



Faith, culture & life in harmony
Founded 1941

19 February 2021

Dear St David's Marist Inanda Community

In a year in which very little remained stable and much of what we believed to be immovable and irrefutable changed overnight, as a people we have sought desperately to find that which is true, that which would give us the stability and assurance we need to cope with such an unprecedented affront on our lives. This disruption on how we live, work, educate, socialise, exercise and worship has given us much pause for thought as to what it is that is important and what has value. What we have discovered is that much of what is tangible is transient and that which remains invisible is priceless – kindness, compassion, connection, community, courage, commitment, character.

At the start of the first lockdown, our Head Prefect for 2020, Nqubeko Mthabela quoted novelist James Lane Allen in an online address to the boys of St David's Marist Inanda, "**Adversity does not build character, it reveals it.**"

The Covid-19 pandemic has repeatedly proven the truth of this statement at all levels of society, and pertinently, to the Matric Class of 2020. We are immensely proud of these young men who, when much of their daily lives changed in a physical sense, dug deep and drew on their character and values. Their results reflect their perseverance, determination, commitment, focus and courage. Today, we celebrate both their achievements and their character, the two core elements of a St David's education. They have reached excellence in both. A breakdown of our boys' results is included as part of this communication for your further interest.

We also congratulate and thank every teacher, staff member, parent, family member and caregiver who taught, nurtured, encouraged, prayed for, supported and cajoled these young people throughout their educational journey but specifically through their Matric year.

As we pause to reflect and celebrate, it would be remiss of us as a school and community not to look beyond our gates. Whilst we recognise and celebrate the achievements of the wider South African Class of 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the gross inequalities that continue to exist in our own society and those across the world. Access to quality education remains one of the United Nation's 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 2020 further emphasised the gaps, with many children receiving little to no education, despite the best efforts of society, schools and parents.

As a Marist school, and as a South African school aware of past injustices and working to address current inequalities, we recognise that our role in being part of the solution needs to remain a priority. We recognise the dual challenge that we face as a country to both strive for and celebrate excellence in all sectors of society in order to compete on a global playing field and grow as a country; as well as the challenge to create access to this excellence as a way to address inequality. St David's Marist Inanda remains committed, and invites collaboration to find ways to create this access through partnerships and programmes that include the sharing of insights, skills and resources.

As such we have significantly reduced our advertising budget to profile our Matric results, and have chosen to redirect this spend to our St David's Bursary Programme. This programme aims to create

access to St David's and to ensure that all boys entering St David's on our programme have every chance of success. In honouring the achievements of this unusual year, we have launched the Matric Class of 2020 Bursary Fund under the auspices of the St David's Marist Foundation, towards which we will direct our donation. Our 2020 Class has, over their high school careers already contributed close to R10,000 through their Montagne Day pledges to the Bursary Fund and this amount will now be directed towards the Matric Class of 2020 Bursary Fund. We encourage you to visit <https://www.stdavids.co.za/foundation> to find out more about the St David's Marist Foundation and should you wish to support this initiative further.

We are delighted that all our boys can move on to the next step of their educational and life journey with the necessary academic qualification to supplement the character they have developed and the values they have deepened as a St David's Marist Inanda boy. We welcome them to the ranks of our Old Boys and know that they will live lives of significance and leadership.

Yours in Marist Education,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Thiel', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mike Thiel
Executive Headmaster