

St Michael's Catholic College

Autumn Term 2023



RESPECT | UNDERSTANDING | AFFECTION | HUMOUR

RUAH

“The breath of life that animates the soul”



WELCOME BACK TO A NEW YEAR

I believe, Lord.

*I believe that each of my students is your child.
I believe that they are a reflection of your love.*

*I believe that each child possesses special gifts and talents,
that you are entrusting me to help them discover these gifts
and nurture those talents.*

*I believe that each child is trying to find you,
And that I can be a model of how to look,
How to live, how to pray.*

*I believe that my job is actually a mission, a ministry;
That you have chosen me in this time and in this place
To be there for these kids.*

*I believe that there is nothing haphazard about my day,
About my experiences with my students or with their parents.
It is all part of your plan.*

*I believe that you have chosen me, Lord.
I believe.*

As with each year, we welcomed new staff to join us at the college.

Within the RE Department we have Miss Krauel; in Science Ms Ahmed, Dr Leon and Miss Parr. In History we have Mr Muir and in Geography we welcome Mr Zanella, along with Miss Mudge in Maths and Mr Roach in PE. Finally as our new cover supervisor Mr McCabe and joining inclusion we are delighted to be joined by Miss Osei - Ampem, Miss Munroe and Mr Long.

A short, but special service was held on the 1st day of term to welcome our new staff members in the Chapel. Miss Casey led as part of the new staff welcome, with a special focus and intention for a prosperous new year.

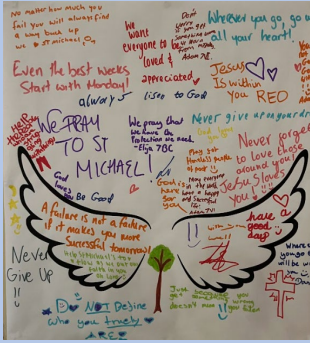
YEAR 7 WELCOME MASS

On Friday 2nd September, our new Year 7 gathered together at Dockhead Church alongside their form tutors, senior staff and parents. It was a wonderful opportunity to be together and give thanks for the new community that we have formed. Canon Alan said Mass for us and many students took part in the Mass led by Miss Casey; in the choir, as readers and during the offertory. Ms. Corcoran spoke to pupils and parents about new beginnings and the achievements that we have to look forward to. We gave thanks to God for our school community and prayed for the year ahead.



When I heard I was reading in the welcome mass; I was nervous. Even butterflies were in my stomach. However, I was also excited. This was my first reading I had done for St Michael's Catholic college. This was a big thing for me. As I sat on the pew I could see the lectern and had a spark of excitement run through my veins. After I had read I felt proud and had a feeling of triumph. Looking back now of when I was chosen to read it makes me feel like I have been happily welcomed into the St Michael's community. I have learnt many things so far at St Michaels and wish to keep doing so.

Conor G – 7SA



On Friday 29th September the college marked the feast of St Michael. Fr Keith led a very well attended Mass in the chapel to begin the celebrations and reflect upon the story and mission of the Archangel. We were reminded that in all we do, to make sure that good always stands in place of evil, and that all that we do in our daily lives should be for the betterment of good.



We shared large scale prints of wings, students and staff were asked to write messages of hope, prayers and good will to reflect the story of St Michael. It is a wonderful coming together across the college and beautiful messages are shared in this unique way.



Finally, at the end of the day the Sixth Form Chaplaincy Team held their St Michael's Carnival – hundreds of students and staff stayed for two hours to have fun together, buy some treats and be entertained. As a college, we raised over £620 in a short space of time, showcasing the kind and giving nature of the students of St Michael's. Half of the money raised was sent to CAFOD and the rest to Alzheimer's UK in honour of all those effected by the disease. We look forward to next years event and what the future Sixth Form team put together.



ALZHEIMER'S AWARENESS

AT ST MICHAEL'S



Students have had more input into the formation and the delivery of Mass, liturgy and assemblies this year. Hermy in Year 13 asked if the college could, during World Alzheimer's awareness, bravely share her personal experience with the disease. As St Michael's Day was the week following, we donated half of all fundraising from the carnival to the Alzheimer's Society in Honour of this. Hermy was supported by her friends, Sadie, Melania and Maria to deliver a meaningful and insightful assembly.

Understanding more about my grandma's Alzheimer's and how to help her through the Alzheimer's Society's 'Dementia Friends' initiative', I was inspired to spread awareness about the prevalence and realities of living with a brain disease. With the confidence I and my friends have developed as sixth formers now, our Year 7 selves would never ever have thought of speaking in front of loads of people and taking the lead on assemblies. But I am genuinely grateful for this opportunity, to remind others that there is support for carer's and those who live with dementia.

Key points that we covered to remember and to tell others about include:

- Dementia is not a natural part of ageing
- Dementia is caused by diseases of the brain
- Dementia is not just about memory loss
- It is possible to live well with dementia
- There is more to a person than dementia

Remember that each person's symptoms and experiences with dementia are different, we shouldn't make any assumptions about a person with dementia's level of understanding without engaging with them first. As we spend time with them, it is essential to recognise that they (like any other person) have the right to be treated with respect and dignity.

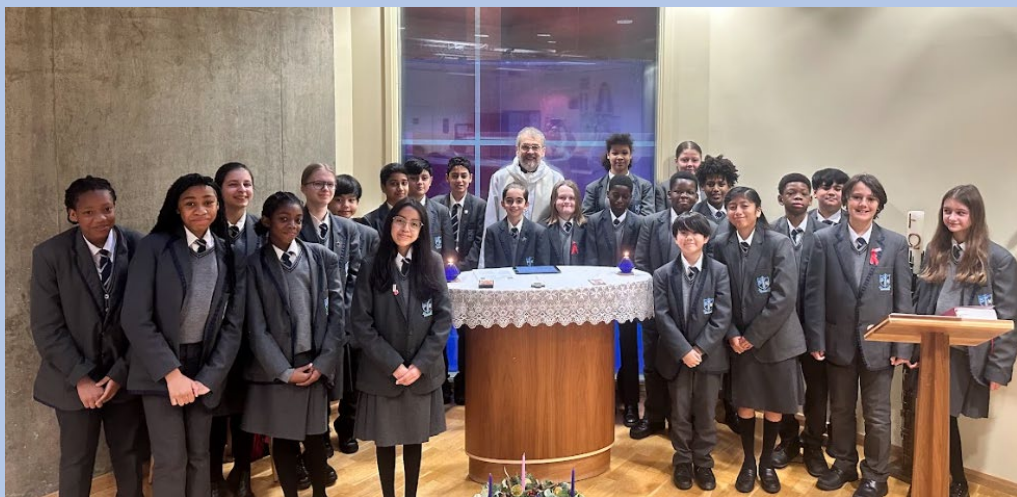
We could help people with dementia in their everyday lives with the simplest actions. For instance, someone who is hesitating to cross the road may be very overwhelmed and confused at that moment, one could help by crossing together. Asking yes or no questions makes it easier for them to reply, we should take the time to reassure and explain in a way they're comfortable with. It can also be very helpful in using photos albums or cue cards to trigger memories which would stimulate their brain and improve their cognitive function. Having a conversation with them and showing our genuine curiosity or getting them involved in things that they've always liked can make all the difference.

One of the key takeaways that resonated with me was in one of the videos we watched when a child had asked a woman with dementia for life advice: 'We should make sure we tell the people we love that we love them'. Being with people we care about is such a blessing we can easily take for granted, so we should show compassion and appreciation for one another, especially our family and friends. Even when our loved ones may forget, beyond the disease, they know in their heart the immense love we have for them and the immense love they have for us.

St. Michael's Day Carnival on Friday 29th September fundraised for both CAFOD and the Alzheimer's Society donations which allow for research funds as well as dementia advisors to facilitate daily living so that it is not as difficult all by themselves. This chance to raise awareness and fundraise is something I am incredibly proud of being a part of. It really proved to me that together, we can make a difference for those devastated by dementia, providing a strong support system to help them feel happier in their day-to-day lives.

If you are looking for any advice in school or someone to talk to, the sixth-form mental health ambassadors and student leadership team are there to help... we aren't as scary as you might think!

Hermy C – Year 13



Since September we have once again had weekly masses in the college Chapel kindly led by Father Keith from Saint Mary's and Saint Michael's. Each service has been very well attended and there have been several different special themes that we have focused on this year. In September we prayed for the season of creation and reflecting upon God's great nature that has been so kindly given to us; we were also able to celebrate on the feast day itself for St Michael. We held a special service for the Feast of Alexandrina DaCosta on the 13th of October which was well attended by pupils across DaCosta house, as well as 11 DaCosta who so brilliantly helped lead the service. On Wednesday the 1st of November Fr. Keith visited the college and held a special mass in the Chapel for the Feast of All Saints. Later in November we were visited by Father Gerald and Father John from Saint Anne's parish in Vauxhall who kindly shared mass with us in place of Fr. Keith. Mass continues to be well attended each week from Year 7's who are experiencing their first college service, to Sixth Form Chaplaincy leaders who have also helped in the formation of Mass. Students are asked to share themes and prayers personal to themselves when we are putting together each weekly service, which has been a wonderful inclusion to the weekly service.



CHARITY WEEKS

DACOSTA



Classes across DaCosta house came together to arrange a host of events to help raise money for charity. The events included a tuck-shop, guessing the sweets in the jar and bracelet selling. In total DaCosta house raised over £280 for Sickle Cell Charities. All of this was spearheaded by the Year 13's who wished to reflect on Black History Month and give back to those impacted by the disease.

RUA

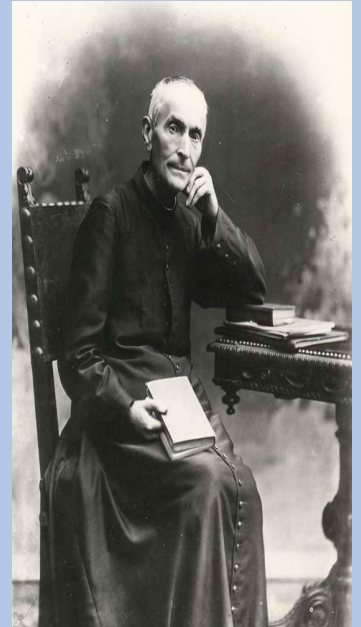
In 8 Rua, we held a bake sale to support the homeless charity Wrap Up London. Lots of people baked and brought in lots of items that we could sell.

We sold out all of our items really quickly, and I personally helped direct people to our sale. It made me feel really happy to know I was helping someone else.

Tija B – 8 Rua

Rua house had two initiatives for their charity week. Firstly to collect as many coats as possible for WrapUp London, successfully bringing in over 100 donations.

Following this, they raised over £780 for the charity to help those who do not have much or who are homeless. They held raffles, tuck shops and a pick'n'mix bar.



READY FOR WRAPUP 2023?

WrapUp London



The new Faith in Action recruits have already been instrumental to the Catholic life of St Michael's. Students have attended Masses well, led in prayers in form time, shared items for the foodbank and have worked hard to fundraise in our advent events. The students are ensuring that they are putting their faith into action and they understand that deeds are just as important as words when it comes to their faith.

I joined Faith in Action to make a change for other students and strengthen my connection with God. I love being in a group of other people with similar interests as me. Being known as a help and easy person to vibe with is a real accomplishment for me! I have been known to be a 'people - person' and would love to help all introverts to feel the joy in our enlightening school! Planning events and seeing what my group's teamwork has achieved is like a thank you from God and shows the difference I am making, slowly but very much surely!!! Working with my comrades is the best thing Jesus would want so it is nice to be following in his footsteps!

Amaris M – 7DA

I joined Faith in Action to get closer to God and to do some fun activities. I've enjoyed our meeting because it helps us get to know everyone better. I am looking forward to the Christmas events coming up and many more.

Paul A-G – 7SA





This year's additions to the KS4 chaplaincy team have made a great impact to the Chaplaincy endeavours of the college. They have worked meticulously to look after the Chapel each week, they have helped in the efforts to fundraise for St Michael's Day and Advent and have worked hard to be faith ambassadors to the rest of their year group. We look forward to seeing them thrive throughout the rest of the year.

I joined the Year 10 Chaplaincy team as it seemed like a great opportunity to strengthen my faith whilst also having an impact in the wider community. Through joining this group I hope I am able to make a difference as I know I have the ability to help those who are less fortunate than me. I have really enjoyed the fundraisers which have allowed me to engage with other students to raise money for charitable causes. My hope to get out of this is to be a better person who has a greater understanding of the world around me.

Hadrian K- 10DA

I joined because I wanted to involve myself in a project beyond my usual lessons, but also to further my connection with the Catholic faith through meaningful action. I think the Chaplaincy team is a wonderful group of people, who all uphold the values and ethos of the College. I've particularly enjoyed going to Friday mass; I feel that the chapel is a safe and suitable place of worship, and I quite like the short but meaningful homilies from Father Keith and every other priest. I aim to go beyond going to mass and maintaining the chapel - I'd like to take part in fundraising, as I want to put the College's faith and values into action, helping those who need it most.

Joshua A - 10DA

There are over 30 students in the Yr12 Chaplaincy team who are excellent role models for the college. They each bring unique talents and strengths to the work that they do. Each student looks after a different area of the chaplaincy, for example assemblies, the creative work needed, Mass formation and lead fundraisers. They have worked tirelessly already, since September to make an impact to the college and the world around them. Students had a large impact on the Year 13 led St Michael's Day Carnival, they supported in the creation and running of the Diwali celebrations and have spearheaded the Advent projects.

10 of these students are also the school CAFOD Representatives on behalf of the whole team, and the work they all do is to support the work CAFOD do worldwide.



Being a CAFOD representative means that I have the opportunity to help others around me, not only in my own community but also around the world. I find this a fulfilling and enriching way to share and embrace the spirit of Christ in every person, and it feels empowering to think that my ideas and actions may be able to make a difference. I enjoyed meeting with the representatives from other schools on the day, and also visiting the office of CAFOD as it really felt like I was part of a larger team. Since the event I have helped out in a number of Chaplaincy events to raise money for charity and raise awareness about other religions. I also helped to deliver an assembly to the school about the importance of giving back. I hope to take part in more charity events and improve my teamwork and initiative skills.

Natasha J – Year 12

As part of our ongoing tradition at St Michael's to reflect on the world around the college, we held a celebration in honour of Diwali. We have previously celebrated this Hindu festival with a presentation from former Sixth Formers. This year, Year 8 Faith in Action wished to perform the story of the Festival of Lights. Year 12 students narrated as the Year 8 students used actions, small props and lighting to tell this moving story. Year 12 Chaplaincy also made traditional custard desserts, catered for all who attended with a range of Indian meals and helped run the event. Students in Year 7 and Year 8 had special lessons in RE to learn about this and make Diwali cards and decorated Diya lamps.



Diwali was fun and very interesting, what I thought whilst doing it is what the origins of Diwali is and the importance of it. It is very interesting to learn about it, I loved the fight between the Demon. I hope the next event will be a little more active and more people will join in.

Ariana J-S – 8DA



The entirety of Year 7 were invited to attend a retreat day at Aylesford Priory on the 31st October, the first time we have had the chance to do this. The students were blessed with a glorious day and were able to reflect on being a new member of St Michael's and what that truly means. We explored the grounds of the Rosary Way, sat amongst the ruins of the original Chapel and spent time writing prayers to honour the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

My favourite part of the retreat was the location because it was very beautiful and serene. As it was the first school trip I really appreciated the way that we were encouraged to not only meet new people but to learn about the place and its importance. It was an amazing experience and out of several things I got that no matter what other people say, our faith is truly beautiful and can really make us the people we are.

Alaia A-G – 7BC

My favourite part about the retreat was when we were put into groups and had to write a poem. I also really liked it when we went on the trails e.g. the Mary Rosary Trail. The place was really beautiful and peaceful which is what you need when you pray.

Elisabeth J – 7SA

My favourite part of the retreat was the little activities we did in groups. I enjoyed those little activities that really positively impacted our faith in God and the understanding of how to grow our relationship with him.

Minerva M – 7MA



As a college giving back to the local community is often at the forefront of what we do. Each year we ask students, staff and their families to bring in non perishable and toiletry items to support the work of Southwark Foodbank.

The Year 12 CAFOD team were also inspired by their time spent at CAFOD and put together an assembly, sharing that what we do for each other, we do for the Lord; which improved our donations.

We were delighted to be presented with a certificate from Southwark Foodbank to remark upon the size of our donations.

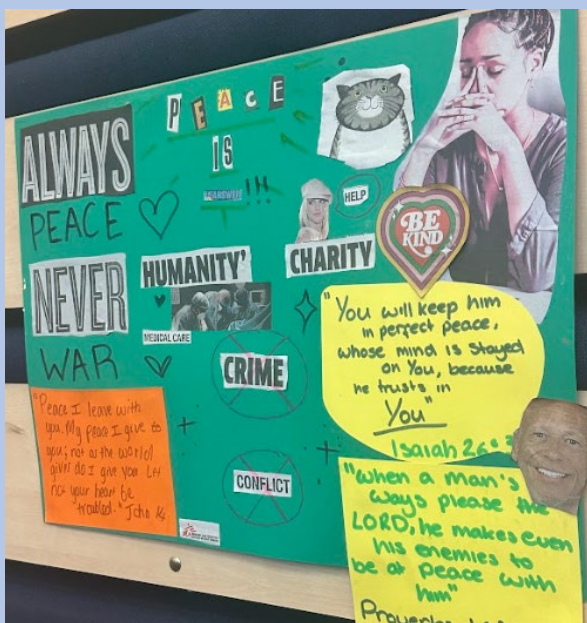


YEAR 12 RETREAT

Students in Year 12 were invited to spend an afternoon in October looking upon the reasons they chose to be a part of our College Community. We explored what it was to be human and to be in unity with not only those around us but our entire world.

They explored our RUAH Values, of Respect, Understanding, Affection and Humour; as well as the 7 Principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

After prayerful reflection, words of admiration and affirmation and spending time with students they hadn't got to know yet, students were asked to create posters of the Values we had been studying. We were inspired by the media of the day to see how these Values are not just school themes, but worldwide human themes.





ADVENT

We introduced this years Advent Calendar which is a live size daily way to hear of the story of the birth of Christ. Form Captains have been asked to open the doors and read the story and the prayer to their form. It has been a wonderful way to respect the importance of this time of waiting and anticipation.

Miss Stewart and Year 9 Faith in Action presented assemblies to reflect upon the season and the importance of the peace this time should bring. This is later to be reflected in the Year 11 retreat on the 20th December, the students will be asked how they can strive for peace, just as the Christ Child brings to us.

The Year 12 Chaplaincy team, after visiting CAFOD, decided to turn Advent into a fundraising opportunity for the College and set about creating a host of events for this year. They inspired all chaplaincy students to get involved with some element.

For several mornings they, alongside some Year 11 Chaplaincy Students and Miss Casey held Hot Chocolate mornings. Each cup was filled with marshmallows, whipped cream and a biscuit. Year 7 were invited to the Cookie Worship in the St Michael's Grotto, they were able to visit and decorate as many cookies as they could eat. Year 7 and Year 8 Faith in Action, along with Year 10 Chaplaincy held a large scale tuck shop featuring a host of treats which they enjoyed selling and eating. Finally, we held Advent long raffle prizes and guessing the sweets in the jar competitions, with the results to be given on the last day of term.

All of these events are going towards the costs for the Hampers for Senior Citizens we make and provide each year. Year 12 students created each hamper and Year 7 Students in English lessons wrote loving letters to the recipients.

Final total for the fundraising is to be announced at the end of term. We thank all students, staff and their families for supporting those most in need in our local community by way of our Advent events.



A WORD AND A PRAYER

A Christmas Morning Prayer

Loving Father, help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Ms. Corcoran - Principal



Christmas Card Competition Winner – Anu in 8 Bosco

Lord,

May we be filled with
the hope of Mary;
The obedience of
Joseph;
The joy of the angels;
And the peace of the
Christ Child.

We ask of this forever
and ever, amen.

*Miss Casey
Chaplaincy Co-Ordinator*

UPCOMING

As the Bulletin goes out before the end of term, here are some of the events taking place in the last week of term:

- Christmas Services at Dockhead
- Christmas Lunch
- Year 11 Retreat
- Year 11 Reward Afternoon
- DaCosta House Reward Afternoon
- Christmas Door Competition
- Hampers for the Senior Citizens in Our Community Delivery
- Final Advent Fundraising