

Dear St. Nicholas Mums, Dads and Staff,



I visited my son, Cival, this weekend. On our long drive back from Potchefstroom yesterday, I found myself deep in thought, reflecting on my journey as a roadrunner, particularly the Comrades Marathon. I have had the privilege of running and completing this iconic race on six occasions, and each time it has taught me lessons that extend far beyond the road from Pietermaritzburg to Durban.

The Comrades Marathon is not just a test of physical endurance; it is a celebration of mental strength, resilience, and unwavering willpower. It demands commitment and absolute dedication to your goals - qualities we hope to instil in every girl and boy here at St. Nicholas Diocesan School. But the Comrades is also a race steeped in tradition and history. It is the oldest ultramarathon in the world, first run in 1921 to honour the South African soldiers who lost their lives in World War I. Each year, thousands of runners line up not just for a medal, but to become part of something far greater than the race itself.

One tradition of the Comrades Marathon that resonates with me, is the passing of the Mayoral Baton. A scroll is handed to the race leader just before they enter the stadium and cross the finish line. This baton carries a message of goodwill from the mayor of the starting city to the mayor of the finishing city, this year being Pietermaritzburg or Durban. This tradition was introduced in 1974 and is a simple yet powerful gesture that speaks to the unity and shared pride between the two cities. As the first runner carries it over the finish line, it reminds us that the Comrades is about so much more than just running. It is a celebration of the connection between people, places, and a shared history.

In today's world, with smartphones, instant messaging and emails, communication is supposed to be easier than ever. However, truly connecting with one another has, in many ways, become more challenging. The symbolism of the baton reminds us that messages with meaning require intention, care and a human touch. Much like the relationships we nurture here at St. Nicholas, real communication takes time, effort and above all, presence.

Many powerful lessons from the Comrades Marathon are especially relevant to our children's growth and learning journey at St. Nicholas:

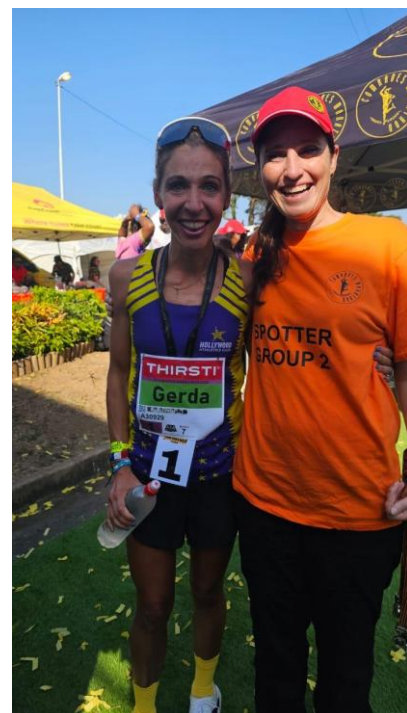
- Mental Strength: Just as runners dig deep during the tough kilometres in the latter part of the race, our children are taught to persevere when facing challenges in the classroom or playground.
- Consistency Over Speed: In Comrades, it's not about being the fastest – it is about pacing yourself and staying on the course with purpose. We encourage our children to grow at their own pace and understand that progress is personal and unique to every child.
- Resilience: Every runner faces moments of doubt or pain, but they keep going. At school, we help our children understand that setbacks are opportunities to bounce back stronger.
- Support: No one runs Comrades alone. Fellow runners encourage one another - just as we teach our learners to be kind, helpful, and encouraging teammates.
- Setting and Achieving Goals: Training for Comrades takes months, sometimes years. Similarly, we help our children set academic, personal and social goals and celebrate the small victories along the way.

At St. Nicholas, we remain committed to developing strong, meaningful relationships with our children, with one another as staff, and most importantly, with you, our parents. Together, we carry the baton of care, responsibility and growth, passing it along daily as we shape tomorrow's hearts and minds. Thank you for running this race with us.

Kind regards

Ms L Swann, our Grade R teacher at the finish line with Gerda Steyn, the lady's winner. Ms Swann was a volunteer at the year's Comrades!

Kamal Rugbar (Headmaster – Junior School)



Mrs Hayward did a delightful “I am a Bucket Filler” assembly today. The children watched a lovely story about a brother and sister who unfortunately where emptying each other’s love buckets by fighting over silly things at home. This then spilt into their day at school where things just got worse. It was only when their teacher and friends started to fill their buckets with complements and kind deeds that the day turned around. Our St Nicholas children were spot on when asked to give “bucket emptying” examples as well as “bucket filler” deeds. Now it is our job as parents and teachers to remind our special children the difference as well as appropriate choices of how to fill the Love buckets of those around us! Each child was given a “I am a Bucket Filler” badge to remind them of the promise they made and strive towards making school, home and our beautiful world a better place.



KINDNESS BADGE
WINNERS



<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
Monday, 9 June	Chess Championships at Cordwalles
Tuesday, 10 June	Grade 1 & 2 Boys Soccer at Epworth
Thursday, 12 June	U9A/U9B/U10A/U10B Netball vs. St. John’s (H) U11A &U11B Netball vs. St. John’s (A) U13A/U13B/U13C Netball vs. St. John’s (A)
Friday, 13 June	Grade 3s to Birds of Prey Cross-Country at St. Charles College

Inter-school Chess Championships 2025



Congratulations!

Nathan Christian was placed 4th in the senior section and Caleb Wiles was placed 9th in the junior section. Well done to both these boys for their hard work, commitment and dedication to Chess.