

Tel: 0504 31299

Fax: 0504 31194

Email: [office@ourladystemplemore.ie](mailto:office@ourladystemplemore.ie)



# Cumarsáid

## Newsletter December 2020



## OUR LADY'S TEMPLEMORE

### Welcome from the Principal

I am delighted to welcome you to the Christmas edition of Cumarsáid. 2020 has been a year like no other. The Coronavirus sent the world into a spin with millions of people losing their lives to Covid 19. In Ireland we have experienced challenges that none of us could have imagined this time last year. If we look at the education sector alone; the extended period of school closure from March – May with a move to on-line learning. The postponement of the State Examinations, the introduction of Calculated Grades for the Leaving Certificate Class of 2020 and the enormous work completed for the safe reopening of schools for the school year 2020/2021.

Since September students and staff have adapted to mask wearing, constant sanitising and the imposition of social distancing. The recreational and sporting activities enjoyed by students have been seriously curtailed by public health restrictions. I say well done to students and staff on your work this term. You have shown wonderful resilience and determination and you have succeeded in sustaining quality in teaching and learning during the public health emergency.

As a nation we are working hard to adhere to public health guidelines and in doing so we are keeping our communities safe. During the pandemic we have witnessed extra-ordinary human kindness and numerous examples of resilience and determination. The Late Late Toy Show being one of the latest examples where more than €6 million was raised for charity. At Our Lady's students and staff have worked together to bring festive cheer with the wonderful Advent display in the foyer, our Christmas tree in the courtyard and the Christmas door initiative.

At this special time of year, we think of the true meaning of Christmas and the birth of Jesus Christ Our Lord. May He come into your homes and your hearts with a message of joy and peace. My wish for you this Christmas time is that the treasures and traditions of the season will fill your hearts with hope and happiness. May Jesus our Saviour shower His Abundant blessings on you and your families. And may 2021 bring new hope, an end to the suffering associated with the Coronavirus and God's blessing on all of you. Merry Christmas and a very happy and safe New Year.

Beannachtaí na Nollag oraibh go léir.

Patricia Higgins



### RETIREMENT

In October, we said a fond farewell to our colleague and friend Ms Anne Kiely who retired from Our Lady's having given more than 20 years of sterling service to the school. As a teacher of English, History and Religion she enjoyed the respect of her students and the admiration of her colleagues. She was passionate about her chosen subjects and she was dedicated to supporting students to realise their potential. We have all witnessed Anne's deep religious faith which infused her gentle presence and impacted those she met in her daily life. Anne made a significant contribution to the Religion Department and assisted at many liturgical events during her time at Our Lady's. Her flair and creativity enhanced celebratory occasions not only with her floral arrangements and displays but more importantly with her faith inspiring reflections and gentle presence. Anne worked diligently coordinating the Pope John Paul II Awards, linking school, parish and community achievements. She also organised the Annual Christmas Shoebox Appeal, assisting children in need.

On behalf of students and staff at Our Lady's we wish Ms Anne Kiely a long, happy and fulfilling retirement blessed with good health and good fortune. We pay tribute to Anne and echo the words of the late John O Donoghue

*Now is the time to enjoy your heart's desire,  
To live the dreams you've waited for,  
To awaken the depths beyond your work  
And enter your infinite source.*



### FIRST YEAR

First Year students have enjoyed subject sampling since the beginning of the school year. They have had the chance to experience the range of subjects that Our Lady's has to offer.



Music



Wood



Home Economics



Visual Art



Engineering

## WELLBEING IN OUR LADY'S

During this term students and staff have worked together to ensure that all members of our school community are cared for and supported. Each year group enjoyed a socially distant Wellbeing breakfast in the Canteen and Social Area. Many thanks to Ms. Higgins, Joe Morrissey and Bernie McGrogan for looking after everyone. It is always good to take a little time out, especially when there are so many changes as we embrace the 'new normal'. Now more than ever we all need to mind ourselves and each other.

National and international events including Stand Up Awareness Week, Remembrance Day and International Men's Day were acknowledged at Our Lady's in an effort to help raise awareness amongst our students.

Stand Up Awareness Week is supported by the Department of Education and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. It helps to build a school system that values the safety and wellbeing of LGBTI+ students.

We look forward to the days getting longer and brighter in the New Year and the opportunities that lie ahead. After a busy term, we hope that everyone gets the chance to relax, unwind and take time out during the holidays to do the things that you enjoy most. Do your best to help others as much as possible. A little gesture or act of kindness can go a long way and make a big difference in another person's life.



## ERASMUS PROJECT: KEY ACTION 229 (KA 229)

Our Lady's has been successful in an application for an Erasmus project. The project is funded by the European Commission and will run from November 2020 – November 2021. The title of our multiculturalism project is "Harmonise: Building Bridges". The project will explore multiculturalism in school settings with a view to increasing awareness and building acceptance of difference. The following are the participating schools:

Sacred Heart College Senior School	Malta
Bishop's Conservatory Secondary School	Malta
De La Salle College	Malta
Bidaide Fundazioa – Amaurre Ikastetxea	Spain
Our Lady's Secondary School	Ireland

The aim of the project is to enhance the ability of schools to address multiculturalism and to strengthen the capacity of participating schools to include students of different beliefs and cultures through long-term planning at school policy level. Students were invited to attend a number of events in recent weeks including an information session, a social gathering in the canteen and a presentation of gifts celebrating St. Nicholas' Day on 6<sup>th</sup> December. Members of the committee (Ms Marion Quinlisk, Ms Eimear O Callaghan, Ms Sinéad Keaney, Ms Patricia Higgins and Ms Linda Fogarty) met to discuss activities which will take place in the New Year. We look forward to many more celebrations in 2021.



## LEARNING TO LEARN STUDY SKILLS FOR SIXTH AND THIRD YEARS

*16 Days away from school – use them wisely!*

*Were you happy with your November results?*

*Think about the study you can get done over the two weeks*

**THINK OF THE POSSIBILITIES**





## STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council have played an active role in the life of the school this year. Students meet with their mentors Ms. Cooney, Ms Flannery and Ms Doyle on a regular basis and they work with the school principal to ensure high quality learner experiences at Our Lady's. The Student Council initiated an outdoor Christmas tree project and held a very special tree lighting ceremony in the courtyard on Tuesday, 1st December. The presence of Tipperary footballers and former students Colin O'Riordan, Emmet Moloney and Conor Ryan got the festive season off to a flying start and brought joy to students and staff members alike. The event was live streamed to all classes and everyone really enjoyed the break from class and the Christmas cheer. We missed our past pupil Dean Mc Enroe who was unable to attend due to work commitments.



Before the mid-term break the Student Council and Ms Patricia Higgins provided treats and a welcome outdoor break for all students.



The Student Council organised a fundraiser in aid of Stephen Simmons who was seriously injured in a car accident last year. This proved very successful and a cheque for €1,000 was presented to Ben Simmons (past pupil) by Anna Ryan on behalf of the Student Council.



### CHRISTMAS ADDRESS DELIVERED BY AOIFE SHELLEY (CHAIRPERSON OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL) AT THE TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY

Neal Maxwell once said "Small lights have a way of being seen in a dark world. As we stand here at the darkest time of year our wish is that these lights will symbolize hope and joy after what was for many a bleak time.

We all know that light also creates a shadow and as a community we have faced great difficulty this year. People have experienced illness and bereavement, we have been cut off from our friends and our classrooms.

However where there is light there is hope. Since last March, in many ways, we have been looking forward to the end of this year. We realise we still have a journey to face and we trust that these lights will guide us along this path into the New Year.

As we gather to switch on the lights, we know that there is light at the end of the tunnel and we hope to raise the spirits of our whole school community. On behalf of the Student Council, I would like to thank Ms Higgins for her generosity in allowing us to have this tree. This tree is not just for the Student Council, but for each member of our school community.

We would like to sincerely thank the Tipperary footballers who have brought light to our school and to the whole premier county. We wish them every success in the coming days.

Christmas is a magical time and this year is no different. We would like to wish you and your families a happy Christmas and a prosperous new year





## TRANSITION YEAR

Despite the public health restrictions our Transition Year students have managed to stay active throughout the term. TY classes have enjoyed many activities including a Personal Safety Talk from Alex Walsh, a Law Day Experience, a Segway workshop and a trip to the Derg Isle Adventure Centre.

Alex Walsh gave a presentation on the importance of internet and personal safety. The presentation began with an interesting insight into his personal experiences followed by practical tips and demonstrations on how to protect yourself in the event of a physical attack or assault.

The Segway workshop was great fun. Students learned how to control the Segway and as they became more confident, they maneuvered their way around an obstacle course. At the end of the session, classes were filmed as they navigated the halls and corridors at Our Lady's. A very enjoyable experience for all involved.



Derg Isle Adventure Centre



Segway workshop



Ascend Healthy Relationships



Law Day

Transition Year students have participated in a series of fitness classes where instructors demonstrated manageable moves, such as, tumbling, cartwheels and walking on a beam. In the boxercise class, students got to grips with a variety of boxing techniques. The final class before the holidays was a lesson on Sean Nós dancing. Students learned some basic steps and progressed to the brush dance by the end of the lesson. Although initially daunted by the coordination required to execute the brush dance students soon got the hang of it. Fitness classes are a wonderful outlet and students have participated enthusiastically in each of the activities.



5 aside soccer match

The Transition Year Challenge is back. Classes go head-to-head for the top prize of **Class of the Year**. Working together, the class that attains the highest number of points wins a surprise trip. Points are awarded for class events and class challenges. Students started off the year with an egg drop challenge where both classes had to design and manufacture a safe harness for the egg. The test was a drop from the second floor!

In October students competed in a Tug of War competition. Last month a 5 aside soccer match was played with teacher participants Mr. Lynch and Mr. Quinn. This was an excellent game which was fiercely fought. Students are very excited to see what the new term will bring.



1st Prize—Christmas Door



2nd Prize—Christmas Door



3rd Prize—Christmas Door