



St Alban's

MATTERS



WINTER TERM 2014



Lower School



Mission Week

Between the 20th and the 24th of October, 'Mission Week' was held in our school and focused on the theme, 'Fuel into a flame the gifts of God.' This theme was explored with the energy, passion and enthusiasm of the Catholic Youth Ministry Team, 'Animate.'

The Animate Team are a group of young people aged between 18 and 25 who offer a year or more of their life to live in community and to work with young people in the Diocese. The mission week they held in St Albans consisted of many high energy activities that were thoroughly enjoyed throughout years seven to eleven and I think a round of applause is in order for engaging a hall full of year 7 and 8's on a Monday morning. The week involved many exciting activities and on Thursday, the Animate team presented a 'True or False' game show where



their contestants simply had to guess what was true or false. With your peers shouting out true and false at you, it's sometimes easier to follow the crowd and go with what they think, but Animate wanted to show how we need to do what is best for us.

Mr Timothy who helped organise this event said that, 'It was such a great week, the Animate team were amazing and all the students really enjoyed it!' Several students also claimed that it took a good week for them to stop singing the very catchy 'Yes Lord' song taught by the Animate team that seemed to echo around the whole school.

This Mission week was a

chance for the students to think about the flame of faith they have in their lives and how important it is to them.

From Britain's got talent to talking about Toy Story, the Animate team really brought the Catholic faith to life. This fun packed week really emphasised the idea that God values us all; we should be proud of what we have achieved and not put ourselves down. The successful combination of both learning and having fun contributed to a very successful week.

Olivia Harvey, Yr 13



'Follow That Star'

This section will tell you about Year Seven's production of Follow That Star. Follow That Star is basically a funny version of the nativity and all the things that happened 2000 years ago. To get a teachers point of view of the production we have interviewed Miss Chewins to see what she thinks about it all! [Be prepared for a laugh!]

We asked her some questions about the production; here are the things she said:

Rehearsals are Mondays and Thursdays and the production will be sometime in the last week of term.

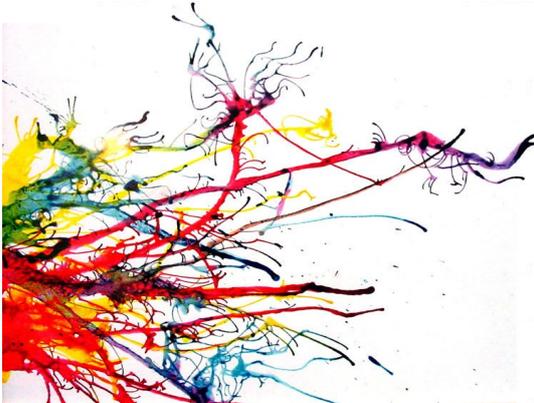
Her and Miss McCarthy's favourite song to sing is Herod was having a bad day as they can change it to Chewins was having a bad day or McCarthy was having a bad day!

She is really excited for this year's production because even though there aren't as many people, the sound is still awesome.



So now you have learnt a bit about Miss Chewins and a bit about Follow That Star. Have a good Christmas everyone, but just remember who is really important this Christmas.

By Niamh Ward, Year 7

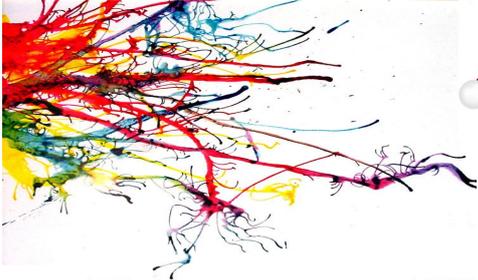


Meet the Teacher! - Miss Chewins

Q: Who is your favourite celebrity?
"Oh I don't think I have one but I do listen to Chris Evans in the morning so it's probably him if he counts as a celebrity!"

Q: What's your favourite colour?
"Blue"

Q: Now we think most people know the answer to this one, but what is your favourite animal?
"It is a cat, and I have Billy, Nigel, Percy and Phillip as my furry friends."



Lower School

The Focus Groups have got the Christmas Spirit!

Saying Farewell



We are very sad to be saying goodbye to a member of our Focus Group team, Mr Butcher who has worked at St Alban's for two and a half years and has supported a number of our pupils who will all miss him dearly.

We wish you the best of luck, Sir.

Over the past few weeks the year 7 and 8 pupils have been carrying out Christmas themed work and activities to get them in mood for this special time of year.

The year 7 class have been reading 'The Polar Express' in lessons, Once the book is complete they will have their marshmallow and hot chocolate day when they sit and watch the film.

The Year 7 and 8 pupils also went on a day trip out to the cinema to watch 'Nativity 3: dude where's my donkey.' The day out was a great success as both groups and the staff all enjoyed the film and behaved impeccably.

Year 8's Maddie Huish-Blount Had this to say;

"It was AWESOME!!"

We are all looking forward to our next cinema trip in the new year.

Film Club

Not known to many people, is that there is now a lower school film club and an upper school film club!

It started at the beginning of term and there has only been two sessions, but it is already so much fun. There is even a tuck shop for students to indulge in, containing a large assortment of sweets and other goodies.

There is an informative website that you can go on, as well as the opportunity to enter a weekly competition on a review of a film. If you win, you'll get a prize! For more information on this new and exciting club, go and see Mrs McCarthy!



Kids Takeover

On Thursday 13th November, several of our students went to Pontypool Museum for part of their BTEC and to experience the life of a newspaper reporter. However, that wasn't all; at the museum Ken Skates: Minister of Sport, Culture and History [for Wales] was there. The students got to interview him in a proper conference room environment and ask him the questions that they wanted to know.

Along with this they got to take pictures of the extremely interesting exhibits, hear some top-tips from professional newspaper writers and editors, and they also got to feature in the 'Free press' on Wednesday 19th November. All of this was part of the national programme, 'Kids in Museums', also known as 'Takeover Day'. Most schools in Wales took part in this organisation by visiting the

local museums and focusing on their local history.

Our students looked at the link between the Hanbury Family and the school as well as how people lived in Pontypool over 100 years ago and the brand new art exhibition with some fabulous paintings and pictures related to our local history. The exhibitions were about things such as Japan ware, the Evolution of Pontypool, 20th century Pontypool and the life of a child back in the 1900s. There was also a Remembrance Day exhibition for a limited time.

The whole focus of the 'Kids in Museums' programme is to encourage Welsh children to visit their local museums and look at their culture. We asked several people in Year 9 if any of them had ever been to Pontypool Museum, the local museum, and only 1 out of 4 people said yes.



This proves how young people don't find much of an interest in museums and local history, and that is the point of the programme. So get involved and visit the Pontypool Museum website or the Kids in Museums website for much more information.

Bradley Barnes and Elliot Roden, Yr 9



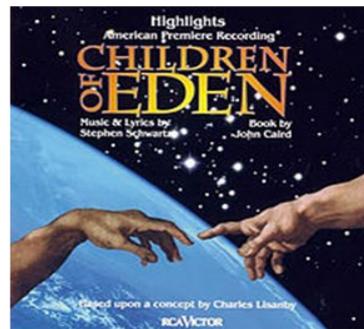
Upper School



'Children of Eden'

For those of you who haven't heard, this year's senior production is Children of Eden and the Performing Arts Department are very excited about performing it! This production will take place on the 11th, 12th and 13th of February 2015 in St Albans. Children of Eden brings the book of Genesis to life through beautiful musical numbers, captivating acting and exciting dance routines. Mia Gregory from Year 12 who's playing Aphra said, 'I've never done this show

before and can't wait to do be involved! It's so different from all the others shows St Albans have done, everyone must come and watch!' David Jones who is playing God said that, 'I've never been cast as the lead role before so this is a new and challenging experience for me but I am very much looking forward to taking part!' So tell your parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and the old woman that lives at the end of



your street to come and see this amazing musical!

Olivia Harvey, Yr 13

Ping Pong Tables

A new addition has been made to the St Albans school facilities, ping pong tables! If you fancy a game of ping pong, you can now find one table located at B Block, and another two on D Block yard.

The ping pong tables seem to have had a very positive effect on the school, lifting the spirits of the students and giving them a new and healthy activity to engage in. Having a game of ping

pong at break or lunch is both an excellent and energetic use of your time, and a great way to challenge your friends. It's not just the younger years that enjoy these tables. Pupils of all year groups are getting use out of them, from year 7 to sixth form; in fact they are nearly never vacated! From the warm reception that the ping pong tables have received from the St Albans population, I think we can all agree that the school has welcomed this new addition with open arms.

Anastasia Jeffries, Yr 13



Harry Potter Studios Trip

On the 3rd of December, the media department went to the Warner Brothers Studio tour-The Making of Harry Potter. The students walked through the iconic Great Hall, strolled along the cobbled streets of Diagon alley, visited 4 privet drive, hopped on the knight bus, had a picture in Hagrid's motorbike, purchased a frothy tankard of Butterbeer and even followed in the flight of Harry Potter on a broomstick!

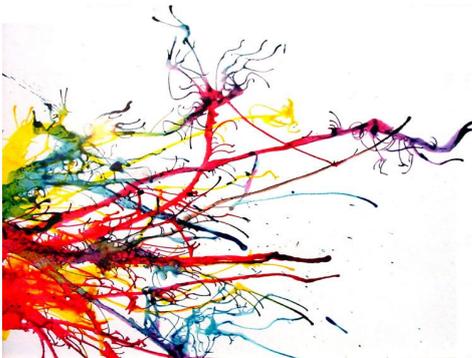
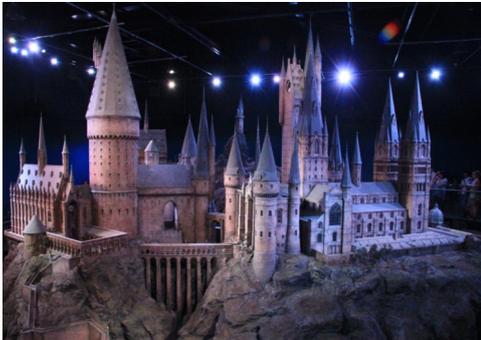
The trip was finished off by a visit to the gift shop where the students had a chance to purchase chocolate frogs, a golden snitch and even their very own wand! Rhys-Evan Jones who went on the trip said that, 'It was an unbelievable experience and I can't wait to go back!' It wasn't only the students who loved the tour, Mrs McCarthy who also went on the trip said that, 'The Warner Brothers Studio Tour is a fantastic opportunity to see inside a working film



studio and gain an incredible insight into the many job opportunities and production processes within the film industry. Plus Hogwarts in the snow is simply magical!

So to all you Harry Potter fans, why not pay Harry, Hagrid and even Dobby a visit by taking a trip to this fantastic place which really brings the magic of Harry Potter to life.

Olivia Harvey, Yr 13



Prize-Giving Evening



St Alban's very own version of the Oscars, or as it's known to us, 'Prizegiving Evening', was held on Wednesday 26th October and showcased the amazing achievements and talents of our students. The evening's guest speaker, Mr Nick Thomas-Symonds, an ex-pupil of St Albans, gave an interesting and thought-provoking speech and presented the awards for the evening. Following short presentations from

governors and the Head Girl/Boy team, entertainment was provided by the choir, performing arts students and musicians who made the evening even more enjoyable. It was lovely to see past students return to receive their prizes. It was a good opportunity to find out what they had been doing since completing their A-Levels in the summer. Well done again to everyone who got an award!

Hannah Roberts, Yr 13

"Congratulations to those who won an award, they are people who should aim high and aim to be the best they can be. In terms of our speech we wanted to try something different, something which was never done before, something unique that the audience would never forget. Going as a duo is very difficult and we thought a good balance of humour and serious tone would bring the best out of the speech which we hope it did."

Brandon Davies and Jordan Parker, Yr 13



Iceland Trip

When it comes to the magical place of Iceland it is very difficult to know where to begin. It truly was a once in a lifetime opportunity to explore landscapes that seemed, sorry to say, heavenly compared to Wales. Without further ado, let's move on and talk about what we actually did there.

Have you ever been next to a volcano that could erupt at any time? I'll be very surprised if you have. Luckily for those who were able to go to Iceland we were able to experience this privilege. Remember 2010 the year that volcano erupted in Iceland, the one no one can pronounce the name of? Does Eyjafjallajokull ring any bells? Anyway, this was the volcano we were able to visit and what a beautiful piece of nature it is.

Despite the disappointment of not seeing the Northern lights we bathed in the Blue Lagoon and visited numerous amounts of waterfalls that make Iceland such a remarkable place. I think it is safe to say everyone who went on this trip enjoyed themselves and will never forget this experience.

Brandon Davies, Yr 13



Sixth Form



Year 13 Summer Ball

As you may or may not be aware, this year the Sixth Form Summer Ball is being held in Maes Manor...I mean Cwrt Bleddwyn. Cwrt Bleddwyn is a big pink building in Usk that is not Maes Manor. Some of you may be wondering why the venue has changed, and the answer is because there were some concerns with the initial venue and some people like pink so we decided this to be a better alternative.

This was a group decision and included the usual input from Brandy Dave that made little to no sense.

Here comes the awkward bit because BrandyDaveSwims and I actually made a Power-Point that we showed you all in assembly with loads of great things about Maes Manor that you don't need to know anymore. So now that you don't need to know those here are some bits about the



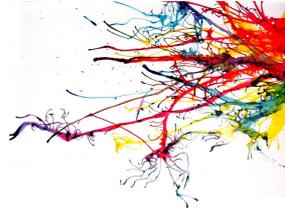
new and improved ball. You can find the venue at Cwrt Bleddwyn, Llangybi, Usk but if you want to enter by train or plane there are also directions for those on the website. For the more conventional method of entering via helicopter the co-ordinates are N 50 39 S 2 54 but the manager would prefer it if you let them know in advance so they can clear the landing pad.

The prices are going to be the same as those mentioned in the assembly (£25-£30 per ticket) and the date remains

as Wednesday 8th July 2015. Anything else you need to know will be given out on letters when the invitations are sent out and we are open to plus ones, so please come to the head boy/girl team if you require the extra ticket. Plans for the Summer Ball are already underway and we are going to make it the best ever. Thank you for reading and see you soon!

Jordan Parker, Yr 13

UCAS Opportunities



Applying to University next year but have nothing to put on your UCAS? Here we've got some amazing programmes for you to be involved in that will certainly boost your application.

UNIQ Scheme

What is the UNIQ Scheme, you ask? Well, let me help you out. UNIQ is Oxford's only official summer school programme for students studying in their first year of further education. Students pick a course that will show them what life is like at Oxford University. UNIQ participants live in an Oxford college for one week in July or August, getting a chance to really experience higher education for themselves. They attend lectures and seminars in their chosen subject, as well as informative workshops

about applying to Oxford. Participants can also take part in a variety of social activities each evening, which gives them a chance to mix with their peers and make new friends!

Applications will open on 6 January at 10:00AM and close on 12 February at 05:00PM. Please note that this is a very competitive scheme, there are currently 850 places available on the summer schools in 2015 and Oxford University expect to



receive over 4000 applications, so get your application in quick!

Anastasia Jeffries, Yr 13

Sutton Trust

Another great programme to get involved in is a Sutton Trust summer school. The Sutton Trust offers a wide range of programmes from Pathways to Law, to



even going abroad the US. These programmes are an amazing opportunity to give you an insight into University education and also offer a chance to meet new people and have an unforgettable experience.

The UK Summer School offers you a chance to have a taste of your chosen University subject at some top Universities – including Cambridge, Durham, King's College London and more. The summer school com-

bines academic days with enjoyable social activities, and also allows you to meet current students and University staff.

If you want to make the most of your summer (and need more for your UCAS application!) then find out more online at www.suttontrust.com/programmes

Amy Watts, Yr 13



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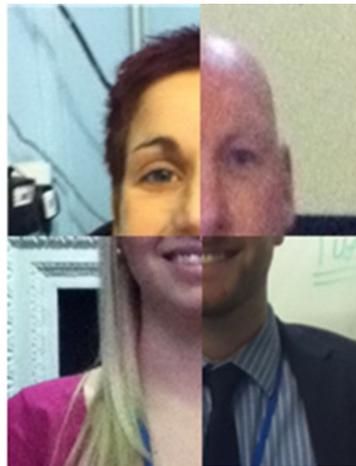
- ◆ Todd
- ◆ Edwards
- ◆ Rees
- ◆ Cook

- ◆ Spokes
- ◆ Thomas
- ◆ Metcalfe
- ◆ Foster

How many teachers can you find?

Guess the Teacher!

Can you guess whose baby photo this is?



Teacher Merge!

Guess who!



Important Dates

Christmas:

Wednesday 17th December:
Year 7/8 Disco (Morning)
Year 9/10 Disco (Afternoon)

Thursday 18th December: Sixth
Form Cribbs Causeway Trip

Friday 19th December: End of
Term

Sunday 21st December:
Church and Community Carol
Service @ St Cadoc's Church
6:30pm

Wednesday 24th September:
Christmas Eve/Crib Service @
St Cadoc's Church 4:00pm

Thursday 25th December:
Christmas Day Service @ St Ca-
doc's Church 10:00am

New Year:

Monday 5th January: Term Begins/Year
10 Work Experience Begins

Monday 12th January: St Mary's and
Henllys Taster Day

Monday 12th - Saturday 17th January:
Ski Trip

Monday 12th - Thursday 15th January:
Year 7 trip to Llangrannog

Wednesday 14th January: St David's
and OLA Taster Day

Thursday 15th January: Padre Pio and
OLSM Taster Day/External Deadline for
UCAS

Thursday 29th January: 16+ Open
Evening for Sixth Form

Parents Evenings

Monday 9th February: Year 11 Parents
Evening

Thursday 26th March: Year 9 Parents
Evening

Wednesday 6th May: Year 10 Parents
Evening

Monday 15th June: New Year 7 Parents
Evening



*Versions in A4 size or Welsh are also
available if required.*