

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE ASSEMBLY FRIDAY 25TH OCTOBER 2019

I am sure that we have all been enthralled by the Rugby World Cup being held in Japan. It has been fascinating to witness the courageous and spirited performance by the home team, affectionately called the "Brave Blossoms". Their performance in the pool stages, beating Ireland and Scotland, was remarkable considering that they are not one of the so-called rugby super powers. While I am sure that we all enjoyed the victory by the Boks in the quarter final, we are full of admiration for the Brave Blossoms and the style of rugby they played.

I think we can learn a lot more from the way Japan have hosted this World Cup. The stadiums have been amazing and the support tremendous. The Japanese spectators leave their stadiums spotless and pick up after themselves.

What I have noticed though, is how players from all countries have adopted the amazing show of respect which the Japanese have shown to their opponents and spectators during and after the games. Have you noticed how a player bows and honours the players on the field and the crowd when he is substituted? After every game they stand in a line and bow to the spectators as a sign of gratitude and respect.

I have noticed that the other teams, including the Springboks, have picked up on this and are doing the same. The nation and its people have been an amazing example of welcome, dignity and respect, proud but humble.

I have thought a lot about how it is opportune that we take the Japanese example to reflect on how a visitor, or even each of us who work and learn here at Bishops, feel about our own situation here. I refer here not only to academic staff, but to our admin and support staff as well.

Do we feel welcome, respected and shown dignity in our daily lives irrespective of our race, religion, sexual persuasion, gender or economic standing? Do we reciprocate that to others? How do we really treat those who are different to us? How do we treat and welcome a visitor stranger? Do we greet and welcome them? Do we clean up after ourselves at sports events? Do we pick up litter when we walk past it?

What do we do when we witness boys acting in a way which is contrary to our values and beliefs and for what we stand for? Do we intervene when we see boys acting in a racist, sexist, discriminatory way, or bullying others? Or is the code of silence stronger than doing the right thing?

These are tough questions, but they need to be asked. Let me give you an example, what do we do when we hear boys involved in casual racism. Do we call that out or do we ignore it? We need to remember that it is very difficult for a someone who is in a minority group to call out this type of behaviour, it is up to us who are in the majority to do so. Let us always do the "hard right" and not settle for the "easy wrong".

In the end, when in doubt, apply the golden rule: treat others the way you would like to be treated. In the words of Kent Nerburn; "Measure your greatness by the length of your reach,

but also by the gentleness of your touch. For now, the world needs hands that love, not hands that conquer. Let your hands be among them.”

To end with a real good news story:

On the morning of the 18th October the Housemother of Founders, Mrs Lorraine Chateau and two of the dorm staff, Messrs Mabel Andrews and Patricia Levendal; safely delivered the baby of their colleague Mrs Lerato Mothlanke. She was due to go on maternity leave next month but baby **Nkosiyabo** which means “our King”, had other ideas and arrived in the 35th week of her pregnancy. He is a bonny baby and doing well and has already been discharged from hospital!