



On Tuesday of next week, 8 December, a special jubilee year begins. This was announced, unexpectedly, by Pope Francis in March and is based on a quotation from St Luke's gospel:

"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful".

Jubilee Years are usually every 25 or 50 years, so this one is unusual and additional. There is so much in the world to be concerned about currently, and so many opportunities to show mercy to others, that the Holy Father has asked us to do exactly this for the next twelve months.

We will explore the possibilities this suggests for our school over the coming months. This might include pilgrimages as that is one of the ways in which people can be part of this special period. To this end we are planning a pilgrimage to Taizé in the summer for students..

Peterborough Catholic Schools Carol Service

The annual Carol Service for our family of Catholic Schools is this coming Thursday, 10 December, at 6pm in our hall. Our four choirs will be leading the congregational singing as well as each contributing separate pieces. A very large number of students are involved and we would invite as many parents as possible to join us for this important joint event. Refreshments will be served afterwards



Advent

We have now entered into the season of Advent, the time of waiting and preparation for the celebration of the season Christmas which starts on Christmas Eve and lasts for twelve days, ending on January 6.



The four weeks of advent are a time for Christians to prepare for celebrating the birth of Jesus by remembering the longing of the Jews for a Messiah. In Advent, we're reminded of how much we ourselves also need a Saviour, and we look forward to our Saviours' second coming even as we prepare to celebrate his first coming at Christmas. The word "Advent" comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "coming" or "visit." In the season with this name, we keep in mind both "advents" of Christ, the first in Bethlehem and the second yet to come.

To mark the journey through advent, our school Advent wreath will be on display in the school hall with a candle lit for every week that passes through the season.

End of Term

Although this is not for another two weeks I thought it worth pointing out now that we will follow our usual pattern for the final day: period 1 as usual and then Christmas Liturgies, form period, and Christmas dinner. Students will be dismissed at 2pm and any that need to wait until later for transport reasons should tell their form tutor in advance. Please note that the Spring Term begins on Monday 4 January, earlier than some other local schools. This is because we moved our staff training day to October 23, so students have already had an extra day's holiday.

Tutor Reports

Each term we issue parents with a report to show how their child is progressing. One of these is usually accompanied by a report from the form tutor. This year we are trialling issuing the form tutor report at a different time for most students. This is easier to administer but if it is confusing for parents please let me know.

Sean Hayes

Music news

Congratulations to Sam Maxwell and Bethen England who have both achieved Grade 5 Music Theory with Merit grades. Well done.
Mr McCoy

School Council Meeting

On Friday 20 November we had our first School Council meeting and discussed many matters to improve the school.

First we spoke about sending students to represent the school at the Peterborough Youth Parliament meeting which takes place once a month.

The school also plays a large part in supporting the E Safety software that we have in place. During the meeting everyone was informed of the benefits the software brings. This includes preventing students from using inappropriate websites or files. We also reinforced the importance of our mobile technology policy which is that the use of any form of mobile technology in school is not allowed and if anyone is found using them they will be confiscated.

We also talked about reintroducing our buddy system which involved Year 10 students mentoring Year 7 students and serving as a form of support.

Lastly, as you are aware, it was anti-bullying week and so it is appropriate to remind you of the anonymous anti-bullying box located outside Student Services. This is put in place to ensure any case of bullying can be reported and immediately investigated to make sure all students feel safe in school. *Irina Demba B7*

Sports News

The Under 16 Boys continued their unbeaten run by beating the Peterborough School 33-2 in basketball. The team has now qualified for the finals; the second final they have reached this year. The team produced some scintillating basketball with Mantas, Paulo, Elvis and Gilson using an array of skills to cut through the Peterborough School's defence. The finals will take place after the Christmas holidays.

The Under 12 Basketball team had a successful campaign, they finished second in their group showing some very promising signs for the future. They missed out on qualification by one game after Sir Harry Smith scored a late basket to scupper the team's hopes on qualifying for the final. Well done to all involved.

Last week we hosted a TAG Rugby festival for 5 primary schools across the city. St Thomas More, Hampton, Fulbridge, King's and Heritage schools all came to play a TAG Rugby tournament led by the Year 11 Sports Leaders. They did a fantastic job and all students and staff gave very positive feedback of their leadership skills. All the year 5 and 6 students left with a smile on their face and a special Rugby gift bag! *Mr Plane*

Taster Day for Year 11 students

As part of the Post 16 options selection process, all Year 11 students will be involved in a Sixth Form Taster Day on 17 December. This is designed to give students a 'taste' of the subjects they are considering for sixth form study. Students have selected which subjects they would like to 'taste' and will each have an individual timetable for the day. The dress code for this day will be business wear or school uniform – please note that informal wear will not be allowed.

Mrs Wilmore

Exams

A reminder that PPEs start next week for Years 11, 12 and 13. Exam timetables have been issued and by now students should be aware of which exams they are taking and where they will be held. Students must be on time to all examinations as the timetable is busy and we won't be able to wait if someone is late.

All examinations in the morning will begin at 08:40. Students should make their way to the Exam hall at 08:35 and be ready to start the examination at 08:40.

Period 2: students should go to their timetabled lesson and be registered, then come to the Exam hall for 10:40 ready for the examination to begin at 10:45.

Period 4: students should be in Exam hall at 13:55 ready to start the examination at 14:00

PPE results will be given out on 12 January 2016 when Year 11 students will also spend the day off timetable doing some activities to help them study and revise more effectively. They will also look at Careers and plans for the future. *Mrs Gilligan*

Rochester Bring And Buy Sale

We are once again asking you to donate items for the Rochester Bring and Buy Sale to raise money for the Marie Curie Cancer Care charity. Last year many students were able to buy excellent quality Christmas gifts at fantastic prices in the last week of term from the Rochester Bring and Buy Sale Stall in the Atrium and we are hoping to have as many good quality items for sale as last year. Items may include, books, CDs, DVDs, computer games, make-up, jewellery, photo frames, handbags, candle holders, toys, designer clothes that don't fit anymore...as long as it is a good quality item we welcome any donations. Please give generously this Christmas. *Ms Stevens*

Merits

Students are working really hard to gain merits across the school and I am delighted that over 30,000 merits have been awarded so far this year – that is simply amazing, well done. We have now taken delivery of the award badges and the certificates are being printed. I hope to issue them during tutor time next week. Remember 100 merits equals a bronze award, 200 is a silver and 300 is for gold. Keep working hard both in and out of lessons to get awarded those merits.

Dress for Success

I am really delighted that so many students respect their school by wearing perfect school uniform. Since we launched our "Dress for Success" campaign the consistency of uniform has improved dramatically, many thanks to you all. I would like to take the opportunity to remind all students that the uniform policy is clearly set out in form rooms and items such as hoodies and highly branded jackets are not permitted. Can I also remind you that school shoes should be black in colour; canvas shoes are not permitted as they do not protect your feet. Trainers may be worn for PE lessons where instructed but should then be changed before returning to lessons. I am most grateful for your understanding of this important aspect of our school. *Mr Van Lier*