

17th July 2024

Dear All,

Wow! Where did that academic year go? Seven Ofsted inspections, six half terms, five capital projects, four new schools, three new Heads, (only) two Prime Ministers, one European Championship (nearly) and countless lessons, assemblies, Masses, liturgies, trips, fixtures, performances and events, it has all been a bit of a blur!

Let me start properly by offering a warm welcome to the school communities of St. Joseph's, Redhill and St. Francis, Caterham who officially join the Xavier family on 1st August. We have enjoyed working closely with leaders and staff at both schools throughout this year and we look forward to all the good that will no doubt come from this exciting new chapter in the life of the Trust. This brings the number of children and students in the Trust to over 10,000 and the total number of staff to almost 1,700. How wonderful to be part of such a large family!

As we welcome the newest members of the family, we say farewell to some of the longest standing. It has been a real privilege again to visit those who are moving on from Xavier schools this summer after notably long stints of service. Particular thanks to those who have served for 20 years or more: Teresa Wort at The Marist, Sam O'Connor at Holy Family, Karen Byrne at St. Alban's, Caroline Ryan at St. Anne's, Kevin McAllister at St. Thomas of Canterbury and Tony Lucas who has been part of the premises team at SJB for 35 years! The dedication of these good people is to be applauded and we wish them every happiness in the future.

Our final theme of the week for this year has been "mission", inspired by the reading that sees Jesus sending out the disciples to spread the message of the Gospel through their words and actions. We are reminded that we are all "sent out" at the end of term and although most of us will return again in September, whilst we are away from school, we are called to proclaim our faith in all that we do and say. For many, putting love into action through charitable acts offers a practical means of fulfilling this mission and the annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes offers a great opportunity for just that. The Pilgrimage celebrates its 50th anniversary this summer which will be a great cause for celebration, and we are delighted to have record numbers of Xavier students attending as helpers.

I know that Lourdes holds a special place in the hearts of many of us as it has been a fantastic source of inspiration, revelation and vocation for students, families and staff over the years. I look forward to meeting plenty of members of the Xavier family in the various places we gather in Lourdes, perhaps we can even arrange to have our own group photograph on the esplanade during the week. One group of pilgrims who will be particularly pleased to arrive are those intrepid staff from SJB who are cycling there to raise money for charity in memory of Nick Windsor, former Deputy Headteacher and Lourdes pilgrim. If you are looking for a way to proclaim your faith through an act of charity, please follow this [link](#) to make a donation.

As always, I should like to take this opportunity to thank you for your contribution to all that has been achieved this year. We continue to be blessed with the most hard-working, talented and loving staff, highly committed and capable governors, almost universally supportive parents, carers and families and of course, the most delightful and brilliant children and young people. Whatever your role, thank you for everything you have brought to the mission and for all the success we have celebrated together.

If you are one of those in Year 11 or 13 awaiting results this summer, we wish you every success on the day and in whatever you are moving on to next, we look forward to celebrating your achievements. To everyone else, on behalf of all at Xavier, please let me wish you a very happy and restful summer holiday.

God bless,

James Kibble
CEO