

Illustrious Members of the Managing Committee  
Respected Principal,  
Beloved Teachers,  
Fellow Parents,  
and my dear Boys

Firstly, I would like to thank you for inviting me and for the gracious introduction; it is indeed a pleasure to be here. I know I stand between you and the prizes you all have worked so hard for, so I promise to be brief.

As you would have gauged by now I have been blessed with a unique 3 dimensional perspective of Campion School.

First, as a student having spent 10 formative years of my life here. Second, as a parent of two responsible boys who too did their schooling here and third as a professional, working closely with the Principal and teaching staff on several occasions.

So let me share what I have learnt at different points of time, in my different avatars and how.

As a student, I went to school thinking, it was all about the subjects that were taught in school.

Life for me at that time was, first learning the lesson and then giving the test-little realizing that in the outside world, the test comes first and the lessons later.

We would be mistaken to believe that Campion provides us with just an education where we are taught subjects such as english, math, science, and so forth.

That is just a miniscule part of the story.

Campion is the protective cocoon, which provides a nurturing environment to transform yourself, before you step out into the world to make your mark.

It provides you not only with academic education, but builds character and ingrains the values required to succeed where ever you may go- Things you can't learn from Google or Facebook.

To drive home this point, let us take the example of our school anthem-Campion Calls.

I too like all of you, on numerous occasions sang the school anthem, as was expected of me, never giving much thought to what it meant or realizing its importance.

It was only in retrospect that I have realized that it was a blueprint to live one's life by.

As you step out into the world, it talks of courage and chivalry that will take you forward.

As a student I still remember myself - terrified and shivering, my hands sweating and my throat dry as I stepped up to address the morning assembly in the Tagore Hall for the first time - Wondering what courage was and where I could find it.

It was only much later that I understood that courage was not the absence of fear but the ability to be able to do what was required in the presence of it.

The anthem provides the framework of success - facing daily challenges and adversity.

This reminds me of sitting and weeping, bruised, in front of my mangled cycle, after I was knocked down by a speeding cab during my first school road race.

I was totally defeated by what had just come to pass, but not a single soul other than me thought that I needed to quit. In fact even the eventual winner, Neil, came up to me, and matter of factly said "Better luck next time, I am sure you will come back stronger".

That is when I learnt that quitting was not an option.

Neil's words were almost prophetic, as they motivated me to come back next year and win both cycling events, breaking a ten year old school record, which I am told still stands till date.

The anthem further goes on to talk about sharing responsibility for one's own and community actions.

As a parent, I often saw both my sons collaborate and contribute on various projects far beyond the scope of their age and knowledge base, working late into the night not because they were told to or forced to, but because they felt the need to contribute and chose to.

Going further, we are reminded that the fruits of success can only be enjoyed with peace and love, and need to be shared with the rest of the world through charity, truth and loyalty.

Charity not from a position of superiority, but in the form of sharing, was something the camp for the underprivileged each year brought alive for us.

We realized that giving benefited the giver far more than the recipient.

My tryst with loyalty may be the most inappropriate of all the examples, but was learnt when our entire class suffered through detention rather than rat on "he who must not be named", for the prank we all had enjoyed and were caught for.

Finally, the anthem clearly indicates that whatever stepping stone we seek, the ultimate goal of each one of us is internal bliss.

This part I must say, took me quite a few decades to understand. It is only when you achieve most of the material goals that you set for yourself and still find something lacking, that you realize that there has to be more to life than that. That is when the longing for internal bliss comes in.

For the last few decades there is a lot of talk on intellectual, emotional and spiritual development but *Campion Calls* talks about the gift of mind and soul right since its inception.

And this is more than evident not only in its illustrious achievers, but in each and every child who passes through the portals of this great institution.

As a parent I have witnessed young men with two left feet being yelled at “What you are doing is not dancing, it is mass P.T.” and yet that same group within days rose to the occasion and performed flawlessly on the day of the final show.

*Campion* has that knack of bringing the out the best in you - Not a selected few but each one of us.

When working with the teachers as an educationist, let me tell you that I have worked with thousands of teachers from hundreds of educational institutions, but rarely have I found the level of commitment, the willingness to learn and the ability to try out new things as I have seen here.

So the only thing I would like you to take away from what I have said today, is that no matter who you are or what your academic performance is, please remember that you are more than well equipped to handle whatever is in store for you.

Let not fear weigh you down in whatever undertakings you may choose to take up.

Don't worry that you don't know how things are done, because remember that the world is always looking for newer and better ways of doing things - and that way, may most likely be your way.

Don't look for quick fixes but stand true to the values *Campion* has built into you, as in the long run they do pay off.

As you grow and succeed, please always keep in mind that you owe your existence firstly to the almighty, then your parents then this institution and all those who played a part in shaping who you are.

Till date, I have not met any “self-made” men.

Be eternally grateful to them and take every opportunity you can to show your gratitude.

Be fully aware that no matter what you do, you will never be able to pay off that debt in full.

So all you can do, is pay it forward, to ensure that future generations continue to benefit from this august institution.

I, from my side, take this opportunity to thank Campion today, for everything it has given me and my family and continues to contribute in every area of my life.

To the teachers I would say that your efforts truly affect an eternity, so continue doing the great work that you are doing.

To the Principal, Hats off to you Sir, You personify everything Campion stands for.

Last but not the least, let me heartily congratulate each and every prize winner and also those who did not quite make it this time but are well on their way.

Congratulations to you all and don't ever stop improving yourself each day.

Thank you,