

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the July edition of our Newsletter, the last Newsletter of this academic year.

Although not without its challenges (Covid and the recent heatwave to name but two!), it has been another extremely successful year at St John's. Monitoring the school each day as I do, I have been incredibly impressed by the 'Attitude to Learning' of all of our students, but in particular the dedication and focus of our two main examination cohorts – Year 11 & Year 13. Their efforts have been absolutely fantastic to behold, especially after all the disruption to education and public exams that we have had to endure as a result of the pandemic. These students have truly applied themselves to their studies right from the start of September. They really have done themselves, their families and the school proud, and I have every faith that they will receive the results that their efforts so rightly deserve this August.

Away from examinations and academic study, it has been wonderful to see so many students benefit from the amount of trips and extra-curricular activities that our staff have been able to organise in recent months, some of which have been included in this newsletter. This is something that all of us have really missed over these last few difficult years, therefore to see these opportunities open up again has been particularly heartening. Fingers crossed that next year sees even less disruption to school life so that normal service resumes and students can enjoy even more enriching activities to compliment their classroom studies.

This time of year is always tinged with just a little bit of sadness as we say 'goodbye & good luck' to those staff and students who are moving on to pastures new. At yesterday's Whole School Assembly we formally said goodbye and thank you to those members of staff who are leaving this summer, however, I would like to take this opportunity to give a special mention to Mr O'Shea, our Senior Deputy Headteacher in charge of Pastoral, who is retiring after 16 fantastic years of service at St John's. Mr O'Shea has been a fantastic servant of our school and has personally been a rock of support to me throughout my headship; St John's has benefitted a tremendous amount through his wisdom and hard work. I am sure that you will join me in wishing Mr O'Shea a very long, happy and healthy retirement – he fully deserves it.

Finally, I would like to wish each and every one of you all the best for the holidays ahead. I hope that you are able to find some quality time to rest and relax as a family, so that your time together helps to create lasting memories full of joy and happiness. May blessings of grace and peace be with you each and every day.

Matt Barron *Headteacher*

## Goodbye Year 11

After a tough and challenging academic year, Year 11 threw themselves enthusiastically into celebrations to mark the end of their examination period before they officially departed for a well-earned break. It is always an emotional occasion saying farewell to our leavers after all the hard work that Year 11 entails. Needless to say, we are immensely proud of them all for their conscientious efforts and dedication throughout this year; the students have been a real credit to St John's.

Our leavers were sent off in true St John's style; students were invited to a celebratory Mass and Leavers' BBQ on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June, and of course the highlight was the Year 11 Prom held two days later at the Mercure Brands Hatch Hotel and Spa.



Mass is an important occasion for students to give thanks and reflect together on their personal journey through St John's and we are very grateful to Fr Moses Amune MSP, Deacon Michael and Mrs Gibbons who led this celebration for us. The leavers' assembly was an emotional one but it also gave the opportunity for staff to show their appreciation to Year 11 for their commitment to their studies by 'letting their hair down' in the well received Leavers' Mass staff video. Students were then invited to participate in the ritual 'shirt signing' before heading outside for a BBQ with staff in the sunshine; it was a glorious afternoon and one which was enjoyed by all!

Prom 2022..... Year 11 students looked amazing in their new attire, and the staff didn't look too bad either! It was a lovely occasion to mark the students' time at St John's with a sit down meal followed by throwing some shpes on the dancefloor. We would like to thank our students for a wonderful evening and their exemplary behaviour - something that has been faultless all year.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our Year 11 pupils for their hard work and determination this year; we very much hope that this is reflected when their results are released in the Summer and we look forward to sharing their successes with them to recognise all that they have worked so hard to achieve.

We wish them the best of luck in their future pathways and look forward to welcoming very many of them back to the Sixth Form.

Finally, always remember as you move into the 'big wide world' that you will always be part of a much bigger community – the St John's community.

*The Year 11 Team.*

## Summer Exam Results

### **Key Stage 5 Results Day: Thursday 18<sup>TH</sup> August**

For results, please enter the school via the main doors & proceed to the SPORTS HALL. Please do not wander around the school.

**Year 13: 9.00am - Advanced Level & L3 BTEC/Vocational**

**Year 12: 10.30am - Level 3 results**

### **Key Stage 4 Results Day: Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> August**

For results, please enter the school via the main doors & proceed to the SPORTS HALL. Please do not wander around the school.

**Year 11: 9.00am – GCSE/L2 BTEC/Vocational**

**Year 10: 11.00am – GCSE/L2 BTEC/Vocational**

**Please note that our Sixth Form Enrolment will also be taking place on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> August between 9am -1pm.**

*Ms D Prior. Examination, Course Data Manager, EVC Coordinator & Access Arrangements Assessor.*

## National Gymnastics Finals

On Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> May, St John's Gymnastics Squad represented the school and the South East Region in the Under 13 and Under 19 Mixed categories of the BSGA Team Floor and Vault Nationals Finals held in Stoke-on-Trent. The gymnasts were up against some very strong teams from other regions around the UK, but they performed extremely well, with the Under 13 Mixed team achieved 5<sup>th</sup> place, and the Under 19 Mixed team came 8<sup>th</sup>. Congratulations to the squad.



*Mrs L Weller. Assistant Headteacher.*

## Winners of National Youth Competitions 2022

The Knights of St Columba (KSC) is an Order of Catholic men bound together in Charity, Unity and Fraternity in order to enrich their own faith and support the Catholic Social Teaching.

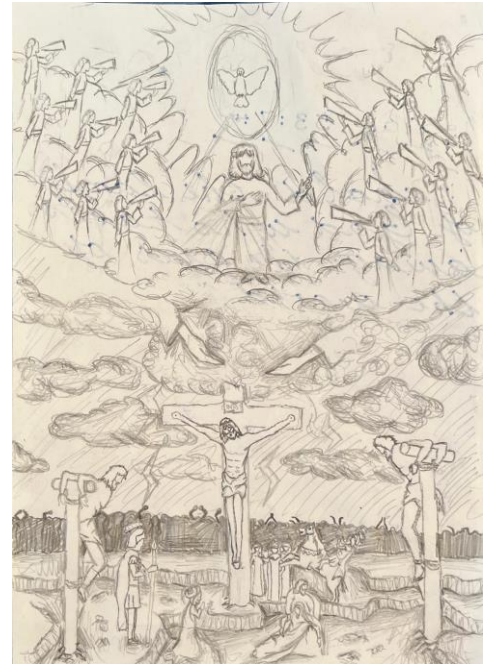
Two years ago (2020), I joined the Knights of St. Columba group at St John's the Evangelist parish in Gravesend. Part of my role is helping out with promoting young people's competitions and it is great that this year many pupils across the whole school participated in the different Youth Competitions that were organised. There are four different categories of competition: Nativity drawing, Easter painting, prayer, and essay competitions. The results, due to the dedication of these students, were amazing. St John's School was the top school in this national competition as we produced the following winners:

Nora K (Year 9): 1<sup>st</sup> Prize Winner of the KS3 prayer competition  
Angel N (Year 13): 1<sup>st</sup> Prize Winner of the KS4-5 essay competition  
Divine N (Year 11): 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize Winner of the KS4-5 essay competition

The students will be receiving a certificate signed by the Supreme Knight of the Knights of St. Columba.

Angel N. and Nora K. were awarded winners trophies, in addition to very generous cash prizes (£100 and £75 respectively – Divine was awarded £50). This is a marvellous feat and a very well done to Angel, Nora, and Divine for their fantastic achievement.

A big thank you to all other students who participated in the different competitions. Every year hundreds of school pupils across the UK enter these competitions; hopefully the successes this year of Nora, angel & Divine will inspire even more St John's pupils to participate next year. Top right is Divine's beautiful award-winning Easter Painting.



*Mr F Juma. Teacher of Religious Studies.*

## Home Cooking Skills



Our BTEC Home Cooking Skills (Year 2) completed their cooking challenge of Summer BBQ Burgers with Sweet Potato Fries. The students have rounded off the year completing all coursework for year 1 of the course bringing the year to a successful end and enjoying a delicious homemade Beef, Chicken or Vegi Burger for their last practical of the year.



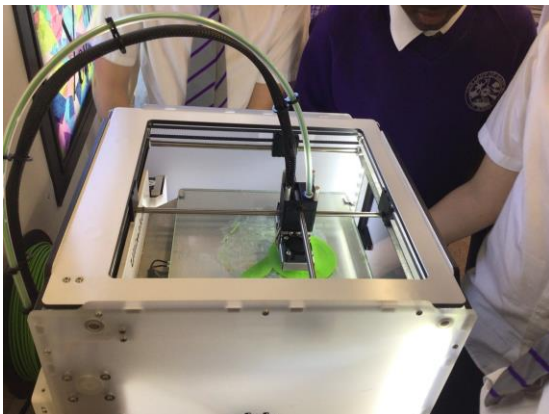
Well Done BTEC students - see you in September

*Mrs S Matthews. Food Technology Technician*

## Charities

The school recently made a donation of £203.11 to a Spinal Research charity. Thank you to everyone who made donations and supported the fundraising.

## TinkerCAD Workshop



Our Lady of Hartley Year 6 students were very excited to partake in an afternoon of CAD/CAM fun. Miss Budd visited the school with one of our 3D printers. The students experimented with TinkerCAD a specialist CAD software where you can design then manufacture 3D forms. The students designed products linked to work they had completed in other subject areas. The winning product was a South American navigation device which was inspired from the students History and Geography lessons. The image above is the start of this product which took 6 hours to manufacture. The students also received a personalised named 3D printer keyring to remember their afternoon.

*Miss S Budd. Technology Teacher*



## Careers

### Canterbury Christ Church University's Inspiring Minds Programme

Inspiring Minds is a pioneering programme provided by Canterbury Christ Church University. The programme has been designed to encourage and support local students to study STEM subjects. Our Year 10 students went to six Saturday morning sessions at the University and engaged in projects where they found solutions for 'real world problems' such as remote learning. This culminated in a showcase event where our Year 10s could display their various projects to staff and parents.



### Work Experience Week

At the end of June, all students from Year 10 and 12 were able to experience the world of work either in an external setting, via an online provider or through an inhouse school programme.

Feedback from the companies and schools that our students visited was excellent, with many commenting on just how professional, hardworking and polite our students were; some were even offered Saturday jobs or summer placements thanks to their performance during the week.

We would like to thank the schools and companies (below) for offering work experience opportunities to our students as this is a vital part of their educational development.

- Almond Bud Nursery, Apollo Taxis, Austen Allen Homecare, Autocruse Service Centre, B & H Haulage Pallets, BPR Group Europe Ltd, Bronte School, CBW Staffing Solutions Ltd, Castle View Day Nursery, Boots, Chantry Community Academy, The Clarendon Royal Hotel, Coachwork Renovations Ltd, Copia Digital Ltd, Copperfield Academy, Cult Salons, D R Car Repairs, Dawn Claire Hairdressers, Day Lewis Pharmacy, Diamond Hand Carwash, Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, Elementary Festival, English Martyrs Primary School, F M Conway, Friday's Plumbing Services, Gary Dunkley Celebrant Services, Global Events and Holidays, Gravesham Adult Education, Gravesend Medical Centre, Gravesham Borough Council, Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School, Hundred of Hoo Academy, Istanbul Flames, JK's Café, Kings Pharmacy, Lion Garage, Manor Community Primary, Manson Mortgages, Marchmont Asset Management, Mears Group Plc, Milton Food and Wine, Network Rail, Next, Nocturnal Touring and Routed Productions, North Kent College, The Old Bailey, Our Lady's Pre School, Oxleas NHS, Pathways Day

Centre, Pro Future Soccer, Red Apple Designs, Reed Recruitment, Riverview Infant School, Rubbish2Go, Rye Street Stables, S R Investment Partners, Sainsbury's, Santander Gravesend, Sara Binning Solicitors, Sealeys Estate Agents, Shoezone, Soccer Elite FA, Specsavers, Springpod, St John's Catholic Primary School, St Joseph's Primary School, Stone Willy's Pizza, Success for Schools, Tax Assist Accountants, Tesco Stores, Treatz Gravesend, Toolbank, Townley Grammar, White Eagle Restaurant, UK South Services, Your Vision Media.

If anyone would be able to support with placements in June 2023 please contact either on email [careers@stj.kent.sch.uk](mailto:careers@stj.kent.sch.uk) or tel: 01474 534 718.

### Southampton University Global Challenge Day

In June this year, a number of our Year 10 students were invited to participate in a multi-school challenge at Southampton University. As a Russell Group University, this was an incredibly valuable experience. Our students were tasked with researching, writing and presenting a debate, as well as creating a supporting information poster focused on one of the United Nations sustainable development goals. This was then presented to rival



schools and three members of university alumni, who asked a number of challenging questions to our students. We are very proud to announce that our students reached 2<sup>nd</sup> place out of all the schools that took part in this challenge, and the lead university professor even declared that our supporting poster was one of the best he had ever seen!!

We are planning to return next year and hopefully come back with the trophy!!!



### North Kent College Visit

We were fortunate enough to be able to take 15 of our Year 10 students to both Dartford and Gravesend North Kent College campuses for the day, where the students were able to gain an understanding of how the college system works and insight into the different courses and options on offer. The students all enjoyed their day and we are hoping to run our next visit for our new Year 10s early in the next school term.

Mrs H Rooke. Pastoral Manager Year 10

## Year 13 Criminology Crime Scene Workshop

Our Year 13 Criminology students recently took part in a Crime Scene to Court Room Workshop. This was provided by ZAKON an external company specialising in crime training. The whole workshop was based on a real-life murder investigation carried out by the Police. The day started with a 999 call to which students then became CSIs. Their task was to analyse witness statements, the crime scene and various pieces of evidence collected. They looked at fingerprints, shoe prints, DNA, and the Post-Mortem details to try and crack the case. They then became detectives, looking for 'holes' in the investigation. The day climaxed with a Court Scene where our students each took various roles. These included the Prosecution and Defence teams, the jury and key members of the investigation team. Our students actively took part in the whole day and were commended by Simon Smith (workshop leader) for their participation and engagement with the activities, from the crime scene to the trial.

*"I think the workshop was very helpful. It gave a real insight to how the authorities would go about investigating a real crime. I especially enjoyed the mock trial as it allowed us to have a hands-on approach and enabled us to step into a real-life role"* – Matilda.

*"The entire workshop was very informative as well as entertaining. The real-life stories and experiences told by Simon were very expressive and entertaining"* – Kevin.

*"The workshop was an amazing experience. It showed me that you must keep an open mind when investigating a criminal activity. Additionally, we had a court scene scenario, which was fun to act out and see the different roles in a court room"* – Navjot.



Miss L Cutting. Religious Education/Criminology Teacher

## History News

### Battlefield Trip, Year 7

The delayed trip to the Ypres Battlefields for Year 7 (postponed from Christmas) finally went out in early June. It was tremendous to see the interest of the students who eagerly enjoyed the experience. 77 students made the journey and arrived back in the UK just in time for History Day!

### Battlefield Trip, Year 8

The second of two Battlefield Trips to the World War I Battlefields in Ypres, Belgium went on June 10<sup>th</sup> (this was delayed from October last year) and it was great to get out and walk the Battlefields. Some 90 students made the journey and had a fantastic learning experience.







## Draughts 2022 Class Champions



Year 7

**Harry E** — Year 7 and Key Stage 3 Champion

Lilly R

Lili J

Denas A

George C

Sahib A

Year 8

**Harvin P** — Year 8 Champion

Hayden W

Liam C

Aishwarya C

William R

Jayden D

Jay M

**Dear Parents/Carers,**

I do hope you are all well and that your children are looking forward to a well-earned rest over the summer holidays.

Please find below some resources that you might find useful.

**For Parents/Carers - How to Set Up Gaming Consoles to Prevent Impulse Purchases**

You will be all too aware that it is far too easy for children and young people to purchase virtual items in games and apps. Some of the amounts they are spending is eye-watering, so too is accidental purchasing where the game has used 'nudge' techniques to entice a purchase.

Many devices have parental controls which can help to mitigate these purchases. Wayne Denner from Ireland has put together a short article which some parents/carers may find useful, detailing how to set up parental controls on popular devices including the PS4, iPhone and Xbox One.

The link is: <https://www.waynedenner.com/blog/how-to-avoid-getting-your-bank-account-emptied-with-your-children-gaming>



## **Instagram - New Parental Controls**

Currently rolling out within the UK right now, Instagram have launched some new features which I'm sure many parents/carers will welcome. These new features include:

- The ability to see how much time their child spends on Instagram.
- Awareness of who their child is following and who is following their child.
- Notification of/when their child reports someone and the type of report that was made.
- The ability to set specific times when parents can limit their child's screen time.

The features are enabled on Family Centre, where a parent/carer can supervise their child's account. Information about the new features can be found here: [https://familycenter.instagram.com/coig\\_consent=1](https://familycenter.instagram.com/coig_consent=1) Information about Family Centre on the page isn't obvious, it's at the top of the page in small font.

## **WhatsApp - View Once**

Ephemeral data isn't new, most famously Snapchat introduced so-called disappearing images as its selling point when Snapchat was first released. As good as WhatsApp is, there are very serious concerns in relation to end-to-end encryption, meaning that WhatsApp/Facebook are unable to detect and report illegal posts to authorities. WhatsApp has now introduced 'view once' which, as it states, an image/video will be auto-deleted once it has been viewed, or within 14 days if it is not viewed.

## **KOOOTH**

The London & South East team run free monthly parent/carer webinars. The sessions are designed to help parents/carers understand how Kooth can support their child with their mental health and wellbeing. The session covers:

- A Presentation on Kooth (which includes what to consider when wanting to have a conversation with their children about how they're feeling, etc)
- A Live tour of the Kooth site
- An opportunity for Questions & Answers about Kooth

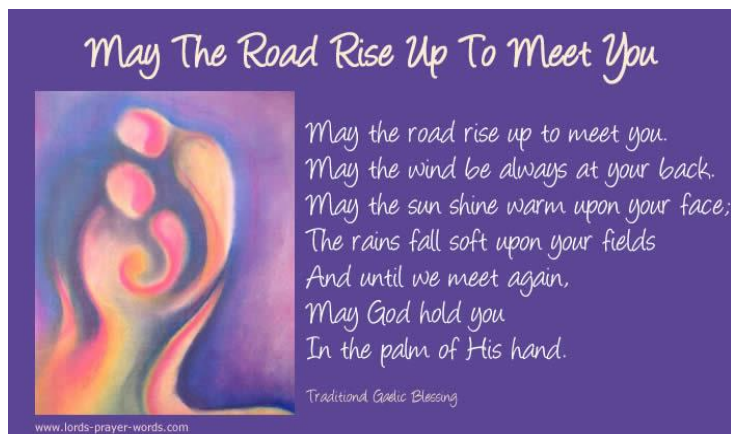
Please check your emails for a separate letter on details regarding signing up to the webinars.

The Kent Resilience Hub <https://kentresiliencehub.org.uk/#accordion-5> has a range of excellent resources to support the emotional wellbeing of young people.

*Mrs O Kelham. Designated Safeguarding Lead*

## Chaplain's Corner

### Farewell to our Year 13s



It is always a mixture of joy and sadness when, at this time of year we say farewell to our Year 13s and some of our Year 11s, as they fly the St John's nest to go on to university, work, college or gap year adventures. As usual, we celebrated Mass for Year 13s and Year 11s respectively, followed by humorous awards, reminiscent photos, and a BBQ. They leave with our love and prayers.

We also enjoyed a set of Year 9 Retreats in Canterbury that were



blessed with fine weather. As usual, we split the cohort across five separate days rather than take all 200 at once, let alone fit them into three minibuses! The Retreats included a tour of Canterbury Cathedral, some thought-provoking sessions back at St Thomas' Church Hall and finally Mass in the Church.

### The heart of a Catholic school

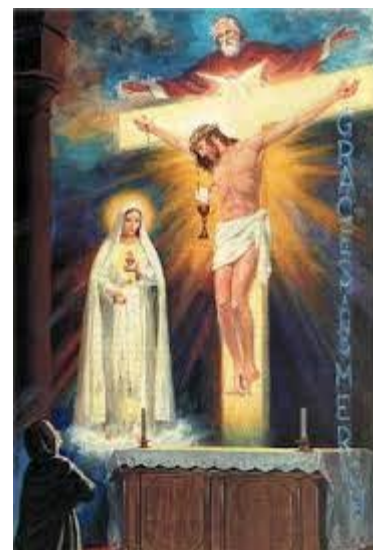
Our retreats are designed to make us think about spiritual things; about our own lives, the relationships we have with each other, and the relationship we have with God – whichever religion we have chosen to follow. So it is perhaps fitting, that in this final Chaplain's Corner before the summer, I reflect on the foundation of the Catholic Spirituality that this school is built on.

If we, by doing good things, satisfy ourselves that we are fit for heaven, we make a profound error. We all break the commandments at some point in our lives; we all do selfish things.


We are forgiven by virtue of the Cross of Christ, but only until the next time. What we need, in order to enter heaven, is His divine love which changes us from the inside out and makes us holy, provided we surrender to it! Then, and only then, may we enter heaven.

At the heart of the Catholic faith is a relationship, a relationship with God, and at the heart of this relationship is the Eucharist.

We are drawn in to that relationship by the Word of God. We never have Mass without the Word of God, with particular focus on the Gospel; the words of Christ himself. Then we kneel, transcending time, present at the foot of the Cross of our Saviour who we have come to love, as he offers himself as our priest and sacrifice to God the Father. Then we receive the fruits of that sacrifice; the divine life of Jesus himself who we receive; risen body, blood, soul and divinity.







Yes, Jesus lives in us; divinity comes to live in our human being; or to be more precise, we live in him. As the love of God changes us from the inside out we can begin to love as he loves; unconditionally. It is a process of transformation.

People sometimes use the expression ‘a marriage made in heaven’. This is a relationship made on earth, consummated on the Cross, and lived, in its fullness, in heaven, and we are all invited.

A Prayer of desire for God

Lord Jesus, you are infinite love,  
who burns with desire to come into my heart.  
Help me to long for you; for my soul to thirst for you,  
for your love is better than life.  
Help us to understand that Holy Communion  
is the shortest and the safest way to Heaven.  
Help me to make this day an offering of love and service to you.

**AMEN**

Stay blessed

Deacon Michael