

Happy Easter to you all and a warm welcome to the April 2019 edition of our Newsletter.

I sincerely hope that you have all had a happy and holy Easter holiday with your loved ones and have managed to make the most of the wonderful spring weather. Once again it gives me great pleasure to share with you a small selection of some of the fantastic events and achievements that our pupils have been a part of over the last few months. A huge thank you to all those students and staff who get involved in the wider life of St John's School; I am always incredibly impressed with the sheer breadth of opportunities and accomplishments that the members of our community get involved with.

As we move ahead into this summer term, please keep in your thoughts and prayers those pupils in Key Stages 4 & 5 at St John's who are about to undertake their public examinations. All of our students, with the excellent support and guidance of the staff, have put in a tremendous amount of effort in preparation for these upcoming challenges and I am sure that you will join me in wishing them all the very best; I know that they will all do the school proud.

God Bless

Matt Barron *Headteacher*

Royal Academy of Arts

On Monday, 4th March GCSE and A level Art and Photography students visited the "Birth and Re-Birth" exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts. The beautiful chalk drawings by the famous Renaissance artist, Michelangelo, were exhibited alongside the installations of contemporary video artist, Bill Viola. Both artists explored the same theme of Resurrection. The students were fascinated to see biblical scenes portrayed by very different artists 500 years apart. The students also enjoyed a structured photo-shoot opportunity in St James' park culminating at the Tate Britain. Please visit our annual summer exhibition to see the resulting outcomes.



Mrs A Stone. *Head of Art*

Othello

From humour to complex ideas, the Othello trip contained a lesson for everyone. After meeting together at the train station, we soon set off to the great city of London. It wasn't just the lectures we enjoyed, it was also the company of fellow English lovers who bonded over smelly cheese and our shared approval of all things Nandos!

Upon arrival, we dived right into thought-provoking, and at times mind-boggling, lectures. Our favourite speaker, we all agreed, was the second man with the wild grey hair, a good humour and big feet. We had the chance to learn lots of new things about this wonderful play which we hadn't seen in the text over the course of the first few reads. We even managed a wild dash through Covent Garden on the way home. What could be better - sightseeing and education; two birds with one stone.

Gemma. Year 12

Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 Examination Information

Key information for Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 examination candidates can now be accessed via the school website:

- <http://www.stjohnscs.com/page/?title=Exams&pid=24>
or
- *St John's Catholic Comprehensive School Home Page - Information – Exams*

Please can you ensure that you and your son/daughter read each of the documents prior to the summer examination season.

The documents detail very important Government (JCQ) and School examination requirements.

Please pay particular attention to the following documents:

- Information for Candidates
- Social Media 2018-19
- Privacy Notice 2018-19
- Warning to candidates
- No Mobile Phones

All of the above information and documents will also be displayed on the school's Exam Notice Board.

The Exam Notice Board is located in the Sixth Form canteen area and can be viewed by all students.

We wish all students every success in their forthcoming examinations.

AFTA Young Game Designer Project

The students in Digital Applications have worked hard to create their very own computer game. Students have developed their games and have entered the prestigious BAFTA Young Game Designer project.

Congratulations on all of their hard work!

Mr C Mooney *Head of Computer Science*

Inter-house Art

The Inter-House Super 6 events for the first two terms saw students making helmets and medals with World War 1 as the theme. The work was once again produced under the watchful eye of the Art Department and many extraordinary works of art were created.

Councillor David Hurley visited the school and inspected the work from the three Houses coming to the conclusion that Ambrose students won the helmet section from Patrick with Clare third, with Patrick House winning the medal award with Ambrose second and Clare third. He did reflect on the quality of the work and the difficulty in coming to a decision.



Mr C. Murphy. *Head of History*



BOOK LAUNCH

80 guests attended the latest Book Launch of the History Society. The book, volume 7, covers the Parishes of Denton and Milton. The book is 466 pages long, in full colour, profusely illustrated and very professionally put together.

The guest list was impressive and included the Lord Lieutenant of Kent, the Viscount De L'Isle, Councillor David Hurley, Mayor of Gravesham, Mr Richard Palusinski, Chair of the Spirit of Normandy Trust alongside veterans of the Normandy Campaign 1944.

All were impressed by the excellence of the occasion. Copies of the book are available at £20 to include postage and packaging.

Mr C Murphy. *Head of History*

HISTORY FORUM

The latest book in the Memorial series was held in conjunction with a History Forum; this consisted of 6 lectures, 3 held at 2pm and 3 at 3pm with distinguished speakers giving talks on various aspects of World War 1 to students of the Borough. The talks were given by guests from Kent University [Dr Tim Bowman and Professor Mark Connelly], Andrew Robertshaw, Christoph Bull and Martin Stoneham.

The talks were full with upwards of 25 students in attendance in each lecture.

Mr C Murphy. *Head of History*



CV and Interview skills workshop

Ten Year 10s were lucky enough to be invited by Guillermo Felices and his team from BNP Paribas Bank in Moorgate, London to have mentoring, CV and interview skills workshops.

The workshops were extremely successful, and the students gained a great deal from this visit.

Mrs H Rooke. *Pastoral Manager for Year 10*

Apprenticeship Week

Umbrella Training came to the school with their apprenticeship bus where our students were able to meet apprentices and employers from the Hospitality Industry. Frank in Year 10 managed to gain a week's work experience with the Goring Hotel through this event and several other students have signed up to Umbrella Training with a view to gaining a hospitality apprenticeship in a four/five-star hotel.

Additionally, the Year 11s enjoyed an apprenticeship trip to Taylor Wimpey's Ebbsfleet Garden City site where they were able to experience a working day on a construction site. Students were taken through the whole process from digging the foundations to a finished show home and they were also given the opportunity to speak to employees about various different careers in the industry. Some of the Year 11s are currently going through the apprentice application process and we wish them all the very best with their chosen pathway.



Mrs H Rooke *Pastoral Manager for Year 10*

BSGA Milano Team Trio Gymnastics Competition

On Saturday 16th March, St. John's Gymnastics Squad competed in the BSGA Milano Team Trio Gymnastics competition, held in Stoke-on-Trent. The gymnasts from the Under 16 Mixed, Under 19 Boys and Under 19 Mixed teams competed a team sequence as well as an individual floor routine and 2 vaults. Their scores were added together within the team, and they battled against every other region within the United Kingdom.

The results were astounding:

Under 19 Boys – 3rd place – Mantas, Mick, Callum

Under 16 Mixed – 1st place – Arjun, Dashsa, Charlotte, Julia

Under 19 Mixed – 1st place – Izzy, Molly, Emmanuel

Additionally, the Under 16 Mixed and Under 19 Boys and Mixed also contributed to the South East achieving first place as a Region when their scores were combined with the schools representing the Girls categories in the South East.



Mrs L Weller. *Assistant Headteacher*

Big Battery Hunt

We are currently taking part in recycling all batteries that the students can bring into school. All classrooms have small collection booklets as we await our larger collection boxes. Please have a look for your old batteries and bring them in and deposit them in the containers. Any questions please see Mr. Ward.



National Rowing Championships

In mid-March the best of the rowing squad took part in the National Rowing Championships at the Copper Box, an iconic Olympic venue used in 2012. With schools taking part from all over England, our students were set the aspirational task of achieving a personal best. 11/14 did just that with 3 new school records being set by the Year 9 relay team who took 30 seconds off their best time to finish 17th. Last year they finished 51st! Arina in Year 10 finished 16th nationally and Gracjana came 21st setting a new record for their year group. Patrick in Year 11 also made the top 25 nationally with a superb row. Grace went from 61st last year to 17th with an excellent 4-minute row. A special mention must go to Talia who has excelled this year. She has forced her way into the Year 9 girls team with some amazing rows, extended her PB by around 150m and went from 146th in Year 8 to 60th in Year 9. Well done to all in the picture. Rowing club takes place with the experienced Sandy doing a terrific job in getting all the rowers to improve. It's a free club every Monday 3.40 pm until 4.40pm at Gravesend Rowing Club. Rowers are taken to and from the venue by Mr. Ward so please see him for details. We have the District Rowing competition coming up in Term 5.



Mr S Ward. *PE Teacher*

American Politics Seminar

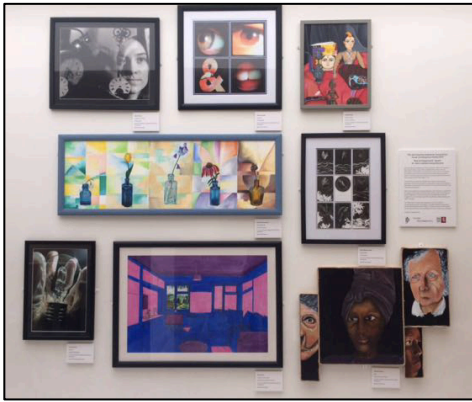
Nine Year 13 students studying Politics travelled with Mr Thilthorpe and Mr Murphy to Wellington College to attend an all-day seminar on the current state of American Politics; American Politics constitutes a third of the course for the Year 13 Politics subject. Despite the best efforts of the traffic on the M25 and M3, the group arrived on time and enjoyed a full day's participation. The traffic on the return journey ensured the expected arrival return time was overshoot by 90 minutes.



The topics included the American Presidency, President Trump and the relevance of the Senate/Congress.

Mr C Murphy. *Head of History*

Prize-winning Artwork



Our school's prize-winning artwork is now proudly on display back at St John's after touring County Hall, Maidstone and the Turner Contemporary Gallery in Margate. The display demonstrates the wide range of media and experimental techniques used in the Art and Photography departments through which the students can express their personal thoughts and feelings. Coming soon will be a display of wooden crucifixes based on the Romero Cross by KS3 students.

Mrs A Stone. *Head of Art*

Japanese Student Visit

25 students and 4 staff from Konko Gakuen School, Hiroshima visited the school on March 22nd. Arriving at 1pm they had lunch with 6th Formers and other students from St John's after which they were taken on a tour of the school in groups of 5. On their return to the Heart Space, the visitors entertained Year 7 pupils with a demonstration of origami which proved to be of huge interest to this most appreciative of audiences. Over 250 dragons and storks were created by the Year 7 students under the careful and watchful eye of their visitors.

The group left at 3pm after a most enjoyable and educational visit.

Mr C Murphy *Head of History*



Maths

As the summer term approaches so does the sun and exam season! Therefore, in order to maximise your potential, the key is knowledge and practice. The most important thing to support you in preparing for your end of term exams is to know exactly what it is you are supposed to be learning.

For all students, from the Easter break onwards, we will be putting up topic lists for each year group on 'SharePoint' as a checklist for what to revise. For those students in Year 11 preparing for their GCSEs, I will make available a range of past papers and other practice materials. Students can log-on to **SharePoint** through their school email - much as they do for one drive. If they are unsure how to log-on, please encourage them to see a member of the maths team.

For our higher tier GCSE students, the most overlooked piece of information is the table of exact trig values, which I have included here for you.

Angle (θ) Degrees	0°	30°	45°	60°	90°
sin (θ)	0	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{\sqrt{2}}{2}$	$\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}$	1
cos (θ)	1	$\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}$	$\frac{\sqrt{2}}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	0
tan (θ)	0	$\frac{1}{\sqrt{3}}$	1	$\sqrt{3}$	Not Defined

In the meantime please find a few Easter teasers.

The Easter bunny visited 47 towns and delivered 19 eggs to each town. How many eggs has he delivered in total?



A bunny hops 2 times on Monday. He hops double this amount on Tuesday, three times this amount on Wednesday, and so on for a whole week! How many times does he hop in total?



A hen coop has 28 hens inside. Half the hens have 10 chicks each. The other half have 12 chicks each. How many chicks do they have in total?





Re: Measles, Chicken Pox and Shingles.

I am writing to request your cooperation in a vitally important matter.

At St John's Catholic Comprehensive School we have a large number of students and staff and, at any given moment in time, it is feasible that one or more members of our school community may be receiving medical treatment for cancer. Any person currently receiving medical treatment for cancer would have their health placed at an even greater risk if they were to be exposed to **measles, chicken pox** or **shingles**.

Measles

If you suspect your child has measles, please let the school know immediately and ensure your child visits a GP as soon as possible to obtain an official diagnosis. If your child is diagnosed with having measles, please ensure your child does not come to school until the measles have fully abated.

The best way to protect a pupil from measles is to ensure they are immunised against measles. Please discuss measles immunisation with your GP if your child is not already vaccinated.

Chicken Pox

If you suspect your child has chicken pox, please let the school know immediately and ensure your child visits a GP as soon as possible to obtain an official diagnosis. If your child is diagnosed with having chicken pox, please ensure your child does not come to school until the chicken pox has fully abated.

Any member of the school community suffering from cancer would need to be given an injection within three days of coming into contact with a person that has chicken pox.

Shingles

If you suspect your child has shingles, please let the school know immediately and ensure your child visits the GP as soon as possible to obtain an official diagnosis. If your child is diagnosed with having shingles, please ensure your child does not come to school until the shingles has fully abated. It is also very important that you let the school know if anyone else in your household has shingles.

The health and wellbeing of the entire school community is of the utmost importance to us and we request your full support on the matters outlined in this letter. Thank you in advance for your cooperation; it is very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Matt Barron Headteacher



Literary Legends

A Short Story by Skye. *Year 7*

The woman stood dead still.

The fear in her crystal blue eyes glinted in the deadly sunlight. Her eyes were fixed on one place, hoping that what she thinks is there won't be. She knew what was going to happen.

Her heart was pounding in her cold frozen chest. Not a single hair on her head dare move; she knew she was being watched.

Her frozen lips weren't able to move. Her nose twitched with fear.

She knew if she moved she would die.

She knew if she stayed there she would die.

She knew if she called for help she would die.

She knew what she had to do...

A Short Story by Katie. *Year 7*

Although she had died, I did not believe in ghosts. It has now been two years since she sadly passed away. Terrifyingly, last night, I heard an almost deafening noise in my room in the cold night. The sound of Molly screaming. Exactly like she did every night in that prison cell, as she used to call it.

A shiver ran down my spine when I heard that freakishly, petrifying noise. As soon as I got the confidence, I stood up. Each step like a step closer to hell. My body stopped, paralysed by the thought of the other side of that door. Could that be the ghost of Molly bobbling on the other side of the muffled door, right at that moment? All of a sudden, I felt a frozen hand on my shoulder bone, piercing like a knife that had just been sharpened.

I almost leapt out of my skin! Then, I saw the transparent silhouette of Molly floating. She was as white as the moon on a freezing cold night. Her lips as red as blood, fresh from flesh.

"Hello" she softly whispered.

Suddenly, I could hardly breathe, I couldn't squeeze a word out from my radioactive brain. My head was like a prison cell, scary but dangerous with millions of awful memories floating about.

Later, I replied in a terrified manner, "Hello?"

Then, she absurdly disappeared.

Chaplain's Corner

If I tell you that Lent is one of my favourite times of year, would you say 'Deacon Michael, have you gone a bit fuzzy in the head? Really!?'

Well it is one of my favourite times of year, because each time it challenges me and invigorates my relationship with God; I love it!

What Lent is not, is a seasonal diet! It is not about giving up chocolate. Fasting is one of three spiritual weapons that only really work when used together: fasting yes, but also prayer and charity. Taken together these are a powerful means to an end; the goal is to re-centre and invigorate our relationship with Jesus. If it doesn't have that genuine purpose it is all bluster and boondoggle! So how has your journey through Lent been going?

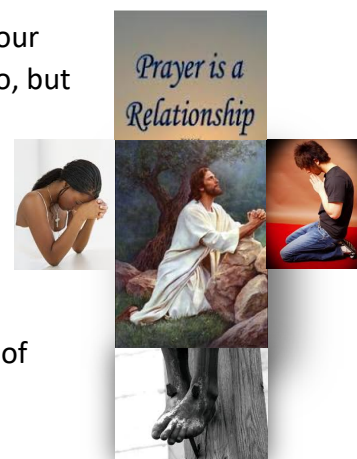
Prayer is relationship with God; spending time with him, bringing him into every part of our life; getting to know him, listening to him, loving him, and yes giving him our troubles too, but always being appreciative of his grace. In our temptations and failings we turn away from him; in prayer we turn back to him.

Fasting demonstrates our determination to put God centre stage in our life, to offer penance for when we have not been faithful, and it is a clear message from our heart to that part of us that demands chocolate, or social media, or computer games or other cravings that our heart, filled with the love of God, is the boss! Charity is the outpouring of that love.

We have had lots going on this Lent at St John's; let me tell you about a couple of them.

On 2nd March we took a group of senior students to Wembley Arena, together with 8,000 others from around the country to attend the Flame event; the biggest Catholic youth event in the calendar. It was spectacularly good; our young people (and staff) were so fired up by it that they are still glowing! The theme of the day was significance. We were all inspired by the words of Robert Madu, "Stay in your own lane and keep your eyes on Jesus!" All too often we compare ourselves to others causing us to ignore the unique plan God has for us. The day ended with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. A powerful experience for all.

Our charity for year groups 9, 10 and 11 this Lent is CAFOD and the support of refuges and the displaced. When you hear the testimonies of many of these people it is sobering that life can be so desperate in today's world. The students are raising money with a sponsored silence during form time and breaks for two days ... I guess giving up talking must surely count as fasting for teenagers!



Please pray for the efforts of our senior 6th Form students sleeping out in the cold all night to raise money and pray for our local House of Mercy charity for the homeless. During the night they will enter the Church and come before the Blessed Sacrament to pray for the homeless. They have embarked on a variety of fundraising initiatives. It is sad to note that homelessness among our local community is on the rise.

I'll leave you with a poem by someone who has experienced being homeless, a prayer for the homeless, and ask you to be generous with your donations.



People walk by,
Not hearing my cry,
No one smiles,
I live on street tiles,
My life is a bag,
All I wear is a rag.
I'm very lonely,
And I'm very bony.
I have no hope,
Because my life went down a slope.
And when I die,
No one will cry.

By Benjamin

Prayer for the Homeless

Bless the homeless, this day and every day,
keep them from physical and emotional harm,
fill their hearts with hope for the future and for today,
comfort the homeless as they walk their difficult paths.
May I know that anyone, even me, can be homeless.
Bless the homeless with enough food to sustain them,
with enough warmth to shield them from the elements,
with the power to wrestle personal demons and win,
with the will to go on, and build their lives again.
May hope touch each homeless heart, spirit and life,
let the kindness of others bring lasting benefits,
bring freedom from addiction, illness and misery,
open their humanity to include & embrace themselves.
Bless the homeless with self-acceptance and love,
spark their imaginations with belief in the future,
bringing the possibility of a better life,
a safer life and a more secure life.

Amen.

Stay blessed

Deacon Michael Chaplain

Answers to the Maths Easter Teasers: 893 eggs, 56 hops and 308 chicks.

Key Dates for Term 5

Tuesday 30th April - Performing Arts Showcase at the Woodville Halls 7pm.

Tuesday 7th – Friday 10th May – Year 7, 8 and 9 end of year exams.

Thursday 9th May – Year 11 Revision Programme Starts.

Friday 10th May – Year 8 Vaccinations.

Friday 24th May – Last day of term.