

23rd January 2012



## From the Headmistress:

It is my privilege, on behalf of Notre Dame Senior School, to attend the annual Catholic Independent Schools' Conference.

Our conference theme this year "Saints in our time" was inspired by Pope Benedict's words to the young people gathered at St Mary's University College in Twickenham on his most recent visit to the United Kingdom.

*"I hope that among those of you listening to me today there are some of the future saints of the twenty-first century. 'God loves you more than you could ever begin to imagine... He wants the best for you.'"*



Our first guest speaker was Father Timothy Radcliffe OP who talked of the difficulties that the young people face in trying to be the best that they can be, when many of those deemed as role models do not promote 'the best' in terms of values. Money, clothes, material goods and constant noise distract our young people from the formation of worthwhile values and from being the best they can be. So what can we do? What can we, parents and teachers, do to promote and encourage the young people to be the best that they can be?

We can lay before them the opportunities to be kind, considerate and compassionate. We can give them our example by seeking a quiet time of silence in our busy lives. To help our young women develop the right sort of values and virtues, we can create a 'safe environment' where the formation of goodness and kindness is promoted and acknowledged, thereby counter-acting the

often selfish, material values that are encouraged in our modern world today.

Our second guest speaker, Monseigneur John Armitage, spoke about the links between spirituality and sport. He talked about his experiences in the East End of London that bound the community in the formation of values when faced with a common goal. In the same way, he said, we should use sports as a tool to promote the values of life - the rules of sport lead to the formation of values, virtue and maturity. Sport requires discipline, practice, consideration for others and dedicated team work. Sometimes it is for the benefit of the team to change positions or sequence and so it is in our schools - we have to consider the position and roles of others, giving others a chance and in this way we develop values and virtues that are seen. He talked about the world in which we live providing "loads of information" - texting - emailing - news items speedily transferred - but what formation does it provide?

Does our world encourage the formation of ancient, orthodox and stable values?

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We took part in a number of workshops on Thursday evening, among them one run by young people from CYMFED - Catholic Youth Ministry Federation - who are organising the Flame National Youth Congress at Wembley Arena, which some of our Senior School students are attending. On Friday, Principal Celebrant of the Conference Mass was Archbishop Bernard Longley, who spoke of the time he had spent at Notre Dame in Cobham.

Our final guest speaker, Father Adrian Porter SJ, explored how it may be possible to encourage our young people to be the best they can be in the midst of the everyday business of our schools. In the middle of the clamour and demands of the curriculum, what opportunities can we create to help them?

- \* As we sat and listened, I thought of the cake sale taking place at that moment in Notre Dame School, to raise funds for the people so badly affected by the floods in the Philippines just before Christmas. I thought of the Company of Mary, Our Lady Sisters whose lives and community education centres would never be the same again as they set about clearing up and rebuilding.
- \* I thought of all the fund-raising initiatives that have taken place to assist in the building of The Rainbow School in Albania; the young women in the Sixth Form who, every other year, go out to Albania with t-shirts, books, pens and pencils to teach the underprivileged children. Of course, the most precious gift they give is their time.
- \* I thought of the Sixth Formers who started the process of Notre Dame students joining the Arundel & Brighton Diocese pilgrimage to Lourdes to help the sick. Now, Year 11 students also go as 'Red Shirts' and the Sixth Form students as "Hospitalite" - many continuing to go on pilgrimage long after they have left Notre Dame.
- \* I thought of all the fund-raising efforts we have employed for the Lestonnac School in Kinshasa.
- \* I thought of the recent student Pilgrimage to Bordeaux, as well as the gifts donated to the Cardinal Hume Centre at Christmas.

Yes, I do think that we create the culture for 'goodness', for being the best that we can be, at Notre Dame. The girls do get the opportunities for formation of the worthwhile values as we accompany them.... in their efforts to build their lives for today and tomorrow.

### **Another successful sale!**



On Friday our pupils made cakes and brought them into school to be sold for the flood victims in the Company of Mary Our Lady Missions in the Philippines and Dar Es Salam. We were overwhelmed by the generous response. Many girls, and perhaps their parents, had clearly spent hours making, icing and decorating their cakes. Everyone poured into the dining room at break, Prep and Senior pupils, and within 15 minutes every single cake had been bought and we had raised over £300. This was such fun and enjoyed by all so we are considering repeating the event within the next couple of weeks so please look up your recipes and get baking!

### **Congratulations to Mr and Mrs Smith**



Our Prep and Senior Schools were united this month by Senior's Mr Smith and Prep's Mrs Smith's new arrival. Their daughter, Isabella Phoebe, was born on 1st January weighing 5lbs 2oz.

Congratulations to you both from the Notre Dame Community.



## Thank-you from the Cardinal Hume Centre

Sandra from the Cardinal Hume Centre came to Notre Dame in December to collect the gifts we were sending for Christmas and this is part of the email I received in response:

*“Thank you all SO much for the wonderful gifts. When I arrived at the Centre, several people came out to help me unload my car and there were lots of ‘oohs’ and ‘ahhs’ over the goodies. They were given out as gifts to all our visitors over Christmas. We absolutely loved the Christmas cards. They were such a personal gift. We hung them up in our family centre and then gave one card to each client on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. Thank you very much indeed to you and all the girls for your wonderful support.”*



## The Times

We were absolutely delighted to have had the Scholarships and Awards granted to Year 11 students for entry into Notre Dame Sixth Form announced in Saturday, 21st January’s copy of The Times. We are very proud of all of our Year 11 students, their hard work and commitment to study as they prepare for their GCSE final papers this summer.

## Canine Visitors take school by storm....

When former pupil, Claire Eaton, offered to give a talk about her work as a ‘Hearing Dogs for Deaf People’ trainer, she probably did not anticipate being mobbed in the school car park. The main focus of this enthusiastic welcome was, in fact, Claire’s demonstration dog, Bertie.



Bertie entertained and educated Year 7, and their Big Sisters in Year 12, about some of the useful tasks that a ‘Hearing Dog’ can undertake for its human partner: signalling the ringing of doorbells, telephones and oven timers; waking people up with gentle nudges or more ferocious patting; directing people away from the direction of fire and smoke alarms and alerting parents to the needs of young children.

Bertie was accompanied by a young dog, Hattie, who is still undergoing the socialisation process. This stage of the training is organised by one of the charity’s volunteers; many of those in the audience were tempted to volunteer for this themselves (parents please note!). ‘Hearing Dogs for Deaf People’ is a relatively small charity but it faces a huge demand for its trained dogs and an overwhelming waiting list. Volunteer socialisers, who keep the dogs for a year, are therefore very much in demand. Bertie’s demonstration in the Sixth Form Common Room, and Claire’s informative responses to the many questions posed by the girls, made it a most enjoyable afternoon... and several adults sneaked in too, proving the universal appeal of dogs. We are very proud of Claire and the work she does.

### Awards

**NOTRE DAME SENIOR SCHOOL**  
Notre Dame Senior School is pleased to announce the following Academic Scholarships and Awards for entry into Notre Dame Sixth Form in September 2012.  
Congratulations to:  
Academic Scholars – Mary Harrison and Caitlin Moran. Montaigne Drama Scholars: Victoria Brooks and Lily Neuhart. Languages Award: Hannah Stockden. Art Awards: Charlotte Robson and Sydney Pimbley. Textiles Award: Sophie Lightowler.  
PE Awards: Kirry Marsh and Joanna Simpson. Notre Dame Award: Laura Appleton, Olivia Barrett, Sarah Flanagan, Victoria Jones, Nicola Sekovic and Daisy Ticker-Porter.



## Quiz Night



This Friday is Quiz Night! Places are still available if you would like to join us for what promises to be an enjoyable evening, with a new quiz format and curry supper. If you would like to join a team or have a team ready, please email [quiznight@fond4u.co.uk](mailto:quiznight@fond4u.co.uk) or contact the School Office for further details.



## Senior School Class Reps' Meeting



The next Class Reps' meeting will be held in the Sixth Form café on Monday, 6th February - Reps for Years 7, 8 & 9 - 7.00 - 8.30 pm and Years 10, 11, 12 & 13 - 8.30 - 10.00 pm. Please contact your Class Rep if you would like anything raised during the meeting.

## News from the P.E. Shop



The current games skirt is being replaced by a 'skort' - P.E. shorts and skirt in one! Mrs Cox in the P.E. shop has samples for the girls to try on for size and will be placing an initial order on Monday, 6th February. Delivery time is approximately 2-3 weeks. Thereafter, a small stock of skorts will be held in the P.E. Shop. To assist with sizing - Mrs Cox will open the P.E. Shop at lunchtime on Friday 27th January and Monday 30th January.

Girls may continue to wear their present sports skirt until they have out-grown them, a small stock of skirts are still available to buy at a discounted price.



## Parents' Survey



Thank you to those parents who have kindly completed and returned the Parental Surveys regarding Extra-Care provision. Please return your completed survey to your daughter's Form Tutor or the School Office by Friday, 27th January. Many thanks for your support.

## Entrance Examinations 2012



Offer Letters for places into Year 7 this September were posted out to parents on Friday. Acceptances should be made in writing to the Senior School by Friday, 27th January.

## Dates for the Diary



**Tuesday 24 January**

**Year 10 Reflection Day**

**Year 11 Full Reports**

**Year 8 Parents' Evening 4.30 - 7.00 pm**

**Wednesday 25 January**

**Years 7 & 8 Surrey Netball Tournament**

**Thursday 26 January**

**Surrey Individual Swimming Championships, Trinity School**

**Friday 27 January**

**FoND Quiz Night, 7.30 pm, Montaigne Studio**

**Monday 30 January**

**Year 11 Parents' Evening (by invitation) 4.30 - 6.30 pm**

**Year 9 ISCO Careers Session, 2.15 pm**

**Tuesday 31 January**

**Year 11 Reflection Day**

**D of E Presentation Evening at ACS, Cobham, 7.30 pm**

**Wednesday 1 February**

**Spanish Exchange Students arrive at Notre Dame Senior School**

**Monday 6 February**

**Senior School Class Reps' Meeting, Sixth Form Cafe**

