



Message from the Head Teacher

Welcome back!

It's an exciting time at St Columba's; not just welcoming our older students back but also greeting our new Year 7s. We have over 180 new Yr 7 students – it's nice to be popular! See how their first day went in the pictures on page 3.

As we welcome our new students we are already thinking about next year's Yr 7s with plans for Open mornings and our Open Day. To give you plenty of notice I would like to remind you that our Open Day is on Saturday October 1st. I am very much aware that when it comes to giving you sufficient notice on calendar changes it would be fair to say that we "could do better". The Governing Board will be deciding on the calendar for 2017/18 at their next meeting and I will be suggesting that we retain the two week

October Half Term that has been introduced this year.

I understand that this will not be ideal for everyone but the overwhelming responses I have received to my summer letter have been in favour of this plan.

Our GCSE results were outstanding.

Science, English, French, Geography, History and Maths were all significantly above the national average figures. Our students do well because of the care they receive from their families and the teaching of our wonderful staff.

I am very proud of our students' academic success I am even more proud of the young men they have become.

Fred's Prayer for the Week

Lord, we pray for wisdom for our world.
We pray for those who struggle for justice for the deprived and despairing
May the light of Christ be the source of wisdom for all the world. Through Christ our Lord. Amen
God bless, Fred (Chaplain)

Saint Teresa of Calcutta, who we may still think of as Mother Teresa, can teach us so much – not necessarily by what she said but what she did.

In the Yr 10 assembly yesterday Mr J Woodcock read out a well-known prayer of hers that deserves repeating:

Anyway

People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered. Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies. Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you. Be honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight. Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous. Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, will often be forgotten. Do good anyway.

Give the best you have, and it will never be enough. Give your best anyway.

In the final analysis, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway

Mr N Fisher



D

Monday

Sausage and Mash with Yorkshire Pudding with Onion Gravy

Quorn Sausage served with Mashed Potatoes and Yorkshire Pudding

Seasonal Vegetables

Blueberry Muffin served with Custard

N

Tuesday

Chicken and Bacon Pie with Roast Potatoes
Cheese and Mushroom Pie

Seasonal Vegetables

Apple and Pear Crumble served with Custard

E

Wednesday

Sweet Chilli Chicken and Egg Fried Rice
Vegetable Stir Fry

Seasonal Vegetables

Chocolate Cake served with Chocolate Sauce

S



Thursday

Chunky Beef and Vegetable Casserole served with Potatoes

Thai Green Curry
Vegetable Chow Mein

Seasonal Vegetables

Jaffa Cake

Friday

Fish and Chips

Southern Style Chicken and Potato Wedges
Cheesy Pasta Bake

Baked Beans

Pain au Raisin

Available Daily

A wide selection of
Hot Snacks, Rolls and Sandwiches

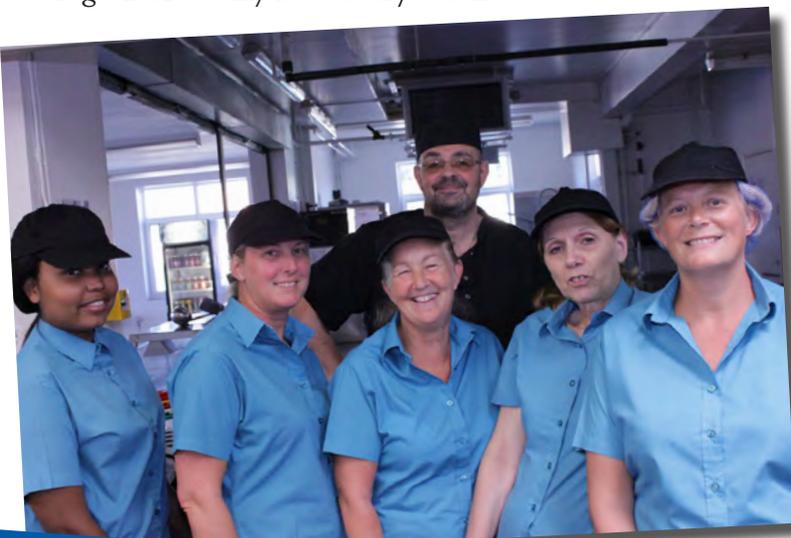
WEEK COMMENCING 12.09.16

Food Glorious Food!

Check out Week 1 of our new Menu

Our new menu starts on Monday, and we hope everyone will enjoy the new tasty lunches (all with vegetarian options) hot snacks, rolls and sandwiches produced and served by our fabulous canteen staff: (l to r) Miss Wright, Mrs Kirk, Mrs Sherry, Chef Mr Dancy, Miss Lee and Mrs Walters (not pictured: Mrs Webb)

Look out for the following week's menu at the top of Page 2 of *Weekly News* every week!



Jack Petchey Awards



Students can now nominate for the Jack Petchey award via the nomination form on the school website.

Young people selected should be those who have gone above and beyond, and achieved – perhaps where others thought they might fail.

Ultimately, it is our young people who can recognise the hard work and efforts of their peers.

Nominations can be handed in at reception or to Mrs Brackstone in the library.

Year 7 First Day



Students waving goodbye to parents and carers



Head of Art (and Form Tutor for 7L) Mrs Archer leading students away to their form room for the first time



Head of Year 7 Mr Eldridge speaking to our new students



Students enjoying their free lunch

Poetry Club

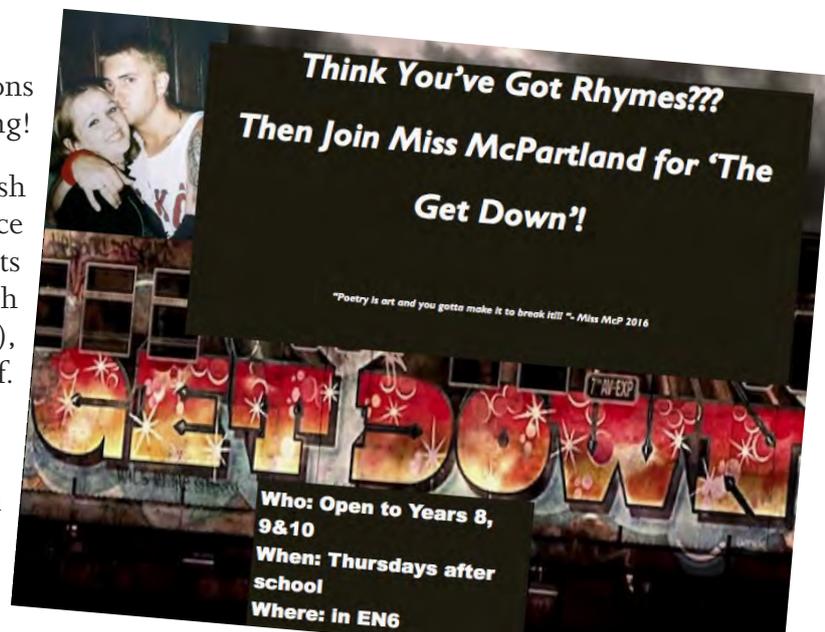
Is your son always spitting rhymes in the shower?
Does he see himself as the new Eminem or Drake?

Next Thursday sees the start of a new after-school club called 'The Get Down'. It will involve students engaging their talents in spoken verse (rhyme and/or rap and MCing) and developing their ability to study and enjoy poetry in an extra-curricular context.

There will also be National competitions with cash prizes to play for so get practising!

The group will be run by our new English teacher Miss McPartland, whose experience and previous career in the performing arts means she's had contact with artists such as DeShaun Holtman (MC Proof from D12), Goldie, Tinie Tempah and Eminem himself.

Come along to EN6 from 2:35 - 3:05pm on Thursdays to find out more.



Step Into Dance

The Iona Theatre

Thursdays 2:45 - 3:45pm

A partnership between the Jack Petchey Foundation and the Royal Academy Of Dance, 'Step Into Dance' is the largest on-going, inclusive secondary school dance project in the UK.

Through a programme of regular classes, performance, creative and professional development, Step Into Dance provides the opportunity and structure for young dancers to progress and excel. Please see Mrs Brackstone or Miss Sudra for details.



Photo: Robert Christopoulos

JACK PETCHHEY FOUNDATION
STEP INTO DANCE
LED BY ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCE

Be part of Step into Dance!

Sign up for weekly dance classes where you'll learn new skills and techniques from a professional dancer, as well as having the chance to perform at exciting events throughout the year.

Day: _____ Time: _____
Room: _____ Contact teacher: _____

ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCE
Jack Petchey Foundation
Inspire • Motivate • Achieve

Step into Dance is a partnership project between the Jack Petchey Foundation and the Royal Academy of Dance. The Royal Academy of Dance is a charity registered in England and Wales. The Jack Petchey Foundation is a registered charity No. 1076888 and No. 0623633.

Film Evening

St John Fisher Church, Bexley

Our next film evening will be on Wednesday 21st September when we will show the 1st of a 2part movie on St Rita of Cascia. The patron saint of hopeless situations is immortalized in this deeply inspiring movie.

The second part (featuring a recap) will be shown on Wednesday 5th October. Watch either or both parts.

The film which includes subtitles, will be shown in St John Fisher Bexley Church Hall, admission is free, light refreshments will be served, bar open, and all are welcome. Arrivals from 7pm for 7:30pm start.

Our Lady's Film group is pleased to show

St Rita of Cascia

Weds 21st Sept & 5th Oct 2016; 7 pm for 7.30 pm starts; 2-part movie – watch either or both parts (part 2 will feature a recap)



the patron saint of hopeless situations is immortalized in this deeply inspiring movie. The powerful story of a brave and loyal woman who helps her husband overcome his dark past and convert to the Faith, she happily bears him two children and later endures immense pain as she loses everything. Rita finds new hope through a convent of sisters and develops an inspiring union with Christ

FREE ADMISSION
ALL WELCOME
SUB-TITLES



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www.freewebs.com/stjohnfisherchurch



Encountering Christ
 Prayerfully preparing for the
 Sunday Mass and praying in
 particular for our school families



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 18th September 2016 - The Twenty Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Relax & Remember

Set aside 10 -15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross † and remain still for a minute of settling silence. **Call to mind the love that God has for you. Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present.** Then read the Gospel, preferably aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.



2 Read

Taken from the Gospel for 18th September 2016 (Luke 16:1-13): The Dishonest Steward

Jesus said to his disciples, "There was a rich man and he had a steward who was denounced to him for being wasteful with his property. He called for the man and said, 'What is this I hear about you? Draw me up an account of your stewardship because you are not to be my steward any longer.' Then the steward said to himself, 'Now that my master is taking the stewardship from me, what am I to do? Dig? I am not strong enough. Go begging? I should be too ashamed. Ah, I know what I will do to make sure that when I am dismissed from office there will be some to welcome me into their homes.' Then he called his master's debtors one by one. To the first he said, 'How much do you owe my master?' 'One hundred measures of oil,' was the reply. The steward said, 'Here, take your bond; sit down straight away and write fifty.' To another he said, 'And you, sir, how much do you owe?' 'One hundred measures of wheat,' was the reply. The steward said, 'Here, take your bond and write eighty.' The master praised the dishonest steward for his astuteness. For the children of this world are more astute in dealing with their own kind than are the children of light. And so I tell you this: use money, tainted as it is, to win you friends, and thus make sure that when it fails you, they will welcome you into the tents of eternity. The man who can be trusted in little things can be trusted in great; the man who is dishonest in little things will be dishonest in great. If then you cannot be trusted with money, that tainted thing, who will trust you with genuine riches? And if you cannot be trusted with what is not yours, who will give you what is your very own? No servant can be the slave of two masters: he will either hate the first and love the second, or treat the first with respect and the second with scorn. You cannot be the slave both of God and of money."



3 Reflect

After spending a few minutes considering this Gospel, continue by reading Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection.

This parable can be deeply disquieting if we take it as an allegory, that is, if every element in the story is meant (as in Matthew's Parable of the Wheat and the Tares) to have an equivalent in reality. We can't have God praising the steward for his frauds! No, the point of the story is simply the steward's energy and inventiveness, his shrewdness as a 'child of this age'. A lot more thought often goes into how to make money than into how to spend it to the best advantage of others! The danger and encumbrance of wealth is such that skill and imagination is needed in using it to live justly here on earth and to prepare ourselves for life in heaven. The full brilliance of the story is even more subtle: Jews were forbidden to lend to Jews at interest. The steward cuts off the interest from the bills of his master's debtors, for oil was commonly lent at 100% interest, and wheat at 25%. It was easy to return olive oil adulterated with cheap sesame oil, but if I scatter handfuls of chaff in the grain I give you back, you will spot it immediately. So the steward makes his master obey the Law! The sayings added at the end hit the nail on the head: no slave can serve two masters, God and money.

Is there anything in your life which prevents you from fully serving God?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

4 Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Then thank God for any insight you may have received. Conclude by asking God to bless you with one of the following spiritual gifts to help you act on any resolution you have made: love, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, self control, patience, or joy. Please remember to pray for the Church and particularly our school families. **Then conclude by requesting the prayers of Our Lady & St Joseph.**



**The Wednesday Word is under the patronage of St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church
 Within the tradition of the Catholic Church, each Wednesday is dedicated to St Joseph**

WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of Sunday 18th September 2016



First Reading: *Racketeering*

Amos 8:4-7

Listen to this, you who trample on the needy and try to suppress the poor people of the country, you who say, "When will New Moon be over so that we can sell our corn, and sabbath, so that we can market our wheat? Then by lowering the bushel, raising the shekel, by swindling and tampering with the scales, we can buy up the poor for money, and the needy for a pair of sandals, and get a price even for the sweepings of the wheat." The Lord swears it by the pride of Jacob, "Never will I forget a single thing you have done."

Amos is one of the first of the prophets whose sayings were gathered together and written down. He was peacefully pasturing sheep in the southern hill-country near Bethlehem, when the Lord summoned him to trudge northwards and denounce the racketeering of rich against poor in Samaria. Archaeologists have shown us the traces of these practices. The capital in the North was moved westwards to link with Mediterranean trade: marriage alliances with merchant princes, grand palaces displacing slum dwellings, expensive (and idolatrous) ivory inlays on the furniture. The fat-cats would not listen to Amos, told him he was not welcome in their country, sent him packing and continued to fleece the helpless poor, for they controlled the money supply and the means of exchange – till the mighty power of Assyria swept down and destroyed them all. For us today perhaps the equivalent would be the rich nations profiteering from poor, unequal business deals, unfair trade, 'international aid' packages to dispose of excess production, the rich growing richer, the poor growing poorer in a thousand ways. The message of Amos is linked to the Gospel by the final sentence: use wealth to make friends in heaven by your generosity.

Can you do anything to prevent the exploitation of the poor?

Second Reading: *Universal Salvation*

1 Timothy 2:1-8

My advice is that, first of all, there should be prayers offered for everyone - petitions, intercessions and thanksgiving – and especially for kings and others in authority, so that we may be able to live religious and reverent lives in peace and quiet. To do this is right, and will please God our saviour: he wants everyone to be saved and reach full knowledge of the truth. For there is only one God, and there is only one mediator between God and mankind, himself a man, Christ Jesus, who sacrificed himself as a ransom for them all. He is the evidence of this, sent at the appointed time, and I have been named a herald and apostle of it and - I am telling the truth and no lie - a teacher of the faith and the truth to the pagans. In every place, then, I want the men to lift their hands up reverently in prayer, with no anger or argument.

As the gospel message was proclaimed beyond the restricted world of Judaism, in the larger world of the Greco-Roman Empire, new questions arose for Christians. The first question addressed here was relationship to the civil authorities, and the answer: accept them and pray for them, particularly in their attempts to provide a worthy framework for human life. The second question, a pressing one in our post-Christian society: can non-Christians be saved? Here the scripture tells us that God wills all people to be saved and come to knowledge of the truth, and that there is one mediator, Christ Jesus. How is this so? Is it enough to grope towards a God 'in signs and symbols' (Vatican II), accepting a power outside ourselves, to which all are indebted for existence itself, the ultimate authority in human life? And what about the Mediator? How can people be saved by Christ if they do not know him? Is it enough for them to acknowledge their human deficiencies and failures and lay them before God? What responsibility do we have to express our Christian values in such a way that others may come to share them?

How can all people be saved by Christ, even those who do not know him?

“God wills all people to be saved and come to knowledge of the truth.”

The Wednesday Word: *Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God*

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