



Happy New Year & Feast of the Epiphany

Happy New Year and welcome back to school after our Christmas break. It was the feast of the Epiphany yesterday which celebrates the bringing of the gifts of Gold Frankincense and Myrrh to the baby Jesus. Thank you to those who arranged and took part in our Mass yesterday. The feast reminds us that we all have our own special gifts and talents that we can use to help others and the word Epiphany can help us to understand that we often need to discover our gifts that we have been given. This reminds me of all our students taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh programme this year and those taking part in Cadets, Youth Dreams Project, Leadership, other Sports and the many extra-curricular activities we have at school. Please get involved if you are not yet.

Certificate Collection

Current and past students came to our certificate collection afternoon yesterday. It was lovely to see our students collect their certificates, especially those who have moved on to college or university. If you have not collected your certificates yet for GCSEs and A' Levels please contact reception.

PPEs

The next set of PPEs for Years 11 and 13 are only a few weeks away so it is a good idea to use this time to get organised with a revision timetable and ensure students know what they will need to revise for each subject as early as possible. Revision should be an ongoing activity that continues until the end of the final exams. Individual subject teachers will be supporting all students in lessons with revision techniques and exam skills in the run up to the next PPEs and the final exams.

COVID Testing

Students have had a staggered return to school this week to enable on site COVID testing to take place which has gone very smoothly. Thank you for your continued support and cooperation in ensuring that students are tested before returning to school. Our priority is to ensure students are at school as much as possible and one way to help with this is for everybody to take two lateral flow tests at home each week. Please support your child in doing this, ideally on Sundays and Thursdays and report the results of the tests please. Again this is keep everybody as safe as possible.

Face masks

As you will already be aware face masks are required in all secondary schools both in classrooms and in communal areas now. Please ensure your child has a suitable mask every day. School masks are available at student services to buy if your child needs more. We will be strictly enforcing the wearing of masks as we have done before in order to keep everyone as safe as possible. Students have always done this very well showing respect and concern for others throughout our school.

Ventilation

Teachers will continue to ensure windows and doors are open during lessons to keep air flowing through the classrooms as much as possible. We are aware that it can be cold at times but we will try to make sure that getting cold is minimised by opening windows at the top or not directly next to someone if possible. School jumpers can be worn **in addition** to blazers if required during winter and can be purchased in the usual way.

Kate Pereira

Christmas Liturgies

At the end of last term we celebrated our Christmas liturgies. We had two services to accommodate 800 students plus staff. They were a fantastic way to celebrate our school Christmas day, which was followed by Christmas dinner, provided by the school for all to enjoy. With grateful thanks for all who were involved; the readers, the candle lighters, the drama group and the band and choir who led a candle lit procession to Silent Night and sang two further Carols. Thank you to everyone who made this such a special day! Happy Christmas to you all and blessings for 2022.

Mrs Goodfellow, Lay Chaplain





Epiphany

On Thursday we celebrated the Feast of Epiphany with a Mass in our Chapel. The three kings joined our Nativity scene to complete the Christmas story. The wise men (Kings or Magi) brought gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh to the baby Jesus. The Gospel of Matthew reports that they came "from the east" to worship the "king of the Jews". The gospel never mentions the number of Magi, however it has been traditionally assumed to have been three in number as they brought three gifts. For us, it's an opportunity to think about the gifts we've been given and how we use them to help others and serve God.

Epiphany is also a chance to give thanks for all those who give so much to us each day. They may give us their time or their knowledge or their comfort and support. It is customary to remove Christmas decorations on Epiphany Eve (Twelfth Night). We carefully put away our decorations so they are ready for next year and clear up ready for all that the New Year brings.



Duke of Edinburgh Participants

A compulsory meeting for all Participants will be on Wednesday 12 January 3.15-4.15pm. Please ensure that Activity booklets are brought to the session and go straight to the hall.



Breakfast - Free Bagels

Why not start the day with a filling breakfast. Our Breakfast club runs every day between 8.10am and 8.30am all students are welcome to come and join us in the Dining Hall for a free bagel.



Cultural Heritage

"I was born in Greece and lived there for 14 years, thus my cultural heritage is Greek. Greece has a variety of cuisines, especially traditional food like Moussaka. Greece is a very beautiful country with amazing landmarks on top of it. Greece has a big history in its architecture, my favourite being the Knossos where the history of it and the buildings there are unique to the other landmarks."

If you want to feature your culture in the newsletter, please email Kazim at rafiq-fazalk@sjfchs.net with a paragraph that answers the following questions: what is your cultural heritage, what do you call someone from the country of your cultural heritage, what is the language spoken in this country, what is your favourite cuisine from this country, what is your favourite landmark from this country?

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