When Jesus was asked about his lifestyle he simply said three words, “Come and see.” The boys and young men who will grace our stage in a few moments are those we celebrate. I won’t talk about them but I will say, “Come and see”. I would contend that excellence is something to be viewed rather than measured.

As no more than a Shakespearean fool, let me finish with the following words of foolish wisdom:

Never allow yourself to mistake excellence with examination results only.

Excellence is about far more than just results. It is about self-confidence, friendship, cheerfulness, honesty, smiling, helpfulness and so much more.

Excellence by itself is cold and hard and bitter, and it never can be anything else. It is also cruel, competitive at all costs and insensitive. In short, excellence, by itself, is never what a parent tells me at interview they are looking for. If this were true, I would feel bound to tell them that Mazenod was not the College where their child would thrive.

Excellence must form the centre part of a “way of life” or a “set of values”. Excellence and living an authentic way of life form young men of integrity and maturity. These are the young men we present to you tonight. In saying this, I am also aware of the many hundreds of our students who are equally excellent in every way but who lose out because of the ‘mark’, grade’ or level we are still forced to use.