The 6th of February this year was the 20th Anniversary of the commencement of Xavier College. It was a small milestone, but a reminder of the work that a number of families did over 20 years ago to lobby various church and political bodies at the time to open a Catholic College in the Gawler region. This brief history serves to remind us that the College must not only meet the needs of current students as they progress through their 5 years of secondary schooling, but must gear itself to always being a significant community institution that must operate as a meaningful and effective educational provider for generations. It is interesting to note that this year the College hosted the first second generation student!

So whilst on this occasion we celebrate the achievements of students in 2015, my annual report reflects the need for Xavier College to be a vibrant educational entity for the next 20 years and beyond. During this time there will be amazing changes; regional expansion with urban development in Roseworthy, Concordia and beyond, technological advancements that are simply beyond my imagination. And of course these things will occur beyond my time as principal and in many cases, your time of involvement with the College.

The challenge then for the key bodies that represent College stakeholders, Catholic Education SA, the College Board and the school Leadership Team is to ensure Xavier College always remains, Relevant, Authentic and Sustainable.

That is:

**Relevant** to our current clients by providing:
- Contemporary Curriculum
- Contemporary Teaching and Learning
- Contemporary Facilities
- Comprehensive Family Engagement (Students and Parents)

**Authentic** to the College Mission:
- Quality Schooling – continuous school improvement
- The Catholic Identity – where love is the centre piece of a Gospel of Joy, where the person of Jesus is the inspiration.
- The Salesian Tradition – commitment to the Salesian manifesto of Presence, the Preventive System and a Pedagogy of Kindness.

**Sustainable** into the long term future:
- Identifiable community presence – clear school identity.
- Prudent financial management – low fees, a high fee collection rate, cautious expenditure.
- Excellent facilities – current Master Plan ($15m 3 year staged development, $13.5m self-funded, debt free).

Whilst I believe Xavier College is on the right track and there is plenty of sound evidence to affirm that view, there is and will always be, work to be done. The recently released College Strategic Plan 2016 -18, captures this sentiment and identifies clear strategic goals over the next 3 years.

Before I conclude this report, I would like to again remind everyone, that the successes achieved at Xavier College are underpinned by our College ethos! It is what defines us, what unifies us, is the reason why students and staff enjoy the Xavier school environment. A recent quote from Pope Francis highlights what I mean. This is a pope that has captured the attention of the world like few before him, and as recently as last Saturday, when he opened an International Congress on Education with 2000 participants, he used the words of St John Bosco to describe a contemporary Christian education, the quote is:

“There are three languages; the language of the head, the language of the heart and the language of the hands; education must go forward by these three ways; instructing in how to think, helping students to feel well; accompanying students as they do what they have learned or are learning to do.”
Pope Francis added, 
“Students must think about what they feel and do, feel what they think and make, and do what they think and feel.”

The purpose of his comments was to shift the emphasis away from the immanent, the me and now, to the transcendent, the higher ideal of human service, the capacity to see the face of God in the faces of those we live with, work with and tread this earth with.

In closing I would like to thank you all for the part you play in this vibrant school community.

To the students, for the energy and enthusiasm you bring to school each day and a special mention to College Captains Sophie Burnett and Liam Halford and our House Captains, they have collectively and individually had a major influence on the life of the College in 2015.

To the College staff, they are enthusiastic and dedicated. This is conspicuous in curriculum based teaching and learning programs and is also evident through their commitment to the House and Oratory System, I am struck by the level of engagement of students and teachers and the positive and respectful relationships that exists between teachers and students.

Inevitably, at the end of each year we must say farewell not only to graduating students but also some staff members. At the end of Term 3 Carolyn Ost retired after 17 years of service and at the conclusion of the 2015 school year we will say farewell to Margit Blythman, who will also retire after 11 years as PA to the Principal. Karolina Yeats is moving to Sydney after 4 years at Xavier and Joel Langley has decided to head overseas next year after 3 years at Xavier. I thank each and every one of these members of staff for having willingly shared their individual gifts with the College community. I am appreciative of all they have brought to Xavier over their years of service. I would also like to wish Ann Rowett every success for next year, Ann has decided to broaden her professional experience by working at Eudunda Area School in 2016.

I never cease to be delighted when I wander around the College property, we need to appreciate and celebrate this beautiful environment and the work of those who care for it. I also value greatly the work of the College Business Services staff; I would like to acknowledge the work of Karl Barber, College Business Manager, for his leadership of this team and in particular, for his work overseeing the capital development program that has begun and which will continue to unfold over the next couple of years.

I owe a particular debt of gratitude to Mark Flaherty, we work very collaboratively and I appreciate immensely his passion for the Xavier College community and his wise counsel in the capacity of Deputy Principal. He will of course be Acting Principal for much of next year. In a similar vein I thank sincerely the other members of the College Leadership team, Gareth Watson and Nicholas Sharrad. Finally, I would thank the College Board members for their support and guidance and indeed all parents for their commitment to the important partnership we have in the education of the students at the College.

I wish everyone the blessings of Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

Mr Lynn Martin, 
Principal