

Dear Parents,

Let me begin by wishing all of you a very happy and successful new year! May 2016 bring you new joys and increased success in all your cherished ventures while ensuring that you continue to enjoy all the blessings of the previous year. With your cooperation and support may the School be able to live up to its enormous latent potential and live up to the promises we have made to the entire Indus community.

We had only half a working month in December but it was not uneventful.

1) Academic-related issues:

- a) The CIE had conducted in November an inspection of facilities and the way examinations were conducted in school. They sent in their report in December expressing their complete satisfaction with the same.
- b) Monthly Tests were conducted from the 11th to the 16th of December.
- c) A business Fair was conducted by the Business & Management Department for Grade 12 students on 16th December. Students integrated Total Quality Management, Just In Time, and Quality assurance concepts through their activities. Everything was well-planned by the teachers and students, and visitors to the stalls were impressed with the effort and learning that took place.
- d) Grade 12 had a PTM.
- e) A professional development session on AFL (Assessment for Learning) was conducted for teachers by Ms Mary Lafferty, Dr (Ms) Sophie Peralba and Ms Usha Kasana. The teachers learned a lot from the combined experience and expertise of the three staff.

2) Whole education

- a) Sports Day was held on the 10th for the whole school. The programme went off smoothly as scheduled. As always, we have made note of what went well and what could have been better, and will plan and work accordingly next year.
- b) Christmas was celebrated on the last day of school. We sang carols and Santa did not forget to visit IISH to give gifts to our students! There was story-telling and a talk on the spirit of Christmas, and PYP teachers enacted the Nativity.

3) Other Matters:

a) Persuasive Communication workshop:

We have tied up with a group called “I Love Mondays” headed by Ms Mary Mala Martina, a Toastmaster herself, to train staff and students in the art of effective communication.

About 20 students have signed up for the training that is being conducted by the team (which includes other Toastmasters as well).

A Workshop on Persuasive Communication was conducted for all staff on 12th December.

It was a skillfully organized workshop and staff enjoyed every moment. We will continue to have staff trained in different aspects of communication so that they may use those skills to further develop the potential of their students and also improve their own communication skills when dealing with students.

b) Guest lecture by Dr. Renuka:

Dr Renuka, (a Grade 5 parent), who was witness to the damage caused by the recent earthquake in Nepal, visited our school to conduct a session for our Grade 5 students in connection with their current Unit of Inquiry: *Natural disasters*. She shared her experiences of her time in Nepal and spoke on how it has affected life in Nepal in multiple ways. It was a very informative and enriching session for our students. We are thankful to Dr. Renuka for her time and initiative.

c) Grade 5 students had a Skype session with students of Domuschola International School, Manila, wherein the students of both schools shared their own experiences on natural disasters they had witnessed or heard of in their respective countries. It was wonderful to see children use technology to connect with others in another part of the world and share life-experiences. Not only did the world shrink for them but they also learned that we are one inter-connected world.

4) Upcoming Events in January

a) The Half Yearly Examination will be conducted from the 11th to the 19th of January.

b) There will be a holiday on account of Makar Sankranti on 15th January.

c) Parents of Grade 8 students are requested to attend the IGCSE orientation on Friday, the 22nd of January

d) On 26th January, we will celebrate Republic Day in School. **Attendance is mandatory.** Parents are requested to send their wards to school without fail.

e) On 27th and 28th January, MSP students will take part in the Inter-house badminton and tennis competitions.

5) A few thoughts on one of our Core Values:

Christmas is the great season of love. (Christians believe that God loved His people so much that he sent Jesus to die upon the cross for the salvation of mankind.) The message and the spirit of Christmas should be universal. Unfortunately, it is not.

Love is the first of our Core Values, values that are dear to us not just because we take ownership of the Vision and want to live the Vision but primarily because love is the greatest of the emotions. But while it is the greatest, it can also become the most difficult. It is easy to love one's own; it is not so to love those different or separate from us. We don't realise that while we are not (and were not intended to be) the same, we have a *oneness*. This is an important point: *Oneness* is different from *sameness*. Because we are each unique aggregate entities of emotions, preferences, energies, etc., because we are each unique expressions of life and of divinity, we are united by this fact and so become equals. Love in its purity recognises and respects this – and responds to this by opening up the heart and giving.

When we give, we give of ourselves. As Erich Fromm says in his 1956 classic, *The Art of Loving*, we must give of our time and energy, of that which is alive in us: joy, understanding, knowledge, humour, optimism, and so on.

When we love and we give, we become richer. There is no paradox in this. He who hoards for himself or for a few is actually, psychologically speaking, impoverished. In giving of himself to his student, the teacher gets enlightenment; similarly, the actor is stimulated by the audience, the doctor finds relief and the fulfilment of his Oath through his patient.

Should we expect in return? How much do we give? For how long do we give? In the Bible, St Paul writes in his letter to the Corinthians:

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.”

Yes, Love never fails. And on that article of faith, I end this newsletter with a renewed wish for a wonderful 2016 for you and your near and dear ones.

Warm wishes,

C P Joseph

PRINCIPAL

Indus International School, Hyderabad