THE WAY

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FROM THE CHAPLAIN

During the holidays, I attended a five-day College excursion. It was an outstanding time of learning. We visited Green Island, the Daintree Rainforest, the Great Barrier Reef and a research banana plantation. The experience was both eye-opening and challenging. Let me share a few key insights.

From the Green Island biologists, I learned that seemingly invisible microplastics are polluting our oceans and killing turtles. We spent time on a tropical beach, and I was surprised by how much plastic we found washed ashore.

Next, we travelled to the Daintree Rainforest and listened to lectures from a local elder. He described the Daintree, in his words, as "Chemist Warehouse and Bunnings combined for the local people." His view of the environment was shaped by stewardship: people must care for the land just as it cares for them.

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The third location that deeply affected me was the banana plantation. We learned from a researcher that many farming practices exploit the land because profit has the final say. Chemicals are used to maximise productivity, leaving the environment depleted. His approach, however, focused on understanding the ecosystem and maintaining balance for long-term returns. The sad reality is that our current posture toward the land is often abusive, taking whatever we can rather than keeping it healthy.

During the bus trips between these locations, I found myself reflecting. We often seem content to pollute the environment as long as the consequences do not affect us directly. We readily exploit creation to serve our own needs. Yet there is another way: the steward's approach, working with nature rather than against it to preserve its health.

I wonder how God feels about all this. I suspect He is grieved when His creation is polluted, abused and exploited. Genesis 2:15 tells us that humans were created to work and care for creation. To be Christian is to be a steward of God's creation. Our bodies, our relationships, our students, our staff, and even our College grounds belong to God. To be Christian is to care for these things, to own our mistakes, and to work faithfully toward restoration and health.

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The polluter, the exploiter, the steward - three approaches to the environment and to people. We all have a choice. As for me, I commit to being a good steward of our staff and your children.

Reverend Denis Oliver
College Chaplain

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