

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



2010

*Wishing you peace and happiness for
Christmas and the New Year.*



2010

Visit of President McAleese: The visit of President Mary McAleese to St. Comgall's on Thursday, November 18th November, 2010 will go down in the history of the school as one of its most important days. President Mary McAleese was the first ever president to visit our school and the visit marked a truly wonderful occasion for all involved. It was indeed a great success and we were delighted that our families and extended family members were in attendance to witness this historic event. We extend our thanks to members of the Board of Management, staff, pupils and parents for contributing to that success. A photo album and DVD of the proceedings are being compiled by Martin Maguire and Seán Connolly, respectively, and will be available to order in the New Year.



Christmas Play: A great crowd was on hand in our local hall for the annual presentation of our Christmas play 'Papa Panov' on Wednesday 15th December 2010. Despite the play being changed to an earlier date, the pupils rose to the challenge and treated the audience to a wonderful performance. Compliments to David and Phyllis Somerville for organising make-up which added greatly to the overall production on the night. Thanks also to the efforts of Mrs. Pennell and Helen for ensuring the play was a hit!! The performance was captured on DVD by Martin Maguire and may be ordered, through the office, at €15 per disc.



Fundraising: I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all who contributed to the success of the Christmas raffle and cake sale. A special thanks to all our hard-working parents who sold raffle tickets for the event and thanks to our sponsors for their generous support. This event earned a total of €2,534 and brings us a long way towards achieving our goal for this year – the purchase of children's playground equipment. We are tremendously fortunate to work in a school community in which parents are so supportive of our efforts to ensure all aspects of children's learning are adequately resourced.

Christmas Shoebox Appeal: Our thanks to all pupils for so kindly and generously donating over twenty shoeboxes filled with gifts including hats, gloves, toys, colouring books etc to the 'Team Hope Shoebox Appeal'. Thanks also to Helen for co-ordinating this initiative. Giving to those poor children less fortunate than we are is certainly a thoughtful and worthwhile preparation for Christmas.



Music/ Gymnastics/ Gaelic Football Classes: January will see a resumption of tin whistle lessons with Fran McMahon and we are delighted that €300 raised through our Christmas raffle on the night of the play will help to furnish payment of these classes.

We are more than half way through gymnastics classes with Catríona Boyle which are proving both challenging and enjoyable. These classes will continue for three more weeks in the New Year and will be followed by Gaelic football coaching for all classes with Anne McKenna until the Easter term.

Altar Servers: We would like to thank those pupils who continue to commit to altar serving in St. Alphonsus' Church. New members are always welcome. Once again please make appropriate arrangements should your child be unable to serve at an assigned mass.

Sacraments: As parents you have the primary responsibility for the faith and spiritual development of your children. We thank you for your active participation in parish sacramental events. In particular we thank the parents of sixth class pupils for attending a Confirmation meeting on faith issues on Tuesday 23rd November. Also thanks to second class parents for bringing children to Mass regularly and especially for their positive participation in the 'Do this in Memory Programme'

Trips: In teaching History we endeavour to help children become familiar with, and learn to value the local environment, so that they can appreciate the elements of the past which give them and their locality a sense of identity. Thus senior classes enjoyed recent trips to our local St Alphonsus Church, to the Cassandra Hand Centre in Clones and a guided tour around Clones with George Knight. Pupils had the opportunity to work as historians as they learned about lace making in Clones and linked famous Clones landmarks to monastic times.

We applaud our pupils who performed their carols so beautifully during the Christmas Carol Service in Aghadrumsee Church on Tuesday 14th December. We were most proud of them and say well done.



School Visitors: An application for our first green flag was submitted by 1st December 2010. We now await an assessor from An Taisce who will visit the school in the New Year to speak to the children and to look for evidence on Step One of the Green-Schools programme, the theme of which is litter and waste. As part of this process the children met 'Green Santa' in Clones Library on Friday 10th December, who encouraged them to recycle old batteries and in return presented them with a little gift. Also, as part of this theme, Niall O'Connor from Monaghan County Council visited the junior classroom on the 12th November with Benjy, the recycling bin to speak about litter, waste and recycling.

On the 16th November, Josephine Treanor and Peter Lynch of the Clones East Erne Sports Partnership called to speak to the children about a major new sports facility in Clones, funded by the European Union's Peace III Programme which is due for completion within two years. They highlighted the extent to which they see this wonderful cross border sporting facility positively influencing the development of sport into the future.

Finally, on the 5th November, in our efforts to promote the study and enjoyment of local history we invited local historian Seamus McCaffrey to talk to the children about the story of our local church, St. Alphonsus, since it was built. An extremely informative session was enjoyed by all as children were provided with the opportunity to see old photos of St. Comgall's and its past pupils (including some of our grandparents...) dating back more than fifty years ago.

School Inspection: As the Department of Education and Skills endeavours to promote quality in the educational experiences provided for pupils in primary schools, schools can now expect 'Incidental Visits' from their local school inspector. Therefore, on Friday 26th November Rita Nic Amhlaoibh visited St. Comgall's, observed Irish and Maths classes and discussed with me, as Principal, issues related to school planning and policies. I am pleased to inform you that the visit was a positive experience and she was complementary on the children's standard of work and affirmed the good practice evidenced in teaching and learning in the school.

Exceptional Closures: As regards the inclement weather conditions we have experienced over the past number of weeks, we thank parents most sincerely for their co-operation and understanding. At all times the safety of pupils and staff was of utmost concern for the Board of Management when decisions were taken.



School Holidays: A reminder that school will re-open at 9.20am on Monday 10th January 2011.

Happy festive holiday!