

Chaplaincy News

The Church's new year starts on Sunday with the beginning of Advent, which means that last Sunday was the feast of Christ the King. It can be a puzzling feast if we think of kings just as warriors on horseback doing whatever they want, but Christ's kingship is about leadership through love and service, and it's part of our baptism to share in that kingship. The assemblies this week focussed on that service, and on putting others first. We had some great presentations from Forms 7Moore through to 13Moore. Thinking about how we treat those around us is a great way to start Advent and our preparations for Christmas.

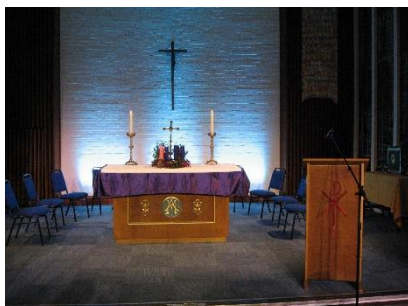
Last week we held a small ceremony to hang or rehang pictures of three pupils who met with tragically young deaths over the last few years. Members of all three families joined us, and it was good to be able to share memories and a few tears, and assure them that the school community still remembers and keeps them in our prayers.



Many congratulations to the fifteen St Mary's pupils who were confirmed by Bishop Tom Neylon at St Joseph's last week – we wish them every blessing in their life-long mission as confirmed Christians. Many thanks also to the group of pupils, led by Mrs Benson, who provided much-appreciated music at the service. Please keep those confirmed in your prayers, along with the two groups who will be confirmed at other local parishes in the new year.



Finally, thank you to all those who came to the school's advent service on Thursday evening, to Fr Paul, the music department and especially to the many young people who read, played, sang and helped to welcome guests. It was a wonderful way to start Advent.



Chaplaincy News



St Vincent
de Paul Society

England and Wales

Turning Concern into Action

A message from our local St Vincent de Paul Society

Could the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) help you or someone you know? We may be able to help you before your struggle becomes a crisis. Telephone 07566725590

Confucius Classroom

Last week St Mary's had the pleasure of welcoming delegates from China as part of the annual board meeting for our Confucius classroom. This was the first time the meeting was able to take place in person. Our visitors were massively impressed with our school facilities as they were toured around various departments with Mrs Brahms and Mr Sloane. The delegates then had a question and answer with some of our fantastic members of the student leadership team, as well as students who are currently on the Chinese language programme. Our students were excellent ambassadors for the school and this was highlighted by our guests.

An action plan was created during the board meeting with some fantastic plans ahead- including enrichment trips and language programmes to enhance Mandarin teaching at St Mary's. There are also some fantastic opportunities in the pipeline for our sixth form students to embark on with Mandarin, which will be invaluable for future studies and aspirations.

It is a really exciting time for the Confucius classroom at St Mary's and we look forward to sharing all details of upcoming plans in the near future.



Key Stage 4 News

A big WELL DONE to our Year 11's who completed a tough two week timetable of mock examinations and acquitted themselves very well throughout. We have had discussions that in the summer exam series, the examinations will be more spread out and to have completed the Autumn Mocks so well, will mean that they are well-prepared for what is to come.

Staff are busy feeding back and this will continue right up into the summer exams; a key message remains that any revision done in school should only make up 10% of what students should be doing at home!

Key Stage 5 News

Year 13 Next Steps

Our Year 13 students are being supported by their tutors and the Careers team in planning for their next steps after college. Many have submitted UCAS applications for university places and applied for degree apprenticeships already. They are guided through the process and helped with where to look, personal statements, application forms, CVs and interview preparation. Many students have started to receive offers and this makes a positive difference to their motivation, as they have a real target to aim for.

All four of our students who applied for a place to study at either Oxford or Cambridge University have been offered an interview. These are taking place either virtually or in person over the next few weeks. Good luck!



THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION
POPPY APPEAL

The History Department would like to say a huge thank you for all your support during Remembrance Week. We raised an incredible **£1,057.85p** for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. Thank you very much!!!

COP 28 Conference



To coincide with November’s global COP 28 conference, St Mary’s were delighted to be invited to take part in a mock secondary school version at West Lancashire Council Chambers Wednesday 29th November. We were joined by 7 other schools and a 6th form college from the Liverpool Archdiocese, who came together to debate and question the climate future of 16 nations. Each team had a 1 minute opening statement to outline current climate change threats, and how their country is already responding in mitigation and adaptation to ensure the global average temperature remains well below the 2 degrees agreed in the 2015 UN Paris Agreement.

St Mary’s pupils formed 2 of the delegates, Senegal and Chile. Each team confidently delivered a punchy speech, supported by factual research to justify their actions and passion for reducing climate change impacts. Next came the round of Q&A. All delegates had to prepare questions to challenge other nations on their contribution to net zero targets and engage in a sophisticated and mature, global debate. I was hugely impressed by the quality of the questions asked and the attention to detail in challenging those countries who are not doing enough! St Mary’s speeches were so watertight that no other country wished to challenge either of the opening statements! Our pupils were an absolute credit to themselves and our school!

After lunch, the pupils began collaborating with other schools on global topics, facilitated by St John Rigby college students. This was followed by a panel of guest speakers from CAFOD to Edge Hill University, explaining how their job roles help to tackle climate change. We concluded the day with a focused discussion on how as a school can each instil sustainability at an individual, local and national level. We were joined by a very special guest, the Mayor of West Lancashire, who popped by to thank the pupils for participating and to remind them how amazing and important their roles are today and in the future. The pupils have brought back many ideas that St Mary’s and the community beyond can look to promote. This was shared during a breakfast meeting with Mrs Brahms.

Holly said: COP 28 was a really interactive and engaging experience. I personally enjoyed the day and believe it was a really positive experience and that we should go again, as it is our duty as humans to continue to look after our planet”.

Finally, not forgetting a huge thank you to Mrs Mort and to Miss Santosuasso, and a massive well done to all of the debate team who helped research and prep for the event. I wish we could have taken more pupils as each and every one of them would have shone in the chambers!

We can’t wait to see what change we can inspire as a result of taking part in such a fundamental experience. A special thank you to the hosts from Liverpool World Centre for such a well organised, professional and inspirational event.

Miss Roche



As we go into winter, common illnesses can keep children and teenagers away from their classmates and studies. One of the best things we can all do to avoid illness is to practice good hand hygiene.

Good hand hygiene helps stop infections from spreading, which means less disrupted learning time.

Teach your child to wash hands properly for 20 seconds and stay away from others when sick. The [e-bug resources](#) for all ages can help you to explain and discuss hygiene habits – and why they are important - to your child or teenager.

To avoid catching bugs or passing it on to others wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and warm water. This is most important following an episode of diarrhoea or vomiting, after using the toilet, before eating or preparing food, after changing nappies, as well as cleaning up vomit or diarrhoea. Alcohol-based hand sanitisers are not effective against some infections.

Anyone who has diarrhoea and/or vomiting should stay at home. Do not return to work or send children to school until 48 hours after the symptoms have stopped and do not visit your GP or hospital while symptomatic. If you are concerned about your symptoms, talk to your GP by phone, contact NHS 111 or visit the [NHS web pages](#). For useful handwashing tips please have a look at the [following NHS video](#)

Christmas Concert



The Music department is really busy preparing for the annual Christmas Concert. This is taking place on Wednesday 6th December and over 100 pupils are involved. There will be a variety of different musical acts including Rock Bands, Boys Choir, Year 7 Choir, Year 8 – 13 Choir, Brass Band as well as some duets and many small ensembles. There will of course be many of our favourite Christmas tunes being performed. Our 6th form students are a huge support; leading the choirs and helping to run the concert. The pupils are really excited to be able to be able to take part in this lovely event.



Sporting News

We have had lots of sporting fixtures recently. The Year 11 football team overcame a strong St Edmond Arrowsmith team to get to the final of the Wigan Schools Competition. The Year 11 rugby team also had success securing a strong victory over the Deanery school winning 48-0 to qualify for the North West County Cup.

Our Year 7, 8 and 9 Netball teams have all secured victories against Fred Longworth and Hindley High School in the last two weeks.

In addition, the Year 7 and 8 girls football team took part in a schools tournament last week and our Year 8 boys and the Year 8 and 9 girls participated in a Wigan Rugby League tournament.

Well done to everyone involved!

SEND Update

We are sad but delighted that Mrs Koziaryn is now on maternity leave and hopefully getting some well-earned rest before her lovely twins arrive. The team is now made up of Mrs Boardman-Hibberd as SENCo and Mrs Thorpe joins our team as Assistant SENCo. Mrs Emson is our SEN Administrator and Mrs Hindley as Lead Teaching Assistant. We welcome also Mr Petts and Mr Wright as Teaching Assistants to our brilliant team of Teaching Assistants.

Reminder that SEN support for homework in our room is available if needed at lunchtime.