The Right Honourable Mr Ted Bailleau Premier of Victoria, Mrs Bailleau Distinguished Guests, Master of Ceremonies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Thank you for the honour paid to the De La Salle Brothers by your invitation to me to deliver the occasional address marking an event of such enormous significance. We celebrate jubilees in an ascending order of wonder with anyone reaching a 60th anniversary simply outdone by those “who are strong and make seventy” and eclipsed by any anniversary that is more than that. To celebrate one hundred years will occur literally only once in a lifetime. Tonight we are part of such a once in a life time event. That the Brothers have been seen as such a core element in the one hundred years that have passed and have been recognised as such by the invitation to me to speak is a gesture greatly appreciated by them and dauntingly challenging for me.

It is not my intention to speak much about the past. In the first place the magnificent publication “With Faith and Zeal Resplendent” has done so far more eloquently and much more engagingly. The eloquence of Bishop Mulkearns, the scholarship of Br Gerard Rummery and the administrative acumen of Br Paul Rogers in commissioning that memento of the occasion are likely to survive this evening much longer than the occasional address. We have also the wonderful method by which Br Paul introduced us, a traverse of history and personalities that has brought the evening to life.

It is encouraging to remind ourselves that we do have a Brother born in 1913 and still alive and well with unimpaired faculties living in Southport in Queensland. It is similarly encouraging that what commenced in very humble surroundings in St Joseph’s Parish Hall in Stanhope Street West, Malvern is equally still here. Almost forgotten are other events of 1912. The Olympic Games were held in Stockholm Sweden, Scott had been beaten to the South Pole by Amunsden. We have been reminded frequently that this was the year of the sinking of the Titanic but most of us forget that Sun Yat-sen formed the Chinese Republic or that the Kuomintang or Chinese Nationalist Party came into being. What makes us remember is the continuity of a presence. Above all, tonight, we celebrate the continuity of the presence of De La Salle College Malvern.

In so many ways the centenary celebration of the foundation of De La Salle College brings into focus why the College has been so important in the life of the Australian District. St Paul tells us that “Faith”, belief in the things that we do, is an essential part of our lives. We need the reassurance from time to time that what we do justifies our belief in its importance and its value. Paul said that we need the “substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of that which appears not” (Heb 11.1).

What drives the Brothers and their partners who share the mission is faith in the importance of that mission. Faith fuels the generosity demonstrated in the passion and zeal with which we engage in the human and Christian education of young men and women. De La Salle College has for 100 years provided evidence for all to see that the human and Christian education of young people can be successful.

That success has been witnessed by the distinguished career of its past pupils, the high academic cultural and sporting achievement of its students, the Catholicity of its culture demonstrated in the practice of students and the many Brothers and Priests that have received their schooling there, the continuing choice of those most discerning of judges, parents, who have sent their sons to the College for up to four generations and the "De La" spirit, unique in the experience of all who come into contact with the College. What has been achieved in De La has always been looked upon in order to "revive the drooping
spirit" of many who battle the day to day disappointments that are part of teaching along with the undoubtable highs and joys that are also part of that noble profession.

We are not about the past, we must deal with the present to make our future. Part of that future will be the celebration of this centenary that recalls to mind in so many ways, the “substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of that which appears not”. Young men are very much in need of the reassurance that the 100 years of De La Salle College will give them. This College has “what it takes” for them to be able to believe in themselves as called by God to be His continuing agents in the ongoing redemption of this world. It will be a better world because they are part of it.

In the epilogue to “With Faith and Zeal Resplendent” Br Paul Rogers reminds us. De La Salle College Malvern is one very special school community that has risen through change and turmoil at times, to be a strong, relevant and valued educational provider of Christian and human education throughout the twentieth century. The foundations are strong! Long may we continue to educate our students to be the best they can be.

Br Gerard Rummery’s introduction to the commemorative coffee table edition of “With Faith and Zeal Resplendent” relies principally on the past issues of the “Blue and Gold” to call to mind some of those changes and turmoil such as that associated with the foundation of the secondary classes, something so many of us would have simply taken for granted. He mentions also the post-world war two expansion caused by migration. Above all the College demonstrated what has recently gained currency as “resilience”.

Along with post war migration and the accompanying explosion of universal secondary education the College has survived the economic rationalism of the eighties when the rate of spending on education that followed the upgrading of schooling in the seventies came under huge pressure. The technology revolution of the nineties was also successfully absorbed by the College in the manner in which the computer challenged teaching and learning methodologies and the very nature and structure of schools and schooling. Brothers Dunstan Leopold and Jerome would never have conceived that one hundred years after the foundation of the College national school performance data would be compared internationally. Globalisation now means the pupils at De La Salle College live in a world in which the international movement of goods, services, employment, finance, and ideas cannot be controlled. De La Salle now educates young men to cope with cyber space when once the conquest of space was the impossible dream.

Our Centenary celebration demands that we dream. Our Centenary celebration demands that we preserve the past in the formation of our future. To do that it is important to imagine De La Salle College in 2030.

I think that tonight as I focus on the future it is appropriate to recall the ideas, borrowed from the book of Ecclesiastes. Some of you will remember the group called the Byrds. One of their hits played over and over again to and by a generation well represented here was a number that became identified with the words ‘Turn, Turn, Turn’. De La Salle College has always been able to turn; it has done so in response to the “season”. We remind ourselves:
To everything there is a season
And a time for every purpose under heaven

A time to be born and a time to die
A time to plant and a time to reap
A time to laugh and a time to weep

A time to build up and a time to break down
A time to dance and a time to mourn

It is also worthwhile delving into the next verse from Ecclesiastes. “I have seen the business that God has given us to be busy with. He has made everything beautiful in its time.” The future essentially requires us and those who carry on from us to be convinced that the College is something that God has made and it is meant to be beautiful in its time.

I propose to provide a few brief reflections on the fact that the passage of future time will mean changes in the landscape that De La Salle College occupies. Those will necessarily require change in the manner in which De La Salle College operates to meet the realities, the challenges if you will, that it will face.

Firstly ‘De La’ and the ‘Brothers’: there will be very few if any brothers working in De La Salle College in the future. That in itself will offer nothing in the way of a surprise to this audience. However the particular identity of De La Salle College has been very closely related to the fact that for 100 years brothers with all their human frailties and strengths have been part of the core identity of the college. That identity is based around relationships. Relationships with college personnel are the web out of which the character, the values and the culture of the organisation develops.

It is a blessing that the living memory of the College perpetuated by the sterling work of its most recent principals is such that it is a memory that many are committed to maintain. In shorthand terms the college identity has become abbreviated to the term ‘Lasallian’. ‘Lasallian’ has come to encompass ideals such as faith service and community. It has become synonymous with excellence and the achievement of potential, the correction of faults, a positive attitude towards oneself and others leading to a confidence to search for the truth and to act. These are values that may have originated in the lives and the reflections of the brothers. They are also values to which all persons of good will can aspire and promote.

The future of De La Salle College will witness a different group of people stepping forward to proclaim the same ideals that so many in the past have derived from the presence of brothers. These people will become the heart, the memory and the guarantee of what it is to be Lasallian in the context of De La Salle College. The brothers will not cease their mission to De La Salle College, their presence will be different, the responsibilities that are to be shouldered by others will be different, but De La Salle College can retain the core of its identity. In this the College Board, the college staff and above all the college community will play the most significant parts. Thinking again about ‘Turn, Turn, Turn’ there has been much planted and it will be reaped in abundance in the future of the College.

De La Salle College and Relevance: with few exceptions most who have experienced De La Salle College are able to identify three principal elements of the educational experience that it has offered. The first is that almost every student has been able to find in the college curriculum and in its spiritual, cultural, sporting, community service and social experiences, a place to belong. Secondly the college has always
been committed to offering opportunity and encouraging effort and imagination. Thirdly this gathering this evening is eloquent in the extent to which it demonstrates that one can achieve one’s potential.

Turning to the predictable characteristics of the world of 2030 the qualities which have made De La Salle College relevant in its past will be even more urgently sought after. Consider for example the issue of ‘Globalism’. Note that the present tense reference contained in the word ‘globalisation’ has morphed into not something that is happening but something that has happened. In 2030 resources, services, information and ideas will be shared throughout the world. Educationally it is likely that courses and assessments will have bypassed the Australian National Curriculum and will be selected from the range of international options. No one considering the expansion of “on-line” University courses can imagine that “on-line” courses will stop there. In this environment De La Salle College with its tradition of “all-round” education will maintain an opportunity to be balanced and comprehensive.

Globalism will have its downside. Many are likely to be intimidated and isolated by belonging to the ‘whole world’, yet failing to feel that they belong to any part of it. De La Salle has always been a place to belong. De La Salle is a place where someone knows my name. In an environment where student attendance and teacher presence will be measured in a combination of physical presence and on-line participation, De La Salle will always insist that students and teachers spend time face to face and in a relationship that can deliver the transactional nature of education so clearly identified by R S Peters.

Personal identity theft, the world wide publication of confidential information about individuals and organisations, the demoralising effects of ‘transparency’ in the publication of outcomes will be issues in which the community commitment of De La Salle College will offer protection and advocacy.

A current demand especially for non-government instrumentalities that rely on public funding for their operations is to be able to demonstrate a social return on investment. The concept of a social return on investment is that the recipient body must be able to demonstrate, objectively, that society is better off in some way as a result of its efforts. Indications are that provisions similar to those already in place in the United Kingdom could well come into play in this country as competition for access to the public purse becomes more and more demanding. For the past 100 years De La has been conscious of the improvement that it has brought about in the part of society with which it has been concerned. In the future predicting the benefits that the College can offer similar to those I have just mentioned and including those that I still wish to cover will become part and parcel of what it means to conduct De La Salle College. It will be able to do so.

De La Salle College and Students: The truism that experienced teachers are always able to aver is that the student body continually changes. Already the pre-war post depression generation is almost antediluvian, the post-war (i.e. WWII) are great grandparents, the baby-boomers have come and are going, there’s been generation X and Y and now Z. I am aware that the staff of the college is conscious that there are marked differences in a new group of students that are represented in the following set of commandments for those of the Z generation
Thou shalt always be connected
Thou shalt always be mobile
Thou shalt use computers at work
Thou shalt use computers at play
Thou shalt have many friends that I will never meet
Thou shalt have a second life
Thou shalt be ultra-independent
Thou shalt multi-task
Thou shalt always be in demand (because there will be so few of you)
Thou shalt invent a whole new language

Scary! Certainly especially for a college that has been remarkable for the manner in which class cohorts have remained so bound to each other, so conscious of the corporate identity of ‘De La’. As Lasallians we are committed to the human and the Christian education of youth. In many ways the College has been able to take this a little for granted because there have always been connections, there have always been religious; there has always been opportunity to be shared.

Individuation and differentiation are the buzz words in today’s educational world. Both of them are essentially individualistic. To honour the individual and still to be able to promote the richness and blessing of relationships is a future challenge for the College. It seems a Herculean task but it is a task from which the college has never shied.

Currently curriculum delivery has been very much influenced by an approach identified as Understanding by Design. In less than adequate terms it encompasses a fairly common sense approach of deciding what one wishes to achieve and designing specific steps to ensure that the outcomes are achieved. That I believe is what De La Salle College will be consistently asked to do and that is what I believe it is in a position to do most effectively.

We may well conclude with the key contribution the College will continue to make, so aptly expressed by Bishop Mulkearns in the foreword to “With Faith and Zeal Resplendent”. We thank the Brothers and those who have worked with them for the witness that has been given at De La Salle College for the past one hundred years. They have pointed the way to all of those of us who have cared to look. They have called many thousands to a genuine living of Christian values, in whatever vocation they may have followed. We thank them for having reminded us that ‘we have not here a lasting city’ and at the same time teaching us that ‘with God as our Leader’ we should respect and appreciate the city we do have.

To wish De La Salle College ‘Ad Multos Annos’ is not a polite and gracious nod. It is a challenge to be the immense influence for good in the lives of young people and their families that we all know it can and will be. Ad Multos Annos.