



# Our Lady's Catholic High School



A National Teaching School

Friday, 23 February 2018

Our Prayer theme next week is **Hope**

There is a beautiful line in this week's second reading from St Paul: "With God on our side, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31) and it is a reminder, as all the readings are this week that our God is one who gives us hope. Hope that no matter how dark things can get or how difficult things may seem, we will always have God on our side and that power and love can overcome anything. Sometimes we can turn away from God's love but it doesn't mean that it isn't still happening. Have hope in Him because He will never let you down, never abandon you and will always be on your side.



**Lord, as we continue our Lenten journey we may have struggled with our promises to You. Give us hope to continue in our fasting, praying and almsgiving and help us to realise the sacrifices we make are nothing compared to your hope for each of us. Amen.**

## OUTWARD BOUND WEEK

On Monday, 5 February 12 excited year 9 boys, accompanied by Miss McNeela and Miss Key, travelled to Howtown Outward Bound for a week of adventurous challenges which would push their teamwork, leadership and resilience to the limits. Within minutes of arriving the boys were told to get changed into old clothes then began the famous 'jog and dip'. This involved running to the lake through, what were this time of the year, ice cold streams and then jumping off a jetty into Ullswater (the temperature was 4 degrees!). After this shock to the system the boys got to know each other and their instructor better through a series of team building activities which required them to make mistakes and then reflect on them, communicate effectively and work together as a team- all skills which would be essential over the coming week. The next morning, we were awoken to a winter wonderland- this would have been great if we were skiing however today's programme involved water sports! Students carefully listened how to build a raft before working together in freezing temperatures to construct it- this involved learning a number of different types of knots. Once confident that the raft was well built, it was put to the test and paddled out to a boat in the middle of the lake carrying 12 hardy sailors-it passed the test remaining strong and sturdy. The afternoon did not provide the students with any respite from the cold weather however, after layering up with wetsuits, fleeces and waterproofs all were motivated to tackle the gorge. This was a highlight for many students and showed what can be achieved when you work together-the quote of the day was "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." Inspired by the enthusiasm and motivation of the boys, our instructor selected a challenging expedition for the final 2 days. This involved getting a powerboat to collect the canoes, canoeing for a couple of hours down the lake and then disembarking and travel on foot with expedition packs to a refuge high in the mountains where they would spend the night. For this the boys had to develop strategies to break down the large challenge to ensure that it was achievable by all (we reflected afterwards that these same strategies could be used for challenges back at home like revision or homework). The journey by canoe was stunning but paddling into the wind was a challenge and required everyone to dig deep and persevere even when they wanted to stop (stopping would mean we would drift backwards). Once on the walk the boys broke the journey down into small legs and offered encouragement and words of advice to anyone that was struggling. Despite many not thinking they would be able to reach the refuge they made it just before nightfall. However there was no time to rest with beds having to be made, fires lit and tea had to be cooked. Despite the extreme challenge of the long journey and a cold night's sleep at the end of the week, many said it was this experience that made them most proud of themselves. We hope that the boys remember that it is often the biggest challenges which may seem impossible to face that make for the most memorable moments and our proudest achievements. On our final day we took the opportunity to climb the mountain that we had been staring at all week next to the centre. Again, by breaking the challenge down into small chunks all students got to the top and were rewarded with spectacular views and their certificates. It was then that our instructor read us a poem and left us to contemplate the challenges that we had faced that week, the strategies that we had used to overcome them and think about how we could use these in our everyday live to ensure that we all fulfil our potential.

## **ENRICHMENT DAY 2**

**Year 7** spent the day learning about how they could take steps towards celebrating the diversity which exists in society and the world. They were encouraged to embrace differences, as that which makes us unique is special. They also considered how we are not all made on a production line and that we don't have to fit into a mould. They reflected maturely and responded to all tasks set with enthusiasm.

**Year 8** pupils took part in a competition with a Dragon's Den format during enrichment day. In groups of 5, pupils were asked to create a project that would have a positive impact in their local community. Initially, pupils presented their project ideas to their form class leading to a vote to decide who should represent their form in the final. The winning group from each form then performed their presentation to the whole year group and the 3 Dragons in the restaurant. The standard was exceptionally high but the eventual winners were 'The Domum Foundation' whose focus was to help the homeless community in Preston.

**Year 9** spent the day working on Moral Development. They looked at how the decisions we make affect ourselves and other people as well as considering what is the moral, or right thing to do, given some tricky dilemmas. Appropriately, as Year 9s approach their options choices, they were also fortunate to have a group of outside speakers from BAE to finish the day and pupils saw a presentation on the variety of opportunities and challenges available within an engineering career path.

**Year 10** pupils received five different presentations on the importance of volunteering. Various guest speakers including The Salvation Army and Guide Dogs For The Blind explained to students how volunteering has positively affected their lives. The day aimed to give pupils an understanding of how volunteering can help other people in addition to building their own personal and professional skills which can lead to future employment opportunities.

**Year 11** enrichment day was entitled Study Skills Day. An external company, Positively Mad, delivered a full day with Year 11 on Study Skills. It was an excellent day looking at the best ways to revise and to motivate pupils to achieve their very best. In the evening parents came to collect their child's revision plan.

## **FAMILY WEEKEND – CASTLERIGG MANOR**

We would like to make families aware of the Family Weekend which takes place from 25 – 27 May 2018 at Castlerigg. This is an opportunity for families to come together for the weekend. There will be activities for all age groups and the opportunity to meet old friends and get to know new. The weekend is open to all families and further details can be found at <http://www.castleriggmanor.co.uk/family-retreats/>

## **RHS SCHOOL GARDENING AWARDS - LEVEL 2**

The Marafiki Gardening Club has been awarded the Level 2 RHS School Gardening Award, which includes a certificate and a Royal Horticultural Society text book called 'How To Grow Practically Everything'. The application for the award was written by pupils in Year 8; Zoya Khan, Nandhini Kovvuri, Kate Moir, Claudia Gornall and Lewis Cooke. The Marafiki Committee are now looking forward to sharing their successes with pupils at St Peter Claver High School in Tanzania.

## **CHARTERED ACCOUNTANCY CAREERS**

An expert from Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) will be presenting information on apprenticeships, work experience and graduate opportunities at a school leavers' event taking place on Wednesday, 28 February from 18.30 pm until 20.00 at the Waterside Hotel, Wilmslow Road, Didsbury. For further details please contact Holly.Phillips@icaew.com or telephone 01908 248 295.

### **Dates to remember**

Thursday, 1 March - Year 9 Parent/Carers' evening from 4.00 pm – 6.30 pm  
Thursday, 15 March - Year 7 Parent/Carers' evening from 4.00 pm – 6.30 pm  
Thursday, 29 March – School closes for Easter holidays – 12.45 pm  
Monday, 16 April – School opens  
Tuesday, 1 May – Year 7 Normandy Trip  
Monday, 7 May – School closed for May Day  
Friday, 25 May – School closes for half-term at 3.30 pm  
Monday, 4 June – School opens