



More News



July 2016

Our students visit Rome

Ten students in Years 11 and 13 visited Rome recently along with Mr Merchant, Mr Murray and Mrs Brown, accompanied by Father Paul Douthwaite.

The group celebrated mass in St Peter's Crypt in the Vatican City, and visited many of the sights of Rome including St Peter's Dome and the Colosseum. They also saw the steps that Jesus walked up to see Pontius Pilate. These have been moved from Jerusalem and are now in one of the basilica of Rome.



St Thomas More bids farewell to Mrs Donkin



Mrs Donkin has worked at St Thomas More RC Academy for 35 years, and for the last 9 of these has been the Headteacher. She retires this summer and this was celebrated by a mass held here in school. The photograph shows, from left to right, Father Martin Stempczyk, Monsignor Andrew Faley, Mrs Donkin, Mr Watson (who will be the new Headteacher in September), Bishop Seamus, and Father Bede from Ampleforth Abbey.

The St Thomas More Open Evening will be held on Tuesday 20 September

Super Scientists!



A huge well done to our A-level Biology students who entered the Biology Olympiad which is a national competition held by the Royal Society of Biology. Matthew McCann and Hannah Chapman achieved a Bronze and Gold award respectively for their high scores and were invited to the Royal Society in London to be presented with their awards.

Sam Burwood in Year 12 has won a Sapphire Award in the Senior Physics Challenge organised by Isaac Physics. This is a project aimed at developing the problem solving skills of A-level physics students and it provides them with realistic expectations of what it is like to study the subject at university. Sam has been awarded a prize for her commitment and ability in problem solving.

Brilliant Berlin

Nine Year 12 students and two teachers took part in the German/History trip to Berlin in June. Four busy days were spent discovering all the amazing sights of Berlin and getting an insight into its fascinating and eventful history. During their stay they visited a whole range of sights, including the Bundestag, the Olympic Stadium, the Holocaust Memorial, the Berlin Wall memorial, and a Stasi prison, as well as taking a boat trip down the River Spree in the hot sunshine. The group were able to enjoy traditional German food and have a go at using German in a real life situation.



Holocaust Evening

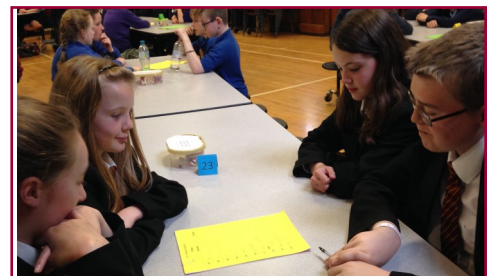


The school was very lucky to have another visit from Eva Clark. Eva was born in Mathausen Concentration Camp, her mother having survived the horrors of Auschwitz before being moved there. As well as a very inspirational and moving presentation from Eva, the evening was a chance to showcase some of the work completed by Year 9 students as part of the Holocaust Memorial Day in January. This included poems and music, and also a pair of blue striped pyjamas made from individual ceramic tiles. The evening ended with a liturgy led by the students.



Inter School Literary Quiz

In May twelve Year 7 students were selected to take part in a literature quiz at Chantry Middle School in Morpeth due to their literary knowledge and enthusiasm. Over twenty teams from Tyne and Wear and Northumberland took part in the quiz which is modelled on the Kids' Lit Quiz. Each round of ten questions follows a particular literary theme and there is also a Pictionary round featuring picture clues.



Living History



Students in Year 9 recently took part in a Diocesan History workshop looking at the Battle of the Somme. They debated about the battle, and saw the very moving exhibition focusing on the lives of four local people. Finally, students explored different aspects of the soldiers' lives through investigating clothing and artefacts.

Catholic Partnership Mass



Forty five students from all year groups took part in the Catholic Partnership Mass in June at St Nicholas Cathedral in Newcastle. The Mass was celebrated by the Bishop and Father Dermott Donnelly. All of the schools in the diocese were present and St Thomas More students read the bidding prayers. The painting is by Year 10 student Pinzhe Xu and was completed as part of the project responding to 'The Year of Mercy'.



Confirmations

On May 12th, 19 of our students were confirmed by Bishop Seamus at a ceremony which took place at St. Cuthbert's Church, North Shields. The programme began with a night at the Youth Village back in April which explored confirmation using the quote from St Catherine of Siena: "If you are what you should be, you will set the whole world on fire." The programme concluded with a joyous celebration of Mass where the students received the Sacrament of Confirmation.



Festivals Galore!

On June 27th, 24 of our Sixth Form students attended the Sixth Form Festival - a full day of worship, group activities and inspiring speakers. The students heard from Father Eamonn Mulcahy, who spent decades living in Africa, who spoke on the corporal acts of mercy and how they are relevant in our current society today. They also heard from Mel Francisco-Lawless, born and raised in the Philippines, who shared her story of losing her father who was shot whilst trying to help a man injured on the street.



On June 29th, 12 of our students in Year 9 got out their tents and wellies and attended the Diocesan Secondary Schools' Festival at the Youth Village. This year's theme was "Love Undeserved" which explored how God's love and mercy for us is so great it can change our lives. Students listened to the story of Manoj Raithatha, a self-made multi-millionaire who realised that something was missing in his life even though he was rich. An inspiring, fun and emotional three days was had by all - and our students even won the talent show!




Sporting Round Up



Two teams of Year 9 & 10 girls competed in a Northumberland county cricket tournament at Benwell Hill Cricket Club in June. Both teams played well and were unlucky not to make the semi finals.

Jack Beverley is competing in the National 100m event so we wish him luck!

After 8 sunny years our Sports Day was a little damp this year! Look out for the photos in the next newsletter.

 Remember that you can see all the latest PE news on Twitter: @STM_PE

Our Busy Year 12s!

A team of four Year 12 students recently took part in the Sixth Form Diocesan University Challenge that is held annually in Durham University debating chamber. The team revised hard but unfortunately were unsuccessful.

Year 12 art students have been helping out at St Cuthbert's Primary School in the Snow Dog art project. Schools get a chance to decorate their own snow puppy in a scheme designed to raise funds for St Oswald's Hospice. St Thomas More will be getting its own snow puppy any day now so look out for it in the next newsletter!



Crescendo Choir on the BBC

The STM Crescendo Choir were recently recorded singing songs by artists such as Alexandra Burke and The Proclaimers. This is to advertise the free concerts being held in the region and will be played on local radio over the coming weeks.

Oxbridge Visits

Four Year 10 students recently travelled to Cambridge University to see what life is like as a student there. They spent two days sampling mini lectures, as well as enjoying the cultural delights of the city. A group of Year 12 students also visited the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge at the end of June. They attended talks by lecturers and current students. Former STM student Brigitte Stenhouse, who has just gained a first in mathematics, met up with us in Oxford to talk about life at the University. Our students even found time to take part in Morris dancing in Cambridge.



Pasteur Project

Four of our feeder primary schools visited us this summer term to watch a French play about the important work of the French scientist Louis Pasteur brilliantly acted in French by students in Years 8 and 9.

They have received rave reviews with comments such as: 'It was amazing', 'It was brilliant' and 'It was a great experience and something I will never forget.'

Pictured are two St Bernadette pupils enjoying dressing up as the chickens who helped Louis Pasteur discover the vaccine for cholera.



In the next issue:

Look out for our new style newsletter next term. As we go to press...

- The Sound of Music begins its 3 night run at the RGS.
- Year 12 students are visiting CERN in Switzerland
- Work has started on our lovely new PE building