



# St Mary's

## Jubilee 2025- Pilgrims of Hope

Pope Francis has declared 2025 to be a Jubilee Year. To mark the Jubilee, our Chapel doors have been decorated to allow for a closer encounter with God.

**ISSUE 5 -  
JANUARY 2025**



## Headteacher's Welcome

Dear Parents and Carers

The start of the new term continues to progress very well and we have had a very successful ski trip and many other superb educational visits. Rehearsals are also in full swing for our upcoming school musical, *Les Misérables*.

We have also been delighted to welcome some of our feeder primary Year 5 students into school for a mini Spiritual Retreat. This week, we have welcomed students and staff from St Stephen's, St Catherine's and St Teresa's and we look forward to welcoming many more primary schools later this term.

We wish students, staff and parents/carers a wonderful half-term break when it comes in a fortnight's time!

Very best wishes,  
Miss Patterson, Headteacher



## Faith in Action for Year 13

Father Chris Hancock came to us from Sunderland to share his thoughts on the nature of vocation and how we can best use our gifts and talents. He shared his experiences about his 13 years as a Priest in Cameroon. He inspired and entertained with his stories about all the challenges he faced and what he learned about both himself and another very different culture. The Year 13 students asked some fantastic questions, and really took the opportunity to benefit from Father Chris' years of wisdom. Father Chris ended his talk by emphasising the point that God created us all for a unique purpose, and it is in our hands to take every opportunity provided to us.

## Wellbeing Hub

We are delighted to share with you that we are launching the wellbeing hub with our staff, students and parents/carers in the coming weeks. The wellbeing hub is an online platform with a wealth of wellbeing resources, videos and information. It has been developed by experts in child and adolescent mental health and wellbeing. It also signposts where further support can be found in relation to different wellbeing issues. We will be sharing login information with you all soon and we hope the platform will be useful for all in our school community.



## Work Experience

With work experience approaching for Year 12 and Year 10 in July, Mr McCrory, Head of Personal Development, has been leading sessions with students looking at how to organise a work experience placement.



## St Mary's Hosts BBCET Maths Hub

St Mary's is proud to host the BBCET Maths Hub, where we lead training sessions across the Trust aimed at further improving the teaching and learning of Maths. Our commitment to educational excellence was on full display during our recent session, which brought together teachers from all secondary maths departments within the Trust.

The focus of this session was on developing effective instructional modelling techniques. We explored innovative ways to demonstrate mathematical concepts clearly and effectively, ensuring that students can grasp complex ideas with greater ease.

One of the highlights of the session was the opportunity for visiting teachers to observe our superb students in action. By stepping into our Maths lessons, they witnessed firsthand the application of the techniques discussed and the high level of engagement and understanding demonstrated by our students.

St Mary's is excited to continue leading these impactful training sessions and looks forward to the positive outcomes they will bring to Maths education across the Trust.



## Book Spine Poetry

In a series of lessons introducing them to the school library, students in Year 7 have been creating poems using the spines of books sourced amongst the library shelves. This has been an interesting way for them to explore the huge selection of texts which we are lucky to have in the school library and engage creatively with these texts.

Here is a selection of our students' book spine poems.

### Rory Hill

When the sky falls  
Beautiful creatures  
Awaken alone  
Life and death burn  
A time of dread  
The end of time

### Sadie Delaney

Beyond the kingdoms  
Where the world ends  
A place called perfect  
The beginning woods  
The dead of winter  
An eagle in the snow  
The winter horses  
The secret keepers  
Nothing more to tell

### Beth Bremner

Close your eyes  
Under the rose tainted skies  
Greek gods, human lives  
Vanishing paradise  
I'll give you the sun  
We are young  
I was born for this  
The kiss  
First love  
Heartstopper  
We'll always have summer



## Newcastle Street Pastors

Paul Waugh from Newcastle Street Pastors came to St Mary's to talk to Year 12 about the work that he does to help vulnerable people in the city centre. Paul talked of the need to be prepared when out and about in Newcastle as well as the work the Street Pastors do to help those who find themselves in trouble. The Street Pastors work on weekends providing essential items as well as a friendly face to those who might be having trouble. Students left the talk with a real sense of the vital work the Street Pastors do to help those less fortunate. Their vocation drives them in their ongoing work, particularly during the cold winter months, to offer care and support wherever needed.

## Year 7 Explore the World of Work with Newcastle United Foundation

Year 7 students recently took part in an exciting introduction to the world of work, delivered by the Newcastle United Foundation. The session aimed to help students understand different career opportunities, the skills employers look for, and how to prepare for the future. All students in Years 7-9 will receive this session over the next few weeks.



## Nissan Factory Tour

Year 12 and 13 Product Design students have been studying the complexities of how products are designed and manufactured on a mass scale. To see this theory in practice, we visited the Nissan Car Plant in Sunderland for a full site tour.

The group donned their PPE and were welcomed on to the manufacturing floor where they were able to see how the Nissan Juke and Qashqai start life as a roll of aluminium or steel through to how they roll off the production line as a finish product just 17 hours later. It was fascinating to see the scale of production and the planning and organisation which goes into making these well known products. Students were able to see cell manufacturing systems, press forming, riveting, welding, quality assurance and quality control, the use of robotic arms in manufacture, assembly lines and much much more.

Since returning to lessons, it has been evident how useful the tour was, as students have been able to make links to the topics covered in class and how they saw it in action on their visit.

Well done to all involved!



## The TICE Award

The fantastic Year 9s applied to be part of the programme and will now begin creating a portfolio of work to submit to professional fashion mentors. In January, we had the pleasure of working with the TICE fashion experts, where students started exploring future fashion trends, marketing and communication, and outfit creation. It was a brilliant day of hands-on workshops, and our students really impressed the TICE mentors.

Looking ahead, we're excited about our upcoming visit to the Fashion Department at Northumbria University, where students will create new pieces alongside students and mentors. Good luck to our budding fashion designers!



## Diocesan Inter-Faith Holocaust Memorial Evening

On Wednesday 22nd January, we were honoured to host the Diocesan Inter-Faith Holocaust Memorial Evening, attended by Bishop Stephen, Rabbi Aaron Lipsey and many other distinguished guests.

We were delighted to welcome guest speakers Smajo Beso who shared his experiences of the Bosnian genocide and David Gold who shared the story of his family and the Holocaust.

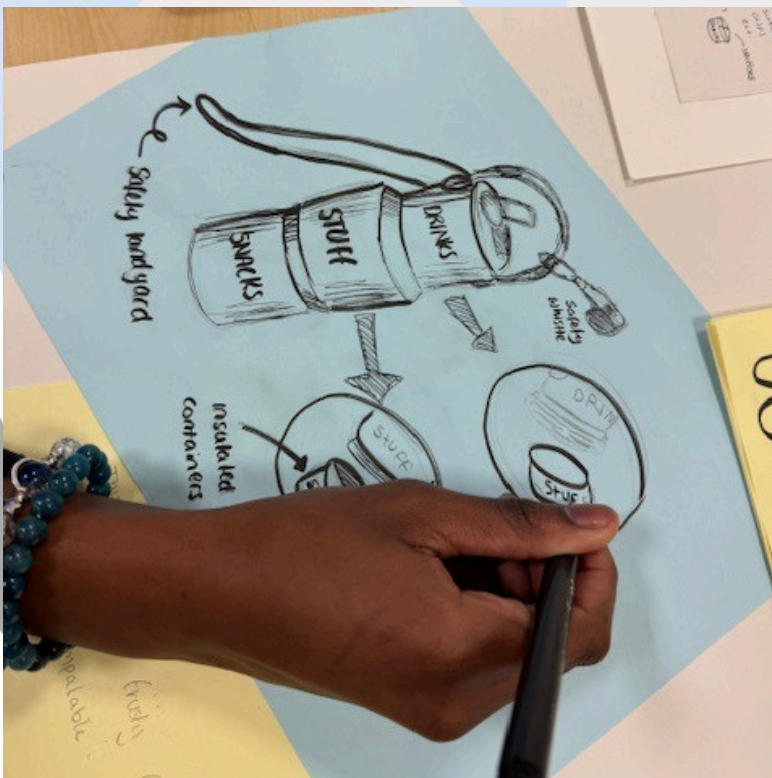
St Mary's students provided the music and choir for the evening, as well as leading some of the readings, and they were wonderful ambassadors for the school. An immense thank you to everyone involved in such a memorable evening.



## E3 Design Event

This half term we were very lucky to have Peter Angus and Lizzie Morrison from E3 Design visit the DT department to run a morning event with a group of Year 9 students. Peter is a highly successful Product Design Engineer who has worked on projects for Unilever, The Ministry of Defence, the NHS, Tommee Tippee and Lynx, to name but a few. Peter spent time discussing his career path and the journey which has led him to from apprentice to being a highly sought after industry expert. The Year 9 students were fascinated to hear about his previous and ongoing projects, the challenges each project had provided and then interact with the finished products. Particular projects of interest were the bomb disposal kit, Lifesaver Bottle and a prototype for aiding stem cell growth with Durham University. Lizzie also offered an insight into the beginnings of a career in Engineering and Product Design, as she discussed her recent graduation from university and starting her professional career at E3 Design.

Students were given preparatory tasks to investigate the context of 'Preparing for Emergencies' so that they could take part in a fast paced design competition. Students were tasked to work in small groups to prepare a design proposal for a product which responded to the challenge of emergencies. There were some truly innovative and exciting concepts generated, outstanding visual and verbal communication skills shown and fantastic team work. In the end, Nell Younger, Lan McLaughlin and Claudie Dodds were named the overall winners for their earthquake safety desk. The girls had not only created a feasible concept for a product which could transform into a sheltering zone when there was risk of debris and building collapse, but also discussed material choices and additional features which should allow the product to adapt to different situations. Peter was stunned by the array of designs produced on the day, saying he was amazed by the quality of work and the truly fantastic attitude towards learning which was shown. Well done to all the students involved.



# Drama Department

It has been a busy few weeks in Drama and our A Level and GCSE Drama students have completed their Devised Drama performance exams. All students created original performance material based on various stimulus and really impressed us with their originality and stellar performances.

In addition to performance exam preparation, we have been busy preparing for our musical which is fast approaching.

Performances will take place in the last week of term from Monday 17th February to Thursday 20th February. Tickets for Les Misérables are on sale now and we can't wait to welcome guests to see our student's hard work! If you would like to purchase tickets, please contact our main school office.



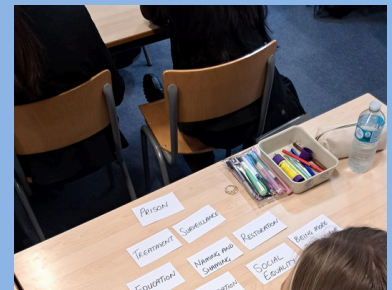
## Year 9 Geography

In Geography, students in Year 9 have recently been learning about the housing crisis in the UK. As part of this they have been exploring the Tudeley Village Project, a housing development in Kent that aims to create a traditional village community. Students took part in a debate about whether they supported this housing development or not. The debates were absolutely fantastic and students made excellent campaign posters to persuade the audience of their views.



## Subject Taster Sessions

To prepare our Sixth Form students for the next steps in their education or future careers, we have been delighted to welcome several universities into the Sixth Form to run subject taster sessions. These sessions give students an understanding of what it is like to study this subject further. In January, we have hosted taster sessions in pharmacy, criminology, history, English and nursing.



## Year 8 Boys' Football

Our Year 8 boy's football team competed in a round of league fixtures at Walker la night. They started off against Walker, with the boys aware of the tough game ahead of them. This didn't stop them as they gave a solid performance which was rewarded with going 1-0 up with debutant Eddie Embleton giving St Mary's the lead from a fantastic half volley finish into the bottom corner. The boys were hanging on towards the end and were unlucky to concede, ending up with a hard earned point. The students played their second game of the evening against Great Park and once again, started off very strong with Seb Whitfield Sykes placing the ball beyond the goalkeeper from a through ball from Jack McManus. The boys then went 2-0 up with a great run from Jack McManus beating two defenders and putting the ball beyond the goalkeepers reach. Great Park then worked hard to get back into the game, making goalkeeper Seth Lyall pull off some wonderful saves. In the end, Great Park scored to make it 2-1. They then scored shortly after to make it 2-2. For the rest of the game, the two teams battled for the winning goal, with chances for both sides. The game ended 2-2, a fair result. The St Mary's students enjoyed every last minute and worked incredibly hard. Well done to all!



## Year 10 - Aspire to Oxbridge

We were recently delighted to welcome Jesus College, the University of Cambridge, into the school recently to work with our Year 10 students. In the session students looked at why they may wish to apply to university, in particular, the University of Cambridge, and the critical thinking skills required for university.



## KS5 Law Society

The Law Society in the Sixth Form continues to go from strength to strength. Every fortnight, students in Year 12 meet to look at different areas of law and debate key issues.

Recently, we were delighted to welcome into the school, Tony, a law lecturer from Northumbria University, who led a session on the criminal law looking at the difference between robbery and theft.



## French Pen Pal Club

Many students in Years 7 and 8 have been attending the lunchtime French Pen Pal Club. We are linked with the Paul Verlaine School in Nancy, north-eastern France. Students from both schools have written letters and sent them off to either Newcastle or Nancy. The picture shows the St Mary's students as they received their first letters. The students were very excited and loved finding out about their peers in France. Throughout the course of the year, there will be several exchanges. This is a fantastic opportunity for Year 7 and 8 students to make friends with their peers from another country and improve their French at the same time. We are already looking forward to the next batch of letters arriving.



### Upcoming dates and events ...

**Monday 17th–Thurs 20th Feb at 6.00pm:** *Les Misérables*.

**Friday 21st Feb:** Last day of school before half-term.

**Monday 24th–Friday 28th Feb:** Half-term break.

**Monday 3rd March:** All students return to school after half-term.

**Monday 17th March:** Year 10 Parents' Evening, 2.45pm–6.00pm (online).

### Former Student Speakers

Recently, we have been delighted to welcome some of our former students back to the school to speak to our current Sixth Form about their experiences at university or the world of work. They have been able to share some hints and tips on how to succeed once students leave St Mary's. In this past month, Isabella has shared her experiences of studying at the University of Cambridge, Roman has reflected upon going straight into employment and Isaac has looked at studying STEM at university.

