

Our prayer for the Advent Season

Ms Edel O' Connor, the Head of RE in Scoil Mhuire was asked by the editor of 'The Net' to write an article on Christmas life in Scoil Mhuire.

"In my role as RE teacher in Scoil Mhuire Buncrana, a community spirit across generations is celebrated every year during Advent. The students organise the senior citizens's Christmas party, make St. Vincent de Paul hampers and perform carol services in the parish and local nursing homes. Our faith is allowing us to weave connections between people in our community. It is wonderful to see the students responding to the call of the Holy Spirit to be true witnesses of Christ in our society.



2020 has become the year of the community with that message "we are all in this together". However, in reality it has been a lonely, isolating year for so many and our trust in the future has lost its innocence with a real sense of crisis hitting our world. Crisis comes from the Greek word krinein; meaning "to sift". This year has also given us the opportunity to sift through our thoughts, to listen to our hearts and become aware of what it truly means to belong. Like never before, we have valued the people in our lives.

My prayer for this Advent season is that people get to celebrate Christmas with their loved ones. Christianity is built on and rooted in relationships. May the founder of Christianity, the Lord Jesus Christ shine his light brightly on our world and may this Christmas be filled with faith, hope, love and a real sense of belonging. "



Gratitude

Focusing on what is good in our lives and being thankful for the things that we have

As part of the CEIST Leadership Christmas Gathering, our school secretary Nikki McIntyre was invited to contribute on behalf of Scoil Mhuire and composed a poem on the theme of gratitude.

*2020, the year that was,
The fear and anguish of what this illness could cause
But we carried on, regardless of all
To ensure that our school would remain tall
In the midst of the COVID, the fear and the stress
Pulling together as we were put to the test*

*Our bubble was formed and a team we became
To prepare for reopening and noise once again
To welcome our students, our parents, our staff
To talk, to listen, to smile and to laugh*

*It hasn't been easy, some days are quite tough
But we carried on together and got through the rough
Dark mornings make it harder to get up and get out,
But an end is in sight, of that I've no doubt*

*So, to take time, sit back and reflect on what's been
For the last 9 months and what we have seen
To realise that there are many and more
A lot of things that we are grateful for*

Our family and Friends

*Who give us our laughs and our tears
Listen without question and share all our fears
We may not be together for this festive season
But we will find another time and not need a reason*

Our Work

*The working together and helping out
Keeping everyone safe, of that there's no doubt*

Our Capabilities

*For jobs undertaken with loyalty and pride
Done with commitment and all in our stride*

Our Colleagues

*To have them return with the times that are hard
To drive, to succeed in classroom and yard*

Our Students

*and the reason we're here,
To teach, to comfort, to allay all their fears
To lead them, to guide them, to show them what's
right
To be the leaders in their young life*

Our School and Locality

*Our buildings, our facilities, our wonderful grounds
Our town, our beaches, and all that surrounds
The smell of the sea as we walk on the shore
That clears the mind like never before*

Our Leadership

*To our management team, the ones at the top
Who are constantly working, who never do stop
The ones who step-up, encourage, inspire
With strength to continue, who never once tire
From all of us, to all of you
I want to share a massive 'Thank You'*

Our Memories

*For those that are gone and no longer with us
Their passing we feel but continue without fuss
The memories they left, we will keep alive
In our hearts, in our minds, as we continue to strive*

The Future

*We do not know what tomorrow will bring
But after a hard Winter, always comes Spring
Confidence, willingness, and strength will ignite
Because we have faith in God that things will turn
out right*

Our Faith

*Perhaps the most important and one that is
forgotten
The one we can turn too when life becomes rotten
The One who can calm us and project no blame
No complaints, accusations, judgements or shame
A mantra that flows and constantly rings true
"O Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you"*

*So, for happy moments, let us praise God
In difficult moments, let us seek God
In quiet moments, let us worship God
In painful moments, let us trust God
And for every moment, let us Thank God*

Gratitude

Turns what we have into enough...and more

SCOIL MHUIRE'S JENNY AMONG THE BEST IN THE COUNTRY



Jenny pictured displaying her project with Scoil Mhuire principal Ma Thorsen Grant and her teacher Ma Corbett.

IT'S NOT every day you find out you have finished second in the entire county and indeed, in the top 15 out of 10,000 students across Ireland but that was the case for Scoil Mhuire student Jenny Doherty recently when she was informed that her SciFest 2020 project entitled, 'Is exercise recovery time in teenagers dependent on the type of sport participated in?' had been regarded as one of the best in the country.

GERARD McLAUGHLIN

Speaking to the *Irishness* Judge/reader this week, the 15th year student explained that she had actually forgotten about the national competition.

"It actually started out as a county competition here in Donegal with the regional finals being done online due to Covid.

"To be honest, I had actually forgotten about it and then one day when I was out sailing, I got a call to say that I was the runner-up in Donegal and that I was invited to take part in the national finals, which again were done online from the 19th to the 21st of November."

For Jenny, it was now a case of going back over the project as she was going to have to go through a judging process and she admits it was tough going.

"It wasn't easy because we had to go through a judging process and take questions from the judges on our projects, so we had to know what we were talking about.

"Because I had made the national competition, I knew I was then in the top 15, so I don't actually know where I finished overall, only that it was in the top 15 in the country."

So, what exactly did the project consist of?

RECOVERY TIMES

"I HAVE always been very interested in recovery times, and I always noticed in my own training sessions with *Runzans* that people who were doing athletics were always able to get back and recover their position a lot quicker than people who didn't do athletics.

"I decided I would have a look at five different sports: football, GAA, athletics, boxing and golf to see who would recover quickest among the teenagers I tested."

Jenny admitted that she thought the athletes would come out on top, so she was a little bit surprised when her findings told her that it was in fact the boxers who scored highest in the aerobic fitness tests, which also meant they were able to recover quicker than the rest.

"I actually thought that athletics



would come out on top is the end but it was interesting to see that the boxers were the fittest.

"I done a ten minute step test on every person and every two minutes I would take their heart rate. I would take their heart rate again when the test was over and one more time when they had a wee bit of time to relax.

"I found that boxing was the best sport for fitness, followed by athletics.

"The main reason for the boxers being the fittest is because the training is very explosive, they train three sprints a week in the gym and two sprints on their own, so their fitness levels are very impressive."

DREAM JOB

ALTHOUGH it's clearly a great achievement for any student to finish as high as Jenny Doherty did, it probably won't come as any real surprise to those who know her, given that she is already running her own successful small business and has her sights set on a dream job as a physio when she gets her exams out of the way in the coming years.

Jenny, who is loved every minute as a Transition Year student last year and got involved in everything she could, had so much praise for her teacher Laura Corbett and credits her

for all her help with the project.

"TV (Transition Year) has been brilliant and I would recommend it to everybody.

"It's all down to the amount of effort you're prepared to put in and a willingness to get involved in everything.

"Miss Corbett has been great with us and if it wasn't for her, there is no way I would have been able to get through that project.

"The business (JM Glassworks) and TY has given me great experience and hopefully it will all help in the future but my dream job is definitely to work as a physio."

"I remember getting injured one time at a county trial and seeing the work the physio done to get me back and it was always something that interested me.

"It's a job but it also feels like you are doing something good for others, so it feels like the perfect job, really." ■

ABOVE: Jenny Doherty (left), Eilana Campbell, Andrea Rado and Phionasa O'Brien pictured at the ST Young Scientist Awards at the RDS in Dublin back in February.

Allingham Arts Festival Creative Writing Competition Prizewinners 2020



Congratulations and well done to our Allingham Arts Festival creative writing competition prize-winners, Anna Polina Mallon, Matthew Downey Fitzpatrick, Janvy Jerin and Michael Lennon pictured with their English teachers, Ms Sinead O'Brien and Ms Aisling Deeney. The English Department now has a Creative Writing Wall dedicated to displaying the work of our current students and past-pupils.



Am I Broken?

The rain roared and thundered it's way through the desolate streets of Chicago, Illinois, pounding upon the Earth, getting its hands on anybody it found out in the open and covering them in a wet, glossy finish.

As the rain howled through the streets, a police cruiser donning the black and white colours and a signature glowing red & blue light on top, pulled up outside a nearby apartment building. Two officers stepped out of the vehicle and into the storm.

One officer with a black trenchcoat covered his eyes and rushed into the apartment while the other simply walked in without as much as a fuss. He was still and unfazed.

As they got into the apartment, a woman in a purple sweater rushed out crying. She hugged the first officer and continued to sob.

"My name is Officer Ouma." the officer said. "Is the intruder still upstairs?"

" Yes! That monster has my son! You must-" the women quickly stopped and looked at Ouma's companion and quickly looked back at him angrily. "You're sending one of those tin cans to save him?"

"Yes." the Android said. "Though I would prefer to be called Ethan, not tin can."

"I'd rather save my son myself than let him do it!" the women yelled. She pushed Ouma to the ground and quickly rushed back upstairs.

A single gunshot then sounded, followed by a thud on the floor.

"That woman... is she as you would refer to as you dead sir?" Ethan asked.

"I hope not." Ouma weakly replied, pulling himself off the floor. "You ready?"

"Yes sir, as always."

Ouma then pulled a handgun he kept in his trenchcoat and rushed up the stairs, with Ethan close behind him. Ouma burst through the door at the top, only to be shot in the leg.

"Get down!" he yelled as he tumbled.

Ethan simply walked in and put his hands up, slowly inching across the room. As he walked in slowly, he saw the lifeless body of the woman he saw earlier, now with a bullet engraved into her skull.

He looked ahead at the front of the room and saw a hooded figure with a child in his right arm and a handgun in his left arm. The child was obviously crying and scared, as his mother was just killed. The shooter's face was metallic, and his exoskeleton could be easily seen.

"WHAT DO YOU PEOPLE WANT FROM ME!?!!" the gunman yelled. "I JUST WANT TO BE FREE DAMMIT!"

"It's okay, I'm not here to hurt you unlike my partner." Ethan said soothingly. He grabbed Ouma's gun and threw it out the door. He then emptied his pockets as he stepped forward. "I'm actually like you."

"What?" the android asked, confused.

Slowly, Ethan peeled away part of his hand and showed a metal exoskeleton underneath as well.

"I don't want to hurt you. I just want to make sure the child is okay."

"I need him!" the gunman yelled, putting the gun to the child's temple.

"Why? Why do you need him?" Ethan said as he inched closer.

"I need him so I can be told I won't be scrapped by the police. They were going to throw me out, so I panicked."

"There's no reason to be scared. It'll be okay. What's your name?" Ethan said.

"Merk."

"Ok, Merk. It's going to be fine."

He then put out his hand to take the gun off of Merk.

"NO!" he yelled. He tried to fire the gun, but Ethan quickly pushed it towards the ceiling and tried to tackle Merk to the ground. However, Merk quickly tripped Ethan and himself and glass could be heard shattering and a sudden scream, followed by a thud.

Ethan slowly pulled himself up and looked up and saw that the child had been tossed out the window and fell to his death. Ethan suddenly felt himself fall to his knees and felt... something.

Then, a gunshot rang out and Ethan turned to see Merk on the floor, and Ouma holding his handgun again.

"Sir... I... failed." Ethan sobbed, with tears rolling down his cheeks. "Am I broken?"

Ouma simply walked over to Ethan and hugged him. "You're not broken. The world is."

By Matthew Downey Fitzpatrick
Second Place in 'The Allingham Arts Festival Writing Competition' 2020

5th Year Economics class meets Susan Hayes Culleton, author of 'Positive Economist'

Susan Hayes Culleton, author of 'Positive Economist' had a 'Google Meet' with the 5th year Economics class. Susan is the Managing Director of Hayes Culleton Group with clients across Europe and the USA. She is a CFA charter holder, four times author and a world-renowned speaker who is known for going that extra mile. Susan regularly holds webinars on Facebook dedicated to leaving Cert Economic students

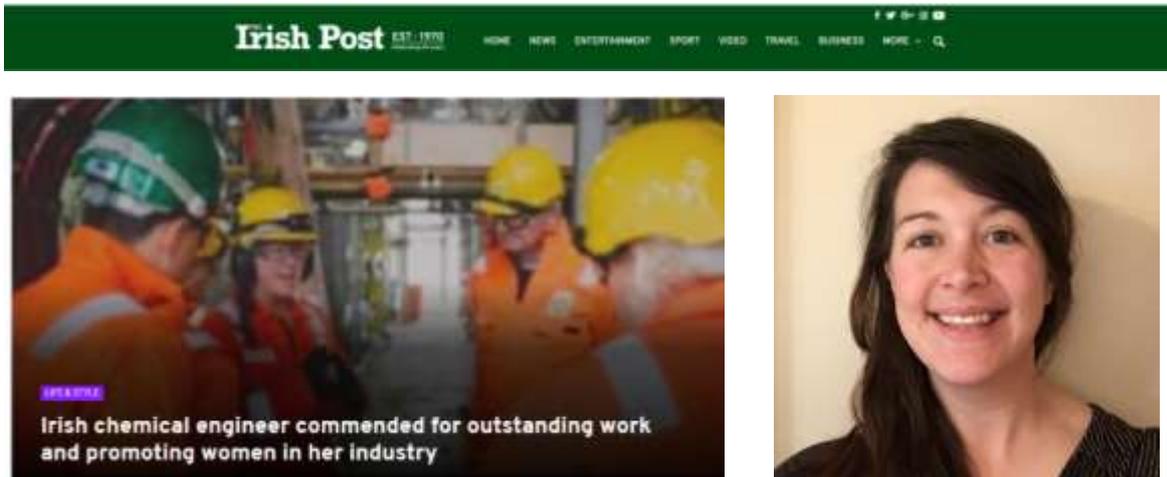


UNESCO Young Environmentalist Awards 2020



Frances Coleman, Matthew Downey Fitzpatrick, Ms Denise Dowds, Ewelina Smolen and Ruth Mc Laughlin, Senior winners of the Eco-Community Development Award 2020 at the eco UNESCO Young Environmentalist Awards

Past-pupil and Irish Chemical Engineer commended for outstanding work promoting women in her industry



Scoil Mhuire, past-pupil and chemical engineer, Bridgeen McCarron has been recognised with a prestigious industry award for her outstanding work in her field.

The Donegal native, who works for BP, is the Production Team Leader on the oil and gas company's Glen Lyon ship - a 100,000 tonne, 880 ft long floating production, storage and offloading vessel (FPSO) anchored in the North Sea.

The Institute of Chemical Engineers (ICHEME) have announced Ms McCarron, who hails from Drumfries in Buncrana, as their Best Newly Chartered Female Engineer 2019/20 - citing her work in promoting women in engineering among her achievements that impressed them most.

ICHEME interviewed a number of potential candidates for the award before making their decision.

"It was clear from the interview that you have made great strides forward in your career, and that you have been very active in promoting engineering to other women" the organisation stated, regarding their choice.



"The shortlisted candidates were all excellent, but it was your enthusiasm and joy for your work and in supporting and developing others which were the final deciders," they add.

ICHEME have also nominated Ms McCarron for the Karen Burt Memorial Award.

Presented annually by the Women's Engineering Society, the award recognises the chosen candidate's "excellence and potential in the practice of engineering and highlights the importance of

Chartered status, as well as offering recognition to contributions made by the candidate to the promotion of the engineering profession”, the charity explains.

The winner of the Award will be announced on December 10.

Ms McCarron, who has nine siblings, graduated from Queen's University Belfast with an MEng in Chemical Engineering.

Following her graduation, she moved to Scotland to join BP's graduate programme and has now been with the firm for eight years.

TY students exploring the beautiful landscapes and seascapes on their doorstep during COVID times.

TY students exploring the Inishowen Peninsula as part of their bonding experience. They visited Malin Head, the Grianan of Aileach fort in Burt, Carrickabraghy Castle on the Isle of Doagh and Pollen Strand overlooking the famous Ballyliffin Golf Club (where the 2018 Irish Open was held), Glashedy Island and Trawbega Bay



The flame of faith shines brightly in Scoil Mhuire, Buncrana by Edel O'Connor



CATHERINE McAuley, the founder of the Sisters of Mercy, encouraged us "to be shining lamps, giving light to all around us". When the darkness of the pandemic descended on us, the students of Scoil Mhuire, Buncrana kept the light of faith shining brightly. Over the last few difficult months, the themes of faith, hope and love were brought alive within our homes, school and parishes.

Students were assigned weekly activities from their RE teachers through the platform of Google classroom. These included academic coursework, prayers and meditations. A particular emphasis was placed on spiritual tasks that students could complete with their families. In

my we were overwhelmed with the response of these tasks is an understatement.

"Branching out in Buncrana" took place on Palm Sunday. Students and staff uploaded photos of their branches. Some of the students participating in the Pope John Paul II Award distributed additional branches on the doorsteps of their elderly neighbours. School, home and parish were working together to bring alive the Gospel values.

Gerard Manley Higgins reminds us that "the world is changed with the grandeur of God". Our students fully embraced the task of "Finding God in the world around us", uploading images of nature, people and the extraordinary spirit

present in the Irishness around, during the month of May, students from across all year groups shared images of their May altars. We may have been physically isolated but we were united in our faith and in our belief in the power of prayer.

Our final liturgical event for this academic year was our 'End of Year' Mass for our Sixth Year students on May 28. It was streamed live from Cuckhill Church, Buncrana. The celebrant, Fr Francis Bradley gave a warm welcome to all watching online, including students, staff and families. Students were represented by Head Girl, Orla Barnett and Head Boy, Caisín McCrigan, while the staff was represented by Ms Lorna Barron, deputy principal.

Our school principal, Ms Rosaleen Grant, in her welcome address, expressed how very proud Scoil Mhuire are of the Class of 2020. Ms Grant highlighted how the pandemic has shown us the importance of family, friends and faith. Although unable to be gathered together physically, united in prayer, the class of 2020 marked this special milestone in their lives.

The theme of the Mass was

"Let your light shine". Ms Ward, along with students, Raina Grant, Aoife Lennon and Saoirse MacLachlainn, greatly enhanced the liturgy with their beautiful music, including songs Christ be your Light and Amazing Grace.

Fr Bradley delivered many words of wisdom and inspiration. Firstly, reminding the students that the concept of 2020 has been with us for a long time: "If we went to an optician and they told us we had 20-20 vision we would be very happy with our perfect sight. Unfortunately, many things can obscure our vision and this pandemic could darken our light. However, the God who inspires us, guides us, helps us and blesses us, can give us a glimpse of the perfect vision".

The Readings and Gospel highlighted to students the message that they are never alone: God walks by their side guiding their lives every step of the way in his love. Fr Bradley reinforced the message of never being alone, by reminding the students of a quote from John Henry Newman, "God knows me and calls me by name". Fr Bradley also noted that at home, in school and in their parish, the students have been nurtured physically, emotionally

and spiritually.

In the words of Fr Bradley, "what matters most is that we have belief in God and belief in Christ. That's what makes us Christians. If you believe in Christ, anything is possible. If you don't, most things will be difficult if not impossible. God in Christ wishes us on to greater things. He calls us never to be satisfied with mediocrity. Never settle for less than our best. No matter how much the world tries to hold you back, always continue with the belief that what you want to achieve, so long as it is good and comes from God, is possible. By believing in Christ and by remembering how much He believes in you - you can achieve so much".

Following the homily, Ms Martina McBride, Year Head, led a ceremony of light, with the students at home lighting their candles representing wisdom, love, memory, faith and hope. The Class of 2020 were a precious part of our school community. With joyful gratitude, we gave thanks for their gifts, talents and accomplishments and prayed that they would find courage to face the new adventures. Finally, Ms Grant read the Communion reflection entitled, "Make your

life the best it can be, with the key message being 'there will always be hope in your tomorrow'.

As the recessional song, "This Little Light of Mine", began, this beautiful liturgy on a warm summer's evening came to a close. However, all in Scoil Mhuire, Buncrana will continue to hold the Class of 2020 in our prayers. The flame of faith and the light of Christ will remain strong in our homes, school and parishes. We ask God's blessing on the students, staff and families, and may the Class of 2020 be become a hope in our world. In the words of the Prophet Micah, "may you act justly, walk humbly and love tenderly"; confident in the knowledge that God is by your side.



I gained so many new skills and confidence through my JP II experience by Lisa Brennan

I completed a lot for my Pope John Paul Award, both in the community and parish, for which I had to do 20 hours of each because I was doing the Gold Award. Through my parish hours, I either took part in the Offertory at Mass each week or organized primary school children to do it, so they could be more involved in the parish.

I also helped out at special Masses throughout the year, including the Mass for Deceased Children, at which I handed out candles and then lit them for people, so they could pray for whoever they wanted. At the Youth Day Mass, I handed out wrist bands to all the young people afterwards and helped at the Penitential Service, where I handed out leaflets for the Mass. After this Mass, the other JP II students and I had tea with a couple of the priests in the sacristy. When it came around to Christmas time, I made Advent trees for the two parish chapels and we hung the quotes on it from the primary school children about Christmas.

Then, when lockdown hit, it was really hard to get my Award finished because we couldn't do anything in the chapel because it was closed, but Lizzie Rea started up an online programme where we would watch a live on a Monday evening at 8 pm. We

were set a task with a different theme to complete each week and it was worth one parish hour. This was a bit difficult, but it was also a unique and fun way to do the Pope John Paul Award.

When things settled down a bit, and we could go back to the chapel, I helped as a steward to make sure everyone was following the Covid guidelines properly. We had to take their name for contact tracing and took them to a seat. We also had to give them a sanitising wipe to wipe down their seat before they left the chapel. My job was to make sure that everyone stayed two metres apart at the main door when waiting to get into the chapel, and I had to make sure they were wearing a mask and sanitising their hands. I really enjoyed this because I got to know the people of the parish a lot more.

For my social hours, I wrapped boxes for the SVP Christmas food appeal and placed them in each form class, so they could donate food to people in poverty. I also filled up Holy Water bottles with Holy Water from the local wells, for the people of the parish for New Year's Day.

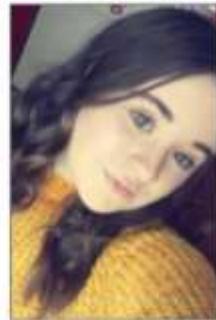
Another activity I helped with was organising the parish GIFT programme for the primary school children. We discussed what activities to do with them and what days suited everyone

to help out, then, once it was up and running, I helped out at the sessions. We played games involving religion and did many things for the chapel and parish, so the children felt like they were part of the community and parish. We sang songs and did a prayer and reflection as well. On the last night, we had a party for them and made a hamper for Fr Farnon, for the parish.

I also collected money for the school outside the chapel gates before Mass started, and helped out at my local youth club on a Saturday night, doing different activities in the kitchen with the girls, like making bracelets and painting their nails. I served in the tack shop as well.

Again, when lockdown hit, the youth club shut down, so it was really hard for me to get hours. However, I came up with the idea of doing shopping for old people. My daddy has a gardening business and a lot of his customers are elderly people who have no families to get them things like bread and milk throughout the week, so they would leave out money and I would go down to the local shop and get what they needed and leave it at the door for them, or if they lived in the countryside with no shop close, they would text daddy what they needed and I got it for them at my

local shop and brought it up the



Lisa Brennan, Parish of Inishkeen.

next time I was going up.

I loved doing the Pope John Paul Award. I gained so many new skills and more confidence to talk to new people and get involved in my parish more often. I loved getting to know the people in my parish more too, as I didn't know many older people before I did the Award.

I also learnt a lot about the different special events that happen in my parish and what really goes on behind closed doors. There are so many hard working people that do a lot to make sure that the chapels are well looked after and the people of the parish too, which was nice to see.

The beauty of the JP II Award is giving back to people and thinking of others



My name is Clara Barrett and I am just finished Transition Year at Scoil Mhuire, Buncrana. The main aim of the Pope John Paul II Award is to enable participants to take an active part in the life of their Church - in the life of their community and society. It enables young people to become more aware of the teaching and role of the Catholic Church in the world and to engage at a deep level with Christ.

I decided to sign up for the Award this year because I felt that this would be the perfect opportunity for me to learn more about the church and bring me closer to God. I am doing the Gold Award. In order for me to achieve this Award, I was required to get involved in my parish and socially involve myself for one hour per week for 20 weeks.

For my parish involvement, I attended a meeting once a month for faith development, arts and crafts and, most importantly, pizza, along with all the other students doing the Award in my local parish. This was led by Maire Gormley, our Parish Catechist. Each week, I went to the Adoration Chapel to pray. I

really enjoyed this time as I got to take time out of my day to relax and fully embrace the special time with God.

For my social involvement I got involved with the local St Vincent de Paul Charity Shop, in Buncrana. Every Friday after school, I went to the shop to help my local community. I met so many people from the local area and I learned so much about them. I was very interested in my job and I really admire the staff that work there every day. The work that the SVP do is incredible.

In doing all this, I feel the Pope John Paul II Award has helped me to step out of my comfort zone and become more of a selfless person to the people around me. This Award has taught me so much about myself and my religion. Through the Award, I was able to go to Knock Shrine, which was an experience that I will never forget. I could not recommend this Award highly enough to anyone who is thinking about taking part.

To conclude, one bit of advice that I could give is to get involved in all the opportunities that come your way, keep yourself busy and just enjoy every minute of this Award. It will be so worth it in the end. You feel great because the beauty of the Pope John Paul II Award is you are giving back to the people and thinking of others, and this Award brought out a side in me which I am remarkably proud of.

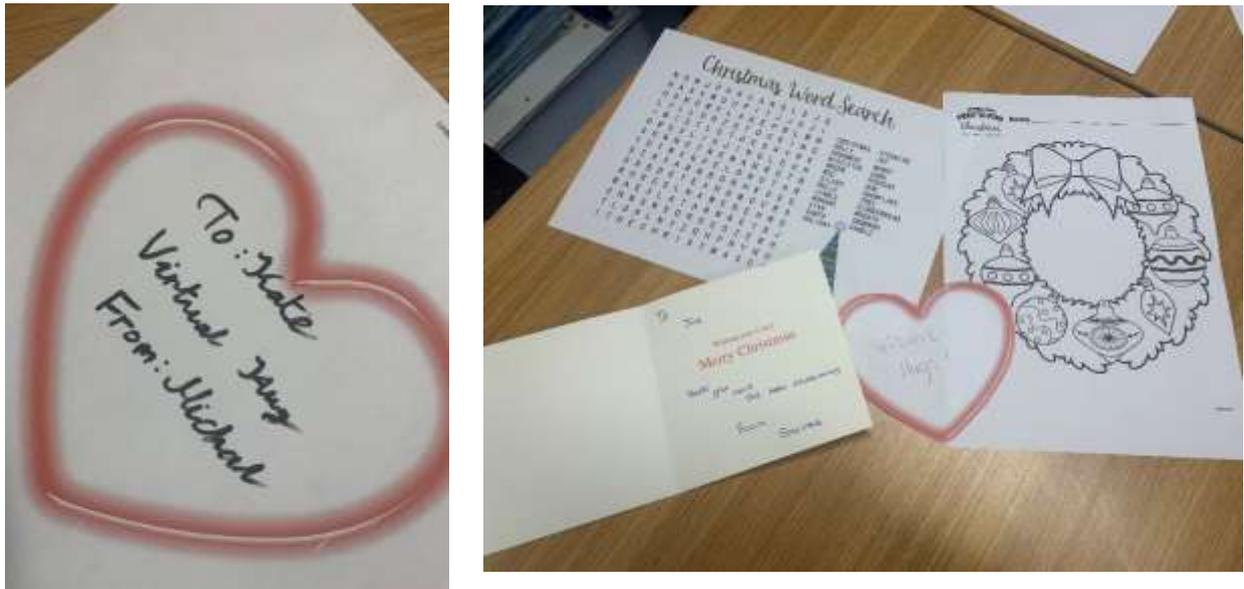
"But sometimes it is necessary to do that which is too much" (Pope John Paul II)

6th years forsake Secret Santa with classmates to make gifts for refugees and asylum seekers



6th years have just finished a module on refugees and asylum seekers. They are making Christmas cards and sending small gifts to children in our nearest direct provision centre. We have the names, gender and ages of all the children. The students decided to do this instead of a Secret Santa this year.

Virtual Hugs for Nursing Home Residents



Our 6th Year Religion classes sending virtual hugs to the residents of OwenMór Nursing Home in Derry, just over the border, which was John Hume's nursing home in his latter years. Included is a personalised Christmas card with a Christmas wordsearch.

Making rosary beads

Ms Edel O'Connor, RE teacher, made simple rosary beads with the ASD students last month and they made one to give as a gift to someone in their lives. Two of the students were giving them to their grannies. This activity will continue with the 1st years during Advent.



November Liturgy



All classes did November liturgies and were given the opportunity to remember those whom they have loved and lost.

Students are loving the new Sensory Board in the ASD Unit

With the move off campus to a different building for our Special Needs' Units due to the COVID crisis this year, the staff, led by senior SNA, Ms Paula Benson wanted to provide extra stimulation for students within the current restrictions, especially during break and lunchtimes – she felt the need to create something fun yet educational for them. Having been involved in some voluntary community art projects over the Summer she decided to take some time to do something for these wonderful students who lift everyone's hearts every time you are in their company

She came up with the idea of developing a large sensory board appropriate to them. Research shows that sensory play builds nerve connections in the brain's pathways, which can lead to greater ability in completing complex learning tasks. Sensory play is also known to support language development, cognitive growth, fine and gross motor skills, problem solving skills, and social interaction.

With this in mind the sensory board that she created was filled with many small activities that also appealed to the senses with sound, tactile and colourful visual sections. Each part of the board has something in it that is of interest to the students she created it for. All the materials were sourced from the local hardware store and shops in our town. She painted and framed a large piece of plywood and then set in motion fixing all the chosen objects onto it.

This sensory board has been such a success for our students. It has created another element of stimulation in their school day while improving both their fine motor and problem-solving skills. There is something on it for everyone, even us adults. The students are receiving so much play and fun from it since it was installed. It has definitely proved to be a beneficial addition for all and has put plenty of smiles on their faces.





Texaco Childrens' Art Competition Prizewinners 2020



5th Year Art students, Gracie Friel and Matthew Clifford pictured receiving their Certificates of Commendation for the Texaco Art Competition from Scoil Mhuire Principal, Ms Rosaleen Grant

