

28th June 2024

Dear Families

We have enjoyed the sunny weather this week at St. Paul's. It has definitely tired us all out though!

On Monday we welcomed students from four secondary schools across the Diocese to our annual Faith in Action Day. It was an excellent opportunity for students to work in communion together to explore their faith in an open and honest way. Students were very privileged to hear stories from three visitors who have real lived experience of the asylum system in this country. Their testimonies were devastating and highly impactful, rightly leaving an impression on all of us who heard them. This was set in the context of Catholic Social Teaching and the Church's response by Deacon Jim Hannigan, Director of Caritas Northampton. The students were able to ask questions and respond in practical ways in the afternoon.

On Monday evening I was privileged to attend one of the services for the Sacrament of Confirmation. It was lovely to see some of our students making this commitment. Year 7 students have enjoyed a visit to the Gurdwara in Leadenhall. They seemed to really enjoy this experience.

On Wednesday morning, the Student Council and Student Leaders had guest speaker, Paul Salver, in to commemorate the genocide that happened in Srebrenica. Mr Salver is a retired teacher, but also a passionate and committed advocate for Human Rights. He currently serves as the Regional Vice Chair for the South East region for 'Remembering Srebrenica.' Furthermore, Mr Salver is a Laureate of Remembrance for the Auschwitz Birkenau State Museum in Poland and is a national award winner for the Holocaust Educational Trust. Mr Salver came in to speak to the students about the annual commemoration of the Bosnian War genocide. His talk included a discussion of his recent trip to Bosnia and personal experiences with survivors. Through his presentation, students learned about the siege of Sarajevo and the Srebrenica genocide. The theme behind the event was to underline the importance of standing up against those who try to divide us and to unify against hatred, discrimination, harassment, and prejudice. At the end of the session, students hung a promise on the 'Tree of Hope' that they intend to keep in order to make the world a better place. The session was excellent and empowered our students to understand the importance of interconnections and in building a safer, stronger, and more cohesive society for all. Students were very moved by the presentation and want to discuss further actions to do more.

On Wednesday evening I was delighted to attend the KS4 Awards evening. It was lovely to recognise the wide range of achievements of our dedicated students. Our Guest speaker was Andy Halliday who managed the GB Men's Olympic hockey team in 2012. After a career spanning three decades policing London and balancing the demands of international sport, he was able to reflect on a wealth of experience at the sharp end of life. His story ranged from the crime frontline of eighties Britain to the

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fight against terrorism in the nineties. With such despair at the bombings of July 2005 contrasting the joys of July 2012, he witnessed and experienced, first hand, the very worst and the very best of life in our capital city. It was a truly engaging speech.

Today has been a wonderful day. It is the Feast of St. Peter and St Paul and so we have celebrated with Mass for everyone. We have also welcomed many of our former students into school for our Alumni Day. It has been lovely to reflect on the rich diversity and talent that makes up our community. I am very grateful to our Careers team for making this happen. Would you be interested in talking about your career at a Sixth Form assembly, work related learning day or other event? If so, please complete the form on this [LINK](#)

Congratulations to Jua Mbikay in Year 12 for having his essay on what is the most under researched area of medicine shortlisted in the Oxbridge Launchpad Essay Competition.

Two of our Duke of Edinburgh Gold students, Charlotte Brewer and Ester Martinkova, have been nominated in the leadership category of the This Is Youth Awards 2024. Well done to both of them.

Next week is focused on welcoming new members of our community to our school. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday our new Year 7 students will be spending a day with us and then we welcome their families on Thursday evening for an information evening. On Wednesday we will be welcoming all new teachers who join us in September for an induction day where we try to tell them everything that makes our community special and unique in just one day! Luckily we don't have a significant staff turnover this year.

Just as we welcome new members of our community, on Monday we mark Year 11 ending their time in lower school with their Prom. I will be at a Governors meeting until 8.30pm but then I will go to the Prom as I love to see the amazing outfits and see Year 11 spending time with each other.

On Thursday, Year 10 & 11 Duke of Edinburgh students will be completing their assessments until Saturday. I hope the rain stays away for them. Finally on Friday we will be celebrating our Day of Culture. We have lots of fantastic activities and events planned, as well as food to enjoy from around the world. Everyone is welcome to come to school wearing something that is linked to or represents their culture. I really enjoy celebrating the rich diversity that exists in our amazing school.

For our community focus we are aware that a number of stores are offering discounts on schoolwear. Marks and Spencer is offering 20% off all schoolwear (excluding third party brands, school footwear, bags and essentials) from 2nd July. Aldi is offering a £5 school uniform bundle from 4th July and Tesco has 25% off school uniform from 23rd July. Sainsbury's 25% off uniform discount started on 19th June.

We are considering holding a car boot sale in the school and would like to know if you would be interested in attending as a seller or a buyer. If this is of interest to you please let us know by completing the form on this [LINK](#).

An article has appeared in MK Citizen about inconsiderate parking around the school and MK College

<https://www.miltonkeynes.co.uk/education/call-for-action-in-leadenhall-over-parents-parking-across-residents-driveways-4681799>

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Please can I ask again that you park considerately when you are dropping off or collecting your children from school.

Finally, a reminder that on Monday at 9.15am the whole school will experience a lockdown practice. This is done during registration time so that Tutors can run through the lockdown procedures and everyone can hear what the lockdown bell sounds like. Everyone will be reassured that this is just an opportunity to practise. This is a useful time for me to ask parents to do a number of things should we ever have a real lockdown. Firstly, in such an event it is only natural that you will want an update as to what is happening. I am a parent myself so I understand this. I will authorise staff to send out a message to all parents but only if it is safe to do so. I won't compromise anyone's safety. I ask that you understand this especially as your child is likely to message you first on their phone even though for safety reasons we ask them not to use them in a lockdown situation as the lights and sounds from the phone can bring attention to people who are hiding. Secondly, I would ask you not to come to the school site. In the event of any emergency, the police and senior staff will be prioritising the safety of your children. They cannot concentrate on supervising the car park or managing large groups of parents. You have my commitment that I will be open and transparent with you in any real lockdown situation and get the information to you as quickly as I possibly can whilst keeping everyone safe. I hope that all makes sense but if you do have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to make contact with me and I can talk you through everything. Thank you for your understanding.

I hope that you have a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely



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