

ST MARY'S KNOCKBEG COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



WINTER ISSUE 2024

THURSDAY 19 DECEMBER 2024

"This is the twofold characteristic of the joy that is the fruit of the Spirit: not only does it not go subject to the inevitable wear and tear of time, but it is multiplied by sharing it with others," Pope Francis

Dear Students, Staff, Parents and Families,



Thank you to all for a very enjoyable opening term of the school year. It has been marked by lots of laughs, plenty of work and great memories. The efforts of the school staff to provide for each student inside and outside the classroom is really admirable here in our school. I want to thank staff for this, and I hope our students and families appreciate these efforts, beyond the usual, that our staff put in each day. The last few months have been very energising and the atmosphere in our school has been excellent. However, like all members of the school community we will enjoy the short break over the Christmas holidays.

As we draw closer to the Christmas season, it's a time for reflection, joy, and a sense of togetherness. Christmas is a time for families to gather, to share meals, to laugh, and to enjoy each other's company. In our fast-paced world, where time together can sometimes feel scarce, Christmas offers us the precious opportunity to reconnect with loved ones. For some, the Christmas season may remind us of a loss we have suffered or an absence of others. The joy experienced by some can always be shared though and as Pope Francis reminds us, multiplied. Whether it's through a thoughtful gesture, a listening ear, or a warm embrace, we all have the ability to make this season a little brighter for someone else. Each one of us carries within ourselves the opportunity to share joy and brighten someone else's day. For those who may find this season difficult or lonely, remember that our school community is here for you.

We also encourage all members of our community to enjoy a full rest. When school returns in January the drive towards the end of the academic year begins in earnest. The Christmas break is the last chance to take a total break from the 'hamster wheel' of the school year. Please try to ensure you return rested and ready and fulfilled from the joy of this season.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Looking forward to the 2025 chapter.

Thank you.

John Maye Principal

Conor Ronan Deputy Principal

CAROL SERVICE

Our school's Carol Service took place on Wednesday, December 18th, with over 60 students participating in various roles, including the nativity play, readings, lighting candles and in the school choir.

A special thank you to the school choir for their uplifting performance and to former teacher Aoibhinn Foley for her beautiful rendition of Silent Night. Well done to the first-year students who took part in the nativity play. Many thanks also goes to Fr. Dunphy, who led the service.



COLLEGE FEAST DAY

On December 6th, our school community came together to celebrate a significant day on our calendar—our College Feast Day. The occasion was marked by a special service led by Bishop Nulty and Fr. Dunphy. We were delighted to welcome John Behan, a former pupil, teacher, and colleague, and now the President of our Past Pupils' Union, as our guest speaker.

Many thanks and well done to our wonderful choir and everyone who participated in the service. Special appreciation goes to all who supported our fundraiser, organized by Mr. Conway, in aid of St. Clare's Hospitality Kitchen in Graiguecullen.



NOVEMBER REMEMBRANCE

November is a time of reflection and remembrance, a moment to honor those who have gone before us. In keeping with this tradition, our school community—staff and students alike—came together for a heartfelt remembrance service in our chapel, celebrated by Fr. Dunphy.



SHOEBOX APPEAL

Our 2nd-year students recently organized a Shoebox Appeal in support of Team Hope. Gerry visited the school today to collect the shoeboxes on behalf of the charity.

These boxes, filled with gifts, will be sent to children in need around the world. Thank you to everyone who supported this effort and helped make a difference.



ODD SOCK DAY

As part of Stand Up Awareness Week and Anti-Bullying week our school had an odd sock day in November to promote inclusivity and celebrate our differences.



SECOND YEAR TRIP

Our second-year students recently embarked on a trip to England, traveling by ferry to take in a Stoke City vs. Burnley match at the Britannia Stadium. The group also enjoyed a memorable tour of Anfield Stadium, soaking in the history and atmosphere of one of football's most iconic venues. A big thank you to the teachers who accompanied the students and made this trip possible, a great time was had by all!



GAEILGE 24

Gaeilge 24 inniu i gColáiste Muire Cnoc Beag Students took part in numerous activities such as a watching the scannán Róise agus Frank, L2 had a fantastic maidin caife in Lamberd to meet members of the Irish community in Carlow with Glór Cheatharlach and the day finished with a Tráth na gCeist.



AG SCIENCE FARM WALK & TALK

On Thursday, December 12th, our senior cycle Agricultural Science students embarked on an insightful farm walk and talk, visiting three different types of farms.

The first stop on their journey was Joe Nolan's organic sheep and tillage farm. Joe shared details about his sheep breeds and provided guidance on scanning.

Next, the group visited John Murphy's dairy farm, where John discussed the importance and benefits of fodder crops.

The final stop was Alfie Byrne's dairy farm and contracting business. Alfie explained his zero-grazing system and demonstrated his machinery operations.

A big thank you to Joe, John, and Alfie for sharing their expertise and giving our students the opportunity to experience their farms in action.



REPTILE ZOO

On Wednesday, the 4th of December, our First and Second Year students enjoyed a fantastic Reptile Show as part of Science Week.

The students had the opportunity to see snakes, scorpions, snapping turtles, and lizards up close, while learning about the creatures' unique features, natural habitats, and eating habits.



TRANSITION YEAR

Kate Fleming from LawEd facilitated a workshop with our TY students. The programme deals with all elements of the law and engages our students in all aspects of legal literacy. The lads participated in a mock trial to conclude proceedings for the day.



Fiona from Agri Aware who presented a workshop to our TYs on Farm Safety Awareness. All elements of farm safety from livestock, machinery, chemicals/fertilisers and all hazards associated with the busy life of farm employees were discussed.



TY CHRISTMAS MARKET

Our Transition Year students held a fantastic Christmas Market to showcase and sell their Mini Company products to fellow students. The event was a huge success with 26 stalls full of creative products!

In addition to the stalls, students ran activities like the Half-Court Shot Challenge, Keepy Uppy Challenge and the Hang Tough for prizes, which brought plenty of fun and competition to the day.

Special mention to Ms. Moran and Mr. O'Connell for their hard work in organising the brilliant event!



VISUAL ART DEPARTMENT

Our First Year enjoyed a taster class in the Visual Art Department designing Christmas decorations for our school environment.



Well done to our 2nd, 3rd and TY Visual Art students who showcased a wide variety of skills through window painting in the ref.



PAST PUPILS UNION

On Friday, November 8th, our Past Pupils' Union Reunion Dinner took place at the Seven Oaks Hotel, with over 150 in attendance. The night was filled with fond reminiscences of days spent out on the touch, in the sports hall, the play hall, and even in "Siberia."

A highlight of the evening was the inauguration of John Behan as Past Pupils Union President, succeeding PJ Dolan. The event brought together familiar faces, laughter, and shared memories, truly reflecting the enduring spirit of our community.



EXTRACURRICULAR

Well done to our First year footballers who topped their group in the first year Br Hubert cup with two impressive victories over Newbridge PBS and Good Counsel college. They now set up a home quarter final after Christmas.



Our Junior footballers had mixed results in the group stages with a loss to Ardscoil Athy and a hard fought win at home to Good Counsel College. They now play an away quarter final to Enniscorthy CBS after Christmas.



EXTRACURRICULAR

Well done to all our athletes who competed in the Portlaoise Schools' Cross Country Invitational on Tuesday, December 3rd. The boys' teams achieved second place in the Minor, Junior, Intermediate, and Senior categories.

Individual medals were won by: Alex Culleton (Junior) Eoin Mulkerrins, Cian O'Sullivan, and Mikey Regan (Intermediate).





MERRY
Christmas
AND A
Happy New Year