

LOVE-RESPECT-FLOURISH

St. Mary's Catholic School Newsletter

Issue 13 - 9th December 2022



Mr Neves Executive Headteacher

Last week we welcomed to St Mary's two very special guests: The Deputy Lieutenant of Hertfordshire Janie Wentworth-Stanley and The Mayor of Bishop's Stortford Councillor Dave Anderson. They were visiting St Mary's for the ceremonial planting of two trees, as part of the 'Queen's Green Canopy' scheme. This scheme offered to every school in the country two saplings, in recognition of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and began to be rolled out last year. Now, having mourned the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the ceremony took on a more poignant perspective. We took possession of a wild cherry tree and a lime tree, and they were planted in two different locations: one near the Refectory, where it replaced a diseased tree that had to be recently cut down, and the other near the student entrance to the school, where there are other memorial trees that have been planted in memory of members of the school community who have died. The Deputy Lieutenant and The Mayor were accompanied by our Head Boy and Head Girl, Year 7 Form Reps, Governor Mr Paul Carroll, Miss McHugh, Mr Johnston and myself. Following the planting our guests had a short tour of the school – including popping into the school hall, where Year 11 practice interviews were taking place - and then enjoyed refreshments in the Staff Room. They were both delighted to visit St Mary's and were very impressed with what they saw and very much enjoyed meeting members of our community.



This week was a week of great celebration, as we held our annual Presentation Evening. Students from across the year groups had been selected for awards and were invited, along with their parents and carers, to the formal event in the school hall. A long table on the stage was filled with over 100 trophies, recognising excellence in all curriculum areas, special achievements at GCSE and special contributions to the life of the school. The awards were presented by our guest of honour, His Grace Bishop Paul McAleenan. Bishop Paul is a great friend of St Mary's and was delighted to be invited. Musical interludes on the piano were a lovely addition to the proceedings.

Following the ceremony, guests enjoyed refreshments in the Refectory and there was a wonderful atmosphere of joy and celebration as students, families and staff reflected on the evening's achievements.

Congratulations to all the award winners!



St Mary's Catholic School

Advent Carol Service
Monday 12th December 2022, 7pm
at St Joseph and the English Martyrs
Roman Catholic Church Windhill

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday 12th December 2022
KS3 Enrichment Day

Monday 12th December 2022
Advent Carol Service 7pm

Wednesday 14th December 2022
Christmas Lunch Day

Friday 16th December 2022
Christmas Jumper Day!
Advent Liturgies
Term Ends 1pm for Students



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST





St Mary's Catholic School

Invites you to our

Carol Service

at 7pm on Monday 12 December 2022

in the Church of St Joseph and the English Martyrs,
Windhill, Bishops Stortford CM23 2ND

Followed by Mulled Wine and Mine Pies in the Parish Centre

Please book your tickets on Eventbrite using the link below

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/carol-service-tickets-479818318507>

*There will also be a collection taken on behalf of the Catholic Children's Society,
which we have been supporting as part of our Advent Trust Charity efforts.*



*"But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favour with God.
You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.
He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High."*

Luke1: 30-32

Whole School Presentation Evening

On Tuesday 6th December, we held our school Presentation Evening to celebrate the achievements of our students for their hard work, achievement and efforts in their studies during the last academic year 2021/2022.



Many congratulations to our Presentation Evening Award Winners



District Cross-Country Competition



Well done to all the students who competed in this year's District Cross-Country event.

The students all ran really well!

A particular well done goes to the following students:



Alex P: 4th in the Year 7 boys race

Zac F: 1st in the Year 8 boys race

Theo L: 4th in the Year 8 boys race

Dawid N: 4th in the Year 9 boys race

Katie H: 3rd in the Year 9 girls race

Luca M: 4th in the Year 10 boys race

Evan J: 2nd in the senior boys race

Chiara L: 4th in the senior girls race



Lessons From Auschwitz Project

Lessons From Auschwitz Ambassador Programme

Student Report by: Matilda F 12A and Ezekiel M 12M



We were recently selected to be a part of the LFA project with the Holocaust Educational Trust.

Taking part in the lessons from the Auschwitz project means that we have the great opportunity to take part in several activities, events, and lectures revolving around the tragedy that happened during the Second World War, which will help to widen our knowledge and provide an insight to the horrific ordeals that Jewish people had to go through when they were sent to Auschwitz concentration camp.

During the LFA project we will be able to learn about the history of the Holocaust and the role of camps such as Auschwitz-Birkenau. We will consider the individuals whose lives were affected by the Holocaust, and reflect on the relevance of the Holocaust today.

The course consists of four parts. The first being an online seminar where we will have the chance to hear directly from a Holocaust survivor and hear their stories and experiences firsthand in an online seminar on the 12th February.



The second part of the project is a day trip to Poland on the 21st February where we will visit the former concentration camp known as Auschwitz Birkenau, which played a large role in the Second World War where historians estimate that around 1.1 million people perished during the less than 5 years of its existence. The majority, around 1 million people, were Jews.

There will be a follow-up seminar on the 27th February 2023.

The final part of the project is to share our experiences and the lessons we have learnt from taking part in the project to the entire school by leading assemblies and writing an article to share our experience.

The Holocaust Education Trust (HET), was founded in 1988. HET focuses on the education of young people about the Holocaust, and more importantly the invaluable lessons that can be taken from it, for example the dangers of unchallenged intolerance.

We look forward to sharing our experience with you in a future edition of *Headlines*.

Student Report by Matilda and Ezekiel

Accelerated Reader Results

Well done and keep on reading!

Students in Key Stage 3 have read and quizzed on 56,470,872 words since the start of the year!

Here are the top ten Accelerated Reader classes with their word count totals (as on 7th December). The numbers show total words from books which have been quizzed on with a pass. Can anyone challenge 7D at the top of the league? And will more Year 8 and Year 9 classes break into the top five? Let's see what happens after the Christmas break ...

1	7D	9,109,850
2	7E	6,744,160
3	7F	5,012,982
4	8G	4,242,654
5	7B	3,657,558
6	7A	3,462,045
7	8B	3,069,787
8	8C	2,434,177
9	8A	2,386,943
10	9F	2,138,040

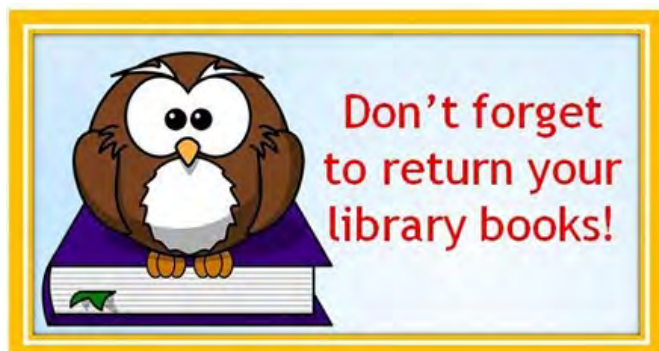


Huge word totals are fantastic, but our ultimate aim is to encourage regular reading. Frequent short bursts of reading are best for developing skills, so please encourage your children to get (back) into the reading habit.

Students in Years 7 to 9 will be set 'read and quiz' homework due in January. They are being asked to finish their current book, log on and take the AR quiz. House points are available (two for a pass, three for 100%), so it is important to finish the book before quizzing. If your child is not sure of their log in details, please ask them to message Mrs Frino or come to the library before the end of term. There are also lists of recommended books available to take home.

Word Millionaire certificates and badges will be awarded to our most avid readers in year group assemblies in January.

School Library Books!



Please ask your children to check carefully at home and return or renew their library books.

Minus house points will be issued for overdue books on Monday 12th December (two per book).

Inter-house Cake Decorating Contest

Students in Year 8 and Year 12 teamed up for a festive Inter-house Cake Decorating Contest this week.



Their brief was to decorate a plain Christmas cake on the theme of the nativity and huge fun was had by all!

Judging has proved pretty tricky and the winning cake has yet to be announced.

The cakes will be on sale at the Carol Service on Monday 12th December, at St Joseph and the English Martyrs Church, 7.00pm.



Mock Interview Day



Last Thursday, 1st December, we held our Year 11 Mock Interview Day and what a success it was!

Our 18 Interviewers eagerly met with 167 of our *suited and booted* Year 11 Students!

Holding mock interviews is an extremely important part of our Careers Programme. It gives our students vital interview experience with independent third parties, being put on the spot and asked to sell themselves. They did very well with many students being 'offered the job' and to start on Monday!

Here are some of the positive feedback comments received from the Interviewers.

Nicola Galvin, from the Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust said:

"I found the event well organised and the students were very professional, some were a little nervous but coped very well".

Claire Ding, from Quantum Care said:

"I thoroughly enjoyed the day and the engagement with your lovely students. Every single student was polite, engaged and took the interview very seriously. I'd like to offer them all an apprenticeship!"



Mock Interview Day



**Well Done
to our Year 11
Students on a
successful
Mock Interview
Day 2022!**



Tree Planting Ceremony at SMCS



On Thursday last week, 1st December, a Tree Planting Ceremony took place at St Mary's Catholic School, as part of The Queen's Green Canopy.

Two trees were planted in memory of Her Majesty The Queen Elizabeth.

The event was attended by the Deputy Lieutenant Janie Wentworth-Stanley DL, The Mayor Councillor Dave Anderson, and Vice Chair of School Governors Mr Paul Carroll.



Psychology Department News...

Year 12 A-Level Psychology Student Report:

The relevance of psychological theory to real-life tragedy and our Catholic faith



When Russia first invaded Ukraine on February 24th of this year, more than 105,000 children within Ukraine were distributed around 700 state institutions, all encompassed under the blanket term, 'orphan'. Since that day, this number has undoubtedly risen as a result of the aggressive onslaught occurring almost daily. This unprecedented situation came after the extraordinary time of the Covid-19 pandemic which, on its own caused its own domino effect on mental health and highlighted the struggles of many.



In A-level Psychology, one of the topics we are studying this year is how being deprived of a maternal figure in early life can have a negative impact on their mental well-being and academic progress. I was able to reflect on how psychological theory of attachment would be relevant to the Ukrainian situation.

Since it is now December, a time full of joyful festivities, these emotions felt by an orphaned and/or institutionalized child will be especially prevalent coming up to Christmas, which is a time dedicated to hope, familial love and generosity. Unfortunately, Ukraine has the highest number of children in institutions in Europe, this coupled with the ongoing conflict means therefore that a concerning high number of children will be left either in these barren places starved of emotional and physical affection or without the embrace of a parent as they are involved in or lost to the fighting within their very own country, a place where someone - especially a child should feel safe to go out and enjoy their lives. Anyone regardless of background and current situation, would struggle during this festive period if that was their reality and unfortunately this seemingly unending deprivation of essential key foundations for life, will be a reality for a growing number of children and young adults in Ukraine and around the globe.

Matthew 10:8 says, "*Freely you have received; Freely give*".

This passage encourages us all to give, whether large or small; of monetary value, time or even emotional support to those in need. During this time of expectant waiting, we are called to help those who are in need, those of us who this Christmas will struggle to provide warmth for the family or food on the table and those of us who will spend this Christmas in a cold institution without that family unit or that love and emotional attachment most of us have and take for granted. Let us keep them in our prayers.

Niamh G, Year 12 A-level Psychology student



RE Department ~ Advent Wreath



These are Advent Wreath Personal Spiritual Growth Calendars from Year Group 8B.

They are lovely representations of the build up to the coming of Christ.





TUESDAY
13TH
DECEMBER

V&A South Kensington

V&A Webinar Live: Staging Disney's Frozen the Musical – a Careers Insight Talk

To coincide with the opening of Re:Imagining Musicals, give your students the opportunity to meet the team that brings Disney's Frozen to life on stage.

3:30-4:30 HUME



The Season of Advent

***Sunday 11th December,
Third Sunday of Advent***

The Third Sunday of Advent is also known as Gaudete Sunday. The word “*gaudete*” is derived from the Latin words “*gaudium*,” joy, and “*gaudeo*,” to rejoice or be glad.

It reminds us of the joy that the world experienced at the birth of Jesus, the joy of anticipation at the approach of the Christmas celebration, the joy that the faithful have reached the midpoint of Advent.



Christmas Jumper Day!



On Friday 16th December, students are invited to come to school wearing a Christmas Jumper (with usual school uniform).