

SGC Newsletter

October & November 2023



A Warm Welcome to Br Tommy Walsh, Mr Pat Walsh, and Mary Connell!

On Tuesday, October 10th, St. Gerald's DLS College opened its doors to esteemed guests Br Tommy Walsh and Mr. Pat Walsh, our new Director of Formation, along with Mary Connell, Parish Coordinator. The school resonated with warmth as our guests were greeted with a delightful concert by the SGC Trad. group in the vibrant school foyer. Led by the talented Ms. Hiney, this musical ensemble showcased the incredible skills of both staff and students, setting the stage for a warm and memorable welcome to our cherished guests.



Faith in the Presence of God

Start of Year Mass 2023



On Friday, September 29th, our school community gathered for the Start of Year Mass at Castlebar's Church of the Holy Rosary. It was a fantastic moment where we all came together to mark the start of the school year.

Big thanks to everyone who played a part in making the Mass

special – from the candle bearers and readers to the talented musicians, singers, and the awesome team from the religion department. Our Chaplain, Fr. Shane, was also there leading the way.

The Mass set a great tone for the year ahead, reminding us of the strength we find in togetherness.

5th Year Religion, A Relaxing Stroll

Lough Lannagh, our neighbouring natural beauty, served as the perfect spot for the students to unwind and take a breather. It's a fantastic amenity right at our doorstep, offering a brief escape from the routine and a chance to enjoy the tranquillity of nature.

The walk was a welcome break, giving the class a moment to step away from the daily grind and simply appreciate the calmness that surrounds us. It's wonderful having such a spot nearby where we can disconnect for a bit and soak in the beauty of the outdoors.



Concern for the Poor and Social Justice

Embracing the Daonchara Challenge

As part of the Daonchara Challenge, Mr. Daly's 1st Year CSPE class recently engaged in litter-picking duties.

The Daonchara Challenge provides a platform for our students to grow not only as individuals but also as contributors to a more compassionate and connected community, echoing the values embedded in the 'Ar scáth a chéile a mhairimid' philosophy.

This initiative is designed to guide each 1st Year student on the path toward becoming a 'daonchara' – a humanitarian or philanthropist. As such, the litter-picking activity wasn't just about cleaning up; it was a step towards embodying the spirit of community and mutual support. By actively participating, these students showcased their commitment to creating a positive impact within their surroundings and fostering a sense of responsibility towards the environment.



Transition Year Students

Support the Simon Community

On Friday, October 6th, a group of our dedicated Transition Year students participated in the 'Sleep Out for Simon' organised by the Simon Community, an Irish charity aiding homeless individuals.

We commend the integrity and resilience shown by these students during the sleep-out. It was a testament to their commitment to supporting a vital cause. Special thanks to Ms. O'Toole, Ms. Brinklow, Mr. Reilly, and Mr. Joyce for their assistance.

Through their efforts, the students at St. Gerald's College raised €1895 to aid individuals and families facing homelessness in the West of Ireland. This contribution will significantly impact those in need within our community.

Their actions exemplify our school's spirit of empathy and community support, highlighting the positive change that can be made through collective efforts.



Quality Education

Highlights from In-School Events

October and November were vibrant months at St. Gerald's College, filled with diverse learning experiences and engaging activities.

As part of Mayo Science Week, Ms. O'Toole's and Mr. Fernandes's coding class had a virtual HTML session by Eoin from whizzkids.ie, expanding their coding skills.

During Maths Week, Mr. Fernandes organized a competition for 1st Years with daily problems via email. Congratulations to Samuel Safo Ankoma for securing 1st place, with Thomas Francis in 2nd, and a joint 3rd spot for Harry Guthrie and Nikolas Yanchev Murphy.



Our Leaving Cert students had hands-on biology sessions dissecting large beef hearts, offering practical insights into biological concepts.

Mr. Daly's 3rd Year Science group delved into practical electricity experiments, exploring the properties of a thermistor, enhancing their understanding of scientific principles.



On the European Day of Languages, our school celebrated linguistic diversity with quizzes, cultural activities, international cuisine, and music, organised by the SGC French Department.

Our second-year students embraced baking, learning how to make a white loaf, encouraging everyone to explore baking at home.

For Maths Week, our 5th-year students participated in the IMTA Maggie Gough Competition, showcasing their mathematical skills.

Transition Year students gained insights from informative talks by Olive Lafferty from the Community Policing Unit, Castlebar, and Gillian Conway from the Western Region drug and alcohol task force.



These experiences reflect our commitment to providing a diverse and engaging education, nurturing well-rounded individuals within our school community.

School Outings Snapshot

October and November were filled with enriching experiences as our students ventured beyond the school gates for a myriad of educational excursions.



A group of our 6th Years embarked on a trip to Dublin for a production of 'Hamlet' at Smock Alley Theatre. The day was thoroughly enjoyed, and we extend our gratitude to Ms. Nyland, Ms. Hoban, and Ms. Duffy for organizing this memorable experience.

At the Pathways Education and Career Conference in Galway, our 6th Year students were informed about further education, training, and employment options post-school. They

benefitted from valuable insights shared by speakers from the education and industry sectors, with guidance from Mrs. Kelly and Ms. Geraghty.



Another group of 6th Year students enjoyed an engaging day at the University of Galway Open Day, exploring various presentations and stands. Their visit was informative and appreciated by all, accompanied by Ms. Geraghty and Mr. McGee.



Furthering their exploration, 48 6th Year students ventured to Limerick for the

annual Limerick Open Days, exploring UL, TUS, and Mary Immaculate College campuses. A day filled with exploration and insights, thanks to the guidance of Ms. Geraghty and Mr. Reilly.

The fifth-year Biology classes explored Dublin Zoo, immersing themselves in talks about conservation and species survival during Science Week, accompanied by their teachers, Ms. O'Boyle and Ms. O'Toole. It was an enlightening visit that broadened their understanding of biodiversity.

Our TY students exhibited resilience and good spirits during their climb of Croagh Patrick. Kudos to them for their perseverance, guided by the supportive supervision of Ms. Geraghty and Ms. Heneghan.



Reflecting on History

Week 203

St. Gerald's College is delighted to share the success of History Week 2023, a captivating exploration organized by our History Department. This engaging week offered a series of talks, trips, and activities aimed at highlighting the importance of history in our lives.

Our 3rd-year students delved into our island's rich history through immersive visits to Collin's Barracks and Glasnevin Cemetery, gaining profound insights into our past.

Meanwhile, our 5th and 6th Year History students embarked on a fascinating guided tour, exploring the West Mayo Brigade's ambush and activity sites from the War of Independence. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Michael Chambers for his expertise, contributing to an exceptional learning experience for all involved.

ST. GERALD'S COLLEGE DLS

HISTORY WEEK

Tuesday 3rd - Tuesday 10th October

TUESDAY 3RD
2ND YEAR GUIDED 1798 WALKING TOUR, WITH HISTORIAN NOEL CAMPBELL


WEDNESDAY 4TH
3RD YEAR TRIP TO COLLINS BARRACKS & GLASNEVIN CEMETRY, DUBLIN

THURSDAY 5TH
6TH YEAR MAYO GENEALOGY WORKSHOP

FRIDAY 6TH
1ST YEAR ARCHAEOLOGY WORKSHOP

MONDAY 9TH
TV BLACK HISTORY DAY

TUESDAY 10TH
5TH & 6TH YEAR GUIDED TOUR OF THE WEST MAYO BRIGADE, NEWPORT




Mock Interviews with Castlebar Rotary Club

Professor Paul O'Grady, alongside Castlebar Rotary Club members, orchestrated a remarkable 'Mock Interview Experience' at St. Gerald's DLS College on Monday, November 13th. This event, orchestrated by Rotarian Paul O'Grady and supported by Sharon Geraghty, St. Gerald's Career Officer, was a resounding success.



Fifty Senior Cycle students grasped the opportunity with enthusiasm, engaging in a series of formal interviews conducted by ten panels. These panels, comprised of existing and new Rotarians, friends, and hospital medical staff, posed core questions to the students. Post-interview, each participant received invaluable feedback, enhancing their confidence and readiness for future interviews.

The impact was substantial, especially for the majority of students who hadn't encountered formal

interviews previously. Sharon Geraghty and her team were thrilled with the event's reception, acknowledging its immense value in preparing students for professional opportunities. Moreover, students departed with a toolkit for success: a meticulously designed flier with 24 interview tips, courtesy of Wrexham Rotary Club, and a certificate to enrich their C.V. portfolios.

The resounding positive feedback underscores the event's significance, marking it as a pivotal experience for the students of St. Gerald's DLS College.

Celebrating Mrs. Kelly: Honouring Decades of Dedication

As St. Gerald's bid adieu to one of our esteemed educators, Mrs. Kelly, on the last day before the mid-term break, we took a moment to celebrate over 36 years of her unwavering commitment to our school community.

Throughout her tenure, Mrs. Kelly's profound influence and nurturing nature have left an enduring impact on generations of students. Her meticulous eye for detail and genuine care have been instrumental in shaping the lives of those under her guidance.

On behalf of the entire St. Gerald's family—past and present students, as well as staff—we extend our heartfelt wishes for a fulfilling and joyous retirement. Mrs. Kelly, your legacy within our walls will continue to inspire us. As you embark on this new journey, we express our sincere gratitude for your dedication and wish you nothing but the best in this new chapter of your life.

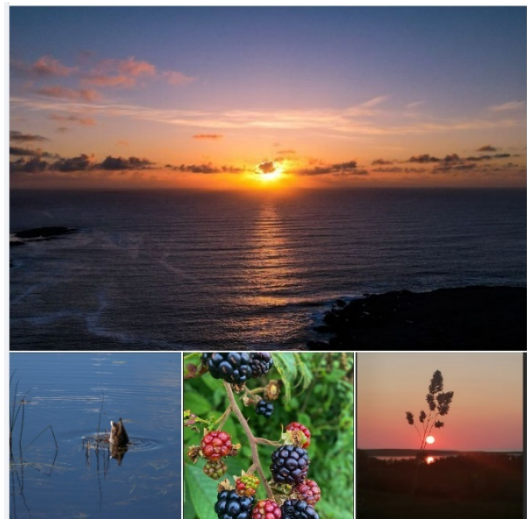
Though you may no longer walk our halls every day, your spirit and contributions will forever remain an integral part of St. Gerald's. Don't forget, you're always welcome here!

Bon voyage, Mrs. Kelly, and may your retirement be filled with joy, relaxation, and endless adventures.



Photography Club

Our Photography Club members have been out snapping their surroundings over the past few weeks. Here is a selection of images from our talented photographers on the themes of 'Change', and 'Dawn and Dusk': Images from John O'Brien, Geoele Gagliardi, Saim Mojumder and Connor O'Toole.



Sporting Snapshot: October and November

As we wrap up October and November, St. Gerald's College celebrates the remarkable achievements and dedication displayed by our students across various sporting endeavours.



Our 1st and 2nd Year students embraced golf lessons with PGA Professional Brian Carroll at Castlebar Golf Club, refining their skills on the green. A special acknowledgment goes to Connall Durcan, Ryan Kilkelly, Aaron Quigley, and Conor Stapleton, who showcased their prowess in the Connacht Schools Senior Golf Competition. A big congratulations to Conor Stapleton for claiming the Individual winner title!

In the Junior Boys Schools Golf competition at Castlebar Golf Club, our Junior Golf team made us proud by securing the 2nd overall spot, with Patrick Garvey shining individually as the 2nd place winner.

The resurgence of our U16 and U19 Basketball teams in Division A Basketball after several years marks a significant achievement. The U16s remain undefeated, triumphing over formidable opponents, while the U19s showcased determination and grit in their games, representing St. Gerald's with commendable pride.





In the ring, Khamal Momoh made an impressive debut, securing a silver medal in his first fight at the Celtic Box Cup in Waterford. His achievement in this international event reflects his dedication and skill in the sport.

A huge round of applause goes to Snugboro Utd U16's, clinching the Mayo U16 trophy during the midterm break. A special mention to our St. Gerald's students who contributed significantly to this victory, showcasing their talent and commitment on the field.

These accomplishments represent just a snapshot of the dedication and talent displayed by our students in their sporting pursuits. We're immensely proud of their achievements and the resilience they've shown in representing St. Gerald's College.



Respect for All Persons

Friendship Week

St. Gerald's College celebrated a memorable inaugural Friendship Week! It was an opportunity for our school community to come together and embrace the spirit of friendship by engaging in various clubs, societies, and activities offered by the school.

Throughout the week leading up to the midterm break, our dedicated Wellbeing, SPHE, and PE teachers orchestrated a series of engaging activities during lunchtimes and Wellbeing & SPHE classes, specifically tailored for 1st-year students. These activities provided a platform for students to connect, enjoy quality time with friends, and foster lasting friendships.

We extend our sincere gratitude to our teachers for their commitment and efforts in facilitating these activities, contributing to the success of Friendship Week. Their dedication created an environment that emphasized the importance of camaraderie and connection among our students.



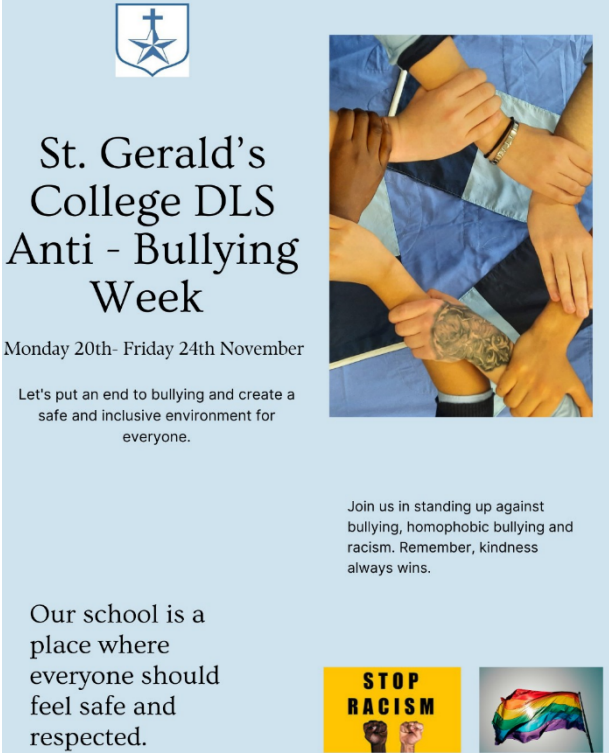
Friendship Week has been a testament to the vibrant community spirit at SGC, highlighting the significance of friendship in our school ethos. Let's cherish these moments and continue fostering a supportive and inclusive environment for all.

Anti-Bullying Week

During the week of Monday, November 20th to Friday, November 24th, St. Gerald's College observed Anti-Bullying Week 2024. It was a dedicated period where numerous activities and discussions were held to shed light on the critical issues of bullying and racism.

Throughout the week, our school community engaged in thoughtful conversations and activities aimed at raising awareness about these important topics. The focus was to emphasize the significance of creating a safe and respectful environment for all our students. Our aim is to ensure that every student feels secure and valued within our school community.

Anti-Bullying Week served as a reminder of our collective responsibility to foster an atmosphere of respect, kindness, and inclusivity. It was a time for reflection and action, reaffirming our commitment to upholding a school environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.



St. Gerald's College DLS
Anti - Bullying Week


Monday 20th - Friday 24th November

Let's put an end to bullying and create a safe and inclusive environment for everyone.

Join us in standing up against bullying, homophobic bullying and racism. Remember, kindness always wins.

Our school is a place where everyone should feel safe and respected.

STOP RACISM



Inclusive Community

Fostering Mental Health Awareness: Engaging Initiatives

At St. Gerald's College, fostering a supportive and inclusive community is at the heart of our ethos. We are proud to highlight recent initiatives where our students have actively engaged in promoting mental health awareness and support.

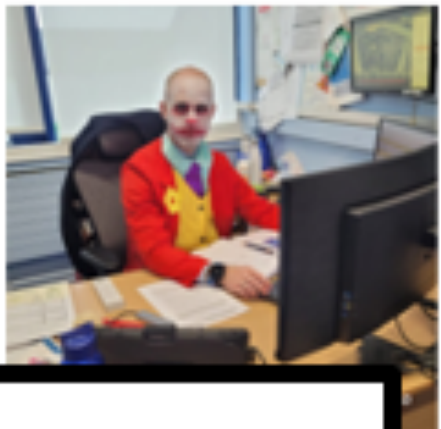
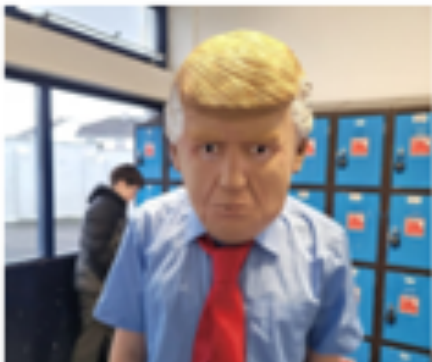
Firstly, we extend our congratulations to Joe Brinklow Basquille from Transition Year, who has been selected to join the Education Centre Student Advisory Committee at St. Patrick's University Hospital for Walk in My Shoes (WIMS). Joe's participation in this committee is part of a group effort to shape a program that equips students with tools and skills to manage their mental health and well-being. We applaud Joe for his involvement in this commendable initiative!



In another empowering endeavour during World Mental Health Month, our St. Gerald's College DLS Wellbeing team visited the Linenhall Arts Centre for a profoundly insightful theatre production, "OCD Me." This engaging play, written and directed by Aisling Smith and performed by Laura Whelan, offers an autobiographical glimpse into the realities of living with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). Teaming up with the Mayo Mental Health Association, the Linenhall Arts Centre provided a platform for this courageous and eye-opening production, fostering understanding and empathy for individuals facing mental health challenges.

These initiatives reflect our commitment to promoting mental health awareness and creating an environment where everyone feels supported and understood. We commend our students' active participation in initiatives that contribute to a more empathetic and inclusive community at St. Gerald's College.





Halloween in St. Gerald's DLS College

