

## 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 – Fourth Anniversary of the Formation of St Nicholas Owen Catholic Multi-Academy Company

### St Nicholas Owen Annual Mass of Thanksgiving

On Tuesday 24 April staff from St Ambrose in Kidderminster, St Joseph's in Stourbridge, St Mary's in Brierley Hill, Our Lady of Fatima in Harborne, St Wulstan's in Stourport and Hagley Catholic High School came together at St Mary's Harvington as the community of St Nicholas Owen Catholic Multi Academy Company to give thanks to God for the work of the schools over the past year. Father Des Devenney and Father Douglas Lamb concelebrated the Mass and Father Des preached, as always, with that rare combination of humour, relevance and thoughtful reflection on the scripture readings. Particular thanks to Amalia Costanza, the parish organist, and to Mgr John Moran for allowing us to use the stable – and his garden - for refreshments after the Mass. It was wonderful to see the church so full and to be able to welcome Mrs Borriello, vice-principal designate of St Mary's, to this special Mass.



### St Nicholas Owen Fourth Anniversary of Formation Mass

On Tuesday 2 October 2018 the fourth annual anniversary Mass was held at Our Lady and All Saints Church, Stourbridge. Over 90 Directors, Academy Committee Representatives and Staff came to celebrate and give thanks for another successful year. Fr Des Devenney, the Parish Priest and Dean of Dudley, celebrated the Mass which also coincided with the Feast of the Guardian Angels. After Mass, refreshments, provided by parishioners from Our Lady and All Saints, were served in the parish centre. Many thanks, OLAS!

## Welcome to the new St Nicholas Owen MAC Vice-Principals



**Mrs Isabel Borriello:** Vice Principal of St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Brierley Hill.

I began my new position at St Mary's Catholic Primary school in September 2018. Prior to starting at St Mary's, I spent 8 years at a larger Catholic primary school in North Birmingham as a teacher and a school leader. My most

recent success was developing the Mathematics curriculum for my previous school and improving the outcomes and confidence of teachers and pupils as a result. I am also a foundation governor and committee chair at a separate Birmingham Catholic primary school. I look forward now to using the skills and knowledge I have learnt in my other roles to help in the development of the future of St Mary's within Saint Nicholas Owen Multi Academy Company.

My passion is ensuring that all children receive a high quality education that is in equal parts enjoyable, challenging and nurturing. I have been fortunate enough to work with outstanding colleagues and highly motivated children on an individual class basis, and I look forward to using this experience to drive through positive whole school developments for the benefit of all the children at St Mary's.



**Mr David Simmons:** Vice Principal of Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Primary School, Harborne

I am the recently appointed Vice Principal at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Primary School. Currently I have a variety of roles: I am deputy designated senior lead for safeguarding,

with additional responsibility across the school for assessment, English, Physical Education, e-Safety and computing. Prior to this I taught Year 6 in the main but I also have experience of teaching Years 2 and 3.

I used to work within a Teaching School where I was involved in Research & Development projects, Initial Teacher Training and Teacher Development events. I have coached and mentored newly qualified teachers and post-graduate certificate of education students, enabling them to achieve success.

My earlier leadership experience as deputy head, head of School and acting Head Teacher, will now be further developed and I am looking forward to sharing my expertise at Our Lady of Fatima as well as across the other schools in St Nicholas Owen Catholic MAC.

# St Nicholas Owen MAC and Primary Partners Pyramid Concert

## Birmingham Town Hall: 15 February 2018



The annual Pyramid Concert is always one of the highlights of the St Nicholas Owen MAC and its Primary Partners year. This music project brings all the schools together to create a professional and uplifting show that is thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. This year's theme was Schools of Rock and we included 15 classic bands and songs from the Rock genre.

We were delighted that Bishop Bernard Longley started the proceedings with a celebratory introduction and blessing, giving thanks for the gifts and talents of all those involved.

The whole ensemble started the show by performing three hymns: "You are Holy", a beautiful setting of "Blest are you Lord, God of all Creation" and, finally, a 'toe-tapping' version of "Sing my Soul". This got the audience clapping along and everyone knew they were in for a great evening's entertainment.

Mr. Mallinson had been working with the children for many months and now the individual schools performed their set pieces. They also made a short video about their chosen Rock artist. Some schools dressed up, some added drama, but all the videos were packed full of facts about their chosen band.

This is what the schools performed...

*Rock Around The Clock* - St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

*You Really Got Me* - Hagley Catholic High School

*School's Out* - St Ambrose Catholic Primary School

*More Than A Feeling* - St Wulstan's Catholic Primary School

*Since You've Been Gone* - Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Primary School

*I Love Rock n' Roll* - Our Lady & St Kenelm Catholic Primary School

*Here I Go Again* - St Mary's Catholic Primary School

*Crazy, Crazy, Crazy Nights* - St Gregory's Catholic Primary School



The evening then brought all 300 performers back on stage for the final songs: *Rockin' All Over the World*, a very emotional *Winds Of Change* (the audience used their lights from their phones; this was a magical moment), *Sweet Child Of Mine* and *The Final Countdown*.

Mrs Horan, Principal of Hagley Catholic High School, then thanked everybody involved and congratulated all the young people on their amazing show.

The audience went crazy as two 18ft inflatable Flying V Guitars suddenly appeared and rocked out in the final song, *Livin' On A Prayer*. The atmosphere was electric as fire jets; smoke and streamers filled the stage.

Suddenly a roar of motorbike engines filled the Town Hall, as Michael McCarron appeared on a motorbike dressed as Meatloaf for a spine-tingling version of *Bat Out Of Hell*. This gave the chance for our young performers to let off steam, wave to the crowd and feel like superstars as they left the stage. The band completed the song to rapturous applause and cheers from the audience.



**The 2019 Pyramid Concert is on  
Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> February.  
Get your tickets quick.... This year's  
focus will be *Disco Fever*.**

## Hagley Catholic High School Retreat & Pilgrimage

Our Key Stage 3 pupils enjoy an annual retreat at The Briars, the residential Catholic Youth Retreat Centre in Nottingham. Our pupils spent a weekend reflecting on the themes of friendship and community. They explored their relationships with themselves, with each other, with the wider world and with God. Through a varied programme of practical activities, including team building, countryside hiking and competitive games, pupils were guided through a number of biblical and spiritual reflections, encouraging them to respond to Jesus' invitation to discipleship. Pupils had a great weekend and returned to school, ready to share what they had thought about over the weekend with their peers.



In February, ninety-six of our Key Stage 4 pupils undertook a pilgrimage to Krakow, Poland. The four-day journey enabled pupils to reflect on the events of the Holocaust from Christian, Jewish and secular perspectives. Pupils visited the sites of Auschwitz I & II, to see the permanent exhibitions which document the atrocities that were committed against those deemed not to 'fit in' to society by the Third Reich. Our pupils were humbled to meet an elderly Auschwitz survivor; through a translator, they heard some of her vague recollections of what she could remember about life in the camp, but mostly about her life since liberation and how she has come to learn the full horror of her imprisonment as she grew older. Additional activities included a historical tour of the city of Krakow, a trip to Oskar Schindler's Factory Museum, an afternoon in the Jewish Quarter, a trip to a synagogue and time in the city centre. Fr Des celebrated Mass with our pupils immediately before their departure.

In the Summer Term a group of staff went on retreat to Belfast. Over the weekend, staff reflected on the troubles in recent Northern Irish history and saw the segregation that remains in place to this day: a wall taller and longer than the Berlin Wall separates Catholic from Protestant communities in our very own country, yet never features in our headlines! Attending Mass at the Cathedral Presbytery St Peter's, we prayed that the then upcoming Papal Visit to Ireland would help stabilise the situation and enable the Irish and Northern Irish to pave a way into the future in peace. The Mass was broadcast on Irish national radio.

### Sixth Form Catholic Life

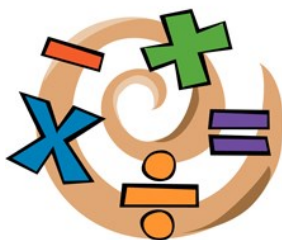
Spiritual development remains a high priority in Key Stage 5. Many new initiatives have been launched as a direct result of a proactive student body which recognises the importance of faith and wants to nourish it whilst undertaking A-level studies. The 'B-Attitude' Group is a group of our Sixth Formers who have joined the St Vincent DePaul Society, the Catholic Church's domestic charity for poverty. The B-Attituders meet every fortnight to nurture their prayer life and undertake outreach work. As part of their work, they are co-ordinating a 'Gift Box' scheme, whereby they will collect items donated from across the school community, package them up and distribute them to the homeless just before Christmas. Later this year, the Sixth Form will undertake a residential retreat in Soli, the Catholic Youth Retreat Centre for older pupils in Birmingham. The students have recently started the process of organising their own pilgrimage to Portugal, where they will visit Lisbon and Fatima.

### St Nicholas Owen Primary Mathematics Journey

In St Nicholas Owen Catholic Multi Academy Company, the primary leads are working hard to ensure that we develop a new culture of deep understanding, competence and confidence in Mathematics.

We are developing our curriculum by using White Rose Maths to include fluency, reasoning and problem solving, using concrete and pictorial resources and developing those into abstract strategies.

We recognise that pupils need to learn basic number facts and be fluent in Mathematical procedures, alongside developing conceptual understanding, to enable them to solve increasingly complex problems in life and later in the workplace.



### St Wulstan's New Academy Committee Chair



I was elected parent governor at St Wulstan's many years ago (my children are now in their twenties and thirties) and I was very pleased to become a foundation academy representative in Spring 2017 and Chair in

October 2018. On returning to the academy committee of St Wulstan's, I have seen the increase in workload and responsibilities that now fall to academy committee Representatives. I am a chartered accountant having worked as a financial director in the charity sector and as a chief financial officer for a multi academy trust. I am parish safeguarding representative for the diocese which informs my role as safeguarding link for St Wulstan's Catholic Primary School. I feel privileged to accompany the children on their learning about their faith, the world and themselves.

## Teach Meet St Joseph's 13 February 2018



The first St Nicholas Owen *Teach Meet* was held on Tuesday 13 February at St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School. The concept of a Teach Meet is to instil positivity into education by celebrating brilliant people and their ideas. It utilises the amazing minds of colleagues from across an organisation - and beyond - to benefit all teaching staff. The Valentine theme for this event, entitled 'Hearts and Minds', focused on the mental health and well-being of both pupils and staff. A packed schedule of speakers from within and beyond the MAC provided colleagues with the opportunity to listen to and share good practice and to then implement these ideas within their own school. The session began with a presentation from the Key Note speaker, Chris Henley. A teacher with over thirty years' experience, Chris has written *The Art of Being a Brilliant Teacher* and other publications which have inspired others.

This provided an excellent platform for the theme of the evening. Food and refreshments were also provided and a grand raffle brought the event to a close. Thank you to Miss Brissett at St. Joseph's for organising the event and for initiating this wonderful networking opportunity to share good practice across the MAC and to keep up-to-date with the latest initiatives in the world of education.

## Teach Meet St Ambrose 13 September 2018

Our second, St Nicholas Owen, *Teach Meet* event focussed on the theme 'Communication is the Key'. On arrival our guests had the opportunity to sample food from different countries around the globe to celebrate the diverse world in which we communicate. Our guest speakers, Jacqui Woodcock and Liz Spencer, opened the evening by highlighting the impact that poor listening skills have on children's lives and delivered some practical ideas about how we, as professionals, can ensure these listening skills are developed. The key to this is to reinforce the four rules of good listening: listening to all the words; looking at the person who is talking; staying quiet and sitting still.

During the course of the evening, *App That* presenter John Holder, encouraged staff to bring a children's story to life through the use of green screen. This provided a different stance about how ICT can be used to portray ideas. We also learnt about the importance of levelling Key Stage Two home reader books from Oxford University Press and how this is crucial to the development of language. Plenty of prizes were won over the course of the evening as guests enjoyed the different games that were played such as 'Human Bingo' and 'Catchphrase' which certainly brought out the competitiveness in a few members of the audience.

The evening drew to a close with our *Art of Sign Language* presenter who had everyone entertained by teaching us how to sign the song "Firework" by Katie Perry. Thank you to everyone who supported our event and enthusiastically joined in our activities and very special thanks to Miss Brewer and Miss Holtom for organising and hosting the event: A warm smile is the universal language of kindness.



The Directors would like to extend their sincere thanks to our elected Directors for their service over the last four years: Maxine Millward and David Harris as Parent Directors, and Ben McArdle and Paulette Berry as Staff Directors. Elections for these roles will be taking place across the schools during December. We welcome Caroline Beech who has joined the Board as a Foundation Director. We also thank Patrick Kennedy for his service as Acting Chair/Chair at St Wulstan's.