Archbishop Sir Guilford Clyde Young DD KBE  
born in Sandgate, Queensland, on 10 November 1916  
ordained as a priest 3 June 1939  
ordained as a bishop 8 September 1948  
appointed coadjutor Archbishop of Hobart 1954  
archbishop of Hobart 20 September 1955 until his death on 16 March 1988

Archbishop’s legacy thrives

In this year of the 100th birthday anniversary of Archbishop Sir Guilford Young, I have often wondered what he might say about this College named in his memory.

He knew well the physical spaces of both of our campuses and their history as told through the dedicated ministry of the Christian Brothers at the Hobart Campus and the Salesians and Dominicans in Glenorchy. One of my favourite photos hangs on the wall of the Board Room at Glenorchy; it captures Archbishop Young surrounded by more than 20 Dominican Sisters in the front garden of the Campus.

He applauded all the religious of Tasmania as they tirelessly devoted themselves to building Catholic Schools in the cities and country townships. This strong relationship included the Sisters of St Joseph and the Sisters of Charity; all
five congregations were to lend their whole-hearted support to the establishment of our College over 20 years ago. So he would say to them today, as he was often heard to communicate as their Archbishop, how deeply grateful he was and is, that their legacy of commitment to the finest in Catholic education lives and thrives today.

So much of his mission as pastor to our Tasmanian community was focussed on access to a Catholic education, always mindful of the enormous sacrifice families made in order to send their children to our schools. He would be pleased to know of the demonstration of welcome this College provides particularly for those students and their families who have had to flee persecution in other countries, students of aboriginal identity, those from country areas and so many from impoverished backgrounds, however that poverty is defined.

In his early years as Archbishop he was profoundly affected by the physical poverty of his schools. The fees and fundraising contributed by parents, barely covered the essentials. He fought tirelessly to correct this, taking his cause to the highest political echelons. The sight of our now well-appointed classrooms and specialist classroom spaces, his personal library collection in our Boardroom, our Chapels, the Trade Training Centre, the Don Bosco Creative Arts Centre, comfortable gathering spaces and nurtured outdoors would both surprise and gladden him.

As a great scholar and lover of informed debate, he would be delighted to see the intelligent engagement of our students with their learning across every discipline and their pursuit of excellence in personal academic achievement along tertiary pathways and into the world of industry. He would be delighted with the reputation the College has developed across Australia and the success of our students both past and present as they stand on local, national and international stages recognised as capable, articulate and generous contributors to making their world a better place.

He was proud of his own Catholic identity and proclaimed his deep faith unashamedly in every quarter. His heart would be warmed by the study of Christianity and all the great religions of the world, undertaken by our students in our religious education courses; and as he did at every opportunity he would revel in the knowledge of the passionate commitment of our students to social justice and the energy given to reaching out to young children, refugees, the elderly, sick and homeless.

He urged his people to look to their immediate environment and to be the face of Christ to each person we encountered and not to leave this expression of our Christianity to an almost abstract or distant focus. He would be so pleased to see the members of our community so readily supporting one another through warm relationship and respect for the human dignity of one another; one of our great hallmarks.

He provided constant reminder of the need to Let Your Light Shine. He would applaud our students generous service in leadership, their wonderful talent on the sporting fields, on the stage, through artistic creativity, their compassionate care for the frail and marginalised by supporting wellbeing and charitable initiatives. He was a great voice for justice and fairness in the face of oppression and abuse. He would resoundingly be assured by the courage and integrity of so many of our students who commit to protesting respectfully but loudly so that others are treated with equity and embrace.

He knew his Tasmanian people very well; he would be reminded of the importance of this as he observed the profound connection between students, staff and families at the College and how hospitality and genuine welcome are offered to each person.

He gathered good people around him and trusted them to fulfil their ministry in accord with our tradition. He would be deeply grateful to each member of our GYC staff, recognising in them their competence, extraordinary professionalism and dedication. He would identify and commend the wisdom and breadth of experience of the members of our Board and Governing Council and be entirely confident that their stewardship would see his College directed towards continued improvement, grounded by its faith tradition and the story of its founders and advocates.
If he were here today, able to walk the corridors and engage in a vibrant conversation with whomever he encountered, he would no doubt express contentment and gratitude in the knowledge that his spirit of faith, love of learning, advocacy for justice, courage, integrity and genuine affection for people lives on in this his Guilford Young College. He would express pride in each one of our students and pray blessing on them as they carry his great legacy with them into the future.

*Mrs Bobby Court*
written for Lux Nostra 2016,
the yearbook of Guilford Young College

*photos*: Archbishop Young in Rome for the Vatican II session
An often-used portrait of Archbishop Young taken by J Barry Laurence Photography
Arise, Sir Guilford!

*with thanks to the Archdiocese of Hobart Archives.*