

Weekly Update, Monday 6 December 2021, 9:30am



Dear Parents

**ST CHARLES COLLEGE**  
S O U T H A F R I C A

### Counting the cost of 2021

When all is counted up, despite infection waves, riots and an election, we are able to say that in 2021 we haven't missed a day of school. Yes, we did have to add in two weeks of extra days just to make sure, but here we are, and yes, the Grade 6 and 7 boys are online for a while, but we still aim to finish well and seal this year off for good.

### Lessons we have learnt

- The biggest lesson, I think, would have to be identifying what is most important. In the crisis days it became so clear that material possessions and position hold no value when our children, family, friends, health, relationships and safety are at stake.
- I hope we have learned that we cannot ignore the poverty and misery of those who are excluded from our economy. Our collective safety and prosperity must be built on basic human care and access for everyone.
- We have learned the importance of hope for the human soul – when it is in our power to act or encourage others we should never delay – we do not know how close to giving up someone could be.
- Technology can assist us to live more-human lives and give us time to interact more meaningfully - or it can disengage us from others and consume our attention. We have important choices to make in the future.
- I hope we have learnt new respect for experts and those who study and work towards excellence so that they can provide answers to complex questions in times of distress.
- We accept that the world can change our plans in an instant. Perhaps we are not as in control as we have liked to imagine.
- Our words matter, and small acts of kindness can change a person's life.

### Listening is important

During the course of the year boys told us that when they play up, they want us to ask why, because there is always a reason for their behaviour. This insight into the way our boys are processing the distress of our times was a significant signal to us all to prioritise listening and making an effort to understand others before we judge them.

### An unconventional year

2021 has been a most unconventional year and the mountains that were in front of us have often seemed too big to climb. On behalf of all our staff, I want to thank you as a community for your support, courage and perseverance. At this time of Christmas, we hope the story of the amazing grace of God will bless you as you consider that He entered our world as a baby with the simple purpose of getting your attention and reconciling you to Himself.

I do not know exactly how we have made it to this point, but I do know this:

<sup>17</sup> the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength. 2 TIMOTHY 3:17

Yours faithfully

Allen van Blerk  
PRINCIPAL