Following De La Salle’s Vision – Mission@Oakhill Walking the Talk

“Show that you love those God has intrusted to you” - Saint John Baptist De La Salle

Last Wednesday the 4th of September 2019, marked the annual Mission Action Day or more commonly known around the College as MAD. The event, which is integral to the Oakhill calendar is an action-packed fundraiser for our Lasallian brothers and sisters in Papua New Guinea and Pakistan and this years the dress up theme was to Walk on the Wild Side. The fantastic initiative led by Mission Team along with our MAD Committee aimed to fulfil one of the College’s core Lasallian values, that being ‘concern for the poor and social justice.’

The entire school gathered in the Centenary Sports Centre to launch the day with a liturgy led by the College captains with the help of our Youth Ministers and special guest Brother Lewis Harwood. At this Liturgy, we were thrilled to have ex-students working as Lasallian Volunteers send us ‘around the grounds’ mission videos from Papua New Guinea, remote Western Australia and New Zealand.

It was then time for the madness to really kick in with carnival activities across the College grounds. Student / staff relationships were tested on the “Dunk a Teacher” activity and skills were tested on both ‘Toro’s Pass Off’ and ‘Soccer Darts’. Damien oval was jam packed with plenty of rides to suit everyone's nerve and the multiple food outlets kept energy at a high. Talented musicians including the staff band entertained the crowds and an inflatable obstacle course in the pool gave people a chance to cool off given the warmer than usual weather. However, beneath all the excitement was a tremendous message of generosity as at each activity donations were made to support Lasallian children all over the globe. This message is further portrayed in Mrs Isaacs take on the day; “Mission Action Day united our community boldly and passionately by following God's call. No wonder it was a great day of joy and strength in which we can share Christ with our global Lasallian families by changing lives.’

After three lively hours, the students moved back into the CSC and were fortunate enough to listen to alumni Rhys Jack from the Class of 2007. An honest and raw speech about the path he walked as a student at Oakhill and his post school endeavours had our community enthralled. Rhys spoke of how his focus and dream of an NRL career was a challenging one. Later in his life he realised a career in building management and to be of service to others through the Black Dog Institute and the Lasallian mission were the things that gave him true purpose. Rhys reflecting on a tour of De La Salle schools in Sri Lanka saying “It was an incredible shock to us to see this different world, but it was also amazing for us to see Lasallian schools in these areas, with Lasallian brothers and high school kids who were doing the exact same things that we had grown up doing while we were at Oakhill. Those children and the people we were with, their joy in the face of the struggles they had all been through, and their willingness to let us into their lives and to actually take care of us with the little amount they had was a greater lesson to me than anything I could ever teach them.”

Mission Action Day 2019 truly was a fantastic event. It catered for everyone's interest and involvement and realigned each student with their founding Lasallian roots in the 300 Year Tercentenary marking the entering into eternal life of our Founder St John Baptist De La Salle. There is no doubt in saying that Oakhill College truly did “walk the talk” in its mission for social justice and the results are evident with over $40,000 collected. To utilise the wise words of our special guest Rhys Jack “If you make the choice to follow the path of your heart the world will reward you with gifts you never would have imagined.” Oakhill College you are truly are a gift to the world. Thank you.

Chris Goodman – Director of Mission