St Bernard’s High School
A Catholic Academy for Arts and Science

Newsletter 10 - Autumn Term 2017
Dear parents,

Welcome to the final edition of our newsletter for this year. Once again, you will find a wonderful range of learning opportunities for our students, incorporating the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of education, as well as, of course, the academic development of our young people. This is an important time for many students, particularly those in Years 11 and 13 who will want to use the holiday period as an opportunity to consolidate their learning. However, it is important that they, like the rest of us, should prioritise the birth of Christ, and reflect on God present in the history of humanity, then and now. We hope you will find time as a family to enter into the Christmas services in your local parish, and to explore together the significance of the nativity for us all as Christians. We wish you a happy and holy Christmas.

Best wishes,

Mr A Sharpe
Head Teacher

IMPORTANT MESSAGE ON SCHOOL UNIFORM

By Mr A. Sharpe, Head Teacher

We would like to remind all pupils and their parents that pupils should wear the St Bernard’s school skirt supplied by Paul’s Discount Store. Manufactured by Trutex and washed according to their instructions it can cope with daily wear for many terms. It comes in a variety of lengths and when purchased it should end just above the knee.

Where a student grows, and the skirt only ends partway down the thigh, it will need to be replaced with a longer one.

The schools has a simple but smart uniform but we look to enforce it
strictly to ensure that all have exactly the same thus allowing equality for everyone in the community.

Tutors will be reviewing all skirts and where necessary issue advice when replacement is required with the expectation that all are wearing the correct skirt at the start of the new term. Purchase can be made at the store or online.

**Spiritual & Moral**

**PREPARING FOR THE BIRTH OF JESUS**
By Mrs H. Barnes, Assistant Head Teacher

‘Advent’ means ‘Coming’ and the first four weeks of the new Church Year (or Liturgical Year) is dedicated to helping us to prepare for the loving mystery that is coming; not for what has already arrived.

Advent, then, starts a new Church year and is a time of spiritual preparation. We use the candles of the Advent wreath and the calendar to count down, or build up, to the birthday of Jesus. Love expresses itself in giving and, as we know, a lot of effort, time and money goes into buying Christmas presents. Whether it was Santa Claus (from the Dutch for Saint Nicholas) and the traditional story of him giving gifts of money to a poor widow’s three daughters; or the example of the Magi (often called ‘kings’) who gave their three gifts to the Christ child, we have the tradition of gift-giving at Christmas. Now, that is an absolutely perfect way of celebrating the birth of Christ, because in our worship we remember the words of Scripture, ‘God so loved the world that he gave us his Son’ (John 3:16) and reflect on the amazing mystery of that. The God who is love (2 John 8) mysteriously makes a gift of his Son to us and, so appropriately, we celebrate that by gift-giving to our loved ones.

**Christmas**

Not being in school for Christmas Day we have our school-family carols, tree and celebration together before we head off for our own family preparations. Our parish churches and our school have Christmas decorations up throughout the whole Christmas season – until 6 January. For some, not versed in Catholic ways, to come back to school to find the Christmas decorations still up, looks and feels odd; but it is correct from our Church’s practice and our liturgical/worship viewpoint.

For most Catholics the highlight of their Christmas is Midnight Mass; however the recent development of a special family/childrens’ Mass on Christmas Eve has deservedly become very popular meaning children and their parents can enjoy Mass and then head home ready for the Christmas celebrations.
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CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION
By Mr M. Galton, Head of Art

The winner of this year’s Christmas card competition is Zier Mapi-Ot, who composed a striking silhouette design and image.

Second place was Lauren Eley for her excellent portraiture work. There is a wide variety of tone to make the figure look 3D and there is an interesting use of collaged text to add interest to the background.

Third place is Showmiya Pathmarajan for her unique interpretation of the brief. She has used candles and angels as symbolism to relate to the prayer.

Well done to all entrants.

First place by Zier Mapi-Ot
On Monday 13 November, a dance-off took place in the Gym. We had a massive turn out, with students competing for a trophy. All the participants performed brilliantly, with Year 7 winning. We managed to raise £60, a terrific amount given that the entrance fee to watch the dance-off was only 50p.
A huge thank you to all those who supported by coming to watch. The proceeds have gone to Equal People Performing Arts, a fully inclusive charity based in Rayleigh.

**DAYS FOR GIRLS**  
*By Miss R. McGlashon, Head of PE Department*

I am delighted to inform you that the recent fundraiser for ‘Days for Girls’ raised an amazing sum of just under £1,500. The school has received a letter from the charity letting us know that it is the largest donation they have ever received, so a huge thank-you to all those who contributed and supported the event.

**SIXTH FORM AWARDS CEREMONY**  
*By Miss R. Carter, Deputy Head of Sixth Form*

We are so fortunate at St Bernard’s to have a wealth of hard-working and talented students, which we were able to celebrate on Tuesday 5th December as part of our Sixth Form Celebration Assembly. This celebration recognises and awards students in both Year 12 and Year 13 for their outstanding achievements in a multitude of different areas, both academic and non-academic.

The celebrations started and ended with music played by our very accomplished school Rock Band, who were accompanied by Tim Fletcher on guitar. Thanks to Sarah-Jane Walter, Autumn Davis, Segun Amisu and Billy Piercy for providing a musical interlude.

Academic achievements were presented to students who have been identified by their subject teachers for their progress, effort and attainment.

We were delighted to present Abbie Sands-Wren the Old Girls’ Association Award for her consistently excellent work ethic and resilience in all of her
subjects. Abbie’s dedication to all aspects of her work is commendable and the award richly deserved.

Other awards were presented to students who have made significant contributions to the wider-life and spiritual life of the school. The hard work and efforts of our Head Student Team were acknowledged with Awards for Service dedicated to three previous Head Teachers: Madame Mildred (Isobel Harforth), Sister Mary Aelred (Nikita Lee) and Miss O’Shaughnessy (Emma Dodson).

SPECIAL AWARDS PRESENTED AT THE CEREMONY
By Mrs S. Alexander, Head of Dance & Mrs M. Bell, Head of Drama

The Keauffling Award for Dance is presented annually to the student who works hard to improve technically and shows their passion for the art of dance through their contribution to the subject, so that others can share in their talent and enjoyment.

Julia Dajani received this award for showing dedication to the subject throughout her years at St. Bernard’s - contributing to dance through performing with St. Bernard’s Dance Company and supporting the company choreographically. Her work has helped to develop the skills of many students in the lower school.

The Helen Mirren Award is named after Dame Helen Mirren. She is probably the most well-known past pupil from St. Bernard’s and attended in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Drama did not feature on the curriculum back then; in fact, the only dramatic activity available was the Shakespeare competition where students would compete to win the Shakespeare cup through their performance of scenes from Shakespeare plays. Helen Mirren won the cup once performing Ophelia’s mad scene from Hamlet. She says ‘I played it years later at the RSC, but never so well again.’

Helen Mirren flourished at St. Bernard’s and it was her English teacher Mrs. Welding who suggested that she should apply for the National Youth Theatre; she is reported to have said that if it has not had been for Mrs. Welding then she may never have become an actress.
I believe that Helen Mirren is a woman who represents the best of St. Bernard’s: she is strong, confident, & passionate and despite her fame she has kept her integrity. I feel very privileged that in the Drama department we have an award dedicated by her to pass on to students who have echoed her passion and strength.

This year the Helen Mirren Award goes to a student who has grown so much in confidence, ability and commitment to doing her best in Drama and Theatre, so it gives me great pleasure to give this award to Chloe Davenport.

The Tolhurst Cup for Drama has become an award that represents commitment and determination and an ability to excel in Drama with grace and humility. The person receiving this award has certainly done this. In her lessons and in extra-curricular work, she has worked exceptionally hard, she contributes exciting and inventive ideas as well and listening sensitively to the others, she takes direction very well and her performances consistently stand out; her ability to develop characterisation is excellent. So, the very deserving recipient of this award is Katriona Stidston.

CURRICULUM EXTENSION CHALLENGE
By Mr P. Walls, Assistant Head Teacher

40 students entered the latest Curriculum Extension Challenge, which offered a choice of tasks for Key Stage 3 students across a range of creative & practical subjects. The Head Student Team, who reviewed all the entries and judged the winners, wanted me to congratulate all the students who participated and demonstrated such creativity. The top 5 places awarded were as follows:

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<td><strong>1st</strong></td>
<td>Phoebe Hines (8F)</td>
<td>ART</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2nd</strong></td>
<td>Honey Miller (7F)</td>
<td>FOOD</td>
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<td><strong>3rd</strong></td>
<td>Erika Serbu (8A)</td>
<td>ART</td>
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<td><strong>4th</strong></td>
<td>Eva Kelly (7M)</td>
<td>FOOD</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5th</strong></td>
<td>Shiloh Vino (7R)</td>
<td>FOOD</td>
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The project included the process of creating the artwork and gave a context to the assignment. It was interesting to see the development from first sketch to final product.

This was a very personal and detailed project and had a great deal of thought put into it.

This was a unique piece of art and the project also gave a personal opinion of the artists. It was amazing work. It would have been even better if it had shown the gradual development.

This was a fun and enjoyable read.

This was fun to read and the pop-ups were a great idea.
CHAMBER CHOIR SUCCESS
By Mrs F. Maltby, Head of Music

On Friday 24 November, the Chamber Choir won their class at the annual Southend Music Festival, gaining 88 marks. The Year 10 & 11 groups performed well, gaining valuable feedback from the adjudicator. As always, our students were great ambassadors for the school, sharing their talents and benefiting from watching other choral work. A big thank you goes to Mrs Thompson and Mrs Joyce for all their hard work in making this success happen.

CAROL CONCERT
By Mrs F. Maltby, Head of Music

Congratulations to all the students who took part in the Carol Concert on Wednesday 6 December – it was a lovely evening. The School Choir, Chamber Choir and Vocal groups sang beautifully and the Orchestra’s performance of ‘Troika’ was excellent. The instrumental work from the Flute, Clarinet and Saxophone groups was enjoyed by all and the Year 13 A level musicians provided wonderful solo/duet work.
A big thank you to Miss Bragg, Miss Connelly and Mr Goodfellow for their musical skills and to Mrs Bell for preparing the Readers.

The retiring collection raised over £500 for Little Havens.

MATHS IN ACTION
By Stephanie Solomons & Hannah Murphy, Year 10

At the end of November, Miss March’s and Miss Clancy’s Year 10 Maths classes went to the Emmanuel centre in London, to listen to five lectures about the applications of maths in real life. We particularly enjoyed Paul Sloane’s talk on Lateral Thinking because he taught us the maths behind many problems that have baffled us in the past. We were so interested that many of us left wanting to buy his book!

We also heard from James Grime who talked about code breaking, both during the war and in the modern day. He also went on to talk about Hedy Lamarr who simultaneously had a successful Hollywood film career and was helping the US war efforts by creating ground breaking technological advancements such as frequency hopping which is now used in modern wifi.
The other speakers included: a science communicator, who spoke about her career in the media & the misuse of statistics in the news; an engineer, currently working on a Mars Rover mission to investigate whether there is life on Mars; an expert in game theory, who taught us a variety of new games and how to use mathematics to win them. Overall, we learnt many new and interesting aspects of mathematics, which were informative and eye opening.

Some quotes from the day:

“I found the Lateral Thinking speech the most useful of all” – Ariba Tai

“James Grime was interesting and it was good how he interacted with the audience” – Niamh Rogers

“I enjoyed learning about how they cracked codes in the olden times” – Husna Begum

“It showed me maths was more than just numbers” – Annie Wickham

YEAR 10 PUBLIC SPEAKING TRAINING & COMPETITION
By Representatives from the Speaker’s Trust

On Friday 8th December Ms Connelly, Mr Goodfellow & Mr Walls were supporting 88 students taking part in training for public speaking, climaxing with a competition in the afternoon. The winners now go through to the Assembly Final, which will take place in the New Year during a PSHE lesson.

Here is some feedback from the trainers from the Speaker’s Trust:

Trainer Teresa Dukes commented:

These girls were totally brilliant! They were amazing throughout the day and I loved watching them support one another. A very mixed level of confidence in the room but by the end every single one of them had increased their confidence. I am always so honoured to train at St Bernard’s and the girls never let me down. They have such great ideas and dreams and they share them freely. As a trainer they made my job so much fun! Great topics ranging from ‘Procrastination’ to ‘Light and Dark – Skin’ to ‘Fear’. I cannot wait to see who comes forward as winners from the School Assembly.

Trainer Gabi Glover noted:

An exceptionally pleasant group of girls! They warmed up quickly. Then the positive energy just carried on from there. Everyone got involved, engaged with the activities and seemed to appreciate the value too. A few vocalised how much they liked the impromptu questions because ‘...they were not ‘boring’ and really got you thinking...’. That was nice. A lot of fun and laughter was had throughout the day, together with some touching moments and personal ‘stretches’. Our final speeches included some interesting ideas such as why young people should avoid using slang words.
Personally, the thing I enjoyed the most, besides the final speeches of course, was seeing how kind and supportive the girls were toward one another. We worked through and past a few tearful or very nervous moments between us, as a collective group. I really could not have hoped for a better set of girls to work with! I wish them the very best for the future.

Trainer A. C. Gaskell said:

A fantastic day with a great and highly motivated group of young ladies. All engaged and delivered well across the day with a wonderful collection of final speeches at the end. A fantastic confidence improvement for the group, about which I am delighted. Congratulations to these young ladies! Thank you for the day and all the support; it is always pleasure working at St Bernard’s!

STUDENT THOUGHTS

Marney Epton: "I think that today has helped me to believe in myself and what I want to talk about."

Grace Igoe: "I really enjoyed today. I enjoyed it more than I would have enjoyed a day off! The trainer was very supportive and funny. I would do it again!"

Katie Rolfe: "I was able to stand in front of people and speak with confidence - for the first time! I was also helped with my nerves."

Jessica Oxenham: "I felt that I was in a safe space where I could give my opinion and my views and everyone would listen to me."

Naysa Rebecca White: "I learnt to scrap what you've written and just speak from the heart!"

SPORTS & DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARDS EVENING
By Mr P. Walls, Assistant Head Teacher

On Wednesday 29th November, the annual event celebrating the sporting and Duke of Edinburgh achievements of our students took place. It was very pleasing to see so many parents & friends in the Bernardine Hall taking time out to acknowledge the efforts and accomplishments of our sporting talents. As they entered the hall they heard some familiar sporting tunes: from Pot Black to Ski on Sunday and were able to see a selection of sporting and D of E photographs.
Miss McGlashon, Head of PE, spoke eloquently about the impact all the award winners have had on the PE Department and the wider school and the fact they are inspirational role-models for others. Mrs Clancy, who is the Co-ordinator for the Duke of Edinburgh Award at the school, spoke passionately about the learning and commitment of the students taking part in the D of E Award, their resilience, fortitude and dedication.

These events demonstrate not only the success of students, but also the hard work and dedication by parents and staff throughout the year. In addition, nights like this are simply not possible without the professionalism of all concerned with the organisation of the actual evening: catering, the premises team, flower arrangers, technicians, administration, as well as curriculum staff. I am grateful to all for their contribution, which reflects so vividly the inclusive Catholic ethos of St. Bernard’s.

Our Guest Speaker was Sophie Holmes, who attended St. Bernard’s High School 2002-2009. During her time she was involved in all the sports teams, as well as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, and took GCSE and A-level PE. Her speech was heartfelt and received well by the audience of students, parents and staff. It was good to be reminded about the importance of being resilient, not putting things off or having regrets. Her message was inspirational and had a positive impact on those at the event.

Sophie has Cystic Fibrosis, which affects her lungs and digestive system, and this is what she uses as her motivation and drive to achieve things that others would say should be impossible. Following a spell in hospital six years ago, she decided it was time to take serious action. Sophie was told her life could be dramatically shortened if her health was not controlled, so she decided to create a long bucket list to push herself to regain her health alongside re-training as a Personal Trainer.

Since then she has summited Mount Kilimanjaro, in October 2016, completed an 100km Ultra marathon, a 176 mile relay and a couple of half marathons and has a long list of challenges lined up over the next couple of years, including 100km through the Sahara Desert, trekking Iceland and husky sledding from Norway to Sweden. Truly, an inspirational young woman!
The following prayer, said at the end of the evening, reminded us that whatever our abilities and skills, these come from God:

Lord, give us each day  
The wisdom to recognise  
Which things are important  
And which things are not.  
Show us how best  
To use the talents  
You have given us.  
Help us to use all opportunities wisely  
That we give in service to others  
The good gifts we have received from you.  
We ask this through Christ Our Lord.  
Amen.

CELEBRATING SPORTING ACHIEVEMENT & GOD-GIVEN TALENTS  
By Izzey-May Cann, Year 11

On Wednesday the 29th of November, the Sports & Duke of Edinburgh Awards Evening took place and was a highlight to all the sportswomen in the school. The guest speaker Sophie Holmes, a former student of our school, was an inspiring woman who bravely and confidently took us through her traumatic life experience and how she has found it in herself to continue doing the things she loves. By the end of her motivational speech there was not a dry eye in the hall and a pin drop could be heard as we listened to every single word she said. The PE teachers & Mrs Clancy gladly gave us students our certificates and badges and each person took their moment on stage. Such an amazing evening for us to celebrate our God given talents.

NON-UNIFORM DAY  
By 8C

Thank you for your contributions towards our Tickled Pink non school-uniform charity event on Tuesday 19th December. We appreciate all the money given. Please remember to bring in money tomorrow if you dress up and you’ve not given in £1.00 yet. Please remember that you must wear one item that is pink or red. Thank you!
O Lord Jesus Christ, who by your example taught all people to be kind to one another and generous to those in need,
Bless all who seek to bring cheer to the hearts of others during the coming days.
Let your spirit of goodwill be abroad in the world,
And help us to remember that it is more blessed to give than receive.

Let us join with the angels to praise you for your great and wonderful gift to the world.
As we remember the birth of Jesus, fill our hearts with gladness and the spirit of goodwill;
So we may praise you both in word and in deed.

O God our Father, at this season when our hearts are filled with the spirit of Christmas,
We thank you for Jesus.
Help us to remember also that he was rejected and crucified.
Forgive us when sometimes we turn away from you.
Fill our hearts with the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ,
So we may try to do your will.

Amen.
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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 19 December</td>
<td>Christmas Dinner and Non–Uniform Day (Wear Something Pink for Breast Cancer Care)</td>
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<td>Wednesday 20 December</td>
<td>School Closes at 12.30pm for Christmas Break</td>
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<td>Thursday 4 January</td>
<td>Students Return to School</td>
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<td>Wednesday 10 January</td>
<td>Yr 10 Parent Consultation Evening</td>
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<td>Thursday 11 January</td>
<td>7A Retreat Day at Nazareth House</td>
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<td>Thursday 11 January</td>
<td>Work Experience Meeting for Yr 10 Parents</td>
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<td>Friday 12 January</td>
<td>Lunchtime Careers Talk for All Year Groups–Fashion, Photography, Graphic Design etc.</td>
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<td>Tuesday 16 January</td>
<td>7C Retreat Day at Nazareth House</td>
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<td>Wednesday 17 January</td>
<td>7F Retreat Day at Nazareth House</td>
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<td>Wednesday 17 January</td>
<td>Yr 11 Parent Consultation Evening</td>
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<td>Thursday 18 January</td>
<td>7M Retreat Day at Nazareth House</td>
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<td>Thursday 18 January</td>
<td>Yr 9 Tetanus/Polio Injections</td>
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<td>Friday 19 January</td>
<td>7R Retreat Day at Nazareth House</td>
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<td>Monday 22 January</td>
<td>Yr 9 X Band Geography Trip to London Zoo</td>
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<td>Tuesday 23 January</td>
<td>Yr 8 Y Band Art Trip to the V&amp;A</td>
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<td>Tuesday 23 January</td>
<td>Yr 10 Jack Petchey Public Speaking Finals</td>
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<td>Tuesday 23 January</td>
<td>Yr 11 Drama Trip to Fortune Theatre</td>
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<td>Wednesday 24 January</td>
<td>Yr7-10 Swimming Trials</td>
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<td>Wednesday 24 January</td>
<td>Yr 12 Parent Consultation Evening</td>
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<td>Thursday 25 January</td>
<td>Yr 9 Y Band Geography Trip to London Zoo</td>
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<td>Saturday 27 January</td>
<td>Bronze DofE Training Walk at Garons Park</td>
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<td>Saturday 27 January</td>
<td>Revision Seminar for Yr11 Students</td>
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<td>Monday 29 January</td>
<td>Yr 8 X Band Art Trip to the V&amp;A</td>
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<td>Wednesday 31 January</td>
<td>Yr 9 Options Evening</td>
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<td>Thursday 1 February</td>
<td>Yr11 Intermediate Maths Challenge</td>
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