



## LETTER FROM THE HEADMASTER. SUMMER 2006.

*"Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us, it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others".*

At the 6<sup>th</sup> Year Graduation Mass, Monsignor Richard Mohan celebrated the themes of wisdom, love and community. The Graduation Mass celebrated both an ending and a new beginning for our 6<sup>th</sup> Year students with the Ceremony of Light adding significance to the occasion.

Monsignor Mohan used the above quotation as a reflection to all present. He asked us to focus on the challenge that Christian living poses to us and he asked us to be true to ourselves and not to wear a mask that hides the real inner person. This is a challenge that all students and parents should contemplate and reflect upon.

### ***Building Update.***

***Sports Facilities:*** As you are aware the new all-weather hockey pitch and adjoining all-weather multi-purpose pitch were opened on Prize and Sports Day for sporting activity. I was delighted with the positive reaction, both from the students and from the parents. Undoubtedly all students will gain much value from these new additions in the future. The routeways adjacent to this area are completed and the area fully landscaped.

***Sports Hall:*** The new dressing rooms, weights room, storage room and studio at the Sports Hall are fully complete and ready for use for the next academic year. Work began on the 12<sup>th</sup> June on the main entrance to the Sports Hall and to the refurbishment of the rooms upstairs, as well as carrying out the internal works to improve the Sports Hall. This work will be completed by the end of the summer holidays

***Main House:*** A contractor was appointed to begin work on the main house following the end of the Junior and Leaving Certificate exams. Much progress will be visible on the house when the students return at the end of August.

***Dining Hall:*** The kitchen is currently under reconstruction and the Dining Hall will be fully redecorated and furnished during the coming weeks.

***New Senior School Extension:*** Enabling work will begin on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> June on the new Senior School extension and again, the progress will be evident by the end of August.

### ***Parents' Association.***

The Parents' Association proved to be a very positive addition to the school structure and I must compliment them on the excellent work that has gone into several projects to date. The Parents' Association Newsletter updates parents on all the Association's activities monthly.

### ***Sugarloaf Race.***

The postponed Sugarloaf Race took place on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> April with the weather favouring us on this occasion. It was a wonderful whole school event and the positive attitude of all who participated was a joy to behold. Congratulations to Sophie Pigot and Richard Radic, the girls and boys winners.

### ***Senior Rugby and Senior Hockey Barbeque.***

The Senior Rugby and Senior Hockey Barbeque took place on May 4<sup>th</sup> in the school Dining Hall and Atrium. Players from both squads were presented with their Cup jerseys on the evening and it was an excellent opportunity for the school to thank both the players and their parents for the commitment they have given to the school over their years in St. Gerard's.

### ***Senior School Family Tennis Tournament and Barbecue.***

Congratulations to Peter and David Horn on winning the final against Max and Madison Duffy. A particular thanks to all who participated and who brought such a great community spirit to the evening. Thank you to the In House Committee for providing the Barbeque.

### ***Summer Concert.***

The Inaugural Summer Concert took place on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May in the Junior School Hall. A very high standard for upcoming students to aspire to in the future was set. The breadth of talent here in the school was most evident from the variety of performances by the school choir, the flute and violin soloists, the talented Acapella group, the solo ballet, the invigorating traditional group, the variety of vocal duets and solos as well as the multi-talented bands. The Summer Concert is here to stay and it set a standard for all our musically talented students to aspire to and will compliment our Music Festival that takes place in November.

### ***St. Gerard's School Charity Golf Tournament.***

The Annual Golf Tournament took place on Thursday May 11<sup>th</sup> in Woodbrook Golf Club and funds raised from the event will go towards the School Social Awareness Programme to assist funding the St. Vincent de Paul Christmas Hamper Appeal. Well done to the student team of Mark Tyrrell, David Quinn, David MacMahon and Kyle Kelly who came 1<sup>st</sup> in the competition.

## ***New School Website.***

The Junior School and Senior School Websites are almost complete and will be fully operational from August. I trust that they will be an additional communication mechanism as well as a prospectus highlighting all the school has to offer.

## ***Bray Lions Debating Competition.***

Well done to the team of Dearbhail O’Crowley, Brian Fitzpatrick, Lyndsay McGinn and David Bourke who defeated St. Killian’s Community in the Semi Final of the Bray Lions Debating Competition. They were most unlucky to be defeated in the Final by Loreto College, Bray.

## ***Maths Olympiad.***

Congratulations to Jamie Judd in 5<sup>th</sup> Year who has been selected on the student team representing Ireland at the Maths Olympiad to be held in July in Slovenia. Jamie has been in training for this event for the last year and his inclusion on the team is fully merited. This is a very prestigious honour and we wish him every success.

## ***2<sup>nd</sup> Year Civics Action Project.***

Well done to the students in 2<sup>nd</sup> Year on their organisation of Jersey Day in May and the organisation of their own sponsored Mini Marathon here in the school. Through their own initiative and hard work, they raised in excess of €7,000. €2,500.00 will go towards the building of a clinic in Tanzania and the other €4,500 will go towards the purchase of agricultural produce and livestock through the charity Bothar. I congratulate them for their enthusiasm and especially for their awareness of others less fortunate. Maith sibh.

Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí.

## ***Athletics.***

It was encouraging to see so many students participating in the athletics programme during the summer term and in particular the students who participated in the East Leinsters and those who qualified for the Leinster Athletic Finals this year. It is important that this positive progression is built on next year.

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## ***School Planner***

A new School Planner will be available to all students on their return in August. It is intended that the Planner will be more “user friendly” for staff, pupils and parents. I will forward full details of the content and use of the Planner to you in August.

## ***School Uniform***

Please find enclosed a full list of the school uniform and sports uniform for the next academic year. The school takes great pride in the appearance of the students and a high standard of deportment is required from all students.

A number of new items have been added to enhance our sports uniform. The new School Tracksuit will be available to all students from August and it will be compulsory for all students who participate in our sports programme. The new School Rugby Jersey will be compulsory for all rugby teams this season. The new Hockey Jacket will also be compulsory for all girls' hockey players. We are introducing a school crested sports bag that will also be available from September.

***In House Committee.***

Since Easter the In House Committee have put in an immense amount of work on behalf of both the Senior and Junior School into the organisation of a myriad of events over the last two months. The school owes each and everyone of the members of this Committee a debt of gratitude for the way they enhanced the community and family spirit within the school.

Ard mheas againn ar bhur saothar.

[www.bebo.com](http://www.bebo.com)

In the Easter Newsletter I drew your attention as a matter of urgency to this particular website which the majority of the Senior School students are currently accessing and using. Most of the students have posted detailed personal information and personal photographs.

Many parents have raised this issue with myself and other members of staff, highlighting their concerns regarding this site and other similar sites that are available to our sons and daughters.

I am in no doubt that this site is being used as a vehicle for bullying and intimidation and is having a negative effect on the lives of many of the children.

Once again, I strongly encourage you as parents, to discuss and review the access which your son/daughter has to this site and the material they have posted about themselves (and which others have posted about them).

***Mobile Phones:***

Nearly all of our students have their own mobile phone. A growing phenomenon sadly is the use of text messaging to bully and to intimidate others. I would be grateful if you could discuss this with your child and monitor their use of the technology in their possession.

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I would like to offer a sincere work of thanks to all of the school staff who offer and give of their time before, during and after school as well as at weekends in the administration, organisation and running of all extra curricular activities in the school including the numerous school based events that take place throughout the year.

The School Office will be closed for the last three weeks in July and will re-open again on Tuesday August 1<sup>st</sup>.

I wish you all a good summer and look forward to seeing you all again in late August.

Yours sincerely,

**Tom Geraghty.**  
**HEADMASTER.**