



WOODFORD HOUSE SYNOD REPORT 2012

It is with pleasure I write the 2012 chaplaincy report of Woodford House.

As we head confidently into our second decade of the 21st century, it is heartening to have our school maxim as an effective scaffold for our strategic plan and direction. We can 'cherish the past, embrace the present and challenge the future' with assurance knowing that we continue to offer an extraordinary education for the young women at Woodford House.

At Woodford House we are challenging the future in the way we deliver education. Whether it is the revised prep system, the development of innovative curriculum delivery through the end of year projects, the leadership programme or the scope for integrated learning through the utilisation of technology, we continue to strive for excellence as we offer holistic learning opportunities that are individualised, appropriate, engaging and positive. Boarding and Day school are interwoven in the tapestry of learning, and together bring richness to the lives of young women who are ready to embrace all that we offer.

The young women of Woodford House embrace the importance of learning that is integral to a girls' school. Our leadership programme that grows the 'servant leader' is testimony to that, and offers extraordinary opportunities for girls to develop their leadership skills and lead and serve their community. The future is challenged through the innovative teaching and learning, which is integral to the classroom, chapel and curriculum. All these endeavours are firmly anchored in the past traditions and advantages of a learning environment constructed with girls, for girls.

The first term of this new school year had a very positive start with the news of excellent academic results achieved last year and for some of our senior students the experience of living independently for the first time in the new apartments. For new girl's parents, the continued support of the Parents Association in welcoming them to the Woodford family has significantly aided appreciation of Woodford's special character.

The Boards have been delighted with the responses associated with the development of the new apartments. A special service was held as part of the Official Opening by the Honourable Craig Foss, our local MP and new Cabinet Minister. Importantly, our senior students are clearly thrilled with these new facilities and have responded positively and responsibly to their new environment and all the opportunities the apartments afford them. They are proving a very beneficial component towards a successful transition into life after Woodford.

At the beginning of February, a special service for the 25th anniversary of the Woodford House bus accident was held (February 17, 1987).

This service was well attended by many and proved to be a special healing and gathering time.

Woodford House and the school chapel were founded by a strong core of visionary people who believed in the value and strength of the Christian message.

We are building on these very good foundations. Our task is the same as it was over 100 years ago and that is, to live the Christian faith joyfully and to share it with others.

In Chapel and in the Religious Education classes, prayer is an important focus of all that we do. We pray for our school community, our families and the wider community.

Year group form class services are proving a great success. These offer a wide appreciation of the Christian journey and the student's personal faith journey.

In March a mufti day was held to commemorate International Women's Day. Everyone wore purple. All funds raised went towards Lizzie Victara, a Zimbabwean girl who needs support to go to University. Following on from the United Nations edict that to educate a girl is to empower a family, the girls' awareness was raised by a powerful presentation led by Lucy Crosse, our Service Prefect. By raising the awareness of Lizzie's challenges to our students, we hope to support Lizzie in her inspiring future.

Also in March our Year 12 students were part of a day long workshop with the Red Cross called 'Women in War.' This is the first time the Red Cross has offered the expanded War Law programme to a school in New Zealand. War Law is an interactive day for high school students on issues that affect people in times of conflict. Students hear about the realities of working and living in a conflict-ravaged country. For our Year 12 students the Red Cross team has specifically focused on women and war.

Through all these activities we hope to raise awareness amongst our girls of the challenges many other women and girls face in the world. We want to strengthen the connections within our school family, build links with our communities and develop relationships with service organisations so that our girls may learn how to best support, empower, lead and serve.

Kind regards,

The Reverend Joy Hamilton-Jones

School Chaplain