

Scoil Naomh Comhghall, Coininsi
St. Comgall's N.S., Connons, Clones, Co. Monaghan



January 2009

To wish you all every joy and happiness for the New Year. May the year in store bring everything you're hoping for and may the future at St. Comgall's be filled with worthwhile learning experiences and endearing memories.

Christmas Play: Heartiest congratulations to all our pupils for their wonderful presentation of *The Peace Child*. Their full commitment and total involvement in this effort is to be commended. Our thanks to parents for your support and for your attendance at our production. We are extremely grateful to David and Shirley Somerville for assisting with make-up on the night which added greatly to the overall excitement of the event. The performance was captured on DVD by Martin Maguire and may be ordered, through the office, at €15 per disc.

School Mass: That we are active members of our Catholic church was evidenced in the special celebration of our annual school mass with Fr. John Kearns. The children participated wholeheartedly and reverently in readings and prayers. Our €100 collection for Trócaire, offered at this mass was sent to the charity group and they recently sent us a letter expressing their gratitude to the children.

Attendance: My thanks to parents for continuing to send in notes and letting teachers know reasons for your child's absences from school. Please retain all documentation regarding children being absent from school for 20 days or more, particularly documentation for those children who missed a lot of time last term due to illness. This will be required when a child is referred to the Education Welfare Officer under the terms of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

Fundraising: We appreciate your on-going support for the recycling initiative. Last term the response realised an amount of €450. This money contributed towards the day to day costs involved in running the school. Bags dropped in prior to the holidays will hopefully be collected within the next week. Any other bags you may have will be gratefully received.

Sincere thanks to the Parents' Association for your generous donation of €2,150 towards the purchase of the interactive whiteboards. We look forward to using these boards to reinforce work being undertaken in the classroom.

Music/French Classes: We hope to resume tin whistle lessons with Mr. Fran McMahon and French classes with Mrs. Janette McPhillips this term. A total of €240 raised through the Christmas raffle will help to furnish payment of these classes. Other amounts collected through the recycling collection will also be added to this fund.

Trips: On Thursday, 2nd October the senior classes enjoyed an informative book writing session with author Oisín McGann and also participated in a quiz in the library for *Children's Book Festival*. On Thursday 4th December the junior classes were highly entertained at a pantomime, 'Rudolph and The Red Nosed Reindeer', in Cavan Town Hall. Then we all savoured the musical experience, 'Stars in Their Eyes' in Larcy College the following week.

As part of the Science curriculum, the senior classes will, once again, participate in the 'Discover Primary Science' programme. Various scientific activities and science trips will be central to this initiative. The aim, ultimately, is to lead pupils to explore, devise and develop their own experiments and investigations.

Healthy Eating Initiative: In October Emma McBride, on behalf of An Bord Bia, introduced us to the 'Food Dudes Programme'. Having explored and tasted a variety of healthy fruit and vegetables delivered to the school, the second phase now encourages children to continue bringing in these foods from home, thereby earning new prizes. I consider this a valuable and worthwhile initiative and thank you for your support in ensuring that children continue with their healthy snacks and lunches.

Altar Servers: We recognise and applaud those pupils who are committed to altar serving in St. Alphonsus' Church. A new rota has been distributed to pupils for the coming term. Once again please make appropriate arrangements should your child be unable to serve at an assigned mass. It is envisaged that the new policy for altar serving will be ratified at the next Board of management meeting. Thanks to parents for discussing this policy at a recent Parents' Association meeting.

Charity: The most vivid memories in St. Comgall's of Christmases past involve our participation in the 'Christmas Shoebox Appeal'. It marks a great opportunity for children to experience that Christmas is not just about gifts received, but rather is a special time for giving to less fortunate children. Sincere thanks for your wholehearted support with this initiative - a total of thirty shoeboxes were filled. A DVD illustrating how/where the boxes are distributed is being circulated for viewing to all families.

<p>Parent/ Teacher Meetings: Parent/ teacher meetings will be held from 2pm to 5pm on Thursday 29th January 2009. We will endeavour, to the best of our ability, to facilitate convenient times for parents.</p>	<p>Quiz Competition: The local heats of the Credit Union Schools Quiz takes place at 7.30p.m. on Friday 30th January 2009 in Larcy College. All children should be in the hall at <u>7.00p.m.,wearing full school uniform</u> for photographs,</p>	
<p>First Holy Communion/Confirmation: First Confession will be held in St. Comgall’s N.S. at 12:45pm on Thursday, 5th March, 2009. <u>All</u> children and parents are invited to attend the Ceremony of Reconciliation. Our second class pupil, Rachel Maguire will receive First Holy Communion in St. Alphonsus Church, Connons on Sunday 24th May 2009. The date for the Service of Light has yet to be confirmed but the Sacrament of Confirmation will be held in The Sacred Heart Church, Clones at 6pm on Friday 8th May 2009.</p>		
<p>Sport: Gaelic coaching for the senior and junior classes will commence on the Monday 12th January and will continue for twelve weeks until Easter. Mr. Colin Malone, a coach employed by the Monaghan County Board will facilitate these sessions. A reminder to <u>all</u> pupils to wear tracksuits on Mondays for the foreseeable future.</p>		
<p>Festival Art Competition: Congratulations to Amie Somerville and Chloe Maguire who won joint 1st Prize in the Clones Film Festival Art competition. On Friday 17th October, the girls, with their families and teacher, Ms. McDonnell, attended the prize giving ceremony in Clones Library.</p>	<p>School Visitors: In November Fr. Flanagan, the diocesan examiner visited the school. Having spoken to the children at length, he commended them on their attentiveness and thoughtful responses. Local Garda Johnny McEvoy also visited us and we took part in a very instructive and educational discussion on road safety, with a particular emphasis on cycling on the roads. Monaghan County Enterprise Board sent its representative, Lena Shaw, to deliver an enterprise awareness in-school workshop. It certainly proved to be a valuable lesson in helping the children to discover how the very things they learn at school and their inherent abilities can make them successful businesspeople.</p>	
<p>Parish Carol Service: Well done to all children who performed their carols so beautifully during the Christmas Carol Service in Aghadrumsee Church on Thursday 18th December. They did themselves and their school proud and looked so well in neat school uniforms on the night.</p>		
<p>A New Brother: We would like to congratulate David and Phyllis Somerville on the birth of their beautiful baby son, Luke. What a lucky baby to have two wonderful sisters, Amie and Katie. We send the family our heartiest congratulations and wish them a future of health, happiness and prosperity together.</p>		
	<p>Christmas Treat: Sincere thanks to Fr. Duffy and Clones Parish for kindly donating €65 to the school as a Christmas present. A <i>Three in One</i> games table, to be used as a school activity on wet days was purchased with this donation during the holiday sales. We can now look forward to promoting healthy new sporting challenges into the future.</p>	
<p>School Closures: A reminder that on Friday, 16th January school will close at 1:00 pm to facilitate a staff meeting. School will be closed on Thursday 19th February and Friday 20th February for our midterm. It will re-open at 9.20am on Monday 23rd February 2009.</p>		

Catriona Donnelly (Principal)

