

Season's Greetings



Inside this issue:

Exam Success

Student Achievements

Art Updates

Music & Choirs

Sports News

Dates to Note:

6th January – School reopens

9th January - 5th Yr.
Parent/Teacher meeting

15th January – TY
Parent/Teacher meeting

23rd January - Enrolment
Evening

28th January – 1st Yr
Parent/Teacher meeting

7th February – LC & JC Mocks
begin

17th February – 21st
February - Mid-term Break

16th & 17th March - School
Closed

6th - 17th April -
Easter Holidays

4th May – School closed

29th May – Summer Holidays

Download our APP



St. Joseph's Secondary School Newsletter, Edition 1, 2019/2020



Welcome

We would like to welcome our first year students and their families to our school community. We hope they are settling into their new learning environment and we wish them well.

Leaving Certificate Results 2019

The Principal of St. Joseph's Castlebar, Ms. Marie Mac Cabe and the staff extend heartfelt congratulations to the Leaving Certificate class of 2019 on their excellent examinations results. The student's results were a reflection of their hard work and commitment and the support of their dedicated teachers. In keeping with school trends, the students of St. Joseph's achieved well above the national average with 23% of the student cohort achieving above the 500 points and 62% above 400 points. Students achieved an average point score of 405 points which is well above the national average. The uptake of higher levels maths is strong in the school with over 50% of students taking the higher level paper achieving above a H3. In general there has been an increase in the uptake of STEM subjects at higher level. The teaching staff and students of St. Joseph's work hard to maintain the strong academic tradition of the school. However the school recognises that academic results while very important, there is emphasis on the personal and holistic development of the student. The Leaving Certificate class will now move on to take up courses in higher education, further education, training programmes and the world of work. There are options for further study for every student that will match their interests, abilities and strengths. Ms. Mac Cabe would remind all students that success in future life will be determined not by points alone but by hard work, focus and determination as well as maintaining a healthy life-work balance. Ms Mac Cabe wishes all students the very best as they take their first steps as independent young people.

Junior Cycle Results 2019

The Junior Cycle results were issued on the 4th October. Teachers, students and parents were very pleased with the results gained by the students. The results were a reflection of the hard work and dedication of the students and their teachers. Results in all subjects were well above the national average. Two subjects in the new junior cycle were examined for the first time: Business and Science. Ms Mac Cabe congratulated the students on their excellent results.



Gaisce

49 Transition Year students are currently taking part in the Gaisce Awards. They must complete 26 weeks of Physical Activity, New Skill and Community Involvement and will walk / hike 25 kilometres later in the year. For the first time, 'Gaisce' is rolling out a pilot programme that allows second year students to achieve their Bronze Award with a view to achieving the Silver Award in Transition Year. 11 of our second year students are taking part. They are Zoe Nimmo, Laura Burke, Any Golden, Eimear Hughes, Éabha McHale, Áilís Moroney, Sadira Uddin, Aoibhín Burke, Hazel Harcourt, Rhea McDonagh and Caoimhe Harte. We wish you all luck in your endeavours!

The School Digital Champion Programme 2019 – 2020

The School Digital Champion Programme was launched as part of the National Digital Strategy to promote digital adoption and encourage the use of technology by students. The Government wants to enhance the use of technology in teaching and learning. The programme is providing students with a platform to drive digital adoption outside the walls of the classroom by connecting with local enterprises and the wider community.



Schools and students have been invited to complete a project showing how digital technology skills can be used to find a solution to day to day problems. Students must show how digital technology and skills can be used to have an impact and make a difference. The

program includes a training day, visits to industry partners and a show- case of completed projects.



The girls recently travelled to Limerick for their training day where they had the opportunity to participate in workshops in Presentation Skills, Video Editing, App Inventor, Coding with Microbits, Principles of Good Website Design and Infographics. Good luck to our three teams from St. Joseph's as they embark on stage two of their projects under the guidance of their teacher Ms Calvey.

L-R - Niamh O'Reilly, Ellen McHale, Sara Niesciorska, Bryony Lines, Ann Sibi, Cairenn Ferriter, Laiba Nazir and Marie O'Malley at their recent training day in Thomond Conference Centre, Limerick. Absent - Oonagh Barrett



Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge

Congratulations to the 29 students who took part in The Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge from 4th-15th November 2019. The Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge is an international competition which challenges student's computational thinking. The challenge was delivered and completed online and, co-ordinated by Ms Calvey. All participating students will receive a certificate of participation with their score. Well done to our high achievers – Norah Doyle, Ann Sibi and Anabel Schafer.

School Mass

The opening of school year mass was held in the Church of the Holy Rosary on Mercy Day 24th September 2019. This is a very special day for our school community as we celebrate the founding of the Mercy order by Sr. Catherine McAuley. We were joined for the liturgy by St. Angela's primary school and the Mass was celebrated by our Chaplain Fr. John Mc Cormack. The theme for the Mass was "Caring for our common home" and we were reminded through song and scripture that each one of us has a responsibility to be stewards of the earth.

Golden Jubilee

Congratulations to our school chaplain Fr. John Mc Cormack on his Golden Jubilee. This year Fr. John celebrates 50 years of priesthood. Thank you for your kindness and commitment to our school always. At our opening of school mass Ms. Marie McCabe made a presentation to Fr. John on behalf of the students and staff as a token of our appreciation.

Third year Retreat

Our Third years enjoyed a day retreat to Knock during the term. The day of reflection was enjoyed by all and the students found it a very worthwhile experience. Thank you to the Youth Ministry team in Knock and to Parish priest Fr. Conal Eustace for his support and help.

November Prayer Service

"In November, we remember". This year in the prayer room we created a wall of remembrance on which each student placed a heart with the names of the deceased members of their families and friends. Each class also had a prayer service with reflection and music.

St. Vincent de Paul

The annual St. Vincent de Paul Food Appeal organised by our TY young SVP conference was a huge success again this year. Students and staff contributed non-perishable food items, which were presented to the local St. Vincent de Paul branch. Thank you to everybody who contributed and the food items will be distributed to families in the Castlebar area this Christmas.

Peer 4 Peer training

12 TY students will participate in Peer 4 Peer training on Wednesday and Thursday the 8th and 9th of January. They will then deliver the programme to 6th class students in local primary schools children in the New Year. Topics include being assertive, substance abuse and internet safety.

Lourdes

Ten fifth year students will once again be travelling to Lourdes next Easter with the Irish Pilgrimage Trust. This project, led by former school Chaplain Fr. Mike Murphy, is held in conjunction with Mount Saint Michael, Secondary School, Claremorris. The group have been busy fundraising and would like to thank everyone who contributed so far. They will be making St. Brigid's crosses in January and selling them in local churches on February 1st. Your support would be appreciated.

John Paul II Awards

These awards are presented to students who get involved in parish and social awareness projects. This year we had 35 students receive the gold award. 5 Leaving Certificate students received the Papal Cross Award for their involvement in the Lourdes trip with the Irish Pilgrimage Trust. They received their award at a ceremony in Knock on Thursday the 14th November. The awards were presented by Archbishop Michael Neary. Well done to all the girls.



Pope John II Awards



Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition

Three of our students, Jennifer Lukikeba (5th year), Marie O' Malley (TY) and Ann Sibi (TY) took part in the Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition on Saturday 7th December in Castlebar Tennis Club. They spoke about global issues such as education, poverty and the effects of social media on young people. The girls spoke powerfully on the day and took part in a very enjoyable and worthwhile day. Well done girls.



Green Schools

The TY Eco class are currently working towards securing the school's 9th Green Flag in the springtime. Since September the committee have attended an energy workshop and some students were involved in the Climate Change Day hosted in GMIT. A nationality survey of our students was conducted. The class are working with An Taisce on the Clean Air campaign and have recently completed a project looking at seasonal variations in levels on NO₂ within the school area. The class are also actively promoting the use of sustainable water bottles rather than single use plastic within the school. In terms of sustainable travel, students will work with the travel officer looking at girls and cycling as part of the #and she cycles initiative.

Junior Certificate Business Studies 2019

Congratulations to the 5 students from St. Joseph's who received a distinction in Junior Certificate Business Studies 2019. The student's results were acknowledged at a ceremony in NUIG **on 20th November 2019**. The students recognised for their achievement in Business Studies were: Zoe McHale, Deirdre Martin, Aoibhe Horan, Emma O'Reilly and Roisin Hannon.



St. Joseph's Senior Choir

St. Joseph's Senior Choir, directed by Ms Lee, had a busy few days performing in the run up to Christmas. On Saturday 14th December, members of the choir sang in Horkan's Garden Centre, entertaining staff and shoppers. The choir performed in the foyer of Mayo University Hospital on Wednesday 18th, an annual performance which students, patients and visitors really enjoy. As well as performing in our own school carol service, the Senior Choir also gave a beautiful performance of 'A Christmas Blessing' at the annual Castlebar Parish Carol Service on Wednesday night 18th. After Christmas, the choir members look forward to preparing for competition in March!

Members of St. Joseph's Senior Choir who were carol singing with Ms Lee in Horkans Garden Centre



First Year Mini-Company

Five first year students have set up their own mini-company and will participate in a Connacht final in a business competition in early 2020. This group of girls came up with the idea of selling healthy Fruit Smoothies. Feedback from sales to other first year students is very positive (tasty and delicious). Good luck to the girls and Mr Doohan in their new venture. R-L Emma Keane, Precious John Omoru, Marija Giedraityte, Naoise Heneghan, Grace Filan

Credit Union Art Competition 2019 – Winners Local/School level



1st Prize 14-17 years Category: - Paulina Luzan 5(E)
2nd Prize 14-17 years Category: – Alison Ryan – 5(C)
3rd Prize 14-17 year s Category: – Kayleigh Rice 5(B)

1st Prize over 18 years Category: – Paulina Welec 5(C)
Congratulation to Paulina Luzan and Paulina Welec who represented St. Joseph’s at Stage 2 - “Chapter level” of the competition in Ballinrobe on 29th November.
Best wishes to Paulina Welec who goes through to the National final of the competition.



Art Careers Information



5th Year Art students and Art teacher Ms Geary attended an **Art Careers, Presentation** in Westport on 28th November at Custom House Studios, Westport. Visiting Lecturers and experts from three main Art colleges were there to give advice and information to the students interested in going to Art College. There were presentations from three lecturers and a Question and Answer session followed. The main presenters included:
Mr Tony Murphy - National College of Art, Dublin, Ms Aideen Barry - Limerick College of Art and Mr John Langan – Galway, Mayo, Institute of Technology, (GMIT), Galway college of Art. This event was organised and funded by Mayo County Council and a great day was had by all.

Student Council

The Student Council is comprised of 27 students who have been chosen to represent their classes. Each class held an election and elected a student to act on their behalf at meetings. At the beginning of the year, the Student Council had a training session with Mr. Pat Murphy. They learned about different approaches they could take as a Student Council in order to ensure they would make as good a difference as possible during the school year. Under the guidance of Ms. McLoughlin, the students look forward to being actively involved within the school community this year.



Student Council Members

1st Year: Sarah Carrol, Zoe Staunton, Suzanne Tuohy, Aoibheann Hanrahan

2nd Year: Chloe Liverpool, Caoimhe Doherty, Alexandra Collins, Ava Cahill Gilligan, Ailish Moroney

3rd Year: Jenushiya Jehu, Dearbhla Lynch, Aoife O'Donoghue

TY: Shauna Corcoran, Abbie Duffy, Roisin Lally, Megan Frazer, Julie Lavelle

5th Year: Caoilinn Gaughan, Ruth Collins, Marianne Ludden, Jennifer Lukikeba, Julianna Aitken

6th Year: Chloe Kerins (Treasurer), Alannah Scott, Aedin Horkan (Chairperson), Jane Mellet (Secretary), Grainne O'Reilly (Public Relations Officer)

Mentors Programme

This year 19 fifth year students are taking part in the schools 'Mentors Programme'. Every Wednesday, the fifth years gather with the 1st year students at lunch time. Since the start of the year, the mentors have been helping the girls to adjust to life in secondary school. In meetings, topics such as exams, study, homework and new subjects were discussed. Along with this, fun activities such as bowling, bracelet making and games took place! The first years are currently rehearsing for their Christmas plays with the mentors; this promises to be a great way to finish the first term!

The School Bank

Below is a picture of Transition year students who have set up and taken ownership of running a school bank for the academic year 2019/2020. All Transition Years had the opportunity to interview for a team

position. The team each has a specific role from bank manager to digital advisor. Well done to all and congratulations to the team selected: Bank Manager- Sinead O'Boyle, Assistant Manager - Katie O'Reilly , Sales & Marketing - Deirdre Martin and Niamh Nimmo, Operation & Audit Manager- Emer Beirne and Abbie Duffy, Social media Managers – Beth Kelly and Laoise Murphy, Customers Advisor – Lena Mohammed and Aoife Hennessy, Digital Advisors – Ruth Kelly and Keeva Gibbons



Left to Right standing - Keeva Gibbons, Beth Kelly, Sinead O'Boyle, Ruth Kelly, Katie O'Reilly, Deirdre Martin, Lena Mohammad. Left to Right seated - Emer Beirne, Niamh Nimmo and Abbie Duffy. Missing from photo is Aoife Hennessy.

Trip to Strasbourg

St. Joseph's are delighted to announce that 12 students from 5th Year will be travelling to Strasbourg to embark on a unique experience of participating in the European Parliament. The initiative is being coordinated by their teacher Ms. Caffrey who will be travelling with them to Strasbourg. A detailed programme of events has been organised by Graduate.ie (citizenship and democracy programme for second level students in Ireland). In the four-day educational trip they will visit Brussels, Luxemburg and Strasbourg. The highlight of the trip will be spending one full day at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, where they will take part in a youth parliament (Euroscola) with students from across EU member states. Students will experience a day as an MEP, engaging in the EU decision-making through debates in the hemicycle, negotiations with their colleagues, voting and adopting resolutions on topical European issues. The participating students will get an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the workings of the European institutions, to discuss democracy, fundamental rights, European values and to express their personal opinions on the decisions taken at the European Union level. The six topics up for discussion have just been released. The 12 girls (Julianna Aitken, Kate McDonald, Grace Geraghty, Ruth Collins, Caoilinn Gaughan, Cynthia Sakala, Saoirse Farrell Scahill, Manmehak Kaur, Lorna McElevy, Lilly Behah, Lily Reeney, Ellen McMorrow) have been put into teams. They are currently researching their topics in preparation for their day in parliament where they will take part in active debates and discussions.

Transition Year News



All the latest TY news, updates and details of their ventures available on the school website www.stjosephscastlebar.com

Well done to the industrious **Editorial Team** of: **Ellen McHale**, **Ann Sibi**, and **Marie O'Malley** who produced the Xmas **2019 TY E-Newsletter**.

Killary

On the 4th & 5th of September TY students had an overnight stay at Killary Adventure Centre. A bonding trip of a lifetime! It was an action packed two days. Students were involved in activities such as high ropes, kayaking, turf challenge and ringo riding. The evening was spent playing many ice-breakers where all groups mixed and each person met with new people. Many new friendships were made and the girls thoroughly enjoyed the trip.

Climate Change Workshop

Lukasz Krzywon, a Travel Officer, Mayo Green Schools facilitated our Green Schools Students with a very informative Climate Change Workshop. As part of our 9th Green Flag, the TY Committee kindly request that students use a reusable water bottle rather than a single use plastic bottle when in school.

John O'Sullivan GOAL

On Monday 14th October, all TY Students met with John O'Shea – founder of GOAL for a Question & Answer session on his time spent working with the Third World community. John urged students to become Social Entrepreneurs and help to solve the ever growing divide in the world.

Beat the Blues

All TY students took part in a "Beat the Blues" workshop which aims to educate young people about mental health, why it is important and how to care for it. The programme is devised by "Aware". Beat the Blues complies with Wellbeing in Post Primary Schools: Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention (2013), developed by the Department of Education and Skills, the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the Department of Health.

National Ploughing Championships

Transition Year students travelled to the renowned National Ploughing Championships in Co. Carlow on, 17th September 2019. The National Ploughing Championships which originated in 1931 as an inter-county ploughing contest, is today, one of the largest outdoor shows in Europe acting as a showcase for Irish food, farming and culture. Some of the entertainment and special events included Fashion Shows, Sheep Dog Trials, All Ireland Lamb Shearing, Craft Demonstrations, Celebrity Cookery Demonstrations, Outdoor Radio Broadcasts, in addition to the ploughing competitions. A great day was had by staff and students alike

National Fire Safety Week

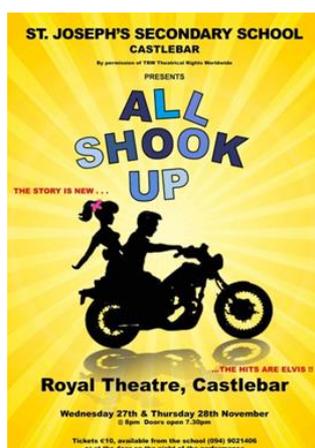
As part of the National Fire Safety Week, all TY students attended Castlebar Fire Station on Thursday 10th October. Students were taught invaluable fire safety tips and also how to prevent a fire in the home. They were given a tour of the station and shown the equipment used by the fire fighters. It was a valuable educational experience.

Social Innovators

Ms Keaveney's TY Young Social Innovators (YSI) class hosted a Family Day in the school library on Wednesday, 2nd October. The students aim was to raise awareness for their chosen theme "Loneliness" which can affect anyone in our community at any age. Family members including grandparents, parents, brothers and sisters, enjoyed a pleasant afternoon of company with our students. There was Irish music, Irish dance, a special "me and you" game, card playing and lots of conversation - all promoting the importance of good company for everyone. Well done to all involved!

Rua Bake Sale

Well done to the TY students who hosted a very successful Bake Sale in Rua on October 10th. This was a sell-out event and St. Joseph's are very grateful to Aran & Colleen McMahon of Rua for their support with this venture. A vast array of delicious treats were baked including Pear & Almond Tart, Carrot Cake, Chocolate Biscuit Cake, Coffee & Walnut slices, Cookies and Lemon Drizzle slices. This Annual Bake Sale gives TYs a valuable insight into the food industry from food preparation, baking, labelling and packaging to presentation and final sale of their baked good. A great day was had by all involved.



“All Shook Up”

TYs staged their outstanding and very well attended musical “**All Shook Up**” on the 27th & 28th November 2019, in the Royal Theatre, Castlebar. The chart topping hits of Elvis Presley form the backdrop for this musical about a mysterious, leather-jacketed stranger who shakes up a small Midwestern town in the 1950s. The story of a small town girl with big dreams and the motorcycle riding stud she falls for captured the audience. Among the 24 songs featured in the score are Elvis classics like “Heartbreak Hotel,” “Love Me Tender,” “Don’t Be Cruel,” “Can’t Help Falling in Love,” and of course the title tune “All Shook Up”. This musical was uplifting, the sets captured the eyes and it was a lively and fun filled performance.



Soccer

Soccer Training for First Years and Under 15's takes place on Tuesday evenings at Castlebar Celtic Astroturf. In the U-15 Connaught School Girls Cup Competition in the group stages, St. Joseph's beat one team and drew with the other meaning they will now progress now to the semi-final after Christmas.

First Years matches begin after Christmas and they have been putting in a lot of practice, particularly at their First year Futsal Competition in Breaffy. This is an indoor soccer competition specifically for First Years. The girls had a great day of football and honed their skills for the upcoming competitions. Best of luck to all in their upcoming matches!

Gaelic Football Season



The U14 girls had a very good season this year, having three comprehensive wins under their belt, but unfortunately lost a game early on, and with winning three out of 4 left us short for qualifying for the next stage. The first years will have a friendly blitz to look forward to at the end of the year, and also our second years will take part in an in-house blitz organised by our own TY Future Leaders' classes, so still plenty of football ahead for our younger girls, and a bright future for our teams, they will feed into next year.

Our U16's are competing in a high division and are putting up a good battle against all the opposition schools. Unfortunately our efforts have fallen short as of this term, but we still have three games to play and our girls will fight hard for the win in each.

The U19's have had a good year, putting in a great performance in all three of their games. They were narrowly beaten in against strong Crossmolina and Foxford teams, but had a very good win over Swinford. The girls still have one game left to play in their group. We wish all teams, students and parents a Merry Christmas

St. Joseph's Swimming team



Congratulations to St. Joseph's swimmers on their achievements in the **Connacht Secondary Schools Championships** held in Longford on 27th October 2019.
Seniors – Fiona Conway, Sarah Conlon, Nicole Fahey
Intermediates – Sophie Henehan, Ella Deely, Zoe McHale, Clodagh Kavanagh, Aisling Stapleton, Rachel Healy, Sarah Cosgrave, Lauren Deely, Roisin O'Connor
Juniors – Caoimhe Curley, Grainne Cogan, Lauren McDonnell, Marija Giedraityte, Sarah Heneghan, Aoife O'Neill

Well done to Lauren Deely who came 1st in the 400m freestyle, Caoimhe Curley - 2nd in 200m IM and the Intermediate medley relay team who came first, and who qualify for the Inter Pro Nationals being held in Castlebar in April 2020.

Congratulations to Maeve

Maeve Gallagher came 3rd in the National Cross Country Athletics U-20 Championships in Dublin, in November and got selected to represent Ireland at the European Cross Country Championships in Lisbon on December 8th. Maeve also won a triathlon in Senegal on Sunday December 15th. Representing the Irish team Maeve, won in a time of 1.05.16 against athletes from all over the world including Egypt, Turkey and the Ukraine. . Well done, Maeve



St. Joseph's Show- Jumping Team



St. Joseph's, Castlebar, Show jumping Team participated in the Interschools Ireland Competition in Hanley's Equestrian Centre, Claremorris on the 24th of November. The team placed first in the Dressage earning rosettes. Team Members included: Alison Ryan on "Sheeba", Kayleigh Rice on "Little Joe", Leah Rochford on "Spice" and Marija Giedraityte and Caoimhe Quigg assisting as grooms. Also, Alison Ryan competed individual, jumping 80cm on "Sheeba" and she placed second.

Our “Chemistree”

Our creative Chemistry teacher, Mr David Mac Monagle has brought the festive spirit into our Chemistry class! A collection of chemistry equipment has been carefully assembled to create our very own environmentally friendly “Chemistree” which is set up in the school Demonstration room. Retort stands form the trunk of the tree, clamps protruding from the stand act as branches and the branches are adorned with volumetric flasks which have been filled with coloured solutions consisting of indicators and a variety of coloured solutions - copper sulfate (blue), potassium permanganate (purple), methyl orange indicator in acid (red), methyl orange indicator in base (yellow), p phenolphthalein in acid (pink), dilute bromine water (reddish-yellow). Well done to our budding scientists and teacher, a clever and colourful fusion of Chemistry and Christmas!



Sympathy

We extend our condolences to all our school community who have been bereaved recently. I bPárthas na nGrást go rabhadar.

Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge and celebrate the many students in our school who have represented themselves and their clubs in various disciplines at local, national and international level over the past few months. Well done to all!



The community of St. Joseph’s would like to wish you all a happy and holy Christmas. See you all in 2020.



