

# NCC Chaplain's Report January 2023 to March 2023

***"A faith without bearing fruit in life, a faith that doesn't bear fruit in works is not faith,"*** the pope said in a Mass homily, focusing on the day's first reading from the Book of James (2:14-24).

**Weekly Masses:** New term and Y11 started off our season of Masses for Spring with the Epiphany on Fridays at 12:20. Fr Tom OMI and Fr Allan are available to celebrate the Eucharist for us, thanks to the generosity of our visiting clergy. Every year group has a scheduled Mass. We celebrate the feast days and when possible, the special days of the church calendar. Students take on leading roles in the Liturgy: reading, serving, bidding prayers, operating the PPT as well as singing the hymns and responding to the prayers in Mass. This term we have introduced the offertory, where each group presents the gifts for the Mass.



**Prayers:** The school continues to be a place of prayer. Classes say a prayer either at the start or the end of each lesson. The chapel is the hub of our Spiritual life and love of a Loving God and Father. Pupils and staff are able to use the chapel for personal, private prayer. The Chaplain leads group prayer services in the chapel. These are currently for the Y7 & Y8, 8Q1 and 8Q2 on Wednesdays. Pupils take on parts in the services. These offer time to reflect, to pray and to develop a relationship with God.



**Ash Wednesday & Lent:** Shortly after Spring half term was Shrove Tuesday and then Ash Wednesday. The Chaplain gave a week of assemblies about Ash Wednesday and the meaning of Lent. The school has decided to raise funds for CAFOD's school Appeal – the Big walk. Students heard about the Lenten promises of Praying, Fasting and Giving to charity. Links were made to other beliefs and cultures. Fr Tom OMI was available to celebrate the Ash Wednesday Mass, to bless and administer the ashes alongside the Chaplain. The Cross was placed on the forehead and the words "repent and believe the Gospel" were said. Staff and pupils were asked to think of what they are going to do for Lent and to Pray, Fast and Give.

**What are *you* doing for LENT?**



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**Ukrainian Anniversary:** The school stood in silence to mark the 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the start of the Ukrainian invasion by Russia. Ukrainian pupils held their flag with pride and were standing in front of the school as we remembered and prayed for the people displaced and involved in the War. A candle burnt that day for the people who died, the intentions of the Ukrainian people and for Peace.



**Altar server training:** This term we had more training for those who serve at Mass to secure the knowledge and experiences they already have. Pupils are always willing to step up and get involved.



**Holocaust:** A group of 15 pupils were at the Holocaust Memorial Day to learn about racism and extremism. The way certain groups and beliefs were treated cruelly by the Nazis in WW2. It was to hear how what we see as unacceptable, and intolerant would become the accepted mentality. We heard from a Concentration Camp survivor - Lily Ebert (99yrs young), who was in Auschwitz. Lily spoke passionately about her experience, how she survived and went on to be a campaigner for religious tolerance.

**Reconciliation:** We looked at our need to change, to turn back to God, and ask his FORGIVENESS. During Lent we think about our relationship with God, to say we are truly SORRY, to decide to change. In the sacrament of reconciliation God is offering us his forgiveness, rebuilding our relationship with him and each other. *"... I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, ..."* Students had time with the chaplain to reflect their living as God asks us to.



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**The Big Lent Walk for CAFOD:** Newman are supporting CAFOD relief effort to help support our global neighbours especially in Syria and Turkey. CAFOD is part of the D.E.C (Disaster Emergency Committee). This Lent we will be walking to raise money as part of the Lenten Promise of charity. DEC charities and their local partners are among the first responders providing urgent aid. We are signing up for the LONDON BRIDGE WALK on Thurs 30th March. Pupils will leave school at 9am and travel into London (Tower Hill) via Tube, walk along the Southbank and North bank of the Thames to Lambeth Bridge. Collecting for Charity. We aim to return for the end of the school day. Pupils are asked to get sponsorship from family, friends, and relations.



**GARDENING ENRICHMENT:** The new group for gardening enrichment has started in the Spring term. The weather is not so conducive to working outside. Snow, frost and rain, Winter is not finished yet. Pupils from 6<sup>th</sup> Form are providing hours of gardening work around the school. They are learning new skills, vocabulary and tools as well as finding the gardening a “good place to think.” Mental wellbeing and mindfulness is very important. The advantages of gardening to the mental health of the individual. The laugh, the panter and the good naturedness is matched by the work done. The Spring group have planted shetland potatoes, tidying up around their open space, weeding and mulching.



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**Flame 2023:** The chaplain and the Head of RE took a group to FLAME 2023 in Wembley, Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March. It was heartening to see so many young, enthusiastic Catholics. The students were able to meet others from around England and Wales. The Statue of Our Lady of Walsingham was processed into the Ovo Arena and was placed on the stage for the entire day. The theme this year was "Rise Up" based on the annunciation story. The key note speakers spoke with passion and were inspiring. Cardinal Tagle spoke about the angels in our life that causes us to "Rise Up" and act like Mary did when hearing the Angel Gabriel.

