of the value that the CBC gentleman does his best and understands the inherent value of doing so. Since 2014 when these attributes were drafted, this has been the least understood and most criticised. And yet, in my opinion, it is the most noble.

Recently I was reading the review of a member of the leadership team. It was an excellent review. In it I found however a comment from a parent regarding the College's academic success.

I don't think the school is currently seen as a leader in academic achievement. What it is seen is a place with excellent pastoral care and development of polite, confident young men.

This is not the first time I have heard this comment, and it is not just parents I have heard it from. It pains me to think that any member of our community would think that the leadership of this school, or any school, de-prioritises academic achievement.

Academic achievement is the core business of schools, and staff recruitment, curriculum development and facilities investment among other

things have academic achievement at their core. The problem I think is that different people will have different definitions of academic achievement and of course each member of a school community plays to their strength in defining and prioritising it.

The simplest way to define academic achievement is to measure it. The league tables have for years now been the metric that is focussed on when determining a school's academic success. Despite the many noble comments by politicians and education leaders about the league tables only being one of many success factors, the fact remains that a school's performance on the league tables is most definitely privately celebrated with gusto and publicly lauded with restrained jubilation. It puts bums on seats. It can also be contrived, manipulated and misleading.

This is, without doubt, the best school community I have ever experienced in my career, and that is a view shared by many members of the public. CBC Fremantle has become a school of choice. But the last government school I worked in had equally dedicated and committed teachers. Not universal in its buy-in, but the teachers who did commit have my everlasting respect. The Principal, his leadership team and most of the staff weaved miracles on a daily basis just to get through each day. On my last visit there in 2009

I walked into classes where some teachers were dressed in pyjamas, others had brought in their pet or organised a whiz bang lesson when most schools would just deliver a run-of-the-mill one. It was a hive of innovation and initiatives, because most students did not want to be there, most parents had a negative view of education and the social issues confronted by students were extreme. These are but a few of the many other initiatives concocted routinely to keep the students engaged. The school provided breakfast, lunch, clothing, shelter, medical care and, most importantly, love in much-needed doses. It was uplifting to see the staff effort, especially when that effort was not always reciprocated by students and parents. And yet that school will never appear on the league tables. That honour is reserved for the schools that also have excellent hard-working staff, in many cases, outstanding staff but benefit from things the staff at that school don't. A good postcode. Academic select entry. Values mono-culture. The ability to ask students to leave. The ability to say who does ATAR and who doesn't. Not necessarily bad features, but differentiating features nevertheless.

CBC Fremantle is a Catholic School in the Edmund Rice Tradition. As such it is Christ-centred and student-focussed. It uses the model of Edmund in showing the graduates how you



The College seeks to provide genuine and effective opportunities for students from Year 7 through to Year 12 to be able to become self-aware and confident in their leadership potential. Pictured is Director of Student Leadership Mr Mike Pickford congratulating Thomas Wilson on his appointment as 2021 Community Captain.

can serve humanity. There was an attempt in our recent history to make this a uni-preparatory school. That was, and is, a fantastic initiative as long as there is no collateral damage. Every boy whose family wishes him to receive a CBC education should get the entire slice of the pie that he is entitled to, and every pathway in this College should be seen as having equal gravitas, value and importance. It is an ideal still not completed, but I believe we are making great progress. Thanks to outstanding staff members who teach ATAR courses, there have, in the past 10 years, been more than 100 young men with an ATAR of 95 and above. This represents a high percentage of boys doing the ATAR pathway and one of the joys of this job is receiving LinkedIn invitations from former students who have achieved great success after completing University.

Importantly, however, I also receive invitations from many Old Boys who didn't go to University, but who are equally successful and proud of their achievements. In recent years, a CBC boys have won State and Australasian gold and silver medals in VET. Many of our boys are being placed in work experience positions provided by

CBC Old Boys who are now running their own successful business. This year, 17 boys of the graduating class already have apprenticeships. If this is not being seen as a school that is 'a leader in academic achievement' it is a reflection on what society values, and a sad one at that.

The CBC gentleman does his best and understands the inherent value of doing so. The second attribute, behind

“When we are confident of our value, we are in a beautiful position to place value on others so they can live a life of purpose and strength making a difference in this world.”

Gospel values. It has been linked to the mantra that 'At CBC Fremantle, your best is good enough'. And yet, some think it is code for mediocrity. Code for minimalism. Code for effort being completely the realm and choice of the student. I personally do not know anyone who can do better than their best. Knowing what it is, and where possible to try and improve it, should be a constant journey. But some of us do hit a ceiling, and when we do, that is not a failure. It is a triumph that we got there. Adolescent years are pivotal in determining what

kind of adults we become. People receive their value and worth from different sources; I find my value from knowing I am loved and cherished by Jesus and from my family, teachers and friends who loved and believed in me during my boyhood. This foundation is one that no one can ever take or touch. It's priceless and lasts forever. My mother has passed away now but her love for me, and belief in me, can never be taken from me.

Understanding, unconditional love has been proved to empower people to live stable, productive lives with purpose and value. When we are confident of our value, we are in a beautiful position to place value on others so they can live a life

of purpose and strength making a difference in this world. But our value cannot be defined by what we can't do. That is our challenge. As parents, in particular, we need to be sure of where our value is established so we can help our children know their value. Our unconditional love for them is the first foundational step to our children knowing their value and worth. This can never be taken away from them regardless of what they come up against in life. And that is why your son's best must be good enough.

Now gentlemen, for the bad news. It is not for you to determine your best, nor should it ever be fixed at a point beneath your capabilities. In terms of your best at this school, it is the staff who determine a boys' best. Their expertise, ability to understand and be informed by data, and innate ability to challenge at a pace and time that suits each individual is what determines a boy's best. As all the mums will agree, boys will do as little as you let them, and as much as you make them. Boys need to be challenged, and when they succeed, they need to be celebrated. What they can't be is crushed. It's a bit like the game of quoits. If the peg is set at the boy's feet, he will quickly get bored. If it is set too far away, he will get disheartened and give up. The art of challenge is that the peg is set far enough away to keep the boy's interest, for the boy to gain eventual success, and if and when mastery is achieved, move the peg further away. During a time when they are finding their self-worth and self-efficacy, if they are crushed by giving their best, they will withhold it and never give it again. Never give it at school, never give it at work, never give it in relationships. In my career, I have seen so many young people revert to low-altitude flying because they fear giving their best and being crushed. This self-handicapping follows them into adult life. It reduces the quality of their life. "I didn't really want that job", "I didn't really study for that test", "I didn't really care about that relationship". All excuses masking the self-handicapping that epitomises those who have not been nourished during their formative years when they give their best.

Now some people have taken this too far, and hence the reason some have misunderstood this attribute. There's no problem with the 'I was in a race' ribbon. The problem is when

that ribbon is not put into context. The conversational phrases 'I'm so proud of you!', 'It's so great you did your best!', 'You beat last year's time!' are very different to 'You're the best!', 'You're a champion!', 'You're such a great athlete!' The balance between affirmation and over-indulgence is the challenge for the adults who partner in this community to form the most well-rounded young man who values his best. Boys get told here for 6 years that their best is good enough. This is the stake we provide for the sapling to make sure it grows true and straight, but during their exit interview, I inform them of the reality of adulthood. Your best as an adult is sometimes not

“Every boy who comes to CBC Fremantle comes on his merits as a young man formed in the image of God.”

good enough. Adults sometimes lose jobs, miss out on contracts, fail in their relationships. Adult failure is a reality. But it is my opinion that if an adult has been formed valuing and giving their best, they will be better placed to reconcile failure. Despite how disappointed, even devastated they may be, if they can honestly say, I gave that situation my absolute best there can be few regrets.

Most of you know I am an avid op-shopper. One place I see the proof of a positive self-worth is whenever I shop at Good Sammy's. Good Sammy's provide employment for many intellectually disabled women and men. It always warms my heart to be greeted by them. Their approach is always confident as if they are the world's greatest salesperson. I listen sometimes to how they are spoken to by their managers, and it confirms my suspicion that the reason for this is that those women and men have always been in environments where

their best was good enough. Where they were valued for what they could do, and strove to do it as well as they could every time.

Every boy who comes to CBC Fremantle comes on his merits as a young man formed in the image of God. I don't look at NAPLAN results, grades or percentages. We don't give academic scholarships. We have lost many enrolments to schools that have offered a scholarship to a boy I have enrolled and, on several occasions, that boy has returned to us, because despite being in the top 2% of the State academically, he was made to feel 'the dumbest kid' at

his academically select school. Academic success at CBC Fremantle is not a simple metric. It is a combination of factors that allow a boy to thrive and to achieve the best possible outcomes given his interests, abilities, gifts and talents. Mediocrity

of effort is not accepted in this College, albeit we remain humble yet ambitious as a school.

There is a plan over the next few years to invest heavily in the buildings. We hope to take residency in a fit for purpose Learning Area to house our Year 12s in the first instance in 2021. The plans for a lecture theatre and classrooms are before Council. Phases 2 and 3 of our Master Plan include replacing our dark and narrow stairwells with lifts and glass-covered staircases and a redevelopment of the Marshall Building. These improvements will help bring the physical dimension of our school to the level of its spiritual side, but as heavily as we invest in buildings, you can't have a relationship with a building, and the most important attribute of CBC Fremantle, that it is a community, that it is a family will continue to drive its success.



Year 12 student Fynnian Copp and Mr Burgio at Mass at the senior students' Retreat on the first day of their final year. Faith, service and love are the cornerstone of a CBC education and the day prepares the young men for a special year ahead.

TOMORROW'S GENTLEMEN SHOULD BE ACCOUNTABLE, RESILIENT AND PREPARED TO FACE AND OVERCOME CHALLENGES.

Our statement that 'tomorrow's gentleman should be accountable, resilient and prepared to face and overcome challenges' is particularly pertinent in a society that suffers a deficit in resilience among its members.

On the topic of resilience, let me commence by relating two brief stories for you. The first occurred during my time at another school when I was Deputy Principal and it was my responsibility to make the final decision on whether we conducted the school athletics

carnival on a day when the weather was quite threatening.

Surveying the dark clouds but lack of rain in the morning, I decided that we would proceed with the carnival. Unfortunately, by mid-morning the skies had opened and we were all soaked. In typical fashion, the students made the most of the day despite the conditions.

A few days later, the mother of one of the girls at the school was waiting for me in the foyer when I arrived at work and informed me that her daughter had become ill after getting wet at the carnival. She now had the flu and I was largely responsible.

My attempts to clarify the fact that raindrops do not contain any virus and that it was how a person looked after themselves after getting cold and wet which was critical, fell on deaf ears. I eventually found it easier to agree that if this situation did escalate into pneumonia I would indeed be hearing more about it. As the lady left my office the strongest feeling with which I was left was wonderment about how she and her family were going to cope when, inevitably, some genuine misfortune entered their lives.

The second brief anecdote concerns a situation which arose in New Zealand earlier this year. It concerns a group



Fostering an appreciation of the fun of learning is assisted by a study programme that is rolled out from Year 7 through to the final WACE exams in Year 12. Boys are encouraged to challenge themselves and offered opportunities to choose their own subject to explore with inquiry-based projects and collaborations with our sister school.

of schoolboy rowers who flew into Christchurch for a regatta which included more than 2,000 teenagers from 122 schools. The regatta also served as trials for National junior selection. As the group from one particularly prestigious Catholic school arrived at the airport, two boys aged 16 and 17 sparked a security alert by jumping on the baggage carousel, going through the rubber curtains and entering the restricted area. They were apprehended by airport security and the police, and the response of the school was to ban them from any further participation in the tour or the regatta.

By the next morning, the families of each boy had employed lawyers and been granted an interim injunction against the school's decision which effectively meant that the boys were now allowed to compete. The parents accused the school of failing to investigate the incident properly, failing to adequately supervise the boys and failing to consider the 'serious and severely disproportionate' consequences of banning the boys from the regatta.

In her judgement, the Judge said that she was satisfied the balance of convenience favoured the applicants, partly because the harm that would be caused to them if the decision of the school was unlawful could not be compensated in any way.

In every sense but legally, she could not have been more wrong. Schools do not exist simply to teach a set curriculum or develop skills according

“At CBC Fremantle we seek to provide a faith community in which our values are explicit and our students experience a sense of belonging.”

to some formula. They are places where young people transition. In the language of our school, they transition from boys to gentlemen. By fighting their battles for them, these parents have done their sons more harm than the school could ever have done. The boys have learned that they are not really accountable for their actions at all, that there is always someone else to blame if you look closely enough and that the values which they accepted when

joining the school community are not immutable – they are fluid and may be adapted to circumstances.

Is it any wonder that in future situations such people lack the resilience to overcome any difficulties they encounter? We all know the statistics surrounding the mental and emotional health of the members of a society in which so often our hands are full but our lives are not.

At CBC Fremantle we seek to provide a faith community in which our values are explicit and our students experience a sense of belonging. We unapologetically judge their behaviour and hold them accountable when necessary. But

we do not judge them personally, for each of them has an innate dignity which is inviolable. Knowing that he is being held to account against a backdrop of unconditional love is one of the greatest gifts a family can provide to a young man in his journey to being a mature and resilient adult. It can be difficult watching and coping with your son learning from his mistakes but the pain of accepting responsibility is an essential part of growing up.

TOMORROW'S GENTLEMEN IS SELFLESS BY NATURE AND ABLE TO FORM POSITIVE, MUTUALLY-BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIPS

This year, I would like to talk about the fourth attribute: the CBC gentleman is selfless by nature and is able to form positive, mutually-beneficial relationships.

At enrolment interviews, I discuss with families the importance of this attribute in the context of a rite of passage. Rites of passage aim to do three important things. Firstly they aim to provide a deep and profound sense of belonging; secondly they provide challenge and celebrate its success, and thirdly they move the boy from a child psychology to an adult psychology. It is this last aim that requires a young person to replace himself with others at the centre of his life and is the focus of the selfless attribute.

In order to emphasise the child/adult psychology difference, I tell a story at enrolment interview. The first part of the story is true, the second part I hope never comes true. The story involves my beautiful grandson Sebastian. On Fridays I often head out to Attadale to visit my daughter and grandchildren. Inevitably, Sebastian will ask, "Nonno, can I please sleep over?" to which I reply, "Of course bello, but Nonno wants to watch the

football, so pack your blocks and pack your pencils and anything else you need to occupy yourself whilst Nonno watches the football." "No worries, Nonno," comes the reply. "You watch the football and I'll play with my toys." Suffice to say, the commitment of a six year old counts for nought, because as soon as we get to Fremantle all bets are off and I'm watching six hours of ABC Kids. All is forgiven because when a child places himself at the centre of his life, it's cute and forgivable.

Fast forward 12 years, Sebastian is now 18 years old and I'm an old man. This time it is me asking the favour, "Sebba, Nonno's not feeling too well. Can you come and help with the backyard this Saturday?" "Not a problem, Nonno, I'll be there at 12pm, count on it. Make my favourite lunch and we'll spend some quality time together!"

On the Saturday midday comes and goes. So does 1.00pm and 2.00pm. My heart sinks by 3.00pm and by 4.00pm I know he's not coming. This time the failure of my grandson to meet his commitments is not met with the same reaction as before.

What is cute as a kid is ugly as an adult. Selfishness can be excused in a child; it is never appropriate in an adult. To place others at the centre

of your life is what CBC Fremantle is about, and the basis of all healthy relationships.

I am not an expert on selflessness. I'm not sure why some people have it and others don't. I'm not sure why it comes naturally to the one, yet with others it grows over time. Whatever the genesis, I have lived enough life to know that it is pivotal to having healthy relationships, healthy relationships are pivotal to happiness, and happiness brings optimal health benefits.

I want to conclude by sharing a story of a special moment that I shared with my beautiful wife a few years ago. She had long wanted to visit eastern Europe, in particular Budapest. I was always hesitant until I read somewhere about the Vass Shoe Company that is based on the banks of the Danube in that wonderful city. Suffice to say, once I knew about Vass shoes, the trip to Budapest was sealed. I guess I've got a bit to learn yet about selflessness.

Whilst in eastern Europe we took the opportunity to visit a few other places. One of the places we both wanted to visit was Auschwitz, not for curiosity, not for voyeurism and certainly not to take tourist pictures. We sought it as a



Zachary Evans talks with locals while on Immersion at Kiwirrkurra, a remote community in the Pilbara. Mission and Identity Immersions provide boys with the opportunities to experience different cultures and ways of life.

pilgrimage destination with the hope that seeing first-hand the inhumanity of humankind we might come away from that place inspired to live, to love life and to be lifted by acts of bravery, indomitable spirit and survival.

For those of you who don't know, Auschwitz consists of a number of camps, the three main ones being Auschwitz I, II and III. Auschwitz I was built in 1940 and intended for political prisoners. Auschwitz II, known as Birkenau, was constructed in late 1941, eventually becoming the extermination camp that killed between one and two million people. Auschwitz III was basically a factory camp where slave labour was used to supply the Nazi war machine. In January 2013, Antonella and I took the bus from Krakow to Auschwitz I and II.

Auschwitz I is famous for the Arbeit Macht Frei gate. It consists of a number of huge barracks, each once used to house prisoners, now filled to the brim with shoes, spectacles, children's toys, suitcases, human hair and other reminders of the magnitude

of what had happened there, just 15 to 20 years before I was born. Each corridor was lined with photo after photo of the prisoners, their details, the dates of their arrival and of their death. You can imagine the experience is very moving. Towards the end of the barracks was Block 11. This was the notorious 'punishment' block. When I entered this barrack, the sombre mood created by the rest of the camp

“To place others at the centre of your life is what CBC Fremantle is about, and the basis of all healthy relationships.”

became even more oppressive, but I felt something drawing me to the end cell. It was here that I found a small shrine to a Saint, and it was here that I experienced as pure an example of selflessness as I could imagine possible. Like many of you, I was aware of the story of Maximilian Kolbe. I knew there was a school named in his honour. I knew vaguely of the story of his death, but now I was standing in the place of that moment and on the spot where he died.

After the outbreak of World War II, which started with the invasion of Poland by Germany, Kolbe was one of the few priests who remained in the monastery he found himself at the time, where he organised a temporary hospital. After the town was captured by the Germans, he was briefly arrested by them on 19 September, 1939, but released on 8 December. He refused to sign the Deutsche

Volkliste, which would have given him rights similar to those of German citizens in exchange for recognising his German ancestry. Upon his release he continued work at his friary, where he and other friars provided

shelter to refugees from Greater Poland, including 2,000 Jews whom he hid from German persecution. Kolbe also received permission to continue publishing religious works, although significantly reduced in scope. The monastery issued a number of anti-Nazi publications before being closed down by German authorities on 17 February 1941. That day Kolbe and four others were arrested by the Gestapo and imprisoned in the Pawiak prison. On 28 May, he was transferred to Auschwitz as prisoner 16670.

Continuing to act as a priest, Kolbe was subjected to violent harassment, including beatings and lashings, and once had to be smuggled to a prison hospital by friendly inmates.

Prisoners at Auschwitz were slowly and systematically starved to death, the rations being barely enough to sustain a child. Each morning there would be a surge toward the rations being served: one cup of imitation coffee.

In the evening after a day's excruciating labour, the same surge for some weak soup and half a loaf of bread. Despite suffering the same ravages of hunger as everyone else, Father Kolbe stood aside until everyone had had their fill, often missing out entirely. In the harshness of that awful environment, Father Kolbe maintained the gentleness of Christ. At night he would seldom lay down to rest, but moved from bunk to bunk saying, "I am a Catholic Priest. Can I do anything for you?" A Protestant doctor reported that Father Kolbe would wait until all others were treated before asking for help, constantly sacrificing himself for others.

At the end of July in 1941, three prisoners disappeared from the camp, prompting the deputy camp commander to pick 10 men to be starved to death in an underground bunker to deter further escape attempts. When one of the selected men, Franciszek Gajowniczek, cried

out, "My wife! My children!", Kolbe quietly stepped forward, took off his cap, stood before the camp commandant and said, "I am a Catholic Priest. Let me take his place. I am old. He has a wife and children."

According to an eye-witness, in his prison cell, Kolbe led the prisoners in prayer. Each time the guards checked on him, he was standing or kneeling in the middle of the cell and looking calmly at those who entered. After two weeks of dehydration and starvation, only Kolbe remained alive. The guards wanted the bunker emptied, so they gave Kolbe a lethal injection of carbolic acid. Kolbe is said to have raised his left arm and calmly waited for his fate. He died on 14 August and his remains were cremated the following day, the feast day of the Assumption of Mary.

Gajowniczek survived the war, passing away in 1995. He recalled before his death: "I could only thank him with my eyes. I was stunned and could hardly grasp what was going on. The immensity of it: I, the condemned, am to live and someone else willingly and voluntarily offers his life for me – a stranger. Is this some dream?"

As I stood on the spot where Kolbe had died and contemplated this act of supreme selflessness for a stranger I began to think. In a place where survival becomes the only priority and basic instinct, where all the strictures of good manners and grace are set loose, where the inevitability of death is only

alleviated by the hope of life, if a man does this for a stranger, how should I, living in a first world country, with a wonderful family, job and lifestyle, treat others? What, and where, are the barriers for me in treating others well, selflessly and with respect?

The attributes of the CBC gentleman came together almost serendipitously. Each year since their introduction, I marvel at how timeless and immutable they are. As I have often said, they provide a fantastic set of personal attributes that makes for a better society. Selflessness does not have to be at the level of Maximilian Kolbe. It starts each day by looking for the good in others. The 'pleases' and 'thank yous' to those who make your lunch, drive your bus, serve you at the shops. Selflessness can be reflected by the way you offer your seat to another, open a door, or let mum and dad know each day of your love and gratitude. Small gestures to those known and unknown by name for no expected return of the kindness; goodness being its own reward.

In my speech to the graduating Class of 2018, I challenged the young men to think of all those who helped them to this point, and to focus their efforts on bringing joy to the lives of their mothers, fathers, family and friends. I now make the same challenge to the CBC community with the reminder that the only true and long-lasting joy you will ever know is when you do something for someone else.



The final day for Year 12 graduands is celebrated with a traditional ceremony that honours their transition to adulthood and acknowledges their lasting bond as a CBC gentleman.

TOMORROW'S GENTLEMEN RECOGNISES AND VALUES THE OTHER

Tomorrow's gentleman recognises and values the 'other' in his life. It is this final characteristic which is so powerful in meaning but so commonly misunderstood that I would like to explore briefly...

When we devised this aspirational statement some time ago, we were inspired by the words of Br Philip Pinto who was the Congregational Leader of the worldwide Christian Brothers at the time. He said:

I see no value in a centre of learning which churns out numerous school leavers each year and is passively part of a society torn apart by division...our schools exist to challenge popular beliefs and dominant cultural values, to

ask the difficult questions, to look at life from the standpoint of the minority, the victim, the outcast and the stranger.

So who are the people in these categories for each of us? Who is this 'other' who has the potential to teach us about ourselves?

We need to accept that sometimes our 'other' is a significant critic. Earlier this year we made a decision to mount a display on our College fence which brought to the attention of passers-by the plight of the 37 children born to refugees on Australian soil who faced the prospect of being moved to offshore detention. For many Australians, including some sitting in parliament, refugees are their 'other'. In response to our protest I received the following email from a former student of the College:

Dear Mr Kenny

I am extremely disappointed with the display of "Refugee Immigration" on the College fence. What next will you be encouraging your students to display?

I would have thought that the College's role was for students to study hard, learn morality but keep highly politicised issues to individuals and not encourage your students to engage in social issues. The time for this is when your students leave the College and can make their own decisions without undue promotion from the College or its teaching individuals.

Mr Kenny, you are very naive or are not up to speed as to how the media colours many of these issues to assist the promoters of them.



Service is a strong component of the development of tomorrow's gentlemen. Volunteering at St Patrick's Community Support Centre and other service providers offers a deeper understanding of the complexities of our wider community and an appreciation of 'the other'.

My response to the writer was very measured. In addition to disputing my degree of naivety, I pointed out that encouraging our students to engage in social issues was not only desirable but was an imperative of a good Catholic education. I also expressed my regret that his time spent at CBC Fremantle had not been more successful in helping him to establish the qualities of sensitivity and compassion.

I concluded by thanking him for his email which had confirmed the value of our involvement as it is only when flying over the target that anyone takes flak.

During the school holidays at the end of Term 3 this year, I spent two weeks in India. I have no intention of giving you a travelogue titled 'what I did on my holidays' and I write the following with the deepest possible regard for those of you with Indian heritage or who know India far better than I do from my brief encounter with her. My experience was of a beautiful people, an amazingly rich culture and of a chaotic country. It is a place which is over 80% Hindu but still contains the third largest Muslim population in the world. I knew what it was like to be in the minority as one of the 2% of Christians. It is also a place where tolerance in general and religious tolerance in particular

are remarkable and is perhaps best summed up in an expression used by one of the students in the school I was visiting when he said, "India is a place of many religions, many languages, many cuisines – we have Unity in Diversity."

During my time away, India was my 'other' and in this incredible landscape of unfamiliarity I learned so much. In Australia we struggle to share our roads between cars and bicycles. In

“At CBC Fremantle we are committed to seeing our ‘other’ not as a source of fear or suspicion but rather as an opportunity to encounter God who comes to us disguised as the stranger.”

our pursuit of whatever it is we are chasing but which we frequently struggle to name, we lose our patience and our composure. In this land of my 'other' the roads are populated by trucks, buses, cars, motorcycles, rickshaws, pedestrians, dogs, innumerable Brahmin cattle and the occasional water buffalo. They are also a place where street signs and traffic lights are treated as mere suggestions. These roads are places of great noise and movement and harmony. There is no phenomenon known as road rage in this country of over a billion people. Accidents aplenty but no overt anger.

The first Indian winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, Kailash Satyarthi, is a children's rights and education activist who opposes child labour throughout the world. In his acceptance speech in 2014 he said that, "India may be a land of over a hundred problems, but it is also a place for a billion solutions." In this country's amazing capacity for tolerance I gained only the tiniest glimpse of one of those solutions. Satyarthi also said that "in the pursuit of global progress, not a single person should be left out or left behind ... but we have failed our children in imparting an education which gives the true meaning and objective of life – a sense of global citizenship."

When I initially sat down to write this report on the topic of the 'other', I had every intention of identifying the groups which might commonly meet this description in Australia. But you don't need me to do that. Any number of xenophobic and frightened leaders at all levels in our country will do that for you. At CBC Fremantle we are committed to seeing our 'other' not as a source of fear or suspicion but rather as an opportunity to encounter God who comes to us disguised as the stranger. The stranger who unsettles us, challenges our thinking and provides great opportunities for our growth.







A CATHOLIC SCHOOL
IN THE EDMUND RICE TRADITION

51 Ellen Street Fremantle Western Australia 6160
PO Box 1345 Fremantle Western Australia 6959
T 08 9336 2700 www.cbcfremantle.wa.edu.au

Today's boys...tomorrow's gentlemen