

27th February 2024

Dear All,

The last time I wrote, we were just about to embark on the journey of Lent, and here we are already in Holy Week approaching the climax of this special time of the year. I hope, regardless of whether you managed to maintain your chosen discipline for 40 days, that it has been a fruitful half term, nevertheless.

It's certainly been a busy half term! Ofsted have continued their Xavier inspection tour of 2024 with visits to St Edmund's, Godalming; St. Anne's, Chertsey & Cardinal Newman, Hersham. Whilst not all these reports are yet published, we know from the feedback we received that they will all be glowing, with particular emphasis placed on the warm and nurturing approach that our Catholic schools specialise in. Congratulations to all those responsible for securing such positive outcomes and many thanks to all you who gave such valuable feedback to the inspectors about the education the children received; it really has been a great team effort.

As I write, children from schools across the Trust are gathered in Cobham for our annual Science Fair (you may spot a scientist you know here). We are grateful to all those who have supported the children to produce scientific work of such a high standard again this year; the experiments, investigations and demonstrations on show are very impressive. Thank you to our Science Lead, Tom Holloway who does a remarkable job of leading our science provision and coordinating events such as this.



It is always a great privilege to be called by one of our Heads to visit a school to celebrate the long service of particularly dedicated members of staff. Marynka Shaw a former student at SJB, Woking, returned there straight after university to embark on her vocation as a P.E. and later PSHE teacher. Marynka, who also sent her own daughter to the school, is moving on this week after 45 years of service, during which time she has made an invaluable contribution to the education of thousands of young people. We wish her every blessing for the next stage of life.

Tomorrow will be Maundy Thursday, the day when we traditionally focus on our call to serve others, as demonstrated in the Gospel reading by Our Lord washing the feet of the disciples at the Last Supper. The phrase "called to serve", has become something of a tag line for the work we do within the Xavier Trust. It neatly describes in simple terms how each of us as members of staff, parents and governors are called to live out our vocations to Catholic education. Each of us are called to put aside our own preoccupations, ambitions and anxieties, to embrace the challenge of giving our all to the children in order that they may know the love and fulfilment that are unique to a Catholic education. The commitment of all you reading this today is what enables this to happen. We are blessed by your contribution and eternally grateful for your response to serve. Thank you.

The holidays are upon us and this as usual, will be a cause for much celebration. However, within that, and especially on this first weekend, I would encourage you and your family to dedicate at least some time to the real joy of Easter which comes from Jesus' sacrifice for us, his triumph over death on the cross, and the gift of an eternal life of happiness with Him in heaven for any one of us who wishes to choose it – surely a bigger prize than any Easter egg you may receive this weekend!

Wishing you all a glorious and restful holiday and all the joy of Easter when we get there.

God bless,

James Kibble
CEO