

## **Ramayana – life lessons** by Shivani Kandoi, Year 11

The symbolism of the Ramayana is renowned for its typical message of good over evil, of light over darkness but what does that mean and how can we imbibe these sacred teaching in our lives? By celebrating the victory of righteousness, we are simultaneously celebrating the defeat of unrighteousness because we recognize that the path of good is rewarding.

Although this may seem simple to understand, when you reflect on this point you may realize that in the routine of life everyone is always fighting their battles of good and bad. Whether it be resisting the urge to procrastinate or getting yourself to revise – at the end of the day it's all the small victories on the path of righteousness that count! While the Ramayana boasts of a plethora of timeless teachings and the exploration of socio-political scenarios we see even today, it's the simple things like selfless compassion and courage that have the power to change lives.

Embedding daily acts of kindness, journaling, and practicing gratitude into a routine to exercise compassion means learning from the selfless acts of Hanuman and the humble sacrifices of Lakshman for Rama on his journey. Speaking up for what's right and standing up for the truth with integrity is a pursuit of comprehending the courageous acts of Sita, Vibhishan, and Mandodari. Getting out of your comfort zone and trying new things draws a parallel to the devotees of Ayodhya that immediately left all luxuries to stay with Rama on the path of righteousness.

Therefore, as part of the celebrations in this year's Deepavali – let's also take a resolution to fight those inner demons, celebrate those small victories, and imbibe the primordial values of the Ramayana in pursuit to walk the path of righteousness.