

**Speech by Dr Don Markwell,  
Warden of St Paul's College, The University of Sydney,  
at a Farewell Dinner,  
St Paul's College, Thursday 19 September 2019**

Thank you so much for being here tonight – and thank you so much to Margie Sullivan for your kind words during drinks, and to Mark Elliott, Max Glanville, James Renwick, and the Vice-Chancellor for your very generous remarks in this dinner.

I am very grateful to everyone for being here, and very touched by what has been said.

Tonight gives me a chance to thank all those who have supported and contributed to the College's continual development throughout my time as Warden – students, staff colleagues, parents, alumni and friends of the College, donors and benefactors, past and present members of the College Council, colleagues from other colleges and the wider University, leaders in the Church, organisations such as the Broderick team and the Full Stop Foundation with which we have worked, current and former Members of Parliament, and indeed members of the wider community. Thank you – thank you – thank you!

Last Wednesday night our undergraduate community came together in this Hall to celebrate our undefeated victory in the soccer, and at the end of the night I said something heartfelt that I want to repeat tonight: I will miss you guys.

I will miss the positive energy, the camaraderie, the sense of community and belonging, “the fellowship of friends”. These qualities, which so greatly enrich the all-round education of our students, are very evident both in our undergraduate community and in our Graduate House community that has come together this year.

I will miss so many students I have come to know and to admire. I make no secret of the fact that there is no more rewarding time as Warden than spending time with individual students discussing their futures – their passions, their purposes, their particular aptitudes, their immense potential, their options for the future. It is the hope of making a positive difference in the lives of students that is the reason I have devoted some 30 years of my life to collegiate and university education. I look forward to watching over the years to come the progress of so many of the fine young people, undergraduate and postgraduate, whom it has been my pleasure and privilege to come to know here at St Paul's.

I will also miss my work together with student leaders here. At the heart of the continuing renewal of the College last year and this has been work together with student leaders to identify and to do what is needed. The College has been deeply fortunate that the Senior Student for 2018, Barney Archibald, and for this year, Max Glanville, are both outstanding leaders who know what is right and what is wrong, who – precisely because they care about the College and its students - face up with realism to its weaknesses as well as its strengths,

who understand our strategic context and continuing vulnerability and the scrutiny we remain under, who work together in a spirit of goodwill with staff and other students to think through what action is needed, and who have the courage to do what is right, accepting as natural and un-alarming that not everyone will agree, and the wisdom to turn difficult situations into opportunities for learning and for progress. These student leaders provide an example for leaders of all generations. It has been a joy to work with both of them, and I want to thank them most profoundly – and to join in that my warm thanks to other student leaders of both years for what they have done and what they are doing.

I am confident that, as the College continues on the path of upholding the values which it declares, the students will continue to rise to the occasion and the College will prosper. I am equally certain that, were the College not to continue on this path, its future would be at risk. The dictum of the conservative philosopher and politician Edmund Burke – to conserve it is necessary to reform – remains profoundly true.

Amongst the many developments last year and this which others have kindly mentioned – cultural renewal, the expansion of the College including the creation of Graduate House, the new Act which, amongst other things, reaffirms our historic and essential place as “a college of and within the University” of Sydney – one of the most rewarding has been the development of such an excellent staff team – a team of talented and dedicated staff committed to the well-being and growth of our students, and to meeting the many real challenges of a growing College. They too are a joy to work with, and I thank my colleagues from the bottom of my heart.

I wish that time permitted me to name them, and also to expand upon my thanks to others – the Women’s Organisation and parents generally, so many alumni and friends of the College including those who, grateful for what the College does, give generously to create opportunities for students now and for the future, the Archbishop and others in the Church, those people who have contributed to wise governance of the College, our dear and much-respected friends in The Women’s College and other colleges, the Vice-Chancellor and other colleagues in the wider University who could not have been more supportive, and other partners on our journey. Again, thank you.

It has been my privilege to have the chance to contribute something – I hope of value – to the journey of the College and – I hope – something to the journey of each student whom it has been my privilege to serve as Warden.

Thank you. Good luck. And I will miss you guys.