



Our Lady's Catholic High School



A National Teaching School

Friday, 4 September 2020

The theme of the week is Suffering - Matthew 16:21-27

Jesus said to his disciples, 'If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me'.

In the Gospel this week, Jesus tells his disciples that to follow him will not be easy, but it will be worth it! In difficult times it feels natural to keep ourselves to ourselves and think about how unfair life is. Jesus, however, wants to pull us out of this place. He extends a hand and lifts our gaze to those who truly love us. Jesus suffered because it was part of God's plan for him. Sadly, suffering is part of life, but we are never alone. Jesus does not take away our cross, but he carries it with us. And with him every burden there will be light. *(Homily by Pope Francis)*.

Let us pray

Merciful God, You call us to follow;

Teach us to do so without fear;

Knowing that You are always with us,

Leading the way

Amen

MESSAGE FROM MR RANSON

School is open and we are delighted!

I really must commend our staff who have been working very hard indeed over the holiday to help make our school environment and systems safe and secure. They have risen to the challenge in a remarkable, positive and purposeful way.

We welcomed Year 7 pupils on Thursday and our senior pupils provided excellent service in supporting teachers with their new form classes. Our Head Girl, Kate Moir and Head Boy, Ummar-Ali Mal spoke to the Year 7 pupils in the morning assembly and provided great encouragement and a very warm welcome to all of them. There were several nervous faces at the start of the day, as is the case every year, but the Year 7 Quad was full of smiles at lunchtime with children already making friends.

We are all adjusting to the wearing of face masks between lessons, where we could pass pupils from other year groups. Pupils have approached this, and the regular sanitising of hands, in a very responsible and mature manner. The best part of what we do takes place in the classrooms and our plans have allowed for us to work very much in the way that we always have. There are restrictions on certain practical activities and the cleaning routines take a couple of minutes each lesson, but the actual process of teaching and building relationships with classes and helping children to believe in themselves remains the same as always.

We are delighted to welcome our new staff joining us for their first term at Our Lady's:

Name			Role in school	Previous post
Mr	Phillip	Allen	Temporary Teacher of history	European School Munich
Miss	Amy	Dennison	Teacher of mathematics	Catholic Teaching Alliance
Miss	Georgina	Hampson	Teacher of mathematics	Shuttleworth College, Blackburn
Mrs	Amanda	Martin	Cover Supervisor	Cardinal Newman College
Miss	Sarah	McHale	Temporary LSA	Degree studies
Mr	Matthew	Power	Principal Teacher of science	Holy Cross, Chorley
Mrs	Gemma	Slater	Teacher of RE	Catholic Teaching Alliance
Mrs	Asma	Stopyra	Temporary Teacher of English	Red Rose Teaching Alliance
Miss	Georgia	Young	Temporary Teacher of geography	Lancashire Teaching Agency

Finally, I extend my thanks to all of our families. You have worked very hard since March, encouraging your children to keep up with their online lessons and this has been a real challenge. You have supported all of my requests for enhanced safety measures and clearly have had strong conversations at home about making a great start back at school. Thank you.

CHANGE TO EARLY FINISH – IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Our usual practice is to finish 12.45 pm to allow pupils and staff to prepare for Open Evening. Unfortunately, it is not possible for Open Evening to take place in school this year for Health and Safety reasons. Therefore, school will end at the normal time of 3.30 pm on Thursday, 1 October 2020.

HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME - REMINDER

Our Attendance Policy states that any absence attached to either side of a school holiday will be assumed to be a holiday taken in term time and such absences will be classified as 'unauthorised' unless evidence is provided which proves otherwise. We ask for this evidence to be fair and consistent with all families. In addition, we will expect to meet with parents whose children have taken such absences and the child will be taught separately until the meeting takes place. We will always meet with parents at the earliest possible opportunity. Should your child be ill on a day attached to a school holiday we ask that you provide evidence of this; an appointment card from a doctor or a dated and named prescription would suffice. Please contact us on a landline or briefly call in to school for us to see you. The principle is that attendance at school is a legal requirement and duty and we must do all that we reasonably can to support this. Finally, may I remind all families that any unauthorised absence for holidays or otherwise in Year 11 will result in the invitation to attend the Year 11 Prefects' Ball being withdrawn.

HAND SANITISER

Can we politely remind all pupils that they are now required to have hand sanitiser as part of their school equipment. If necessary, they will be able to buy this from our Restaurant/Kiosk. The cost is currently £1.35, and pupils must ensure that they have sufficient funds on their Scopay account before purchasing.

TOUR DE FRANCE - EX PUPIL

Ex pupil, Hugh Carthy is currently taking part in his first Tour de France, riding for professional cycling team EF (Education First). Hugh left Our Lady's 10 years ago and has progressed through the professional cycling world very well in recent years. He has won events and stages across a variety of worldwide competitions and is currently climbing the rankings in this year's Tour. After stage 6 he is ranked 30th position out of 124 riders. Hugh is wearing number 73 however it may be easier to spot him as his team colours are bright pink! The PE department will be tracking his progress and keeping staff and pupils informed of how he is doing. All within the Our Lady's community wish Hugh the best of luck.

Dates to remember

Friday, 2 October – INSET day school closed for all pupils

Friday, 23 October – School closes for half-term

Monday, 2 November – School opens

Friday, 18 December – School closes for Christmas at 12.45 pm

Monday, 4 January – School opens for the Spring Term