



Final Term 4 Assembly – Rector's Address

Christine Leighton

Friday 27 October 2023



Morena koutou katoa

This morning's assembly gives us a final opportunity to recognise more outstanding achievements before our Leavers' Assembly on Monday and of course our whole school Prizegiving at the end of November. Welcome to whānau who have joined us this morning as we have much to celebrate.

Our recent term break was a chance for a number of teams to participate in national level tournaments with the netball, girls' basketball, and trap shooting teams doing exceptionally well. All these sports required a sustained level of commitment, training and resilience both in the lead up to and during the competitions.

The teams will be recognised later in the assembly, but a particular shout out goes to the Girls' Senior A basketball team for their second place in New Zealand – a phenomenal success, losing in the final to Westlake Girls' High School after an unbeaten run to this point.

Also competing at nationals were the Girls' A netball team, coming an impressive 13th in the country against an incredibly strong line up of teams. The trap shooting team also competed at nationals, enjoying exceptional success in the North Island Championships with the female team coming second place. Maggie Hood (Year 13) retained her title as female North Island Skeet Champion.

Congratulations to these three teams for their recent success and also to coaches and managers for their skill, encouragement, guidance and organisation.

We have also recently heard that Sienna Stowers-Smith (Year 13), along with her other achievements, has been named in the New Zealand U21 Netball team. It is very rare for a Secondary School student to be named in a team at this level and an indication of the exceptional talent of Sienna. Congratulations Sienna.

An individual performance on the world stage is the first place of Year 10 student Jake Wilson in the Amateur Jet Ski competition held recently in Arizona, USA. This was an open competition with no age restrictions which makes his first place quite exceptional. Jake will receive his recognition with a Colours Award later in the assembly.

There have also been some recent outstanding Cultural achievements. The St Andrew's College band, The E.C.H.O. played once again in the finals of the Battle of the Bands in Auckland – an impressive feat to make it to the last round against adult bands.

Georgia Eagle (Year 13) has recently returned from another trip to Scotland to compete in the World Solo Drumming Championships. Competing in Juvenile Section 5 (16-18 year-olds) against 18 other drummers, Georgia came in fifth place in this world competition.



Closer to home, Christine Jeon (Year 13) had phenomenal success over Labour weekend, competing in the Performing Arts Competitions Association of New Zealand awards (PACANZ) in Palmerston North. This competition is open to students under the age of 21 and attracts not only the top school musicians on any instrument from across the country, but also those studying at university. After several rigorous performance rounds, Christine was named as winner of this prestigious competition, securing an impressive trophy and prize money of \$5000. Congratulations.

Last night St Andrew's was well represented at the Zonta Sports Awards presentation. Congratulations to the following finalists:

Category 1 - Most Valued Contribution to a Team

Harris Steel (Year 12) – Rowing
Torin Ward (Year 13) – Basketball

Contribution to Sports Administration

Liam Hackston (Year 12) – Football Referee

Most Outstanding Achievement in One Sport

Kavanah Lene (Year 13) – Basketball
Lauren Whittaker (Year 13) – Basketball
Jonah Cropp (Year 13) – Racewalking Athletics

Most Outstanding Team

St Andrews Girls' 1st XI Hockey
StAC Senior Girls' Basketball

Best All Rounder

Friederica Todhunter (Year 13) – Rowing and Rogaining
Molly-Belle Morrow (Year 12) – Netball, Volleyball and Basketball
Penelope Taulafo (Year 13) – Hockey, Rugby, Rugby 7's, Volleyball and Touch
Sienna Stowers-Smith (Year 13) – Netball, Touch and Rugby 7's

Last night at the awards ceremony St Andrew's featured in three winning categories:

Most Valued Contribution: Winner Harris Steel for Rowing
Most Outstanding Girls' Team: Highly Commended Hockey and Basketball
Best All-round Sportswoman (more than one sport): Penelope Taulafo

There is certainly a great deal to celebrate this morning. This success cannot happen without the contribution of all of you, whether you are participating for fun and enjoyment or a serious competition. Congratulations for what you contribute not only to your own development but to our St Andrew's community.

Thank you also for the way so many of you supported Grandparents' Day last Friday. It was the largest number of grandparents on record and was a great success. A special thanks to those who provided items for the concert in the Chapel.



Congratulations to the jazz bands who performed last Saturday at the Big Band Jazz Festival in Christchurch. All involved represented St Andrew's with pride, and those who braved the chilly morning were treated to an hour and a half of great entertainment.

Finally, congratulations to approximately 60 students involved in the cast, crew and orchestra for the current Middle School production *The Little Mermaid*. Once again Director, Ms Ginnie Thorner, Musical Director Mr Duncan Ferguson, and other staff and parent helpers have produced a stunning evening's entertainment.

This ambitious and well-loved show has been sold out to most appreciative audiences who are transported to a magical world of mermaids, sea creatures and mythical figures. Best wishes to all for the final two performances.

At yesterday's chapel I spoke to you about the power of story. Each of us creates our own story, and an Old Collegian who is doing just that is very much in my mind this weekend. Richie Mo'unga a key player for the All Blacks at Number 10 attended St Andrew's for four years from 2009–2012. He is a proud Old Collegian who keeps in touch with his school.

After the semi-final against Argentina I sent him a text from us all, wishing the All Blacks well for the final this weekend: "Just want you to know how proud all at StAC are of you and the All Blacks. You have made many people so happy today and we wish you and the team all the best for next week and the big final".

Richie replied immediately: "Thanks so much for the message. Really appreciate it... Always waving the StAC flag wherever I am". Richie Mo'unga's story is certainly one that will be captured in St Andrew's College history. Go the All Blacks!

On Monday we have our Leavers' Assembly where we honour those who will not be returning to St Andrew's for Years 12 and 13 in 2024. Year 11 students will have their final year group assembly and graduation into the Senior College on Monday afternoon.

After a very busy two weeks it is time to transition into full study and examination preparation so that your results in January will be satisfying and you can say you have done your best.

Best wishes to you all for what lies ahead.
No reira – tena koutou katoa.