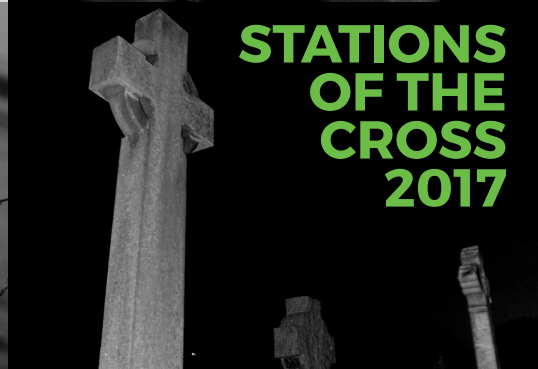


MORE LIFE



Newsletter of St Thomas More RC Academy, North Shields

EASTER 2017



STATIONS OF THE CROSS 2017

The idea started before Christmas when a competition was launched in school to submit photographs that sum up each station of the cross. They were reflecting over broader themes such as "crushed" for when Jesus falls whilst carrying the cross, and "a helper" for when Simon of Cyrene helped Jesus to carry the cross.

The standard of entries was excellent, and they were eventually whittled down to the chosen few which were printed on canvases and hung around school in time for their launch on Ash Wednesday.

This means that there is now a physical representation of Jesus' walk to Calvary around the school site. Year 7 students have been the first to walk this path; they have been led by Sixth Form students who have been offering points of personal reflection at each station.

The Stations have also been printed for use in the local parishes; and already have toured the parishes of St Cuthbert & St Joseph in North Shields and Our Lady & St Oswin and St Mary in Cullercoats and Tynemouth. The feedback from parishioners has been overwhelmingly positive and many

have appreciated the chance to reflect and pray over a new take on the Stations through the eyes of a young student.

- Michael Thompson, Chaplain



RECOGNITION FOR OUR TALENTED STUDENTS



POPE JOHN PAUL II RECIPIENTS

The Lord Glenamara Prize is an award given to students in the North East who have made a civic contribution to their local community, for example volunteering for charities, as well as showing strong academic performances. The award was created in memory of Lord Glenamara, a North East politician and former Education Secretary who worked towards social reform in the North East through education. This year the award was presented at Imperial College London by the Secretary of State for Education, Justine Greening. We were both given the opportunity to travel to London after being selected as runners up for the award.

Before the ceremony itself we were given a whistle-stop tour of the university and had the opportunity to try the department of Physics' flight simulator, managing to successfully land a plane. We then returned to the main venue and were presented with a certificate by the Secretary of State for Education.

- Aaron Rowell and Niamh Waters, Year 12

The Pope John Paul II award enables young people to become more visible in their church, community and society. The award was created to commemorate the late Pope John Paul II, who was committed to young people and had such belief and confidence in them. It is designed for year 12 and above and consists of 3 stages, gold, silver and bronze.

I completed my gold award, which consisted of 20 hours of parish involvement and 20 hours of social awareness. For my parish involvement, I helped with children's liturgies as well as handing out hymn books. I did social awareness both in and out of school. Within school we organised activities such as random acts of kindness and poppy selling. Outside of school I worked with the St John Ambulance Badgers, teaching children aged 5-10 life saving skills such as first aid and communication skills.

The presentation was a fantastic event celebrating the incredible and rich work that young people do. I was very proud to be part of it.

- Elena Jones, Year 13



LORD GLENAMARA RECIPIENTS



RICHARD MOORE ON FORGIVENESS

When Richard Moore came to speak to our class we were told he was there to teach us about forgiveness, but as he stood at the front of the class and explained his story I realised he would educate us not only on forgiveness, but on perspective.

Richard Moore is from the city of Derry in Northern Ireland. At the age of 10, in the midst of the Northern Ireland troubles, Richard was shot with a rubber bullet by a British soldier. As a result of this accident he was left completely blind. Despite what this man had done to him, Richard wanted to meet the soldier, and chose to forgive him. Richard described to us his thoughts on the futility of anger towards other people, and that being angry at someone else was like drinking a cup of acid and

expecting the other person to die. In an event that would have left most people bitter and resentful at what they had lost, it is clear that Richard does not believe he has lost at all. In the years since his incident he has lived a full and happy life; he has a family and a purpose and even a friendship with the Dalai Lama.

What Richard showed us is that no matter the obstacles you face, no matter how easy it would be to take the low road and fixate on those who have caused you suffering, by stepping above it and adapting to your situation with a smile on your face you can achieve anything you set your mind to. Richard is a source of inspiration to every one of us who struggles to remember the value of forgiveness in our daily lives.- Holly Holman and Ellen Crozier, Year 11



FLAME 2017



On Saturday 11th March, 29 students from St Thomas More RC Academy, 5 former students, and 6 parishioners travelled down to London for the Flame 2017 event. The event was organised by the parishes of St. Oswin's Deanery and was very generously funded by the parishes, and our local SVP and Catenians groups. Amy Hamilton, Year 10, writes...

It was a very early start to get to Wembley arena, but once we arrived we listened to live music by Matt Redman and inspirational speeches by cardinals from around the world, including Cardinal Charles Bo from Burma and Cardinal Vincent Nichols, the Archbishop of Westminster. Many people were touched by these speeches, as they had messages about ourselves, and how lucky we are to live in the world we do. The day was amazing as we were able to meet new people from other schools, and interact in the many activities that we participated in. This trip was a once in a lifetime opportunity.

- Amy Hamilton, Year 10

SIXTH FORM AMNESTY GROUP

This year the Sixth Form Amnesty Group has been involved with a number of projects to campaign for an end to human rights abuses, based on the founding principles of Amnesty International, who target justice for those whose rights have been violated. The Refugee Crisis has been at the centre of many of the group's efforts.

There are currently more people fleeing conflict and persecution than at any point since World War II. Amnesty believes that the international response to the crisis has been inadequate, and that we should be doing more to support the 21.3 million refugees globally. In November we took pictures of Sixth Form

students holding up signs which said they stood with refugees. The group also went into Year 7 PSHE lessons to make postcards welcoming refugees to the country. The postcards were then sent to Amnesty International to be distributed to refugees arriving in the country.

- Niamh Waters, Year 12



A WEEKEND IN VIENNA

In February, a group of year 13 Psychology students visited the beautiful city of Vienna, home of the famous psychologist Sigmund Freud.

After an early 4am start at Newcastle airport on the Friday, we arrived in Vienna for a packed weekend of activities. After visiting Freud's former home (now a converted museum) we were most surprised to learn about some of the work that Freud conducted, including experiments on the impacts of cocaine. Whilst in Vienna, we took a tour of the underground crypts, visited the Narrenturm (an 18th century mental asylum, now part of the medical university and containing many preserved body parts), the Schönbrunn Zoo and an overwhelming and extremely thought-provoking trip to the Mauthausen Concentration Camp.

Some students took the opportunity to attend the Rapid Vienna v Austria Vienna derby match, whilst others visited the more relaxed Prater Park Ferris Wheel. Our personal highlight was ice skating at the Rathaus (town hall), which was an absolutely magical experience! Despite a couple of visits to Vienna hospital, the whole trip was a massive success, leaving us with new knowledge, a broader perspective on History and Psychology, and a weekend of unforgettable memories.

- Charlotte Lowery and Beccy Hutchinson, Year 13



OUT AND

ICELAND 2017



After a long journey, on the road and in the air, the hotel was a welcome sight to us all. After a delicious dinner, we all collapsed into our bed ready for the excitement of the next few days.

It was at our first stop, the Hellisheidi geothermal power station, that the snowball fights began, as we realised just how much snow 51cm was. From here we went to the first of many waterfalls, Skogafoss; most of us walked to the top to look across the icy landscape, all 500+ steps. The landscape of Iceland is truly unique and like nothing any of us had experienced before.

During the evening quiz on the second day, Mr Rayson and Miss Vardy sprinted out the room, leaving students looking quizzically at each other. Seconds later, Miss Vardy's shout of 'run' confirmed our suspicions. We ran out of the cafeteria area onto the balcony where we saw, much to our awe, the faint green glimmer of the Northern Lights.

I would recommend this trip to anyone as it is a once in a lifetime opportunity, which has to be taken.

- Ben Anastasi, Year 10

HISTORY AND MUSIC TRIP TO LONDON

The London trip has to be one of the best trips ever, even though we had to be awake at 4:30am! One of the most fascinating places was the Cabinet War Rooms, a secret bunker under London that housed the British government during the Second World War. On the evening of the first day we went to the Lyceum Theatre to watch The Lion King; the singers were so talented and the costumes were amazing. We only got back to our rooms at about 10.30pm, but everyone was still so excited that we



didn't get much sleep, and we were awake again at 6.30am for another exciting day. The highlight of the second day was trying a butterbeer at the Harry Potter Studios, but also seeing the many artefacts at the Imperial War Museum.

Everyone loved the trip and some of us actually managed to sleep on the way back. We would certainly recommend it to any Year 8 students if they get the opportunity!

- Annie Johnson and Brooke Armstrong, Year 9

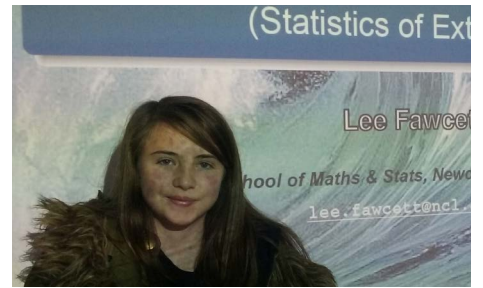


ABOUT

MATHS MASTERCLASS

For 6 weeks during the Autumn term I had the wonderful opportunity to attend a series of Maths Masterclasses run by the Royal Institution of Mathematics. The opportunity made me realise how vital Maths is to everything around us, and to every job that I might do in the future. It also opened my eyes to the variety of topics within Maths. This is something that everyone should remember, so if you don't like one kind of Maths I guarantee there will be an area that you will be interested in and that you can excel in.

- Elizabeth Adamson, Year 9



HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE TRIP TO SUNDERLAND UNI

On Wednesday 1st February, we visited Sunderland University, which was an opportunity to find out more about university life and what Sunderland University has to offer. We learnt how to budget money when staying in student accommodation, we had a lecture in the largest lecture hall in the university, which can hold up to 300 people, and we visited Spark Radio, a student-run university radio station. The day really gave us a lot to think about.

- Chloe Grant, Year 12

MOCK TRIAL AT NEWCASTLE CROWN COURT

On Saturday 4th March 2017 a group of Year 9 students took part in a Mock Trial competition. The case this year was a domestic burglary, which was quite challenging due to a shortage of leads. However, through excellent team work and expert cross examination, the team cracked the case and we were all very proud of our performances! Many thanks have to go to Mrs Forsten and Mrs Ritson for all their help in preparing us for the day in advance.

- Annie Johnson & Angela Pascua, Year 9



YEAR 8 SAFETY WORKS

On Wednesday 15th March, 50 Year 8 pupils were selected to go on a trip to Safety Works, a life-sized safety 'town' of various locations which can be set up to represent real-life scenarios. Throughout the day, we witnessed the dangers of Metro Stations, we solved a crime on a mock street, and we learnt about the risks of legal highs and alcohol. The most interesting bit was trying on eye goggles that showed you how your vision would be distorted by alcohol.

- Ella Backhouse, Year 8

HAPPY PUZZLE

On Thursday 16th March, we travelled to Carmel College in Darlington to participate in the Happy Puzzle Day. We spent the day solving a series of amazing puzzles, including penguin pile-up! The Happy Puzzle Day was extremely fun and we learned teamwork skills as well as enjoying ourselves.

- Chrysta Lois, Year 8



DIOCESAN BAKE OFF

The bake off was the best experience ever because we got to make things we had never baked before including quiche and chocolate eclairs. They looked so delicious! We were against 7 different schools and they were all lovely. We didn't win but I don't care, because it is the taking part that is important and we had a fun day.

- Gemma & Chloe Close, Year 9

Gemma & Chloe were also awarded a special prize for the exceptional teamwork.



LIBRARY NEWS...



Hello, my name is Charlie, I'm in 7E and I'm a Word Millionaire! This means that I have read over a million words since October for the Accelerated Reader scheme. My favourite books are series because you get a lot more detail and character development. Some series that I have read are *The Maze runner*, *A Series of Unfortunate Events* and *Skulduggery Pleasant*. In total I've read 26 books and nearly 3 million words.

I think that Accelerated Reader is great to develop your love of reading because it introduces a reward system. The interactive quizzes are really fun. It's a great way to get newer readers hooked and cherishing books. Currently, I'm aiming for 4 million words...and who knows where I will end up next!

- Charlie Whelan, Year 7

Members of the Girls Book group have been interviewing members of staff about their reading habits, including Mr Johnson:

What was your favourite book growing up?

- *Growing up, some of my favourite books were 'Noughts and Crosses' by Malorie Blackman, 'Artemis Fowl' by Eoin Colfer, books about the Vikings and 'The Hobbit'.*

What are currently your favourite books?

- *'Game of Thrones', 'I am Pilgrim' and the Inheritance trilogy.*

What is your favourite genre?

- *Fantasy because it allows me to escape and imagine new worlds.*

What is the best book on science for year 7?

- *The Pig That Wants to Be Eaten*

What is your favourite Pokémon?

- *Blastoise* - Jaimie Hinchcliffe-Hume, Year 7

WORLD BOOK DAY

On March 2nd we had a very eventful day in the library as it was World Book Day! The Year 7 Girls Book Group ran a number of activities such as "Guess Who Came to Dinner", origami bookworms, a Frankenstein Treasure Hunt and the top hit, our book sale! The book sale went extremely well as we raised £25 for St Oswald's Hospice. We also had a lot of free books and book tokens to give away.

A number of staff and students got involved and participated in the activities. Plus, the staff came dressed up as their favourite book character!

- Mishma Sony, Year 7



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Remember when... Year 9 went to Holy Island with the Geography department in 2008. If you have any photos from old school trips, feel free to send them to alogie@stmacademy.org.uk, and they may feature in future editions of More Life.



BUTTERFLY NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

On 15th January 2017 an eager squad of Year 10s and one Year 9 headed down to Northfield School in Billingham for the next stage of the Schools Table Tennis Competition. These students were: John Hogg, Adam Webster, Oly Thompson, Patrick Easton and Matthew Mastaglio. We qualified for this event following our title wins in events at Sandhill in Sunderland and one at Monkseaton High School. As the players arrived they knew it was going to be a tough competition, seeing other county champion teams from all over the North East of England as far as Hull. Most of the players we were up against regularly attend table tennis clubs outside school whereas only half of our 5 players do so.

- Adam Webster, Year 10

Our students played in the under-16 league, and handled the challenge extremely well, finishing fourth in the tournament.

- Mr Young

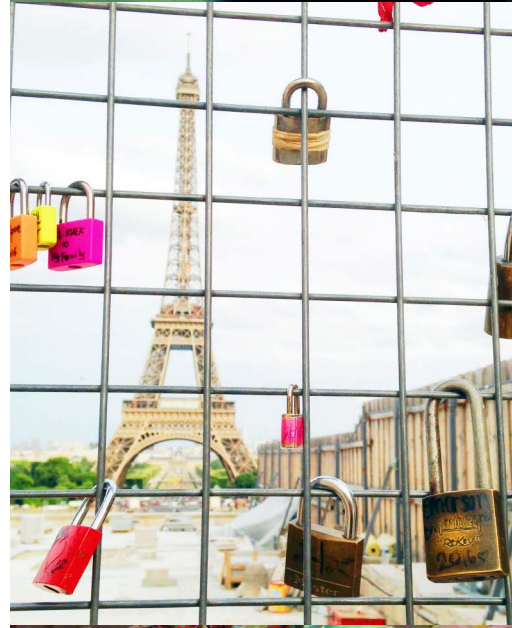
NORTH SHIELDS DANCE FESTIVAL

This year's theme for the North Shields Dance Festival was 'Creative Curriculum'. There were 23 schools participating which included over 500 pupils, ranging from nursery to year 12. St Thomas More was very well represented, with our students being involved in 6 dances from 5 different groups of dancers.

Students from across the year groups performed fantastically well, including the Year 11 Performing Arts students contemporary / urban fusion dance to the theme of Edvard Munch's 'The Scream'.

Year 12 Performing Arts students performed two dances. For our contemporary dance, we looked at Matthew Bourne's work in 'The Car Man', and for the jazz dance, we looked at Bob Fosse's 'Sweet Charity', creating a dance that replicated his awkward movements and his use of hands and props.

- Katy Burton, Emma Walker & Elizabeth Graham, Year 12



OUR TALENTED ARTISTS

Through the Catholic Partnership, our talented students have had the opportunity to display their work to a wider audience this term. In January, Jenny Anderson (bottom image) and a number of other students displayed their artwork at St Mary's Cathedral in Newcastle, and on 28th March many of our students will attend the launch and presentation of the KS3 photography competition at the Sunderland Glass Centre. Pictured on the right are the works of Anna Reay, Year 9 (Memories category), Martie Inson, Year 8 (Natural Forms category), Dannah Cruz, Year 9 (Sense of Place category) and Imari Logue, Year 7 (Animals category).





GRACIE DAVIES

INTER-COUNTY CROSS COUNTRY

On the 4th of February, I travelled to Kirkby Stephen (North Pennines) to represent Northumberland at Cross Country, competing against teams from all over the north of England! On the way there the weather took a turn for the worse with heavy sleet and cold winds, making the already waterlogged course even more of a challenge.

Each team of 16 competed across the 1.9 km long course, which included 2 major hills. It was a fast start as we all clambered up the hills and hit the mud and then it got really tough, the pace started to get faster as we came to the finish line, and at the end I gave it everything I had left to make sure that the team got maximum points. I was pleased with my efforts - I came 9th for Northumberland and qualified for the National Cross Country Championships in Leicester!

- Gracie Davies, Year 7

EX-PUPIL SUCCESSES

As always, we are extremely proud to share with you the success of our ex-pupils, and have loved hearing from people who left more years ago that they would perhaps like to admit! If you or a member of your family are a former student of St Thomas More, please let us know at alogie@stmacademy.org.uk and you could feature as early as the next issue.

ANDREW KING

1984-1989

I was a pupil at St Thomas More during the merger between St Aidan's and St Anselm's in 1985. Since graduating from Huddersfield with a degree in Music and completing my PhD at Northumbria, I have worked at the University of Hull for the last twenty years. I have had various roles including Deputy Dean, Associate Principal and I am currently Head of the Music Department. I have been published quite widely in the area of music, technology, and education, including several books. I have also been editor-in-chief of the International Journal of Music, Technology and Education for almost a decade.



JADE BYRNE

2001-2008

Not long after graduating from Leeds Met University with a 2:1 in English Literature, I started my career in magazine publishing, gaining experience in journalism and editing. I then transferred these skills to the other side of the press office desk and now work as an in-house PR Manager for a FTSE100 financial services company.



AMANDA STRONACH

2001-2008

I graduated from New College Durham with a BSc (Hons) in Podiatry. Podiatry involves the diagnosis and treatment of patients with lower limb issues, carrying out routine treatments and minor surgery when required. I have been working in a Gosforth practice since 2012, and have recently been promoted to Regional Podiatry Clinical Manager for the Northern Region.



NEXT ISSUE SUMMER 2017

Address: Lynn Rd, North Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE29 8LF

Phone: 0191 258 8340

Email: info@stmacademy.org.uk

Newsletter: alogie@stmacademy.org.uk

Check out our newly re-launched website - the best place to keep up to date with the latest news from St Thomas More.

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