

Message to our Community from Ms Teresa Roque, Chair of the St. Julian's School Board

Mrs. Simona Demuro

Fellow Governors

Members of the Association

Mr. Morgan

Parents, Teachers, Administrative and Support Staff,

Alumni, ...and (lest we forget) our very charming and helpful School Ambassadors.

Welcome

A very warm welcome to our 90th anniversary. How wonderful it is to see you all back on campus... back home, where we belong.

I stand before you today as the school's Chairman. But I first got to know St. Julian's in September of 1985, when I walked through those gates as a student. Back then, everything was new to me and a bit daunting – new country, new syllabus, new friends. Little did I know that St. Julian's would open a whole new world to me that would take me on a path I had never imagined.

I am by no means unique in this.

I have, since then, known St. Julian's as a Parent, an Alumnus, a member of the Association, and then of the Board. I never taught at the school but thanks to my son I got to know some teachers rather more intimately than perhaps they or I would have wished...

When we first walk through those gates, we cannot help but be struck by a sense of history, of a school which began decades before we arrived and will continue decades much after we have left. St. Julian's has a legacy unrivalled by any other international school in Portugal.

Today we celebrate our 90th anniversary, and what a 90 years it has been! St. Julian's lived through a World War, a revolution, two pandemics, rationing, several economic recessions and some three bailouts. And through all this the school persevered and thrived.



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It went from being a boarding school of some 100 pupils that mainly catered for the children of the employees of the Eastern Cable and Wireless Company, and of some families in the local community. With the World War and the influx of refugees, St. Julian's opened its doors to welcome the children of war refugees. Very quickly we were catering for 39 nationalities.

Today our student body represents well over 50 nationalities. From the very start we have been a **local school with a global outlook**. This diversity is part and parcel of the St. Julian's experience. Our students are at home with different cultures, different perspectives, different ways of interpreting the world. Whether they choose to remain in Portugal, or go abroad to pursue further studies, a St. Julian's student is prepared for a globalised world.

The world of education may have changed but there is a thread of continuity and character that have remained a constant at St. Julian's and that very much defines the school's identity. We are a school that continues to be **not-for-profit and non-selective**. In an era where schools have become competitive businesses, we have held strong to our values. We believe that education is not about the bottom line, it's not about league tables and educating for exams.

Ours is a different mission. We are in the business of excellence in education; of helping our students develop in a well-rounded holistic way. We want our students to leave with a sense of responsibility, a sense of duty, a wish to make a positive contribution in the world, to somehow give back. We want each to thrive in their own individual way; to chart his or her own educational experience. We strongly believe that each student has their own individual talents, that should be cherished and nurtured.

There is no one size fits all.

We balance academic success with student welfare and wellbeing. Though St. Julian's continues to have the best academic results in Portugal and outperforms many of the most successful British international schools around the world, something we are naturally proud of, we believe that education is not just about academic results. **We have a clear mission:** to empower the next generation; to instil in them resilience, empathy and consideration for others, open-minded curiosity and love of lifelong learning.

A St Julian's student leaves here a citizen of the world.

To our parents, I thank you for believing in us. We can only do, what we do, in partnership with you. Your support and presence in the school is crucial in making St. Julian's what it is and taking it forward to the next level in its development.

To our teachers, I salute you tonight. If we continue to be a reference in Portugal, the school of preference for most families wishing to provide a British-international education to their children, it is largely due to you, the work you do, your dedication, flair and professionalism, and the support you give the students and the school. From all of us, thank you.



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To our alumni and former teachers, former Headmasters and to the Association and to the governing bodies, both present and past, I thank each and every one of you. A school is nothing more than the people it is made up of. You created an important legacy. We stand on your shoulders tonight.

I started off by saying that St. Julian's took me on a path I had never imagined. It's not uncommon to hear this amongst our alumni. Some had that special teacher who inspired them to pursue a certain field of study; others made friendships that they maintain long after they have left, some even for life; others still were encouraged to follow more creative paths in theatre, art, music, film, writing or dare we say politics.

Most remain connected to the school in one way or another. The strength of our Alumni networks is testament to that. We are more than just a school – we are a strong community, where generation after generation keep coming back and entrusting our school with the education of their children.

We take this responsibility you bestow on us with very seriously.

And what of the future?

The school will continue to invest in its current facilities while waiting for the license for the new Build.

We will continue to invest in our teachers with professional training and mentoring.

We will continue to provide an environment where children can flourish, where they are not afraid to take risks, where curiosity, creativity and collaboration are encouraged.

Of course, for a school to excel, it needs an **inspired school leader** who brings vision, skill and a keen understanding of the environment. I believe we have found that in Paul Morgan. I wish him and his team God-speed in the next few years in driving the school forward.

A final word of thanks to John Burke, the Deputy Principal of Secondary School and the school's unofficial historian. I strongly encourage a visit inside the *Palácio* where John and his team have organised a special exhibition of photographs related to the early years of the school.

I now invite you to return to the reason we are all here today – to celebrate the 90th anniversary of this great school.

Have a wonderful evening!