

CHAPLAIN'S COMMENT

Dear Parents and Friends of the College,

With the 2004 academic year all but over, it's time to write on some of the happenings that have centered on our Christian Cornerstone of our College.

I greatly enjoyed my sabbatical in Term Three. The opportunity to step back from the daily demands and routine was appreciated. My sincere thanks goes to **Mrs Debbie Starck** for covering Religious Studies classes in my absence. Debbie did a great job, with the boys enjoying a new face in front of them in the classroom. I must also congratulate members of staff and students for leading the Tuesday and Thursday morning chapel services. The comments have all been extremely positive, with everyone rising to the challenge of leading worship in fine style. I also thank the Rev'ds Nolan Martin and Craig Kilgour for so ably covering the Sunday evening services.

I returned at the beginning of the Fourth Term, straight back into the busyness of end of year activities. Once again this year, attendances at Sunday evening chapel services have been extremely encouraging, with both students and parents taking seriously their commitment to our college's special character. Again this year we have had on average, five Sunday evening services a term. This means that boys must try and plan ahead to ensure they are able to meet the required number of chapels. Generally they do extremely well and are to be commended for this.

Well done to our **Year 13 students** who have led chapel this term and especially to **Jay Sorensen and his group of Prefects** for the fine job they did in fronting the Prefect's Chapel service. Jay's sermon was exceptional and he is to be congratulated on the fine job he did.

My usual word of thanks must go to **John Snowling and Angela Warmke** for their involvement in fronting the various music groups that accompany our singing in chapel. Also to the students who make up these groups for their willingness to give of their time and talents in this way. Their contribution is enormous and very much appreciated. Also to **Wendy Jones** and the ladies who do the flower arrangements in the Chapel and Homestead foyers. Looking ahead to next year, Wendy would be keen to hear from any folk who would be prepared to join the flower arranging team as we will be losing some folk at the end of the year. .

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With Christmas approaching fast, we become conscious of the busyness and demands leading up to one of the most important seasons of the church's year. In the rush to get "everything done" we often overlook the fact that, for many, it is not the joyous, happy time that it is for others. We live in a needy world, a world torn apart by war, division, famine and need, even here in "God's own." With this in mind we are asking all students in the school to once again bring along to the **Carol Service** a **non perishable food item** to donate to the **Hastings District Community Foodbank**, to support those in special need within our local community at this time of year. It was a great success last year and we trust that you will support it again this year.

I take this opportunity to sincerely thank all those associated with the Lindisfarne College community for their support of the Christian Dimension and of my role as Chaplain. The job is a challenging and rewarding one, and I greatly enjoy my association with your sons. They are, generally, a great bunch and they work extremely hard at upholding and living out the Christian values and standards talked of in Chapels and Religious Education classes.

May you all have a safe, relaxing and joyous Christmas season, knowing God's every blessing as we move into a New Year with its many challenges and opportunities.

Every good wish to you and yours.

Sincerely

Rev. Warren Fortune
CHAPLAIN:

CUTHBERT HOUSE CHAPEL SERVICE - Sermon presented by Joshua Bird

Let me begin to try to encapsulate in one phrase the point I want to make clear today: "Determination determines direction". One's determination, good or bad, determines the direction of one's life, as well as one's choices and actions.

We hear much these days about determination. Certainly, determination is a required asset and for just about any endeavour, determination is a necessary quality. If one expects to do well at school, they must be determined to do so. If you want to go on to develop a thriving business, you must be determined to overcome every obstacle. Realising your goals is likely to be a measure of your determination to achieve those goals.

An example of determination comes in the film 'Ice Age', where the little squirrel is trying to store an acorn for the coming ice age. He faces many challenges holding onto his acorn like splitting ice, giant cliffs or thieving sloths and no matter the challenges he is determined to keep it. This demonstration of single purpose is all that keeps the squirrel from losing his most precious possession. This is a good illustration of how determination can be applied to our lives. No matter how tough life gets, no matter what God passes onto the squirrel, he holds onto the faith that he will eventually be able to enjoy his acorn. He keeps hold of his determination in order to realise his goals and dreams.

The determination to succeed has blessed all those in this room. In the reading Easton has just shared with us, God has asked us to search, to ask and to knock. We will not be given without taking that first step; it is in this way that determination determines direction. It is this first step that requires the most resolve and which decides the direction we take in life we can choose the easy way out or with more will-power tackle the more rewarding path, hard work in the pursuit of success.

For most of us study is already underway for the coming exams which we will all face but for some that study has yet to commence. I urge these people to dig deep and find the fortitude needed to take that first step and begin studying.

For those who have started, a different type of determination is needed to keep to their goals and not to be distracted, not only in study but in future challenges they will face. Their determination will determine their direction and ultimately their success in life.

Take from your faith both in yourself and God to realise your goals. If we have determination we will find the strength to run the race set out before us, and like the squirrel in the film, we will finally catch the prize.

DURHAM HOUSE CHAPEL SERVICE – presented by Jordan Williams

An elderly woman had two large pots which she used to fetch water from the stream, each hung on the ends of a pole, which she carried across the back of her neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water.

At the end of the long walk from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full. This went on daily for a full two years, with the woman bringing home only one and a half pots of water each trip. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it could only do half of what it had been made to do. After two years of what it perceived to be bitter failure, it spoke to the woman one day when they were by the stream. “I am ashamed of myself, because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house”.

The old woman smiled – “Did you notice that there are flowers on your side of the path, but not on the other pot’s side? That’s because I have always known about the crack that you consider your flaw, so I planted flower seeds on your side of the path. Every day while we walk back, you water them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house”.

Similar to the pots, we’re all different. Not one of us here shares exact values or opinions, but something even more unique between us is our individual skills and talents. Despite what some people believe, no one is good at everything. However, what’s far more important is that everyone is good at something. In other words, we still have our weaknesses but we also have our strengths.

Unfortunately, often we have a limited ability to dictate what our weaknesses may be. For example, even if I was to practice for 8 hours a day for 5 years, I still wouldn’t make it into the 3rd XI cricket. Likewise, we have members of our school community that may not be high achievers academically, but bring glory to our school in other fields of achievement, for example a student in here that has represented his country on two wheels. An amazing achievement.

We look at Sir Edmund Hillary, perhaps the greatest New Zealander, yet he was not the traditional academic or sporting success that you would have expected when at college.

With this in mind, I want to talk about two things today: The first is acceptance of our own weaknesses and the second is the ability to tolerate other peoples.

Sometimes, the easiest way for a happier life is to accept things the way they are. No I’m not meaning saying to yourself – ‘I’m not good at maths so why bother studying’. I am meaning happiness can be found by having a greater understanding that there are some areas of your life you will find harder than others. By accepting this and working at developing an appreciation of your own uniqueness and abilities in others areas, you can focus on your positive aspects and not sweat the things that don’t matter.

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To know, understand and most importantly accept our own weaknesses, not only allows us to work on what we're not good at but also gives us the ability to recognise what our strengths are. When we do this self analysis we become much more at ease with who we are and are able to identify our achievable potential.

As Vexen Crabtree said, (yes that is his real name) and I quote:

"The biggest weakness of all is not knowing your weaknesses and leaving them wide open for anyone to abuse at any time. Without self knowledge self development is folly!"

There are so many people that have overcome huge disadvantages to achieve their ambitions. People like President Roosevelt who led America through a world war, despite being bound to a wheelchair; Helen Keller, who was deaf, blind and mute yet entered university and graduated with a bachelor of arts degree and who became a role model for many with disabilities; and Christopher Reeve who achieved much more and will be remembered not for his achievement as Superman but for his determination following his horse riding accident and the legacy he left as a motivator for quadriplegic people.

The second thing I want to reflect on is tolerance. In the reading Ryan shared with us today Jesus showed tolerance for Zacchaeus, even though he knew Zacchaeus was not the most worthy and most likeable bloke at the time. Jesus showed tolerance and in return Zacchaeus responded in a positive way.

As human beings we naturally seek out and identify weaknesses in others. We all know we have our own weaknesses so why then do we live in such an intolerant environment towards other people? We're all only too happy to jump on the bandwagon when others shortcomings are exposed.

My challenge for you today is to think about your own predetermined shortcomings and how these differ from the person sitting next to you. Try to see in others around you not only their irritating weaknesses but also their, sometimes less obvious strengths. Try to show them the understanding and tolerance required and in doing so give them the opportunity to demonstrate their strengths.

Here at Lindisfarne we have many opportunities to build on the things we are good at and interested in. Not everyone here, shares the same talents or interests as their colleagues. But we all have our particular contribution to make to the bigger picture.

In conclusion, none of us are born perfect. It is the interaction of all sorts of different people that fills the world with interest and unexpected excitement. We are all different in the way we interact and fit into society. By understanding this we can accept ourselves for what we are and strive towards reaching our full potential and by being tolerant to others we can help them identify and achieve theirs.

OSWALD HOUSE CHAPEL SERVICE – presented by Brad Richards

Over the last two years, it has become a habit of mine to flick on my stereo on Sunday nights at 7.00 p.m. and listen to the High Performance Hour on Radio Sport (other than weeks I'm at chapel, of course). Guests on this show haven't been limited to sports stars, indeed a wide range of people have been featured, with the likes of Mike McRoberts and Richard Noble, being featured in the past.

Anyway, the idea with the High Performance Hour as these guests come on, talk about their experiences, how they have got to where they are and give a little advice for everyone out there listening. With each different guest, I have tried to listen out for the pieces of advice that are the same. Without fail, each of the individuals who have starred on this segment have talked about two things:

- living life to the full
- and following your dreams

One of the most recent guests on the show was Dick Hubbard. Successful in the business world and now in local body politics, Dick is well-known for his motivational sayings and anecdotes which he sends out with his Clipboard newsletter in boxes of Hubbard's cereal. One of the stories Dick likes to tell goes like this:

A man lived his entire life without taking a risk. He stayed within his comfort zone and never failed once in his life but consequently didn't succeed at much either. One day he died and the family went to cash in his insurance. Upon investigating however, the insurance company did not pay out. Why? They decided that given his track record the man had not lived at all and therefore could not have died.

Naturally, we all want to make the most of our lives, and if I were to run a quick survey around the room about what you all want to do with your lives, very few of you would say "I want my life to be mediocre, boring and meaningless". Ten years down the track however, if we were to ask you to describe your life at that exact moment, some people would be forced to use those words. Because like it or not, very few people live life to the full. They ignore the many doors they have open to them, and instead set out in life living out the ambition someone else has bestowed upon them. All this does is mean that our individual potential for greatness is never fulfilled.

The poem Mark shared with us today encapsulated the manner in which we should live out our life. It's title, "Carpe Diem" means "seize the day". There are two moments I will never forget of my time at Lindisfarne. The first is the first time I heard those words, Carpe Diem. Mr. Welch, in his leaving address to the school, talked about the importance of seizing the day, and gave a list of all the opportunities available at Lindisfarne. I think his list was so elaborate of opportunities at Lindisfarne that he listed a few of them two or three times. Nevertheless, the motto of Carpe Diem has not left me since.

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I think everybody in this chapel has had reinforced by others standing where I am today about the importance of taking opportunities, so I'm not going to go down that path. In any case, Carpe Diem means more than just taking opportunities. Carpe Diem sums up those two key things all of the guests on the High Performance Hour have talked about. Live life to the full, and follow your dreams. The two ideas go hand in hand.

At a time when the leavers are making their final decisions for next year, I encourage you to look deep inside yourself and consider: am I really doing what I want? Because it is not possible to live life to the full following someone else's dream, be it the dream of your parents, your teachers, or your friends. Living life to the full is about following your own dream.

To the rest of the school who aren't leaving just yet, don't think this message applies any less to you. Following your dreams and living life to the full starts today. Every decision you make, and every opportunity that you take, will impact on where you consider your life to be in ten years time. This is where the second thing I will never forget of my time at Lindisfarne comes in. Henry Willis, in his Head Prefect's service of 2000, talked about the poster he had above his bed in his cube. The poster read: Every morning in Africa the gazelle wakes up and realizes it must outrun the fastest lion or it will die. Every morning in Africa the lion wakes up and realizes it must outrun the slowest gazelle or it will starve. The moral of this story is that regardless of who you are, you better wake up and start running.

It has become almost clichéd in these chapel services, but I urge you to appreciate what you have at Lindisfarne, and come to school every day with the mentality that you too want to run. This school gives you better opportunities than most others to make yourself the best person you can be and live life to the full. But above all, if you have a dream – follow it. No amount of others telling you what is best for you is going to be fulfilling at the end of the day. People with dreams and ambitions are becoming a precious commodity in society. If you have one, go for it and don't let anything stand in your way.

Don't be the man who says in ten years time that they feel their life is mediocre, boring and meaningless. As Robin Williams says in the film "Dead Poet's Society", "**Carpe Diem boys! Seize the day! Make your lives extraordinary!**".

Follow your dreams, and live your life in a manner that ensures your family can collect on your life insurance.

PREFECTS CHAPEL SERVICE - Sermon presented by Jay Sorensen

This evening I am going to start my sermon with a story, listen to the story I am about to read to you and put yourself in the position of the main character.

Calm blue sea. Clear blue sky. Silence. You float on your back, looking up to the heavens and thinking, - now what? Suddenly you are aware of being caught in a current. You turn over and look ahead. You see an odd sort of small island. It has no trees and seems quite smooth. The current is swifter now and is carrying you towards what seems like a cave. As you draw near it, you look up. Above the cave, on either side, are small bad-tempered eyes. You realise that the cave is actually a whale, as you open your mouth to yell, the whale shuts his mouth with a snap and you are inside. You are cold, wet and very frightened. There you sit inside the whale, you don't even know what you are sitting on, you start to think about things.

'All right,' you say to yourself, your voice sounds echoey and spooky, 'all right, I disobeyed, but God could have sent someone else. I'm nobody. The message could have been to someone important, a priest or a prince or something, not to me, I'm nobody.' And the words I'm nobody went on echoing and ringing round the great vaulted inside of the whale far longer than the other words until your head is banging. And then suddenly all is deathly quiet. You now look at yourself honestly and start seeing things more clearly. You see that you are really at a low point in your life, the lowest ever, lost, alone, very unhappy – and that this is all really your own fault. Maybe this going down into the depths of the whale is a turning point in your life. You now feel very humble and miserable. You ask God to give you another chance. You promise to do as you are told. You remember and are grateful for all the good things in your life given to you by God, and speak quietly and sadly into the vast listening silence for quite a while. When you are finished you feel better. Nothing happens for a time, and then far off you begin to see a golden glow. After the darkness it hurts your eyes a bit. It gets no bigger. You get up, stretching your cramped legs and walk forward. The glowing shining spot starts to grow larger. You walk faster and faster along the whale's tongue, through the whale's open mouth and out onto the golden yellow sand.

The story I have just read to you illustrates that even at the lowest points in your life, if you just take time out to sit down and have a think through your problems you may find that things are not too bad and will work out for the better in the end.

Being saved or being "born again" is the main point in my message. Conversion or being born again is all about change, the message is that it is never too late to change. You do not have to be locked into what you have been or what you have done. You do not have to be a prisoner of your past. The possibility of being saved is God's gift to everyone and it is never too late to repent and turn your fortunes around.

A classic example of this happening is in the story I have just read to you. In this story you are the person that is down and out on yourself and through a so called miracle you find that things are not so bad and that you can start a new life if you only have a positive attitude. Such also is the story of Lance Armstrong who I am sure most of you have heard or read about. Lance Armstrong made world headlines in Paris on July 25, 1999 with the most stunning come back ever in the history of sport, but the personal side of this resounding triumph brought Lance's life and career full circle.

In 1996, Lance Armstrong was diagnosed with advanced cancer. He was given the chance to fully appreciate the blessings of good health, a loving family and close friends. Lance Armstrong described his bout with cancer as a "special wake-up call". He reacted to it by becoming a spokesperson for cancer and by forming the Lance Armstrong Foundation within months of his diagnosis. What is undeniable, however, is that Lance Armstrong has already won the most important race of his life. Perhaps the words that capture his resolute spirit the best are his own: "It's ironic, I used to ride my bike to make a living. Now I just want to live so that I can ride.

National and world champion cyclist, two time Olympian, renowned humanitarian, role model, cancer survivor, and now 6-time winner of the Tour De France, Lance Armstrong is clearly one of the most celebrated and charismatic contributors to the sport of cycling. To say that he is an emotional athlete is an understatement. To say that he is a passionate and fearless competitor is evident. However, what may not be so readily apparent is the depth of character and generosity of spirit that is so much a part of the psychological blueprint of this modest and straightforward hero.

Cancer left him scarred physically and emotionally, but he now maintains it was an unexpected gift; a viewpoint that is shared by many cancer survivors. Getting cancer was "... the best thing that ever happened to me," Lance said, in relation to the maturity and life focus the disease forced him to face. Throughout this life threatening ordeal, Lance knew his priorities were changing. His physical well being, something that had never been challenged was suddenly fragile. Lance Armstrong's story is one of great courage and determination and is an inspiration to us all. He demonstrates that even in the lowest point in his life, he manages to remain positive and now looks back on the cancer with a positive attitude as it has changed his life for the better.

The theme of being born again is also demonstrated in the reading Jordan shared with us. We learn how Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. We are introduced to a man named Zacchaeus, his name meaning "righteous one", how ironic for he was a dishonest tax collector. Tax collectors in Jesus' day were little more than government-sanctioned crooks.

Zacchaeus, the wealthy tax collector, was a part of the crowd trying to see Jesus. But Zacchaeus being a short man, was unable to see, so he climbed a tree. That is a nice part about being filthy rich, he does care what people think. Zacchaeus, being a rich man, was free to do something others might think was silly – like climb a tree.

But why did Zacchaeus want so desperately to see Jesus?

I have to believe that Zacchaeus had found his wealth and lifestyle unsatisfying. How often even today, do we hear of people who seem to have it all as far as the things of this world, who find their lives very unsatisfying? Perhaps like Zacchaeus these people lack peace, they lack wholeness, and need something more than this life can offer.

Secondly, it is very likely that Zacchaeus was tired of being hated. When people hassled him, he deserved what he got, but it no doubt made him miserable. In short Zacchaeus was tired of living his sad little life.

In verse five, we read - "And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house."

When Jesus stopped under the Sycamore tree in which Zacchaeus had hidden himself, he would have naturally tensed, perhaps even broken out in a sweat. Terror is likely to have grasped Zacchaeus' heart as he braced himself to be made a spectacle for ridicule by Jesus. And then Jesus called him by name and invited himself to Zacchaeus' home. Notice that Jesus did not say - "I would like to stay at your home", he said, "I must stay at your home". "Must" is a translation of the Greek word (di) meaning it was necessary.

This is Zacchaeus' moment. Zacchaeus scrambled out of the tree, hardly believing his good fortune, delighted to take Jesus home with him. I want you to think of all the people who like Zacchaeus have had their lives changed by coming out of the tree, so to speak.

This whole reading demonstrates the main theme of my sermon. It doesn't matter if you are down on yourself, you can always pick yourself back up. This can happen in the way of miracles or with help from people or things around you. This can be demonstrated at Lindisfarne where I have attended the last 7 years of my schooling. Lindisfarne has taught me that in the hard and busy times in your life, that there is always a person there to encourage you or point you in the right direction. Whether it is in the academic, sporting, cultural or the religious cornerstones of the school there is always help and guidance available. This support helps students at the college to grow, innovate and improve. I have no doubt that Lindisfarne has developed me into being a well-rounded person who can face the future with a positive attitude. Boys of Lindisfarne show support for each other and with this support there comes a high level of trust between them. This trust strengthens others abilities, will and sense of personal worth. To the boys that are leaving the school this year I present you with the challenge to envision an uplifting and ennobling future. This will make sure that you live your future lives to the fullest of your potential. You will leave Lindisfarne having made many life long friends and having learnt many life long lessons.

YEAR SEVEN CHAPEL SERVICE - presented by Christopher Starck

What do we have in common with Giraffes? Well did you know that we both have the same amount of vertebrae in our neck but they still seem to stretch them further than ours – think about it. Imagine you are on the field and there's a fight – what would you do? Most of you would probably stay out of it, so you don't get in trouble. But if you were Craig, a 12 year old boy would probably go and try to break it up. Craig is no ordinary boy he is a kid that set up a charity fund at 12 called free the children., which gives children that live in poor places a fair chance at school and at life. He helps the children by providing pencil cases, school bags, text books and lots of other school items. This charity was first set up in 1995, Craig is now 21 and the charity is still going strong.

Craig first became a spokesperson for children's rights when he was 12 years old. Searching for the comics in the local paper, a front-page article caught his attention. He read about a young boy from Pakistan who was sold into bondage as a carpet weaver, escaped and was murdered for speaking out against child labour. Craig gathered a group of friends and founded the organisation "*Free the Children*".

Craig, now 21 years of age, has travelled to more than 40 countries visiting streets and working with children and speaking out in defense of children's rights. He frequently addressed business groups, government bodies, educators, unions and students around the world. He has advocated, on behalf of children, in meetings with political and religious leaders including Prime Ministers and Presidents, CEO's of major corporations, Pope John Paul II, the Dalai Lama, Queen Elizabeth II and the late Mother Teresa. Craig's work has been featured on major television programmes in North and South America and Europe, including CNN, the Oprah Winfrey Show and 60 minutes.

But what does this have to do with our reading? Well Craig can be compared to the crippled man's friends in the way that they carried him to Jesus. The crowd was too big to get through, so they made a hole in the roof and lowered him down to Jesus. Jesus amazed by their faith, healed the man and said "get up and carry your mat home". The man's friends especially went out of their way and helped the man. So wherever you may be you can help someone even if it's a fight in the playground. So the message today is be a Giraffe and stick you neck out.

YEAR NINE CHAPEL SERVICE - presented by Brad Sickler

Forgiveness on the river Kwai.

Don Ratzlaff retells a story on the River Kwai. The Scottish soldiers, forced by their Japanese captors to labour on a jungle railroad, had degenerated to barbarous behaviour, but one afternoon something happened. A shovel was missing. The officer in charge became enraged. He demanded that the missing shovel be produced, or else. When nobody in the squadron budged, the officer got his gun and threatened to kill them all on the spot. It was obvious the officer meant what he had said. Then, finally, one man stepped forward. The officer put away his gun, picked up a shovel, and beat the man to death. When it was over, the survivors picked up the bloody corpse and carried it with them to the second tool check. This time, no shovel was missing.

Indeed, there had been a miscount at the first check point. The word spread like wildfire through the whole camp. An innocent man had been willing to die to save others!... The incident had a profound effect... The men began to treat each other like brothers. When the victorious Allies swept in, the survivors, human skeletons, lined up in front of their captors (and instead of attacking their captors) insisted: "No more hatred. No more killing. Now what we need is forgiveness." Sacrificial love has transforming power.

In the reading William just shared with us, it shows us that if you ask for mercy and forgiveness, God will forgive you. How many of us have denied the forgiveness of someone else. It is a lot easier to receive forgiveness than to give it, especially to those who have done horrible things like murder, rape and terrorism. The Lord forgave the servant's debt of 1,000,000 dollars but did he forgive the slave that owed him 10 dollars.

Why forgive? We forgive because God has first forgiven us. Jesus took our sin, our wrong-doings, and our guilt and claimed them as his own. In that act of redemption, Christ gained for us forgiveness. So we forgive because God has first forgiven us.

Everyone in this room, in the school community, in the world, deserves a second chance. If I'm perfect, then well I'll owe you a thousand dollars each. I ask and give forgiveness although sometimes it is hard. We all make mishaps, for some more than others. I'm trying to tell you to absolve, acquit, condone, excuse, exonerate, pardon, remit in one word – FORGIVE.

We forgive because Jesus forgave us!

Here is a quote from Corrie Ten Boom - *"To forgive is to set a prisoner free, and to discover, that this person was you"*.

YEAR 11 CHAPEL SERVICE – presented by Matthew West

The poem, read to you by Chris this morning, was first published on the 21st of January 1945 in what came to be known as the 'Pamir Press'. It was written by my Grandfather, Martin West at an earlier date while he was on the sailing ship 'PAMIR' at the Nautical Position 15.00N, 125.00W, a point west of Guatemala, south west of Mexico city in Mexico. This area of ocean down the west coast of the America's is commonly known as the doldrums, where ships can sit aimlessly for many days due to lack of wind until finally, enough wind arrives to help them carry on their way.

There are two things about this poem which I would like to point out to you today. The first of these is that the poem not only describes the ship which my Grandfather was sailing on but it can also be related to our school and our lives.

Our life is a ship. The hull and rigging of the ship are like the school which we are in today – the buildings and the grounds. We have our captain – the Rector, our first mate and officers – the deputy rector and staff, and we as students are the crew. These school buildings and grounds are the sailing vessel that we are to sail in for this next stage of our lives. Of course, we will go through storms and the doldrums but we will eventually reach our goal and will be rewarded for it. As is written in the poem: "The stormy blast did come and go, as across the line they went, and Neptune paid his usual call, and as always, pleasure bent". The line of course, being the equator.

The last two lines of the poem say – "And not since joining this very ship, have I seen anyone tearing his hair". What my grandfather meant when he wrote this was that even though the crew and the ship went through the most dangerous and most scary conditions, he never saw anyone lose it completely. No one went mad or wished that they were back home in front of a warm fire, they all carried on and helped each other through the toughest times until they reached their goal. It is the same on our ship of life, we must put in a solid team effort and work as hard as we can if we want this ship to sail anywhere.

Without a crew, a ship is nothing, and a school is nothing without its students, as a student is without a goal. As the crew of our own ship, we are responsible for what happens on the ship, where it goes, and how fast it travels. To reach our goal as quickly as possible, we must work with speed and efficiency while helping others along the way. And once we reach our goal, we don't stop and give up. We reach higher, set another goal, and begin our journey towards it.

As coincidence has it, a week ago today, in the year 1941, Pamir was officially seized by the N.Z. Government as a Prize of War, but she continued sailing right up until November 1948 under the N.Z. flag, before being returned to Finland, where she had been previously owned.

The second point that I would like to raise is about faith. My grandfather was a Christian man. He was the sort of person who took his faith wherever he went – to school, to work, and in his case, often to sea. He was always by the sea, he grew up in Napier on the hill and went to sea at an early age. Years later, he settled permanently back on land and worked at the Port of Napier until he retired. While at sea, he crossed the oceans numerous times, in all sorts of weather, and whatever happened, he would always be keen to go out and do it all again, keeping his faith with him whenever he went.

The one time in his life when his faith really helped him was during the war. He was a deck officer working on a minesweeper called the Puriri in the Hauraki Gulf, and all was going well for him until the ship struck a mine. He was found several hours later, floating in a thick coat of ship oil, barely alive. My grandfather would have been praying to God when this happened. If he hadn't have been, he may have died right back then.

As it turned out, I never knew my grandfather. He died a matter of 2 years before I was born but I have always known and admired what he made of his life and admired how he lived it to the absolute full.

When we sing our final hymn today, take notice of the words in the second and third verses, as they relate very appropriately to the poem and to the messages that I have given you today.

We are only a term and a half away from our major exams – N.C.E.A. and 6th Form Certificate for the seniors and end of year school exams for the juniors. Put the work in now, keep your faith, and get your ship of life sailing towards your final goal, knowing that you will be duly rewarded when you reach it.