



Principal's Corner

Dear Theodorians Community



Traditionally, in my first High School annual assembly I always try to commence with some thoughts for the year. Aspirations we can hold onto and work at. I will share these thoughts with you in this newsletter.

My message centers on COMMUNITY, our theme for 2021.

A community being the group of people we interact regularly with – our friends, colleagues, those who live in our area or share a common bond.

To this end I looked for inspiration from the late Lord Rabbi Jonathan Sacks.

Rabbi Sacks so eloquently explained using Darwin's discoveries on natural selection, that species compete for scarce resources and only the best adapted survive. The weak species or those that do not adapt die in the natural world. The same, Darwin believed, was true of humans also.

This created a problem for humans as you imagine.....we would wipe each other out to survive! The strong would take the resources and weak people would perish.

Rabbi Sacks comments that, if evolution is the struggle to survive, if the strong win and the weak perish, then everywhere ruthlessness should prevail. But it doesn't. All societies value kindness. People applaud those who make sacrifices for the sake of others.

Rabbi Sacks believes that it was Darwin's greatness that he saw the answer, even though it contradicted his general idea. Natural selection operates at the level of the individual. It is as individual men and women that we pass on our genes to the next generation. But civilization works at the level of the group.

As Rabbi Sacks said, "a tribe including many members who, from possessing in a high degree the spirit of patriotism, fidelity, obedience, courage, and sympathy, were always ready to give aid to each other and to sacrifice themselves for the common good, would be victorious over most other tribes; and this would be natural selection." How to get from the individual to the group was the challenge and something we as a school can work hard at. Instead of just looking out for yourself you work for the betterment of the group and as a group or community we are stronger.

The conclusion was clear: We survive as groups. Or as Rabbi Sacks illustrates in a simple analogy: One man versus one lion: lion wins. Ten men against one lion: the lion may lose.

Homo sapiens, in terms of strength and speed, is a poor player when ranked against the animal kingdom. But human beings have unique skills when it comes to creating and sustaining groups. We have language. We can communicate. We have culture. We can pass on our discoveries to future generations. Humans form larger and more flexible groups than any other species, while at the same time leaving room for individuality. Humans are the community-creating animal.

It should also be noted that people form communities around places of worship, which encourages people in these communities to act together for the sake of the common good. They form associations, charities, voluntary associations, what in Judaism is called chevrot.

So religion, and in our case being in a Jewish School, safeguards the "habits of the heart". It guards public morals. It encourages people to work together to solve problems themselves rather than assume others will do it.

Religion and in particular Judaism in our multi-cultural inclusive school creates community, community creates kindness or altruism, and kindness and sensitivity turns us away from self and toward the common good. In Hebrew this would be called a Kehillah, a community.

In Judaism, community is essential to spiritual life. Holy prayers require a minyan. A minyan being a quorum of 10. When Jews pray, celebrate or mourn they do so as a community. In Judaism, it is as a community that they come before Hashem. For Jews, the relationship is not I-Thou, but We-Thou.

We develop virtue, strength of character, and a commitment to the common good in community. Community is local. It is society with a human face. It is the work we do ourselves, together. Our school has the unique and iconic position to foster this sense of community through the foundations and being guided by Jewish heritage. This we achieve by coming together as a community, irrespective of culture, ethnicity or religion for the common good of humanity.

Thank you and I wish you all the very best for 2021.

Kind regards
John Alexander
Executive Principal

Welcome Back to School

Our Theodor teachers were very happy to see their favourite pupils return to school this week



Grade 8 Orientation

Our Prefects decided that they will make a “fuss” of our brand new Grade 8 pupils during a fun Orientation *Murder Mystery* afternoon.



Sports News

Primary School Summer sports will resume on the 15th of Feb. At the High school, our Cross Country athletes have started working on fitness and we enjoyed our first Yoga session in the school hall.



Our Interact Club has started their Sandwich collection to support *One Life Child* and the *Walmer Angels* projects. So please send loaves of bread or an extra peanut butter sandwich to school on Thursdays and/or Fridays.

The club has organized a Blood Drive at school on 16 Feb from 07:00 - 16:00. Please donate blood, as the SANBS is desperate for blood.

Also, diarize Flip Flop Day on 12 February! Stickers will be sold at R10 and proceeds go to the *CHOC Initiative*.

Tu Bishvat

Theodorians celebrated *The New Year for Trees* this week by planting *Spekboom* on our campus.

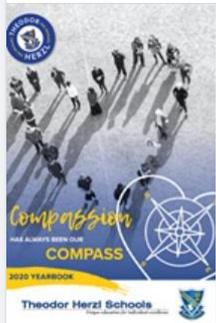




Dear Theodorians, Parents & Friends of Theodor,

We are so happy to welcome our teaching staff and Theodorians back to school. With all the Covid protocols in place, we feel very safe in our bubble called Theodor Herzl.

Thank you for your overwhelmingly positive feedback on our first Digital Yearbook. I can assure you that it was as much fun creating it as it was for you to view. Any Theodorians who have not yet had an opportunity to view our Digital Yearbook, please note that you can View, Download and Share from our Website, Facebook page and Engage.



THEODORHERZL.CO.ZA

2020 School Magazines | Theodor Herzl

Download the Pre-primary, Primary and High School Magazines for 2020.

We look forward to welcoming some visitors to our school on the 18th of February.

Theodor Herzl Schools



Open Day 18 February

Phone to book your time slot between 17:00 & 19:00

Pre-Primary School 041 581 2204

Primary School 041 581 4268

High School 041 581 4244

14th Avenue Walmer

www.theodorherzl.co.za

We wish all Theodorians a safe and happy Term 1!

Mariska