THE WAY

TERM 4 | THE WAY NEWSLETTER | MONDAY 1 DECEMBER 2025



FROM THE CHAPLAIN

Over 3 days last week, our Year 10 students have been participating in a service-learning program, both at the College and in the community. I have been leading teams to Scalabrini Village, where our students spend time immersing themselves in the daily lives of the residents. They sat with them, listened quietly to their stories, played games, held conversations and showed genuine interest in who they are. In doing so, they stepped into the frailty of aging and for some residents, the complications of dementia.

As I debriefed the students, many shared how they were confronted and moved by what they saw. They responded with compassion, gentleness and respect. I was proud of them. For many, I believe this will be an experience that shapes them for years to come.

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Their willingness to join the residents in their brokenness reminded me of Christmas and why Jesus came. This Bible reading captures that connection perfectly:

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.
In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:
Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death - even death on a cross!”
Philippians 2:3-8

Christmas is the celebration of Jesus taking on our humanity - entering into our frailty and later taking on our sin. Why? So that we might be lifted from our brokenness into God’s sinless eternity. Far better than anything Santa could offer.

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Our students could sympathise and empathise with the residents, but they could not remove their brokenness. Christ, however, not only entered ours, but He also offers to lift us from it.

This Christmas, I encourage you to memorise verses 3 and 4 of this passage and apply them in all your interactions.

May the Lord bless your holidays.

Reverend Denis Oliver
College Chaplain

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