



## Parents' Christmas Newsletter 2012

### School Ethos

In keeping with our school's ethos, retreats were recently held for our First Year and Transition Year Students. In addition, we had our annual Christmas Carol service on December 20<sup>th</sup> and we commend our students on the wonderful array of carols sung and musical talent that was displayed. All students attended with their teachers. It was a joyful experience where we all entered into the true spirit of Christmas. We would like to congratulate the choir members, readers and all teachers who prepared the girls so well for this ceremony.

### Christmas Tests

Our students had their Christmas Examinations during the week of December the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup>. Parents are asked to discuss the results with their daughters and to set realistic targets for each girl to work towards.

### Chaplain's News

- We bid a sad farewell to Sr. Pat who has worked as our school Chaplain here in St. Mary's Holy Faith for the past four years. We wish her well.
- Sr. Pat recently facilitated a retreat programme for our First Year girls. We are very proud of our students who proved themselves to be worthy ambassadors of our school.

### Literacy Strategy

Our school is a pilot school for the Department of Education and Skills' National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (NLNS). In-service for all pilot school teachers / link teachers is currently taking place on a national level. Here in St. Mary's Holy Faith the following tasks have been achieved:

- In May 2012, all teachers had a presentation on the NLNS
- We have a Literacy Committee in place which is cross curricular
- We have examined definitions of literacy
- We have distributed a second year questionnaire focusing upon literacy and are currently in the process of analysing the results
- We are currently beginning the planning process for incorporating literacy in all of our subject department plans

Further details on the Department of Education and Skills' National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy can be found on their website <http://www.education.ie>

### Young Social Innovators (YSI)

Following a curriculum review in 2012, a new and exciting programme was introduced at senior cycle in the school. The Young Social Innovators (YSI) is a youth-led, team-based, action focused programme where young people identify a social issue of concern to them and/or their community or further afield, explore it and come up with innovative actions and responses which they put into practice. Students at St. Mary's are working to raise awareness around the issues of the environment via the 'Green Schools' Project', cyber bullying, food poverty, epilepsy and the 'Elderly Pairing Project.

### Voluntary Contribution

Parents are reminded that voluntary contributions can be made to the school office in full payment or in installments.

### Website

We encourage all parents to keep in touch with all school activities via [www.holyfaith.ie](http://www.holyfaith.ie) where we provide news, information, and group photos of the girls from time to time.

### **Examination classes**

A reminder to all parents/guardians of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year students that examination fees for the Junior and Leaving Certificate classes will be due in the New Year. Last year's fees were €105 (JC) and €110 (LC) approximately so it is advisable to plan for this payment. Candidates with a current medical card are exempt from this payment – please ensure that your medical card is in date.

Some Leaving Certificate subjects have a practical component or a project to write up e.g. Geography Field Trip and the Home Economics journal. These projects can be prepared to the highest standard possible by each student. Parents are asked to ensure that their daughters keep up to date with their project work.

### **Career Guidance News**

- ✚ Congratulations to the 20 Transition Year and Fifth Year students who received a DCU Achievement Award on December the 6th in the Helix in DCU. A great night was had by all and we are very proud of all our students who received an award.
- ✚ Well done to all the Transition Year students who recently completed their Differential Aptitude Tests. The girls have received their individual feedback and are using it to choose subjects and decide on future career plans.
- ✚ The Rainbows Programme is up and running for First Year students. The girls have had two weeks with their Rainbows Facilitator on Tuesday mornings for hot chocolate and plenty of support. The programme will continue for a further ten weeks and we would like to thank Mary Mc Niece and Mary Free for their voluntary support. We are looking for new facilitators to run a Rainbows group and full training is provided. Please contact Ms Kealy at the school if you would like further information. A commitment of one morning for twelve weeks is required.
- ✚ Sixth Years had a very informative talk from Bernard Norris from University College Dublin. Many Sixth Years have completed their CAO form at this stage and the online closing date is 20th January 2013.

### **After School Study**

The school will provide After School Study for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> years from 3.45pm – 5.45pm every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Parents will be notified of the commencement date by letter after Christmas. Students will pay a contribution of €60 towards the cost and places will be limited. This is an excellent opportunity for students and we ask you to strongly encourage your daughter to attend. Students should understand that doing homework well is essential to success in their examinations and should be fully completed every single evening.

### **Fundraising**

We commend the generous spirit and enthusiasm of our students who are involved in many fundraising activities for the benefit of others. Amongst these during the first term were:

- Laura Lynn Foundation
- St. Michael's House
- St. Vincent de Paul

### **Extra Curricula Activities**

- The basketball leagues have been in full flight over the last couple of months. The school has entered 5 teams this year in the Dublin League. Our First Years have made a brilliant start winning their opening two games with two magnificent performances defeating St. Mary's Baldoyle and Our Lady's Drogheda. Well done to all girls involved especially Chloe Knowd, Lauryn Fitzgerald and Caitlin Manning. The girls have two more league games after Christmas.
- The 2nd year team have also played two games with one win against St. Mary's Glasnevin and one defeat to Santa Sabina. They also have two games remaining after Christmas.
- The under 16s have had plenty of matches but have found wins hard to come by. Their best display was when they defeated St. Mary's Glasnevin. They have one game remaining against

Coolmine Community School. The senior team have had a great season winning three out of four games to qualify for the semi-finals which will be played in January. They have defeated Ballyfermot, Cabra and Santa Sabina with their only loss coming against Maryfield. Good luck in the semi-finals girls.

- Our First Years completed a four week tag rugby course during PE classes learning a new game which many of them had never played before. They were due to take part in a fun blitz in DCU in November but due to unforeseen circumstances this had to be cancelled. We hope to run an event in the Summer.
- The senior soccer team got a bye against St. Marys Glasnevin as they had no team and they played a strong St.Paul's Greenhills team and lost a close game 3-1. They are now concentrating on the league which will take place after Christmas. The under 15 soccer league will also begin after Christmas. We also hosted Mercy Beaumont in a 7 a side tournament in the school.
- The Gaelic team have played against St. Mary's Baldoyle and recorded a great victory at the start of the year. There will be more games in the summer term.
- The school gym is open every day after school and is free for all students to use. This is a great facility with a new weights room recently added. We encourage as many students as possible to use this facility.

### **Student Leadership**

We salute all our senior students for the invaluable contribution they make to the school as Prefects and also students in all year groups who take on responsibility as Student Council representatives. The Student Council meet regularly on Wednesday mornings with Ms. Noone and are very active in our school in promoting student welfare.

### **Parents' Association News**

Our Parents' Association meet on the first Tuesday of each month. We thank our Parents' Association for their continued support to our school.

### **Positive Behaviour**

Sixth Year students have approximately six months left in St. Mary's Holy Faith. We know that as their parents you want them to achieve the best possible Leaving Certificate. All the teachers here in school share this hope and believe that every student deserves the opportunity to reach her potential. Therefore, unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated this term. Parents should be aware that any student who disrupts the teaching and learning in a lesson will not be allowed to remain in that class and may be sent home for the remainder of that school day.

### **Merit Awards**

In January following the results of the Christmas tests and other progress reports, many students will receive Merit Certificates at the beginning of the New Year assemblies. These awards will recognise the commitment of individual girls and the manner in which they embrace the school's core values of Respect for Self, Respect for Others and Respect for the Environment.

### **Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) News**

- A number of our LC2 LCVP students recently hosted a fashion show and raised over €450 funds for the Laura Lynn Foundation.
- Each of our LC2 LCVP students are currently in the process of putting the finishing touches to their Portfolios. The deadline for the students Portfolios is March 6<sup>th</sup> 2013.

### Transition Year News

- Our TY students recently attended Emmaus Retreat Centre in Swords for a day of reflection.
- This outing followed on from our programme of student induction where our TY students had an opportunity to mix and get to know each other even better.
- A trip to the Craft Fair in the RDS, was recently organised for our students.
- Unfortunately, due to inclement weather the TY trip to the Botanic Gardens had to be cancelled but we were delighted that Collin's Barracks were able to accommodate us on very short notice. Our students found this trip very informative. In the afternoon our students went to the Lighthouse cinema and watched the film 'Argo'.
- The TY students showed excellent leadership skills in preparing for their musical evening, called 'Christmastain', which was held on Wednesday the 12th and Thursday the 13th of December. Both evenings were fun-filled and we are very proud of each girl.
- Well done to Nicola Maye and Carla Hickey who were successful in progressing to the next round of "School Star". We wish them the very best of luck for the next stage!
- Congratulations also to Sylvia Wan, who was selected to play the piano at an awards ceremony held in DCU.
- Auditions for the musical with Chanel College took place recently. The show this year is "High School Musical".

### London Art Trip

A very successful and enjoyable art trip to London took place in November. The two day trip for senior students included such highlights as the Pre-Raphaelite exhibition and the hit West End Musical 'Wicket'. The girls also enjoyed a walking tour of London's great sights before ending the visit with some much needed retail therapy. It was a very educational and inspiring trip which will be remembered long into the New Year.

### Upcoming Dates:

✚ January 7th	School re-opens for all students
✚ January 14th	First Year Parent Teacher Meeting (4.15 – 6.45pm)
✚ January 17th	Careers' Evening (6 – 9pm)
✚ January 21st	Options Evening for Parents of Incoming First Years 2013
✚ January 28th - February 8th	Mock Examinations commence for 3rd & 6th Year students
✚ January 29th	Senior Cycle Information Evening – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year & TY
✚ January 31st	CAO Closing Date
✚ February 6th	Fifth Year Parent Teacher Meeting (4.15 – 6.45pm)
✚ February 11th – 15th	Mid-Term Break

*Wishing all of our girls and parents a peaceful Christmas.*

**Ms. Ada Broderick**  
Principal

**Ms. Evelyn McLoughlin**  
Deputy Principal