

Chaplaincy News

Last term ended with Mass celebrated in the school hall to mark the end of term and to say farewell to three members of staff who were leaving, and in particular to Brother John after his amazing 34 years of service to the school. It was our first chance to use the new altar in the school chapel at the front of the hall. Mass was concelebrated by six priests, including the archbishop's representative, local clergy and members of Brother John's order, with the school choir rising as ever to the occasion. It was a wonderful and very fitting event.

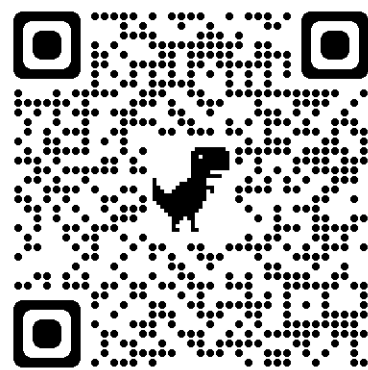
In the first week of term assemblies focussed on Epiphany – the arrival of the wise men in Bethlehem. They represent the world hearing the news of the Messiah's birth, and all of us on our journey towards Christ. The Bible doesn't give us much detail about them, or even tell us how many there were, but they are such an important part of the story that many traditions have grown up around them. One tradition, which has spread from south Germany and Austria, is to chalk an Epiphany blessing above the door or houses, with the year and the initials of Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar. We've adopted that at school this year, with a blessings appearing above the door to reception and many classrooms and offices.

This week the CAFOD Young Leaders have been running a CAFOD awareness week to make us aware of its work and encourage us to make New Year's resolutions that include some of the Catholic aid charity's aims and campaigns for the year, including the World Day of Peace, help to farmers in developing countries and the Big Lent Walk. The QR code will take you to CAFOD's website.

God bless,

Deacon Paul

20 + C + M + B + 24



Catholic Life & Mission at St Mary's

While our pupils returned to school on Monday 9th January, school staff returned a day earlier to take part in an INSET which focused on the Catholic Life and Mission of St. Mary's. Our day was led by Dr. Ann Marie Mealey who is Director of Catholic Mission at Leeds Trinity University. Dr. Mealey reminded us that education should empower young people to contribute to building a just world, which is a powerful message for us to relay to our pupils. Education is important and they can use their gifts and talents to make a positive difference in the world. (We tell them that all the time...but it's always good to be reminded!) We learned more about Catholic Social Teaching, which are teachings from the Church that help to build up society and encourage us to stand together with the vulnerable, to work together in communities, to support the poor and to care for the environment.

Dr. Mealey shared the message from Pope Francis, which he addressed to young people. You could copy it and put in on your fridge, as it's a beautiful thing for our families to read.



Education for Hope

WE ARE THAT HOPE

"Dear young people, do not bury your talents, the gifts that God has given you! Do not be afraid to dream of great things!"

Therefore, let us dream!

Standards & Attendance

Thank you to parents for supporting the high standards of uniform on return from the Christmas break. The vast majority of pupils look smart and are following the policy

https://stmaryschs.org.uk/School_Life/Uniform/

We have also been impressed with how students adapted readily to changes in arrangements to ensure continued uninterrupted learning despite the adverse weather conditions.

With regards to attendance, it is vital your child is present in school. Having weeks off or broken attendance hinders potential as there is a significant correlation between absence and examination results. Please contact our Attendance Officer Mrs Hampson should you need any further support. Please note that if your child's attendance is 90% this is a concern. This means on average they are missing a day every fortnight across the school year. They will struggle to understand the work they do the following week because lessons are taught in a sequences which rely on prior knowledge. Please could you also be aware that this applies to internal absence from lessons in school such as poor punctuality and visits to the toilet. We reinforce that lessons are for learning time and toilets should be used at break, lunch, before and after school.

“ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me to be a safe, happy, proud, loving person who flourishes in life. ”

Ofsted
Good
Provider



Thank You!

We have an army of student volunteers at school who often help out at school events. This week we held a Rewards Breakfast to say thank you for their time and support. Well done everyone!



In light of the recent cold weather we would like to provide a useful reminder of procedures in the unlikely event we will be forced to close the school due to the weather conditions. If this does happen please be reassured this would be a very last resort.

If snow falls during the night and conditions dictate that staff/students cannot travel to school then we will contact parents and carers via text to inform you that the school is closed. Please check the contact information we hold on your child/ren and update any changes via Edulink as a matter of urgency to ensure you do receive important messages. If you do not have an Edulink account please contact school with updates to contact details and information on setting up your Edulink account.

We will also use social media to communicate information. It would be useful if parents/carers could follow the school on X: @StMarysCHS, Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StMarysAstley/> or Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/stmarysastley/#> - which will be updated regularly.

Following the text notification, the school website will also be updated regularly with the latest information and advice as will the Council's website.

In order to safeguard your child in the unlikely event of school closure during the day, and considering the potential issues with bus transportation, we will send your child home unless you inform us not to. A text message will be sent to you informing you of the decision.

If you do not wish your child to make his/her own way home please let us know in writing to: c.mills@st-maryshigh.wigan.sch.uk as soon as possible and we will arrange supervision until an authorised person can collect them at the end of the school day. It is vital that your child is fully aware of these arrangements. If school has to remain closed, students can access work via their Show My Homework account.

Key Stage 3 News

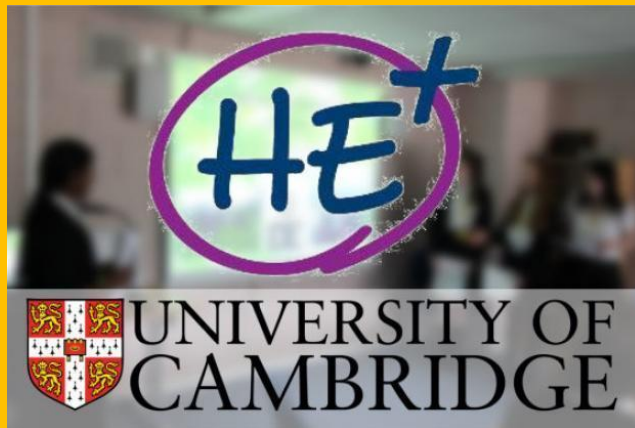
All students have been busy sharing their own reflections on their first term this academic year. We have had some lovely comments particularly from Year 7 about belonging and how they have made new friends and are enjoying being at St Mary's. Year 9 are due to start their option assemblies week commencing the 29th January – more information for Year parents will follow shortly.

Key Stage 4 News

A big thank you to all of our KS4 students who have responded to our recent survey. We are busy collating results and will be putting actions together to assist our students in their Key Stage 4 life. The raffle draw for the voucher will be drawn this week.

This week has been interesting weather wise and the vast majority of Key Stage 4 have been shining examples to the school on how to conduct themselves.

Key Stage 5 News



This month saw the start of this year's Cambridge HE+ programme. Seven of our Year 12 students have been selected and enrolled and have attended the first masterclasses in Manchester. The aim of this is to stretch and challenge the students in a subject they are interested in and help them consider the opportunities available at top research-led universities. There are a number of masterclasses through the year, an opportunity to take part in a research project and a wide range of resources from Cambridge. Before the summer holiday the students will be invited to visit Cambridge, stay in a college and meet students and tutors.

The students thoroughly enjoyed their first masterclasses and the challenges they were presented with.

“ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me to be a safe, happy, proud, loving person who flourishes in life. ”



Co-Curricular News

The co-curricular Programme for this term has been updated and we are delighted that there are some new activities for students to be involved in. The programme is shared below.

St Marys Catholic High School Co-curricular Timetable Autumn Term

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me to be a safe, happy, proud, loving person who flourishes in life

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lunchtime	Quiet board games (C1)	Choir Y7 (MUSIC)	Drama club (drama theatre)	Chess club (L12)	Confucius film + music (C6)
	Football Y7 (ASTRO)	Quiet board games (C1)	Boys choir (MUSIC)	Choir Y8-11 (MUSIC)	Quiet board games (C1)
	Art/photography GCSE (Art)	Creative Prayer 1.25pm (R4)	Keyboard club (MUSIC)	Chinese handcrafts (C6)	RE Ambassadors 1.25pm (R4)
		Football Y8 (ASTRO)	Chinese Calligraphy (C6)	Football Y10 (ASTRO)	Football Y11 (ASTRO)
		Table tennis (YARD)	Quiet board games (C1)	Table tennis (YARD)	Art/photography GCSE (Art)
	Art/photography GCSE (Art)	Football Y9 (ASTRO)	Football Y9 (ASTRO)	Art/photography GCSE (Art)	
			Art/photography GCSE (Art)	GCSE RE Revision (R4)	
Afterschool	Rock school (MUSIC)	Chamber choir (MUSIC)	Boardgames club (LIBRARY)	Staff meeting night	
	Homework club (LIBRARY)	Chess club (LIBRARY)	Rugby Y7-8 boys (FIELD)		
	Book club (LIBRARY) *	Homework club (LIBRARY)	GCSE PE practical (SPORTSHALL)		
	STEM club (L11/T2)	Netball Y9-11 (SPORTS/COURT)	Debate club (C10)		
	Football Y8-9 (ASTRO)	Football Y7 (ASTRO)	Girls Rugby (FIELD)		
	Cheerleading Y7-11 (GYM)	Rugby Y10 (week A only) (FIELD)	Art/photography GCSE (Art)		
	Art/photography GCSE (Art)	Art/photography GCSE (Art)	Y9 Photography Club (Ar3)		
		Girls Football Y7-11 (ASTRO)	Homework club (LIBRARY)		
		Netball Y7-8 (SPORTS/COURT)			

*Book club (once per half term book club as well 1st week b staff; 2nd week b KS3; 3rd week b KS4)

In sports news we have a Year 7 and 8 girls' rugby festival coming up next Wednesday – we wish everyone involved lots of luck. Other fixtures will be coming in the next few weeks and we will keep you updated on results.



WIGAN BOROUGH

SEND

ROADSHOWS

Join us at our SEND Roadshows to...

- Hear updates from Education, Health and Social Care
- Hear feedback from the Big SEND Survey
- Share your feedback and ideas to improve SEND services
- Agree your areas of priority and how your input will shape service development

Dates

- 26th January 10am Leigh Cricket Club
- 30th January 6pm (Virtual)
- 1st February 10am Wigan Sports Club
- 1st February 6pm (Virtual)
- 2nd February 10am St Peters Pavilion

Book your place