Dear Colleagues, Parents and Guardians

Fr Julian Slatterie - Requiescat in pace

It is with great sadness that we write to inform you that Fr Julian Slatterie SJ, one of our longest serving members of staff and a member of the Xavier Jesuit Community died yesterday afternoon. Over the last 18 months Fr Julian has battled ill health with a broken ankle in December 2012 and a full knee replacement in November last year. Fr Julian returned to the Xavier Community for the beginning of the school year and was delighted to be once more making a contribution to the community he loved so much. Sadly in early March, Fr Julian had a fall and broke his hip and shoulder. He was recovering from a full hip replacement and shoulder replacement. About 10 days ago he moved from St George’s Hospital to Campion House, next to Burke Hall, to continue his rehabilitation following his surgery. Yesterday morning he complained of chest pains and was taken to the Epworth Hospital where he died following a cardiac arrest.

Fr Julian has been a most loyal and faithful servant of the College, a place he deeply loved and a place where he was loved by so many. Fr Julian began his Xavier journey as a student at Burke Hall in 1942. After graduating from the College in 1952 he studied Commerce for a year before joining the Jesuits in 1954. He was ordained on 13 December 1966. He was the Headmaster of Burke Hall from 1975 to 1980 and the Headmaster of Kostka Hall from 1983 to 1994. From 1995 he has been a member of staff on the Senior Campus and a member of the Xavier Jesuit Community. He has been most dedicated in his role as Chaplain to the Old Xaverians’ Association and in his care of the Past Parents’ Association. He has been untiring in his support of the Xavier Foundation. All in all, he had 11 years at the College as a student and 38 years as a member of staff at the College. This is an extraordinary contribution to have made, one that is never likely to be repeated by any Jesuit in the future. He was the last Jesuit headmaster of one of our three campuses. Earlier this year we celebrated his 60 years of service as a Jesuit, including 48 years of priesthood.

He was a kind and gentle friend to so many of us across all three campuses. Each day he was interested in what was happening in the College and often gave very helpful, wise and encouraging advice. With his battle with ill health over the last 18 months, so many of us have missed his regular companionship in the College. Fr Julian continued to be interested in what was happening at Xavier and only last week was talking about his return to our community later this year. Now he is at peace with our God, taking his place among the communion of saints experiencing the gift of eternal life.

At the beginning of today there were prayer services for all staff and students to give thanks to God for the gift of Fr Julian’s life and to pray for us as a community. We do so in the Easter season, strengthened by our faith that Jesus has risen from the dead and the gift of eternal life is open to us all. We prayed for the Jesuit Community and for Fr Julian’s family. Our condolences are extended to his brother Paul and his wife Barbara, his sister Diana and their children especially the Terrill, Slatterie and Smart families.

It is natural for all of us to feel a great sense of loss at hearing the news of the death of a loved one. If your child is feeling troubled by this news, please do not hesitate in getting in touch with his Head of House or tutor on the Senior Campus or his/her homeroom teacher at Kostka or Burke Hall. We will have extra counselling provided at all campuses.
The requiem mass and funeral for Fr Julian will be on Monday 26 May at 10am in the Xavier College Memorial Chapel. Let us give thanks to God for gift of Fr Julian Slattery - the life of a most dedicated and generous Jesuit priest and loyal Xaverian. Let us continue to be consoled by the words of Jesus:

“I am the resurrection and the life. 
He who believes in me will live even though he dies 
And whoever lives and believes in me will never die.”

John 11:25-26

Yours sincerely

Father Thomas Renshaw SJ
Rector

Mr John Hickey
Acting Principal