

# It's Time

Term 1  
2017

# Inclusion



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# Who are we and what is our reason for existing???????

"Two are better than one ... For if they fall, one will lift up the other" (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10)

Our College Theme for the year, selected by the current Student Leadership Team, encapsulates the essence of the St Patrick's College community. When someone is in need we step up – this is what we are called to do. Jesus told us to treat others as we would wish to be treated and he also challenged us to love like Christ. We can do this each day in the little ways and we can ensure we tackle some big issues to leave a legacy for future generations.

Whether it be working to preserve our earth for our grandchildren and their grandchildren and so on or preaching love over hate in nearly every justice issues that faces us in this day we cannot be passive and leave it to others. God told all of us to get involved; to be Christ for the world!! How can we sit on our hands and feet when incidents of injustice and hatred are presented? How can we do nothing? What will we tell our children when they ask what we did to stop the pain and hardships? Who will look after us when we fall if we never lift up the other??

It only takes one person to make things happen so *'If evil is contagious, so is goodness. Let us be infected by goodness and let us spread goodness!'* (Pope Francis tweet)

The Social Justice Action Group (SJAG) aim to raise awareness, work for justice and be advocates for the voiceless. While they work tirelessly in the pursuit of peace and harmony, we cannot simply defer to them or groups like them to take action on our behalf. Join them, learn from them, be inspired by them.

You can now follow SJAG on Twitter - [https://twitter.com/SPC\\_SJAG](https://twitter.com/SPC_SJAG) - And all of us can increase our understanding of issues by reading this publication and passing it on.

At St Patrick's we have also introduced a new Co-curricular for Years 7 – 9; the Faith In Action Team (FIAT). They meet every week to learn about matters of faith and connect them to our acts of justice. They will be leading the community in understanding how our foundation in faith guides us towards our actions, and they will be helping to lead the spiritual formation of St Patrick's College. Keep an eye out for their work, including the prayer tree they have set up for Lent in the Chapel and the implementation of the Lenten Carbon Fast in the community.

There is so much good that happens, but sadly one action or one bad word can undo a lot. It is our aim to always 'lift up the other' with compassion and love.

Live Jesus in our hearts, forever.

Gillian Daley

Director of Identity

# The World Attempting Inclusion

What is inclusion? What does it mean? How do we go about it? And how does it impact the world?

“The action or state of including or of being included within a group or structure”

Inclusion, in one sense is the act of acceptance of individuals and groups with differences. These groups may be different in a variety of ways: ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion or worldview. Although there may be variances in individuals and groups one thing remains common across humanity; some form of acceptance and longing for peace.

In a country, as multicultural as Australia, cultures mix such as at the Parramatta Lanes Festival or through film such as in the Tropfest Film Festival. Events like these and many more provide a chance for cultural appreciation and growth as communities. The breaking down of cultural boundaries offers the opportunity for inclusion on many different levels. This also provides the chance for growth as well as understanding of communities.

In the modern era, an explosion of understanding and communication regarding multiple genders has become prominent, especially in the media. With the announcement of Caitlin Jenner's gender transition came a flood of both acceptance and questioning. With many people whom did argue against a change, there isn't a message of inclusion but exclusion. The truth of the matter is that regardless of personal stances, everyone should be accepted and included within the greater community. Exclusion is the cruel person's response to the unknown.

Furthermore, through Mardi Gras, awareness and changing perceptions, different sexualities have become more accepted within the wider world. It's a matter of respect, it doesn't matter whether one agrees with or understands an individual's sexuality. All peoples should be accepted into the community. This assures the security and prosperity of the community through the spread of positivity and lack of negativity.

Finally, religion and world views have always been in affect across the globe. This means that inclusion is needed in this area more than any. Progress toward religious inclusion and acceptance has been made through ecumenical movements but more importantly, interfaith dialogue. Discussion amongst world religious leaders promotes understanding and good relationships. When we promote inclusion we promote understanding and peace.

Inclusion is more than an *It's Time* article, it's a manner of conducting the everyday. It's a step forward, progression toward a better tomorrow. If we offer a hand to each other regardless of differences, we walk in the light. Further, “two are better than one, for if one shall fall the other will lift him up”; we build an inclusive community in order to better the individuals, and thus the whole.

Eoin O'Sullivan

Social Justice Prefect

# Lent

*Return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God. – Joel 2:12-14.*

Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> of March, marked the beginning of our spiritual journey through Lent, where we are encouraged to *“turn away from sin, and be faithful to the Gospel”*. The ashes we received on our foreheads are a reminder of our devotion to God during this time, as we cleanse ourselves through almsgiving, fasting and prayer.

Traditionally, Lent has been a way for Christians to bring themselves closer to the suffering of Christ. During this time, Christians replicate Christ's sacrifice and withdrawal into the desert for forty days. By doing so, we expiate with God to remove sin and grow in virtue and righteousness. Similarly, we keep in our consciousness the sorrow of Christ through his crucifixion, as we await in hope for his Resurrection on Easter Sunday.

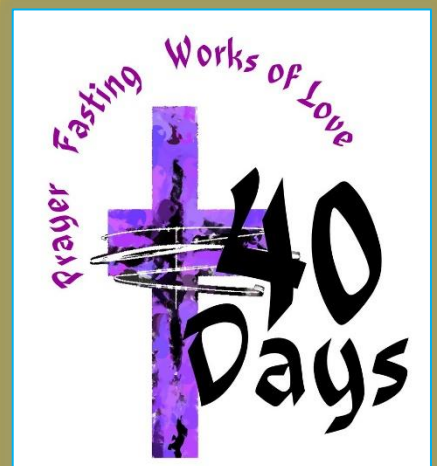
As the Lenten Season is a time to repent, to *“return to the Lord”*, and to enter into an intimate and deep relationship with Christ, it is important for us to live its teaching and spirituality. To repent means we conform ourselves with the Will of God. Therefore, we are willing to leave behind our tendency toward sin, focusing and relying our whole life only on Jesus Christ. Repentance opens our minds and hearts to the transforming power of God's presence and grace, and allows us to return to the merciful heart of the Father.

As a school community, we are called to unite together during this special season of Lent, to bring about both an inner spiritual awakening, and to make a broader impact on those less fortunate in the wider community. By contributing to various Lenten fundraisers, fasting or devoting personal reflection to God, we can make a great impact on the lives of others, and transform our hearts and minds to the love of God.

*“Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same intention. For whoever has suffered in the flesh, has finished with sin”. – 1 Peter 4:1.*

Mitchell Devine

Spirituality and Faith Formation Prefect



# Living out inclusiveness at St Patrick's

*'Inclusive community, a good-quality education is a foundation for dynamic and equitable societies' –Desmond Tutu.*

Being involved in an inclusive community is very important as it brings people closer together. Here at St Patricks College, we strive to form one big, inclusive community consisting of staff, students, parents and the local and global community. To form an inclusive community, we must reach out to others, work together, support each other, be understanding, help others and be more spiritually connected. It is a value we live out every day.

At our College, we are a multicultural community. We have a wide range of cultures who come from many continents. So, we as St Patricks College strive to do our best for the community and include students and staff from all backgrounds showing understanding and acceptance. As a school and as the Faith in Action Team(FIAT), we work together to launch a more uniting and understanding culture, valuing and celebrating each race for who and what it is.

At our school, we like to stay spiritually connected to our faith, and promoting coming together to take part in the Eucharist is an important part of our school's inclusive community. Every Friday our community comes together in worship and reflection, with teachers, parents and students all greeting one another with a smile and solidarity. Father Jack and our student Eucharistic Ministers lead us as a community in prayer and preparation for the Eucharist. At our weekly assembly also held on the same day, the entire school is gathered to celebrate the achievements and talents of one another and promote our tradition and culture in different ways. We are lucky to have the opportunity of coming together as a community every week and connect with each other.



# Living out inclusiveness at St Patrick's – cont'

One of the main values at St Patrick's College is supporting each other and helping others. This is a key part of learning, growing and education. At our college we seek to encourage an anti-bullying culture and ensure it is lived out every day. Bullying others is a poor act and not the way of St Patrick's College, Strathfield. Supporting others is a noble act and one that makes everyone feel good. Simply supporting someone else that may be in need or someone that is not feeling well can make that person's day. This makes people enjoy school and know that they have people around them who can support them and make them feel comfortable. It is not extremely difficult to support and help other people, and these small acts of kindness and generosity, further strengthen our justice and solidarity throughout SPC.

A vital part of forming an inclusive community is working together. If we all work together, we can perform to our best ability. With a team, we can solve complex problems because we have more than 1 mind. To be more collaborative, we must invite others to work with us and we must listen to each other and respect their ideas just as we would like to be respected. Working together also builds bonds and gives us new perspectives on ideas. Working together gives us a sense of belonging.

We believe that living out the inclusive community touchstone every day is extremely important as it brings people together and closer to God.

By Patrick Alphonse, Joshua Chander and Jacob Braithwaite (Year 7)



# Inclusiveness in Sport

## Why is Inclusiveness Important in Sport?

Inclusiveness in sport is an imperative aspect of what makes a team a TEAM! Inclusiveness is important as it incorporates all walks of life in a direct activity to perform to the team's full potential. The fundamentals of a team are working together as one, accepting your team members for their strengths and weaknesses and working on how the team can improve.

Inclusiveness is important in sport as it makes a team productive and successful. Players that do not feel welcome in a team often feel like outcasts and this is a form of exclusion. Collaboration is important in sport as well, as it makes a team feel whole. The All Blacks have a staggering record in Rugby, winning 93 percent of all games in the past 5 years. The All Blacks claim that this is because they don't only choose players based on their skill, but based on their attitude. They incorporate their cultural attributes to create a cohesive team that works in unison and performs to their full potential. The best example of this is when the media found the All Blacks players cleaning the change room and they responded to this by saying that All Blacks take care of themselves. What a positive example to follow??!

Inclusiveness is important in today's society and culture because it is a part of learning. It is an opportunity to create lifelong friendships and to create a better understanding of what it is like to do collaborative learning. This is the same when people start to enter the workforce. Inclusion helps people & groups feel whole.

Luke Philpotts, Marc Salamone, Nick Cassano  
Year 10





# Peer Support

At St Patrick's College Strathfield inclusiveness is one of our core touchstones that encourages us to accept and welcome each other with open arms. Our community is accepting and welcoming, fostering right relationships and committed to the common good. A way in which we encourage inclusive community is through Peer Support where the new Year 5 students and Year 10 students form a bond that helps Year 5 in becoming more accustomed to school life.

The meaning of peer support is to help the new Year 5 transition to St Pat's in a happier, more welcoming way. This is done through the activities that are undergone throughout the day. Most of these activities have alternative meanings where both enjoyment and learning are achieved. Through interacting with the Year 5 boys, we built a sense of trust and understanding between both year groups by encouraging both moral and fun activities. The Juniors through this process discover a new role model in school to share wisdom and advice with, for their future at this school. This shows that St Patrick's College is an inclusive community that aims to form a close bond between both older and younger year groups.

Throughout the program, we are able to speak and listen to each other in a safe environment, without being judged. We give the Year 5's a model to look up to and in return we have someone to look to as a means to strive to be a better person ourselves. The relationships formed through many activities such as building a tower or just playing some basketball, will remain with us even after we leave St Patrick's. Eventhough these experiences are fun, they provide messages to the Year 5's, and even us. If any future Year 10 student is given the opportunity to do Peer Support, we would highly recommend it.

Peter De Meio, Nicholas Giunta, Christian Guarna

Year 11





# The Recognise Campaign

It would be hard not to notice something about the 'Recognise' campaign, either within the college community or in wider society. Perhaps more recognisable by its logo seen above, the campaign has grown increasing support since its official launch in 2011, with now over one quarter of a million Australians declaring their support. But not many in our college community understand what it involves, and fewer understand the shocking and dark issues it seeks to overcome.

Every year, from the 27th of May until the 3rd of June, the College, along with the rest of the country, celebrates National Reconciliation Week. This year is the 50th anniversary of one of the events this week celebrates, being the 1967 referendum. Up until 1967, the Australian Constitution - the rules upon which the country is run and was founded upon - stated:

*51. The Parliament shall, subject to this Constitution, have power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to:-  
...(xxvi) The people of any race, **other than the aboriginal people in any State**, for whom it is necessary to make special laws.*

The section in bold was under question at the time, however this was not as controversial as section 127, stating:

*127. In reckoning the numbers of the people of the Commonwealth, or of a State or other part of the Commonwealth, aboriginal natives should not be counted.*

The first people of the country, weren't just left out of the founding document of Australia, but it actually, literally said that the aboriginal people should not even be counted when conducting a census. And to change this, a referendum was held, with the highest 'YES' vote ever recorded in an Australian referendum.

In 1992, the more familiar Mabo decision was passed in the High Court of Australia, recognising that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have rights to the land, despite the previous understanding of *terra nullius*, meaning that before European settlement, the land belonged to no-one.

In a new century, and in an increasingly diverse country, most Australians would like to believe that, despite the views of particular individuals, Australia as a country is not racist. And certainly, we would all like to believe that clauses in the Constitution such as the ones changed 50 years ago would not remain.



# The Recognise Campaign – cont'

Several members of the College community were asked if they thought the Constitution was racist. Of all of the individuals asked, no student had read any part of the Constitution, but most 'assumed' or 'expected' that it not be racist. Much to the shock of individuals questioned, there are in fact sections in the Constitution allowing the government to make laws specific to a particular race, and further laws prohibiting people of a particular race from voting. By definition, racism describes the action of discriminating against people, based on their race, or to believe that one's own race is superior. Surely creating a law, prohibiting people of a particular race from doing things that any other person can, is not something we as modern day Australians should want to live by. This is a frightening example of exclusion, opposing the inclusion we aim for. (The sections can be found at the end of the article as they appear in the current Australian Constitution).

There is often a struggle to see people as people first, and not by the colour of their skin first. For the Recognise campaign, it is one thing to have a minority of bigoted individuals think classification and stereotyping based upon race is tolerable - it is another for the founding document of the country to permit it.

The primary aim of the recognise campaign however, is to have written proof and acknowledgement within the Constitution, that indigenous Australians were in fact the first Australians. It is widely accepted as fact, and as Harold Ludwick puts it:

*"If the Constitution was the birth certificate of Australia, we're missing half the family".*

The Constitution was written at a time when Indigenous Australians were given minimal rights, and through several changes to the Constitution this has been fixed to a substantial degree. But now, in 2017, the 50th anniversary of the year aboriginal people were legally allowed to be counted on the census, it is about time they are legally counted as the first Australians.

## **COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA CONSTITUTION ACT - SECT 25** **Provision as to races disqualified from voting**

*"For the purposes of the last section, if by the law of any State all persons of any race are disqualified from voting at elections for the more numerous House of the Parliament of the State, then, in reckoning the number of the people of the State or of the Commonwealth, persons of that race resident in that State shall not be counted. "*



# The Recognise Campaign – cont'

## COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA CONSTITUTION ACT - SECT 51 Legislative powers of the Parliament [see Notes 10 and 11]

The Parliament shall, subject to this Constitution, have power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to:  
(xxvi) the people of any race for whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws;

- **Remove** Section 25 – which says the States can ban people from voting based on their race;
- **Remove** section 51(xxvi) – which can be used to pass laws that discriminate against people based on their race;

**Insert** a new section 51A – to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to preserve the Australian Government's ability to pass laws

- for the benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- **Insert** a new section 116A, banning racial discrimination by government; and
- **Insert** a new section 127A, recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages were this country's first tongues, while confirming that English is Australia's national language.

<http://www.recognise.org.au>

Harrison Vellar, Liam Coffey and Jordan Tanti

Year 10



# Recognise this...

*"It's time to RECOGNISE Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia's Constitution and deal with the racial discrimination in it."*

RECOGNISE is the movement to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian Constitution and ensure there's no place in it for racial discrimination.

Their role is primarily focused on raising awareness of the need to end the exclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from the Australian Constitution and deal with racial discrimination in it.

The Constitution was drafted at a time when Australia was considered a land that belonged to no one before European settlement when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were considered a 'dying race' not worthy of citizenship or humanity – especially evident during The Stolen Generation (1910 – 1970 mentioned in the *Bringing Them Home Report*), where the motive of the Australian Federal and State government agencies and church missions was to eradicate the Aboriginal race and ensure they were incorporated into 'white Australian' society. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are not mentioned in the Constitution.

As mentioned on the 'Recognise' website, they strive to ***"see fairness and respect at the heart of our Constitution, and ensure racial discrimination has no place in it"***. Their goal is to ensure a more ***"united nation"***. It is considered a chance for Australia to forge a future together.

St Patrick's College supports this campaign by ensuring awareness is raised. This will be done in a variety of ways including the selling of Recognise pins. Visit the website for more details: <http://www.recognise.org.au/>

**Nicolas Di Cecco**



# Our Purpose

*"I see no value in a centre of learning which churns out numberless school leavers each year and is passively part of a society torn apart by division. Our schools exist to challenge popular beliefs and dominant cultural values, to ask the difficult questions, to look at life from the standpoint of the minority, the victim, the outcast, and the stranger."*

*Philip Pinto, Congregational Leader of the Christian Brothers 2002-2014*

The above words of Brother Philip Pinto summarise perfectly what it means to be a school in the Edmund Rice tradition. It's a tradition based on social justice and liberation and which recognises that to overcome disadvantage, we need to challenge the unjust social and political structures that exist in society.

After all, that is exactly what Edmund Rice was doing 215 years ago when he opened a makeshift school in a converted stable for boys living in poverty in Waterford, Ireland. Edmund was a man of significant wealth who, after experiencing immense personal loss and suffering, realised he had a responsibility to respond to the injustices of his time. His response – opening schools – was not only risky, but it was also considered illegal.

However, in the words of Martin Luther King Jr, "one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws."

Not only did Edmund disobey unjust laws, but he was also part of a movement for change. He understood the need to address the underlying cause of his students' poverty: the Ireland of his day was not a free country, with its people oppressed by foreign rule.

Thus, Edmund was a staunch Irish nationalist. He even invited the leader of the Irish nationalist movement, Daniel O'Connell, to open his first school in Dublin. This event effectively became a political rally and was attended by over 100,000 people.

For Edmund, education was not an end in itself; rather it was a means of overcoming social, economic and political injustice.

In 1928, St Patrick's became part of this radical tradition. In the words of Old Boy and internationally acclaimed author Tom Keneally, St Patrick's had the task "of elevating the Catholic children of the working and lower middle class, of giving them their due place...It was a social justice story."

It is fair to say that the vast majority of St Patrick's students are no longer the children of Sydney's Catholic working class. However, if our purpose is merely educating the Catholic children of the middle class to be middle class, we have turned away from our reason for being.

# Our Purpose – cont'

New challenges have emerged about which we cannot stay silent. Refugees and people seeking asylum are denied their right to live in peace. Indigenous incarceration rates are now higher than they were 25 years ago and little progress has been made to meet the Closing the Gap targets. And we are losing the race against dangerous climate change, the consequences of which are truly catastrophic.

As a community in the Edmund Rice tradition – a community of students, teachers, parents and Old Boys - we have an obligation to act in response to these challenges. To respond effectively, we must do more than simply raise funds for various charitable causes (as important as this work is). We need to work to overcome the causes of injustice, just as Edmund Rice did over 200 years ago. That's why the work of the Social Justice Action Group and projects like Detention for Detention and immersions to Alice Springs and PNG are so important.

While I am always proud to be an Old Boy of St Patrick's, I was especially proud when I heard that the school was taking part in the Detention for Detention campaign. It is exactly what a school in the Edmund Rice tradition should be doing. Therefore, it was also disappointing to hear that this important campaign was the subject of complaints by some parents, with one parent even phoning a talkback radio presenter to criticise the school publicly.

However, complaints like these are nothing compared with the challenges Edmund Rice faced when he opened his first school in Waterford 215 years ago. And if Edmund Rice was prepared to break laws to stand up for social justice, surely we can bear a bit of criticism as we continue his mission of challenging popular beliefs, asking the difficult questions and looking at life from the standpoint of the minority, the victim, the outcast, and the stranger.

Dominic Ofner

*St Patrick's College Captain 2008*

*Co-ordinator of Development, Promotions and Campaigns, Edmund Rice Centre for Justice, Homebush*

## **It's Time Magazine**

**Have you been moved to contribute???**

**Members of the community are invited to contribute articles by sending them to [Identity@spc.nsw.edu.au](mailto:Identity@spc.nsw.edu.au)**