

CEIST is the trustee body for the voluntary secondary schools of the Daughters of Charity, the Presentation Sisters, the Sisters of the Christian Retreat, the Sisters of Mercy and the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.

## Feature

### Catholic Schools Week 2010

Catholic Schools Week, January 31st - February 6th 2010, gives us the opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the tremendous contribution that our Catholic Primary and Post Primary Schools make not just to Irish society but to the mission of the Church.

This year the theme for the week is 'Catholic Schools – A Light for Every Generation'. The events scheduled for Catholic Schools Week will take place in schools, in parishes, at diocesan and at national level.

Catholic Schools Week is organised by a joint steering committee of IEC and CORI and will be launched nationally on Thursday 28th January, 2010.



## CEIST News



### Joining the Dots: Faith, Life, Teachers, Teaching and Theology

Joining the Dots: Faith, Life, Teachers, Teaching and Theology – a programme in theology and spiritual renewal for teachers – concluded its first pilot run in Mercy Mounthawk, Tralee, on November 30th 2009.

The programme ran for 1 hour 45 minutes every Monday evening for seven weeks.

Fifteen teachers took part. The programme was facilitated by Amalee Meehan, CEIST and John O'Roarke, Principal of Mercy Mounthawk.

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### Christmas Greetings

CEIST Education Office would like to offer thanks and congratulations to the Boards of Management, the Principals and Staff of all our schools who day by day, create and sustain the environment of love and faith in our schools, which enables young people to flourish, learn and grow.

May you be richly blessed in all you do and may the peace of Christmas be yours.

We would like to wish all in the CEIST community a very happy, peaceful and blessed Christmas.

### Benedict XVI sings on Vatican CD

Scheduled for release at the end of November, 'Alma Mater: Music from the Vatican' features the singing of Benedict XVI.

Click [here](#) to access podcast and video via Kandle website.

### School Retreats

Over the past while the Catechetics Commission has been working to produce a set of Guidelines and Guiding Principles for Youth Retreats in Ireland.

These guidelines are now available and they are offered as a working document.

The guidelines deal with: the context of youth retreats, guiding principles, safeguarding children, roles and responsibilities etc.

Click [here](#) to access the guidelines.

### CEIST Newsletter

We have completed our Winter Newsletter edition, which includes updates from each department, along with photos from our recent conference and other news bits from our schools.

Click [here](#) to download electronic copy of the newsletter.

## Education Matters



### Presentation Secondary School, Warrenmount in School Business Partnership Programme

For the past three years, employees of Diageo have worked with the Transition Year student group in Presentation Secondary School, Warrenmount, delivering a mentoring programme which aims to expand student's awareness of the workplace, promoting self-esteem and encouraging students to maximize the opportunities available through education.

[MORE](#)



### Notre Dame Irish Undergraduate Scholarship

Notre Dame University in USA, one of the great Catholic universities of the world and an institution, which has strong historic links to Ireland, has announced two undergraduate scholarships for high achieving Leaving Cert students in Ireland.

We are pleased to bring this to the attention of students in our CEIST schools and we attach information which will be of particular interest to Guidance Counsellors.

Click [here](#) for more details.

## Faith-related Issues



### Psychosocial Benefits of Religious Education.

The Faith Development Team have added resources regarding the Psychosocial Benefits of Religious Education.

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## News from CEIST Schools



### Civic Reception and Christmas Appearances on RTE by Presentation Kilkenny Choir

The Senior Choir from Presentation Secondary School, Loughboy, Kilkenny, was honoured with a civic reception, hosted by the Mayor of Kilkenny, at City Hall, on Wednesday 9th December at 7.30pm.

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### Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela - A Personal Journey

The following is an account from Presentation De La Salle Students, Niamh Kelly, Mairead O' Connor and Paraig Whelan of their recent pilgrimage to the city of Santiago de Compostela in Northern Spain.

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### Presidential Visit to Our Lady's Secondary School, Templemore

On Monday December 7th Our Lady's Secondary school was honoured by a visit from President Mary McAleese and her husband, Dr. Martin McAleese.

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### St. Joseph's Secondary School, Navan Liturgical Music Programme

Music and Choir form a significant part of the curriculum at St. Joseph's Secondary School, Navan. The school has a thriving instrumental tuition programme, where many students learn piano, voice, woodwind, violin, etc.

The school has recently introduced a Liturgical Music Programme whereby students have the opportunity to specialize in liturgical music.

Each Year, students sing in the Opening of Year Mass, Christmas/Advent services, Graduation Mass etc, as well as occasionally provide music at liturgies in the parish.

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### Our Lady of Mercy College, Beaumont - International Day

Our Lady of Mercy College, Beaumont held it's 4th International Day on Nov. 27th last.

International students from the school set up stands displaying the culture of their country.

[MORE](#)

## Reflecting CEIST Values



### Youth 2000

Youth 2000 is an international movement of young people called to spread the good news of the Catholic Faith and share this experience with other young people.

The Youth 2000 motto is "Youth leading youth to the heart of the Church."

Youth 2000 have over 40 weekly prayer groups around the country, 18 to 20 weekend retreats throughout the year and various other social events, all organised by young people, for young people.

Click [here](#) to visit the Youth 2000 website.

## Reviews



### Hundreds turn out for Presentation Sisters book launch

Four hundred past pupils braved the floods in East Galway recently to attend the launch of the remarkable 600-page full-colour book marking the centenary of the Presentation Sisters' arrival in Athenry, and their educational contribution to the town and the wider area.

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## Joining the Dots: Spirit, Faith, Work, Life

A programme of theology and spiritual renewal for educators

This course is an invitation to all of you, every teacher of every subject area, to explore your faith and your own spirituality and connect it to your life, especially your work life. It involves 90 minutes one evening a week for five weeks. As a school based programme there are no fees, no travel and no exams. It involves only your time and enthusiasm!



Joining the Dots concluded its first pilot run in Mercy Mounthawk, Tralee, on November 30th 2009. 15 teachers from a host of different subject areas took part. The programme was facilitated by Amalee Meehan, CEIST and John O'Roarke, Principal of Mercy Mounthawk.

The second pilot run took place during March-April 2010 in St Mary's Secondary School, Mallow where 14 teachers participated. It has since run in Coláiste na Toirbhirte, Bandon and in St Mary's Secondary School, Nenagh.

**Join the Dots is due to run in Christ King Girls Secondary School, Cork on Monday 12th September, 2011.**

Through connecting how God is revealed with the deep desires of the human heart, it hopes to deepen participants' own faith, praxis and relationships – with God, with themselves, and with others - especially in the context of the school community.

**In a confidential survey, 100% of participants said that Joining the Dots enhanced their understanding of Christian faith and their own spirituality.**

### What the participants said (Mercy Mounthawk) . . .

In answer to the question "what have you found most helpful about the programme so far?" participants answered:

- "The opportunity to think at ease about myself in the light of my faith. My faith was nurtured and strengthened throughout these seven weeks. I needed this guided time more than I knew."
- "Time out to reflect is essential. I felt that it was 'my' time in this week. It has given me a focus on my work here in school for 6 weeks – and I really want to keep that focus going."
- "I really found the programme helpful in looking and reflecting on my own spirituality. The programme gave me a greater appreciation of scripture. I found myself asking myself so many real questions."
- "Finding the spiritual side of myself, looking at my relationship with God and relating this to students that I teach. I reflected a lot."
- "The reflection process – accessing self through reflection action. Raising questions of faith/spirituality and allowing them space in my hectic life. Honest engagement of the whole group in the process."
- "It helped and pushed me to think about myself, God, and how I relate to others, [things] that I would normally not think about or ask myself."
- "To take the opportunity to mediate and reflect on what we're about as teachers. Also, to discuss this with others in the group. A great opportunity for openness and sharing with colleagues."



*"Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?"*

Mary Oliver

### What the participants

### said (St Mary's, Mallow) . . .

"I really enjoyed the time for spiritual reflection with other people, the combination of intellectual rigour and the experiential, and the prayerful relaxation."

"The atmosphere was very relaxed and friendly."

"[Joining the Dots had] a lovely, respectful approach. Very good time management, facilitation and clear content, with a lovely blend of literature, theology and art. Thank you so much."

In answer to the question "what did you find most helpful about the programme?" participants answered:

- "Gathering as a searching community as distinct from a professional body."
- "The mystery of how God is at work in each person is very evident and heartening."
- "Time out to reflect and ponder the many questions I have wanted to explore for so long."
- "Talking to colleagues at a different level, so much deeper than "shop" talk."
- "I was glad of the opportunity to hear and read Scripture portrayed in a most enjoyable way. It has jogged my belief in God."
- "Having the opportunity to reflect on my spirituality and give myself space to think about me and where I'm going."

### Course Outline

- Spirituality and life's journey: living life with meaning
- Being a reflective teacher: is it actually possible and why bother?
- *Imago Dei*: Who am I and Whose Am I - and whose are those kids!
- Jesus - the face of God
- Connecting the dots: what this means for me, for us & for our school

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## Presentation Secondary School, Warrenmount Working with Diageo

Thursday 17th December 2009

For the past three years, employees of Diageo have worked with the Transition Year student group in Presentation Secondary School, Warrenmount, delivering a mentoring programme which aims to expand student's awareness of the workplace, promoting self-esteem and encouraging students to maximize the opportunities available through education.

As the programme operates on a same-gender basis, female employees are matched with a student from the school, meeting for an hour every three weeks to explore and discuss different career options. With the help of their mentors, students decide to investigate one career in detail.



Pictured above Students from Presentation Secondary School, Warrenmount, attending the launch of the mentoring programme in DIAGEO, November 2009

The mentors facilitate and arrange a visit for both mentor and student to meet and interview a person who works in this career. Subsequent meetings focus on preparing a PowerPoint presentation to represent the key learning from the visit, which is then delivered by each mentor/student partnership at a ceremony held in The Guinness Storehouse near the end of the programme.

The parents of all participating students are invited to this wonderful event which highlights the range of careers explored and acknowledges the enjoyment and evidence of the wider impact of involvement in the mentoring programme.

Since its inception, the mentoring programme has continued to grow in strength and this year alone, over 40 students applied for 9 available places.

All candidates who applied were interviewed and the successful students met with their mentors for the first time on Friday, 13th November 2009 where they enjoyed breakfast in the Guinness Storehouse.

All were delighted to have been given the opportunity to have their very own mentor to guide them through this year of exploration.

Click [here](#) for more information on the School Business Partnership Programme.



# Faith Development

## The Psychosocial Benefits of Religious Education

The Faith Development Team have added resources regarding the Psychosocial Benefits of Religious Education.

The three resources below include a lesson plan, supplementary material and a PowerPoint Presentation.

[Transition Year Religious Education.pdf](#)

[Supplementary Material.pdf](#)

[Religion can make you happier and healthier.ppt](#)



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## Civic Reception and Christmas Appearances on RTE by Presentation Kilkenny Choir

Thursday 17th December 2009

The Senior Choir from Presentation Secondary School, Loughboy, Kilkenny, was honoured with a civic reception, hosted by the Mayor of Kilkenny, at City Hall, on Wednesday 9th December at 7.30pm.

The event was held in recognition of their achievement in the recent All Island Choral competition. The Presentation Senior Choir was one of only 4 choirs to compete at the live televised final in Belfast. Under the direction of Choral Director, Ms. Veronica McCarron the choir performed at the reception.



The Presentation Senior Choir has also been busy practicing for 2 further appearances on RTE this Christmas. During Richard Corrigan's "Corrigan's Family Christmas" on the 22nd December at 8.30pm they will sing one of their pieces from the "All Island Choir Competition" and traditional Christmas Carols. The show will be broadcast from Farnleigh.

The choir will also perform on the Ryan Tubridy Radio Show on 23rd December at 9am; this will be broadcast live from Kilkenny.



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## Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela - A Personal Journey

Thursday 3rd December 2009

The following is an account from Presentation De La Salle Students, **Niamh Kelly, Mairead O' Connor and Paraig Whelan** of their recent pilgrimage to the city of Santiago de Compostela in Northern Spain.

On the 4th of July 2009, we were part of a group of 25 pre-leaving cert students who left Presentation De La Salle College Bagenalstown, to begin a pilgrimage to the city of Santiago de Compostela in Northern Spain. Camino de Santiago is the name given to the Pilgrims walk. The pilgrimage was organised by Fr. Paddy Byrne, Curate of the Bagenalstown Parish and it was also part funded by the parish of Bagenalstown. Our group flew from Dublin to Santiago and travelled by coach from Santiago to Sarria, a distance of 110km.

The "Camino", meaning "The Way", is a famous pilgrim's walk since medieval times. The walk covers a 750km stretch in the north of Spain. The group was accompanied by 5 staff members from the school and we had a local tour guide every step of the way. We learned a lot from him about the history of the area and the pilgrimage. The total duration of the trip was a week.

Five out of the seven days were spent walking (sometimes running to finally reach our destination). Each day we walked approximately 25km. The walk was signposted with yellow arrows, guiding the pilgrims from one little village to the next. We met many different nationalities during the course of the walk and a familiar greeting between pilgrims, no matter what nationality they were was, "Buena Camino", meaning "Good Way".

The countryside and landscapes were magnificent with vast forestry areas and mountainous regions stretching far across the land. The panoramic views from the peaks of the mountains were truly breath taking. This part of Spain, the northern area, is an industrially un-developed region and is much like Ireland from years ago. Everywhere along the pilgrims path we saw many small farms with old machinery and tractors.

Each day we rose at around 7am. We grabbed a quick breakfast, which usually consisted of fruit and bread, no Full-Irish- much to our dismay! Shortly after breakfast we would set off on our day's expedition, stopping en-route for a well earned lunch in small shops and cafes along the path. Most days we finished our daily trek at around 2pm. Fr. Paddy celebrated Mass with us each day when we all had reached the daily stopping point. Mass was an integral part of our pilgrimage.

Our group was extremely lucky as we had the advantage of having our accommodation pre-booked. This was a huge asset to us as some other groups doing the walk had to leave early so they would reach their hostel while there was still room left.

Upon arrival at our accommodation we nursed many a blister and the odd bit of sunburn!! The weather was very nice, the sun beamed down on us every day we spent there.

In the evening time, with everything else out of the way, we had the pilgrim's meal which was quite reasonable at €8 for a 3 course meal. It was a great feed. We also got to taste some of the native dishes of Spain like Paella (rice dish with meat and vegetables), Calamari (squid) and Pimientos (very hot green peppers). It was nothing like the bacon and cabbage of back home but very tasty and enjoyable all the same.

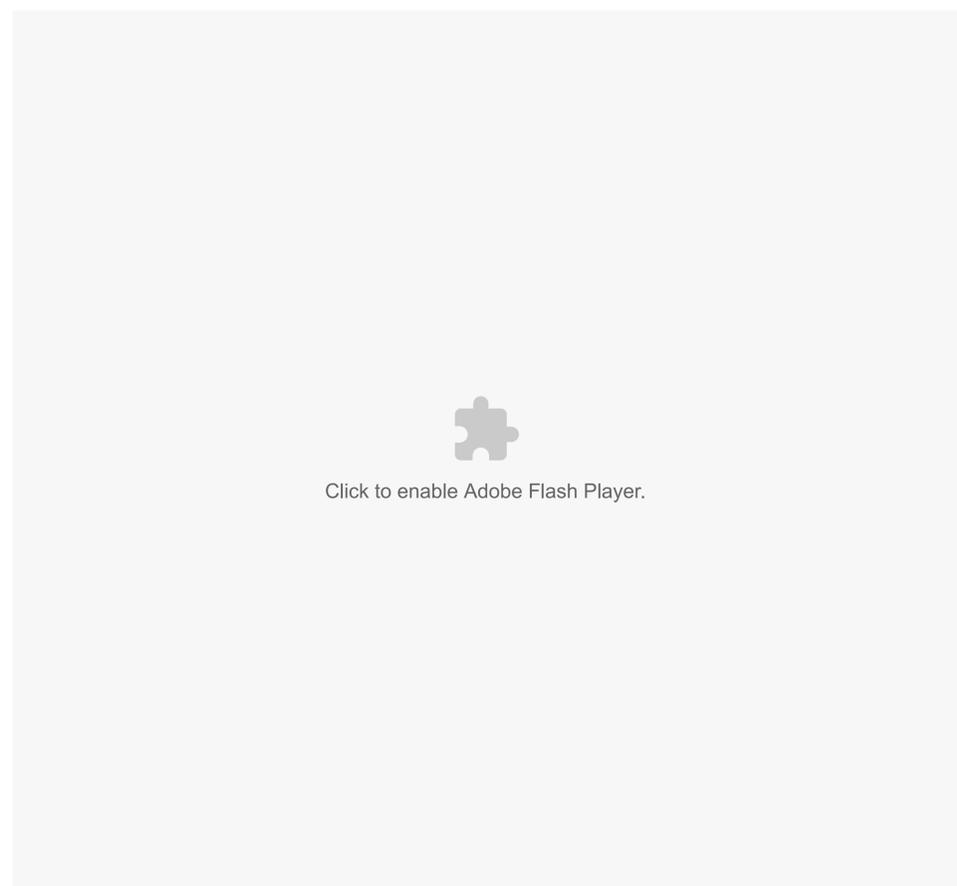
Each day we walked we passed through many little villages and towns. We started our walk 110km from the city of Santiago and walked towards it. To obtain the certificate of completion, called The Compostela, pilgrims must walk a minimum of 100km and upon reaching Santiago you can apply for your certificate. To be successfully granted with The Compostela we had to get a special book, the Pilgrims Passport, stamped at each town and stopping place along the way. If this book wasn't stamped you would not receive a Certificate.

When we received The Compostela, it gave us a great sense of achievement, after all that walking! We attended Mass in St. James' Cathedral. It is a spectacular building. We were supposed to see the Thurible in action, it is the largest in the world, but unfortunately it was not being lit that day. We also went shopping, as it was the first day we had seen proper shops since we left home! A visit to Burger King was another highlight as everyone was looking forward to some familiar food.

We enjoyed this trip immensely, and we speak for the group when we say that we would love to partake in a trip like this again.

A special thanks to Fr. Paddy Byrne, our teachers; Ms. Maher, Ms. Whelan, Ms. Halpin, Mr. Garvey and Bagenalstown Parish for giving us this opportunity of a lifetime.

## Photo Album





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## Presidential Visit to Our Lady's Secondary School, Templemore

Tuesday 15th December 2009

On Monday December 7th Our Lady's Secondary school was honoured by a visit from President Mary McAleese and her husband, Dr. Martin McAleese.

On her arrival The President was played in by student members of Templemore Pipe Band. After signing the visitors' book she was introduced by Principal, Ms Patricia Higgins, to members of the Student Council, the Board of Management and the Parents' Association before she unveiled a plaque to mark her visit to the school.

In the library, the President chatted with students and viewed displays by the Sport, History, Science, Home Economics, French and Music departments. In the German room which was splendidly decorated for the visit, there were multilingual greetings from students in all the languages of the school - Irish, English, French, German, Polish, Hungarian and Lithuania.

Students of Home Economics, under the watchful eye of Ms Caroline Kinane, then treated Ireland's first citizen to the delights of home baking before she was briefly entertained by the school's traditional music group. In the Design and Communication Graphics room President McAleese interacted with students of the subject and viewed artefacts created in the Woodwork and Construction Studies' Department.

After viewing a short digital display on school life, President McAleese was formally welcomed and introduced to students and guests in the school Gym by Ms. Higgins. In her address of welcome Ms. Higgins told President McAleese that her visit had been eagerly anticipated by students and staff of the school.

She spoke of President McAleese's outstanding academic prowess which she carries lightly as she extends the hand of friendship to all the people of Ireland especially the old and the vulnerable.

After Ms. Higgins' address, there was an enjoyable performance by award winning Irish Dancer, Aoife Newe who danced a reel for the President. This was followed by a performance of Siúil a Rúin by the school choir and traditional musicians.

The high point of the visit was, of course, President McAleese's address. Speaking in her characteristically engaging and sincere manner she spoke of the warm welcome she experienced on her arrival at the school. She said she was impressed by the range of work being done by students and the quality of the work on display.

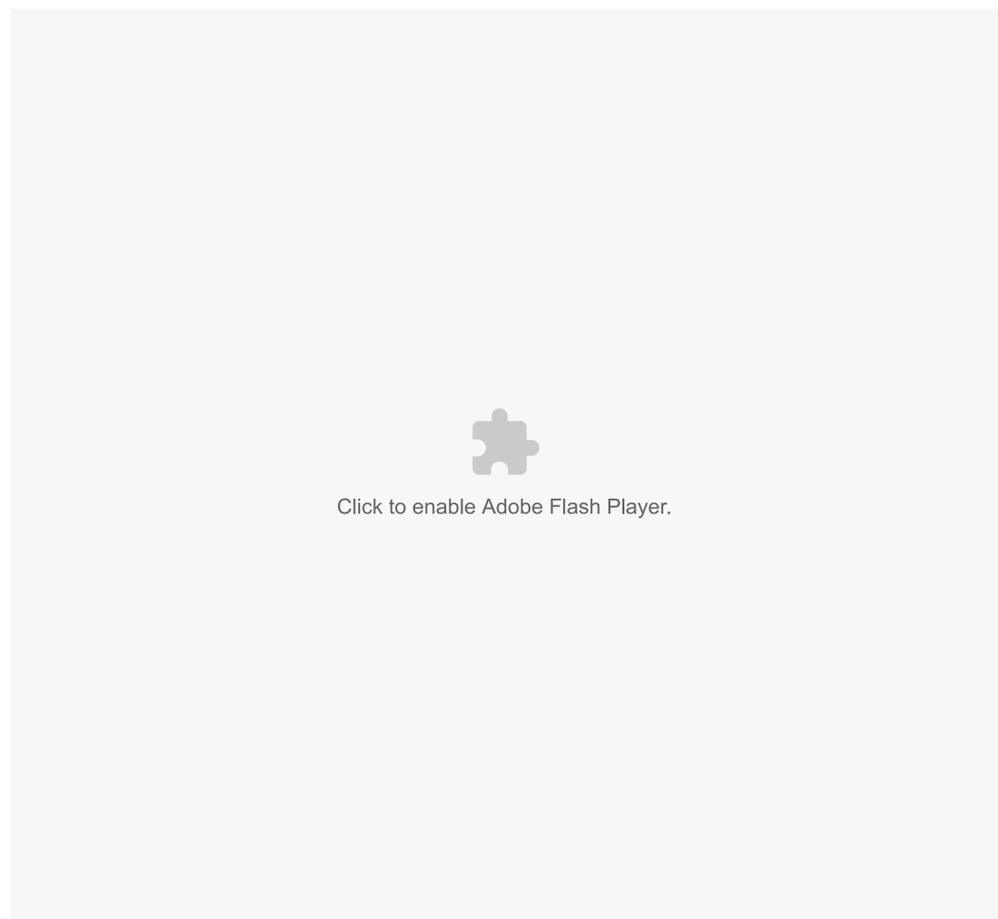
She expressed her happiness to be greeted in a range of languages in the school and made reference to the difficulties for newcomer students who do not always have the same network of close family support that we may take for granted. President Mc Aleese spoke of her love of Gaelic Games and the rivalry between Tipperary and Kilkenny. She said she looked forward to seeing Tipperary in Croke Park next year.

Transition Year student, Saoirse Timmons was the final speaker. She thanked the President for her visit to the school and for her commitment to young people.

She expressed the hope that the young people of Our Lady's would grow up to be the kind of leaders and problem solvers that President Mc Aleese had wished young people to become when she spoke at her inauguration ceremony in 2004.

Finally, first year student, Shane Manton made a presentation to President McAleese. The Presidential visit was a memorable occasion which was enjoyed by the entire school community.

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## Our Lady Of Mercy College, Beaumont International Day Celebration

Thursday 3rd December 2009

Our Lady of Mercy College, Beaumont held it's 4th International Day on Nov. 27th last.

International students from the school set up stands displaying the culture of their country.

The students celebrated in different ways, such as singing their national anthems, dressing in native costumes and performing national dances.

All students and staff enjoyed talking with the students about their native customs.

Many parents helped set up the stands and a very enjoyable day was had by all.

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## Hundreds turn out for Pres book launch

Thursday 17th December 2009

Four hundred past pupils braved the floods in East Galway recently to attend the launch of the remarkable 600-page full-colour book marking the centenary of the Presentation Sisters' arrival in Athenry, and their educational contribution to the town and the wider area.

The book entitled *The Story of the Presentation Sisters*, Scoil Chroí Naofa and Presentation College, Athenry (1908-2008), was edited and compiled by Gerry Ahern and was launched by Galway Bay fm Head of News, broadcasting lecturer, and past pupil, Bernadette Prendergast who was the keynote speaker at the event in the school.

Past and present pupils, teachers, members of the boards of management, and the public attended the event in Athenry as the books flew out the door.

The event was chaired by MC Gerry Cloonan who kept the crowds entertained with his stories of times past in the school.

The impressive tome was compiled after two years work and was designed and printed by Castle Print, Galway. It also contains a social history of Athenry, 1910-2008, listing all the principal events in the town and parish.

The book costs €30 and is an ideal Christmas gift for past pupils of the school as it contains hundreds of photographs, documents and stories told by pupils, staff and local dignitaries.

It is available from the school and from local bookstores.

This unique and historical publication will be of great interest to thousands of present and past pupils and the general public.