

Diocesan Synod Report 2022 – Christ's College.

Tēnā koutou katoa.

Greetings to you all the family of Christ.

In reporting on the significant events of this year as a new incumbent of some five months, the retirement from the chaplaincy at Christ's of The Reverend J. Bosco Peters is first and foremost in mind. After 23 years as College Chaplain Bosco was farewelled under Covid-19 restrictions at the conclusion of 2021. Many present and former students and staff have paid tribute to Bosco and Helen for their committed service to the college, and the values and mission for which it was founded, since the retirement was announced. As a new chaplain one can only add it is a great gift and legacy he and Helen bequeath for the place of worship, and religious instruction on this campus. The boys in the main genuinely appreciate chapel, are confident in asking questions about God, themselves and others, and college leadership and staff have a sense the name above the gates is significant in what it means to be part of this community.

Christ's enters 2022 with a roll of 702 students, including 164 boarders and 21 international students. For comparison the roll of 2018 was 645, and so demand for places at the college is strong.

Unsurprisingly the year was dominated by Covid-19, restrictions rather than lockdowns in the main. As a result chapels have been a mixture of online (under Rev'd Peters) and in Term 1 of 2022 by House (70 boys) in chapel at any one time. There was no school singing until as term 2, and half the school attended chapel in two services ensuring every student was in chapel once a week. In term 3 full school chapels returned, Monday and Friday, and congregational singing on Wednesday, all indoor classes and events requiring masks.

During terms 1 and 2 full school Eucharist's were in abeyance, but provision was made during lunchtime hours weekly for those who would attend voluntarily to do so. The school celebrated it's first full school Eucharist at the end of week 1 term 3.

The College Diploma which has replaced Level 1 NCEA is now into its third term, and given the disruptions in face to face learning resulting from isolation periods and illness, is bearing fruit. Seeing an wholistic

approach to the development of our students inside and out the classroom is something which may take time to bed in. But the potential for improvement in seeing our graduates as men of virtuous character, achieving within, and contributing to society is congruent with the special Christian character of this setting. As ever striving for academic excellence remains a focus at Christ's College.

Executive Principal Garth Wynn and the chaplain have been putting together an 'Our Anglican Identity' resource for perspective parents/ caregivers, supporters, and the wider community. For many of our College family, church, let alone the special nature of Anglicanism in this place is some mystery. The resource draws heavily on existing symbols at the College, and sees us aspirational in identifying as Anglicans in our context - Christ Centred, Journey Focussed, Worshipfully Expressed, and Bi-Culturally Committed. It is hoped the resource will open pathways for questions and reflection from all quarters of the community on the Anglican Identity at Christ's College.

In 2022 the College Chapel and surrounding environs will host their first Services of Holy Matrimony, and weddings without restriction to Old Boys or those directly associated with the College. It is hoped this will be a revenue stream which will support the College into the future, and also an opportunity to engage with the wider city. Services in the chapel will reflect our Anglican Identity, mindful always of our mission to build the body of Christ the Church, and respectful of the Memorial aspect of the Chapel itself.

In reflecting on my first terms as the College chaplain it is clear this College promotes and upholds it's special character starting at Board and Executive level. The Principal asked a question on day one, 'What would Christ whose name we bear think if he walked into the College, after all he has the naming rights?' As I move between our services of worship, the classroom, the boarding houses, sports fields, and the staff room; this question returns to me again and again. The KPI's one might use to respond to this vary, as do we all day to day in seeking to live the Gospel of light and love – the living Word that is Christ. Though one can hardly hope to contribute as significantly, or for as long as my predecessor, that question is one I commit to asking regularly of this community in our daily witness.

The Reverend Cameron Pickering
Chaplain
Christ's College Canterbury.