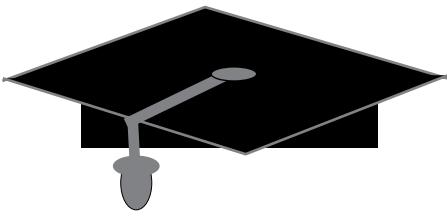


THE



Education
Commission
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK



CRIER

Spring 2021

*CELEBRATING THE WORK OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES ACROSS THE
DIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK*



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Virtual Nativity at St Augustine's



As the traditional Nativity is the essence of Christmas in a primary school, we hosted a virtual Nativity event in each of the Infant classes. The children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 each prepared an individual class Nativity retelling using a range of artwork, audio recordings, photographs or videos to create a PowerPoint presentation.

These Nativity presentations were shared with the rest of the school using Microsoft Teams in place of the usual dress rehearsals. Each class also scheduled a Teams meeting for the parents/carers at home to virtually attend a showing of the Nativity presentations.

Additionally, the children in each of the Junior classes prepared artwork, prayers, music and carols to create a Virtual carol service. This presentation has been uploaded to our school's website for the whole school community to enjoy.

Congratulations at St John Fisher

Congratulations to Max Membrino in year 9, who has won a super writing competition organised by 'Christian Projects'.

This was a competition where students from all across Britain were asked to sit down and write about the life of Jesus Christ. Mr McCullagh (Headteacher) has presented Max with his own copy of 'Saints and Heroes'. Well done, Max!



Does your school have news to share? To feature in the Summer term edition of *The Crier*, email your articles and photos to eceditor@rcaos.org.uk before 12pm on Friday 21st May 2021. Articles must be no longer than 300 words.

Laleham Lea School Pupils Support Samaritans' Purse



Pupils from Laleham Lea School in Purley have lovingly filled over 60 shoe boxes with gifts and treats for those in need around the world this Christmas.

The boxes have been donated to Operation Christmas Child, a project run by international Christian relief organisation the Samaritan's Purse.

Since 1990, more than 178 million children in more than 150 countries have received an Operation Christmas Child shoebox. For many of these children, the gift-filled shoebox is the first gift they have ever received.

Ms Barry, Head teacher at Laleham Lea said: "Laleham Lea Students and their families are always very generous throughout the year in supporting and giving to those in need."

"We are delighted to once again support Operation Christmas Child this year; I know the Students have enjoyed filling and wrapping their special gifts with care and love. Some Students have even brought in two or three boxes! We hope they make for a lovely surprise Christmas gift for those children who really need it."

Gold Awards at Ursuline College!

Amazing news at Ursuline College! Despite the current difficult circumstances, 3 of our year 13 girls have completed their Duke of Edinburgh Award experience by achieving their Gold Awards. Charlotte Burring, Katrina Davenport and Gabby Elks started their DofE journey back in year 9 in 2017 with their Bronze Award and completed their Silver Award in year 11. They have now successfully completed all elements and achieved their Gold awards.

Along the way they have developed many new skills, for example, they have learnt sign language, cooking and how to sew. They have undertaken sports such as rugby, cycling, Zumba and dance and they have dedicated over 264 hours to volunteering in the community.



Katrina volunteered with the Scouts association, Charlotte with the Brownies and Gabby has been coaching sports for young children as well as taking on a leadership role in DofE and acting as our DofE Ambassador. Their teammate Ciara Kinnon is also very close to achieving her award having had her residential section thwarted by the current pandemic.

The girls have grown in confidence and leadership, compassion and resilience through their experience. We are now looking forward to them being invited to the Palace to be presented with their awards. 'Yet again the work of both staff and students has made me extremely proud. This is another excellent example of working hard and being kind.' Mrs Englefield, Academy Principal.

Nativity at St John's



Given the restrictions of the current situation, the staff of St John's Catholic School wanted to make sure that the children in Early Years and Key Stage 1 got the chance to take part in a Nativity.

Although parents would not be able to come into school and watch it, the school worked on a video performance of the Nativity Story. All children were involved - there were costumes and props for all. The only difference is that this was recorded scene by scene both in school and outside.

The school made the most of the local area and were able to use Russia Dock Woodlands and Stave Hill as a background for some of the scenes. The children enjoyed it and were thrilled when they got to see themselves on screen - and so were the families!

St Micheal's College Donates to Southwark Food Bank



The Southwark Food Bank is an event that we do at the start of every year which allows students from all year groups to offer themselves to bring food for the people that need it most. This year, despite COVID-19, we were still able to collect many items as a school and we successfully managed to fill over six boxes full of canned food, nutritious foods as well as hygiene products such as shampoo, shower gels, and diapers.

The Southwark Food Bank is an amazing opportunity and a perfect example that portrays and comes to show how much we can do as a community, and as a school for the wellbeing of others, which comes to show the morals and the Salesian values that we are always taught at St. Michael's. By donating food and giving from what we have, we have shown respect for those who don't have it as

easy as we do, and thus, we also show understanding that we know what they might feel like.

Affection was shown from the moment we all decided to come together and give because at the end of the day, giving is one of the biggest acts of affection and love there can be.

Finally, the empathy we portray and express towards the people in our community, allow us to always be cheerful despite the current circumstances that anyone may be experiencing, thus allowing us to manifest that final Salesian value of Humour.

The Southwark Food Bank was announced at the start of the year and had a deadline for the 5th of November, which many people happily contributed to. Posters were handed around and some of our Year 12s went around all houses to make sure that everyone participated and offered what they could.

We want to thank everyone who put time and effort into making this happen, members of staff as well as students, were all involved in this, and this huge act of kindness that represents us, wouldn't have been possible without everyone's help. We couldn't have started the academic year off at a better pace, and as a school, we hope we can keep doing more acts of charity and giving, such as this one.

Holy Family Advent Foodbank



In December 2020 we launched the Holy Family Advent Foodbank. Thanks to the generous donations from our School Community, our parish & local businesses such as Waitrose in Greenwich, the Co-op on Shooter's Hill and a community group in Blackheath, we have been able to make up almost 100 food parcels.

Amongst the donations, we received over 40 boxes of mince pies, 67 tins of baked beans, 78 packs of pasta and almost 50 tins of soup. We made up food parcels to help feed our most vulnerable families during Christmas. Through difficult times our school and community has worked together to help those in need, we are proud to be Holy Family.

St Fidelis Reach New Heights!

There is no stopping the children reaching new heights at St Fidelis in Bexley. Everyone was disappointed not to get away in October as planned, but the children of St Fidelis did not miss out. If you can't take the children to the climbing wall, you bring the climbing wall to the children. 62 Year 6 children showed courage, strength and determination as they supported each other to climb the wall.

Through having this experience the children were still able to build upon many skills which are grown on residential trips. Mr Kennor, the organiser of the event said "The children were disappointed to not be able to go on their residential at this time, but they were able to show some of the key skills of resilience, teamwork and communication in the session".

Unsurprisingly the children loved the experience and are excited to see what the staff have up their sleeves next for them.



Letting our Light Shine in the Community at St Matthew Academy during Advent



Despite the challenges faced in school in the Autumn term we were determined at St Matthew Academy to continue with our charity and fundraising events during Advent. As a staff we rallied together once again to support our local Salvation Army led Christmas Present Appeal. This is an opportunity to provide a gift for the children in our local community who might not otherwise receive one. The staff happily donated presents over a period of a couple of weeks hoping to spread some Christmas sparkle and were eager to support this great initiative. We received a lovely letter as thanks for our donations

"Thank you. The Salvation Army & Voluntary Services Lewisham would like to say a huge thank you to the students, staff and families at St Matthew Academy for all your help with the Christmas Appeal

this year. Your toy and food donations made such a difference to so many families within our community. Thank you for making such a difference"

In addition to supporting the Salvation Army Christmas Present Appeal our Heads of House led a campaign to donate items to Action for Refugees Lewisham. We were able to collect over 125 items for them. This included a range of books, toys, blankets and food. Our pupils in both the primary and secondary phase are thoughtful and give generously to those who may be in need.

Our fundraising didn't stop there! Every year as we prepare for Christmas our pupils sing carols at our local care home and we didn't want them or us to miss out this year. So on Friday 11th December our Year 5 pupils visited the local care home; The Old Refectory in the Glebe, to spread some Christmas cheer to the residents. The children sang a variety of carols and the residents really enjoyed singing along. We all had a wonderful time and it was lovely to be asked to visit again soon. After our performance, we walked to Blackheath and continued our carol singing to raise money to buy board games for Lewisham Hospital Children's Ward. We raised over £70.00 and will be delivering the games to the hospital after Christmas.

We would love for pupils across the school to have been able to take part and we very much hope that next year pupils from Reception to Year 11 can take part in the carol singing. Our carol singing day also happened to be the day we supported the Save the Children Christmas Jumper Day!

St Philomena Students Compete in the Chemistry Olympiad 2021

The Chemistry Olympiad is designed to challenge and inspire students in secondary education. This enriching experience is a unique opportunity for St Philomena's A-Level Chemistry students to push themselves further and excel in the field of chemistry.

The chemists at St Philomena's developed critical problem-solving skills, learn to think more creatively and get a chance to test their knowledge in new, real-world situations. They could even find themselves representing the UK at the prestigious International Chemistry Olympiad.

On Friday 22nd January 2021, seven pupils from St Philomena's sat the two hour online written exam of Chemistry Olympiad 2021 Round one.



The students involved are Thinara Kumarasinghe, Siruja Srimohan, Rania Ocho, Jolene D'souza, Annmary Kuriakose, Abigail Laryea and Trivina Tadrous.

Up to 30 of the highest-scoring students from round one will take part in lessons and demonstrations on new topics from respected academics, teachers and technicians, followed by a theoretical test.

In March round two will be held online. Four students from round two will be chosen to represent the United Kingdom at the International Chemistry Olympiad.

The 2021 International Chemistry Olympiad will be hosted by Japan from 24 July – 2 August 2021.

Wishing luck to all our seven students to achieve their best and excel in the field of chemistry.

Happy 60th Birthday to Bishop Thomas Grant School!

Here is a brief background on your favourite school on its 60th birthday

The school is named after the first Bishop of Southwark, Thomas Grant (1816-1870) who was named in the First Vatican Council. The school was opened on 9 September 1959 as a voluntary aided, co-educational 11-18 Catholic comprehensive school, the first of its kind in the South of England. It was the vision of Canon Crowley, the Parish Priest of English Martyrs Church in Streatham. He passionately encouraged his parishioners to donate all they could to help build the school in the 1950's. The school site was originally a farm and the land was donated by the Diocese of Southwark to build the school. It finally opened in 1959 and was dedicated to Christ the King. The school badge reflects Bishop Thomas Grant's coat of arms. The crown represents Christ as a King and the alpha / omega represents the endurance of Christ along with its motto "Instaurare Omnia In Christo, To unite all things in Christ".

Mr James Rudden was the first Headteacher.

The school's large illuminated cross was proudly lit at night and can still be seen in its prominent position on a hill above Streatham Common.



A few memories from two of the school's original students

Where have all the years gone? We new pupils, felt very fortunate as it was the first Catholic Comp. in London and everything was brand new and "modern". It was as if all the students had a clean slate. No teachers knew of us or our siblings and they were new and untested to us. Julie and I were even more fortunate as we had visited BTG earlier dressed in our new uniform (complete with straw boater hat). The Head of St. Andrew's knew Mr. Rudden well so suggested we modelled the uniform for him and - I think - the Deputy Head. The school looked enormous to us after our primary school, but everybody was "in the same boat" and not at all intimidated.

Everything seemed to be so big and new. The school was so large and I feared I would never get to know my way around and getting lost and being late for my next class. I remember being in the Hall along with everyone else and very nervously waiting to hear my name called out and the Form I was assigned to. Bit like Harry Potter and the kids waiting to see which house they were going to. It was terrifying! And my uniform was who knows how many sizes too big so that I "would grow into it!" What a laugh when one thinks back on it.

The Bishop Thomas Grant School Prayer

Dear Lord

Bishop Thomas Grant School has served thousands of special students over its 60 years, we remember them along with the former and present Headteachers, Governors and staff that through their hard work and dedication to its young people, have built the successful school we enjoy today.

We give thanks for the wonderful school that we work in and in doing so rededicate ourselves to follow your message, we promise to continue to serve our young people to achieve their best, use their talents and so leave us as rounded moral citizens that live out and share the special values of a Catholic education in the community and to live their lives to the full.



Christmas Charity at Bishop Thomas Grant School

Christmas at Bishop Thomas Grant School is normally the busiest time of the year for fundraising, with the Christmas Fair and Carol Concert. However, like many things this year, raising money for our community as well as the House Charities had to be done a little differently, to ensure both staff and students were Covid safe.

Students were given the target of raising as much money as possible for our House Charities (Spires, The Children's Trust, Salesian Sisters and Kids for Kids), by completing challenges set

out completing challenges set out by the Heads of House such as, creating luxury hampers, sponsorship for giving up a favourite food or drink, for completing a bike ride or walk or sponsorship for carrying out random acts of kindness. One Year 9 student managed to raise a fantastic £750 by completing a 12 hour sponsored silence.

The Year 9 Youth SVP Society collaborated with the Salvation Army to create their own hampers as well as raising money to buy and donate coats for the homeless and the local community. The whole school has come together to donate food and hampers to our own food bank and for local homeless charity Spires.

The response from our students and families has been overwhelming and we await to hear the total raised along with the number of hampers created in the New Year. Well done to all of our staff and students for their hard fundraising work.

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