

13th December 2024

Dear Families

I can't believe that we have just finished week 14 of the Advent Term and we still have one week to go! I think everyone is absolutely exhausted and really needs a holiday. We have some lovely events to look forward to next week so hopefully that will keep us going!

This week Advent fundraising has gathered pace! I have resorted to giving donations without taking the cakes or donuts now because it was getting ridiculous! Children and staff have collected many items for the MK Hospital for children and older people. 7 Elizabeth (with a little help from 7 Kolbe) raised an amazing £200 during their mini Christmas fete this week and were just brilliant at running the stalls. Congratulations to them all. On Monday, Year 12 Politics students took part in an excellent event. They participated in a Model United Nations event with some pupils in the United States. They produced position statements, opening speeches and presentations on the theme of possible solutions to the supply of narcotics across borders. Such a rich opportunity for our students.

Our wonderful choir performed at the Christmas service at St. Augustine's church on Wednesday evening. This is such an important part of our parish liaison, and they did us proud. Yesterday I enjoyed serving Christmas lunch in the canteens to all of our children. I think they enjoyed the Christmas music that accompanied the wonderful lunch. I am grateful to our Catering team who produced such an amazing lunch.

Last night we held our final STEM lecture of the calendar year. The theme was 'searching for life in our solar system' and I hope all who attended enjoyed the discussion.

Today 15 Student Leaders and Student Council members went to MK Hospital to drop off the gifts that they have been collecting for the past month to the patients of the children's and older people's wards. They had collected well over 100 gifts that were donated by the Student Council, Student Leaders, and staff. Students met with the Ward Head of Departments in the hospital to give their donations. Four students also gave speeches explaining how the donations directly relate to the school's Catholic Social Teaching of 'Option for the Poor'. The hospital was really impressed with how eloquent the student speeches were, how thoughtful the gifts were, and how compassionate and empathetic our students were. They impressed upon the children how what they are doing is making a difference and how very special it is that they took the time to come and deliver the gifts themselves. Students are already looking forward to doing this again next year and giving a merrier Christmas to those who are in need. Thank you to all who gave donations!

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In sporting fixtures our Year 10 boys' football team consolidated their unbeaten run when they played Stantonbury and won 3 – 0 thanks to two goals from Luis and one from Stephen. Our U16 girls' football team continued their challenging journey in the County Cup. The girls got off to a good start against Cottesloe going 3 – 0 up within the first 15 minutes. However, their intensity dropped allowing the opposition back in the game and they finished the first half 3 - 3. Thankfully the girls played some scintillating football scoring some outstanding goals and eventually winning the game 9 – 3. Our striker Bella finished the game on a hat trick and player of the match, Tilly gave a superb performance. The girls have their final group game on Monday at home to The Grange where a win is needed. They will then have to wait and see what the results are in the other game to see if they have qualified for the knockout phase. Well done to all those involved.

Next week we have some significant events planned. All week there will be reward events for Years 7, 8 and 9 with a Christmas theme. On Tuesday our EAL Department will be taking a selection of students to the pantomime in Milton Keynes Theatre. We will also have a visit from local F1 team Red Bull for a STEMx event for Year 9 students. That afternoon Bishop David will be visiting school to formally open the Emmanuel Centre for us. Later that evening Paul Herbert, our Chair of Governors, will be providing an inspirational keynote speech for our Key Stage 5 Awards Evening. I am very much looking forward to welcoming back our former students to St. Paul's. On Thursday I will be enjoying watching the fantastic achievements of some of our pupils in the next edition of 'Emmaus has talent!' Finally, on Friday everyone is invited to 'Wear something Christmassy' on our last day of term.

I'm delighted to tell you we have received a significant award from the Section 106 funding held by the local authority. This is the funding provided by developers of housing projects. We are putting it towards our new Sixth Form block. Our planning application is being considered at the moment. I'm very grateful to the local authority for supporting our bid.

One of our Year 12 students is fundraising for the Camps International trip to Peru in July next year. He is doing a December Daily Dash challenge which means he is going out and running, jogging or walking between 3 and 5km every day (even during Storm Darragh and on Christmas day). So far he has clocked up 53.8km. If you would like to support him his Just Giving can be found at <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/william-rudland>.

Congratulations to two Year 9 students, Amelia Kowol and Chukwula Onah, who have been accepted onto the Royal Institution Masterclasses in Computer Science (run by the University of Oxford). To be selected they had to be in the top 20% academically in their year group and had to write and explain why they should be considered for this masterclass. They then had to apply directly to the University of Oxford and we are delighted to say that they were amongst only 25 students from Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Berkshire, Swindon and Buckinghamshire to be selected. More information on the masterclasses can be found [here](#). Well done to Amelia and Chukwula.

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I hope that you have a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely



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