



*From the Principal:*

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### **Fresh Beginnings and New Starts**

Several times this week I have walked across the bridge into the school ground and paused to admire the NEW standard roses we have planted at the entrance. They are beginning to put out **new** leaves. Soon they will look like bushes, not twigs and I look forward to them being covered with beautiful rose flowers. Along the roads on my way here I notice that there are blossoms on plum trees and some of the wattles are covered with brilliant golden balls. Spring is coming! There are signs of **renewal** and health. For a man struggling with an eye problem these signs are heartening, encouraging for several reasons. One reason is just the pleasure of being finally able to get outside and to see with a **new** appreciation the beauty of our world. The other is that it seems to me one of the God-given principles of life that we have seasons of doing it tough, the 'winter of our discontent' as Shakespeare put it, but these are balanced by times of renewal, of the chance for fresh beginnings.

This idea is particularly true for relationships. Within families or here at school we can get out of sorts so easily, as angry words or offensive actions get strong, negative reactions. It takes effort to work through these tensions or conflicts. We need patience and humility to accept responsibility for our part in the problem, and grace to give or accept an apology. This can open up the possibility of a new start, and hopefully renewed appreciation or love of the other person.

The same is true of relationship with God. There are times when we feel disappointed with God or angry with Him. "Why don't You do something!" we may be screaming inside. "I prayed, I believed that You would be there for me, but all this difficult, painful stuff is happening! Where are You when I need You?" The amazing thing is that our patient, long-suffering God can handle such outbursts. In fact, the Bible is full of them, especially the Old Testament. God assures us that He is always with us, even in 'the dark night of the soul' when we feel depressed and alone. Sometimes we have to go through Winter to really appreciate Spring. The joy of hope in Christ is that He is all about bringing light into dark places, putting hope and heart into us, offering us a new beginning. And just to remind us, we see the blossoms of spring, the blooming of new roses. Look around you, and give thanks for the seasons of life and the promise of fruitfulness to come.

**Stephen Leslie**