



## Welcome

We would like to welcome our first year students and their families to our school community.

## Exam Results

Congratulations to our Leaving Certificate class of 2017 on their outstanding results. Students scored an average of 390 points, with 13% of our students achieving above 500 points, 53% above 400 and 83% above 300 points. Our students have moved onto further study in the Universities, Institutes of Technology and the colleges of further education. They have taken up courses in medicine, nursing, teacher education, arts, business, social studies, engineering and technology and veterinary nursing. Congrats to Maria Ruddy, Erica McMorrow & Ciara Murphy who all received entrance scholarships. We are proud of all our students' achievements and wish them every success and happiness in their future careers and life.

Congratulations also to our third year students who achieved exceptional results in their Junior Certificate Examination in June. These students will receive a new award called the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement which will replace the previously awarded Junior Certificate. These new awards will be awarded to students in the New Year.



## School Enrolment 2018

Our enrolment night will take place on Wednesday 24th January from 5.00 – 8.00pm. All sixth class students and their families are invited to attend.

## Sunday Times Survey

This annual survey ranked our school 34th in the Top 400 schools in Ireland in terms of student entry to third level. These figures are based on a three year average.

## Business Awards

Eimear Keane, Jane Mellet, Rachel Henahan, Fuschia Fadian, Heather Fadden, Amy McLoughlin, Maeve Gallagher, Aoibhinn Kennelly, Andrea Clarke, Leah Jennings, Hana-Rae Quinn, Ciara Bourke & Sinead Sweeney were all presented with Certificates of Achievement from NUI Galway in October based on their Junior Cert Business results. These students achieved an 'A' in their higher level Business Studies exam in 2017. Well done to the girls & their teachers.

## TY Business Studies Fundraiser

TY Business classes held a very successful fundraiser by raffling a Mayo hamper and by having a red and green day in September. Students raised a total of €825 which was divided among three charities: Irish Pilgrim Trust, Leukaemia Trust and Relay for Life.

## International Junior Science Olympiad (IJSO)

Amy McLoughlin, TY, was selected for the IJSO based on her Science and Maths Junior Certificate results. She was identified by the Dept. of Education as a high achiever in these two subjects. This written test was held in DCU in October, where over 100 students from all over Ireland attended.



## Saffron Science Competition Runners-Up 2017

2nd year Science students were announced as runners up in the national Saffron Science Competition 2017. The girls made a 3 minute film

on 'What will be the mode of transport in 2040 and how will it work? They received a €1,000 voucher from Saffron Travel and went to dinner paid for by Saffron Travel. Well done to the girls & their teachers Ms. Lynch, Ms. Tierney & Ms. Flannelly.

### **Student Council**

Class elections at the start of the school year presented us with a stellar cast of students from First to Sixth Year, all keen to make a positive contribution to school life here in St Joseph's. The following students were elected by their classmates as their student council representative: Shauna Redmond, Eve Okunzwa, Úna Togher, Kate McCarthy, Eunice Prabhu, Hannah Needham, Grainne Reilly, Claire Heneghan, Caitriona McCormack, Chloe Kerins, Cynthia Sakala, Aoife Moran, Heather Fadian, Nikol Bukovska, Nora Doyle, Kate Roberts, Megan Frazer, Ellen McHale, Chloe Stevenson, Faith Ameh, Anna Fahey & Sophie Ralph. Our meetings take place at lunchtime and so far we've been discussing many areas of concern brought to the council through our class representatives. At the opening school mass we were presented with our badges from Mrs. Mac Cabe who wished us well for the year ahead. We've liaised with the Principal on a number of issues in the school and are hopeful of making a real difference.



### **Mayo Association Dublin School Debates**

Katherine Smith, Kate McCarthy, Niamh Breslin & Sarah Boyce Homan, 5<sup>th</sup> years, took part in the Mayo Association Dublin Schools Debate on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> Oct in GMT. Katherine and Kate debated the motion that the house should ban mixed martial arts while Niamh and Sarah debated that a united Ireland was inevitable with Brexit.

Katherine and Kate won their debate while Sarah Boyce Homan won best individual speaker. Katherine & Kate debated again on Sat 18<sup>th</sup> Nov. in Trinity College on the motion that the house should oppose a united Catalonia. The debate was adjudicated by Mr. Pat Rabbitte, Mr Pdraig Lyons former Convenor of Irish Times Debating Competition, Ms Mary Laffoy, Former Provost of Trinity and Prof. Thomas Mitchell. Dr. Mary Robinson is patron of the competition.

### **Pope John Paul II & Papal Cross Awards**

These awards are presented to students who get involved in parish and social awareness problems. This year we had over 40 students receive the gold award & 7 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 in November. The awards were presented by Archbishop Michael Neary. Well done to all the girls.



### **School Mass**

The opening of the school year mass was celebrated on Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> September in the parish church. The theme of the mass was how each person can be a gift to other people. Through music, scripture and dance we celebrated our identity as a Mercy School and a CEIST School.

### **French Theatre**

French Theatre for Schools visited St. Joseph's on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> & Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> of December. The actors performed a junior show for 3<sup>rd</sup> year and TY French students and a senior show for the 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> years. The shows were very educational, highly entertaining and it was brilliant to hear authentic

french from native speakers. We look forward to welcoming the group to our school again next year.

### **Mentors**

This year 5th year students are taking part in the school's mentoring programme. These fifth year meet with the first years at lunchtimes to organise activities. They are currently working hard on their Christmas concert performance.

### **Credit Union Art Competition**

Congrats to our students on their success in the Credit Union Art Competition. Sarah Bohan 5th year was 2nd in 14-17 age category; Anna Forde 5th year 1st in 14-17 age category & Ava Flynn 1st Year 2nd in 11-13 age category, Anna went forward to the Chapter Level of the art competition where she was awarded third place Well done to Anna and her teacher Ms. Geary.



### **Advent Penitential Service**

Our Advent Penitential Service and the Sacrament of Reconciliation was celebrated on the 5th of December in our beautifully decorated school hall. Students were given the opportunity to prepare for Christmas in a meaningful way. Sincere thanks to the priests of the parish who celebrated the sacrament with us.

### **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 note with the names of 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 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.

### **Lourdes**

10 fifth years 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 1<sup>st</sup>. Your support would be appreciated.

### **TY Musical 'Schools Will Rock You'**

On the 16th and 17th of November the TY students, accompanied by the school orchestra and band, performed their musical 'Schools Will Rock You' in the Royal Theatre Castlebar. This musical is based on the music of Queen. This excellent show was full of song, dance and colour and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Well done girls!



### **Peer 4 Peer Training**

20 TY students will participate in Peer 4 Peer training on Wednesday the 24th and Thursday the 25th of January 2018. They will deliver the programme to primary school children in the New Year.

### **Music, Choir & Orchestra**

The choirs & orchestra were busy in the run up to Christmas preparing for the school carol service

which was held on Tuesday 19th Dec. After Christmas, the senior choir, made up of 5th & 6th years, will be busy preparing for the Limerick Choral festival in which they will compete. They are also looking forward to a concert in Ballintubber Abbey on Friday 23rd March, when they, along with the St. Joseph's Gospel Choir will perform with the Cherry Creek Choir from Denver, Colorado. This choir will also visit the school for a special performance on the day. This is all in connection with the Mayo International Choral Festival. The Irish traditional group enjoyed giving performances at the Relay for Life event in Breaffy Arena and Cuan Chaitriona recently. The Gospel Choir enjoyed a vocal workshop with Veronica McCarron and a trip to Derry to participate in the City of Derry International Choral Festival. They also performed around the community in the run-up to Christmas. The RTE Lyric FM orchestra visited the school last month and all music students enjoyed a great performance from the musicians.



### **First Year Musical Trip**

On Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October all first year students attended the musical 'All Shook Up'. The musical was produced by students of Mount Saint Michael, Claremorris and was enjoyed by all!

### **Gael Linn debates**

Congratulations to our Senior Irish Debating team and their teacher Mr. O'Tuathail who took part in the quarter final round of the Gael Linn debating competition on Thursday the 13<sup>th</sup> of November. The debate was held in St Gerald's College, Castlebar and students from fifth year, Rachel Lammond, Isobel Ní Eosaigh agus Elizabeth McGinn took on St. Gerard's College, Cliften Community School, Ballinrobe Community School and Our Lady's Secondary School Belmullet to debate the motion

that 'Ireland is a Tourist Paradise'. The adjudicators had a difficult job in choosing the winners from this lively debate. Fortunately St. Joseph's girls defeated the motion and are successfully through to the regional final which will take place in St. Joseph's in the New Year. Good luck girls!

### **Irish Debate**

"Is é an corasa daonlathach an córas is fear". Three girls from TY, Kate McCarthy, Ruth Murphy and Katherine Smith, debated in favour of this motion in Merlin Parke College, against students from Lisdoonvarna and Athlone. The girls are now through to the next round which will be held after Christmas. Well done girls!

### **Cycle Against Suicide**

In September we were delighted to receive the news that we had become an ambassador school for Cycle Against Suicide for a third year. The aim of the programme is to encourage schools to become actively involved in mental health promotion. It recognises the efforts put in by students and staff to promote the message "It's ok not to feel ok, and it's absolutely ok to ask for help". The TY students are currently working towards achieving the ambassador school status for the academic year 2017/2018. The theme for this year is 'Empower Your Voice'. They will also be attending the Students Leaders Congress in the 3Arena Dublin on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The aim of the congress is to promote positive mental health and help-seeking behaviour in young people. The day will consist of music, inspiring celebrity speakers, discussion and much more.

### **Transition Year News**

The TY's started off their year with an overnight stay in Killary Adventure Centre. Here the girls bonded through outdoor activities such as gorge walking, canoeing and the turf challenge.

Students also attended the Ploughing Championships in Tullamore in September. The girls attended talks from Youth Connect, AIDs West and GMIT Outdoor Education in recent weeks. The school bank, in conjunction with Bank of Ireland, will be opening in the New Year. In October the girls went to Glasnevin as part of their tour guiding programme. They each chose a different famous

historical figure/topic and are due to return in February to give their presentations.

### **Criminology and Psychology**

The TY students got a criminology and psychology talk from John O'Keefe, lecturer in UCD and Trinity College in September. A number of girls went on to do an online course on the topic through City College. This involved them watching the lectures online once a week and completing an assignment

### **Wild Atlantic Words**

As part of the 'Wild Atlantic Words' festival held in Castlebar in October, some TY English students wrote a 'Letter to my Hero' for a Transition Year event. Former Taoiseach Enda Kenny was also in attendance to hear Ciara Kelleher read her excellent letter. Other students who took part were Ciara Hannon, Jane Ryder, Carlota Agelet, Sinead Sweeney, Evanna Winters and Alice Hussey. Well done girls!

### **Internet Safety & Cyber Bullying Workshop**

An Internet Safety & Cyber Bullying workshop was held in school in October. Jeremy Pagden of Lurtel Ltd. ([www.schoolswebsites.ie](http://www.schoolswebsites.ie)) gave presentations to 2nd, 3rd, Transition Year, 5th and 6th year students on Internet Safety and Cyber Bullying in the school. He also delivered a talk to parents.

### **Third Year Geography Trip**

In September, 120 third year student enjoyed a trip to the Ceide Fields Visitor Centre and Downpatrick Head in Ballycastle.



### **Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition**

Fifth year students Sorcha Higgins, Aimee Bailey and Molly McHugh took part in the Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition in November. The girls were asked to speak about global issues such

as female empowerment, human rights, the environment, bullying and democracy. They each spoke very eloquently and powerfully on the day. Molly McHugh was successful in going forward to the Regional Finals which will be held in January and we wish her the best of luck!

### **Roddy Doyle Workshop**

In November, 30 5th year English students attended a 'Fighting Words' workshop with Irish novelist Roddy Doyle in Turlough House Museum. The writer commended the girls on the quality of their writing and expressed his belief that some of the group could become household names in writing in the future.

### **Irish Singing Competition**

Togra Mhaigh Eo organised an Irish Singing Competition for secondary school students in County Mayo on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2017. The competition took place in the Ivy Tower Hotel in Castlebar. Katelyn Deasy from 2E took part in the competition and was the overall winner with her song 'Tóg mo Lámh'. Katelyn was the overall winner and was presented with money and a cup after the competition. Well done Katelyn!

### **TY Christmas Cake Challenge**

This competition involves all TY students making, icing & decorating their own Christmas cake in school. The competition was judged by Aaron McMahon, owner of Rua, on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December. There were a number of highly commended cakes and the overall winner was Clíodhna Hennessy.



### **Cinema Trips**

Ms. Berkeley took 3rd years to the cinema to see the documentary *Condemned to Remember*, about the holocaust during World War II. Students then had the opportunity to ask Tomi Reichental, a holocaust survivor, some questions.

### **Rua Bake Sale**

On Sunday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, TY students, along with the Home Economics Department, organised and baked for our annual Rua Bake Sale. The girls came in at 8am to start baking. Rua opened at 12 p.m. and the girls produce was sold out by 3:30 p.m. All funds will go towards the Home Economics Department

### **Green Schools**

Our school will be assessed for its 8th Green Flag in March 2018 on the theme of Global Citizenship Marine Environment. The TY Green Schools committee took part in a 2 minute beach clean-up in Enniscrone as part of the programme. The committee are also looking at the issue of single use plastic and microbeads in cosmetics.

### **Gaelic Football**

The u14 team have had a very successful year and are through to the quarter finals. The senior team is also through to a quarter final. We wish both teams the best of luck in the New Year.

### **Swimming**

Well done to those students who represented our school in the Connaughts in October. Heather McFadden took gold in the senior 100m breaststroke and the intermediate team (Sarah Conlon, Rachel Henehan, Maeve Gallagher & Brianne Horan) took silver in the 200m freestyle.

### **Basketball**

Both the U-16 & the U-19 teams got through to the regional finals in December. The teams will now play in the playoffs in the New Year. The 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> year teams will commence their tournaments in January. Well done to the teams and their coach Ms. Kilkenny

### **Miss Carey – Duathlon Gold Medal Winner**

St. Joseph's teacher Ms. Lorraine Carey won gold for Ireland at the Powerman Long Distance

Duathlon World Championships in Switzerland during the summer. Ms. Carey was also the winner of the 2017 Duathlon National Series. She also finished second at this year's Duathlon National Championships. Ms. Carey is a great role model for the students in St. Joseph's with her dedication and can-do attitude. The staff and students in St. Joseph's are very proud of her achievements and wish her well for the future.

### **Sporting Achievements**



Huge congratulations to **Maeve Gallagher** in TY on her successful year in sport. She was a member of the Irish Cross Country team that competed in Celtic Cross Country Race in Wales, she was also a member of Team Ireland Cycling Squad who competed in the European Youth Olympics in Gyor, Hungary in July and she was named Overall Junior Triathlete of the Year for 2017 by Triathlon Ireland. We would also like to congratulate **Lucy Tuohy** for taking part in the cross country finals in Abbotstown in November

### **Sympathy**

We extend our condolences to families and staff members in our school who have been bereaved recently and who are experiencing sadness at this time. Go dtuga Dia faoiseamh dóibh uilig.

### **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!

### **Season's Greetings**

The community of St. Joseph's would like to wish you all a happy and holy Christmas. See you all in 2018.

