



HEADLINES 4TH FEBRUARY 2022

St. Mary's Catholic School Newsletter (Issue 19 2021-22)

Inter-faith Reflections on the Holocaust



**Acting Heads of School Update
Mr Johnston & Miss McHugh**

Headlines this week contain a 'must-read' article expertly written by a student—the next page contains a highly entertaining, personal and reflective piece by Ezekiel in Year 11 which outlines the time they spent last Friday at the Hasmonean High School in Mill Hill, London for a Holocaust Memorial day.

I won't say much more about the day as Ezekiel's first hand account captures it so effectively, but I will reflect for a moment on the importance of keeping the memory of the Holocaust alive, and how powerful it is for young people of different faiths to come together to celebrate both their differences and those aspects of humanity that bind us together. I'd encourage you to share this prayer over the weekend.

Tom Johnston
Acting Head of School

Eternal God, you hold all of our days in your hands.

On this day, we come before you to remember the victims of the Holocaust.

We lament the loss of the six million Jews who were killed in the Holocaust, the millions of other victims of Nazi persecution, and other genocides.

May our minds be clear and attentive to their memory and our hearts be moved to bear witness to their lives.

Today, help us to remember and recognise the sanctity of each human life, that all people are made in Your image.

One day, we pray that genocide and hatred will be no more, and that love will triumph over evil.

In our prayers and in our actions, help us to show this love in the world today.

Amen.

We are all lighting the darkness on #HolocaustMemorialDay



Please continue to TEST EACH WEDS & SUNDAY and follow all Covid guidance.

Every student must bring the following to school EVERY DAY:



UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday-Friday
14th-18th February

HALF TERM

Return to School
Monday 21st February



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

www.stfrancistrust.net



Holocaust Memorial Day at Hasmonean High School

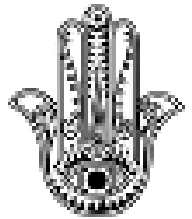
Holocaust Memorial Day at Hasmonean High School

By Ezekiel M (Year 11)



Standing outside the gates, we were immediately greeted to loud chanting within the school, as the students had congregated for their morning prayers. We entered shortly after, tentatively stealing glances at our new surroundings, as watchful eyes followed us from within a school hall. Walking past the hall, the students we encountered gave friendly greetings, one even referring to us as Ofsted (due to our visitors' lanyards), jokingly asking for us to give a good review. Then, we entered the classroom and took our seats to begin the day.

Our guide formally introduced us to the school and, with the help of sixth formers, went over Jewish symbols, many of which we had encountered on signs and posters along the walls, for instance the Hamsa, a hand-shaped charm with an eye at the centre of the palm, used as a protection against "The Evil Eye." It was also fascinating to observe one of the sixth formers strap Tefillin, two black leather boxes with leather straps attached, around their left arm and head, carefully creating a knot on the left hand to resemble part of God's name.



If it wasn't evident from our arrival, the students were just enthused as the staff to meet us, as pupils attempted to enter our classroom to talk with us. After a short break, lessons officially began for the whole school, and Year 11 students entered the room.

We were slightly apprehensive starting the History lesson, but these feelings were soon to be relieved. We were arranged so that at each desk was a student from Hasmonean, before learning about the events surrounding Shoah (the Holocaust), and more specifically how minor acts of prejudice and discrimination against Jews (and other vulnerable minorities) led to mass genocide and extermination. Even in our short discussions, it was immediately obvious how welcoming and amicable the students were, despite dealing with sensitive topics. Towards the end we were presented with stories from survivors of concentration camps. We all then wrote messages to these survivors on cut-out flames, symbolic of hope and life anew, which also reminded us of the insurmountable suffering inflicted upon them. This led up to the crux of the lesson – to avoid such terrible wastages of life, we must first recognise the subtle symptoms of hatred that surround us.



An English lesson was next up: familiar, consistent English. We looked at "Refugee Blues", written by W.H. Auden in 1939, which examined the maltreatment of Jewish refugees. This was accompanied with a live reading of the poem by Sheila Handcock. The class engaged in a discussion, with each addition building on, or offering alternatives to, our understanding of the poem. By the end, we had quite diverse, yet valid, interpretations, including whether we believed the speaker was referring to their lover or their child.

After a short reprieve outside, it was time to eat. Stacks of boxes wafting aromas of warm, melted mozzarella drew everyone's attention. We revelled in the seemingly endless slices of cheese pizza passed around, disappearing amongst pillars of hands instantly. The white paper bags of chips stood no chance either; they were swept away in the clutches of clawing fingers and palms. The chatter raised with our appetites. Wandering around, many bubbles of animated conversation had formed, only growing with each round of roaring laughter. Unfortunately, this had to end, especially as it was Shabbat, the Jewish day of rest. After many cheers and applause, we waved goodbye to our friends as we left the school, handing our lanyards back with a smile, as if to give an "Outstanding" rating of them.

Looking back on my experiences, there were two moments – out of the many possible memories – that lingered in my mind. The first was between lessons, where we all gathered around a piano, after we had goaded one of our musically gifted pupils into playing a medley of songs. Spontaneously, students gathered into a semicircle of sorts around the piano as we joined in with the music, with our arms around each other's shoulders swaying in time, and concluded with raucous appraisal for the talent on display. However, the second highlighted the camaraderie I felt during my time. During our break, we had stood outside to take a photo. There was a massive conglomerate of students all shuffling between each other, until we were all in place. Through some persuasion, we managed to get our teacher involved (met by a great jubilation from us!), and we found ourselves yet again, shoulder to shoulder, another show of our companionship. Throughout the whole trip, it was clear that the memories of those affected by Shoah lived on in the Jewish community. But more so than that, the life still beating in the community was in defiance those who tried to oppress them, as if this were how they honoured the dead, and memorialized Shoah victims.





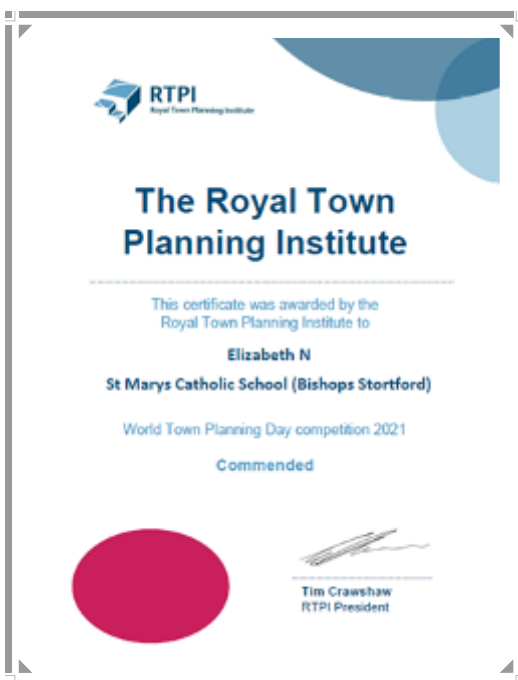
World Town Planning Day Competition



The Royal Town Planning Institute was very impressed with all of the entries to the Town Planning Competition last term.

It has awarded commendation certificates to Jaymie S and Elizabeth N whose entries made it into the final shortlist of top 21 entries.

Well done!



Leave of Absence A Polite Reminder

Please be reminded that Medical / Dental / Hospital Appointments should be notified via the student planner app.

All other absences for example, attending a funeral / ballet exam / work experience interview should be made via the formal Leave of Absence request form which can be obtained by emailing info@stmarys.net.





Well-Being

Our anti-bullying ambassadors delivered some guidance on what physical and emotional activities can be beneficial to well-being during form time last week. Hopefully you will begin to see your child starting to develop some new healthy habits for 2022. We all need a boost to our well-being at times, so be sure to ask your child what strategies have been discussed and maybe try a few yourselves.

Support

Parents are often unsure on how to discuss mental well-being with their children. Healthy Young Minds in Herts have put together a short set of tips for parents that have been written by young people. Whilst it can be difficult to start a conversation, starting is often the hardest part and the benefits of talking, far out way the awkwardness and discomfort we can feel at first. The link below will take you to the relevant part of the website. There is some excellent material on this website so please explore other areas of this great resource.



[Talking to your teen - 10 tips for parents from young people | Healthy Young Minds in Herts](#)

Charity Roses



We will be bringing back the selling of Roses next week where all profits will be going to Lourdes 2022 pilgrimage.



The idea of the roses is to send a thank you message to someone. The rose will be delivered to the lucky recipients next Friday together with a hand written message from the sender.

These can be anonymous which adds to the intrigue. Roses will be available to buy from year 12 students next week for £2.50.

Free School Meals

VOUCHERS COMING YOUR WAY:

Parents or carers of students in receipt of free school meals should be receiving an email at the beginning of February to cover lunches during February half term and the Easter holidays.

Please let Mrs C Wilkin know if you have not received an email.

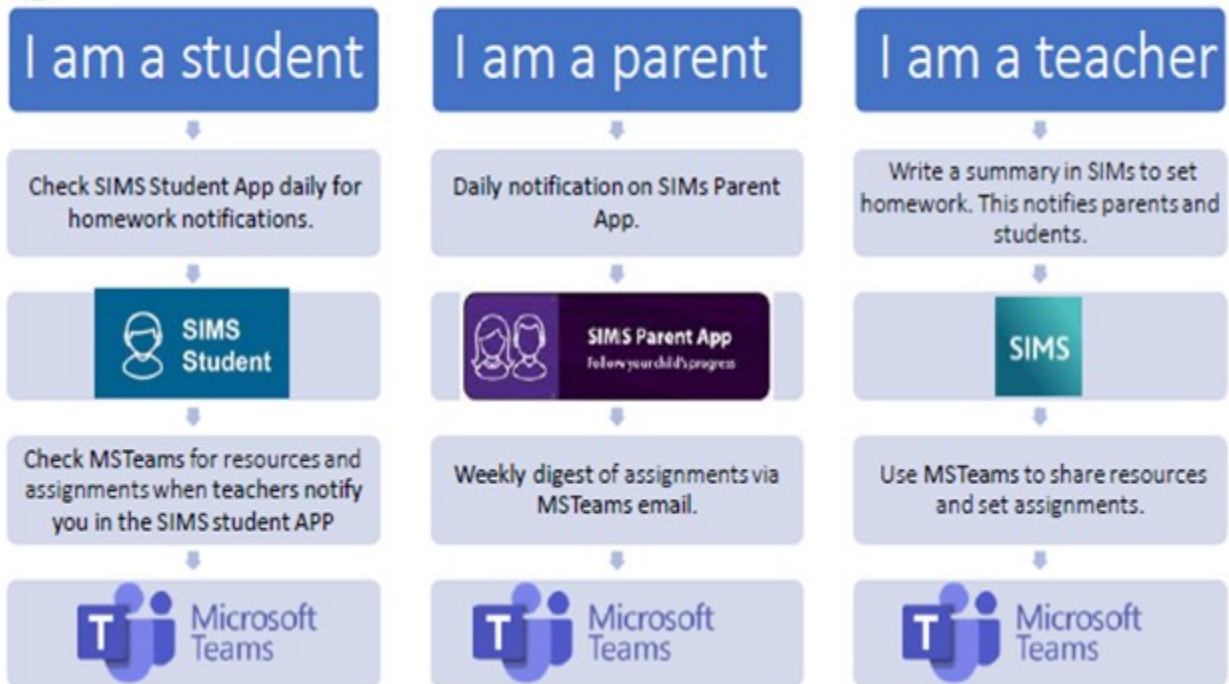




Homework Information



Homework at St. Mary's Catholic School



Music Update

Dates for your diary

Tuesday March 15th:
Spring Concert
St Mary's School Hall 7pm
Tickets available online



Music Clubs

Monday: Orchestra
Tuesday: Choir
Wednesday: GCSE Catch Up
Friday: Pop & Rock Group





Design a Prayer Competition



St Mary's Design a Prayer Competition:
125th Anniversary Year

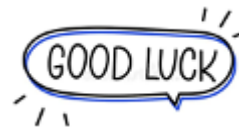
Competition Task

1. Write a prayer you feel is appropriate for the school's 125th Anniversary Year.
2. Write your prayer down carefully and creatively on WHITE A4 paper.
3. Add creative illustration/decoration to your prayer to make it very special.
4. Add colour to your work using coloured pencil, paint or felt tip as you like.
5. When you are ready HAND THIS IN TO YOUR ART TEACHER.



The top 10 will be put forward to Miss McHugh to judge.

All hand-ins will receive a St Mary's Award Recognition



Deadline to hand in your work is Friday 11 February 2022.

World Book Day ~ Free Book Tokens

WORLD BOOK DAY

YOU ARE A READER

THERE IS A BOOK FOR EVERYONE
Check out our 5 TOP TIPS to help you find yours

EXPLORE THE BOOKS IN FRONT OF YOU

1 CHECK OUT THE FRONT COVER Does it make you want to find out more about the book?	2 DRAWN IN BY WHAT YOU SEE Read the blurb on the back - does it make you want to read the book?
3 FIRST PAGE CHECK Does the first page make you want to carry on reading the rest of the book?	4 GET READING Or have another go at finding the right book for you!
5 STILL STUCK? ASK FOR A RECOMMENDATION Ask a friend, family member, teacher or librarian to recommend a book they enjoyed.	

GET TALKING
Share what you enjoyed reading - talking with friends about what they've read is a great way to find even more brilliant books to read.

Discover the World Book Day Book Club at worldbookday.com/bookclub

SPONSORED BY NATIONAL BOOK TOKENS

Changing lives through a love of books and shared reading.
World Book Day® is a charity sponsored by National Book Tokens

Free Book Tokens

will be given out to all year 7 and 8 students in English lessons next week to celebrate World Book Day's 25th birthday!

Please encourage your child to exchange their token for a free book!



10 Top Tips for Respect Online: INSPIRING CHILDREN TO BUILD A BETTER DIGITAL WORLD

Our ability to communicate with anyone in the world, at any time, via the internet has grown at breakneck speed. For teachers and parents, it can feel impossible to keep up. Worrying about our young people is understandable, and not unjustified: in 2020, for example, one in five 10- to 15-year-olds experienced bullying online. Our tips highlight ways that adults can support young people's positive online behaviours: by adopting and following 'netiquette', we can show them how to avoid getting into difficulty as they learn to negotiate the continually evolving digital landscape.

WHAT IS NETIQUETTE?

Just like etiquette is a set of rules which guides and governs our interactions with others in everyday life, netiquette – etiquette on the net – is the framework which helps inform how we communicate with people online. The rules of engagement often aren't the same as a face-to-face meeting, so it's important that we can accurately 'read' situations in the digital world and know how to act appropriately.

1 ACCEPT DIFFERENT RULES

A lot of our interaction with others is helped by non-verbal signals like body language and facial expressions. Online, of course, many of these clues are missing. Talk to your child about why this makes misunderstandings more likely to occur in the digital world and why keeping in mind that online communication is a very different process can help to prevent difficulties from arising.

2 PRESS 'PAUSE'

It's so easy to do things quickly online that most people (adults included) habitually send or respond to messages without considering the consequences. Pushing 'the pause button' buys a young person some time while they ponder the golden rule: "Would I still say this if the other person was right front of me?" You could practise this with your child on some made-up tricky situations.

3 THE INTERNET IS ADDICTIVE

Apps and sites use sophisticated algorithms and clever marketing to keep us engaged, while notifications to our devices are designed to draw us back in. It's no wonder that people continually return to the digital world, sometimes spending long periods of time there. You and your child could try turning off notifications on certain apps and instead agree a time to check for updates manually.

4 BEWARE THE DARK SIDE

Getting a hurtful or unhelpful comment on social media or in a group chat can make the recipient feel publicly shamed. That's painful for anyone – but especially for a young person whose status in a group is integral to their sense of identity. Encourage your child to think about the best and safest way to send a message: for example, doing it as a private message rather than a public post.

5 HARMFUL INTERACTIONS

Unfortunately, it's very easy to send a hurtful message or to spread gossip and rumours online. We all know this happens regularly. Not having to deal with actually seeing the other person's distress usually doesn't help people to make a positive decision in the moment. It's important that trusted adults help children to visualise the potential consequences and have empathy for others.

6 APPRECIATE DIFFERENCES

We're all built differently; some people are simply more emotionally sensitive than others. Young people can be particularly affected by negative online communication, such as group shaming. Even a single message (which might seem trivial at face value) can cause deep anguish. Trusted adults should be prepared to be patient and listen to any difficulties their child might have had online.

7 ACCENTUATED ANXIETY

Young people's online lives create a lot of anxiety. Messages go into a 'black hole' until someone responds, there are more reasons to compare ourselves negatively, and social media can make us feel like we're missing out. Encourage activities such as sports and hobbies to balance this out, and remember that merely blocking out thoughts (by gaming, for instance) isn't the same as relaxation.

8 PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

A huge positive for the internet is how it helps people to feel connected and makes being kind and helpful easy to spread. When young people get involved in pro-social behaviours online, it creates a positive feedback loop which makes them feel good. Show your child examples of when you've done or said something positive online, and praise and encourage them when they do the same.

9 BE A GOOD ROLE MODEL

One of the best things we can do as trusted adults is to role model positive online behaviour. Just letting your child see that you know when it's time to put your phone away and do something more productive can set a strong example. Some families set aside particular times of the week (such as mealtimes or a family walk) where digital devices aren't allowed and conversation takes precedence.

10 SHOW COMPASSION

Mistakes can feel much bigger online, because they're so public. If a young person does or says something regrettable on the internet, it's important to support them to forgive themselves, learn any lessons and move forward positively. Even as adults, we can often stumble when learning how things work in the fast-moving digital world, so it's important to have compassion for ourselves, too.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Carole Francis-Smith is an experienced counselling psychologist who, through her research, specialises in promoting safe and ethical online communications. She consults with businesses and organisations to support positive and effective communication online, often by considering some of the more hidden aspects of the mediums.



Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/531963/online_bullying_guidance_for_parents_carers_and_trusted_adults.pdf
<https://www.nationalonlinesafety.com/parents-carers-and-trusted-adults> | <https://www.nationalonlinesafety.com/parents-carers-and-trusted-adults>



Menu in our Aspens Refectory

Autumn Winter 2021

STREATERIES

Aspens

MONDAY



TUESDAY



WEDNESDAY



THURSDAY



FRIDAY



STREET

Spicy Andhra Chicken Curry

Sweet Potato & BBQ Pulled Jackfruit Burger

Roast Chicken & Stuffing Bap Gravynaise

Mongolian Lion's Head Beef Meatballs

Hand Battered Fish & Frickle

VEGGIE

Keralan Egg Molee Curry

Veg Chilli Nachos
Homemade Salsa

Quorn Roast & Stuffing Bap Gravynaise

Korean Spicy Rice Bowl with Fried Egg

Homemade Fishless Cake
Lemon Yoghurt

SIDES

Turmeric Rice
Masala Roasted Cauliflower

Garlic & Herb Wedges
Rainbow Slaw

Fennel Seed Roasties
Roasted Carrots

Beggar's Noodles
Sweet Chilli Broccoli

Chips
Peas

Subject to change based on supply

WEEK 1

We are hiring!



St Mary's Catholic School



St Francis of Assisi CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Assistant Premises Manager (School Estates)

Full Time (37 hours per week) – plus additional hours as agreed

You can view the job details by clicking here:

Click: [Assistant Premises Manager ADVERT](#)

Closing Date: 1st March 10 a.m. Interviews week commencing 1st March.

Apply in writing using the forms available on our website www.stmarys.net

