At the end of this term we formally farewell our current Year 12 students. This is always an important process and it is the beginning of the end of their time at All Saints’ College. It is, I hope, a time of reflection, of thanks and of excitement and as they prepare for the challenges and opportunities which await them beyond the college.

At a recent chapel service for our boarders, the girls from Marsden House farewelled the Year 12s with themes around grace and vision. It was a great service and I thank the young women for their thought and care in preparing and presenting it. After the service I spoke briefly of the importance and relevance of both grace and vision. I encouraged our Year 12 students to approach their last days at Saints’ with grace – with genuine gratitude for the opportunities and support which has been afforded them and with dignity. Grace is characterised by both thanks and dignity in how one expresses themselves and I know that our Year 12 students will display this grace as they end their classes and prepare for the HSC exams in Term 4. I also encouraged our students to be mindful of the vision they have for themselves into the future; to have dreams and to chase these and work hard towards achieving them. The scriptures tell us that without vision, the people will perish; so, it is vital that we all have dreams and develop a vision.

I often refer to a quote which suggests that “The heart of education is the education of the heart.” I absolutely agree with this!

What a person is in love with is what drives them, what sustains them and helps them endure. It is the heart that must hang in at times of endurance when reason might be suggesting we give in. The heart is the symbol for a person of their character, the cluster of values that constitutes the individuality of the person. At Saints’, we are privileged to be called to share with parents in this area of formation. The heart is the place that is fed by wonder, the inner place where faith grows. It is a wellspring from which we draw either our ability to love or sadly to hate. The heart is the energy source for our willingness to respond to a challenge, to commit, to sacrifice, to experience delight and joy in living.

Remember that as you journey beyond Saints’, you will need a compass to guide you; make honesty a compass point. Honesty is often hard and you will be tempted to the easier path, but really there is no other way. There will be times of hurt and anger, disappointment and betrayal even with those who you love, but never close the door of your home nor your heart; it is never too late to forgive. In all that you do, be gentle with yourself; the hardest journey is the journey inward and the hardest hurdle is to forgive yourself. But both the hurdle and the journey are worth it!

And in all of this, as you journey, always remember that you never walk alone. No matter what you do, God is always walking beside you and will always love and support you!

Congratulations to all of our Year 12s – we are very proud of you and wish you every blessing. Go confidently in the direction of your dreams and live the life you have imagined! Stay well and keep in touch with Saints’’. And as Confucius says “Wherever you go, go with all your heart”!