

# NCC Chaplain's Report June 2021 to Nov 2021

***"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, new academic year, less Covid restrictions. The school was keen to restart the traditional Friday Masses for the various year groups. Starting with Yr11, we celebrated Mass for those preparing for their GCSE in 2022. This has been a challenging 18 months plus for those preparing for upcoming exams. Fr Allan and other local clergy are willing to celebrate the Masses.



Pupils from each year group read, serve and operate the PowerPoint.



## **Prayers:**

The school continues to be a place of prayer. The chapel is the hub of our Spiritual life and love of the Divine. 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 & 8 on Wednesdays. Pupils take active parts in the services. These offer time to reflect, to pray and to develop a relationship with God.



## **Liturgy Group:**

Once again Mr Roche will be establishing Year Group Liturgy Groups. These pupils (2 per form) are involved in organising the Year group Mass as well as the major religious events around the school. This allows the boys to discuss the readings for the Mass, write prayers for the Mass and to participate in a particular way in certain events in the school year. Form Tutors hold the elections and notify the chaplain of the results.

**Newman CoFee Morning**  
Fri 19<sup>th</sup> Nov  
9:00 – 11:00  
In the Conference Room - (access from steps beside the Foodbank).  
Drop in - ask about Debt Management, Fuel costs & tariffs, Advice on Budgeting & Money Matters.

## **FIRM FOUNDATIONS:**

The School, via the chaplain, has joined with Firm Foundations and advice to renters holding a free coFee morning inviting parents and guardians into school to meet and to discuss with financial advisors. Looking at the possible benefits available, the best fuel tariffs and schemes, managing debt. If they are on a low income, benefits or a pensioner, they may be entitled to certain discounts and schemes to reduce the cost of your utility



bills such as Warm Home Discount worth £140, Thames WaterHelp or WaterSure. Plus they may also be entitled to join the Priority Services Register - a free utility support service to help people with additional needs or in vulnerable situations.

The chaplain has also been involved in redeploying furniture that the school no longer needs. Families are invited via email to come along and discuss their needs with Mr Roche about what furniture they would like to take, eg. desks, chairs, shelves etc. Reuse, recycle and reduce – Laudato Si



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**Food growing Project:** The edible garden, which was started earlier in 2021 to provide fresh vegetables for the Foodbank. The pupils helping the Mutual Aid group to weed, to water and to



harvest produce. The allotment was a great success and has provided over 500 meals worth of produce. The idea is to develop the area and the vegetable



beds to do even more for the upcoming year. The pupils are maintaining the grounds for the winter. Let's Grow Brent group, part of the Mutual Aid group are looking for funds to develop and to expand, getting more topsoil and equipment and seeds.

## **Remembrance Service:**

Every year the chaplain leads the school in the 2 minutes of silence and reflection on the 11<sup>th</sup> of the 11<sup>th</sup> at 11 o' clock. Last year was virtually but this year was in glorious sunshine. All the school gathered on the playgrounds. Prayers were said, scripture recited and a wreath lain at the foot of the cross. The pupils and staff stood quiet and still to mark the 2 minutes. The Last post sounded out over the school grounds and beyond. Later, Mr Roche drove a group of pupils to the local Willesden Cemetery, to the war graves to pay respect to those who died in the wars, to remember the dead. There we placed Newman Crosses around the monument.



## **GARDENING ENRICHMENT:**

Enrichment group has now been constituted and the 12 pupils for the 6<sup>th</sup> Form are providing 2 hours of gardening work around the school. They are learning new skills and finding the gardening a "good place to think" according to one of them. 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. This group work of the gardens and the buckets around the school as well as the edible garden.





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**RE Lessons:** As part of the RE curriculum the Y8s: care of God's creation. As mentioned in "Laudato Si" Pope Francis says, "The Earth is God's gift to us, full of beauty and wonder, where the fruits of the Earth belong to everyone. But what we see today is that our common home has never been so hurt and mistreated as it has been in the last 200 years." Pupils come out to do whatever is possible to improve the school environment.



## **Marian Procession:**

What a welcome return to the local liturgical year, the procession of Our Lady of Willesden around Harlesden. The event was paused during Covid and now was very well supported. Pupils from Newman along with family members turned out to walk and recite the Rosary as the Statue of Our Lady was processed around the streets. Motorists and locals showing respect and understanding. The weather was an additional blessing as it was a pleasant Autumnal evening. The Honily was delivered by Bishop M Campbell OSA.

## **FOODBANK:**

The School's Foodbank is well stocked with many outside agencies providing food: fresh, frozen and longlife. The Foodbank had a large amount of certain tins of Grapefruit, mandarines or catering size baked beans. The pupils along with Mrs Mullahy and myself started to make jams and marmalades. Other products we provided to other local foodbanks that might be able to use them quicker. We provided tins to Sufrā – who we have supported since 2017, to Quex rd Parish and to the Kilburn Street Kitchen.



## **EAL & Practical Lessons:**

Learning through another language has its own challenges. Where possible the chaplain helps out with some practical solutions to hone in on home grown talents from the pupils' Fatherland. Where science lessons can move from the class to the garden. Where innate skills resurface. This develops literacy skills as they



communicate about their experiences or the lack thereof. The notion of germination, photosynthesis become real. Mr Roche encourages that the pupils then take care of their vegetable patch, watering, harvesting, etc.



## **Bereavements:**

**PRAYERS FOR THE HOLY SOULS**

Year name: \_\_\_\_\_

The names of the dearly departed to be included in prayers for the Holy Soul

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November is the Month of the Holy Souls, when the Church remembers those who have gone before us to their eternal reward. This year we focused on those who lost someone over the past 2 years. All staff and pupils were given the opportunity to record the names of their deceased loved ones. These were prayed for in the school Masses. The Book of the Holy Souls lay on



the altar in the chapel. We have experienced a high amount of bereavement among the pupils and staff. This is a time for gathering around and supporting the Newman family.

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Mr Roche attends the funerals of those members of school who would like the school to be represented. Mr Roche is always available to sit, talk, pray etc with pupils and staff. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen

## **REFUGEE WEEK:**

Every year Newman runs a very successful Summer camp Syrian Project. This year was no different. The School welcomes pupils. We welcome the individual as s/he is. The camp which is operated to support families recently arrived from Syria, Afghanistan etc. This is not just a summer program but runs into the rest of the year and years. Pupils stay because they feel that Newman is a school that welcomes Refugees, a school of sanctuary. Pupils spoke in public about their experiences during Refugee week in Wembley.



Mr Roche continues to be part of the Brent Multi-faith forum and part of the City of Sanctuary group. The

chaplaincy is open to all for all. So is the chapel.



## **DEANERY MEETING:**



It was great to have the October Deanery meeting in Newman. The Brent Deanery met to discuss how to support the Catholic schools in the Borough. Mr Coyle and the Head of St Claudine's gave passionate speeches about the need to have continued Parish clerical backing when parents are asking about schools for their sons and daughters. Brent clergy and parishes must think if they want

to have Catholic schools operating in their deanery. The time is now to act. The Deanery group were given a guided tour of the school by Mr Coyle and Mr Roche. Clergy were able to see pupils at work and to feel the rhythm of the day. They also have a great school lunch made from vegetables from the School Allotment.



## **Class Masses:**

With the easing of Covid 19 restrictions and the implementation of the vaccination program, we have been able to restart assemblies and Masses. Fr Albert has been away for most of the term due to personal circumstances and has now returned to the parish in Wembley. We would like to thank all the priests who are allowing us to continue to live a sacramental life. Fr Allen stepped in to support but also had to leave for family circumstances. Thanks to Fr Tom and Fr Steward, Fr Tebin for helping out. Watch this space. We have also drawn up a plan with Fr Andrew to celebrate class Masses in the school chapel. These are fortnightly. However Fr Andrew recently caught Covid and has not been available since early Oct. We wish him well.





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## **NEWMAN DAY:**

The Feast of St John Henry Newman was celebrated this year on the 21<sup>st</sup> Oct in the presence of Bishop John Sherrington. Newman day is



the 9<sup>th</sup> Oct but due to circumstances was moved. This was a blessing as Bishop John was able to spend the morning in school. He arrived at 10am to officially open our Newman Foodbank. This has



grown since the days Mr Roche arrived in Newman. When pupils provided tins etc for the needy. These were shared with the local SUFRA foodbank. During Covid the more structured idea of supporting the needy began to take shape. Then with the links in CARITAS and with the local community, a portocabin was ascertained and the Newman Foodbank Hub established. This has been operated from the School, by the school. Staffed by pupil volunteers, supported by adults. "The mustard seed has grown into the tree." Miss Grace has been a great asset to the Foodbank as she has established her links with local communities and groups. With her connections in Wates we were able to move to the present structure.



Bishop John blessed the Foodbank and spoke about the care of those in need. The ribbons were cut, one by the Bishop and one by a student member of the Foodbank. Those who were supporting the Foodbank: Wates, Let's Grow Brent, Caritas, etc were in attendance. Now the next stage of supporting the needs in the school and the area.

## **NEWMAN MASSES:**

Following the blessing and opening of the Foodbank, the focus was to the celebrating of 2 Masses simultaneously. One in the the Parish church of Our Lady of Willesden and the other in the school Hall. Both Masses



were planned by Mr Roche. Bishop John celebrated the mass in Our Lady of Willesden with staff and pupils from y7 to y11, meanwhile Fr Tom OMI from Quex Rd celebrated Mass with y12, 13 and those pupils in the Pathway program. Mr



Hughes (Head of RE) supported the pupils in school. Fr Stephen was the Master of Ceremonies in the church. The school band played the music for the hymns and the entire celebration went off splendidly. Pupils read beautifully and clearly, the servers carried out their duties and the day was a delight.



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To crown the School's special day each pupil has (as is the tradition) received a souvenir of the day – this year a Newman pen and a bar of Cadburys Dairy milk. As the pupils went home, they queued to be presented with these. Staff members also received a bar of chocolate and a Newman prayer card or book mark. It can be said

Founder' Day was well marked again this year. Especially after last years low key events. St John Henry Newman Pray for Us.



## **Breast Cancer Awareness Day – Wear it PINK**

Although this is not directly connected with the Chaplaincy of the School, Mr Roche is involved with this year's setting up, etc. On 22 October, we wore it pink and raised money for all those affected by breast cancer. Because of the rarity of male breast cancer men affected by breast cancer find little support in their fight against the disease. Male breast cancers are often diagnosed later, when the disease is already more advanced, leading to a worse outcome.



## **Advent & Christmas:**

As November draws to a close, we celebrate the Feast of Christ the Universal King. A feast set up after the 1<sup>st</sup> World War by Pope Pius (xi). It reminds us that no matter what kind of year you have just had that with Faith in Christ, in God, that His Kingdom will come and that His Reign will have no end.

We move forward in to a new liturgical year in the hope of the Return of Christ. But are we really ready for that. The school will explore that in the next few weeks.

