



*Learning today,
Leading tomorrow*

St Catherine's School

P.O. Box 5013, Delmenville 1403
Tel: 011 827-4102
E-mail: headofschool@stcatherines.org.za

31 Piercy Ave, Parkhill Gardens
Fax: 011 827-4117
Website: www.stcatherines.org.za

28 February 2019

From the Head of School's Desk

As we look back on the first half of the Lent Term, it's difficult to believe that the year has just started. Half-term is behind us and pupils and teachers are working diligently towards the end of term assessments and their reports.

We have started the year well and our enrolment is up on last year. While there is certainly room for improvement in this regard, we remain pleased with our upward movement at a time when other independent schools are experiencing a decline in numbers and the after-effects of the constrained South African economy. This does not mean that we can rest on our laurels, however. We have already initiated our marketing campaign for the year, and we have hosted the Grade 7 leaders from our neighbouring schools with a view to encouraging their attendance in our Senior School next year. Our first Open Day in February was a great success and many prospective parents displayed a keen interest in our school. At present things are looking most promising for 2020.

The dedication of the new classroom block will take place on Friday 8 March in the newly christened St Patrick's Quad. The building has been named in honour of Sr Aelred O'Donovan, a former Headmistress of the school, and serves to highlight her contribution to the school and the support which we receive from the Dominican Sisters in general. The event will be officiated by Mr Lebogang Montjane, Executive Director of I.S.A.S.A. and will serve as a reminder of the fact that effective education depends on a partnership between school and parents. We will be sure to post photos of the event on the school's Facebook page.

Schools in Gauteng have had to deal with a number of traumatic events in recent weeks. Our sympathy goes out to the parents, staff and pupils at Driehoek High School in the Vaal Triangle on the tragic loss of four pupils and injury to others. We also note with concern the unprovoked attacks at Edenvale High School, Dowerglen High School and Norkem Park High School. I want to assure you that we have reviewed our security measures and that staff stand ready to deal with any emergency which may arise. We may not be able to prevent an attack, but we do have measures in place to mitigate its effect.

I also wish to reassure parents that our new building is fully compliant with all building regulations. The work was done under the supervision of a structural engineer, an architect, a quantity surveyor and a fully registered contractor. The city council have inspected the structure and given the go-ahead for occupation. Every effort has been made to assure the safety of our children.

We have sent out a letter asking parents to consider volunteering for service on the Board of Governors. I wish to thank those who indicated a willingness to become involved in this process. I regret that we cannot include you all. However, it was most gratifying to see the level of interest. I will be communicating with you all in due course to let you know if you will be included in the next step of the selection process.

We will also be sending a school climate survey out to parents to complete and return to school. The aim of this is to get a sense of what parents are happy with at school and where things can be improved. More details will follow.

We have appointed Mrs Liz Morley in the post of Collections Clerk (fees). Mrs Morley has many years of experience in this field and has already made contact with several parents with regard to their accounts. I urge you to give her your full co-operation should she contact you, as she speaks on behalf of the school and the Board of Governors. Her contribution has allowed Mrs Wilson more time to focus on other matters and to provide a more "hands-on" service to parents and pupils.

We celebrate Ash Wednesday this week and the start of the period of Lent. May you achieve peace and fulfilment in this time of reflection and prayer.

God bless.

Mr D.I. Maritz

40
days
of Lent