



St Mary's
Secondary School



Mission Statement

St. Mary's follows the Holy Faith philosophy of creating a school community whose central purpose is the religious, moral, intellectual, human, social and physical-recreational education of the student. The education programme of the school is directed to the growth of the whole person. It aims to form integrated and self-reliant Christian people who are eager to build a better world.

December 2015

A Message from the Principal

Welcome to the December Edition of St Mary's Newsletter. This online edition can be accessed through our Website and our School App. This newsletter, which is packed with reports and supporting photographs should give you an overview of what has been going on in St Mary's since September 2015, culminating in the Christmas Festivities which began with the Christmas Fair on 6th December and continued through to the Carols by Candlelight in the Convent Chapel on Wednesday 18th December.

It has indeed been an action packed term incorporating trips to Sicily with the Geography Department and Northern Ireland with the History Department, alongside the myriad of TY outings that happen on a weekly basis. Our basketball players have been busy, only barely missing a semi final place, while our girls are holding their heads high in all their other sporting activities from hockey to gaelic football. With extra-curricular activities in abundance due to the selfless commitment of teachers in their own time, it is equally inspiring to witness the high standards of teaching and learning that are a hallmark of the academic life of St Mary's.

Our first years have settled in well supported along the way by the genuine warmth of the St Mary's welcome. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the school community – Board of Management, staff, students and parents – for the support and encouragement shown to me since taking up my position as Principal. I feel sustained in the warmth of your welcome and hope that each member of the school community feels equally cherished and included as we move forward together.

Wishing you all a Happy and Spiritually Enriching Christmas and Health and Happiness in 2016.

With thanks and good wishes,

Bernadette Bourke
Principal
December 2015

CONTENTS:

Principal's Address	1
German and History trip	2
History Department	3
Home Economics	4
Sicily Trip	5
Geography Department	6—7
Green Schools	7
Science Department	8—10
Spanish Department	10
SPHE	11
Prefect News	11
Maths Department	12—13
Music Department	14—15
Green Schools (cont.)	15
Roinn na Gaeilge	16
Religion Department	17
Art Department	18—20
Library News	20
Sensory Garden	21
English Department	22
Business Department	23—24
French Department	25
Sports and PE Dept	6— 30
Transition Year News	31—32
Thanks	33

German and History Trip



Christmas Markets

The German and History departments are delighted to announce a trip to the fascinating and vibrant cities of Munich and Nuremberg in December 2016. Students of German or History, along with their teachers, will embark on a four day adventure in these historical and cultural cities. Excursions will include visits to Dachau Concentration Camp, the Nuremberg Courts and Zeppelin Fields. Other activities will involve ice-skating and a shopping trip to the world renowned Christmas markets. This is a fantastic opportunity for students to immerse themselves in German culture, history and language.

Ms S McManus



Home Economics Department

Junior Certificate Craft

This year's current second years are currently embarking on their Junior Certificate projects. They have begun by making an Owl cushion. This is done in preparation for their Junior Certificate cushion which will be done in the coming months. Wishing you all the best.

Junior Certificate

Well done to all the third years who received superb results this year in their Junior Certificate examination. We are very proud of all your hard work and wish you the best in TY and 5th year.

Ms E Doheny & Ms C Walsh

Leaving Certificate Tasks

This year our current fifth years will be undertaking their Leaving Certificate Tasks worth 20% of their overall Leaving Certificate examination. They have reduced the number of assignments this year from five to four, reducing some of the workload for our busy Leaving Certificate students. This year's tasks include making ice-cream, iron, children, sensory analysis and hygiene and safety. We would like to wish them the best of luck .

Ms E Doheny and Ms C Walsh

Breakfast Club



We are delighted to be running Breakfast Club again this year. We offer a wide variety of breakfast items at a minimal cost of 30cent. It runs in St. Mary's Kitchen every Tuesday to Friday morning at 8.15.

Remember breakfast is the most important meal of the day!!

Ms C Walsh & Ms O A Griffin

Homework Club

A reminder to all first and second year students that the Homework Club takes place after school on Tuesday and Wednesday. It is the perfect way to get your homework started and to make your schoolbag lighter for the journey home! The senior students are there to give a hand if any students are having any difficulties with their work.

Ms E Higgins

Geography Department

Sicily Trip September 2015



On behalf of the Geography department I want to thank all the students who travelled with us to Sicily. It was an amazing trip, but it was also physically demanding and involved a couple of early mornings! The girls were fantastic throughout, showing a great spirit of adventure (tasting freshly squeezed donkey milk and scaling volcanoes) and sense of fun. This made our job so much easier and more enjoyable. A special mention goes out to Francesca Sacco who did a great job of interpreting! We would love to be bringing you all with us to Iceland in 2017, but by then many of you will be off seeing the world yourselves. (Don't forget to send a postcard!)

J Byrne

This day seven weeks ago we were on a boat heading towards the Aeolian Islands to do one of the best hikes ever up a volcano. The day before that we would have been on the plane just about to land in Palermo. From the minute we got to Dublin airport departures to the minute we got back to arrivals, all we had was absolute A1 banter; from planes to boats, coaches to cable cars, mountains to oceans, it was the best place we had ever been. All of us climbed volcanoes and conquered Mount Etna (which was not easy in a pair of Nike Huaraches) but we did it cracking jokes the whole way up. Rock collecting, Kiko make-up and holy ornaments - what else could a 16 year old want??

Sicily was possibly the best place I've ever been too and I made so many new pals and the best memories. Every Wednesday we still remind each other of those memories. I'm so glad I was able to go.

Orla Carney (5 Orchard)

Geography Department



Geography Department

Sicily Trip - a Sixth Year's perspective

After a very early flight, we landed in Sicily and then went straight on the bus to a local farm. Here we got to visit olive groves, orange groves and artichoke fields. We then got to have a delicious lunch that had been made from all fresh produce from the farm. After lunch, we had the chance to see the donkeys being milked and to sample some of the milk.



On our second day, we had another early 6am start for a boat trip to Lipari. Here we got to do some sightseeing and have some cool ice cream of every flavour imaginable. We then got back on the boat and headed to the small island of Vulcano, where we hiked up the mountain and got the chance to stand on the edge of the crater. We then made our way back down the mountain and had a refreshing swim in the sea. By the time we were leaving Vulcano, we had just about got used to the smell of rotten eggs from the sulphurous gases.

On our third day we got to have a little lie in until 7am, before a walking tour of Catania and then a visit to the Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology. This was one of the highlights of the trip, as we got to see how the research is carried out and how the volcanoes and earthquakes in the area are monitored. We then got on the bus to Mt. Etna. After we had all prepared ourselves to go up the tallest active volcano in Europe, we boarded the cable cars and then hiked up to one of the many craters on Mt Etna. When we came back down we got to go

to the new 7D simulator room, where we were in a simulated volcanic eruption.

On our second last day we got to visit the famous Alcantara Gorges which were made from an old eruption, more than two thousand years ago.

At 4.30am we got on the bus for the last time and tried to get catch up on some sleep before we got to Palermo airport for our flight to back Dublin.

Green Schools

Over the next two academic years the Green Schools team will be trying to get the travel flag for the school - our fourth flag. Saint Mary's has three green flags for recycling, energy and water. We will be trying to make the travelling habits of our staff, students and parents more environmentally friendly. We are currently in the process of identifying targets to aim for to get our flag. So far this year we have set up a committee of staff and students and surveyed our students' travel habits. We are also undertaking a walkability audit of the routes students take to get to school. In the coming weeks and months we will be starting initiatives to make Saint Mary's a greener school.

(see photo page 15)



Science Department

Congratulations to Eve Tully who won the 'Write a Poem about Science' competition which was run in collaboration with the English department to mark Science week.



Science Careers' Talk

Dr. Pat O'Malley, School of Chemistry, DCU visited the school during Science Week to give a talk on 'Molecules and Careers in Science', to senior and junior students.

Congratulations to all who took part and to the winners of the 'Make a Bonding Model' in second year, which took place in collaboration with the Art Department. Students built atoms, ions and molecules to illustrate covalent and ionic bonding. The winners were judged by Dr. O'Malley and were:

- 1st Eve McGrath-Tully and Juliana Muresan
- 2nd Fiona Conway
- 3rd Alex Fitzgerald and Leah Harris

Pictured right is Fiona Conway receiving her prize from Dr. O'Malley.



London Science Trip November 2015



See page 10 for full report



Science Department

Science students in St.Mary's were run off their feet during over the past few weeks. Between the national Science Week activities which ran from Monday 9th to Friday 13th November, normal science class practicals and the highly successful science trip to London, it was an action packed autumn.



It was the first time a science tour headed off to the bright lights of London. Over the three day tour, the students visited several significant scientific sites. Greenwich is notable for given its name to the Greenwich Meridian (0° longitude) and Greenwich mean time (GMT). Here, the students watched a video of the Big Bang and they wandered around the exhibits.

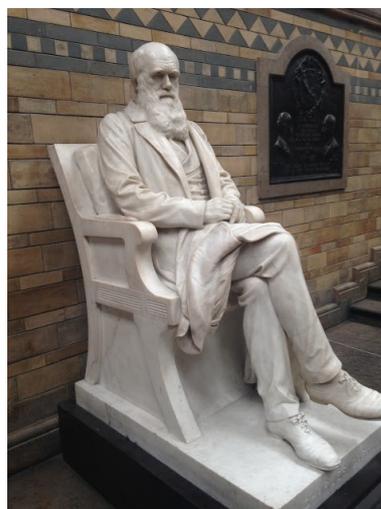
The Natural History Museum first opened its doors in 1881. It is one of Britain's most striking examples of Romanesque architecture, and is considered a work of art in its own right.



The museum has become one of London's most iconic landmarks. In 1856 Sir Richard Owen, a brilliant natural scientist who came up with the name for dinosaurs, left his role as curator of the Hunterian Museum and took charge of the British Museum's natural history collection.

The students saw a life size marble statue of him and of course, of Charles Darwin,

who is credited with coming up with the initial idea and understanding of Evolution.



Next door, is the science museum, in which our girls participated in different activities and got stuck into some exciting science experiments. The "Centre of the Cell" is an interactive model of a cell, full of information and computer simulations of how our body

works. It is housed in the working laboratories of Queen Mary university right in the heart of London.

To conclude our tour, the girls energetically threw themselves into gravity experiments



by engaging with all of the crazy roller-coasters found in Thorpe park. The teachers present, Ms McCormack, Ms. Nolan, Ms. O'Donnell, Ms. O'Keeffe and Ms. Coleman, cautiously watched over all of these practicals to ensure health and safety rules were being observed!

Science Week was a busy affair. Students competed in a poetry competition, lunchtime dissections, activities in DCU and the Botanic Gardens, careers talks and TYs had a private viewing of "The Martian" in the local cinema. Many thanks to all involved.

Ms R McCormack

Well done to all the students who entered "The Young Scientist and Technology" exhibition. A particular congratulations to Zuzanna Bartkowska and Nicole Ledden from third year who qualified from thousands of entries. The girls will exhibit their project entitled "Does the use of electronic devices before sleep affect secondary school students' cognitive ability the next day?" in the RDS in January.



Ms R McCormack



1. Club de Español

Spanish Club takes place every Monday at 1.15 in the Prayer Room. It is open to all First Year students of Spanish, so come along and learn Spanish through fun and games.



2. Spanish Trip to Barcelona

The Spanish department are delighted to announce that the Spanish trip in September 2016 is to the beautiful city of Barcelona. Approximately forty students will get the opportunity to visit the famous sights of this fantastic city and enjoy the culture, food and architecture.

3. 3rd year Spanish Breakfasts

This term, the three third year Spanish classes got the chance to enjoy a desayuno español to complement the learning of food vocabulary. Some girls were brave enough to taste olives and chorizo. ¡Que rico!

Ms E Higgins

The SPHE department has helped the first year students to settle in and prepare for their Christmas exams by exploring our learning styles and character strengths. They brainstormed study techniques and also created study timetables. They have been practising meditation and breathing exercises in order to help them deal with stress in a productive and relaxing way. Transition year SPHE has dealt with serious topics under the heading of 'Relationships and Sexuality Education', using fun team-work exercises, group discussion and self-reflection. Their final assessment has been to create a leaflet on Sexually Transmitted Infections as part of a group project. The week of November 23rd "Stand Up" week, which aimed to create awareness of and take a stand against homophobic and transphobic bullying.



Assembly time was utilised by year heads to highlight what is considered to be homophobic and transphobic bullying based on "Belong To's" guidelines. The topic was also covered in SPHE classes.

Ms N Cunningham

After the excitement of becoming prefects a workshop was organised for us all in August. This workshop gave us the skills and guidance to help us fulfil our role as Prefects. We began the year with a First Years Sports Induction Day, where we got to know the incoming first year students as a group. We not only bonded with the First years but also got to know a bit more about each other too! Every Thursday, we take turns helping out with the after school sports for First Years. There is always a great turn out and great participation from everyone.

At the School Mass at the beginning of the year, we were all commissioned as Prefects. This was a very proud moment for us all.

The Prefects have run the Homework Club every Tuesday and Wednesday as a way to help the First and Second year students with their homework while giving them confidence and guidance in their work.

At the end of October we had our annual Halloween Dress up day. This day was a great success as we raised money for our IT facilities in school. Huge effort and creativity were put into costumes and there was a poster competition to promote the day. Well done everyone!

Amy Ray (Head Girl) , Seth Banaga and Roisin Byrne (Deputy Head Girls)

Maths Department

The Maths Department and students in the school had an exciting first term. The following events took place in the Maths Department during the first term:

Maths Week: Maths week was celebrated in St. Mary's in Mid-October. Our first day of Maths Week got off to a great start as the whole school community was involved (even teachers!) in 'Mental Monday' from 8.55am-9.10am. During this time, all students enhanced their numeracy skills by attempting maths puzzles. There were numerous activities for junior and senior students throughout the week.

First Years – All first years took part in a maths trail around the Botanic Garden. The aim of the Maths trail was to give students the opportunity to work as part of a team and to develop their problem solving skills. The winning team members were: Abbie Whelan, Brigita Brazaityte, Syeda Adjha Begum and Ellah Phelen.

1st year Trail Botanic Trail Abbie Whelan, Brigita Brazaityte, Syeda Adjha Begum and Ellah Phelen. (L-R)



Poster competition: There was a huge entry for the unique "Infinite Poster" competition. The standard was so high again this year that we awarded six places instead of three.

First place was awarded to Libby Fox (see photo of winning poster below).



Second Years – A table quiz was organised for all second year students with the help of some TY students in the Choir Hall. The students worked in teams and there were many differentiated Maths questions in the various rounds. The teams were very competitive.

Third, Fifth and Sixth Years – Students from these years took part in a Bingo Bonanza. Students got the opportunity to have fun playing bingo while also revising key skills from topics such as probability and geometry.

Maths Department

At the end of the week, the students also took part in the Marshmallow challenge. The Marshmallow Challenge is a remarkably fun and instructive design exercise that encourages teams to experience simple but profound lessons in collaboration, geometry and creativity. The task is simple: in eighteen minutes, teams must build the tallest free-standing structure out of twenty sticks of spaghetti, one yard of tape, one yard of string, and one marshmallow. The marshmallow needs to be on top. The winning team members were Rebecca Cray, Katelyn Ward, Aoife Feton and Nadine Byrne. (See below, L-R)



Transition Years- The students had the opportunity to partake in two maths events during maths week. At the beginning of the week, they participated in the Hamilton walk. The girls enjoyed the walk to Broombridge to see the quaternion maths formula which was carved into the bridge by the famous mathematician Hamilton. During maths week the student also learned about the life of Hamilton in class.



Music Department

Choir - Opening Academic Year Mass

In early September the school community celebrated the opening of our Academic year, with mass in Ballygall parish Church. The theme of this year's mass was "New Chapters". The choir focused on pieces of music that celebrated this theme. A number of songs were from the Emmanuel programme. For our new members this was their first time to sing with the school choir so this was a great experience for them. It was a taste of things to come for them. Many of the 1st years also did solos which was great to see. Well done to all our members, for all their dedication and commitment.

Carols by Candlelight 2015 - Convent Chapel. And, Annual School Carol Service.

This December the Convent Chapel was the beautiful setting for 'Carols by Candlelight'. The School Choir performed a night of Christmas carols and familiar melodies for parents, staff, Holy Faith Sisters and members of the local community.

The Annual School Carol Service for all staff and students was on the 18th of December in the Convent Chapel, which is always the highlight of the Christmas season in St. Mary's



School Choir is a Special Guest at the National Concert Hall with Glasnevin Musical Society.

The School Choir was honoured to be asked to be a special guest on the 5th of December at the Glasnevin Musical Society's Christmas concert "Deck the Hall". The choir sang two pieces, 'Suantraí ár Slánaitheora' and 'Breath of Heaven'. It also sang "Silent Night" with the GMS. It was a night to remember for all involved.



The Concert Hall Choir with Mr Coll, Ms O'Rourke and Ms Bourke on the steps of the John Field Room after the concert on 5th December.

On the 10th of December, the choir was invited again to perform alongside the GMS for a Christmas concert in Our Lady Of Dolours, Glasnevin. This has become an annual event in the local community as a way of celebrating the true meaning of Christmas.

Mr C Coll

Music Department

♪ St. Mary's Holy Faith Chamber Choir ♪



The St. Mary's Holy Faith Chamber Choir has given a great opportunity for students to sing and perform in a smaller choral group. The choir meets every Monday at lunchtime to rehearse new and challenging repertoires for school events throughout the year.

The choir's first performance will be on the 16th of December in the Convent Chapel at the **Carols by Candlelight** evening. It will also be performing during this year's **School Carol Service** on the 18th of December.

The choir looks forward to learning more challenging and exciting repertoires throughout the year to perform at the 1916 Celebration Musical and school concerts in the New Year.

Below is a list of the 2015-2016 Chamber choir members:

Czarinah Bulaclac
Casey Harris
Joanna Agnes John
Gemma Reilly
Claire Mulcahy
Rachel Watters
Brianna Nutley
Claire Mulcahy
Heather Dunne
Juliana Muresan
Katelyn Winston
Tara Sterne
Corina Boud
Allison Mooney
Ciara Lennon
Aoibhinn Kennedy
Nicola Wolnowska
Ciara Lennon
Katie Mc Quillan
Niamh Kelly
Neave D'Souza

Thank you to all the Chamber Choir mem-

Green

Schools



Over the next two academic years the Green Schools team will be trying to get the travel flag for the school – our fourth flag. Saint Mary's has three green flags for recycling, energy and water conservation. We will be trying to make the travelling habits of our staff, students and parents more environmentally friendly. We are currently in the process of identifying targets to aim for to get our flag. So far this year we have set up a committee of staff and students and surveyed our students' travel habits. We are also undertaking a walkability audit of the routes students take to get to school. In the coming weeks and months we will be starting initiatives to make Saint Mary's an even greener school.

Mr P Montague

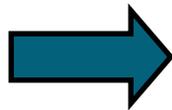
Roinn na Gaeilge

Feachtas:Tráth na gCeist i Scoil Chaitríona

Bhí Feachtas, Tráth na gCeist ar siúl i Scoil Chaitríona, Glasnaíon i mí Mheán Fómhair. Ghlac na cailíní ón 6ú, 5ú agus 3ú Bliain páirt san ócáid seo. Bhí an oíche ar fad trí Ghaeilge agus thug sé seans mhaith do na cailíní chun a gcuid Gaeilge a chleachtadh. Bhí foirne ó Choláiste Chaoimhín, agus ó Scoil Chaitríona ann freisin. Bhain na cailíní sult agus spraoi as an oíche! Míle buíochas le Ms.Bourke agus Ms O'Donnell as a gcuid tacaíochta.



An Idirbhliain (T.Y):



An Scannán

'Song of the Sea'

Thug cailíní na hIdirbhliana cuairt ar an bpictiúrlann 'Lighthouse' i mí na Samhna. Chonaic siad scannán Éireannach 'Song of the Sea' agus bhí na hamhráin go léir trí Ghaeilge. Thaitin an scannán go mór leis na cailíní! Míle buíochas leis na múinteoirí go léir!

An Ciorcal

An Club



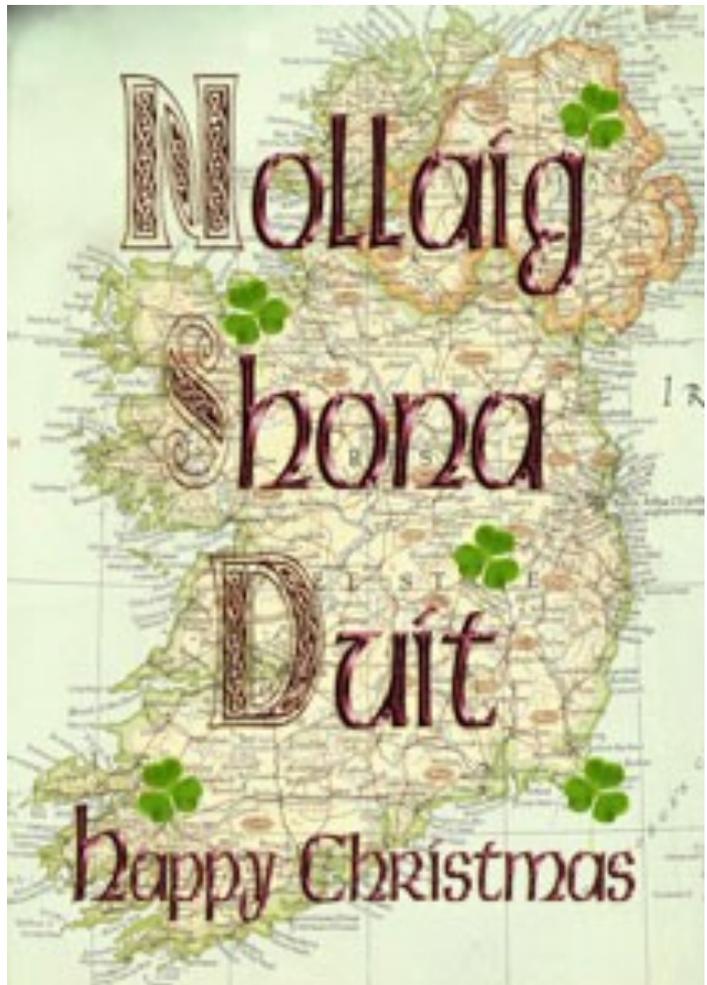
Comhrá

Gaeilge

Bíonn sé ar siúl arís ag am lóin gach seachtain. Tá 40% ag dul do bhéaltriail na hArdteiste anois. Bíonn neart cainte, ceoil, agus cluichí sa chlub seo! Tugann sé seans mhaith do na cailíní sult a bhaint as an nGaeilge. An Ghaeilge abú!

Club Gaeilge

Ms C Salmon (Roinn na Gaeilge)



Religion Department

Religion Department

Mental Health

All 5th year students participated in a workshop on mental health delivered by the organisation Aware. The theme of each workshop was "Beat the Blues". There was a focus on how to build resilience and how to cope when challenges arise. All students received a workbook to take home.

Ms. L. Sullivan

1st Year Retreats

All 1st year classes had a mini retreat in the Margaret Aylward Centre for Faith and Dialogue. This gave students an opportunity to reflect on their first few months in St. Mary's. They experienced meditation, friendship activities, music and put together a very personal prayer service to end each retreat.

Ms. L. Sullivan and Mr. C. Coll

THE EMBER TEAM -

A New Initiative for St. Mary's.

Eight current 5th year students were selected from interview to be part of the Ember Programme. The successful students were:

Edel Sintos, Roisin Byrne, Lisa Fitzsimons, Karen Parjarillo, Angel Molina, Olwyn Galbraith, Amy Ray, and Sally Ahern.

The Ember Programme is a faith leadership training programme for students at senior level in secondary schools. The students are trained to become faith leaders in their schools and in some cases they act as mentors for incoming students at Junior Level. This programme is coordinated by the Archdiocese of Dublin Education Secretariat and has been developed in partnership with a number of professionals who engage with young people in a faith capacity.

The Archbishop of Dublin sanctioned the programme to be increased from six schools to fourteen this year and St. Mary's was invited to be included as one of the new schools to be involved in the programme. Last year the School set up a Liturgical group made up of 5th year students and the Ember programme seemed to be a natural development of this group. As part of this programme the students would receive the training and supports from the Archdiocese under the guidance of the Post Primary Diocesan Adviser Anna Maloney.

St. Mary's Ember Team 2015-2015



Hence from the 2nd- 4th June 2015, six of the fourteen schools in this year's programme took part in the training in Avoca, Co. Wicklow. The students took part in team building activities with members of Scripture Union in Avoca. Then within small groups they looked at effective planning strategies and good listening skills. Each evening ended with a reflective liturgy and at the close of the programme on the Thursday Bishop Eamon Walsh commissioned the new teams and presented them with their certificates and badges. They then returned to their schools in September to be doing their work as peer leaders promoting faith and ethos based activities in the school.

Before the commissioning the girls from St. Mary's elected their Chairperson, Secretary and PRO. The results were: Roisin Byrne as Chair, Angela Molina as Secretary and Olwyn Galbraith as PRO.

Art Department

The Art Department at St .Mary's was delighted to be invited to represent Creative Engagement Project for The NAPD at Feilte, the Teachers' Conference, in the RDS in September. Mylene Hayes and Enoch Brownson represented their year group and displayed 'Flight', a porcelain installation created in collaboration with artist Isobel Egan.



Art Club has continued this year on Thursdays at lunch time. Our senior students Karen Pajarillo, Em Hardiman and Rebecca Harrison have done a superb job running the club with great efficiency and fun.



Our first year art students have studied the art elements and focused on observational drawings and painting techniques. They have explored form and textures in natural and manmade objects. Second year students have revised drawing techniques with an emphasis on geometric shape. They have used these studies to develop their understanding of 3D form and constructed interesting architectural structures. Second year art students have also examined the proportions of the face and created portraits. Our third year students have begun to explore and develop their Junior Certificate art themes. They are researching artists, photographers and filmmakers who will act as inspiration for their individual projects.

Sacred Spaces' is a creative collaboration between transition year students, Architect-in-Residence, Evelyn D'Arcy , historian, Dr.Jacinta Prunty and the art department.

The project will explore a visual dialogue between The Margaret Aylward Spirituality Centre and the students. Each student will make a unique response through the media of photography and 3d model making. The work will examine a sense of place and will be informed by the beauty of the surrounding natural landscape. The students will make observations of perspective, scale, space and materials. They will comment on the aesthetics of the architecture and how it relates to the human, spiritual and built environments inhabited by the students.



Art Club has continued this year on Thursdays at lunch time. Our senior students Karen Pajarillo, Em Hardiman and Rebecca Harrison have done a superb job running the club with great efficiency and fun.

Art Department

'Sacred Spaces' hopes to explore themes of contemplation, both spiritual and personal in an ever changing world.

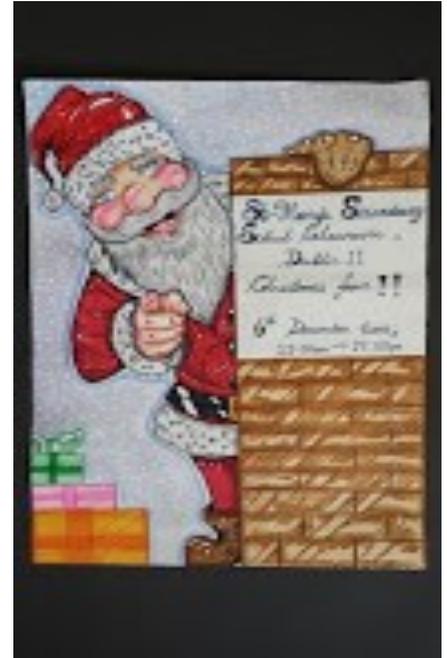
The project will be further informed by the Transition Year Architecture Module supported by The Irish Architects Foundation. Architect-In-Residence, Evelyn D'Arcy, will also facilitate a workshop based on design principles.



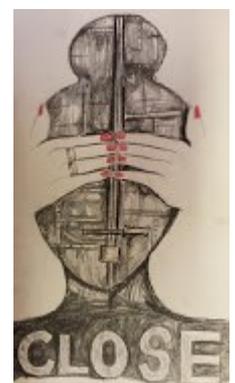
On the 5th of November, 4 Larkin had the opportunity to participate in a poster workshop at the National Print Museum and view a selection of ephemeral posters from the exhibition, 'A World to Win'. The posters, dated from the 20th Century are on loan from The Victoria and Albert Museum. They explored a variety of themes, including propaganda. The students focused on 'The Declaration of Human Rights' as the subject matter for their posters.



Transition year students and our second year art students made Christmas cards, beautiful porcelain jewellery and decorations for St. Mary's Christmas Fair.



Our fifth year art students and other year groups visited the 'Sculpture In Context' exhibition held in the Botanic Gardens. They made observations of the sculptures and created maquettes informed by the work. Fifth year students also ran a Positive Mental Health Campaign using Graphic Design. Their posters were included in the 'Walk in my Shoes' campaign that promotes positive mental health.



Art Department

Library

An exciting art careers evening held in December enabled our art students, in particular our sixth years, the opportunity to look at examples of college portfolios. Frances Mc Donogh, former Head of Fashion and Textiles in NCAD, was among others who was invited to speak to students on the topic of Portfolio Preparation. She also kindly shared her experience as a freelance shoe designer. This event stimulated and motivated our Leaving Certificate students to do their very best in the State exams.



Library News:



Gold Module

Sixth year Gold has embarked on an exciting adventure with “121 Digital, Junior Teaching Senior”, supported by the Department of Communications.

In this section of the Gold Module, students have the opportunity to be the teachers, working with learners from the local community, who want to improve their digital technology skills for free.

Thanks to Fintan Mulligan, creator of the course and our wonderful Learners, who come each week with great enthusiasm.

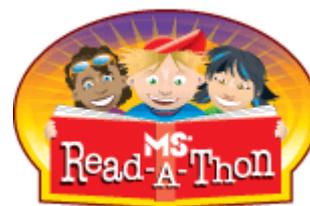


Ms N Cunningham



Book Club

The book club meet every Wednesday after school. In October we watched our first film of the year “The Hunger Games- Mockingjay part 1”. There was a great turnout for the film and everyone enjoyed it.



MS Readathon

Many students participated in the MS Readathon raising funds for a very deserving charity. All students who participated received a silicone watch. Well done to all involved. Over €100 was raised by students.

Library Staff

Many students volunteered to work in the library this term. They were trained in using the computerised system at the start of the year.

Non Fiction Books

The process of uploading the fiction books to the library system concluded last year and all fiction books have now been inputted. We have now begun the task of uploading the non fiction books. We have started with the Art books and hope to have all Art books inputted

Ms L Sullivan

The Sensory Garden

The sensory garden looked beautiful on our return this autumn, despite the poor weather during the summer.



The Gardening Club was set up this term and the students have been busy: weeding, harvesting the crops and planting daffodil bulbs for spring.



A seasonal colour flower bed is being constructed presently and it will be planted with bright bedding plants for winter by the Gardening Club students. Our aim is to bring more cheer to the students and foster positivity around mental health for everyone.



Ms N Cunningham

English

1. Sixth Year English Trips

On Monday 12th October, students in sixth year attended performances of their comparative texts. Ninety five students went to see “King Lear” in the Helix at DCU. The play was a dark and compelling production of Shakespeare’s tragedy, starring Christopher Saul as the king, Sarah Morris as Cordelia and the Fool and Liam Heslin as Edmund. Meanwhile, forty students attended a screening of “The King’s Speech” in the Lighthouse Cinema at Smithfield. The historical biopic stars Colin Firth as Bertie, the Duke of York who struggles to overcome his speech impediment. Both English trips provided an opportunity for students to take a deeper look at the texts on their comparative course and the English Department would like to thank all the sixth years for their exemplary behaviour.

2. Trinity Lectures

Every year, a number of sixth year students attend the Leaving Certificate Revision lectures in Trinity College. These lectures are delivered by members of the University’s English Department and offer alternative insights and ideas as well as an opportunity to experience class in a third-level setting. This year students attended talks on the poetry of Emily Dickinson and Brian Friel’s play “Translations”

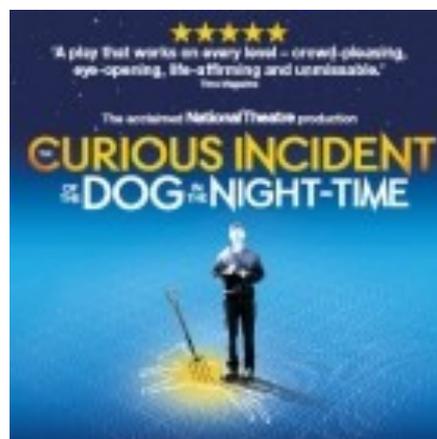
3. 1916 Writing Group

As part of the school’s centenary celebrations for 1916, a group of enthusiastic students have formed a scriptwriting group. Here they are collaborating, brainstorming and researching in order to create the script for the 1916 Rising production. These scenes range from Maud Gonne’s rejection of W.B. Yeats in favour of the military leader John MacBride to the poignant wedding between Grace Gifford and Joseph Plunkett on the eve of his execution. This is the first time a scriptwriting group has been formed to work on the play and we look forward to watching its creative efforts come to life in the acting rehearsals!

4. T.Y. English

T.Y. students are getting the opportunity to experience English in many creative and exciting ways. Three subject modules have been especially designed to help them develop their writing skills and personal response to literature; *Creative Story Writing with Mr. O’Connell*, *1960’s America in Literature, Song and Images with Ms. Nolan* and *Shakespeare’s Life and Works with Ms. Murtagh*. Students also participate in reading classes on Catherine Stockett’s “*The Help*” and a Reading for Pleasure module in the library. During their drama module with Ms. Callan, students are developing their screenplay writing skills and working on their first short films, in preparation for collaboration with “Create Schools” later in the year.

Outside of class, students have enjoyed a number of extra-curricular English activities. A dynamic Slam Poetry workshop with the Inspireland team was a huge highlight of this term, while the girls also attended a screening of the moving Civil Rights drama “Selma” in the Lighthouse Cinema. Students from 4 Farrell were also the lucky winners of a Bord Gais Theatre competition, which meant they received free tickets to the amazing production of “The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time” and attended this performance on Wednesday 7th October.



Ms D Callan (English Department)

Business Department

5th Years

It has been a busy first term in the Business department with an array of exciting events for our students. The 'Build a Bank' initiative led the way in early September with an information session from an AIB representative, followed by the acceptance of applications for the seven positions on the team. There was a fantastic response to this new Transition Year venture and the students were interviewed on the 1st of October. The team selected have worked extremely hard since then in setting up its 'Treasure Bank' and we look forward to seeing how the bank progresses over the year ahead!

6th Years

The 5th year LCVP classes worked together this year to brainstorm and research potential visitors who would enhance their understanding of enterprise. This initial groundwork paid dividends as they succeeded in organising two very worthwhile visitors to the school. On 1st of October, David Hyde, from The Irish Patents Office in Kilkenny, visited and gave an enlightening presentation on the role of the office and the practical steps that can be taken to protect intellectual property in the business world. On 5th of November, Tim Mackey, who is a successful entrepreneur and founder of 'Code Plus', a Dublin based software company, visited the group to provide an insight into the life of an entrepreneur and shared valuable tips for those thinking of following in his footsteps!



St. Mary's 5th Year LCVP class with founder of 'Code Plus' Tim Mackey

The 6th year LCVP class was involved in an interview training day on 30th of September with Denise Wright from "The Way Ahead" training group. The students involved were given advice on how to prepare for their upcoming interviews as part of the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme. They were also given the opportunity to participate in mock interviews with a very experienced interviewer. The day was a great success for all involved!

The Transition Year NFTE class had an 'Idea Gen-

eration' workshop on 30th September to help them come up with ideas for their mini-companies. The workshop was very interactive and got the girls thinking about different ways to set up their businesses. This was followed up with a 'Marketing' workshop in the choir hall on 4th of November which highlighted the importance of promoting their businesses in as many ways as possible. The mini-companies are currently preparing for the school Christmas Fair on Sunday 6th of December which we all eagerly await!

Mr M Lyons (Business Department)

Business Department

Treasure Bank

By Hannah Ryan Murphy

Treasure Bank is a branch of A.I.B. which is located right here in St. Mary's. This exciting initiative is part of the A.I.B. 'Build a Bank' competition, whereby students from post-primary schools throughout Ireland run banks within



their schools.

The school decided to get involved as it's a great opportunity for all students to learn about banking and form good saving habits from a young age. In early September, the positions available within the bank were advertised to all Transition Year students and there was a fantastic response. The Treasure Bank team has seven members in several different positions who were selected, through an application and interview process, by Mr. Lyons and two staff members from A.I.B. They are:

Bank Manager: Lauryn McCausland

Assistant Manager: Naoise Finnegan

Sales and Marketing Executive: Hannah Ryan Murphy

Financial Controller: Rachel O'Neill

Digital Officer: Aimee Flanagan

Customer Service Representatives: Samantha Vodo and Trish Azubike

They are supported by Mr. Lyons and Ms. Burrell, as well as A.I.B. student officer Stefan Connolly, and the bank is open every Friday in St. Mary's Kitchen from 1.10-1.40.

On Tuesday 10th November 2015, Treasure Bank was officially launched, with the help of none other than Colm 'the Gooch' Cooper, Kerry football star, along with Stefan and the manager of the Drumcondra branch of A.I.B. Derek Dunne.

On Tuesday afternoon, 1st and 2nd year students were each given a time to go down to the choir hall, which was decorated with posters for the bank and even contained a table covered in gold (chocolate!) coins, for the launch. They first watched a video showcasing Colm's football skills, and then listened to him speak about the 'Build a Bank' programme, which he is thoroughly involved in. Then the Transition Year students on the 'Build a Bank' team (who were all dressed as pirates to go with the theme of the bank!) gave a short-but-sweet PowerPoint presentation about the Treasure Bank, which was pirate-and-treasure themed also and included a short joke!



The launch ended with a question and answer session with Colm himself, where the students' questions ranged from football - 'How did it

feel to get beaten by Dublin?' - to banking - 'How long have you been working with A.I.B.?'. Colm was very friendly and accommodating, posing for pictures with all who asked, answering every question with a smile and even finding the time to go out to the all-weather pitch and get in pictures with the school's Gaelic football teams in-between the 1st and 2nd year launches.



A great day was had by all and we look forward to seeing Treasure Bank go from strength to strength throughout the year!

French Department

The French Club



The French Club is running again this year with all of the French enthusiasts meeting every Tuesday at lunchtime to experience French culture and language in a fun filled environment. The French Club is a great place for students to come and enjoy French activities while improving and practising the language skills they have learned in the classroom.



So far the French Club has enjoyed tasting French treats, playing French games, listening to French music and watching French films.

This year French Club Captains were chosen to help organise the games and activities. The French Club Captains are: Fiona Conway and Ciara Mc Kenna.



Merci!

Ms. Shanahan
Ms. Watts

Sports and PE Department

Transition Year PE – Team Building Module

As part of Transition Year PE the TY students take part in a team building module. The team building module is based on the philosophy of students challenging themselves physically and mentally. The activities involve trust, choice, cooperation, self-confidence, respect, discovery, problem solving challenges and taking risks. It is an opportunity for the students to learn how to work cooperatively as a group to solve problems and overcome risk, to gain respect for and confidence in themselves and their peers.

The students also completed a full value contract agreement in the form of a poster. It was an agreement developed and agreed among their group in an effort to create an effective learning environment for all who participated. They had great fun being creative and designing their own individual class poster!

The class content involved activities based on getting acquainted and cooperating, building trust, communicating and collaborating and finally team challenges and problem solving. During the activities the students had an opportunity to become leaders and present the challenge to their group. The students gave feedback and reflected on what strategies worked well or areas for improvement.

Ms A Boran



Sports and PE Department



Transition Year PE – Team Building Module

Sports and PE Department

1st Year Sports

Our 1st year sports competition is already in full swing. The girls must be commended on their enthusiasm and dedication so far. Twelve teams compete in a range of sports and activities each week in a bid to win a mystery trip for their team. We are looking forward to the final stages of the competition, to see which team will be crowned winners for 2015. A special word of thanks to all those involved in this initiative especially the 6th year prefects who have been a huge help to the teachers this year.

Active Schools Flag

Having registered for the Active Schools Flag last year, much work has been done on the application process this year. In an effort to attain this flag, an active schools committee has been set up, it is made up of teachers, students, management and parents. Some noticeable changes have been implemented so far this year. Students now have the opportunity to use sports equipment on the tennis courts during break and lunch. We are delighted to see so many of the girls outside being active and enjoying themselves every day. A 'Well Done Wall' has been erected on the downstairs corridor. This wall is to celebrate and commend the efforts and achievements of students in the area of physical activity and sports. With Health Week fast approaching there is so much to look forward to in 2016.

TY Galway Trip

Our annual Team Building Trip to Petersburg in Galway was as usual a trip to be remembered. Early on a Sunday morning in September, fifty students set off across the country to face activities that would challenge and exhilarate them beyond anything they had experienced before. The aim of the trip was to work on the core team building skills presented to the students during their PE classes. On arrival the sun began to shine as did the girls' enthusiasm. They were greeted by the Centre Manager and they were divided into task groups. In these groups the girls got

to take part in activities like gorge walking (where the girls dived into the ice cold waters of the Atlantic), abseiling down a massive sink hole, kayaking, negotiating an obstacle course and many more. Evening activities included walks, campfires and sing-songs. Each group was also responsible for one meal during the day. This included setting the table, serving food and drinks, washing up and cleaning up the canteen afterwards. This gave each student a sense of responsibility throughout the three days of the trip. The sleepy heads on the bus home suggested that the trip was a resounding success and we would like to say well done to the girls for their enthusiasm and participation.

Festive Fun in PE

The gym was taken over by witches, goblins, giants, and zombies in the run up to Halloween. There were Halloween themed activities for all PE students, with some new games and furry friends they proved to be a huge success as in previous years.

With Christmas fast approaching we are all looking forward to Santas, sleighs and snowmen who will appear during the final PE classes before the Christmas break for all students.

The PE department organised a fun teacher versus student relay race. The Halloween themed rat race provided lots of laughs on the day. Well done to all those involved. The winning teacher was Mr Beirne and the winning student was Orla Carney from 5th year.

Ms A Walsh



Sports and PE Department

Camogie

Senior and Junior camogie is well underway. The junior team was narrowly beaten by Coláiste Pobail Setanta in Na Fianna in its first game in October. We are delighted to have some talented new camogie players in 1st year and we are looking forward to the rest of the games. The senior team travelled to Kilcock in October and was met with tough opposition. Unfortunately we lost out on the day but the girls gave a spirited display.

Ms A Walsh and Mr Lyons

Badminton

Badminton runs each Monday in the gym after school. More girls than ever are attending each week. With a mixture of junior and senior students, there is great competition. New members are always welcome to join.

Ms Walsh & Ms Saint Ledger

Gaelic Football:

St Mary's have been very busy this term, competing in both Junior and Senior football. First out were the seniors who travelled to Swords to play Loreto Swords and narrowly lost out in the end. Next up were local rivals Scoil Cairtriona and we overcame them after a great team effort. We have one more game left to determine if we get out of the group. The seniors are led out by joint captains Shauna Halpin and Mairead Mc Donagh.

The junior team played St. Michael's Finglas in the first game and with two games remaining, this leaves us in a great position coming towards the end of this term. Under 14 (1st & 2nd year) Gaelic football will be starting after Christmas and there will be numerous blitz days ahead.

Ms.Considine and Mr. Beirne



Mairead Mc Donagh and Shauna Halpin (senior Gaelic captains) with Colm Cooper



Gaelic footballers of St Mary's with Colm Cooper

Sports and PE Department

Hockey

It's Hockey Time...Hurrah!

In September the new first year students took part in a Sports Induction Day. This was a fantastic success and also introduced the new first year students to the many sports and activities that St Mary's has to offer.

The preparation for league matches commenced in September. Great excitement mounted as teams prepared for their first hockey matches. The girls were highly excited at the prospect of getting back into playing matches and as always they took great pride in representing St Mary's in hockey. The teams had a great start in their practice matches against Holy Faith, Clontarf and Manor House.

The 4th, 5th and 6th year students combined as the senior teams. They enjoy having their early morning training at 8am to fit in with their busy schedules! They will commence some warm-up matches in preparation for the Northside League in January. We wish both teams luck in this year's Northside League. The 3rd Year Junior Team train every Monday and will also take part in the Northside League in January!

The Minor 4 team (2nd Year) played Loreto Mullingar in their first Leinster league game and was narrowly beaten 1-2. It takes on Holy Child Killiney, Wesley College and High School Rathgar in their next league games and the girls are looking forward to these match challenges!

There are two First Year beginner teams and they took part in a Super Eights challenge against Holy Faith Clontarf. The girls thoroughly enjoy playing hockey and show great potential for the future. The team look forward to the Northside League and in preparation will take part in some more friendly matches.

We are looking forward to the new hockey season this year and new players are always welcome. With such enthusiastic and talented players, we will enjoy playing and representing St. Mary's with great spirit and enthusiasm. We highly recommend to everyone to come along and join hockey.

Go Astro....Be Active.....Play Hockey!!

Ms Boran, Ms Bunnnett.



Transition Year Howth Walk (above)



Transition Year Petersburg Trip (above)



For more Transition
Year Activities see
over



Transition Year News

Causey Farm

Our first day back at school to begin Transition Year definitely left a good impression on how the rest of the year would be. We went on a trip to Causey Farm. It was a great opportunity to bond with our new class mates and have lots of fun.

When we first arrived we were brought into the centre to make bread, it was quite interesting as I didn't know how easy it was to make and it was also really tasty!

After that we were brought into a barn where we learned 'The Siege of Ennis' and we also learned how to play along to the song on a bodhran.

We then got to milk a cow so we really got a feel for the country life.

Lastly, we visited the bog. We got to ride a tractor there, We were all squashed onto a trailer with hay to sit on. I first jumped straight in, it was very funny as everyone kept getting their legs stuck and we had to help each other out. We were all very mucky by the end!

By Lauryn McCausla



Trip to Howth!

On Wednesday, the 23rd of September, we went to Howth to do team building exercises. We met up at Connolly Station and we got the Dart to Howth Station. When we got there we had to split ourselves into groups. In my group there was Alannah, Leah, Roseann, Hannah and Orla. Everyone was given a balloon and as a team we had to keep our balloon alive. In our groups we decorated and named our balloon.

My group obviously had the best name for our balloon, it was Thor Waitforit Mc Dougal. We decorated Thor by drawing on him. We drew big eyes, a little tiny bit of hair, two dots for a nose, a cute little smile and a huge amazing moustache. Everyone hiked up a huge hill, when we got to the top we were all very sweaty and relieved. It was an amazing experience. After the hike we went down to the pier and went to the shop. Some got ice-cream and some got chips. We wrote a poem about Howth and we had to read it out in front of everyone. After sitting on the grass for a while, we made our way back to Howth Station and got the Dart back to Connolly Station. It was a great bonding experience for the whole TY group.

Nadine Cooney and Leah Riordan



Petersburg Galway

We left the school at eight o'clock to go to Galway. The bus journey was long but we kept ourselves occupied by chatting, listening to music and sleeping. When we arrived in Galway, we jumped off the coach and went to Supermac before continuing our journey to Petersburg Adventure Centre.

When we arrived we were in for a treat. We did a number of activities such as kayaking, rock climbing, gorge walking and an assault course. Every evening after dinner we had an hour to chill and explore the grounds. On the two evenings we were there we went for a walk in the forest and we had a camp fire with marshmallows and biscuits.

PTO

Transition Year News

The teachers who came got involved in everything and our instructors were very friendly, kind and they even made us laugh.

When it was time to leave, everyone was disappointed as we were having such good fun. On behalf of our year, I think it was our favourite school trip yet.

By Zara Quane



Leprechaun Museum

On Monday the 19th of October we went to Dublin Castle and The Leprechaun Museum in town.

We had to meet at 9:30am outside the Jervis shopping centre. We got divided into four groups. We were all booked into The Leprechaun Museum at different times. We went to Dublin Castle while we were waiting and we looked around some of the gardens there.

My group was booked in for 11:00am so we left Dublin castle at about 10:30 so we would get to the museum on time. When we got there we were assigned a tour guide. First she told us some stories and myths about leprechauns and fairies. Then, we walked through a tunnel that made you feel smaller the further you went down. The tunnel brought us to a room where the furniture was huge so it would make us feel small like a leprechaun.

Some people got onto the furniture and took pictures. It was really high and I couldn't get on to any, no matter how hard I tried! She brought us to some other rooms and told us more stories. I thought it was a really good day!

Rachel O'Brien.



Thanks!

Special thanks to all the staff and students who contributed to this online edition of our December Newsletter. Thanks also to Ms Nolan for editing prior to publication.



*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from
all at St Mary's!*