Traditional rituals still relevant today

Contemporary Australian society tends to shy away from formal ceremony and rituals. There appears to be an increasing tendency to look back at traditional rituals as irrelevant and outdated. I am delighted to focus, in this VIM article, on an event in our school calendar that is contrary to this popular view.

On Saturday, 26th May, the All Saints’ College Presentation Ball was held at the Bathurst Memorial Entertainment Centre. It was a fabulous event at which our Year 11 students were “presented” to the Right Reverend Richard Hurford, Bishop of Bathurst, and Mrs Hurford in front of the school community comprising staff, parents, siblings, relatives and family friends.

Each year the Presentation Ball brings together our school community to celebrate a time of life for our Year 11 students in a way not achieved in any other event. The Ball provides a well supervised, choreographed and fun occasion for all. At the same time it is a “rite of passage” for our students as they move towards the completion of Year 12 next year.

Among the fantastic hair, elegant dresses, smart suits and shiny shoes is a unique sense of great fun. The evening is totally focused upon the students as young people for who they are and where they are going in life. There are no long speeches, no explicit celebration of individuals’ achievements or the like yet each student is recognised as both an individual and as an important member of our school community. The Presentation Ball is about all the young people for no other reason than their position as a Year 11 student at this school.

The fact that we have members of the school community across ages together at the Presentation Ball, enjoying a fabulous evening with formalities, dancing and a meal is very important. The Ball legitimately crafts a positive, once in a lifetime experience for our young people.

Many thanks to both Memory Sanders and Toni Thompson who taught the students how to dance in the weeks leading up to the Ball. Their labour of love and good humour has a significant impact on the night. In addition to this Memory takes on most of the organisation of the Ball. For this our school community is most grateful. Finally, thank you to Bishop Richard and Mrs Hurford for receiving the Year 11 students.

The Presentation Ball is a key part of our All Saints’ College calendar. It provides a fantastic opportunity for our school community to be together and celebrate our young people for who they are. In short, it is simply great fun!