



Precious Times - Term Two 2019

Mentoring Weekend - Precious Blood School Riruta – 27th & 28th April 2018

Don't carry your mistakes around with you. Instead, place them under your feet and use them as stepping stones to rise above them.

Dear Precious Girls,

It is a joy for me to, once more, compile an edition of Precious Times – summarising another great weekend of mentoring, learning and interacting with girls from other schools and our faithful mentors.

Introduction

During this mentoring, we had the pleasure of welcoming 30 new Form 1 girls who have joined us this year. In total, there were 109 of you girls in school, 12 alumni who are in the university or waiting to join university and 36 mentors. In this our second mentoring event this year, the theme was **Ambition** which is the A in our ABC theme. (Remember, A stands for Ambition; B for Self Belief; & C for Commitment.)

Wallace took time to welcome the Form 1 girls and to explain that mentoring is a conversation between a more experienced person and a lesser experienced person where the former provides guidance and support. Precious Sisters offers mentoring to support your development throughout the school years and help you plan what to do after school. There are things that you cannot change like where you come from but in the school you are in, and with sponsorship from Precious Sisters, you are getting a golden opportunity to change your future and make it better. All of you Form 1 girls were assured that you are in safe hands and mentors who represent many fields of experience are here to help you realize where you are going and how to get there.

What Is Ambition?

Wallace defined **Ambition** as a strong desire to do something typically by hard work and determination. Ambition is driven by passion and is important if we want to achieve something in life. Intelligence without ambition is compared to a bird trying to fly without wings. Ambition can be long term or short term. It helps to look ahead at where you are going and not be stuck looking back at where you come from. Wallace also explained that your goal must be SMART.

- S** – Specific (What is your goal?)
- M** – Measurable (How much time will you take to achieve it?)
- A** – Achievable (What do you need to achieve your goal?)
- R** – Realistic (Can I do it if I try?)
- T** – Time bound (Do I do it weekly, monthly or yearly?)

Muthoni took over the session and explained that ambition can be hindered by lots of things in one's head for example: boyfriend, poverty, fights at home, family member's illness and so many others. You have to learn to let go in order to go far and achieve your ambition, always remember that circumstances are the rulers of the weak, don't let anyone influence your ambition and it is not okay to be just 'okay'. Challenges should make you stronger and help your emotional muscles. Take every problem you face as an opportunity to grow. She shared with you a number of quotes:

- ✚ To use my communication skills to teach. And to be known for inspiring my students to be more than they thought they could be. – *Oprah Winfrey, founder of OWN, the Oprah Winfrey Network.*
- ✚ The size of your dreams must always exceed your current capacity to achieve them. If your dreams do not scare you, they are not big enough. – *Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia.*
- ✚ I embrace the power of entrepreneurship to change the economic and social state of Africa ... by giving people, who are at the bottom of the pyramid, access to financial services that can maximise their opportunities. – *James Mwangi, Chief Executive Officer of Equity Bank.*

Muthoni then narrated to you a story about a farmer who one day collected eggs on his farm and gave them to the hens to hatch. When the chicks hatched, one appeared to be very different from the rest. It turned out that one egg was hatched from an eagle's egg. The chicks grew but one day when they were playing they saw an eagle and all of them ran to hide except the eagle's chick (eaglet). The eaglet admired the eagle in the sky. One day, the eagle came down and explained to the eaglet that he was not a hen but an eagle and he was supposed to fly with him. The eaglet refused and said he was a hen. The eagle came back and took the eaglet so he could teach him how to fly. At first, the eaglet did not fly high; he only jumped a little and fell. The eagle then took the eaglet to a high mountain and told him to fix his eyes on the sun and spread his wings. The eaglet did exactly as he was told and he was able to fly. Before he tried, the eaglet never knew he had the great ability to fly and soar like an eagle rather than scratch like a chicken.

To emphasis more on the theme of Ambition, Muthoni gave you a self-assessment form on how to come up with your life vision. Your life vision is a compelling idea about achieving your dreams. A life vision can be compared to a compass that points you in the right direction. Your life vision will help you take the best actions and make the right choices that propel you towards your desired life. **Creating a vision is neither a waste of time nor an exercise in futility, even though it will change as you grow and learn more about yourself.**

To write your life vision, you were asked to answer these three questions:

1. What is my greatest talent? *If you cannot identify your greatest talent, ask your friends, teachers and parents.*
2. What issue do I care about deeply? *Most of us care about more than one thing. Try to identify an issue that you really care about. Get started by identifying one or two that most bothers you and explain why.*
3. What are my core values? *Values are what inspire and energise you. Your values guide how you treat others and how they treat you. Based on your experience, pick the 1-2 core values that matter most to you and think about why.*

Vision Box

Write your life vision in your own words. **Be brave, think big and go for it!** Think deeply about yourself, your possibilities, your uniqueness and fill this in as honestly as you can:

I.....want to use my special talent which is

To (do) in order to bring about a change in

.....

Group Sessions with the Mentors

The group session with a mentor gave you opportunity to interact with students from other schools and participate in discussion based on the day's theme of ambition. You discussed various activities you are involved in while in school, in church or at home that require ambition, for example a higher grade or a leadership position. The mentors shared their life experiences in areas they had to apply ambition in order to succeed. A number of you have shared with me that during the discussion you learnt that:

- You should surround yourself with people who have dreams, desires and ambitions and who are likely to push you.
- An ambitious person is characterised by:
 - Focus
 - Determination to achieve what she sets mind to
 - Risk taking
 - Having a teachable spirit.
- One without ambition is characterised by:
 - Being easily influenced
 - Fearing taking risk
 - Giving up easily
- You are the determiner of whether your ambition will come through
- Having ambition is not enough, you have to take the actions that will help you attain it
- Being in school is a golden opportunity to mould your future and you should be ready to pay any price and sacrifice to achieve your best
- Maintaining a positive attitude towards your teachers and subjects will enable you to acquire a good grade

One-on-one Session with a Mentor

The afternoon 1-1 session with a mentor was a time that you had the mentor to yourself. During the session, you discussed issues that could prevent you from achieving your ambition. These could either be from home or from school. You also reviewed your performance last term and discussed your plan to achieve what you were committing to, this term. Through the session, you were able to identify where you made mistakes and discussed ways to avoid repeating them this term. The mentors encouraged you to aim higher and forego other things to ensure that you give your studies your best. The mentors let you know that the current world needs people who lay down strategies that will enable them to pursue their goals. It is important to know the main reason you are in school.

Public Speaking Session

As the 1-1 sessions were going on, the rest of you who were waiting to see a mentor or had already seen one sat in three groups. The public speaking majored on the self assessment forms you had been given in the morning. Each one of you was expected to stand up and share with the group how you could use your greatest talent and your core values to solve an issue that you cared most about.

The session is usually meant to empower you with public speaking skills and increase your confidence level. It was amazing to hear ideas that you came up with to make the world better. Most of you in your presentation proved that you are bold in the steps you would take to achieve your goals.

Sunday Morning Skits

On Sunday morning, you presented skits based on the theme of ambition that showcased your confidence, organisation and team spirit. The skits are meant to ensure you understood the weekend's theme. It also empowers you with presentation skills as there will be many situations in life where you will be required to express yourself in front of people. The winning team were awarded with not only chocolates but also with a cake from Muthoni.

Wallace took time to share with you ways that you can deal with pressure which a number of you especially in Form 4 seem to be experiencing. He defined pressure as the feelings of anxiety that are caused by the need to achieve or behave in a particular way due to being forced to do something. He challenged you to only accept pressure from yourself to achieve your ambition.

Career Talks



Jo Mbeo - Deputy Director in Charge of Communications. Her work is to inform the public of what is being done to achieve the objective of the ministry she is in. Her success has mostly come due to her ability to speak out confidently. She explained that the government is a very vibrant employer and any profession can work for the government. The government is all about order and structure and there are papers and policies that show you exactly what you are supposed to do. A civil servant is expected to meet the needs of all the citizens regardless of their tribal, political or religious affiliation. Civil servants work under performance contracts and the majority of them are passionate and committed to their work. Jobs in the government are advertised and after one is shortlisted, what follows is a long interview process. There are, however, entry level jobs that one can get without experience and there are also many clerical jobs in various ministries.

Jo studied at Alliance Girls' High School and proceeded to join Baraton University to study a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History and English. Her career has spanned through several media houses and Kenya Airways before joining the civil service.

Our take from Jo:

- The key to being a good civil servant is passion, determination, dedication and confidence
- You should be humble enough to start small but courage will take you far
- Remain focused and use your spare time wisely
- Look for something to occupy you after sitting for the KCSE as this will give you the experience on how to work with people and perhaps earn you some money instead of just staying at home

 **Jackie Akelo**— a lawyer and an alumna of Precious Blood, Kilungu. Enjoyed studying sciences and languages when she was in secondary school. Initially she was torn between a career in law or medicine but ended up choosing law. Her strengths include confidence in self and being results oriented. To study law, one needs to study for four years at a university and then Kenya School of Law for 12 months of theory and six months of pupillage (kind of internship) with either the government, a court or at a private law firm. Law is hard work and especially when you work in private practice and your pay comes from clients you have to work very hard, put in many hours to satisfy your clients.

Our take from Jackie:

- To be a good advocate, you need to be open-minded, have a love for humanity, need to help people and be confident
- Being a lawyer is not about luxury. It requires dedication, hard work, determination and ambition
- To succeed, you need to be all rounded and teachable
- Law has many specialities and one can choose from a variety of areas: entertainment, human rights, family law, business, criminal, intellectual property law, among others

Our Alumni – compiled by Marcella Karimi

The turn up wasn't as expected, only 12 Alumni showed up. Next time, it's a call upon all the alumni to show up, to learn and interact with each other and our esteemed Mentors. The morning session was conducted by Kate Vorley, the Country Director for Plan International, an NGO that helps young people. The topic of discussion was **Work and Family**. She tackled the topic by narrating her life experiences that gave us a lot of lessons to learn from.

The following lessons were realized from her experiences:

- Build a network of friends in school, work places. These friends help one to get the connection to various places of work and get better opportunities
- Women deserve equality and equity in every opportunity
- We should take bold steps to grab opportunities that come our way as equally as men

- In work places, demand your space, don't pity yourself or see yourself as inferior in our male dominated society, show respect and play your part
- Our life paths are very different and people help us reach our destinations in various ways. Don't ignore even the least of people you wouldn't expect; they can be the doors to your destined future blessings. Just be social, respect and appreciate everyone along the way
- Play the "À game" all along. You don't have to be the super woman in everything but in every situation showcase what makes you the lioness and the shaker in you
- Sometimes career women tend to work more for their careers and forget their families, neglect spouses and children. It is important to know the family is what remains after all is done. Don't choose work over family. Create a balance and find time for family in the busy schedules of work and career

The second session was conducted by Rosemary. The topic of discussion was **Personal Financial Management**. This is a topic that is very important to each one of us. How we spend the money we earn is vital for our life's development. Rosemary took us through income sources and some of these sources include: loans, salary, business profit, consultancy etc.

How we spend the income to meet our needs requires an organized mindset. A poor mindset could mean that one is a spendthrift or extravagant. A brilliant mindset focuses on proper spending, saving and investing for future. The expenditures are realized from any income. She emphasized that when negotiating for salaries we should take into account that there are compulsory deductions made from the gross income. These are mandatory for every citizen, for example the PAYE that can be as much as 30% of the basic salary, other deductions include NHIF, NSSF covers among others. The sessions were interactive and we learnt a lot.

Reports compiled by

*Kilungu – Precious & Shanice
Riruta – Winnie & Edith*

*Gatimu – Salome & Ruth
Starehe – Faiza & Fatuma*

Maryhill – Hannah

We greatly appreciate all our Mentors for making the time to come and mentor our girls; you are a source of motivation to our girls and every Saturday you turn up to mentor the girls is an investment in their lives that is of enormous value. Thank you once again to all the Administration and Catering staff of Precious Blood Secondary School, Riruta for your wonderful hospitality. The girls always mention how well they are treated and fed. We appreciate all our Sponsors for believing in Precious Sisters and partnering with us to 'Give the Bright Girls a Chance to Shine'



KEEP AWAY FROM THOSE WHO TRY TO BELITTLE YOUR AMBITIONS.
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"it had long since come to my attention that people of accomplishment rarely sat back and let things happen to them. they went out and happened to things."

—leonardo da vinci

YOU DID NOT WAKE UP TODAY TO BE MEDIOCRE

#BELIEVEANDBEAWEOME