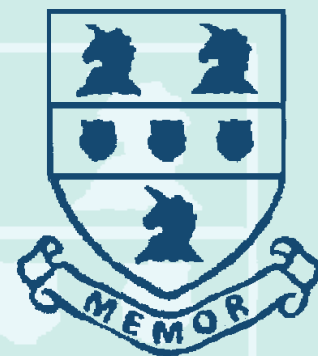


ST. GERARD'S SENIOR SCHOOL

LETTER FROM THE HEADMASTER



SUMMER 2009



As we bask in the glorious sunshine of early June and once again appreciate the true meaning of summer days we reflect with great satisfaction on ninety years of education here in St Gerard's school. On 10th May 1919 the old house and grounds opened its doors on Thornhill Road. The school must have been a magical place for boys to explore, to enjoy and to be nurtured in the ethos of a new school in such wonderful surroundings – little did they know then that they were the first students at the dawn of a new era.

We strive humbly to maintain the ethos of the founder John James and our patron Saint Gerard Majella. This is the first summer with no building taking place for many years and it is our first opportunity to truly appreciate the beauty of the school and the aesthetics of our stunning facilities. We should be very proud of our school and daily we can see the positive determination on the students faces as they toil with the challenges of modern day education. We wish our Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate students every success in their examinations.

Our Senior Development Team are currently in Canada enjoying the opportunity which the tour offers and we congratulate and wish the Sixth Year students and staff travelling to Rwanda in July every success on their journey of discovery. As one prepares the various newsletters in both the Senior and Junior School we can only be inspired by the commitment of all involved. I take this opportunity to thank you, the parents for entrusting your children to our care and for the support that you offer the school on a daily basis.

I thank the staff and students who work so closely together and give so much of their time to the curricular and extra-curricular programmes in the school. The success of St Gerard's School is truly based on team work and prioritising the "You" above the "Me". Monsignor Mohan at the Graduation Mass left the students with a message to carry in their hearts "Me for You". It is this theme that we will take as our focus for the next academic year.

I wish you and your families a wonderful summer and I hope that the glorious sunshine of early June will continue for many weeks.

Tom Geraghty
Headmaster.

www.stgerards.ie

MODEL UNITED NATIONS

Congratulations to Ben Blunnie, Daniel Cooney, Megan Fox, Fiona Kelly, Issy Spencer-Higgins and Hilary Repko of Fifth Year and Niall McLaughlin of Transition Year, who took part in St Andrew's International Model United Nations during the Easter holidays. Representing Canada, they prepared resolution topics ranging from International Trade to Narcotics and Human Rights in Tibet. Over the four-day long conference they had the opportunity to debate such topical issues as the Unfolding Crisis in North Korea in front of committees and the General Assembly. Being chosen to represent an influential country such as Canada reflected very well on the participant's performance, and we hope to build on this in the years to come.

YOUNG SOCIAL INNOVATORS

The Transition Year YSI team had a very busy term as they continued to work very hard on their 'Paper Free Schools' project. The group performed a two minute 'musical' in the Red Cow Hotel in February to raise awareness for their project at the YSI 'Speak Out', and were so impressive that they appeared in the 'Irish Times' the following day! They continued to raise awareness of paper usage in the school, and planted a tree by the rear car park so as to compensate in their own little way for the paper we have been using in the school. The team made it to the final showcase in the RDS in May, where they presented a fantastic display of their year-long project. Well done to a very enthusiastic YSI team.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CLUB

The 5th and 6th Year Amnesty International Club continued to meet on Mondays to discuss human rights issues and how they raise awareness of such issues in the school. In February, the club held a 'Friendship Day' in the school, where they sold fair trade friendship bracelets made by children in Guatemala. The Club raised 214 Euro, all of which went directly back to the street children who made them. The club is looking forward to developing further developing further next year.

HEAD BOY AND HEAD GIRL

A sincere word of thanks and gratitude on behalf of the school community to our outgoing Head Boy and Head Girl, Jonathan Towers and Éabha Ní Mhathúna. Jonathan and Eabha are true Ambassadors for the Goodness and have worked tirelessly to fulfil their responsibilities. The school congratulates our new Head Boy and Head Girl, Ben Blunnie and Madison Duffy on their appointment.

SENIOR SCHOOL DRAMA TROUPE

The Senior School Drama Troupe hosted Cluedo which was written by Ms. Eithne Carney, An Actor's Nightmare & The Exam. At the St Andrew's One Act Drama Festival Cluedo won the following; Best Play; Best Director; Best Production and Best Design & Costume. A truly remarkable achievement. This most talented cast performed two matinees and one evening performance in the school. The quality of performance and production in such a young group is remarkable.

SENIOR DEVELOPMENT HOCKEY TOUR TO CANADA

The Senior Development Hockey Tour travelled to Vancouver on the 3rd of June. The twenty one member Squad and four staff members will have a memorable trip and we look forward in anticipation, to their results.

A special word of thanks to the Fundraising Committee who organised the fundraising drive for the tour. The Fashion Show and the Summer Party were once again great successes and were among the social highlights of the year.

SUMMER CONCERT IN THE NATIONAL CONCERT HALL

The Summer Concert took place in the National Concert Hall on Monday 4th May to mark the 90th Anniversary of education here in St Gerard's School. One is always mesmerised by the depth of the musical talent in the school. The National Concert Hall bore witness to this where the extensive programme showcased the talents of both the Junior and Senior school students. A particular word of thanks to Ms Diane Owens, Ms Jackie Olohan, Ms Deirdre Farrell, Ms Paula Hillman, Ms Eithne Carney and Ms Claire Dowling for their true dedication to excellence. It is a great pity that so many did not support this significant event and missed out on the opportunity to witness the calibre of talent in the school.

JOSEPH & HIS AMAZING TECHNICOLOUR DREAMCOAT – TRANSITION YEAR MUSICAL

All Transition Year students were involved in the wonderful production of Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat. The two evening performances; in addition to two matinees were most positively received by all audiences. The school is extremely fortunate to have a producer of the calibre of Jackie Olohan to nurture the undoubted talents of the students.

SEACHTAIN NA GAEILGE

Bhí réimse imeachtaí éagsúla ar siúl sa scoil. Ina measc bhí Tráth na gCeist, damhsa, comortas ealaíne agus seisiúin ceoil. Chuir daltaí na céad Bliana taispeántas rince agus ceoil ar siúl. Seachtain den scoth a bhí ann.

VALEDICTORY MASS

A most moving Valedictory Graduation Mass was concelebrated by Monsignor Richard Mohan, and Father John O'Connor. The theme of Called and Gifted were proclaimed and celebrated. These are the simple things we wish for our sons and daughters and for each other. Monsignor Mohan asked students to focus on the challenge that Christian living poses to them and to be true to themselves. The Graduation Mass celebrated both an ending and a new beginning for our 6th Year students with the Ceremonies of Light adding great significance to the occasion.

MEDJUGORJE PILGRIMAGE

A group of thirty-one Fifth Year students accompanied by Mr. Seamus Jennings, Mr Ben Armstrong and Ms. Niamh Aylmer travelled to Medjugorje in May for a week-long pilgrimage. The pilgrimage included a tour of the shrine, attendance at a number of religious ceremonies and meeting one of the Visionaries. This is the third year the Fifth Year students have travelled to Medjugorje.

SOCIAL AWARENESS PROGRAMME

The Social Awareness Programme within the school continues to grow. Since last September the students have involved themselves in a myriad of charitable works including the Sugarloaf Sponsored Race on St. Gerard's Day in aid of Temple Street Hospital, the Christmas Bazaar, Transition Year Mini-Company activities, the 2nd and 3rd Year CSPE projects, Young Social Innovators, the Christmas Hamper Appeal for

St. Vincent de Paul, as well as many other individual fundraising events. Since last September over €125,000 has been raised, donated and/or given on behalf of the school to a range of international, national and local charities. I highly commend all of the students, parents and staff who are so generous with their time throughout the year on behalf of the various charities supported in the school.

IN-HOUSE COMMITTEE

Once again the In-House Committee hosted and organised wide variety of social activities during the academic year in both the Senior and Junior Schools. On behalf of the school I thank them most sincerely for their constant support, encouragement and hard work in the organisation and preparation of all these events. A particular word of thanks for the continued organisation of the Graduation Dinner, the Senior Rugby and Hockey BBQ and the Senior and Junior Family Tennis Evenings

TRANSITION MINI COMPANIES

Many congratulations to the Jett Desmond and David Symes of TY who were runners up in the Wicklow Enterprise Board Student Enterprise Awards 2008-2009. A special word of congratulations to Robert Boland, Christopher Clarke and Jack Farrelly who were awarded the most innovative idea in the same competition.

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

A sincere word of thanks to Mr Liam O'Brien, Chairperson of the Parents' Association and his excellent committee, for all of their tireless work on behalf of the Parent Community for the school this year. Once again, the St. Gerard's Ball was a tremendous success, as was the continuation of the series of coffee mornings for all of the Senior School parents in May. Their continued organisation of talks, lectures, courses and newsletters is a great support to the parent body.

ART EXHIBITION

St. Gerard's School In-House Committee once again hosted an Art Exhibition in the Junior School Hall with the support of the Cherry Lane Gallery. The display of excellent art work included pieces from both parents and students in the school. The Art Exhibition as always drew a large attendance. €2,500.00 was raised and presented to the Sunshine Children's Home.

CANADIAN RUGBY VISIT

We were delighted to host Shawnigan Lake School from Vancouver, Canada in March. I sincerely thank all of the families who hosted the thirty five players and we thank Shawnigan Lake for two highly competitive rugby matches in the school. We look forward to developing our links with Shawnigan Lake in the future.

UCC FACULTY OF LAW ESSAY COMPETITION

Many congratulations to Ben Blunnie 5th Year and Jill Roy 6th Year as the first winners from St Gerard's School in this prestigious competition. Both Ben and Jill's essays are published in the St Gerard's School Literary Magazine enclosed.

DESIGN A BOOK COMPETITION

Congratulations to the following 1st Years; Janice Lau, Katie Wong, Katie O'Farrell, Faolan O'Mahony, Fiodhna Campbell, Roddy O'Caomh and Shauna Cannon on winning the Design a Book Competition.

RWANDA 2009

Best wishes to the twelve 6th Years who have volunteered to go to Rwanda and work with UNICEF in late July. We wish them every success and we thank Mr Seamus Jennings and Ms Diane Owens for accompanying the students on this wonderful journey of exploration.

DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

This has been a year of great activity and success for the public speakers and debaters of St. Gerard's. Some seasoned veterans of the debating world, 5th years Karl Brennan and Ben Blunnie, performed exceptionally well in the Denny Leinster School Debating Competition. The boys emerged victorious

from four tough rounds in both UCD and Trinity making it all the way to the semi-finals; a great achievement.

Other 5th Year students who excelled in competitions this year were Theo Jebb, Fiona Kelly, Finn Boylan and Meadhbh Delahunt who spoke in the finals of the Bray Lions Club Debate. This was Meadhbh's first debating competition but it will hopefully not be her last. Theo and Finn had already survived tough rounds of the Denny's in Trinity and proved themselves a formidable team. St. Gerard's also sent a team to the Wicklow County Council Environmental Debates. Theo represented the school yet again aided by Izzy Spencer-Higgins and David Mulrooney.

Four of our second year debaters, David Beamish, Adam Cross, Peter Wilson and Jamie Cameron attended the ICYD Debating Workshop in UCD where they learned valuable tips and strategies for future competitions. Our representatives at the Literary and Historical Society debates in UCD were Tom Noonan and Paraic Behan, while Niall McLaughlin, Kevin O'Leahan and Mark Freeney spoke brilliantly at the National Forum on Europe. We had three gifted young ladies speak at the Association of Women Graduates Public Speaking Competition in UCD. They were Evie Weir, Katie O'Farrell and Lauren Lynch, first years who showed great maturity in this prestigious event.

In light of the phenomenal participation of St Gerard's students in these competitions, it may surprise you to hear that we have also enjoyed many informative and amusing in-house debates. Keith O' Connor won our first year competition and Laura Gallagher was the winning second year student.

SCIENCE NEWS

This has been a busy time for the science department. It began in January with three TY students submitting a very interesting project on 'Diet- the Physical Edge' for the BT Young Scientist Competition. The senior cycle students have been striving to complete their courses while 3rd years have worked at an accelerated pace in order to meet the deadline for their Junior Certificate investigations. Transition Year Chemistry students spent a valuable afternoon (Thursday, 26th March) on an industrial visit to Takeda Pharmaceutical Company, courtesy of Mr. Paul Blunnie. The highlight of the final term was the excellent achievement of three 3rd year students who came first out of 18 Dublin schools in a science quiz, bringing the I.S.T.A. trophy to St. Gerard's. Well done to all!

GREEN SCHOOLS

The Green Schools Committee has been actively implementing the Environmental Action Plan drawn up at the start of the academic year. A Green Schools Code has been drawn up and an environmental audit has been carried out to identify the issues. As a consequence of this, a plan was developed. The aim is to recycle as much as 85% of all waste produced within the school. The green schools committee of 22 students drawn from all years has been monitoring this and believe we are well on our way to reaching these targets. Events which occurred in the last term include an Environmental Action Day where almost 200 mobile phones and over 1000 used batteries were collected for recycling. An environmental quiz based on timescales for different objects to biodegrade had over 250 entries and was won by 6th year student Ronan Mc Carthy. Students were also addressed by Mr. Dean Eaton, Environmental Officer from Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council and also participated in "Crann" National Tree Planting Week in March and "An Taisce" national spring clean week in April. Details of our action plan and other linked information can now be seen on the school website under the green schools link www.stgerardsgreen.tk

SPORT.....

TAG RUGBY

Congratulations to St Gerard's Tag Rugby Team who played in the Stuart Mangan Appeal Competition. Beating Blackrock in the semi-final and eventually going on to beating St Mary's in the final. Many thanks to Shaun McCarthy who coached them on the day.

TENNIS

Congratulations to the Minor & Senior Tennis Teams who narrowly failed to qualify for the semi-finals of the Leinster School Boys Tennis Championships. Congratulations to Sam (TY) and David Gilmore on winning the Family Tennis Event. They defeated Jamie (3rd Year) and Fergus Murphy in a high quality final. We wish Alan Gleeson the best of luck when he will compete in the European Junior Tennis Circuit during the summer months.

SHOW JUMPING

It was a very busy and encouraging season for Show Jumping Team. They competed in seven major show jumping events which were part of the Hoofprints Equestrian League held in different venues around the country. We look forward to hosting our annual show jumping event in Boswell's Equestrian Centre on September 26th.

SENIOR CUP TEAM

History was created when the Senior Cup team defeated Kings Hospital in the final of the Leinster Senior League with captain Jordan Egan scoring all of the points. This result will live long in the memory of both players and supporters and special praise is due to Joe McDonnell, Tony Ward, Micheál McMullen and Damien Hall for all of their effort and commitment in bringing this prestigious trophy to St Gerard's School.

JUNIOR CUP TEAM

The future looks bright for this young team in a season where they finished mid table in their league. They were unfortunate to lose to Wesley College in the first round of the Cup campaign. They bounced back with a superb victory over St Andrew's College before succumbing to Clongowes Wood College in the semi-final of the plate competition. Special thanks to coaches Shaun McCarthy and Jason Emery.

TY RUGBY

This talented group of players reached the final of the East Coast League where they were narrowly defeated by Blackrock College in an enthralling game. This team also won 15 of their 17 matches played throughout the season. Great credit and thanks is due to Seamus Jennings and Jonathon Carroll for instilling a great love of rugby in this progressive side.

UNDER 14 RUGBY

We look forward to seeing this improving group of players participate in the junior ranks next year following a progressive season of results which augers well for their JCT season. Many thanks

to Rory O Connor and David Campbell for their coaching commitment to this team.

UNDER 13 RUGBY

Congratulations to the Under13 team who travelled to the Oratory Rugby Sevens Tournament in February and won the Plate Competition. They showed how much they have improved by winning their last three matches against St Michaels College, Templeogue College and The High School. Thank you to the coaching staff of David Kelly, Dermot Mulholland and Ben Armstrong.

SENIOR HOCKEY

Many congratulation to the Senior 1st Hockey Team who were most unlucky to lose to Loreto Beauford (last year's all Ireland finalists) after injury time and on penalties. Our Senior 2nd Hockey Team had an successful run through to the Leinster semi-final where they were beaten by Mount Anville on penalties.

JUNIOR HOCKEY

Congratulations to the Junior A Hockey Team who beat Newbridge College in the final of the Plate. This is the first time St Gerard's School have won a final in hockey at Junior level. Aoife Kenna scored the only goal in tightly contested match. A big thank you to Mr Ken Jolly and Ms Sarah Scott.

In March, St Gerard's Minor A Team welcomed Bloomfield Collegiate from Belfast for their Annual match. It was a great game and St Gerard's were victorious winning 3 – 0.

ATHLETICS PROGRAMME

Well done to all the students who participated in the Athletics Programme this term. A special word of congratulations to all of the students who participated at Senior, Immediate, Junior and Minor level in East Leinster and Leinster Competitions. The strong increase in students participating in athletics and in the above competition augers well for the school in the future. Congratulations once again to the Girls Athletics on retaining the Tony Ward Athletics Trophy.

PREFECTS

The following is the list of Prefects for the next academic year whose main responsibilities are as "Buddies to 1st Year Students"

Ben Blunnie	Amy Deignan	Fiona McErlane
Miriam Bourke	Madison Duffy	Jane McGrath
Jack Brennan	Sarah-Kate Fenlon	Brigid McKeown
Karl Brennan	Joshua Glynn	David Mulrooney
Katie Burgess	Theo Jebb	Adam O'Flynn
Louise Byrne	Fiona Kelly	Hilary Repko
Lorcan Byrne	Rachel Kenna	Joy Sinnott
Daniel Cooney	Max Kruseman	Isobella Spencer- Higgins
Claire Cullen	Aaron Lynch	Sheenagh Walker
Carol Dalton	Conor Lyons	



2009 - 2010

AMBASSADORS

The following Ambassadors are appointed and will have responsibility for developing areas under their care in liaison with various staff members:

Ambassadors for Athletics

Ambassadors for Community Links

Ambassadors for Amnesty International

Ambassadors for Arts & Crafts

Ambassadors for Ballet & Dance

Ambassadors for Creative Writing

Ambassadors for Charitable Works

Ambassadors for Debating

Ambassador for Department & Etiquette

Ambassador for Env. Awareness & Green Schools

Ambassadors for Equestrianism

Ambassador for French Language & Culture

Ambassador for Golf

Ambassadors for Hockey

Ambassadors for Irish Culture & Language

Ambassadors for Junior School

Ambassadors for Learning Support

Ambassadors for Liturgy

Ambassadors for Music & Choir

Ambassadors for New Students

Ambassadors for Rugby

Ambassadors for Sailing

Ambassadors for School Spirit & Ethos

Ambassadors for Soccer

Ambassadors for Spanish Language & Culture

Ambassadors for Social Awareness

Ambassadors for Speech & Drama

Ambassadors for St. Vincent de Paul

Ambassadors for Technology

Ambassadors for Tennis

Ambassadors for Sports Development

Sheenagh Walker

Sheenagh Walker & Aaron Lynch

Joy Sinnott & Sarah Fitzgerald

Alison O'Kane; Conor Lyons

Carol Dalton; Amy Kennedy

Fachtna Basquille; Megan Fox;

Hilary Repko; Theo Jebb; Amy Deignan; Madison Duffy

Ben Blunnie; Karl Brennan; Fiona Kelly

Adam Bowtell; Ben Blunnie; Madison Duffy;

Rebecca Concannon

Theo Jebb, David Mulrooney, Conor Lyons

Fiona Kelly; Miriam Bourke

Sarah Kate Fenlon; Karl Brennan

Adam Bowtell

Brigid McKeown; Rachel Kenna

David Mulrooney; Sarah Fitzgerald

Joy Sinnott; Kevin Hegarty; Lorcan Byrne; Max Kruseman;

Georgina Coulter; Amy Kennedy; Alison O'Kane

Claire Cullen; Jane McGrath

Fiona McErlane; Anna-Sophie De Jong; Carol Dalton

Sarah-Kate Fenlon; Rory Lahart, Hilary Repko

Jane McGrath; Jane Mc Evoy Adam O'Flynn; Conor Lyons;

Louise Byrne

Stephen Toal-Lennon; Jody Crosbie

Alix Cafferky

Alix Cafferky; Max Kruseman; Sorcha Brady Louise Byrne;

Carol Dalton

Adam O'Flynn; Karl Brennan

Daniel Cooney; Maeve Fitzpatrick

Hilary Repko; Izzy Spencer-Higgins

Eoin Ryan; Miriam Bourke

Lisa-Marie Sally; Theo Jebb

Scott Condon; Izzy Spencer-Higgins

Amy Deignan; Rian O'Loughlin; Jack Brennan

Adam Bowtell; Katie Burgess;

TEACHING STAFF

We are most fortunate to have a dedicated teaching staff who are not alone truly committed in the classroom but are also exceptionally committed outside of the classroom. All of the above mentioned activities in the school are reliant upon the continued support and goodwill of the teachers and the sports staff, as well as that of the administration staff, the maintenance staff and catering staff who so unselfishly give of their time to all of the students activities. I thank them all on your behalf.



SCHOOL OFFICE

Please note that the school office will close on Wednesday 1st July and will re-open on Tuesday 4th August.

DATE	EVENT
AUGUST 2009	
THURSDAY 27TH AUGUST	Staff In-service Day & Prefect Induction day
FRIDAY 28TH AUGUST	1st Year Induction Day Transition Year Induction Day Study Skills for 3rd and 6th year students
MONDAY 31ST AUGUST	Class begins for all year groups
SEPTEMBER 2009	
TUESDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER	5th & 6th Year Parent Information Evening - 7.30pm
THURSDAY 3RD SEPTEMBER	1st Year Parent Information Evening - 7.30pm
MONDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER	2nd & 3rd Year Parent Information Evening - 7.30pm
WEDNESDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER	St. Gerard's Sailing Event – venue T.b.c.
WEDNESDAY 9TH OR 16TH	Junior Certificate Results - to be confirmed by DES
WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY & FRIDAY 9TH, 10TH, 11TH (TBC)	TY Camping Trip to Glendalough
FRIDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER	St. Gerard's Debs Ball
THURSDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER	TY Parent Information Evening – 7.30pm
FRIDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER	6th Year – Higher Options
SATURDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER	Conference - RDS - Show Jumping Event Boswells