FOBA and Fatima Introduce Smartboards

THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION HAS ARRIVED IN TRINIDAD. FOBA, IN CONJUNCTION WITH FATIMA, HAVE EMBARKED UPON A PROJECT THAT WILL SEE THE USE OF SMARTBOARDS THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL.

The idea to use smartboards is not a new one, but rather a concept that is years in the making. Previously, however, neither the technology nor the economic implications allowed us to realise our vision. That has now changed as Columbus Communications (Trinidad) Ltd has provided us with a solution that allows us to lease the smartboards as part of a managed service for 5 years. The boards remain the property of Columbus and they take care of all maintenance and repair issues throughout the duration of the contract. Training and high-speed internet access are also part of the deal.

The initial demos and contracts were signed at the end of Term 2 and the installation of the boards and related infrastructure took place in July and August. The school is now equipped with smartboards in every classroom. In this regard Fatima is a bit of a trailblazer as no other secondary school can lay claim to smartboard functionality being available to all of its students all of the time.

Since the school year has begun the boards have been a revelation to teachers and students alike. Students can now interact with the material being presented in hitherto unforeseen ways. Imagine a Geography lesson where different types of forests are being discussed. The teacher has prepared examples of each but a question is asked about a part of the world that was not prepared. The teacher can easily discuss and display images via applications like Google Earth to satisfy the students’ curiosity.

The smartboards facilitate a step change not only in the capacity for learning but also the capacity for teaching. Teachers can now save valuable time in the classroom as time-consuming tasks like the drawing of...
From very young I had a sense of a call, an invitation from God which has developed and deepened over time. A decade ago, that invitation from God was to be a Brother in LWC. It was this invitation to which I gave myself fully, and even as a priest I would be at heart a Brother of LWC. The call to priesthood, which I had a strong sense of a decade ago, comes within the context of the first call to share life in community.

**What aspects of your early life developed your relationship with the Church?**

I think first of all, my family and parish community experience. My parents were very active in Church life and lived their faith. They were instrumental in helping to build the church community in Maloney. My mom was a guitarist, and my Dad was involved in many areas, such as leading services, serving on the Parish Council and helping to organize many activities. My brother and I naturally became involved; we were altar servers from very young and became leaders in the group.

At home we prayed as a family, including at times the official Morning and Evening Prayers of the Church. My parents had a deep devotion to Our Lady, and were involvement in Charismatic Prayer Groups and Teams of Our Lady. They were also very charitable and involved us in activities such as feeding the poor, visiting the sick, choir, prayer groups. I developed a thirst for knowledge of my faith.

Another huge influence then was my Parish Priest, Fr. Clyde Harvey, who had a tremendous gift for building a faith community. For 9 years of my childhood into adolescence, he helped me build a strong foundation of faith.

**Do you think that Fatima College placed sufficient emphasis on fostering a Catholic culture?**

I guess part of this answer is identifying what we mean by Catholic culture. For me, Catholic culture is more than just having daily Mass, Religious Education classes or annual retreats; these are important aspects of Catholic culture. At its heart, Eucharist is a way of living in and building relationship, it is living gratitude and selflessness, celebrating life, communion, solidarity, love – it is a celebration of a common way of living which we believe is not just for a select few but actually speaks to all of humanity because it helps us become more of who we are as human beings. So for me the question is: Did the school continuously foster an environment which made us more human? My
answer would be that it certainly tried. Education itself is part of culture. My experience of education at Fatima was that it was open to life and challenged us to grow and develop our talents and skills, to do what was right for the right reasons, encouraged conscientiousness, discipline and respect for others, and introduced a social dimension of caring for the poor through different activities. There was of course a spiritual component to the school, through daily Masses, devotions to Our Lady, Religious Education classes, annual retreats, and participation in the Corpus Christi procession. All of the above is part of what Catholic culture is about. Much was available and offered but the students must want to participate. So I think the school tried to help us flourish as persons by offering ways for us to develop all our dimensions and become who God desires us to be.

Do you think that the religious diversity of Fatima’s student population is a hindrance to maintaining its Catholic identity and culture?

No, not a hindrance. In fact, I think it presents opportunities to firstly deepen and clarify what it means to be Catholic and to share this. It will pose a challenge if we are speaking of Fatima as a Catholic school and yet Catholic teachers and students are in the minority. Fatima, and Trinidad in general, offers a space to share and learn about other religions. So studying in a religiously diverse space is in part a preparation for the reality of our nation. It does present opportunities for sharing and witnessing to our faith but also for listening to the faith stories of others who also seek Truth. Part of what it means to be Catholic is to learn to dialogue in the true sense of that word. We are given opportunities to build on what is common to us, especially among other Christians. In an unofficial way, I think this reality allows students who seize the opportunity, to do these things. I remember many dialogues and debates among my friends and classmates concerning God and religion. These naturally caused us young men to deepen our faith in trying to offer reasons for what we believe. It naturally opened a space where conversations about faith and life emerged, which is important for young people on a whole.

How well is the Roman Catholic Church relating to our e-culture?

If by e-culture you mean the electronic culture and the whole range of technology that is represented by new media, I think there are at least two levels on which that question can be answered. Firstly, the Church sees all of media and technology as a gift which has the potential to help humanity in areas of research, the alleviation of sicknesses, interconnectivity and sharing of information. Therefore the Church also utilizes it for evangelization. It is true that this may not be the norm in many parishes in Trinidad and Tobago but we must also remember that technology is costly. At another level is the reality that the Church, with hundreds of years of experience, has a message that is pertinent to the human person and the flourishing of the human person, regardless of the time. No matter what generation we are living in, the Church raises questions which call us back to the fundamentals of human living and what it means to be truly happy. In this sense the Church raises ethical questions concerning the ways in which we are willing to allow technology to enter human space and relationships. How do the new media within the e-culture threaten human existence and relationships? The Church also reminds us that there are many worldwide who are excluded from sharing in such technologies.

Briefly outline your transition from Fatima College to Living Water Community?

After A-levels I went to an international Catholic youth festival called World Youth Day. That was in 2002 in Toronto and it was there that the message of Pope John Paul II really touched me. He called on young people to give their youth to God and not to wait till they are “settled” in a job. His well-known refrain “Do not be afraid!” really impacted upon me. I came back to Trinidad and after getting my results I decided to do a silent retreat at Mt. St. Benedict, to pray “settled” in a job. His well-known refrain “Do not be afraid!” really impacted upon me. I came back to Trinidad and after getting my results I decided to do a silent retreat at Mt. St. Benedict, to pray a religious order there. On my return I was at prayer in the chapel at LWC when I met then Fr. Jason Gordon and that’s
how it began. Of course this is a VERY concise version.

**Q** What challenges did you face as a Brother?

**A** In the early years, my greatest challenges were that people didn’t understand the life choice I had made or the Community and so they criticized both. There were challenges of adjusting to Community life and all that entails: the early hours of adoration and the Liturgy of the Hours from 5:00 a.m., the tremendous and varied ministries of the Community, the work of the formation process which was directed to my own development. One challenge which will always be there is balancing one’s time.

**Q** Share about some of the work done by Living Water Community.

**A** The Community’s work flows from the call given to Rhonda Maingot and Rose Jackman. Rhonda received the call to live and to show the world how to love. Our ministry has both social and pastoral dimensions not only here in Trinidad but also in Saba (where I lived and worked for about 16 months), Barbados and St. Lucia. The Community also worked for three years in Russia during the early 1990’s. The work of the Community is facilitated by its members and associates, including married couples, youth, single persons, Consecrated brothers and sisters, and priests. It spans working with the homeless and refugees to caring for dying cancer and AIDS patients, working with drug addicts through rehabilitation programs, caring for youth in crisis and much more. The Community is also involved in Communications and Evangelization through the media, seminars and retreats, counselling, and catechesis and Christian formation of children and youth. It is truly a life-giving stream of water that flows.

**Q** What sealed your decision to become a priest?

**A** Deep in my heart I experienced this call from young. There have been many distinct moments in my journey in Community life which revealed a call to priesthood. So it is really an amalgamation of experiences which, as it were, confirmed more and more the call.

**Q** How did your parents react to your life decision?

**A** My parents were supportive and prayerful.

**Q** What subjects did you do in Form 6 and why?

**A** In Form 6 I did Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and General Paper. I wanted to study medicine.

**Q** What house were you part of for Sports Days and did you compete?

**A** I was in Fr. Byrne’s house I believe, and yes I did compete in some events.

**Q** Do you remember any of the achievements of the Fatima choir whilst you were a member?

**A** Wow, that was a while ago. We sang in Music Festival and did quite well.

**Q** Were you able to further your singing while studying in Italy, the land of Opera?

**A** I did attend a weekly hour-long class in classical singing in the Italian style. Music really is close to my heart.

**Q** What do you miss most about Rome?

**A** Definitely the friends with whom I shared the last two years, the stresses, joys and great discoveries of such a wonderful city.

**Q** Do you think that your faith in God grew while in Rome?

**A** I think my faith certainly deepened.

**Q** Advise a person who is part of no religion but desperate to discover God.

**A** The yearning to discover God is really a yearning for Truth. It is important to be honest with ourselves, and faithful to where that search may lead and to what Truth might ask of us. In the end, one may just discover what is most intuitive to us all that at the heart of the search for God is relationship, gift, communion and love. The novelty of Christianity is that that search leads to relationship with a person in Jesus Christ.

**Q** In a previous interview for this publication, Justice Holdip stated that one of the reasons T&T is failing in the war on crime is because the Church no longer has the impact it had in the past. What can churches do differently to rescue youth from a life of crime?

**A** In essence I believe if we lived the Gospel message in all its richness this would help. “Church” and religion offer a ritual space which is essential to the human person. It facilitates the building of relationship with others and God. There is a need to rediscover the importance and depth of the ritual and the role of the mystical in our lives. Christianity also has a lot to say about education and formation. One of the significant messages that our world and youth need to hear concerns learning self-sacrifice and how to die to oneself. Church helps us grow in solidarity and a sense of shared responsibility since for a person to flourish is for others to flourish as well. It does this by allowing persons to enter into a much bigger story in which we are all protagonists. In this space, virtuous living is modelled before it is taught and so there needs to be a greater practicing of what we preach. It is the witness that counts.

**Q** In Rome, did you ‘do as the Romans do’?

**A** Yes and no.
Images from ‘Ease D’Tention’ retro party held on Saturday 4th July

Images courtesy David Wears
In 2008, Mr. Berment and Ms. Roberts reignited the Applied Mathematics program at Fatima College, including modules on Statistics, Discrete Mathematics, Probability and Particle Mechanics. As a result, Fatima College has begun to re-emerge as an academic super-power in the field of Mathematics, now winning Additional and Open scholarships.

Mr. Berment’s accolades as a Math teacher do not end with his contribution to scholarships. More impressive are his students’ achievements at the prestigious International Mathematics Olympiads. In 2013, 2014 & 2015, the Trinidad and Tobago team consisting of only 4-6 members included two Fatima boys. They were selected from a pool of 3000 plus students and represented Trinidad & Tobago at the International Mathematics Olympiads in Columbia, South Africa and Thailand. Quite impressively, in 2015, Fatima copped the challenging Round II Team Prize at the Trinidad & Tobago Mathematics Olympiad Awards. The combined team score was the highest among all the schools that progressed to this difficult final stage.

Mr. Berment, fondly called ‘Rog’ by his peers has so far enjoyed a fantastic 2015. In March, he was awarded a scholarship by the University of Waterloo to attend the International Mathematics Teachers Conference 2015. This conference exposed him to modern teaching strategies and concepts being used internationally. He basked in the opportunity to visit the Quantum-Nano Technology Centre and to learn about the field of Quantum computing and the applications of Mathematics in the fields of Thermodynamics, Computer Graphics and Animation, Operations Research, Transportation, Inventory Management, Surgery Planning and Actuarial Science. For Rog, this was analogous to a child’s first visit to Disney Land. It was that exciting!

What shines through all Roger’s excitement at being exposed to so many great opportunities is his genuine desire to give his students the best. For him, teaching is not a job; it is a vocation. It is his duty to God. Rog leads a strong spiritual life, one of his personal mantras being “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

He believes that “Fatima is the cradle for future pioneers of our civilization” and treats his students as such. The linkages made with academics abroad will prove invaluable to Fatima College and Rog has already organized with a lecturer at the University of Waterloo, Professor D’Alessio to guest lecture at Fatima in Applied Mathematics.

Mr. Berment is my good friend and former teacher. He is a wonderful husband to his wife Donna and father to two beautiful kids, Mathieu, 5yrs old and Sarah, 13yrs old. I remember him as a teacher in 2005 being very timid. Now, he is at the fore, boldly advancing Fatima forward in the field of Math. One common trait resonates – his genuine care for the students. Rog is a great man with a pure heart and Fatima College is truly blessed to have him.
FOBA’s 2015 7-A-Side Football Tournament

ONCE AGAIN IT’S THAT TIME OF YEAR WHERE FATIMA OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION HELD IT’S FOOTBALL 7’S TOURNAMENT ON SUNDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER ON FATIMA GROUNDS.

If last year was the return of the event, then this year, we had a full tournament, whereby 14 teams subscribed to be crowned Champions.

As per the norm, there were 2 team categories, Under-40 and Over 40. Teams competing in the Under 40 were divided into two groups and the Over 40 in one group.

**Under 40 Group ‘A’**
- Young-ish Old Boys
- O Four
- Skunks
- 2nd Eleven
- Fatima & Friends

**Under 40 Group ‘B’**
- Stickerz
- Second Generation
- Multiple Scoregasmers
- More Drinks than Goals
- Fatima Staff

**Over 40**
- Fatima Hockey Vets
- S.S.K.G.V.
- Fatima and Friends
- Western F.C.

Camaraderie on the day was high as all teams were situated in the Pavilion and you know how picong is when team rivalry is on the spot. Reminiscent of Intercol games of yesteryear and also for the love of football, a great time was had by all.

Special Thanks to our sponsors, Carib, Lucozade, Powerade, Dasani, A.S. Bryden, Amco & Angostura

Special mention to Richard Piper of All Sport Promotion who ran the entire event with his referees.

Kudos to the Events Committee Team for making this event memorable. Looking forward to 2016.

**EVENT RESULTS**

**Under 40**
- Winner ~ O Four
- 2nd Place ~ Expendables
- 3rd Place ~ Fatima Staff
- MVP ~ Frank Denzy (O Four)
- Most Goals ~ Frank Denzy (O Four - 5)

**Over 40**
- Winner ~ Fatima & Friends
- 2nd Place ~ Western F.C.
- 3rd Place ~ S.S.K.G.V.
- MVP ~ Roger Johnson (Fatima & Friends)
- Most Goals ~ Dale Hearn (Western F.C. - 3)

Images courtesy LimeTT
2015 Annual General Meeting Recap

THE AGM HELD ON TUESDAY 30TH JUNE WAS OPENED WITH A PRAYER BY FR. GREGORY AND THE PRESIDENT’S REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 2014 TO 2015 WHICH WAS READ BY PRESIDENT DWIGHT ANDREWS.

Changes to the constitution were proposed, discussed and eventually passed by unanimous vote. The changes were as follows:
- Vice President position was changed to Senior Vice President
- Treasurer position was changed to V.P. Finance
- Assistant Secretary position was changed to V.P. Strategic Operations
- Assistant Treasurer position was changed to V.P. Sports & Extra Curricular Activities

Following reports by each sub-committee chairman, elections were held.

The elected Officers were:
- President – Dwight Andrews (unopposed)
- Treasurer / V.P. Finance – Mr. Mitchell De Silva (unopposed)
- Assistant Secretary / V.P. Strategic Operations – Mr. Rawle Annandsingh (unopposed)
- Ordinary Members – Mr. Kevin Crosby, Mr. Rene De Gannes, Mr. Trevor De Landro, Mr. Burt Bushell, Mr. Steven Luk Pat

The elected sub-committee chairmen were:
- Alumni – Mr. Colin Darmanie
- Sponsorship – Mr. Kent Jeary
- Events – Mr. Carlos Cedeno
- Benefits and Recognition – Mr. Jason Aguion

In the subsequent first meeting of the new Executive Committee, Fatima College Teaching Staff Liaison ex-officio member, Mr. Kevin Wells, was elected to the position of V.P. Sports & Extra Curricular Activities. This was to fill the gap that was left when Assistant Treasurer, Laurence McMaster resigned from the committee due to his upcoming migration from Trinidad.

The new Executive Committee stands as follows:
- President – Dwight Andrews (Class of 82)
- Senior Vice-President – Ruthven Thompson (Class of 91)
- Immediate Past President – Barry Davis (Class of 81)
- Secretary – Hayden Alexander (Class of 74)
- V.P. Strategic Operations – Rawle Annandsingh (Class of 91)
- V.P. Finance – Mitchell De Silva (Class of 89)
- V.P. Sports & Extra Curricular Activities – Kevin Wells (Class of 2002)

ORDINARY MEMBERS
- Burt Bushell (Class of 94)
- Christian Flemming (Class of 2000)
- Dexter Hosein (Class of 78)
- Graeme Ottley (Class of 84)
- Justice Ferreira (Class of 2013)
- Kevin Crosby (Class of 92)
- Noel Aming (Class of 68)
- Raymond Samms (Class of 84)
- Rene De Gannes (Class of 79)
- Robert Smith (Class of 77)
- Steven Luk Pat (Class of 2007)
- Trevor De Landro (Class of 74)

Historian - Keith Simpson (Class of 68)

Congratulations go out to all the returning officers and the newly elected members.

Letters to the Editor
Anyone wishing to send letters to the editor of FOB Newsletter “Beyond the Grey Shirt” can email their contributions to: contact@foba.fatima.edu.tt

Be a part of FOBA and join one of our sub-committees...
Sponsorship, Events, Recognition & Benefits and Alumni.
Visit www.foba.fatima.edu.tt/about/sub-committees for details on the sub-committees

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