

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



2010

*A bewitching Hallowe'en wish to all our families.  
Hope you enjoy a magical and fun-filled midterm.*



2010

**President McAleese to Visit St. Comgall's:** President of Ireland Mary McAleese will visit St. Comgall's N.S. at 10:45am on Thursday, November 18, 2010, in response to an invitation extended to her by our pupils in 2007. This visit is a wonderful and significant occasion for our pupils, staff and community and we look forward with huge excitement and anticipation to the day. Some activities proposed for that morning include a tree planting ceremony, the unveiling of plaque, a personal tour of the school and classrooms with the children culminating with a pupil performance and a formal address by the President. We extend a warm invitation to you the parents and your families to join us for this celebration and as we plan on providing a buffet as part of the festivities, we will ask you to confirm the number of family members planning to attend at a later stage.

**Our Parent Association:** We congratulate our re-elected members of Parent Association Committee; Eugene Fitzpatrick as Chairman, Debbie Butler as Secretary and Christine Clarke as Treasurer. We thank all parents for your interest and attendance at the Association's A.G.M. last Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October. As Principal I look forward to working with staff, Board of Management and you, the parent body, in providing an enhanced learning environment for our pupils which is focused on their collective needs.

**Green Schools Initiative:** This year St. Comgall's will apply for our first Green-Flag award. Since last October we have focused on Step One of the Green-Schools programme, the theme of which is litter and waste. Our application will be submitted by 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010 and then an assessor from An Taisce will visit the school in the new year to speak to the children and to look for evidence of how the first step was adopted. Should we be successful, the flag will be presented later at a specially held award ceremony.

**Science Initiative:** The theme of water, its conservation and children's responsibility for the protection of our waterways is being explored in the senior classroom with the help of Lisa Mooney, an Australian Science teacher. Lisa is part of a community interest group based in Fermanagh that is working towards developing education for sustainability through the acquisition of two boats which will ultimately facilitate water workshops for school children. This initiative will involve a visit to a local water treatment plant, an 'art' activity session with schools from Fermanagh and a press release involving pupils to draw attention to the work being carried out in classrooms and to highlight the benefits / advantages of the boats in promoting children's learning.

**School Mass / Sacraments:** Our thanks, once again, to all pupils for their sincere and reverent participation in our annual school mass on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September. It was a lovely ceremony celebrated by Fr. John Kearns and we were delighted so many parents, families and friends could be present.

Regarding the sacraments, the following are dates set out for the coming year:

-Ceremony of Enrolment: Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2010

-Confirmation: Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2011

-Confirmation Pledge: Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2011

-First Holy Communion: Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2011

-First Confession: Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2011

**Maths Week:** Maths week 2010 took place in the school from 9<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> October 2010 and was successfully co-ordinated by Mrs. Pennell. An enjoyable and challenging week was experienced by all pupils as they worked their way through activities covering all strands of the Mathematics curriculum e.g. measurement tasks, manipulation of 2D/3D shapes, number function board games, problem solving puzzles and computer software games. The diversity of assignments certainly engaged and entertained pupils throughout the week and it proved to be a worthwhile activity in which to be involved in every year.



**National Tree Day:** In our efforts to generate children's interest in trees we participated in National Tree Day on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October, with a trip to John and Celine Connolly's garden to study a birch tree. We were also fortunate to have Eddie McCaffrey on hand to share his experience of forestry work with us. Observation and a survey of the tree was followed with the examination of the catkins and their seeds and the pressing of birch leaves back in the classroom. Many thanks again to the Connolly's for their kind welcome on the day.

**Charity:** We will participate in the Team Hope 'Christmas Shoebox Appeal' project again this year. Please note all relevant details provided on the leaflet, particularly in relation to new items which may be included in the shoeboxes. To facilitate customs checks during transit, please ensure you do not seal boxes when covering them in Christmas paper. An elastic band will suffice. Collection of boxes will take place when we return from midterm in November.



**Football Blitz:** Well done to all senior children who participated so wholeheartedly in the football blitz which took place last Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> October in Cloghan Gaelic football grounds. In particular we say 'Bravo' to Amie and Chloe on their first game with the school's senior Gaelic football team. The girls played great and show great potential for the future!!

**Fund Raising:** We have been getting to grips with technology thanks to parents' help in funding the purchase of school laptops last year. A 'labcabby' bought during the holidays to transport the laptops around the school now provides us with greater flexibility, which in turn helps to empower and motivate our children. Pupils can just take a laptop and sit down where ever they are working and have Internet access to use the Internet as a research tool.

It is also our intention to liaise with 'Temple Street Recycling Appeal' in collecting mobile phones as every 100 phones collected could earn the school another free 15" laptop. Hence we see this appeal as being a worthwhile incentive in helping children requiring special care and an aid to further building our technology resources.

**Recycling:** Our recycling initiative continues to be a great success in raising funds for our music classes. Many thanks for your contributions; we appreciate your on-going support of this initiative. Our school account has so far this year received a total of €344 from Cookstown Textiles, in lieu of bags collected both prior and post the summer holidays. This will cover the cost of tin whistle lessons up until Christmas and a subsequent collection after Christmas will hopefully fund further costs. In any case bags can be dropped into the school at any time and may include items such as clothes/sheets/fabrics and shoes.

**Music/Gymnastics:** We have now settled back into tin whistle lessons with Mr. Fran McMahon on Tuesdays and gymnastic coaching is being organised for the Easter term 2011 through the Killeevan Gymnastic Club.

**In memory:** We acknowledge with sadness the passing of former St. Comgall's Principal, Gerry Curran. I'm sure many of you parents have fond memories of days spent under his care and educational guidance in St. Comgall's N.S. In recent years the staff have had the privilege of working with Gerry as a dedicated member of the Board of Management. We remember his lovely sense of humour and generosity as he gave willingly of his time, to share with the children his wealth of knowledge on issues related to the school garden.

We also remember with sadness Joan McGuigan, our Learning Support teacher who we were privileged to have worked with last year. Joan was a gifted educator who loved her job and greatly enhanced the education of the children under her care. A lasting memory we will have of Joan, is her kindness, on Sport's Day last year, as she sat patiently and painted the faces of all the younger pupils during the day's activities. May they rest in peace.

**Hallowe'en Break:** School closes today Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October and will re-open at 9.20am on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2010.

Finally, we would like to wish you all a... *spooky*, happy and safe holiday.

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Catriona Donnelly (Principal)