



## PRINCIPAL'S ASSEMBLY 28 April 2021 (Term 2 Week 2)

Good morning staff and students

We enter the new term not dissimilar to Term 1.

The COVID-19 Pandemic ever so slightly presents us again with the inconvenience of a three day lockdown, temporary restrictions on movement, mask wearing, social distancing, cancellation of events and a re-emphasis on personal hygiene.

Our situation however falls short still of what is happening across other parts of the world. Today in India for example 330,000 people tested positive to COVID. Watching the news we see the chaos of hospitals turning people away, people literally dying on the street and families either scared for their safety or grieving the loss of a loved one. This is not our reality - it seems surreal to the relative safety of Australia. But it gives a perspective, if not a reflection, on how fortunate we are to be living here at this moment in time.

Today we celebrate ANZAC day and its tradition!

We give thanks for Robert's address today for his service, commitment and advocacy.

As we have heard, Anzac Day, 25 April, is one of Australia's most important national occasions. It marks the anniversary of the first major military action fought by Australian and New Zealand forces during the First World War.

This war in many ways defined our nation and the values and beliefs we hold true to this day. Former Prime Minister Paul Keating said in his 2013 address at the Australian War Memorial:

*Those bloody battles in Flanders, on the Western Front and at Gallipoli nevertheless distinguished us, demonstrating what we were made of. Our embrace of a new sense of human values and relationships through these events gave substance to what is now the Anzac tradition.*

*Those Australians fought and died not in defense of some old-world notion of competing empires and territorial conquests **but for the new world – the one they belonged to and hoped to return to.***

On Sunday morning at dawn I lit a candle on my driveway with my 10 year old son Stephen and tried to explain to him the significance of remembering those who had served or currently serve our country in the Armed forces - those who have fallen; given their lives for what we have in our country and the freedoms we enjoy, the opportunities that are afforded to us.

Story ...

- In 1998 I had the privilege of taking 12 students on a study tour of France – there we spent time re-tracing the steps of the Australian soldiers who had fought during WW1 and WW11.
- Battle of the Somme July to November 1916 – 30,000 died on the morning of day 1.
- Honfleur Villier Bretteneaux and Amien - surrounded by pastoral land - sweeping fields.
- Trying to understand the devastation, the loss was in some ways hard to comprehend until I came across 2 Frenchmen later that night in a restaurant...
- Their parents had fought alongside Australians
- Their great thanks – merci
- At that point I recognized the power of story and the impact people can have on the lives of others.

Our ceremony today encapsulates this message. We have so much to be grateful and thankful for and it is in this grace that it is incumbent on us to make the most of what we have.

The term ahead is full of opportunity. Learning is such a gift - how we use it determines our success.

Dr Jordan Peterson writes in his book *Beyond Order - 12 More Rules of Life*:

*Imagine who you could be and then aim single mindedly at that.*

So I ask all of you: Who do you want to be?

In our College we have a vision that frames the canvas of what is possible: *Shine Through Discovery – Let Your Light Shine*. What is your light? How will it shine?

Take every opportunity this term to be the best person God intends you to be in whatever pursuit you endeavour. Let us be mindful of those around the world who are suffering at this moment. Let us keep them in our prayers.

John Finneran

**PRINCIPAL**