

## Reflections of a Theological Student

Last week, I pressed **SEND** for the last time as I submitted my final assignment for my Bachelor of Theology degree through St Francis College. It was a strange feeling. Obviously, the last Semester was rapidly changed from face to face lectures to online meetings, which meant that firstly a good proportion of the lecture was taken up with technical trouble shooting and secondly a lot of the camaraderie between the students was lost, and there will be some students who I won't see again at all. So all in all it was a bit of an anticlimax.

However, as I reflect on the subjects that I completed as part of the degree I am struck by the variety of topics that I covered. I learnt two new languages (Hebrew and Greek), studied all the Gospels in detail as well as the writings of Paul, discovered a lot of the Old Testament (which to be honest I hadn't taken much of an interest in before), and then covered liturgy, the sacraments and how theology might be applied to the challenges of today's world. I'm not sure how many words I would have written in total during the degree, but it must have been around 50,000.

When I think about what I am walking away with, though, it is more than a piece of paper. I met some wonderful new people, built strong relationships, and broadened my mind extensively so that I can now approach what I hear and read in the Bible and at church very much more openly. We were a mixed group of students, and although we didn't all agree, we all respected what each other had to say. While for some theology is an academic interest, it can also at times challenge your faith and the approach to Christianity as a whole. I was very lucky to have Fr Steve to bounce my ideas off and fire questions at (and I thank him for his tireless hours of patience and putting up with me during those times!).

I don't by any means think that the learning is going to end here. In fact, it has probably only just started. I've been given the pillars on which I have the rest of my life to build on. The final structure will no doubt look very different from what I imagined!

Finally, I would like to also thank my long suffering Mum, who read every one of those 50,000 words that I wrote, offering suggestions and finding grammatical errors for me. In fact, just the other day she asked me the question that I have been thinking about for a little while already - "So...what's next?"

**My dog, Annie, doing the final spell check for me**  
**(turns out I had spelt "Canaanite" wrongly!!)**

