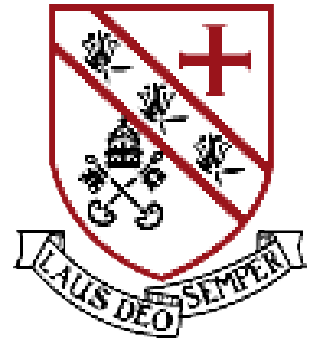


St. Joseph's Catholic College Newsletter



Another successful year! I wish you all and your families a peaceful and enjoyable summer.

Our Year 11 leavers will be anxiously awaiting their GCSE results in late August, and while I am confident that the results overall will be impressive, I also sincerely hope that each individual student achieves the results that will take them on to their chosen next steps in education. The Year 11 group who left this year were a great group of young people, and as I have no doubt that they will be successful, it is useful to try to analyse their success and the reasons for it. They were particularly successful as they were really well behaved, worked really hard and supported each other and had high expectations of themselves. They also grasped every type of support that was given to them with both hands, whether it was revision sessions, one-to-one support, online resources such as SAM learning, or weekend events such as the PGL revision. As for how successful they are, we'll know soon enough...

As you can see from the variety of activities described in this newsletter, St. Joseph's students have had the opportunity to gain from an impressive range of activities this year. For the last two years, in particular, we have really worked hard to develop the enrichment opportunities for our students, as we believe that a wide range of experiences will help develop them into the confident, ambitious, and accomplished young people who will not only succeed in the modern world, but will still be guided by Gospel values and the moral compass their education at St. Joseph's has given them.

Parents of children in Year 8 and above may remember that we decided to cancel Sports Day last year and work to develop a better event this year which we called the 'Celebration of Sport.'

This took place last week and was, bluntly, a huge success. The students clearly enjoyed the range of activities on offer – it was, apparently, the 'best day ever!'

As well as a high quality academic education and the moral compass for life that I mentioned above, we really want to provide all our students with positive and memorable experiences during their school year – 'Celebration of Sport' was undoubtedly one of these.

Once again, I hope you all have a great holiday. On a practical note, please ensure that your contact details are updated as necessary at the school office, and we look forward to welcoming back all students in September.

Jerry Giles - Head of School



Holy Cross Chaplaincy Visit to St. Joseph's

On 9 July, Holy Cross' Chaplaincy Team came to visit St. Joseph's alongside other primary schools. This lovely feedback was received from Holy Cross students:

"On 9 July, the Chaplaincy Team went to St. Joseph's Catholic College to meet the secondary school as a welcome to our future school. We met the Chaplaincy Team and got to know them better. We also met chaplaincy teams from other schools like Holy Family and Holy Rood.

We painted candle holders as a reminder of our special trip to St. Joseph's, then had delicious snacks and some juice. After that, we talked about different charity events like crazy hat day. then had some fresh air - it was really fun there. We had a remarkable time and wish to meet them again soon."



Hairspray Success

On Friday 28 June, Elizabeth (10C) made her debut performance on stage at the Swindon Arts Centre in the performance of 'Hairspray'. Elizabeth played the role of Tracey. Staff and students both attended and gave nothing but excellent reviews.

Elizabeth loves performing and decided to audition for the part when she saw it advertised. She was 100% committed to the part and had been rehearsing since January. She has also been asked to return for the next production which she is keen to do.

Well done Elizabeth!

St. Joseph's Netball Tour

On Friday 10 May, 34 St. Joseph's students (ranging from Years 7 - 10) travelled to Condover Hall in Shropshire where they took part in netball tournaments against other schools from around the country.

All teams played some excellent netball and although we were not successful in winning trophies, students were a true credit to St. Josephs and were a pleasure to coach throughout the weekend. The PE department were very proud of each and every player!

A special mention goes to the following students for impressing their teachers enough to be awarded the following awards.

In the Year 7 team the most improved player was awarded to Abena (7J) and the Most Valuable Player (MVP) was awarded to Ana (7F).

In the Year 8 team the most improved player was awarded to Jessica (8I) and the MVP was awarded to Julietta (8I).

In the Year 9 team the most improved player was awarded to Emily (9C) and the MVP was awarded to Neve (9D).

In the Year 10 team the most improved player was awarded to Jessica (10F) and the MVP was awarded to Olivia (10C).

We look forward to Netball Tour 2020! More details will be given out in September!



Fessey House

On activities day a group of us visited Fessey House, a dementia care home in Haydon Wick. In the morning we learnt about dementia and what to expect, then we went to the care home.

We started our visit with a tour from staff. They had lifts on the stairs because some of the residents can't walk very well, so they use stair lifts. The building was massive, like a mansion, the rooms beautifully decorated.

In one of the activity rooms they had a magic table which was a touch screen on the table, to help stimulate the senses.

Some of them were pool experts and showed us how to play pool. They also had a pretty back garden with huts and chairs.

Some of the residents taught us how to play bowls on the lawn. We also did an art session together where we painted canvases and made banners for their fete, adding sparkle spray. It was amazing spending time with the residents of Fessey House and they enjoyed it too.

The people there were so kind to us, they held our hands and said, "look after yourself" which melted our hearts. The staff are very loving and kind to them. We had an amazing time and can't wait to go back.

Kelloshka & Pearl (Year 8)



Fundraising

This year we have raised a total of £2000. We achieved this by fundraising, with activities such as cake sales, selling roses on Valentines Day and other presents on Mothers Day.

The money raised will go towards a special Christmas dinner that we are planning for the elderly in December. During the Christmas dinner, there will be entertainment such as singing and a raffle. We plan to serve and entertain our guests and make sure they have a good time.

The SVP group are organising it all; from invitations, to decorations and food. We have worked hard to make this happen and we look forward to everything coming together in the new term. Brina, Sophya & Abena (Year 7)

Turning Concern into Action

When we joined SVP, we wanted to visit Kingsmead care home. Later, with a lot of help from Mrs Mancari-Rees and Mrs Barkham, we now visit every other week. When at the care home we do a lot of activities with the elderly residents, such as arts and crafts, or sometimes we will get in to deep conversation with them.

They talk about their lives, passed family members and how they feel lonely a lot of the time. However, whenever we see them they always tell us how they enjoy our company, and that's all that matters to us. We've also made Christmas and Easter presents for them, and we did a Christmas Karaoke for them last year.

As we cannot visit every week, we have also been writing letters to some of the residents and to homebound elderly members in our community. Through our letters we tried to create a friendly bond and a friendly atmosphere for them. Imagine never being able to leave your house. The loneliness they may feel would be unbearable. We are proud to be able to write to them.

Annika & Duella (Year 8)

Rotary Dinner

In June, a small group of us attended a rotary dinner where we asked people for certain things we needed to expand our SVP group further. It was a really good experience and we got a lot out of it.

Instead of asking for money, we asked for their services to help out with things we needed for the Christmas dinner. We were fortunate enough to be offered transport for people who would otherwise struggle to get there without this help and would be very grateful for it.

We also look forward to working with some generous people from the rotary dinner in September who will be giving us advice on how to behave around the elderly and giving us other tips on everything that we need to ensure that our Christmas dinner is absolutely amazing.

Amelie (Year 7)

Thank You

Our SVP group would like to give a great big thank you to all of those who helped us this year. If it wasn't for them we wouldn't have been able to do fundraisers, go to the care home, and go to the Rotary Club, make bath bombs, bake, garden, write letters... and so much more.

With the support of our College we have raised £2000 for our Christmas dinner and many homebound, vulnerable people have been able to enjoy the company of SVP and know that they are thought about.

We would like to say thank you to Mrs Mancari-Rees and Mrs Barkham because if it wasn't for them we wouldn't be able to come together as one to make our community a better place. In September, we are open to new members to join our SVP group and will welcome anyone, like us, who wants to turn their concern into action.

Mary & Molly (Year 9)



Swindon Oasis Re-open

Swindon's Oasis Leisure Centre's Water Park has been reopened following a major three-month refurbishment programme.

On hand to open the venue was Wiltshire Swimmer of the Year 2017/18, Holly, who has represented the UK at the Downs Syndrome International Swimming Organisation's European Championships.



Musicians perform at Gorse Hill Baptist Church

A group of 5 musicians went to Gorse Hill Baptist Church on the afternoon of Thursday 18 July to perform to a group of adults on a weeks' retreat. Music was performed on the piano, guitar, violin and vocals by Brian, Sabastian, Lizzy, Audzin and Olivia. All students performed so very well and the audience thoroughly enjoyed their afternoon entertainment.

The students have all had a really successful year in music. Amongst the students we had: one student who came first in the Swindon Young Musician of the Year competition, two students who came second in the same competition (plus they were both successful in the Performing Arts Competition last term) and 2 students who were in the finals of the Performing Arts Competition run by our college.

Well done to you all - you are amazing!

Mrs Cooke

Summer Extravaganza!

On Tuesday 9 July the students and staff put on an amazing performance for over 200 KS3 students who received a Golden Ticket! A performance also took place on the evening of the 10 July for parents, friends and family. Over 70 students took part in a variety of songs and dances from stage shows and movies. A number of students showed their amazing independent skills by choreographing their own dances! So many wonderful performances by our own very talented students. You should all feel very proud as you performed brilliantly!

A special 'shout out' to the staff who bravely took to the stage! We had our very own 1st World War hero, Mr Brown, our wonderful King George, played by Mr Matyla, a fantastic performance on vocals and guitar by Mr Shakles, an out of this world duet performed by Mrs Mobey and Mr Halpin and Mrs Hogan joined all the staff and students in a grand finale at the end of the show! Well done to you all!

Our next whole school performance is at Christmas!

New College Languages Festival 2019

On Wednesday 26 June eighteen Year 9 students attended the New College 'LangFest' accompanied by their teacher Mrs Carbone. It was a very practical event with workshops in Polish and Arabic and some language – based competitions which our students won! This is what some students had to say about their day:

"The whole day was very enjoyable. I learnt something new every five minutes and that made me more confident about learning new languages, specifically Arabic. I also enjoyed the constant fun in the sessions, like the Polish word game that we played and the Kahoot quiz at the end. The staff were very friendly, and provided us with all things necessary, including a variety of lessons, great activities and very tasty food. I overall think that the 'Langfest' was very successful and I would happily go again if I could". Konrad

"I went to the New College trip on Wednesday and I had a lot of fun and learnt lots of things. We started off by learning about a spy agency which was really interesting. It taught us that you can do coding when you learn languages. We also did a sort of scavenger hunt and it was really fun but we learnt languages at the same time. Then we had lunch which was so great because there was lots of choice of food and it was like a party buffet. We played a fun game at the end and we got some goody bags which had earphones, stationery, some books about the college and some sweets. I had such a fun day and would love to go again and recommend it to anyone".

Shannon

"I enjoyed my day at New College because I learnt about GCHQ. I have learnt that languages are an important skill for your career. I liked learning Polish but more importantly Arabic, which I have continued to explore into". Hansel

Nationwide Trade Fair

On Tuesday 11 December (which now seems so long ago!) a group of 12 students took to Nationwide Head Office in Swindon to participate in a trade fair, selling items they had made.

Students sold items such as organic soap, jewellery, handmade decorations and assortments of sweets.

These students participate in the Young Enterprise Company Programme where they set up and run their own business, generate their own funds to setup the business, make their own decisions and ultimately hope to gain profit from their efforts. This was the first external selling opportunity, although most groups have already sold items within school. Well done to all!

KS3 History Projects Summer Term

This term Year 7 students in History have been completing independent history projects. This entailed choosing any historical topic of their choice, researching it and then answering an independent enquiry question.

Topics have ranged from life in Ancient Rome to Japanese samurai warriors, from Victorian childhood to life as a Viking warrior!

Our Year 7's have produced impressive projects, including models such as Baden-Powell's first scout camp on Brownsea Island and a cardboard Aztec village showing their games and religious worship.

The students have gained valuable independent research skills, showing an ability to sift through a lot of information to choose the key facts, but also to assess the usefulness of the sources they used. As a department we are more than impressed with the work, and are grateful for the time and effort our Year 7's put into these projects. We hope they enjoyed their project work and should rightly be very proud of themselves.

Our students in Year 9 completed a depth study on the causes and consequences of the Holocaust, a difficult topic. As part of this project they were tasked with creating a museum that dealt appropriately with the prejudice, persecution and annihilation of Jews and other minorities. Students had to justify the use of information to go into their museum and in so doing were able to show a developed understanding of the topic.

Many students chose to produce a practical piece of work whilst others chose a written or diagrammatic approach. Again, this was an excellent showcase of St. Joseph's students' talents and abilities and we hope they found the topic valuable.



Physics Challenge Day

The Institute of Physics organised the 'Physics Challenge Day' on Wednesday 10 July at Great Western Academy in Swindon. The Year 10 Physicists who attended the event had a great time and were able to apply their physics knowledge to a tricky challenge.

The challenge required the students to investigate how the success of a relief operation depended on the precision and accuracy of the landing positions during the delivery of supplies dropped from a moving aircraft.

Students had an opportunity to explore airdrops during the First World War that aircrafts first started carrying things to drop on targets, at that time these were propaganda leaflets rather than bombs. And that it was only by the Second World War, Britain, along with the other countries, had developed more sophisticated aircrafts. These aircraft were capable of carrying much heavier loads, such as passengers, airborne troops, bombs, food and supplies and over the course of the war, the RAF and other allied air forces would deliver all of those loads. The students shared personal family connections with grandparents flying Spitfires that were produced in Swindon.

The students modelled the airdrop using their investigative skills and their knowledge on Energy and Forces.

"The day spent at the 'Physics Challenge' event was one I thoroughly enjoyed and is an experience I would recommend anyone to take up given the opportunity, whether enthusiastic about Physics or not." - Daniel (Year 10)

Library News

The Reading Leaders course ran for the first time in St Joseph's this year. Responsible Year 10's volunteered to be student mentors - "Reading Leaders" - to selected Year 7's who struggled with reading. The Year 10's organised weekly sessions which combined games with reading activities to help challenge the Year 7's skills and raise their confidence. Many of the Year 7's said that enjoyed it, and some even said they would do it again.

The Year 10's reportedly found that running the sessions and talking to the Year 7's helped them out with their own interactional and flexible thinking skills. The Reading Leaders program was advertised to the current Year 9's for recruitment in June, and a number of enthusiastic students signed up. The following year is looking very promising!

We are looking forward to welcoming the new Year 7's and will of course be encouraging them to come and visit as much as they want to.

We are very excited about the upcoming Swindon Youth Festival of Literature (SYFL) during the month of November. Watch this space for lots of promotional material informing you of the amazing Authors and Poets that will be visiting the college during SYFL. There will also be opportunities to attend workshops, and enter prize winning competitions! The Library Team.

Battlefields Trip

We began our trip by arriving at school by 4am - which was totally not early! We then travelled by coach to Folkestone where we got on the Eurotunnel, which took us to France! The tunnel wasn't the most pleasurable experience and we were disappointed to discover that we were unable to see fish from the windows.

This was one of the lies fed to us by the Head of History. Another was that we were unable to take foreign chocolates into Belgium as it was 'illegal'. We later discovered this was untrue, after panicking over our many chocolate items.

Arriving in Belgium, we began our three-day trip by visiting the first of many museums! This was the Hoge Crater museum, which was important part of our GCSE course - medicine. Meanwhile, the

Year 8's were more interested in the guns and gift shop! To follow this, we visited Sanctuary Wood, where we experienced life in the trenches and discovered that when there is no lighting in the tunnels you cannot see anything, including your fellow soldiers!

By around 5:30pm we arrived at the hostel, where we groaned and moaned about our early arrival which resulted in us all queuing outside, with faces like thunder. We all then marched to dinner, where we were served spaghetti bolognese. After we demolished our food, we headed to the Menin Gate ceremony where a small group of students, Olivia, Elizabeth and Alfie, laid a wreath in remembrance of the fallen. After a tiring first day we quickly hit the pillows and slept in excitement of our second day.

Day 2 began with an early visit to an underground quarry at Arras. It was a real-life experience of the conditions soldiers were faced with. Following on from this, we visited Thiepval Memorial for the missing. This was a hard hitting reminder of the many lives lost in fight for our country and freedom.

After paying our respects, we visited a piece of Canadian land which is called Newfoundland Park which allowed us to observe some trenches and crater holes (which many had the urge to run into) from the Battle of the Somme. The day then ended with us visiting local market stalls, where we spent most of our money on local food. This was after dinner too, we should add!



Bright and early on our final day! We again visited Ypres square where we visited many souvenir shops and brought a tonne of chocolate- with our excuse being 'we were on holiday!' After we'd spent all our money and ate all the chocolate we bought, we headed to the last few sites on our trip. Along the way Mr Brown proceeded to tell us interesting facts about the local children and how they were forced into working for two years - as service for their country (another fib?). We stopped by to further pay our respects at two other cemeteries, Etaples and Essex Farm. We ended our fun-filled adventure with a visit to Le Touquet Paris Plage beach where we got covered in sand and enjoyed a game of rounders, in which Mr Matyla really thrived! Overall it was a great experience which was thoroughly enjoyed by us all!

Fiona and Maddison (Year 10)

Being asked to take up the wreath at the Menin Gate ceremony was an offer I could not decline. It gave me a real insight into how much the ceremony meant to the local Belgian people and how it was so important to them to remember all those who fought in the Great War. The ceremony is a part of their culture and thousands gather everyday to pay their respects. The streets of Belgium are full of history and there are beautiful memorials in honour of all the soldiers wherever you go. The importance of remembrance is a belief shared by all those who live there, and everyone is truly committed in giving their tributes to the fallen. The Great War has obviously had such an impact on the town of Ypres and everyone who lives there. All of the graveyards are kept so perfectly and are a real tribute to the soldiers who are buried there. I thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the ceremony and visiting the town of Ypres and learning about its fantastic history.

Elizabeth (Year 10)



We went to the Menin gate ceremony and I was part of the group laying down the wreath. The ceremony started at 8pm, just like every evening, and a man walked into the centre and spoke a few words. After this a soldier started to play The Last Post on the trumpet. Once he had finished playing the place was silent in respect for those British and Commonwealth soldiers who dedicated themselves to the war but sadly lost their lives in the fields around Ypres. Standing there and seeing all 55,000 names up on that wall puts it in to perspective just how many people died for our tomorrow. Then we had to go up and lay the wreath; it was such an incredible experience and walking up the stairs to lay it down was quite surreal. I was nervous but was overcome with the honour of being there. Olivia (Year 10)