

*'I believe that future scholars will likely look back and recognise
Campion as "the college that shaped the leaders who shaped Australia".'*

The Champion Adventure New President's Inaugural Address

*Dr Ryan Messmore receives the robes of office from the Chairman of the
College's governing body, Mr Joe de Bruyn*



Campion's incoming President, **Dr Ryan Messmore**, presented an Inaugural Address after his investiture. He congratulated the new graduates and thanked the retired President, Dr David Daintree, and then reflected on the significance of the 'Campion adventure' – the birth of Australia's first and only Catholic Liberal Arts college.

This is an edited version of his speech.

Several months ago, my wife Karin and I, along with our children, set out from Washington DC for Australia.

We envisaged it as a 'great adventure' because we are inspired by a certain experiment taking place at Champion — one that answers today's need for intentional and thoughtful training of tomorrow's leaders.

It is the kind of endeavour that historian Christopher Dawson thought could transform a culture. Indeed, when the English journalist Malcolm Muggeridge visited Australia in the 1970s, he asserted that the most strategic initiative one could undertake in this country was to establish a Catholic tertiary liberal arts college.

We are here because we believe Dawson and Muggeridge were right, and we believe Champion College is that college.

A core vision

At its core, I view Champion as a **community of learning, in Christ, for others.**

First, I want Champion College to flourish as a community. Many universities fill huge auditoriums with hundreds of bored students and then proceed to deposit info-bytes into their craniums and call that education.

Campion takes a different approach. Here the staff, the faculty, and even the president get to *know* every student by name and care for them as entire persons.

Unlike the mish-mash of unrelated courses one finds at most universities, Champion offers an integrated core curriculum, enabling students to take the same classes, read the same books, and engage in the same conversations – in short, to participate in a genuine community of learning.

Second, at the centre of this vision, and at the centre of this college, is Jesus Christ.

Rather than a mere pious label or decorative gloss, the Christian faith informs the very content and character of a Champion education.

Christian truth, safeguarded by the Church, will guide the goals we set, the decisions we make, the way we teach and the rhythms of campus life.

And this 'community of learning in Christ' is not meant for us alone. It is also 'for others'. Champion College will thrive, not as an

isolated bubble or enclave, but as a community focused outward. I want Champion to equip students with the vision and the skills to engage the world around them for the better – to view their education as a means of serving others.

I desire for Champion to become recognized and imitated in Australia for its distinct approach to education.

Campion is recovering what universities like Oxford and Cambridge have been doing for centuries – equipping students with the basic tools of learning so they can think, and problem-solve, and communicate well.

But how do you do that? How do you teach someone to reason critically and speak persuasively?

The answer is the liberal arts – to make young people apprentices to the best thinkers who have ever lived.

Being an apprentice means learning from masters how to be like them, not just by listening to their words but by walking along beside them – exploring the times in which they lived, the obstacles they faced, how they worshipped, the manner in which they spoke, the ideas that shaped their thinking, and the way they applied those ideas to the challenges of their day.

As apprentices to the greatest thinkers of the Western tradition, our students not only read their works but also rehearse their arguments, participate in their conversations, and practice their way of thinking and speaking until it becomes habit.

This is the time-tested approach to forming thoughtful, curious, confident young adults who understand the world and their place in it.

The Champion experiment

And yet, preserving this kind of education is by no means guaranteed.

When Alexis de Tocqueville reflected on democracy, he called it an 'experiment'. He knew that democracy was not a sure thing; that it might not last without citizens who understand its value and work to preserve it.

I think a similar thing can be said about the liberal arts education that Champion promotes in Australia.

The success of such an endeavour can never be taken for granted. It requires constant attention, and it depends upon a people who value it because they see the



John Witherspoon – shaping leaders

world differently – and who are willing to make sacrifices to ensure that the Champion experiment succeeds.

John Witherspoon – a leader who shaped leaders

In this effort, we would do well to remember John Witherspoon, who in 1768 became president of the liberal arts university now known as Princeton.

Witherspoon taught courses in theology, history and eloquence, and all students were required to take his course in moral philosophy. Those students would go on to fill many positions of influence, from a President (James Madison) to various educational, political and religious leaders. And how did Witherspoon produce such leaders?

Not by offering them large, impersonal, vocational training, but through personal instruction in the liberal arts – by teaching them subjects like history and moral philosophy.

So if you ever hear anyone question the value of a Christian liberal arts education, just remember John Witherspoon.

Scholars have dubbed him "the man who shaped the men who shaped America"

I believe the same sort of potential lies in Champion College – that future scholars will likely look back and recognize Champion as 'the college that shaped the leaders who shaped Australia'.



**Please remember Champion
in your Will**



Important Gift Opportunities at Campion

As the College begins a new year, 2012 opens, Champion's President, Dr Messmore, has identified two special needs for the support of the 'friends of Champion' – one, to enhance the community life of the students; the other, to bring outside scholars to the campus for seminars that will extend the scope and depth of the College's Liberal Arts education.

A new Student Common Room: \$4,000

Campion gives a strong focus to fostering community life on campus. A key way to develop this spirit among students is to provide a common space in which to gather, talk, and form friendships.

Dr Messmore has restructured the use of rooms on campus to create space for a new student common room.

A goal of \$4,000 has been set to furnish the room and provide an attractive array of facilities.

These include couches, a teapot and cups, and recreational features such as a pool table and a ping-pong table. He is asking 'friends of Champion' to consider donating to furnish it – and strengthen the sense of community in the College's student body.



Would you help to fill this room?

Centre for the Study of Western Tradition: \$7,500

This Centre is a vital part of Champion College. It allows the students and academic staff to engage with visiting scholars from various institutions – as a means of enriching the educational experience of Champion students, while exposing the College's own faculty to scholarly conversations in areas relevant to the Liberal Arts.

A goal of \$7,500 has been determined to enable the Centre to bring a range of scholars to the campus in 2013.

Examples of seminars held last year were on the religious origins of modern science (Professor Peter Harrison, University of Queensland), and the continuing relevance of the work of the Thomistic scholar, Rev Dr Austin Woodbury SM (Dr Christine Wood, John Paul the Great Catholic University, San

Diego, USA).

Dr Wood was the first recipient of the Centre's Fellowship (\$5,000), which allowed her to carry out research into the uncatalogued notes, lecture material and unpublished works of Dr Woodbury, who is renowned as the founder of the Aquinas Academy, Sydney.

The Centre also sponsored an international colloquium at Champion, in August 2012, on 'The Christian View of History and the Revival of the Liberal Arts'. The papers have been published as a special edition of the 'Connor Court Quarterly' (December 2012), and copies are available via the publisher's website: www.connorcourt.com

For 'friends of Champion' keen to help the College to meet these needs, there is an appropriate box on the enclosed donation sheet.

Summer School in Greek

In January, twelve Champion students attended a Greek Summer School at Sydney's Macquarie University.

Their participation was made possible by the generous sponsorship of a Champion donor who was keen to foster a broader interest in the Ancient Languages.

Ms Jon Dalrymple of the Ancient Cultures Research Centre at Macquarie commented that the students were 'a credit to Champion':

'It's wonderful for our regular supporters who have been attending summer and winter schools for many years to see so many keen young students joining classes.'

One of the Champion students, Alexander Westenberg, expressed the appreciation of the group for the benefactor's gift:

'We were able to build on our classical foundations begun with study at Champion – especially Latin – and to see and understand first-hand the original writings of the New Testament. This strengthened our knowledge of the Ancient World, while also making our faith more a part of our psyche.'



Campion students studying Greek at Macquarie University



**Lent Term at
Campion**

CAMPION'S BRAG

Catholic Learning in the Liberal Arts

GRADUATION ISSUE

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Campion's New Graduates

Campion College held its annual graduation ceremony prior to Christmas – the fifth occasion on which students have completed their Liberal Arts degree at the College and begun to embark on postgraduate courses in various vocational areas.

Nearly 400 people assembled at the College on December 12 to celebrate the graduation of 17 students.

The day began appropriately with a Mass of Thanksgiving. The Principal Celebrant – and the homilist – was the Most Rev Anthony Fisher OP, Bishop of Campion's home diocese of Parramatta.

He was accompanied by seven visiting priests as well as the College Chaplain, Fr Luke Holohan SM.

The Graduation ceremony followed, in which the Chairman of Campion's governing body, Mr Joe de Bruyn, conferred a BA in the Liberal Arts on the



Campion's 2012 graduates celebrate in the traditional way

new graduates, and presented the College Medal to Keziah Doughty and Anna Hitchings, who achieved the same high academic results throughout their degree. The Occasional Address was delivered by Dr Paul Kelly, Editor-at-Large for 'The Australian'. He stressed the importance of a liberal arts education for the citizens of the 21st century, noting changes in Australia and the international environment which

make a liberal arts education more valuable than ever.

The Valedictory Address was given by Fenelle Crimmins, President of Campion's Students' Association, who explained what Campion's liberal arts degree has given her and her fellow graduates.

Edited versions of these speeches are published in this issue of 'Campion's Brag'.

Inaugurating a President



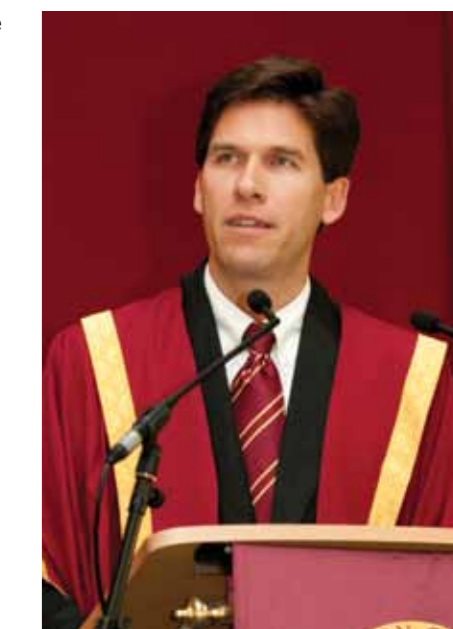
Dr David Daintree

The recent Graduation ceremony saw the passing of Presidential leadership from Dr David Daintree to Dr Ryan Messmore. Dr Daintree served as President for four years, leading the College during a period of significant development. Campion is now more widely acknowledged, both in Australia and internationally, for its quality as a Catholic Liberal Arts college.

Dr Messmore comes at a significant juncture in Campion's development – a time of pressure as well as of great opportunity. The College is striving to expand its enrolments, both to strengthen its financial viability and to spread its distinctive education in faith and reason to as many students as possible.

As a privately supported institution, Campion continues to recognise, with gratitude, the vital part its benefactors play in sustaining the College – and keeping alive the flame of a faithful education.

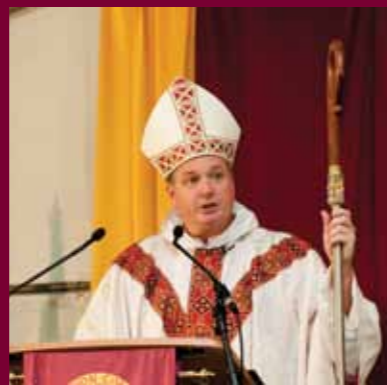
Dr Messmore's Inaugural Address is featured on page 5 of this 'Brag'.



Dr Ryan Messmore

'Campion has immersed you in a long and valuable tradition of learning; and through you, offered that to Australia.'

The Graduation Homily – Bishop Anthony Fisher



In his homily, Bishop Anthony Fisher OP emphasised the spirit of thanksgiving animating the Graduation ceremony, and explored the modern meaning of the ancient virtue of 'pietas'.

In this Mass of Thanksgiving we have much to be grateful for: for the academic year just past, the graduations we will witness, the leadership of the College past and future, and the enthusiastic support of benefactors and friends.

Above all, as a Catholic College, we give thanks to Almighty God for the gift of His Son whose Advent we now celebrate, whose coming has raised us to the dignity of the children of God, and who showers us with so many gifts including human intelligence and the opportunity for a broad and deep education given here.

Such grateful reverence for God is traditionally called *pietas*.

To modern ears piety is about old ladies saying the rosary. But as St Thomas Aquinas articulates it – and as usual he does so best of all writers – it is about a grateful reverence to God, ancestors, country, Church and teachers.

If little old ladies are good at expressing that in their devotional lives, good on them. But piety is every bit as much for young ones like our graduands!

Pietas is a virtue alien to an age marked by theoretical and practical atheism, that glorifies youth and demeans the elderly, that values vogue over tradition, is ambivalent about patriotism and cynical about churches and other social institutions, and expects teachers will always pass us rather than challenge us too much.

Catholic and Western wisdom

But Campion is not like that. It is aware of a longer and deeper Catholic and Western wisdom about these things. What's more, it is situated in one of the most multicultural regions of the world, and so acutely aware that there are other wisdoms than that of Western secular modernity.

Where to start on real piety?

We all at some time have seen a natural wonder, such as the Milky Way in the country at night or a newborn baby, especially our own. We have had that experience of open-mouthed awe, wonder, humility, delight in the goodness and beauty and sheer undeserved gift of it all. Even people who never lighten the door of a church say they experience something like reverence at such times.

Now, when we make that emotion a choice and habit it is the beginning of *pietas* and at the heart of all true worship.

Giving thanks

We wonder at and give thanks for our birth and rebirth in Baptism, the gift of our fellows, our lives in this bountiful if broken world, the heaven we are promised and taste even now.

We are led, St Thomas observes, to give thanks to God as the source of that being and those blessings and from Him to all who have mediated them to us – those who've gone before us, marked with the sign of faith; those giants upon whose shoulders we stand, who made our Church and country and civilisation, those to whom we owe so much that is good in our institutions, traditions and beliefs.

It also includes those who brought us to where we are today: the leaders, staff and benefactors of this college; our parents and

others who have assisted our attendance; our fellow classmates: all of whom have played their part in helping us expand our being and develop intellectually, morally, socially and spiritually.

We give thanks today for the 17 who will graduate and take to the world knowledge, skills and talents nurtured in this unique college. Campion has immersed you in a long and valuable tradition of learning; and through you offered that to Australia.

We give thanks also for the year past: the teaching, learning, worship, pastoral care, sport, dancing, formation, debating.

We are proud of the continuing links of this College to the diocese, to East Timor, to World Youth Day and more. And I know the College has exciting plans for growth in enrolments, offerings and facilities so that there will be even more to be thankful for in the future.

Today we also give thanks for the several years of leadership given by Dr David Daintree and we are excited that Dr Ryan Messmore will succeed him.

As a distinguished Australian journalist, Paul Kelly spoke to Campion's new graduates on the value of the Liberal Arts as an educational grounding for the citizens of the 21st century. This is an edited version of his Occasional Address.

Graduation is a genuine milestone in the life of a student, and a day of pride for parents and family. It's an achievement which marks a point of learning, and a point of character.

I think it is more important to see graduation as a beginning rather than an end.

My message to you today is to have the imagination to aim high in your life, but to always think of yourself in the bigger frame of the contribution you can make to community and society.

Never belittle your liberal arts education.

My own experience of life, looking back, is that contrary to some fashionable views today, a **liberal arts education is more important, and more relevant, than ever** – particularly in a world where its foundations are being challenged.

For this to be true, however, you need to be dedicated to the liberal arts as a lifelong journey, and have a passion in your chosen field.

Synthesis of faith and learning

Your education at Campion College has been different from the norm, because you have sought to find a synthesis between the world of learning and the world of faith. While this is a rare experience at the tertiary education level, such an education is the key to understanding the true nature of Western Civilisation and the forces of modernity that now shake it.

I have to tell you, frankly, that liberal arts study, in the wider academy at the moment, is under siege – the product of financial pressure and of philosophical fracture from within.

Yet being a full citizen today means having a firm and constructive view on standards

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The Enduring Value of the Liberal Arts

Paul Kelly's Occasional Address

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Yet being a full citizen today means having a firm and constructive view on standards

and values. I believe a Campion College education gives you the robust equipment for this task.

Global and local

The fully formed individual of today is a citizen of the world, sensitive to global perspectives, but also a citizen of your neighbourhood and your community. It is vital you have both perspectives – the wider global perspective but also a deep sense of what is going on at the local level in your own community.

As a citizen of the world, you will know that God is making a comeback. From

Egypt where I've recently been, to Indonesia, to China, religion (whether it be Islam or Christianity) is only gaining more traction. This isn't discussed a lot, but it is a reality in today's world.

It is easy, I think, to misinterpret the secular trend in the West, believing it is the trend in the entire world. Evidence, however, suggests this is wrong.

As a framework to explain politics in society, the idea of the relentless march of secularism fails to capture

what is happening in many cultures and in many countries.

One of the great challenges of the 21st century will be the negotiation between religion and the state. One of the best preparations for understanding this dynamic, which will play out in your own lifetime, is the liberal arts course on this campus, with its explicitly religious foundation.

Far from being on the margins in the 21st century world, you, I believe, will be located at its epicentre because of the Campion education you have had.

Let me conclude with some intellectual observations about the world today, the world you will enter after graduation.

Cultural revival and religion

First, we live in a time of globalisation driven by technological and financial forces – and globalisation is an enormously beneficial process with the capacity to deliver millions of people from poverty.

Yet globalisation is not leading to one global culture, but just the reverse. In

Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas, we see a stronger tide of domestic cultural assertion. People are looking to their roots, to their traditions, and this sense of cultural assertion is often tied in to rising nationalism.

Indeed, in much of the world, this cultural revival and religion are rising together – witness the Arab spring.

Secular state – prized but perverted

Second, in the West today, the classic notion, the prized idea, of the secular state is now under challenge.

The secular state is fundamental to progress and to liberty in the West. The idea is that the state must be neutral among believers of different faiths, and it must be neutral between believers and non-believers. This separates religious practice from state power. It guarantees religious freedom, and in its originating purpose is to allow religion to flourish without fear or intimidation.

However, we now face in the West a new movement, arguing that the state become, not neutral, but an anti-religious force seeking to drive religion from the public square.

This argument is a perversion of the meaning of the secular state, and it is a risk to personal and religious liberty and social stability in the West.

Moral foundation

My third and final observation today is the need to recognise more than ever that the practice of government requires a moral foundation.

In our public life now, there is much discussion of values. Politicians are being called upon to take decisions on such issues as human rights, gay marriage, and the role of religious schools and institutions. Values and morals are central to all such decisions. You should participate in these debates as individuals and support the right of your faith and your church to express its views as well.

Any effort to silence such views is tantamount to intellectual repression and a denial of secular state pluralism.

The world you are entering is turbulent, exciting and filled with opportunities for young people.

Honour your education, your faith, your church, your family, and your country.

'I am confident that my time at Campion has equipped me with essential and versatile tools that will allow me to apply them to any path I choose to take.'

A Valedictory Address



Fenelle Crimmins (pictured above), President of Campion's Student Association in 2012, delivered the Valedictory Address on behalf of her fellow graduates.

She reflected on the nature of the Liberal Arts degree at the College, and thanked all those – benefactors, teaching and administrative staff, and fellow graduates and parents – who have made this distinctive education possible.

This is an edited version of her speech.

I have commonly been asked about the nature and purpose of a Campion degree in the Liberal Arts.

I believe its purpose is twofold – to produce persons of both knowledge and virtue, and to train them in skills and subjects necessary for active participation in the public sphere.

How is this achieved at Campion?

The answer begins with the fundamental role that faith and reason play in the education of the students.

As a proudly Catholic college, the subject of theology is a focal point of our studies. However, we are not confined to the realms of theory, but experience Catholicism in our

day-to-day lives.

Learning the theory behind transubstantiation is complemented by the opportunity to receive the Eucharist each day.

The Faith that is deepened through study and experience is further developed through its interaction with reason. Studying the extensive reasoning behind what we believe gives us the conviction to live it out in our actions, and when we take these opportunities to live out our faith, we become persons of virtue.

Furthermore, our studies of Literature, History, Philosophy and Science pass on a richness of knowledge that imbues the individual with a love of and desire for

learning and education.

I know I will leave Campion with an awareness that my education is not over, but only beginning. But I am confident that my time at Campion has equipped me with essential and versatile tools that will allow me to apply them to any path I choose to take.

The skills of critical thinking, exceptional articulation of thought, rational argument and leadership are all invaluable to the individual wishing to make an impact on, and participate in, the public sphere.

It is my hope that we will continue, not only along the path of knowledge, but also the path of virtue.

It was Immanuel Kant who said: 'Faith without reason is blind but reason without faith is empty.' Campion provides a genuine opportunity for the individual to merge these two faculties of faith and reason and allow them to inform their actions both in their private and public lives.

In combining faith and virtue with knowledge and skills for the public sphere, Campion College is living out its aim to form and produce future leaders of society.

Campion's Summer Program

In mid-January, Campion College held its third Summer Program for senior high school students, attracting its largest enrolment yet – 27 young people from both the cities and the rural areas of Australia.

The Summer Program is designed to offer a foretaste of life at the College.

It includes opportunities for spiritual

nourishment, especially Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours, talks on the key subject areas of Campion's Liberal Arts curriculum, and sport and social excursions.

Of special appeal to the young people who attend are the sessions held on learning skills, which are particularly useful for those about to enter Year 12.



Summer Program students at a waterfall in Sydney's Blue Mountains



What we strive for at Campion College, we could not do without your support.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY.

ALL GIFTS ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE



Anna Hitchings (left) and Keziah Doughty (right) – College Medallists 2012