

## Michaelmas Term round-up – St Mary's College stories and events

**SMCS Reunion 14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> September** – This was a hugely successful weekend with a great turn-out across the days with ca. 80 alumni attending the evening meal on the Friday (with some celebrating 60 years since they graduated!). Some said it was the best reunion weekend ever! Involving trips to the Botanic Gardens, Oriental Museum and Ushaw College, it was a real success. A wonderful chapel service was put on and on the evening talented musicians played for us all and we were super grateful to the after dinner speaker (Zoe Tabery who works for the Thomson Reuters Foundation) with her captivating talk linking the idea of the community we all enjoy in Mary's with her many travels as a journalist. Explaining how large scale global problems such as climate change impact upon local communities, exploring the idea that the best solution is when communities are enabled to help themselves towards a sustainable solution. A huge thank you to all who made this possible and who attended to make it a special weekend!



**St Mary's College Society Annual Lecture 6<sup>th</sup> November** – Delivered by Professor Tom McLeish a Professor in the Department of Physics at Durham University, on the subject of 'The Rich Entanglement of Science and Religion, a Fresh Appraisal'. Attended by ca. 50 people, there was a mixture of postgraduate and undergraduate students, SCR and staff from across the university. It was an engaging foray into the philosophical basis of scientific enquiry, using Tom's research and a long period of time to illustrate an argument to the audience that Natural Philosophy can be used to illustrate a synergy between the narratives created by science and Christian theology; a greater understanding thus produced would enable a more positive narrative to be attached to science in society.



**College Award 15<sup>th</sup> November** – Around 15 students recently received their College Award certificates from our Principal which can be completed throughout your time as a student. This award is for recognition of the skills and experiences you develop whilst undertaking your degree. It reflects on personal achievements and how to develop further, capturing extra-curricular activities that are vital for a CV and articulates all of this in a way relevant to future employers! A further meeting was held where more students want to start their College Award this year!



**College Lecture 20<sup>th</sup> November** – Adam Jasienski is an academic from the Department of Art History, Meadows School of the Arts at the Southern Methodist University in Texas. He is a Fellow here at St Mary's College this term, in partnership with the Zurbarán Centre for Spanish and Latin American Art in Bishop Auckland. It was an enlightening lecture that began with the Zurbarán paintings of Joseph and his twelve sons in Auckland Castle, before considering the overall art movement in Spain and Spanish America during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Ultimately challenging a narrative of judging women portrayed as saints in paintings of the period as vain, by placing the images in their proper context and suggesting that such women were in fact displaying religious virtue. Whilst more broadly re-evaluating the categories such as sacred and secular and even the definition of the term 'portrait'. The audience numbered ca. 60 people and consisted of students with a strong presence of staff and SCR.

**SMCRFC Charity Leg Waxing Event 20<sup>th</sup> November** – Mary's Rugby Club embarked on a mission of silky smooth legs as they raised money for the charity Mind. Mind is a charity which aims to raise awareness and understanding of mental health issues all around the UK. This charity was of particular interest to the club due to the alarmingly high levels of mental health problems afflicting young males at university. Suicide is the most common cause of death in young males, stating 'It's crucial for us that mental health issues, such as depression, are talked about to avoid people suffering in silence'. It was a huge success with over 20 members of the club getting wax strips ripped off legs and even armpits in exchange for donations! They raised a total of £400 during the event. This was double their original target and they were immensely pleased to provide the charity with as much support as possible. SMCRFC will continue to support Mind for the rest of the season so look out for further charity events, such as the charity Rugby versus Netball match next term.



**Winter Ball 23<sup>rd</sup> November** – A beautifully decorated hall for the first Ball of the year with great lighting effects to top it off. This was an excellent evening with a 3-course formal meal with activities such as photo booths, air hockey, and dance machines set up in college for all the students to make it a memorable experience. Delicious nibbles were also available if you hadn't eaten enough food already; with a cheese table, candy floss and a chocolate fountain!



**DASH Clothes Collection 26<sup>th</sup> November** – Joe Witt, our Communities Officer and a student volunteer (Phoebe Turner) who helps directly with the charity, liaised with a local charity known as DASH. Their mission is to provide accommodation with support to people who are homeless or are about to become homeless. They organised to set up a clothes collection at Mary's in support of this. It was very well received with around 5 full bags of clothes donated by our students!



**Christmas Formal 6<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> December**– A tradition of the College this formal event brings all the festive fun to students and staff alike, with a steaming Christmas dinner and wearing gowns whilst surrounded by friends throughout the student years! Special songs and poems were read by the Principal and JCR President and a merry time was had afterwards with an exceptional live lounge musical performance on the evening of the 11<sup>th</sup> by our own talented students.



**Carol Service 7th December** – A warm and inviting evening that brought students and families together within St Mary’s college to start feeling festive in an amazing atmosphere held at St Oswald’s Church. Started by the choir singing carols in college to kick-start the evening with festive treats, it was followed by a candle-lit procession to the church with the warm glows lighting all moods despite the dark and cold weather. The service was a success with joyful hymns and carols getting everyone involved with the choir leading and some religious texts read by staff and students to remind us all of the reasons behind Christmas!



**Pantomime 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> December** – A thrilling occasion that was full of talent and laughs. This college interpretation of the well-known ‘Wizard of Oz’ was transformed by our students into Wizard of Duz’. Our Foot Of The Hill Theatre Company Production provided sass, songs and sarcasm with classic pantomime moments and brilliant writing. Having their own yellow brick road adventure from Mary’s to Castle College whilst bumping into Bailey Colleges along the way to introduce the students very own Scarecrow, Tinman and Lion.



**St Mary's College Christmas Gift Collection – Mission Christmas appeal – Cash for Kids'** 'Mission Christmas' appeal aims to raise money and donations for disadvantaged children who are at risk of not receiving a gift on Christmas Day. The appeal aims to collect gifts for over 48,000 children living in poverty in our region. Staff were invited to donate new gifts that would be suitable for children and young people up to the age of 18 years. Gillian, St Mary's housekeeper, co-ordinated with the housekeeping team and offered to be the point of contact in the College to receive the gifts from any other staff member who wished to get involved. She and her team managed to collect over 6 bags full of gifts!

