



ISSUE 2
ACADEMIC YEAR 2009-2010

NEWSLETTER DATE:
NOVEMBER 2009

November Newsletter

St Mary's Catholic College

PROPOSALS FOR "LEARNING & FAITH CAMPUS" ON ST. MARY'S SITE

The Diocesan Trustees have recently agreed to the co-location of St. Mary's Catholic College and Christ the King Primary School on the St. Mary's site. The plans, actively supported by Blackpool's Children & Young Persons Department, will see a capital investment of just over £22.5 million pounds with a brand new primary school, extensive new secondary and sixth form facilities and the refurbishment of the remaining parts of the College. The iconic frontage of the College, the oldest part of the Layton Hill Convent and the Chapel, will be retained but two different consortia are currently developing a range of ideas for what the rest of the site and the buildings might look like.

In one of the most radical parts of the plan the trustees have given agreement in principle to the relocation of Christ the King Parish Church and associated accommodation onto the St. Mary's site. This will provide possibly the only new Church to be built in Lancaster Diocese in recent times and for a number of decades to come! It is intended to provide a powerful message to the Grange Park community of the Catholic Church's ongoing commitment to it. The plans will produce a learning and faith campus that will be one of the first of its kind, anywhere in the country, consisting of a secondary school, primary



school and parish church all co-located on one site.

The plans currently being developed by the consortia are unfortunately highly confidential due to their commercial sensitivity. However, the work done during the middle of the year with groups of staff and students about what they would like to see was written up into a design brief and is now at the centre of discussions and the planning process.

The build is planned to start in January 2011 and the College is already developing plans to ensure that students' learning continues to be of the highest quality throughout the building programme.

To reassure parents and student our provisional value-added figures for 2009 shows the College has a contextual value added (CVA) of 1021 for this summer's GCSE results. This will place it amongst the best schools in the country and we intend to continue on this upward trend over the coming years! These results will be officially reported later this academic year.

When the buildings are finished, I am sure that students and staff will have the most outstanding buildings and facilities in which to learn.

....a learning and faith campus that will be one of the first of its kind, anywhere in the country ...

... a capital investment of just over £22.5 million ...

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Bishop Michael's visit
- Fr Bernard's departure
- 'Gaplains' in Nigeria
- Advent Festival

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ST. MARY'S WELCOMES BISHOP MICHAEL CAMPBELL

On Thursday 8th October 2009, the staff and students of St. Mary's welcomed Bishop Campbell to the College.

Bishop Campbell enjoyed assembly with Year 8 and watched a video prepared by Lizzie Cavanagh (Y13) on her Lourdes experience in which the Bishop made a guest appearance giving "high fives" to a number of the archdiocesan youth pilgrims. Following a tour of the College and its grounds Bishop Campbell met the five strong Chaplaincy team and chatted with our gap year chaplains about their forthcoming trip to Africa - Bishop Campbell spent a number of years in Northern Nigeria. He then had the opportunity to meet with students from the Youth SVP, Activ8 and TOG groups to listen to their work and involvement in the life of the College.



After spending break in the staff room he gave a lecture on the synoptic Gospels to seventy Sixth Form students who are all studying A-level Religious Studies. Reflecting on his visit Bishop Campbell was most impressed by the students he met and the friendly, warm welcome he received.

Mr. Tierney was delighted to meet up again with Bishop Campbell after nearly thirty years – the last time the two met Mr. Tierney was in Year 8 at secondary school and was taught RE by the then Father Campbell who was the school's Chaplain and a RE teacher!

.... Bishop Campbell was most impressed by the students he met

SIXTH FORM NEWS

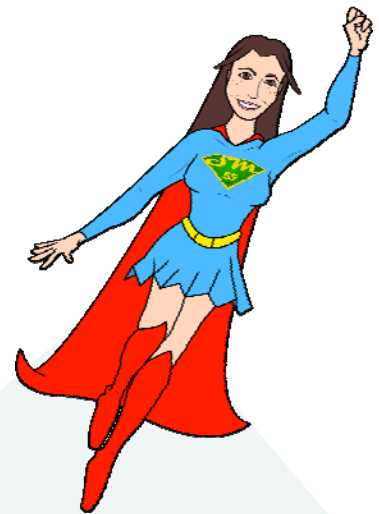
Our current Sixth Form is the largest ever at St Mary's and our own fantastic students have been joined by some highly able students, from across Blackpool and beyond, who have been a great addition to our College community.

Our recent Sixth Form Open Evening was attended by over 100 of our own students and 40 other students from across Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre.

The Sixth Form at St Mary's offers students a fantastic community spirit, strong academic results, excellent staff,

small class sizes in which learning can be personalised and individual needs met and high quality pastoral care.

There are a wide range of A-level courses and a number of Level 3 BTEC courses. The College is able to provide a continuity of learning from pre - to post-16 and an enriching ethos. If you would like an application form please see Mrs Murray or Mrs Leigh - you can also return the forms to these members of staff. Interviews with students will start later this month.



ADVENT FESTIVAL - MONDAY 7 DECEMBER AT 7:30 P.M.

Tickets are currently being sold in college for the Advent Festival. This year the theme for the evening is 'JUMP FOR JOY' and will include music, dance, art and drama to help us celebrate the Advent season.

Our students and staff have been working hard preparing for the event - please show your support for all their efforts by coming along on **Monday 7 December at 7:30 p.m.** - it would be a fitting start to the Advent season and a great evening out for all the family.

Tickets are available from the college office - prices as show below:

Adults - £2:00

Children - 50p

Concessions - 50p

We look forward to seeing you on the evening



CHAPLAINCY NEWS

'GOODBYE' TO FR. BERNARD

Fr Bernard doesn't like fuss. A round of applause at his last Tuesday Mass; a rousing 'goodbye' from all those gathered in the chaplaincy room; a presentation from the governors; and now he's away. He doesn't like fuss and that is one of the reasons why he has been such a great chaplain to the college. It's never about him. It's about God and it's about the young people in his care. He has been a great support, willing to take centre stage or just pop up at the end to give his blessing. He turns up for things even when he doesn't have to. He chats to people, he smiles, he encourages. We will miss him. We know that various communities of Walney Island and in Barrow will benefit greatly from his ministry and we hope that he enjoys lots of opportunities to work with young people. Go with our thanks, Fr Bernard, and don't forget to drop in next time you're in Blackpool.

NIGERIA - 'HERE WE COME'

Our two gap-year chaplains ('gaplains') are acclimatising to life in Nigeria! After flying out on 31 October, their base was a Holy Child community in Lagos for three weeks. They then travelled North to Jos where they visited a CAFOD-sponsored community and environment projects. They will also be staying at a Jesuit secondary school in the capital city Abuja. Their 5-week stay will end with some well-deserved R&R in Bauchi, visiting some hot springs and a nature reserve.

Chris said before leaving, *"This experience in Nigeria is going to be challenging, but I feel confident in saying that we are going to have a positive impact upon the people and communities we meet. When we return in early December we are very much looking forward to sharing our experience with all the people who have supported us in St Mary's community and the primary schools across Blackpool."*



Chris and Lou teaching a class at the high school at Ajegunle in Lagos

This experience in Nigeria is going to be challenging

VISIT TO SEE THE RELICS OF ST THERESE

At the end of September, we took some 43 Year 8 students to Lancaster Cathedral to see the relics of St Therese. They had done some work in the RS classes in preparation for the trip, though nothing could quite have prepared them for an experience so unique. On arrival we were briefed by Sr Maureen Coyne on the historic nature of this event. We then spent some time with Sr Zela, though as her alter ego - one of Therese's fellow sisters in Carmel. Sr Zela, in full Carmelite garb, described life in the convent and answered some questions about Therese's life. Our students were clearly impressed as

some wondered aloud whether she had actually been alive during Therese's life! We then took the students inside the Cathedral and onto the sanctuary where they were able to reflect and pray beside the beautiful casket which contained the relics. There followed a short liturgy or prayer and song as the relics were taken out of the Cathedral to carry on with their pilgrimage round the UK. This was Catholicism in all its full grandeur, bringing the past alive for a new generation, and I am sure it was an experience that the young people will never forget.

'WHOSE WORLD IS IT ANYWAY'

Following the success of our parish liturgy 'Where is the Love', Louise Cross, with the help of some sixth formers and members of the Activate Group, has designed a new one for this year. It focuses on our duty to care for God's earth and includes opportunities for participants to reflect and act on the areas of water, poverty, climate change and sustaining relationships. Our first port of call was Holy Family parish. Although we were not inundated by parishioners, those who came were full of praise for the work our students had done and they were moved and challenged by the words, images and prayers. Afterwards, people stayed for a drink and a chat, and the Headteacher of Holy Family Primary School suggested we might deliver the liturgy during school-time. Our plan now is to offer the liturgy to other parishes and schools, so if you would be interested in using it please contact Simon or Marie at college.

BRINGING HOPE TO THE HOMELESS

Our award-winning SVP group has once again mobilised St Mary's students to collect much-needed food and toiletries for Streetlife, Blackpool's youth homeless project. Students in every form have been asked to fill the boxes provided with as many provisions as possible and, as usual, the results have been great. This is just one of three projects the group has taken on. They have also been approached by a local SVP conference to help support a feeding station in Sudan. Fund-raising ideas are already bubbling, helped by the 'challenge of the talents'. In this, small groups have been given £20 start-up, with the proviso that they double or treble it during their fund-raising. Watch this space!



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PE NEWS

Football

Year 11 Boys' football team entered the English Schools National Cup competition, playing at Lostock Hall near Leyland. The boys played well and deserved something out of the game, but unfortunately they lost 2-0 with goals coming in injury time in both the 1st and 2nd halves. They are having slightly better luck in the league with a victory over Highfield 2-1. Unfortunately, they were beaten narrowly 3-2 by Montgomery.

Year 10 football - Recent league results have been fairly mixed with a victory over Collegiate at home 6-3 and a defeat away to them 7-4. League games against St. Georges and Palatine to come, with the cup competitions beginning after Christmas! Good luck to them!

Year 7 Football - lost first game but have qualified for Blackpool Schools semi final v Montgomery, beating Highfield and drawing with Palatine. Got knocked out of Lancs Cup on goal difference after drawing 0 - 0 with Montgomery and beating Collegiate 2 - 0.

Year 8 Football - unbeaten record and just need a point at Montgomery to win league. Already beaten them 4 - 1 and had comfortable wins over Palatine and Collegiate. Through to 2nd round Lancs Cup after beating Glenburn. They are due to play Lytham (away) next week.

Year 9 Football - unbeaten 100% record already won league with one game to play after wins over Bispham, Collegiate and St Georges. They have now been promoted to Division 1. Also through to 2nd round Lancs Cup after win over Morecambe and play Darwen Vale next week.

Basketball

The Year 7 Boys' basketball team recently competed in the Blackpool schools basketball competition at St. George's High School. They won the tournament, going unbeaten throughout! A big thank



Basketball Coaching Clinic

you must also go out to the Year 11 boys basketball team who helped coach the Year 7 boys.

The Year 11 boys have also begun training in advance of their forthcoming league fixtures. Good luck to them!

Netball

The Year 8, 9, 10 & 11 Girls Netball teams have been competing in the Netball league. The Year 10's haven't lost a match yet, with a mixture of results for the other years. Practices are still continuing on a Monday after College. An Under 16's Netball team was entered into the Lancashire round of the National Schools. The girls played extremely well but were unfortunate not to make it through to the next round.

Hockey

The girls hockey practices started after half term, taking place every other Wednesday. The Under 16 fixtures commencing shortly on Mondays as we lead up to Christmas.

Try something new!

Tag Rugby for Year 7 girls, led by the SSC's every Tuesday until Christmas
Golf Extreme open to all girls, delivered by a Sharon Brookes the PGA Golf Professional on Fridays until Christmas.

Badminton

Reminder to all pupils that badminton practice is every Friday after College. We have fixtures coming up for boys and girls against Highfield, St. George's and Palatine. There is also the Centre Parcs competition being held at Beacon Hill this half term for both boys and girls! Come along and try out for the team!

Active Lunchtimes

Active lunchtimes have begun again, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday lunchtimes with a range of activities in the gym and sports hall, with videos in the Chapel!

Extra Curricular

Mondays – Netball practice and hockey fixtures for all years

Tuesdays – Rugby League – Years 7-10 Boys, Girls netball fixtures

Wednesdays – Yr 7 boys Football training, Girls hockey practice

Thursday – Girls Netball fixtures

Fridays – Badminton for all years / Girls Golf Extreme.

Cross County at Stanley Park - dates - Sunday 15th Nov and Sunday 4th December. Everybody Welcome.