

# Calasanzius College, Oranmore

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## CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2009



### CHRISTMAS 2009

As we come to the end of 2009, it is timely to reflect on the year past. From the school's perspective 2009 has been an eventful, enriching and successful one. Our students continue to excel in academic and non-academic matters.

We are very grateful to all our staff, as they continue to give their best inside and outside the classroom. The level of support we get from parents is the envy of many schools around the country.

Without this support there is no doubt that the school would not enjoy the well-deserved reputation that we have in a wide range of sport and other activities.

The dedication and commitment of our staff and parents, in providing our students with opportunities for a well-balanced education, is not taken for granted.

We see ourselves as facilitators of this excellent work; long may it continue! We are conscious that many families are living in very uncertain and difficult times.

Our wish is that, as we all weather the economic storm confronting us, Christmas will provide us with a welcome opportunity to take time out and celebrate with our families and loved ones the true meaning of Christmas.

As we enter 2010, we hope that the year brings you all you wish for and perhaps a little more!



### HAPPY CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR

Joe Harrison, Principal.  
December 2009.

Marian Merrick, Deputy Principal.

#### PRE JUNIOR & LEAVING CERT EXAMS 2010

Parents are reminded that these exams will take place from  
**February 5<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> incl.**

In light of the economic downturn, staff have examined the costs associated with these exams and balanced these against the value of the pre-exams in preparation for the State Examinations in June.

THE FEES FOR THE 2010 PRE-EXAMS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

**PRE-JUNIOR CERT €100**

**PRE-LEAVING CERT €100**

Parents are requested to have the appropriate fee paid to the school office  
**before FRIDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> JANUARY 2010.**

#### *CAO Applications 2010*

Mr. Kavanagh will meet the parents/guardians of Leaving Cert students on Tuesday evening January 12th at 7.30pm to explain the CAO application procedures for University and Institutes of Technology. Other options for students will also be explained. The meeting will finish by 9:00pm.

#### *Career interviews*

Any parent/guardian who wants to make an appointment to meet Mr. Kavanagh can do so by phoning the school office or phoning the career office directly at 795172

## Transition Year News

### *Cope Galway Sleep Out*

Transition Year students will be sleeping out in aid of the homeless people of Galway on the grounds of St. Nicholas' Church on 21st December, the longest night of the year. The sleep out, organised by Cope, was set up to raise funds to support their work with homeless people of Galway. This is the first time that Cope Galway, has organised a Sleep Out and we are delighted to have been asked to take part.

Although the main objective of the Sleep Out is to raise funds, it is also to raise awareness of homelessness in Galway. We can experience what it would be like to have to sleep on the streets at night, in the cold and wet Irish weather.

Thankfully we won't get to experience the real ordeal and emotions that are involved with being homeless on that night as we know that our beds are waiting for us at home but we will hopefully raise an awareness and much needed funds especially at Christmas time when we look forward to our time at home.

Having had the opportunity to hear visiting speakers talk to us about how Cope helps and works with the homeless, our views of homeless people have changed dramatically.

To raise money we were asked to get people to sponsor us for the Sleep Out. If you want to help Cope and donate money, you can

### *Work Experience - November 2009*

From the 9<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> of November, all Transition Year students took part in work experience. Everyone tried to find work experience in areas that they had an interest in pursuing as a career. A huge variety of different types of work was chosen by students.

I did my work experience in the Four Courts in Dublin. I accompanied Senior Council Barrister Brendan Grehon. I learned the layout of the court and how it operates. Throughout that week I witnessed three murder cases and I also saw cases that were dealt with in the District Court.

The murder cases were very intense and I had to have a non-biased view of the case until evidence was proven in the trial, I found that quite challenging to do.

I also found that sitting in a court room and actually watching the case proceed was difficult at first, but then it became easier as the week went on as I adjusted to the environment of the court room. I thoroughly enjoyed my work experience in the Four Courts and found afterwards I was able to choose the type of Law I would be most interested in pursuing as a career. Our two weeks in the world of work was a very valuable experience for us all.

*Bronagh Caulfield*

### *Trip to Oranmore Castle*

It was a damp and dreary Wednesday morning and having just finished our Maths class, we headed off on our trip to Oranmore Castle - a piece of history right before our eyes that none of us had ever visited. Weren't we surprised when we discovered that Oranmore Castle has a long and interesting past.

First of all we were brought through the entrance into the grand hall. A fireplace and candles provided the only light and heat in the Castle and we learned that when the Castle was bought it was falling down and had to be renovated. We were then taken to the next floor and we were shown the bedrooms. The first bedroom is home to the White Lady. We were shown more bedrooms and as we climbed further up the Castle, we saw the arrow slits and defensive mechanisms that we have often read about in our History books. We climbed up a final flight of stairs to the current master bedroom, which in the past would have been used as the captain's room. We all marvelled that this jewel of history residing on our doorstep and look forward to further investigating its past.

*Michael Cleary*

### *Songschool*

What started as a short talk to a local TY class has now expanded to the largest provider of music workshops to secondary schools in the land. In the last 2 years they have delivered over 200 workshops to 28 countries, in 2 continents which has created almost 1200 songs. On the 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> October, Transition Year students of Calasanctius College were added to that list.

The Transition Year class was divided into two groups and with the guidance of Mike O' Dowd we created two songs from scratch. First of all we had to come up with the theme which would eventually lead to writing and composing our songs.

Even thinking of the themes proved itself a challenge but finally with group effort we gradually came up with our ideas. We then progressed to writing the lyrics and decided on backing vocals .... to end up with songs we think that even Simon Cowell would approve of!

Mike had all the necessary equipment needed including several guitars and the proper recording equipment so we got the effect of a real recording studio.

Although the process was challenging and we had to overcome many tasks, we all thoroughly enjoyed the experience. One of the group's songs - called "Cheater" - even got played on Galway Bay FM during the Alan Clarke show! If that wasn't exciting enough, they played it a second time as listeners requested it by text. Not only was Songschool enjoyable, it was educational as we got to see behind the scenes of a music studio and also the process behind producing a high quality song. We all agree it is definitely one of the highlights of Transition Year so far.

### *Congratulations Saoirse*

Earlier in the school year the Transition Year students from Calasanctius College, together with students from ten other schools in the Galway area were interviewed by members of the Salthill Rotary Club, in order to qualify for an annual competition on Youth Leadership and Development. This a national competition where in round one, one student from each school is chosen to go forward to the second stage of interviews. A week later we were informed that **Saoirse Houston** had been selected for the second stage of interview, which took place on December 10<sup>th</sup> at the Ardilaun Hotel Galway. The grand prize in this competition is the opportunity for 24 students from throughout Ireland to fly to Strasbourg, for a week to voice their opinions in the European Court of Human Rights. Congratulations to Saoirse on her success in being selected to represent Ireland in Strasbourg.



## Junior Science World Olympiad

Congratulations to **Ruth Cormican** (5<sup>th</sup> Year), who was selected for the Irish team to participate in the World Junior Science Olympiad. The competition for selection to the Irish team was held in DCU on Saturday November 7<sup>th</sup>. Ruth then travelled with the team to Baku, Azerbaijan on December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2009 to represent Ireland at the International Junior Science Olympiad. Following intense competition over nine days from participants from fifty different countries from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, Ruth was awarded a Bronze Medal! Well done Ruth, we are so proud of you!

Congratulations also to **Sorcha Beirne** who represented the school at the selection tests for the Senior Science Olympiad team in DCU in November.



Congratulations to the following school basketball players, who have been selected for the Irish team:

U 18 Boys: **Colm O'Hagan**, U-16 Boys: **Enda Walsh & Pdraig Burke**, U-16 Girls: **Caitriona Finn & Ailish O'Reilly**. The U-18 girls team has not yet been selected.

### Rugby Heroes

The school Rugby season is in full swing and success has come to us already with victory for our Juniors in the Connacht Schools League final over Sligo Grammar school. This is a highly significant event when one considers that Sligo Grammar are the aristocrats of school's rugby while Calasanctius are still considered novices. We dug out this victory in dreadful conditions with our team taking the field as boys and becoming men who know what it is to fight for every inch. Everyone who played their part can feel great pride. But this is just the beginning for our Juniors who face great challenges in 2010 especially on Feb 8th when they meet a wounded Sligo again in the cup at home on the Castle Road pitch. On such games our destiny hangs and all who will take part on this day will remember it forever.

Senior rugby is taking shape after an unsteady start and great work is being done by Sean Grealish and Richard Murray. We had a great win over St. Enda's last week and we host Garbally as we go to press. We will know where we are after this game in terms of Senior cup rugby in 2010. Watch this space and book your seat in the Sports ground for Cup Final Days. Oranmore Rugby is on the march in March.

U13/14 teams have won all their games to date and great future talent continues to flourish in the engine room managed by Coaches - Fitzpatrick, Cannon and Maher. A three in a row Junior cup looks on the cards.

The parents committee headed by Bernie Huxford continues their great supportive work. The recent cake sale in Maree centre was a sweet success in every sense of the word and Johnny Lardner got his ball back which was a real relief to us all after the Sligo Grammar game!

HAPPY CHRISTMAS. " WE PLAY TO WIN".

### Senior Science Quiz

As part of Science week, two Leaving Cert teams were entered for the Galway-Mayo Inter Schools Senior Science Quiz. Team 1 (below) consisted of Daithi Murphy, Ailbhe Manning and Darren Martyn .

Niall Sheehan, Lua Rahmani and Martin Talbot. (below) were on Team 2.

Both teams did themselves and the school proud, winning first and third prize respectively.

Team 1 qualified for the National Final of The Irish Science Teachers Senior Science Quiz, which was held recently in Trinity College. The team did really well, finishing up only 4 marks behind the winners. Well done to both Teams.



## R.E. News

Presentation Day Mass was celebrated in Oranmore church for all staff and students on Fri. Nov. 20th. Two Leaving Cert. members of the Students' Council, Aisling Killilea and Darragh Kirwan introduced the Mass. They pointed out the significance of this feast day for all Presentation communities throughout the world. They spoke about the importance of continuing to bear witness to the Gospel values of justice and compassion which are central to the Presentation ethos.

Among the emblems brought to the altar were a lantern which was a symbol of Nano Nagle's life among the poor of Cork city, the Presentation cross and an icon of Nano Nagle. These were presented by Michael Wilkins, Laura O'Conner, (fifth year) and Mary Olaloko (third year). Aoife Fox and David O'Shaughnessy (Leaving Cert) brought forward a wreath of flowers, which was later placed in the Sisters' cemetery in the school grounds, and a box which had been placed in the Oratory during November. Students had put the names of all the deceased that they wished to remember into this box.

At the offertory the gifts were presented by Cian Ryder and Rebecca Mullins (2nd year) Niall Tuohy and Emila Jaskiewicz (1st year). In his homily Fr. O'Dwyer spoke about the importance and the purpose of education. He urged the students to develop a strong sense of self-respect as this leads to respecting others. Ms. Merrick, Deputy Principal, thanked Fr O'Dwyer and all those who had prepared and participated in the Mass. She developed the theme of equality & justice and spoke about bullying and interference with another's right to education as something that can never be tolerated in the school.

The readers for the Mass were Elise Fleming, David Connolly (fifth year), Patrick Burke (second year), Emily Staunton (first year), Sarah Long and Obegi Okomah (Leaving cert). The choir gave their usual excellent performance.

The Annual Carol Service, hosted by the Fifth Year group, will take place on Tuesday Dec 22nd in Oranmore church at 11.30.

### Career Guidance

#### **Attention all Parents of LEAVING CERT STUDENTS! HEAR = HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESS ROUTE**

Parents of our LC students should be aware of a scheme called "HEAR" because it might affect their son's/daughter's entry into third level education. HEAR (the Higher Educational Access Route) was set up to tackle educational disadvantage. There is clear evidence that socio-economic disadvantage has a negative impact on educational attainment at school and on a student's ability to progress to higher education. Up to this year this scheme was limited to a certain number of schools. This year (2010) the scheme has been extended to include all 730 secondary schools in Ireland. Students apply for the scheme through their CAO application. On average 5% of first year places are allocated to HEAR students.

All our universities and colleges of education are participating in HEAR. This is important for our students at Calasancius College because NUIG, Mary Immaculate, and UL are participating in the scheme.

Each "HEAR" applicant is assessed in relation to six criteria or indicators, and they must satisfy a number of these. They are as follows:

#### **Financial Criteria**

1. Income
2. Medical Card
3. Social Welfare

#### **Social and Cultural Criteria**

1. Applicant is a member of socio-economic group under-represented in college
2. Applicant attends a DEIS school
3. Applicant lives in an area of concentrated disadvantage.

Mr. Garvey and Ms. Clarke would like to remind anyone who wishes to donate old mobile phones, DVDs, ink cartridges, to the **Jack and Jill Foundation**. We are only 147 phones away from receiving a free interactive whiteboard. Thank You.

### Bounceathon

A sponsored Bounceathon was held in the school gym on Friday 4th December. Over fifty students were involved. The money raised will go towards Basketball Ireland. Students took part in numerous drills and bounced a ball for over an hour! A big thanks to all who took part!



#### **Congratulations**

Well done to Stephanie Quinlivan for collecting the most money in the Bounceathon.



#### **L.C.V.P. Highlights**

5<sup>th</sup> Year LCVP students organised Fictitious Friday (See Photos) They also visited Briarhill Veterinary Clinic on November 5<sup>th</sup> last. Riona Mac Eoin gave the class a guided tour of the clinic. The students watched while the vet performed various procedures.

