

Happy New Year to you all, I trust you had a good Christmas and we hope that students are ready to face the new term refreshed after a well deserved break.

Weekly Food For Thought For Youths

Theme: Reflecting on Pope's New Year's message on Happiness

With joy and gratitude, I welcome you all into the new year of 2018. We remain ever grateful to God for His grace and mercy which followed us throughout 2017 and has led us into 2018. Did you ever remember to say thanks to God for allowing you see the New Year? If you have not, can you just stop reading now and say a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the New Year and then commit the year into His hands, remember He has said in the gospel of St John 15:5, "cut off from me you can do nothing". Let us therefore begin the year with Him. Acknowledge Him in all you do this year and He will direct your paths (Proverbs 3:6)

I want to begin this year by sharing with you the lovely New Year message from the Pope on being happy in 2018.

"You can have flaws, be anxious, and even be angry, but do not forget that your life is the greatest enterprise in the world. Only you can stop it from going bust. Many appreciate you, admire you and love you. Remember that to be happy is not to have a sky without a storm, a road without accidents, work without fatigue, and relationships without disappointments. To be happy is to find strength in forgiveness, hope in battles, security in the stage of fear, love in discord. It is not only to enjoy the smile, but also to reflect on the sadness. It is not only to celebrate the successes, but to learn lessons from the failures. It is not only to feel happy with the applause, but to be happy in anonymity. Being happy is not an achievement for those who can travel within themselves. To be happy is to stop feeling like a victim and become your destiny's author. It is to cross deserts, it is to be able to find an oasis in the depths of our soul. It is to thank God for every morning, for the miracle of life. Being happy is not being afraid of your own feelings. It's to be able to talk about you. It is having the courage to hear a 'no'. It is confidence in the face of criticism, even when unjustified. It is to kiss your children, pamper your parents, to live poetic moments with friends, even when they hurt us. To be happy is to let live the creature that lives in each of us, free, joyful and simple. It is to have maturity to be able to say: "I made mistakes". It is to have the courage to say "I am sorry". It is to have the sensitivity to say, "I need you". It is to have the ability to say "I love you". May your life become a garden of opportunities for happiness... that in spring may it be a lover of joy, in winter a lover of wisdom. And when you make a mistake, start over again. For only then will you be in love with life. You will find that to be happy is not to have a perfect life. But use the tears to irrigate tolerance. Use your losses to train patience. Use your mistakes to sculpture serenity. Use pain to plaster pleasure. Use obstacles to open windows of intelligence. Never give up... never give up on people who love you. Never give up on happiness. For life is an incredible show"

Remember, happiness can be affective. If you begin your January on at happy note, then the rest of the

months will be affected with happiness too. I pray that God will give us all the grace to find happiness and fulfilment in all our undertakings this month and the rest of the year. May His light of His love continue to abide with us so that all we do will be to the greater glory of His name and for our own sanctification. Wishing you a happy and blessed new year.

Fr Alvan

Year 9 Options Evening

On Thursday 11th January the Year 9 GCSE Options Evening is taking place, where we invite both Year 9 students and their parents/carers to come into school to receive information about the GCSE options process. The evening will start at 6:30pm and finish at 8:00pm.

The programme for the evening starts in the hall with a talk about the options process, before moving to classrooms where you will hear presentations from subject teachers on their GCSE as well as having the opportunity to ask them any questions you may have about their courses. Each option subject will be assigned a classroom and you can select which ones you wish to visit on the night. A bell will signal the end of each presentation and signal the opportunity to move to another presentation. On the evening, you will have the opportunity to hear four presentations and so it is worth deciding in advance which subjects you want to visit.

Year 9 students will have an options assembly on Tuesday 9th January where they will receive their options booklet, which provides important information about each subject and is worth reading in advance of the evening.

Mr Croucher

Friends

The next meeting of the Friends of St Benedict's will be on Tuesday 9th January at 6:30pm at the USC. We would welcome any new members to our numbers as we plan the activities for the coming year and look to how we can support the school in the education of your children.

Friends
of St Benedict's Catholic School

Musical News

A huge congratulations to Ewan Parkin in Year 11 on his incredible achievement of Grade 8 ABRSM on trumpet with a very high distinction. Ewan currently studies GCSE Music, and plans to continue Music at Sixth Form and beyond. This fantastic result shows that he certainly has the talent to pursue a musical career – well done!

Well done and thank you to the members of Chamber Ensemble and Senior Choir who led carol singing at Montana Care Home near the end of last term. The staff and residents very much appreciated our visit, and kindly provided us with cakes and sweets at the end! I was particularly impressed with many pupils' kindness and friendliness in chatting to the residents over refreshments.

Mrs Davis, Head of Music

St Benedict's News

