

SALESIAN SCHOOL

Newsletter

March 2024 - Issue 24



I am delighted to welcome you to our final newsletter of the spring term. I hope that this Lent continues to be a special time of reflection and prayer for your families and that you have drawn strength from the Lord at this time.

As we set our sights towards the holidays, the days are getting lighter, and the hope of Easter is drawing closer! During this Holy Week we are reminded that Jesus encourages us to forgive others, pray, fast and give of ourselves.

At School and College, we continue to have much to celebrate and two quite monumental events over the past week have demonstrated beyond doubt why Salesian is such a special place. The first being Cultural Day, which was celebrated on Wednesday and enabled every single student and staff member to honour their cultural backgrounds. Everyone was encouraged to wear the colours that best represent their culture and be ready to discuss what those colours meant to them. Activities during cultural day were all student devised, including every lesson beginning with a short cultural activity highlighting a particular culture. Over at the college lots of fun was had and students took part in an afternoon full of food, music and cultural games to further celebrate the diversity we have amongst us.

The second was one very close to my own heart, that of the Memorial Concert in Honour of our devoted music teacher Miss Rebecca Clarey. I do not have the words to describe just how incredible the concert was and even by Rebecca's standards it was close to perfection. Special credit has to be given to Miss Thom, Mr Graham and Mrs Garbett who directed not just current choirs and scholars but past alumni and staff choirs, some of whom could not rehearse until the day itself! The impact that one special person has had on so many people's lives was evident in the room last week and it was a fitting reminder that Rebecca inspired so many people as part of her vocation.

We are keen for Rebecca's legacy to live on and the school have set up a fund in her honour. The fund has the aim of continuing Rebecca's mission and ensuring that every child has access to music and is inspired to believe in themselves. If you are able to make a donation the link can be found here.

I wish you all the best for the upcoming break and look forward to the Summer term.

God bless, Mrs Baumgart Assistant Head

What does the scripture mean for us this week?

Holy Week

Mark 11:1-10 & Mark 14:1-15:47

We have two Gospel readings on Palm Sunday. The first is usually heard outside the church and focuses on Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem. Despite arriving in humble fashion, upon a donkey, Jesus is praised by the crowds as a triumphant returning king; He is at the height of his popularity. The second passage takes us

through the ensuing highs and lows of Holy Week, concluding with Christ's passion and death on the cross.

Ideally, the Spring Term would always conclude with Holy Week, and not just because it makes the week a day shorter! To be with the children and one another as the story unfolds gives us a great opportunity to share all that it offers: the cast of characters, their many flaws, and in some cases virtues; the willingness of Jesus to endure all that pain and suffering for our sake, even though He could have avoided it; and perhaps most poignantly, the moment of seemingly utter despair when Jesus dies on the cross, only made bearable by the fact that some 2000 years later, we have the comfort of knowing that there will be a very happy ending, just a couple of days later.

For many, Holy Week will slip by without note and Easter will be merely another commercial celebration focussed mainly on chocolate. For those of us who have dedicated ourselves to the vocation of Catholic education, this is the climax of our year and the cornerstone of our faith. The story of redemption, of the triumph of good over evil and the promise of eternal life, warrants our undivided attention this week. Immersing oneself in the observances, readings and liturgies of Holy Week, offers an amazing opportunity, not only for personal formation, but for a better understanding of the whole mission of Catholic Education.

Getting To Know Our Teachers



Mr Honeywood

Current Position in School:
My current roles include being a
Teacher of English, Deputy Head of
Year 11 and Eco Lead.

How I got into teaching:

I got into teaching as I was very fortunate to have an older sister (Mrs Honeywood-Jones) who worked at a local Catholic school and loved her job. Hence, in a quest to find a job that I would also love, I tried working in a school and never looked back; I truly enjoy my job everyday and am very lucky.

Why I love my job:

I love my job for a number of reasons. First of all would have to be because of the students. Whilst some might have an off day now and then, overall the students at this school are all great and it is because of the wonderful students that I love my job everyday. The students make me smile and laugh everyday and they give me an opportunity to preach about my love for reading and living life in an optimistic way.

A Fact About Myself

A fact about myself is that I am a Teacher of English but I did not become a real avid reader until quite a few years after secondary school. Therefore for the students who do not love reading yet, it is not too late and you just have to discover the right book!

Envirolent Sleep Out

In Aid of Shelter

A wonderful group of students from years 7 to 10 took part in a Lent sleep out to raise not only money for Shelter but also to raise awareness of homelessness. As Catholics we are encouraged during Lent to; Pray, Fast and serve others, Catholic Social teaching also encourages us to see the inherent dignity of all people, regardless of who they are. This evening was representative of the servant hearts of our students at Salesian School, not only did they raise over £1200 for Shelter, a special shoat out goes to Sophia C from year 8 who raised a huge £300! The evening culminated in students choosing to take part in prayer at the foot of the cross, calling for an end to homelessness and an increase in compassion and love in our society for our most vulnerable. Each student was given a candle to light and to take home with them to carry on their intentions during and after lent.

We were also lucky enough to be visited by a representative from Shelter, Called Nat, who had been homeless herself, she shared statistics and experiences with the us that made us realise how often hidden homeless is in our society, from people being forced to sofa surf, to those who are stuck in tents and hostels. She asked the students why they had decided to sleep out on such a cold night in support of the work Shelter does. Philip M summed up the thoughts of our group, "I see so many homeless people around that I just wanted to do something, I just wanted to make a small difference, shouldn't we care for all people?".

The evening was a great success and although very serious at times, we did have fun. A campfire with plenty of marshmallows, a fun film session watching the minions and of even more joy provided by Mrs Bruney bringing her Canine companion Alfie to stay out with us.

A big Thanks to Mrs Bruney for supporting the evening and the Premises team for making it possible!

If you would life to support our other EnviroLent initiatives then you can by going on to Tucasi and clicking the Envirolent Solar panel link.

- Mrs Hibbins-Durkin











Musical Celebration

In Honour of Rebecca Clarey

On Wednesday 20th March we honoured Rebecca Clarey in a concert that celebrated her life with a collection of her favourite musical works, songs and readings. It was an incredible evening filled with love and music. The College Hall was full to the brim with Rebecca's family, friends, colleagues and students, all who wanted to be there to celebrate her, and the incredible impact that she had on everyone in our community. We celebrated her love of music with a wide variety of musical genres, from pop, to film, to worship, to musicals.

The evening started with 'Somewhere in My Memory', from *Home Alone* (performed by the Salesian Orchestra) which was one of Rebecca's all-time favourite pieces of Christmas music and was therefore a very appropriate and way for us to begin, despite the concert taking place in March!



This was followed by 'City of Stars', from La La Land (sung by the Scholars choir) which was one of Rebecca's favourite songs that she taught in Scholars, and is still a definite student favourite.



We then listened to 'Hallelujah', by Jeff Buckely (sung by Darragh Chaplain – alumni student), he shared that he wanted to perform this song as it was one that Rebecca asked him to sing most at school events. He shared that even if he was "nervous or apprehensive she would always spur me on", and I think that perfectly summarises the endless positivity and encouragement that she would instill in her students.



Following this, the Alumni 'Scholars 2018' choir performed 'Skyfall' from James Bond, which was chosen by the choir members as they shared that it "was a firm favourite amongst those who had the pleasure to be a part of Salesian Scholars and the song has certainly stood the test of time. We had the joy of singing this at many performances both in school and outside and it was a no brainer when choosing what to sing!".

Lorna Chinyani, a year 12 student who had a special relationship with Rebecca, then sung 'This is the Air I Breathe'. Mrs Hibbins-Durkin shared that this was a very special song, as is was a favourite of Rebecca's, and brings fond memories of evenings in her flat sat at the piano praising God gently through the beautiful words and faith-filled friendship. This song was chosen to reflect Rebecca's lifelong faith found through music.



We then enjoyed the singing of 'California Dreamin' by *The Mammas and the Pappas*, performed by the Salesian Staff Choir. This was one of the very first songs that Rebecca taught the staff choir when it was first set up fifteen years ago, and we were so thrilled to have such a big group of past and present staff members singing together again in Rebecca's memory.



There was then a short break from the performances, as Mrs Hibbins-Durkin and Fr. Marco lead us in a Taizé prayer where everyone in the room was lead in meditative prayer, and we were all encouraged to offer whatever was on our hearts up to God. This is something that Rebecca loved to do, and it was a very special opportunity to think and reflect together.

We then listened to a performance of a very special song called 'We Will See You Again', written by Rebecca's friend and colleague *Mr De Cillis*, who works as a teaching assistant here at Salesian. His song was a beautiful offering with a chorus proclaiming "We will see you again, we can't say goodbye." The song was sung by a choir of year 9, 10, and 11s, many of whom have been taught and inspired by Rebecca in recent years. This was an incredibly special moment in the evening.

We then had a second alumni solo performance; Callum Heart performed a rendition of 'Somewhere' on the piano, and the room was absolutely captivated by the beautiful playing and performance. This was a wonderful opportunity for everyone to sink into the melody, and reflect together.



The words challenge us to understand that God calls us into challenging situations, sometimes situations that we would hope never to find ourselves in. But these words, like Rebecca, illustrate a deep understanding that she had with God, "that grace abounds in deepest waters, but your sovereign hand will be my guide".

We then listened to the second performance from our current Scholars choir, singing 'All the Way Home' by Sarah Quartel. This was beautifully accompanied by Mr Creen, who has dutifully performed alongside Rebecca as an honourary music department for many years. This was a truly beautiful performance, featuring moving lyrics such as "Evening brings a shining star, her ancient anthems from afar. Silence below, her song in the sky. Joyful with harmonies sing me all the way home with a song in my heart."



Everyone then enjoyed a sudden burst of energy in the hall as members of the 2022 cast of High School Musical took center stage to perform a medley of the top hits from the show. This was the last school musical that Rebecca directed, and the revival performance brought so much joy. The performance was a beautiful reflection of the infectious energy that Rebecca had, especially during the rehearsals and performances of the school musicals each Summer.



The concert ended with a big, beautiful, moving performance of 'The Power of Your Love'. This song was not just performed by the student choir, alumni choir, staff choir, staff band and orchestra, but by the entire room filled with family, friends and colleagues. It was a true celebration, and an honour to be surrounded by so many people who loved Rebecca singing one of her most favourite pieces of worship music. It was a performance that will be treasured by us all, and will always be remembered.





The evening encapsulated the love she had for all kinds of music, and we were so pleased to be able to show this with such an incredible group of performers made up of current and alumni students and current and ex-staff.

Thank you so much to the following members of staff who all pulled together to organise and prepare the most wonderful celebration; Mrs Garbett, Mrs Baumgart, Mrs Hibbins-Durkin, Mrs Carr, Mrs Morelle and Mrs Alighieri. And another huge thank you to our wonderful musical staff both within and outside of the Music Department; Mr Creen, Mr N Graham, Mr Boon, Mr S Graham, Mr Wroxley and Mr De Quay.

A final thank you to the wonderful community of people who came to be a part of the celebration of Rebecca in the audience. If you were there, you will know how much of an incredibly special evening it was, and much of that is thanks to you.



We can rest assured that Rebecca was with us all, and would have been overjoyed to see such a display of love and admiration through some of her most favourite music. She would have undoubtedly been far too humble to admit it – but we all know that the evening was the perfect way of showing how much of an incredible impact she had on us all, which we won't ever forget.

- Miss Thom



The Magnificat fund has been set up with the aim of continuing Rebecca's mission and ensuring that every child has access to music and is inspired to believe in themselves. Please scan the QR code below if you would like to donate.



Drama

GCSE Drama Exam

On Monday 18th March our Year 11 students took the final practical exam of the GCSE course. They performed in a range of scripted pieces which spanned different styles and genres. We will find out their results in August but want to congratulate them now on the huge amount of effort that went into the performances over the last 3 months - we are very proud of you!



















Drama Careers

We were lucky enough to be joined for a special career talk this month with star of 'Mrs Brown's Boys' Connor Moloney. Students joined us at lunchtime to hear all about how Connor's life at Drama school led to acting with some stand-up comedy along the way. We are very grateful that he came in to inspire our students with their own vocations and look forward to working with him again in the future.





Drama Trips

Mr Graham took 20 Year 9 students on a special trip to Royal Central School of Speech and Drama on 8th March for a tour of the school and a chance to see their production of 'Merrily We Roll Along!'. This was an excellent opportunity for students to learn more about post 18 options for those interested in a career in the Arts and it was great for Mr Graham to show everyone round his old stomping ground!



Instrumental Recital

On 7th February, students from Y7-11 gathered in M39 to showcase their skill on a variety of instruments. We had performances on the cello, clarinet, flute, violin, trumpet, and guitar with music ranging from Vivaldi to the Foo Fighters. It was an eclectic evening full of inspiring performances, supported by an audience of parents and friends – the students did themselves proud. We now look forward to our next recital in the series, which is for singers and will take place on Wednesday 8th May at 5pm.

House Music

For the first time this year we ran a house event for our Y7, Y8 and Y9 musicians. Organised with our ten Y9 music leaders, each house had to pick one soloist and form one band to compete for the inaugural house music trophy. All the performances were selected, organised, and rehearsed by the students themselves and it was wonderful to see the five bands competing for rehearsal space in the weeks leading up to the competition.

Decked out in their house shirts, the students took to the Guildford Road Stage on Monday 11th March, performing for our College Judges, Imogen and Matilda. First up were the soloists, with Clementine from Y7 bravely taking the stage first to play a beautiful piano piece on behalf of Zatti. She was followed by three singers (Chloe, Mia, and Layla – who also played the piano) and Oscar on the drums. The standard from all the performers in Y7 and Y8 was high and the judges had a hard time choosing a winner, eventually selecting Mia from Mazzarello for the soloist prize.

Each house them entered a band. Working with the instrumentalists in their house, these were varied! We had a cornet solo in 'Uptown Funk' and a flute/saxophone/vocal performance of 'Careless Whisper' in addition to more conventional versions of music

by Coldplay, The Beatles, and from the musical Six. All the performers did a fantastic job and we hope to see them taking their performances to our whole school Battle of the Bands event in November.

In the end, Rinaldi won the band prize, but Mazzarello lifted the overall house music trophy, winning house points and (crucially) a selection of Easter Eggs to share. Congratulations to all the performers – do come and chat to your teachers if you would like to get involved in our next event.

- Mr N. Graham











Year 11 Basketball

Salesian Year 11 Basketball team are Surrey Schools Champions!

On Friday 8th March, the Salesian Year 11 basketball team played Grey Court School, Ham near Kingston in the Surrey Schools final at the Surrey Sports Park, Guildford.

Having defeated St Andrew's School, Leatherhead in a closely fought semi final, Salesian faced the previous year's champions and strong favourites, Grey Court School in the county final.

The match proved to be a thrilling contest with both teams leading at times throughout the four quarters. On the final buzzer both teams were tied and therefore went into a first period of overtime. At the end of that period, both teams were still tied and went into the second overtime with Salesian finally emerging winners 77 - 75 with a basket with just a few seconds remaining. This was an outstanding performance from a team of just 9 players, overcoming a couple of injuries as well as some inevitable fatigue. - *Mr Doherty*





Macbeth: Dock X Theatre

by Mrs Sullivan-Tailyour & Miss Silsby

When offered the rare opportunity to travel to Dock X to see Ralph Fiennes (thankfully with a nose this time as he fulfilled the lead role) and Indira Varma in the timeless tragedy, Macbeth, 46 fortunate Year 10 students jumped at the chance! Hailed by critics as 'a Macbeth that quickens the pulse, then goes straight to the jugular', this was a performance that promised a punch and was sure to capture the students' imagination – it certainly delivered!

The play's director, Simon Godwin, made the conscious decision to depart from the original setting of Macbeth's castle in Inverness and opted for his version to be set in a modern day war zone. As we walked to our seats, we were immediately plunged into the set which brought the aftermath of a post-apocalyptic battlefield-style set to life. Chaos and disorder dominated as rubble was strewn across the stage, burnt out cars were upturned and set alight; students' jaws dropped as they were transfixed and amazed. This modern day setting was heightened by actors wearing camouflaged army gear complete with bullet proof vests, making this more realistic. Whilst roaming soldiers patrolled the set and stage, the Scottish Play began.

Looking around the warehouse, it was clear that students were enthralled by the masterful and polished performances.

They witnessed the haunting predictions made by the Weird Sisters setting the whole play in motion, the powerful soliloquies by Macbeth and Lady Macbeth and the gruesome and ghostly Banquo haunting the set, and the eventual decline of both into madness.

Varma and Fiennes were brilliant at shedding light on the multifaceted aspects of Lady Macbeth and Macbeth as they committed their bloody, brutal acts, wrestling with their conflicted conscience.

They captured the couple's spiralling descent into madness perfectly; watching the performance was almost uncomfortable and haunting at times. Each soliloquy was delivered with raw emotion, luring the audience in to gain a deeper insight into their tortured psyche. The students were enthralled and engrossed by Fiennes and Varma's portrayal which was refreshing to see.

Students were blown away by the performance and this will definitely benefit them when they study the play after Easter. They absolutely loved the pyrotechnics and explosions near the end – who wouldn't! We'd recommend trying to grab some tickets before it's too late – the last performance in London is on 30th March! The cast are then set to take the play across the pond to Washington DC from 9th April – 5th May. Whether you're a seasoned theatre-goer or a Shakespeare newbie, this incredible performance is one that will remember for many years to come.

Salesian Champions League

Year 9

The Year 9 Salesian Champions
League commenced shortly after the
Christmas break with eight teams
from Year 9 being registered to play
in the five-a-side tournament. Two
leagues of four teams played each of
their group opponents twice over the
course of the term with the league
games taking place on the Astro every
Thursday lunchtime.

The top two teams from each league qualified for the semifinals, with the winners of each progressing to the final which took place on Thursday 14th March.

In a competitive and very closely fought final between Mc Neil's Deal FC and The Unknowns watched by a vociferous crowd, the final proved to be an exciting affair. The Unknowns, previously undefeated throughout the tournament, and strong favourites, raced into an early lead and played some excellent passing football. However, with just over a minute remaining, Mc Neil's Deal FC scored a superb equalizer leading to the "agony" of a penalty shoot-out. Mc Neil's Deal players held their nerve and emerged victorious, winning 4-3 on penalties. - Mr Doherty





Debate Club

Last month, three Year 10 students competed in the Regional Finals of the English Speaking Union Public Speaking Competition, with all three performing impressively. Ben D won Best Speaker of the Evening with his speech on 'Democracy is (not) a sham', which was highly praised by the Head Judge.

Sam T (questioner) and Dom H (chair) also excelled, winning overall best team and progressing to the Southern Finals of the Competition in March. Salesian has not got this far since 2018 so wish us luck!





On Monday 4th March, Tobia E (Year 12) represented the school at the Catenian Public Speaking Competition giving a brilliant speech on 'The Inevitability of Misinformation'. There were 8 schools competing and the standard was incredibly high. There were multiple speeches on the rise of AI, as well as feminist and whether the British Army is fit for use. Although he was pipped at the post by Richard Challenor School, Tobia did himself, and Salesian, proud.

Below is the gripping opening to his speech (highlights in bold left in so you can imagine his intonation for yourself).

The Inevitability of Misinformation

How much of what **we** believe to be true has been shaped by misinformation? In today's interconnected world, we have reached a point where misinformation is **indisputably pervasive**. You have undoubtedly been impacted by it — either through social media, the news or even through word of mouth. Whether it is intentional or not, these inaccuracies shape our worldview and are making the issues that face our society today **much** more overt.

And what might the causes of this inescapable danger be, you may ask?

One of the most prominent causes of misinformation has been the rise of the digital age. The unprecedented access to news stories and rise of the internet means that **rapid** dissemination of information is more notable than ever before.

At the click of a button, war.

At the click of a button, climate change.

At the click of a button, we can see **devastation wreaking havoc** on the world.



Our Salesian Public Speaking team have been busy competing in the Southern Final of the English Speaking Union Churchill Public Speaking Competition at St Catherine's in Guildford. Our stellar team of Dom H (chairperson), Ben D (speaker) and Sam T (questioner) did themselves and the school proud and were the only non-private school in attendance.

We are now also one of only 50 or so best public speaking teams in the country competing at this level - a huge accolade, I'm sure you'll agree.

Ben spoke eloquently on the motion that "Relying on News Channels to be Impartial is Futile" and was described as "mesmerising" to listen to.

Although we didn't progress through and our ESU journey ends here for this year, we couldn't have lost to a better school (Churcher's College: Miss Burdekin's alma mater), and we wish them well as they represent the southern region in the Grand Final in May.

Finally, in May, a whopping six Salesian teams from Year 7 to Year 12 have been invited to our first 'Philosothon' by Notre Dame School in Chobham. This is new territory for us but we are extremely excited for I and will share how we get on.



- Miss Burdekin



Year 7 Drama Club presents 'Horrible Histories!'

This term Year 7 Drama have been working on their very own episode of the hit BBC show 'Horrible Histories'. A cast of Rotten Romans, Vicious Vikings and Awful Egyptians (among many more!) have directed and starred in the show, filmed on location around school with some superb costumes and props. Year 7 were treated to a special premiere viewing in the final assembly of term to show off all their hard work (video link here).

'Shrek' Auditions

On Monday 25th March we were very excited to hold auditions for this year's summer musical production of 'Shrek'. Over 50 students in Years 7, 8 and 9 came along and we were wowed with monologues from Donkey, Gingy and some excellent Princess Fionas too! Decisions on casting were extremely difficult but all who auditioned will be part of what is set to be our most spectacular show to date! Join us for the performances on July 3rd 4th and 5th. Details on how to buy tickets will be released nearer the date, in the meantime follow us on Instagram @salesiandrama for rehearsal updates and photos.

Careers

This term in careers was one of our busiest yet! We celebrated National Careers Week (4th to 9th March) which was marked by students completing a range of careers activities across various year groups. For example, careers tasks were embedded in all KS3 lessons, Year 12 explored higher education options at a University Fair, while Year 13 built valuable connections at a Business & Technology networking event at St George's College. We were also honoured to welcome the renowned actor Conor Moloney, who shared his experiences and insights into the creative industry, inspiring our students.

This term, Year 9 have been choosing their GCSE options and attended their first Careers Fair, meeting with representatives from 22 diverse organizations including industry leaders like the NHS, Tesla, McDonalds, Samsung and many more. The fair opened their eyes to the vast array of career possibilities aligned with their chosen subjects. We received glowing feedback from exhibitors who were impressed by the politeness, confidence, and

engagement of our Year 9 students. Well done, Year 9!

A heartfelt thank you goes to all the parents who every generously gave up their time to meet with Year 9.







Calling All Industry Professionals:

Work Experience Opportunities

Every year, we are incredibly grateful to members of our Salesian community who provide valuable work experience placements to our students. This year, we are seeking your support once again!

- Year 12: Work experience placements will run from June 24th to 28th (5 days) for 220 students.
- Year 10: Work experience placements will run from 9th to the 10th July (2 days) for 280 students.

If you'd like to inspire the next generation by offering a work experience placement or have tasks that could benefit from an extra pair of hands, please don't hesitate to contact Mrs. Petheram (Ipetheram@ salesian.surrey.sch.uk) or Mrs. Dunne (Pdunne@salesian.surrey.sch.uk) to find out more.

Many thanks, the Careers Team.

Silver DofE Practise

84 year 10 Silver DofE participants headed to the South Downs for a very chilly practice expedition. With temperatures dropping to 3 degrees, they all coped remarkably well. They practiced their navigation, campcraft and put their fitness to the test with 7 - 8 hours of hiking per day. The instructors commented not only on how proficient their DofE skills were, but what a lovely, friendly and caring group of students we have at Salesian. Well done all. - *Mr S. Graham*















Lourdes

Salesian students are going to Lourdes this Summer!

At the beginning of the Summer Holidays this year, 19 of our Year 12 students, and 13 of our Year 10 and 11 students, have volunteered to be helpers on the Arundel and Brighton Diocese Lourdes Pilgrimage. This shows great generosity on their part, and a determination to really make a difference in our world. They have all been busy raising awareness in their parishes and school community, and doing some fundraising to reduce the cost of going on Pilgrimage.

2 weeks ago, many of the group ran and walked 7 miles round the lakes and rivers in Great Windsor Park and Runnymede Park; and some even managed to save a man and his dog en-route who had accidently fell into the river Thames. Not all heroes have capes; some, it seems, wear lycra shorts and white t-shirts!

Forms are almost filled and plans complete. Miss Meredith, who is volunteering as well, and I, are looking forward to sharing this wonderful experience of community and service with this special group students this Summer. - Fr K. O'Donnell

