

Scoil Nn. Peadar is Pol.

Newsletter.

June 2015.

School Building.

We are extremely busy at school these last few weeks with end of year exams, tours, ceremonies, reports, graduations and preparing for a massive school refurbishment programme that will cost several hundred thousand euros. The Infant building will receive a complete new roof with all new electricals, roof orientation and internal fit out. The main building will see approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of its windows replaced with the primary purpose of saving heat and conserving energy. Perhaps a member of the Parents Council might record the pictorial progress of this huge project over the summer where it could be mounted on a display montage for future viewing by pupils and parents.

Active Flag.

There was great excitement in school this last term as we eagerly set about winning and acquiring the much coveted beautifully designed Active Blue Flag for the school. Hours, days, weeks and months of tireless dedicated work was invested in this project by Ms. Deirdre Lawlor and Ms. Lisa O'Brien and their hardworking committee comprising of pupils from all classes. The ceremony for raising the flag was held on Friday, June 19th where the highlights included all 300 pupils putting on a beautifully choreographed performance of the MACARENA 'Song Dance' and the Gaelic version of the HAKA by Mr. Chris Ryan's class.

Great life enhancing skills were learned from the project which is primarily geared at teaching young people the health benefits around regular exercise which benefits cardiovascular and aerobic fitness. We had walking, running, cycling, skipping, circuit training and many new exercises for confined spaces. Well done Deirdre and Lisa.

Ceili Mór Lá le Padraig.

Again this year for the feast day of our National Apostle St. Patrick we had a whole week of celebratory events culminating in the boys learning a whole range of traditional Irish dances. Every year the boys are getting better as the incremental progression from year to year is clearly evident. These dances such as Siege of Ennis, Walls of Limerick and Rince Mór will no doubt be desirable skills for weddings or Gaeltacht visits in later life.

World Book Day.

In a further promotion of our beautiful new library and to encourage a love of books and reading the boys were invited to adopt one of their favourite characters from the world of Literature and to dress in the most colourfully imaginative way possible to portray the complete 'character of the character' if you know what I mean. Teachers also got in on the act. All classes are now availing of the library on a regular basis and sincere thanks to Mr Fenlon and boys for coaching and monitoring the young Librarian Programme.

Sports Day - Fun for all Day.

Our annual sports day was held on Friday, May 29th and despite some early morning showers the clouds lifted by mid morning and blue skies emerged. There was an extra competitive element to the novelty events this year with groups of students from classes 1 – 6 being assigned a particular colour. So as events progressed throughout the day boys scanned the display board minute by minute to see if the greens, blues, reds and yellows were to the fore and the whole scene resembled something from an early morning 'tally count' at a highly competitive eagerly awaited election contest. Sincere thanks to the Parents Council for purchasing medals and goody-bags and to all who helped on the day.

We had our annual **Fun for All Day** again this year with the emphasis on promoting healthy lifestyles, curbing obesity and actively promoting our bid to win the coveted Active Flag for exercise and healthy living. Yards, fields, classrooms and hall were used with stations set up wherever space allowed. Obstacle courses, skipping, dancing, circuits, and tug of war, were some of the events enjoyed by the pupils who energetically embraced the programme. Thanks to all the teachers for your interest in the HOLISTIC approach to education in the school.

Train Visit.

Pupils in the younger classes got to ride the train again this year all around the school yard.

Cór Fhéile Cork.

Again this year the school band and the choir participated in this annual non competitive celebration of music and song in the beautiful City Hall in Cork. This year we used the occasion as a dress rehearsal for Dublin and we had a beautiful enjoyable evening capped off by a visit to McDonalds in Douglas. Earlier in the day the young musicians visited UCC where no doubt many of them will later study and were given a guided tour of the college visiting the Honan Chapel, Library, Science Building, Observatory and the Aula Maxima where they were conferred with their 'degrees'.

I think I heard somewhere that the Library is called after a man called 'Boole' who cracked the BINARY Number System in Mathematics and it is this BINARY System that is at the core of all computer technology, mobile phone brains and the transfer of information using electronic technology – and you thought I knew nothing about computers.

Primary Science Award.

The school is in celebratory mood this week as we received the outstanding news that once again we have been awarded a Primary Science Award. We sincerely thank and appreciate all the wonderful experiments done in the various classes which contributed enormously to winning this prestigious and much coveted award. Sincere thanks especially to Mrs Orla Tobin who promotes, records, assembles, tabulates, displays and organises all the relevant information for the adjudicators.

It is very exciting to see science in the school going from strength to strength and we now have a wonderful working relationship with science Tutors and Mentors from Boston, Abbott and Merck as part of the Junior Achievement Programme. Clonmel is a hub for the medical and pharmaceutical industries at the moment and we greatly appreciate their enthusiasm for our Science curriculum. In 6th class Leighton Donovan from Boston taught us all about the bone structure of the body, the heart and its functions, chromatography, DNA, making periscopes, bacteria, immunisation, the circulation highway and electricity. Leighton's enthusiasm for all things science was so infectious that we learned a lot from him and so thrilled was he with the boys interest in Science that he returned on his free time to do extra classes – such was the interest generated.

Science in tomorrow's Ireland is a job for life. This is my mantra to all students.

Sacrament/Church/Prayer Services.

Sincere thanks to Mrs Catherine Kearney and Mr. Jimmy Fenlon for all the work they do in organizing religious events and prayer services during the year.

Well done to Mrs. Orla Tobin and Mr. Darragh Kearney and congratulations to all the boys in 2nd class who received their First Holy Communion in May.

Congratulations are extended also to the boys in 6th class who received their Confirmation in March preceded by a wonderful day of retreat and reflection in the beautiful grounds of 'Glencomeragh House of Prayer' facilitated by the wonderfully, inspiring, energetic and enthusiastic Sr. Antoinette Dilworth.

Our Religious Year started with the Feast of the Epiphany Mass in the Friary on the 6th January followed by a St. Bridget's Day Service in early February and a St. Patricks Day Prayer Service in March. We had our May altar and a Graduation Prayer Service for the boys leaving in June. The school is indeed very proud of its Christian Catholic Ethos and the wonderful atmosphere of respect, tolerance, understanding and acceptance which pervades. Every aspect of school life stems from this ethos. I was struck that during the Berkley tragedy in California and in the outpouring of grief that hangs like a cloud over Ireland at the moment that the Church is at the centre of it all and its where we all go for as a sort of refuge in our darkest hours. We remember in our thoughts and prayers this week all those mourning and grieving because of this awful tragedy at this difficult time. In those beautiful young people we see our own

children and empathise with their parents and pray for them at this heart breaking time of sadness mourning and loss.

School Tours.

Junior Infants (Ms. Marnane and Ms. O'Donnell) went to Parsons Green. Highlights were getting a ride on “Toby” the horse, playing at the playground, getting a boat ride. It was the first time some boys were on a bus! They saw animals: rabbits hens, deer, goats, cows and pigs.

Senior Infants (Mrs. O’Dea and Ms. Lawlor) went to Copper Coast Farm. It was a great day. They saw lots of animals even lizards and some boys were brave enough to hold them. Other potential farmers bottle fed the lambs. The sand pit was a great hit and some treasure was unearthed. The baby fawn was very shy and hid when he saw us. They had a lovely picnic, played football and drove the small tractors.

1st Class (Ms. Kearneys) went to the “Lets Go” summer camp in Waterford. The highlights were the Disco Dome, the K.M.X. go karts, the wobbly ladder, football, fling-socks and the obstacle course. Many were in a deep sleep by the time we arrived back in school which was a testament to their action packed day.

1st Cass (Ms. Cooney) went to Nore Valley Farm in Bennettsbridge. The highlights were Crazy Golf watch out Rory McElroy, Maze, Straw Jumping and Karting. The boys also got to see “Fluffy” and friend 2 of the chickens from the School Incubator Project. We had a great tour of the farm from David and were “Kings of the Castle” in the Fort. For many the highlight was holding the baby rabbits.

2nd Class (Mrs Tobins and Mr. D. Kearney) went be going to Blackrock Castle where they had workshops relating to space and our universe, visited a planetarium, sent messages to space and played an interactive game to save the earth from a meteorite (or not save it – we will see!). After lunch at the castle they went to Monkey Maze to expend any extra energy.

3rd Class (Mr Ryan) went to the Dunmore Caves in Kilkenny. They got a guided tour of the caves. One of the tour guides played Slieve na mBan on tin whistle. They also went to Kilkenny Activity Centre where they did paintballing, Hunger Games, Zorb Football, Obstacle Course in mudpolls and slides.

4th Class (Mr Fenlon) went to Kilfinane Outdoor Educational Centre. They enjoyed Canoeing and Kayaking, team challenges at Lough Gur while the indoor wall climbing and orienteering were undertaken with great skill and enthusiasm.

5th Class (Mr. Ring) went to the University of Limerick Activity Camp. Their leader for the day was Tipperary hurler Niall O’Meara. There was a great atmosphere around U.L. on the day as the National U14 soccer tournament was taking place. The boys took part in Canoeing,

rafting, archery, indoor soccer, swimming, dodgeball, wrecking ball, obstacle course, orienteering, penalty shoot out, and climbing.

6th Class – Mr. Kearneys class went to Dublin with the highlights being the early morning Luas ride through the city, Kilmainham Jail, Croke Park, Quazar & Bowling in Tallaght and shopping in Dundrum.

Hurling County Finals.

Congratulations to our 2 UNDER 11 Hurling Teams who represented us with great pride and much success on the hallowed sod of Semple Stadium last week. Rory Mahers team won the shield while Kyle Dargans team were narrowly beaten in the final by Thurles. Who will ever forget the heroic reception they received as they arrived home to a hero's welcome in the school yard from their friends and classmates. Both teams received their medals and were guests of honour at the Active Flag Raising on Friday 19th. Congratulations to Mr. Chris Ryan and Mr. Darragh Kearney who trained these boys over 50 lunch breaks and sacrificed their meal time. Sincere appreciation also to Mr Ring and Mr Larkin who put in no less a sacrifice with the Senior U 13 boys and while silverware eluded them this year, the school management, fellow teachers and students are wonderfully appreciative of all the work and sacrifices you make in the promotion of our gaelic games.

We as a school are very fortunate to have the services of Mr. Ring, Mr Ryan, Mr Larkin and Mr. Kearney because in a county like Tipperary it is nearly every families dream that someday their boy or boys will have a long exciting rewarding career playing football and hurling for club and county and in the process learn all the benefits of being a team player. Being part of a team is one of the greatest lessons in human and social development. You learn about friendship, bonding, trust, loyalty, commitment, dedication, responsibility and camaraderie. You also learn how to deal with a whole range of human emotions and above all being part of a team completes the truest holistic education of the individual. So to our games coaches we say thank you and whether you win or not it is the journey not the result that is most important. In the longer journey of life the team skills you impart at lunch time and the guidance and advice you give the young boys will form the basis and foundation of very rewarding fulfilling lives for the students lucky and fortunate enough to avail of your selfless dedicated commitment.

Waltons Music for Schools Competition.

Pride of place this term and indeed this year goes to the all conquering school band who on the 11th May came away from the National Concert Hall in Dublin with first place in the Waltons Music Competition.

Who will ever forget the scenes of ecstatic emotion that greeted the announcement by Lyric FM presenter Liz Nolan that Peter and Pauls were All Ireland Champions. Our pupils gave a magnificent performance and it really had the auditorium spell bound. You could see that adjudicators David Brophy and Ellen Crannitch as well as Mr. Walton and presenter Liz Nolan

were visible impressed. It was wonderful to share this once in a lifetime, joyous, historic and memorable occasion with the many parents who travelled to support us on the day.

We have since been on one big merry go round of celebratory functions and events. We recently had a celebratory joint concert with Banna Chluain Meala in the local Banna Hall. We had a wonderful evening and greatly enjoyed the 'Apres Concert' back in the School hall with delicious food and drinks culminating with the presentation of certificates. Congratulations Ms. Moran on realizing your dream.

Mayoral Reception.

Recently there was a **Mayoral Reception** in recognition of Ss Peter & Paul's winning this All Ireland Music Competition and to acknowledge what it means to Clonmel in general. We were accorded the highest honour that can be bestowed on a group when we were received by the Mayor of Clonmel and Cahir District Mr. Martin Lonergan in the Council Chambers on Thursday 18th June. The boys, parents, staff and school community were honoured and privileged to have been given this highest honour where previous recipients were national presidents, international dignitaries and celebrities and personalities from other areas of life. The other councillors were all lavish in their praise for what the school had achieved and the honours we brought to our town.

We sincerely appreciate Mayor Martin Lonergans generous hospitality and as well as giving us the highest honour and recognition Clonmel can give any of its notable and exceptional achievers he also catered generously for us with delicious food for over 100 guests. A very proud Principal Ms. Moran thanked the Mayor and acknowledged the wonderful supporting roles played by Peter Taylor, Darragh Johnson, Elliot Fennessy and Ronan Ruth. The Waltons prize fund will be invested in musical instruments probably guitars for a full class in the coming year. 'Garret Brooks watch out'.

Fr. Ray Reidy RIP.

There are life defining moments when we all remember where we were and what we were doing when momentous news of great significance breaks. I certainly will always remember the evening of Wednesday the 10th June sitting at my desk doing late 'admin work' when the phone rang. Canon Crowley called to reveal the heart breaking news that our beloved Fr. Ray had passed away after a short sudden illness which began with a routine visit to the local hospital on May 8th. Numbed with sadness I sat motionless for over an hour just happy to be on my own grappling with my emotions as I recalled the wonderful experiences, happy memories and times I shared with this extraordinary man. Long before he arrived in Ss. Peter & Paul's Parish and School I knew of the extraordinary ability of this fantastic sportsman on the hurling fields of Tipperary, Munster and all over Ireland. This fact was acknowledged in a very poignant way last Sunday June 21st when nearly 50,000 hurling supporters stood in silent tribute to remember Ray Reidy the hurler.

Ray as we affectionately knew him was born on March 22nd 1937 and the family moved to the Cathedral Town of Thurles when he was 8 months old. Thurles – birth place of the GAA would

play an important role in shaping Ray's life. Thurles is synonymous with hurling and faith formation and it was to the Seminary College in Thurles that many young men would go in the 50's, 60's, and 70's for training to the priesthood. It is therefore easy to see how hurling and religion would become the 2 most important influences in his life. His early education began in the Presentation Convent Thurles in 1942 at the age of 5. He did his Leaving Cert in his beloved Thurles CBS in 1955. Later that year he went to Kiltegan Seminary in Co. Wicklow for the 'spiritual year'.

From 1955 – 1958 he won 3 All Ireland medals, 2 minor and one senior with a star studded Tipperary Team in 1958. Simultaneously and side by side with his hurling he enrolled for a Science Degree in UCC Cork

In 1959 he returned to Kiltegan and studied theology for the next 4 years. He was ordained a priest on Easter Sunday April 14th 1963. Ray's life changed dramatically at this stage and the call from God to the mission fields of Nigeria in Africa was answered. This must have been agonising for Ray who was leaving the hurling fields for the mission fields and a promising hurling career that would have made him a legend and a household name. He spent from 1963 – 1969 in Nigeria but had to leave when the war started and could not return. Kenya called after Nigeria and he spent several years in this part of Africa building churches, schools and teaching young native men for the local church and priesthood.

He worked in the Diocese of Waterford and Lismore from 1978 – 1987 and after that was on the road again for parish work in London until 1994. He then returned to Waterford Lismore where he has worked until his untimely death. He ministered in Kilsheelan, Cahir, Passage East and Clonmel.

Last week our town lost a pastor, our school lost its Chaplain and pupils and teachers lost a very special dear friend. We will always have fond memories of Ray coming into the staffroom for the '11 o'clock cuppa' and exchanging hurling stories and discussing current news. At 78 when most men/women are retired over 20 years Ray was as busy as a 28 year old. After school events and ceremonies the two of us would chat for hours and he would tell me about a typical day in his life. On one particular day he had 3 hospital visits late night early morning – all tinged with sadness, loss and heartbreak. Requiem masses – again with pain suffering, sadness, grief and loss were always difficult as were accidents and tragedies involving fatalities. Marriages, Baptism and First Communions brought great joy and fulfilment, as did visiting the sick, school visits, daily mass and Sunday celebrations. Easter and Christmas were highlights in his life and he really enjoyed Confirmation preparation with 6th classes. We had many a laugh at the Confirmation practices and he really enjoyed my Hurling style motivation of the lads for singing practice. He got extraordinary satisfaction and fulfilment from the Confirmation ceremony and took great pride in the fact that his boys were the best in the diocese. They made him so proud and it was fitting that on the night of his removal the boys paid their personal respects by organising a guard of honour with such dignity, respect and solemnity that even in death his influence over his boys was very apparent.

Ray left his mark in this world in an extraordinary way. His down to earth simple practical but effective approach learned in Africa won him many friends and admirers. On a brilliant sunny Saturday June evening I said my last good byes to Ray. As I walked away with heavy heart swallows soared over the beautiful Wicklow graveyard – recently arrived from Africa for their summer. And then it dawned on me - Africa – swallows from Africa were paying their own respect to a man who made such a difference in Africa and who left his mark on the lives of so many people. I was privileged to have known this man who left a mark on me. I feel truly blessed to have known you RAY.

Graduation.

We say a very sincere goodbye to the 6th class boys of 2015 who graduated on Tuesday 23 June. We will sadly miss this immensely talented group of high achievers who excelled across all areas of the curriculum – music, sport, science, culture, art, games, athletics and creativity. Academically they were amongst the best I have ever encountered in a career spanning nearly 40 years.

They were great ambassadors for the school and wherever or whenever the opportunity arose they represented us with great pride and distinction. Reflecting on this group of young men makes one very confident and positive about the Ireland of tomorrow. Many of these boys possess the necessary qualities of ambition, maturity and intelligence to be leaders and achievers over the coming decades.

We are confident we have equipped and prepared them with a rich variety and wonderful diversity of educational experience to face the world with confidence positivity and self-assurance. We know from reading their profiles that they were very happy and contented in the school and enjoyed their time here. We were indeed very happy that many of them made reference to the mutual respect between students and teachers and the wonderful relationships they built up with all the teachers and staff.

So as you begin the next stage of your life journey we say ‘Bon Voyage’ and hope that you build well on the foundations you put down in Ss. Peter and Paul’s and use the tools and equipment we gave you to fully construct happy worthwhile lives for yourselves. We will follow your progress with interest and we are happy that as you leave us you are ready to face the next challenge in your young lives and are glad that you have wonderful happy memories of your days in Ss. Peter & Paul’s.

Thanks.

Sincere thanks to everybody in Ss. Peter & Paul’s School Community who have worked earnestly and diligently to make Ss. Peter & Paul’s one of the best schools in Ireland as evidenced by the results of the pupils and the remarks of visitors. Thanks to our B.O.M., Principal Ms. Moran, Parents’ Council, Val in the office, S.N.A.’s: Monica, Stella and Audrey, Janitorial Staff: Oliver, Michael and Linda, Resource and Learning Support: Catherine, Cathal, Fiona, Pdraig, Lisa, and Catherine, Margaret in EAL and Roz in Home School.

