



St Benedict's Newsletter 278

24 January 2025



Catholic Parish Youth Group

CALLING YEAR 9, 10 AND 11 STUDENTS!

We are very excited to announce the start of a new Bury St Edmund's Catholic parish youth group, Bury Teens. It will initially take place from 7 till 9pm, in the crypt underneath St Edmund's church on the following Saturdays: 1st February, 8th March, 10th May & 7th June. Come and play, pray, learn about your faith and eat together (each session will include a hot meal and play sessions led by some of our Sixth Formers). The parish adult volunteers who run this club will all be DBS checked. It is free of charge, however a parental consent form **MUST** be filled in before attending the first time. (Unfortunately, due to safeguarding reasons, we will have to turn away anyone who does not have parental consent.) Please email buryteens@gmail.com to have a form sent to you. It needs to be sent back and completed as soon as possible so we know numbers for the catering team.

We are looking forward to welcoming many of you.

The Bury Teens Team

Holocaust Memorial Day



Holocaust Memorial Day Live Webcast

On Wednesday 22 January our Year 9 students, along with thousands of others across the country, participated in a 'Live Holocaust Survivor Webcast' with Mala Tribich MBE.

Mala delivered her moving testimony to the students in the form of an interview with Natasha Kaplinsky. She was born Mala Helfgott in 1930 in Piotrkow Trybunalski, a town in Poland, and had an elder brother Ben and a younger sister.

When war broke out in 1939 her family initially fled eastwards but then returned to their hometown and were forced to move into the ghetto that had been established (the first in Poland). The conditions in the ghetto were terrible and there were frequent deportations, so her family decided it would be safer for her and her cousin Idzia to be taken to the city of Czestochowa to try to pass as Christian children and stay there in the hope that conditions would improve.

Her cousin Idzia was homesick and asked their hosts if she could stay with good friends of her family. She was taken there but was never seen again by her family. Mala then returned to the ghetto in Piotrkow Trybunalski. However, shortly after her arrival, there were further round ups and tragically her mother and eight year old sister were taken and murdered in the local forest.

Mala continued to live with her father and brother in the ghetto and became a slave labourer until 1944, as well as undertaking responsibility for her five-year old cousin Ann Helfgott. When the remaining Jews were deported, Mala was separated from her father and brother and was taken, along with her cousin Ann, to Ravensbruck concentration camp.

After about ten weeks they were transported in cattle trucks to Bergen Belsen where the overcrowding and conditions were so terrible that Mala contracted typhus. When Bergen-Belsen was liberated by British troops in April 1945 she was very ill and was transferred to a hospital/children's home and it took her several weeks to recover.

Three months later she was sent, along with a large group of children, to Sweden where she spent nearly two years. She had thought that she was the only survivor from her immediate family but out of the blue she received a letter from her brother Ben who had also survived the Holocaust and had settled in England.

In March 1947 Mala came to England to be reunited with Ben. She learnt English, studied at a secretarial college and found a job. In 1949, she met her husband Maurice whom she married in 1950. Today Mala has two children and three grandchildren.

In the question and answer session at the end of her testimony Mala told us a bit more about her brother Ben. He was among 732 orphans who were brought to England after the war by the CBF World Jewish Relief after being liberated from Theresienstadt, who were known as 'The Windermere Children' as they were sent to Troutbeck Bridge in the Lake District. Ben was a gifted weightlifter who won the Great British 11 stone championship in 1954 and captained the British weightlifting teams at the 1956 Melbourne and 1960 Rome Olympics.

The Year 9 students were a credit to themselves and the school as they behaved impeccably throughout the whole morning. They were interested and engaged for the entirety of the broadcast and many of the students have commented on how much they learnt from it.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and the theme for 2025 is 'For a Better Future'. The students have been tasked to do their bit to make this slogan a reality by challenging prejudice and discrimination and have been encouraged to write to Mala to tell her what they have learnt about the Holocaust and share with her any action that they have been inspired to take as a result of hearing her testimony.

Mr Murphy

Following on from Mala Tribich's testimony, Alexis Josy was inspired to produce this poster and thought provoking poem to mark the Liberation of Auschwitz concentration camp eighty years ago.

Jude

I used to be a human being

With a name, personality, and identity

I was known to be different and unique

My ideas and thoughts were only me.

One day, people barged into my home
They called me "Jude" in hatred
I started to explain that "Jude" wasn't my name
Yet they sneered and took me away

"Yes, I am a Jude." I say
But that's just a part of who I am
These people thought me being a Jude
Made me who I am

I was kept like an animal
In a cage of barbed wire
My hair no more but
Golden locks on the cracked ground
Clothes I saved up for
Were now rags used for cleaning floors

My name was never uttered
My steps were now stuttered
My faith was always muttered
My breath had now faltered

Friends and strangers alike
Were killed every night
Anguished cries were now ordinary
Love and help were extraordinary.

Jude was my forsaken label
My ideas, thoughts long forgotten
In their eyes, I was not human
I was evil, vile and hate personified.

Yet, I thought
Don't we all love, cry, and laugh?
Don't we all have families, friends, and enemies?
Don't we all have the same materialistic objects?
Don't we all eat, drink, live and breathe?
Don't we all live on the same planet?
And don't we all have different identities, personalities, and thoughts?

Yet, I'm known as not human
And others are known as human
What is so different between you and I
To make me trapped in the wire
And you stand in front of the wire?

You see not all is determined
From our actions and thoughts
Some are determined by our ways of life
And mine was by my faith

I was liberated from my trap
On the 27th of January 1945
But then I thought every day
Am I really free from my trap?

Today, genocide still exists

Discrimination still has a clutch

Dehumanization hangs from a rope

So, ask yourselves

If you and I are so alike

Then how come we take different sides

Think if the world was rid of this evil

Then truly you and I would both be known as

Human.



Chess

On Wednesday 22 January, we took six students to the Stephen Perse School in Cambridge to take part in the second round of the English Schools Chess Championships. We were playing a very strong opponent and were narrowly defeated 8-4. All of our students performed very well and represented the school brilliantly, a special mention needs to go to

Adam Herd who went undefeated in the fixture which is a great achievement. Well done to Amy John, Raf Calumpiano, Nazar Kushnir, Joe Ferdinand, Adam Herd and Carl Conway.

Mr Harrison

Stars of the Stage

On Sunday 19 January a group of 14 students performed in the show 'Stars of the Stage' at Ipswich Regent Theatre. They were performing alongside 11 other dance and theatre schools. In Act One they performed a jazz dance to Britney Spears Circus. The students sparkled on stage in their red sequined dresses. In Act Two they absolutely smashed their lyrical dance to Bastille Pompeii XXII. At the end of the show all 360 dancers in the show performed a huge finale number to Come Alive from the Greatest Showman. If you look in the photos you can see our students at the very front of the stage. It has always been a dream of mine to give our students the opportunity to perform on a professional stage and we did it!

A massive thank you goes to our incredibly talented Teacher of Science Miss Dalby who choreographed both of our dances. A huge thanks also to Mrs Cornforth who supported rehearsals and helped at the show.

I am incredibly proud of these students.

Alanna Evans, Evalina Garnett, Lucia Harding, Beatrice Harpur-Davies, Elizabeth Jordan, Martha Lockhart, Leja Lukosevicrute, Annabel Mansfield, Charlotte Nichols, Teisha Roughley, Lottie Sander, Ruby Smith, Elena Stachowiak and Amelia Zabojszcz.

All the dances were rehearsed in our Wednesday after school dance club. If you wish to become part of the club join us in the hall after school on a Wednesday.

Mrs Roughley







New Reading & Literacy Champion

Mrs R Hayter-Gare - Reading and Literacy Champion

Mrs R Hayter-Gare was born in Bury St Edmunds, just a stone's throw away from St Benedict's, which was also born in the same year! She then grew up in Buckinghamshire before moving back to Bury St Edmunds in her 30s.

She previously worked as a Lecturer in English Literature and History at West Suffolk College on their Access Courses and GCSE. Mrs Hayter-Gare loves travelling, walking with her two dogs and reading.



GCSE Pod



Well done to all of our Year 11 students for completing their mock exams. Exam feedback sessions may have revealed some areas that need a bit more attention. GCSEPod is an excellent way of addressing any topics that would benefit from a bit more revision during the Christmas holidays.

[Parent Resources](#)

Reporting Absences

Reporting your child's absence

If your child is unwell or has an appointment e.g. dentist/doctor could you please leave a message by 9.00am including the reason for the absence via:

Phone: 01284 753512 and Choose option 1:

And then choose option 1 for students in year 7-11 and option 2 for students in the sixth form

OR

Email: attendance@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk

For information on what to do if your child has COVID-like symptoms please see the following link for NHS guidance:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

If you do not inform us by 9.00am or use the above phone/email address, it will be highly likely that you will receive a text alert at home or at work. Please note the school operates a first-day response to absences.

If, in exceptional circumstances, you need to request permission for your child to be absent from school during term time, you should complete a **leave of absence application form (please see link below)**, at least three weeks in advance, stating the reason why the absence must be taken in term time. Please note that the Fixed Penalty Fine is now £80 per legal guardian for unauthorised absences of 10 sessions (5 days) or more.

<https://www.st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=74&type=pdf>

Thank you very much.

Mrs Wesley - Attendance Officer

Dates for your Diary



29 January - Year 7 Parents Evening

6 February - Year 9 Options Evening

11 February - Year 9 Parents Evening

6 March - Year 10 Parents Evening

Contact Us



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