



# Chaplaincy Report

## Spring Term January – April 2020

### UPDATES FROM AUTUMN TERM

**Advent Mass** – On December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019 around 450 students from across the year groups at school gathered for the End of Term Advent Mass celebrated for us by Fr Chris Hughes. Members of the Y7 and 8 Culture Club sang a Christmas song in the Chichewan language of Malawi, we had artwork from across the school prepared for the Tuesday morning Mass and music from our school choir and school orchestra.

**Advent Angel Week** – 48 members of staff signed up for Advent Angels week to carry out kind gestures for other members of staff in the build up to Christmas.

**Advent Fundraising** – Staff raised a total of £188.50 for St. Oswald's Hospice in the run up to Christmas.

**Holocaust Memorial Day** – On November 12<sup>th</sup>, we marked a special Holocaust Memorial Day in school. Students were involved in leading the collective worship for the whole of Year 9 with a liturgy praying for the victims of the holocaust between 1939 and 1945.

**Trips** – Students in Year 7 enjoyed their retreat to Ampleforth organised by the RE department and students in Year 8 enjoyed an overnight stay at the Youth Village.

### SPRING TERM

**Weekly Year Group Masses** – Weekly Masses have continued as usual in the School Chapel each Tuesday morning. Mass prep sessions continue to shape the theme and structure of the Mass in Years 7-10. Students prepare by volunteering to read, writing bidding prayers, designing posters on the theme and decorating the chapel, leading music (either choosing songs or singing themselves) and acting drama based on the Gospel. Students this term have also considered how they would welcome one another to the Chapel.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Year Group</u>	<u>Priest</u>	<u>Notes</u>
January 7 <sup>th</sup>	Year 11	Fr John	Tuesday after Epiphany
January 14 <sup>th</sup>	Year 9 (T-Side)	Fr Martin	"Care for Society" – "The harvest is rich but the labourers are few"
January 21 <sup>st</sup>	Year 10 (A-Side)	Fr John	"Family" – Mary meets Elizabeth
January 28 <sup>th</sup>	Lourdes Mass (Year 12)	Mgr Andrew	Attended by all those travelling to Lourdes as well as representatives from the Catenians who we thank for their vital financial support for our young people
February 4 <sup>th</sup>	Year 12 (12O)	N/A	No priest available on this day. Short liturgy with the theme of John 10:10 (linked to school Mission)
February 11 <sup>th</sup>	Year 13 (13R)	Fr Chris	ROTD – Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.
February 25 <sup>th</sup>	Year 9 (A-Side)	Mgr Andrew	"Forgiveness" – Story of the woman caught in the act of adultery
March 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Year 7 (7M)	Fr David	Lenten ROTD

March 10 <sup>th</sup>	Year 8 (T-Side)	Fr Martin	Lenten ROTD
March 17 <sup>th</sup>	Year 13	Fr Chris	Lenten ROTD
March 24 <sup>th</sup>	Year 8 (A-Side)	Fr John	Lenten ROTD
March 31 <sup>st</sup>	Year 10 (T-Side)	Mgr Andrew	Lenten ROTD

**Prayers in Registration** – Prayers continue to be written and lead by students in registration time. During Lent 2020, we have extended two of the five days of prayers. Students in the John Paul II Award Group have written reflections based on the Stations of the Cross to be used as an act of Collective Worship during Registration Time.

**School Mission** – The School Mission was an overwhelming success across the two weeks that the Youth Ministry Team were in school (January 27<sup>th</sup> – February 7<sup>th</sup> 2020).

The current school newsletter details everything that took place throughout the week.



Highlights included:

- The Year 5 day led by Year 9 and 12 students – 236 students from across our feeder primary schools joined us to learn music and dance to go back to their schools with and teach the younger students.
- The Family Night with students engaged in drama, dance and music; then fundraising for Kenya.
- YMT's fantastic sessions delivered to all students from Year 7 to Year 13 on the theme of "Unbroken" – there is nothing that we can ever do that will cause God's love for us to break.
- The buzz in and around school all week – students were well behaved and enjoyed the nature of the mission.
- Activities going on in lessons, on breaktimes and lunchtimes each with a different take on the theme (especially in lessons outside of RE)
- Students in Year 11 wrote a special Mission song which was titled 'Unbroken'. The song was performed at various points throughout the week, and we plan to revisit in Assemblies and at the St. Thomas More Feast Day celebrations in June.

- The collection of almost 300 coats to be donated to 5 charities – Shelter, the People’s Kitchen, Changing Lives, the Diocesan Justice & Peace Refugee Project and Centrepoin.

Feedback from students was overwhelmingly positive. Some of the feedback is contained below:

*What message will you take away from the Mission?*

“I have learnt, to be unbroken means that even if any difficulties attack us, they cannot break us because we have something greater and truer within us. We shouldn't forgive and forget but to learn from our experiences.”

“No matter how much things you have been through, good or bad, you will always have worth in the world.”

“That it's okay to take things slowly because good things take time.”

*What was the highlight of the week for you?*

“Helping the YMT with anything, whether it be dancing with the year 5s or performing a TikTok flashmob. They're an amazing, hard working group of people that I've loved to get to know in the past week.”

“The session itself was fun, and I enjoyed having time of prayer to respect and ground myself. Well done to the sixth formers for their flashmob too!”

“The positivity that the people from the mission brought with them”

*Describe the Mission fortnight in one word*

Reflective. Inspiring. Fun. Educational. Interesting. Amazing. Unbroken. Thought-provoking. Togetherness. Enjoyable.

**LGBT ‘Vegas’ Group – Faith & Spirituality Q&A Panel** – As part of the School Mission, and the ongoing work our school counsellor Orlean has been doing with LGBT+ students, we held a Q&A Panel to discuss faith, spirituality and sexuality on Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>. The panel was made up of Fr Chris Hughes, and three LGBT men and women who attend parishes in our Diocese.

The session was overwhelmingly well received as students were given the chance to ask their questions and have an open and honest time to share their fears, anxieties and hopes as young Catholics who are also LGBT.

Feedback has been very good, and it encouraged many of the students to get more involved in the School Mission. It is hoped we could perhaps do more things like this in the future, especially for the wider school.

**Fundraising –**

**Newcastle Cat & Dog Shelter** – A group of students in Year 7 have been planning a week of Cake Sales for Newcastle Cat & Dog Shelter since October. They decided it would be the first week of Lent so that it was an act of giving. The students raised an astonishing £341.43 for the shelter and Michael will arrange for them to visit to hand over the cheque. The students involved were Lucy Woodward, Jennifer Henderson, Laila McKale, Annabel Whitehead, Rose Jackson and Annabelle Office.

Maggie's Cancer Care – Another group in Year 7 have also been selling cakes for Lenten fundraising to raise money for Maggie's Cancer Care. Students involved are Mayleigh Bradshaw, Layton Robinson-Longstaff and Sidney Dawson.

Teardrop – Money was raised for local charity Teardrop for a Staff Cake Sale at the end of the first half-term. The social event ties in with the school's commitment to staff wellbeing, but is also an opportunity to raise some money for smaller charities that are close to the hearts of our staff members. Staff are encouraged to nominate charities for future cake sales.

Lourdes Pilgrimage – Many of our Sixth Formers have been raising funds for disadvantaged young people to travel to Lourdes at Easter. Students have been involved in lots of fundraising events including running a tuckshop for Lower School students on Tuesday and Wednesday breaktimes.

Students in Year 9 have also been fundraising for Lourdes as part of their Social Enterprise project in ICT/Business lessons. Students in Year 11 have also been fundraising as part of their Lenten commitment.

Fr David Smith's Kenyan Muhoroni Project – On the Mission Family Night, members of our community enjoyed a Bingo evening to raise funds for the project in Kenya that Fr David Smith has been telling our students about this year. We raised around £250 for the good cause.

### **Retreats & Pilgrimage**

Lourdes Pilgrimage – 11 pupils were due to attend the HCPT Lourdes pilgrimage alongside Mr Murray, Mr Merchant, Mrs Hallam and Michael the Chaplain with Group 714. Unfortunately, due to the spread of the Coronavirus, the entire pilgrimage has regrettably been cancelled. It is a shame as the students have put in so much hard work fundraising, and we have recently spent a weekend together at the North East Regional Prep Day. It is hoped the same students will join the pilgrimage in 2021 with Group 714.

YMT Summer Festival ('God Camp') – 28 students have signed up and paid to attend the annual 2-day trip to the Youth Village. They will join 600 other young people from across the Diocese for talks, music and relaxed time celebrating life and faith.

### **Lent**

Ash Wednesday – Following on from the success of last year's Ash Wednesday, we decided once again to approach the day in two ways. Every class in the school watched a 5-minute reflection on the meaning of Ash Wednesday and why it is important to Catholics. It was an opportunity for students to reflect on their own lives and think about the contexts in which we are all called fast, act and pray.

At the two lunchtimes, the School Chapel was opened for students to come and receive ashes. Michael ended up standing outside on the yard so as to be visible to students. Some students used the chapel as a quiet space to think and pray, whilst the ashes were being distributed outside. Students approached the Chapel for ashes right the way through lunchtime and around 300 students came along. Michael also played United Pursuit worship music into the yard to encourage young people to come forward.

Prayers for Registration – as above, JP2 students have written reflections on the Stations of the Cross to be used in registration. Some younger students will also be leading in assembly an act of Collective Worship following on from the Mission in February.

CAFOD – All CAFOD boxes will be collected in the last couple of weeks of term, and donated to their Lenten appeal.

Other Fundraising – As above, students have raised money for Maggie's Cancer Care and the Newcastle Cat & Dog Shelter this Lent.

Friday Morning Prayer – Staff Morning Prayer will follow a Lenten theme over the coming weeks.

**Tyne & Wear Citizens** –

### **Community Organising Update**

The Tyne & Wear Citizens alliance is currently in its second cycle of listening. We are currently asking students "What is putting pressure on you, your families or communities?" so that we have a good idea what will be our priorities within TWC going forward.

Before Christmas, Michael and Claire Rodgerson (community organiser for Tyne & Wear Citizens) met with members of the Student Council to begin this listening process. Orlean and Michael have also begun listening with the students that they work with.

In terms of action, students carrying out the John Paul II Award are trying to engage the bus company Arriva to agree to a meeting with us so we can discuss 16-18 year old bus fares (which are unfairly priced as compared to other bus companies).

### **Mental Health Campaign**

Students this term have been continuing to get involved with the Schools-based Counselling Campaign which we are hoping will soon be a national priority.

Students invited Jonathan Ashworth, MP to school. He has agreed to come and hear about the work of the Mental Health Core Team. We are still waiting for this meeting to be set up.

Students attended the North Tyneside Council offices for a meeting with Jacqui Old, Head of Health, Education, Care and Wellbeing to discuss a proposal for a pilot scheme of a full-time counsellor for the schools in North Tyneside. As a direct result of students sharing their experiences of the benefits of school counselling, Ms. Old agreed to fund the pilot programme for North Tyneside Schools. This was not an easy task, but an incredible satisfying win for students on the Core Team.

Students are preparing to attend the Northern Trade Union Conference. The NUT want to put Schools-based counselling as a motion so it can be adopted as policy. In order for this to be voted on and approved, students passionate about mental health support will attend and share their story.

BBC Radio 4 are also keen to interview students to find out more about the campaign.

**St. Thomas More Mental Health Award** – Michael has been working with Mark Henderson and other key staff on developing the school's strategy for clear and consistent mental health provision in school. Part of this is undertaking the process of achieving the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools Award. We will soon be submitting our self-evaluation so we can begin the process of working towards the first tier of the award.

**John Paul II Award** –





4 Students received the John Paul II Award this year at the award ceremony which was this year held at the Hilton Hotel, Gateshead. They were:

Ben Anastasi	Gold
Rachael Cook	Gold
Jennifer Devine	Bronze
Megan Shiels	Gold

**St. Thomas More Feast Day Celebrations** – We will soon begin to think about our celebrations for the Feast Day of St. Thomas More for what will be our fourth annual celebration.

**Partnership Co-Workers group** – The Partnership Co-Workers group have continued to meet regularly (once a half-term). This term the group focusses on upcoming plans for Confirmations (see below) and planning more strategically for Youth Sunday on the Feast of Christ the King this November.

**Confirmation Programme** – This year's Partnership Confirmation Programme will begin on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020 with the students being confirmed on Wednesday, May 20<sup>th</sup> 2020 with Bishop Robert Byrne, C.O.

The programme has been co-ordinated by Ali Hain (chair of the Partnership Co-Workers) and Michael the Chaplain and follows the schedule as set out below.

**"Come enkindle in us the fire of your love"**

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Venue</u></b>	<b><u>Theme</u></b>
March 20 <sup>th</sup>	St. Cuthbert's, North Shields	Session One – Our Unique Journey / Baptism
April 2 <sup>nd</sup>	St. Aidan's, Wallsend	Session Two – Inspirational People
April 3 <sup>rd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup>	Emmaus Youth Village	Proposed Retreat to the Youth Village
April 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Our Lady & St Columba's, Wallsend	Session Three – Gifts of the Holy Spirit
April 30 <sup>th</sup>	St. Edward's, Whitley Bay	Session Four – Celebration and Explanation of Mass with Mgr Andrew
May 7 <sup>th</sup>	St. Cuthbert's North Shields	Session Five – Confirmation
May 14 <sup>th</sup>	St. Cuthbert's, North Shields	Preparation for Confirmation Mass
May 20 <sup>th</sup>	St. Cuthbert's, North Shields	Confirmation Mass with Bp Robert Byrne C.O.

**Chaplaincy Updates** – Michael has been involved once again with the High School Musical school show in the capacity of Show Chaplain. He is involved in all aspects of the production, not least being there for spiritual and moral support leading prayers before rehearsals.

Michael will also accompany Year 10 students to Paris this coming July.

Michael has also started having supervision with Fr. Kevin Daly of the Road Centre, as part of the school's commitment to provide pastoral support for all its key pastoral staff who work day in and day out tending to the pastoral needs of students.