



MERCY COLLEGE ALUMNI

Where are they now?

Introducing:

Claudia Russo

Class of 1986 (Form 4 Year 10)

Hello everyone!

My name is Claudia Russo and I was a student at Mercy College from 1983 until 1986.

I completed Year 7 until Year 10. Year 11 was not introduced to the College until 1988, so sadly, I had to find a new school. I loved my time at Mercy College. The students were friendly and the teachers were amazingly bright. My favourite subjects were English and Italian, hence, why I became a teacher in 1993. My teachers at the College were: Miss. Mosca, Signora Bianchi, Mr. Zappone, Mr. Bruzzese, Mrs. Crispo, Mr. Joy, Sister Diane and Mrs. Agricola, just to name a few!

My highlights at the College was being a Prefect in Year 10 and playing Lacrosse.

Another highlight was the Year 10 Ball with St. Joseph's Marist Brothers' College, North Fitzroy, Therry College, Broadmeadows and St. Joseph's Christian Brothers' College. It was challenging learning the traditional dances with the boys, but very entertaining at the same time!

I can remember Mercy College being very multicultural. Girls came from all different backgrounds and I loved this the most about the school. A friendship between eight school friends formed in Year 7, 1983 and is proudly still going strong today. We loved our time at secondary school and we were very sad when we had to leave at the end of Form 4. We wished and prayed we could have finished our VCE at this school, but it was not meant to be. It was emotional saying goodbye to our dear friends that some of us knew since kindergarten.





MERCY COLLEGE ALUMNI

Where are they now?

I enjoyed the teaching and learning experiences the College provided. I was inspired by the Religious Education Program and the Social Justice initiatives. One day was known as Rice Day. We only had rice for the day and we donated to Ethiopia to improve their sanitation. I took away from the Catholic ethos, that being selfless is a precious gift.

Gratitude and giving to others are priceless!

Friends were wonderful and I still treasure them today. We were afraid of Speech, a subject at the College which taught us to stand straight and our posture needed to be perfect. We then recited our poems. We had to be perfect at it and we feared making a mistake. Mrs. Pamela Davies was our Principal, followed by Mr. Daws. We feared slightly the unknown, but soon realised we had nothing to concern ourselves over. We were kept busy with exams and the introduction of a computer. No more typewriters! Wow!!

I had decided to be a school teacher at the age of 5. I would gather all my stuffed toys in my bedroom and formed a classroom and I was the teacher. Seventeen years later that dream became my reality.

My career was set to fly!

I have studied a Bachelor of Arts with Honours Degree at the University of Melbourne. I then completed a Graduate Diploma in Education at the Australian Catholic University - Mercy Campus. In 2016 I completed a Certificate IV in Assessment and Training.

I also work as a Languages Consultant, and this work has allowed me to teach overseas, both in Indonesia and Italy in 2016 and 2018. It was a remarkable experience. I also visited USA and I visited Harvard University. It was wonderful to observe how students live on campus and all of their study choices. I was impressed with this University to say the least.

I plan to travel to Japan and Vietnam next year to observe different teaching styles and report back to my colleagues.

Visiting Singapore this year was beautiful and I enjoyed my time at an International School. Both the staff and students were very friendly and knowledgeable.





MERCY COLLEGE ALUMNI

Where are they now?

I am blessed my career has included travel but most importantly, I have been able to connect with other cultures. My personal growth has taken off to a new level. My passion for teaching has been ignited and I realise that our youth in every part of the world is unique but are connected with one common thread: they all want to be loved, respected and educated!!!



My parents, Francesco and Saverina Mercuri, have taught me to choose kindness wherever I go and to respect others as you would like to be respected and treated. My marriage and becoming a mother are the significant milestones in my life. I am kind, respectful and most importantly, loved and share love within my family. They give me strength and they inspire me to be a better person every single day.



Losing my father this year unexpectedly, has made me realise that tomorrow is never guaranteed. We need to reflect upon the past but not dwell on it. We need to live in the moment and cherish our life. Live life to the fullest. It is a privilege to become older, it is not a right!!!

Maintaining my friendships has meant that I have sisters for life. I did not grow up with sisters but my dear friends from High school mean the world to me. They have supported me during the passing of my beloved dad. For this, I feel very blessed and grateful and love that we catch up every 8-10 weeks either for dinner or a coffee. We connect and these special relationships soothe the soul.



MERCY COLLEGE ALUMNI

Where are they now?

I plan to travel the world when my daughter Alyssa graduates from secondary school. We plan to visit family in Europe and more importantly, visit Cambodia and help a community in need.

I would love to experience peace wherever I go! I would welcome in a heartbeat the eradication of bullying, rudeness and superiority. We do not need pretentious people; we need caring people. We do not want aggressive people; we want assertive and insightful individuals who will leave their mark on the world in such a positive light. This is what I would like to experience in the future. I want the students I teach today to be remarkable citizens of the new generation. We must embrace our youth and take care of them. They are our next precious generation!!



Lastly, I will finish with a special message for Mercy students...

*There is no greater joy in life than being responsible for Yourself
No one can control your behaviour but YOU.
No one else owns your attitude but YOU.*

Do take control.

You have the power to be amazing!!

Set your goals and aim for the sky!

It is wonderful to fall because the stars will catch you!

Never fear, wonder awaits you!

Be happy, laugh and love life.

It is there for you to capture it with a kind smile!!!!

Be yourself as people want to know the real you!!

Honesty is the best policy and always follow your instinct.

Avoid having regrets.

Do in life what your heart truly desires as we only get one chance at it.

No one else can live our life, but us!

Smile as it is your best trait! Nothing makes you look more wonderful than a beaming smile.

This will aspire others to smile and be happy!!



MERCY COLLEGE ALUMNI

Where are they now?

I am grateful to Mercy for allowing me this opportunity and with the festive season almost upon us, I would like to spread a message of goodwill.....Claudia Russo

English :

Dear Mercy College Community,
Hope you're well. Wishing you all a wonderful festive season.
All the best,
Claudia Russo

Italian :

Ti auguro una meravigliosa stagione festiva.
Tante belle cose, Claudia Russo

French :

Chere communaute' de Mercy College
En vous souhaitant une merveilleuse saison des fêtes. Bonne chance.

Spanish :

Estimada cominidad de Mercy College
Te deseo una
maravillosa
temporada festiva.
Todo lo mejor.

Simple Chinese :

亲爱的慈悲学院社区
Qīn'ài de cíbēi xuéyuàn shèqū
祝您节日愉快。祝一切顺利。
克劳迪娅·鲁索 (Claudia Russo)
Zhù nín jiérì yúkuài. Zhù yīqiè shùnlì,
kè láo dí yà·lǚ suǒ (Claudia Russo)

Thank you for sharing your inspiring journey and words of wisdom!

*Diane Psaila Alumni President
15th November 2019*