

Kia Ora Koutu! Malou e Lelei! Kia Orana! Fakatalofa Atu! Mabuhay!

I am very pleased to be here tonight to be able to join you in celebrating this wonderful occasion.

To our invited guests, our Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Aherne, my fellow Board of Trustees members and most importantly, our dear Parents and Caregivers and to our BELOVED tamariki, a pleasant evening to you all.

Before anything else, my warmest congratulations to all our awardees and our **Year 8 Leavers**. You should be very, very proud of yourselves for accomplishing your goal. I know you must be all excited to get your hands on your certificates and trophies to take them home.

As Aristotle said, “The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet”. That’s where I come in as your humble servant and reporter, to tell you the sweetest fruits we have in our school.

One of the important areas of work for our Board is to ensure we meet one of our primary objectives – that the school is inclusive of, and caters for students with differing needs. Digital development is one of the methods we strongly believe, is vital in equitable learning. Availability of this equity tool is just one of the ways to provide equitable learning opportunity to our students. We now have enough Chromebooks, with a **1 to 1 ratio of Learning Devices**, so each student has their own Chromebook. With the demand of interconnectivity in school, we have also upgraded our internet speed.

Our school, under Dr. Kevin Kannan’s strategic management and with the cohesive and strong governance partnership with the Board, has addressed the opportunities and challenges of what matters for you, our dear learners and your whanau. During the year, this work has been intensified and together with the help, support and guidance of New Zealand School Trustees Association, we on the Board have adopted much needed policies:

- a. Pandemic Planning Policy – to ensure that the school has a plan in the event of a pandemic
- b. Bully Prevention and Response Policy – commitment to ensure that our school provides an environment that is free from any bullying behaviour

Your school Board is working the best way possible to make our school a physically and emotionally safe place for all of you; we give effect to relevant students’ rights as set out in the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act and Human Rights Act; and we take all reasonable steps to eliminate stigma, bullying, racism and any other forms of discrimination within our school.

We have worked intensely, and as one of those working behind the curtains, I can proudly say that the Board has worked really well together. I would like to mention, **María Curray, Jenny Clemente** and **Lynda McPoland**, our Proprietors Representatives, who are ensuring we provide a Catholic Education, assisting in the preservation of our Special Catholic Character and supporting the Diocesan Religious Education and the Director of Religious Studies; our Staff Representative – **Alan James** who brings staff perspective to our Board discussion and decision making; our Parent Representatives – **Jessica Steiner, Venancio Lucido and Sonam**

Chand – they truly represent the needs and aspirations of our school community and ensure the best possible academic outcomes for all our students.

As the Board is accountable for students' progress and achievement, we have approved the **Charter and Annual Plan for 2021** which is composed of four important goals. Our first goal is the focus on **Religious Education and Special Catholic Character**, followed by targeting improvements on **Student Achievement in English Reading and Writing**, sharpening our students' skills in **Mathematics** and continued enhancement and development of **Information and Communications Technology (ICT)** across our school.

In **Diocesan Property Development**, due to the pandemic, Covid 19 has presented challenges and delay. The Diocese is currently working to update their 10-Year Planning for all Catholic Schools and once completed, **Mr Graeme Roil**, Diocesan Property and Finance Manager, will have discussion with us on the planned property enhancements, the upgrade to our facilities into **Innovative Learning Environments (ILE)** - one classroom block to incorporate a new flexible teaching environment. I am thanking **Bishop Steve Lowe** for including our school in the Diocese Strategic Property Development Plans for school upgrade and development.

Just recently, we had our ERO review and I am humbled and proud to share with you some portions of its report.

“Many trustees have been in the role for less than a year and are growing in their understanding of their governance responsibilities. Most have undertaken training in a range of governance areas and are very responsive to the support given by New Zealand School Trustees Association. The Board understands that the charter and strategic plans are essential tools, and now trustees receive regular reports from the Principal on the progress towards meeting strategic goals. Trustees make good use of NZSTA tools such as workplan to ensure they meet their statutory obligations. A cyclical schedule of policy reviews is in place. Board meetings are well-organised and efficiently run. Trustees have a positive and constructive working relationship with the Principal.

The school has developed its ability to sustain and review its performance. Teachers and leaders have strengthened the foundation of values, tone, climate and relationships that promote and improve student learning. The school has the capacity to respond effectively to current and emergent issues.”

An ERO review looks at how our school reaches positive learning outcomes – knowledge, skills, attitude and habits – for all children and indeed the review result you have heard is a testament that our school has set the seal on the ability of every student to attain their highest possible standard in educational achievement. I take this opportunity to thank Anna Gallien, our NZSTA Governance Advisor, for all the trainings and ever-ready support and with your wise guidance, we have achieved this remarkable Governance ERO Report.

It takes a lot of patience, endurance and care to be a teacher aide but you make it look so easy day after day. I want to assure you that although working at our school sometimes feels like your efforts are not appreciated day in and day out, it is not! We appreciate all the work

you have done...no other words to say but thank you very much, **Barbara Baker, Lana Neho, Jenny Doyle, Elisapesi Norman and Margaret O' Hara.**

To our School Secretary, your organized ways, efficient and dependable ways, and professional ways. These are just some reasons why you deserve my endless thanks. For all the big and little behind-the scene things you do that make our lives a lot easier...thank you so much **Mrs Julie Grut!**

For coming to school early and staying until the next day's lesson plan is ready, checking through the paper piles and students work, looking after kids, making their day with your inspiring talk, staying calm when tensions rise, making sure that you always smile, typing lesson plans and reports, handling crises of all sorts, keeping track of what goes where and finishing tasks with love and care. To **Mrs Lucido, Mrs Harwood, Mrs Casimiro and Mr James...**a huge thank you to all of you!

To **Dr Kevin Kannan**, I am thanking you on behalf of the Board for bringing out the best in the team and always striving for excellence. I commend you for being a dependable and reliable Principal. All the work you do in our school makes our students and staff feel safe, supported and motivated. Thank you again for going above and beyond to create a school environment in which the staff can work happily. I can proudly say that our tamariki are thriving and reaching their full learning potentials under your care.

To all our Year 8 Leavers, you've worked hard, learning new skills for the past months. Let me leave you with this thought from Ralph Waldo Emerson. "Do not follow where the path may lead. Go, instead, where there is no path and leave a trail." Now that you're equipped with one of the most important tools – **St Anthony's Catholic Education**, you can make a straight path. Your future is in your hands – with God's help it will be bright. Bring with you our school's **Fruits of the Spirit** – Patience, Self-Control, Generosity, Kindness and Faithfulness, Gentleness, Goodness and Love, Peace and Joy!

Finally, to our **Parents and Caregivers and most importantly to our dear students**, treasure your family and friends and may you all have a safe and amazing holiday break!

May the Good Lord continue to bless our school.

Magandang gabi at maraming salamat po!

Kia Kaha! Tena Koutou!

Marvin Casimiro
Chairperson