

BLACKROCK COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



CHRISTMAS 2016

Dear Parents,

At our Annual Carol Service at the start of December – snippets of which were shown on BT Sport (there's a first!) – our College Chaplain, Sean Goan, reminded the boys that the real key to understanding Christmas lies with the idea of '**presence**' not '**presents**'.

We live in a world where anger and acrimony, crime and conspiracy and suspicion and strife dominate the media, be they print, visual, audio or social. And then ... along comes Christmas which for a short period anyway, changes the agenda and re-establishes perspective. Our world favours the myth of individualism and certainty over the truth that is community and mystery. Thank God for Christmas as we take time for friends and family, reconnect in wonder and awe with the joy and serenity that is overlooked or maybe just put aside because of the busyness in our lives.

Presence – God's presence in our lives, in our hearts – draws us together. The message, that God has sent his Son to save us is celebrated annually not just as a memory but because He is always with us. Christmas time prompts us to recognise and share His presence. It is a reminder that we do not just follow a light but that we should also carry a light, be a beacon for goodness and truth. Our boys certainly, through their support for the St. Vincent de Paul Appeal have shone that light on the needy and destitute of our city. I acknowledge their support for this vital part of our mission be it through the weekly Soup Run, the 6th Year Fast and Raffle, 5th Year Poker Classic and FIFA Competition, Transition Year Soccer Marathon, Hamper Project and Mince Pies Coffee Morning, 3rd and 2nd Year Shoe Box and Duck Race appeals as well as our flagship event, The Christmas Tree project.

Presence or Presents? – Christmas is a reminder that service to others, 'Being There', is central to our lives. The Christmas story, told year after year, never loses its majesty. It is the story of peace, hope and love but this is not just about Christmas as it sustains our community throughout each term of the year.

And what a term we have had!

Our boys constantly surprise us, surpass expectation, as they achieve at a level barely believed possible. The Crucible, B.C.R, the Mass of Remembrance, the afore-mentioned Carol Service, Thursday Tunes, the 3rd and 4th Year Family Masses, as well as the many sporting activities, M.U.N, Debating and of course the inspirational teaching and learning that flourishes in the classroom characterise the solidarity and purposefulness that is the promise of Catholic education.

Finally, it is the **presence** of so many that makes this possible. I thank our Spiritan Community and my colleagues, our Parents' Association and Student Council, our Board and Trustees and our boys, your sons for making Blackrock such a special place.

May the **presence** of Christ bring peace, joy and love this Christmas and guide us through 2017, long after the presents are forgotten.

Yours sincerely

ALAN MacGINTY
Principal

Photos from L to R :

- a) Father O'Brolchain (Spiritual Director) reflects at the Carol Service
- b) Ryan Fitzgerald and Billy Flannery(TY) selling Christmas Trees in aid of SVDP



Second Year



Our Second Year boys have now finished their first term in the College, and what a fruitful one it has been. The Application Cards are a real indicator of the level of organisation and commitment each boy has shown and are a weekly opportunity to compliment good behaviour and to challenge and change when required. The **House Competitions** have continued, with the Table Tennis competition and the Chess competitions coming to dramatic conclusions. The Rugby 10's competition saw Duff and Leman Houses drawing in points won, and the Swimming Gala saw Shanahan House coming out on top. Ethan Murtagh won the *Junior Championship Race* with Adam O'Reilly coming in second. Ethan also won the *Open 50m Crawl Race* with the overall event taking place in a superb spirit. Each of these competitions contributes to the overall scoreboard which will decide at the end of the year which House wins the *Barry Shield Perpetual Trophy*.



Matthew McCarthy, Harry Whelan, Jude O' Reilly and Jude Antonio

arts. Students and teachers express themselves in different genres, about whatever passion they have, in drama, poetry, song or recital. We congratulate the Second Year boys who have performed so far this year.

Every boy is expected to be involved in at least one of our many **extra-curricular activities**: this we consider to be essential for each student's overall development. Rugby is of course our most popular sport, with badminton and rowing having great numbers turning out. Other activities availed of include table tennis, squash, swimming, cross-country, debating, the Art Club, the Science Club, chess, the

The **College Musical** this year was a stunning production of *The Crucible* and although we had no direct Second Year involvement, many of the boys attended the opening night and enjoyed a powerful performance. It was good preparation for the Second Year & Transition Year Production that will be taking place in the final term. Another cultural event is the **Thursday Tunes**. This takes place in the Learning Centre and is a weekly gathering that celebrates the

arts. Students and teachers express themselves in different genres, about whatever passion they have, in drama, poetry, song or recital. We congratulate the Second Year boys who have performed so far this year.

orchestra, basketball, along with tennis and athletics, these last two becoming more prominent in the second and third terms respectively. Well done to Colm Kelly on his performance in the Under 14 Leinster Gold Championships, and to Robbie Nolan for his Gold Medal in Chinese Kickboxing in a competition amongst clubs from around the country.



Some of the boys at the 'Leave No Trace' course, part of our Green Schools campaign

The **Remembrance Mass** was held in the College Chapel at the end of November, for the extended Blackrock College community and friends who have been bereaved during the past twelve months. In December we had our **Carol Service** for the season of Advent, with the whole College in attendance in the Sports Hall hearing traditional carols and a rousing rendition of *The Holy City*. It was both a festive and a prayerful occasion. Mass took place on 8th December during the school day for Second Year for the **Feast of the Immaculate Conception**. Boys in Second Year also made their contribution to the Season by raising over €3,000 for the **St Vincent de Paul Society**, through the *Duck Race*. This was a great effort by the boys, for the benefit of the less fortunate, and hopefully made them reflect on the true spirit of Christmas.



After the Christmas Report has been received, and the new term has commenced, we ask parents to congratulate their son on his weekly Application Card when he presents it at home each Monday. This is a real opportunity to reinforce the good behaviour and practice that is acknowledged on the Card. A regular check on each boy's Homework Diary would also be worthwhile, to assist him in the organisation of his daily homework and revision.

Dates for your Diary

Catholic Schools Week begins Monday 30th January
Leman Festival Concert on Sunday 5th February
Progress Reports on Friday 10th February
2nd Year Parent-Teacher Meeting on Thursday 16th February

Third Year

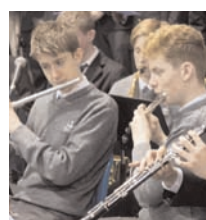


It is important to acknowledge the considerable amount of work put into academia during the term. While on occasion some boys may fail to sustain the necessary pace they need to work at, there's clear evidence that the example being set by their peers is having a telling and beneficial effect. As results arrive home with this newsletter it will be worthwhile to take time to reflect and plan for the journey that remains to the Junior Certificate in June and as the Principal has urged on a number of occasions, the boys should study smarter rather than harder. Allocating two and a half to three hours a night to studying is in itself not the solution; how effectively one works during that time is crucial. Of course the upcoming parent teacher meeting on **Thursday January the 26th** affords parents the opportunity to get important feedback and indeed share any concerns they might have about their son's commitment and progress, while at the same time being conscious of the queue behind them.

The very active Third Year Parents' Committee have been most supportive this term and are always keen to get feedback and suggestions from fellow parents. The chairperson, Alice McGarvey can always be contacted by email at amcgarvey@rcsi.ie. The Talks' Committee has arranged two talks in the coming weeks. The first takes place on **Wednesday January the 18th** "How to talk so teens will listen and listen so teens will talk" which will be facilitated by Stuart Wilson. The second talk by Fergus Heffernan on **Monday the 13th of February** will discuss the issue of "Exams - Testing times for all the family". We strongly recommend that you pencil both dates into your New Year's diary.

We welcomed Fr. Paddy Moran C.S.Sp. for our annual Family Mass. In a superb homily he reminded the congregation that each one of us is very precious and that we all have the capacity to do great things. We are close to God for "God is love". The boys' participation was exemplary and many thanks to all who were involved in the various ministries, director of the pastoral programme Mr. Tom Ryan and all the families who attended. A big thank you to all who supported the Roar Can for Sultan Hamud, Duck Race and Shoe Box collection for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

In basketball a large squad competed over the course of the term for places on the u16 team. The Harry Moraghan captained team was beaten by Drimnagh Castle in a game that was in the balance until the last thirty seconds. Cross country has afforded a core group of boys the opportunity to represent the College on a number of occasions, our own school



Max Potter and Peter O'Grady perform in the orchestra at the Carol Service

invitational being one of the highlights. Liam Blackburn, Adan Harvey, Tom Grennell, Tom McNulty, Luke Reynolds, Conor Griffin and Joe Young Hughes participated in the events when fit to do so. The rowers have shown great commitment and in recent weeks have competed in the Leinster indoor competition and in Cork at the 'Muckross Head of the River'. Louis Crowe, Jack Tiernan, Peter O'Grady, Daniel Kyrychenko, MJ Power, Mark Kavanagh, Tom O'Connor, Mark Kenny, Dan Casey, Michael Gadaloff, Conor Bowler, Conor McGrath, Peter Spellman and Jonathan O'Neill were the participants in these events. Badminton, Squash, Cricket and Table-Tennis, Water-polo, Swimming, Choir, Chess, Cycling, Coding, Debating, as well as the Art Club, provide great opportunities for boys to benefit from the extra-curricular programme. Those interested in playing tennis on their return after Christmas should contact Ms. N. Keenan or the Games Master Mr. E. O'Brien. The number participating in the Model United Nations continues to grow and we look forward to RockMUN on the **20th and 21st** of January. We wish the JCT, captained by Hugo O'Malley, all the very best in their opening cup match against Terenure on February 6th and the Junior Seconds, Thirds, Fourths and Fifts in their respective leagues.



Andrew Jones plays at The Carol Service

Dates for your Diary Days of Reflection

Tuesday Jan 17th - McQuaid and Shanahan
Thursday Jan 19th - Ebenrecht and Leman
Friday Jan 20th - De Valera and Duff

Parent Talks

1. Wednesday January 18th 7.30pm
How to talk so teens will listen and listen so teens will talk - Stuart Wilson
2. Monday February 13th 7.30pm
Exams-Testing times for all the family - Fergus Heffernan

Thursday 26th Jan - Third Year Parent Teacher Meeting 12:45-3:45 p.m.
February 6th - Junior Cup First Round vs. Terenure

Transition Year



In midst of exams there is an opportunity for the Transition Years to draw breath and hopefully over the break look back on a very busy half term. But Transition Year can be pretty relentless! There are still Christmas trees to sell, 220 hampers to pack and deliver and the final work experience places to be finalised for the New Year. I would encourage all students during the holidays to reflect on the first term of Transition Year, their engagement with the programme and personal involvement. The group has done some superb work and is actively making a difference through the Matthew 25 programme, The Soup Run, community work with Gaisce, the many charitable collections and bag packing and of course the Saint Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal. Between all of this they also managed to produce 50 hours of top notch radio! The Transition Year group of 2016-17 has set the bar very high and I look forward to more of the same in January 2017 as we focus our attentions further afield fundraising for the school in Machakos.

Blackrock College Radio

We were delighted to have both Marie Baker and Maria Bailey in to launch the station on Monday 21st of November. It was to prove a fantastic week of radio, with a mixture of news, sports, current affairs, language programmes, music and a very eclectic mix of studio guests. I credit the students on their passion, drive and the high standards they demanded of each other. As Dean it is great to see so many of them grow into their roles as the weeks went on. By Friday it was easy to forget you were listening to Transition Year students and not professionals in RTE. The feedback from the many guests we had was fantastic including a letter from the Taoiseach (who faced some tough questions on BREXIT!) and a mention in the Irish Times. Well done to all involved, in particular the management team who put in countless hours to create a fantastic week of radio.



Sean Hannon, Adam O' Sullivan, Harry Hughes, Sean Fleming and Rhys Rowlands get ready to broadcast.

Soccer Marathon

We were blessed with fantastic weather for the annual Soccer Marathon in aid of Saint Vincent de Paul. The matches kicked off at 9am with 114 students involved on what was an almost balmy December morning. The students from the get go were giving it everything, which probably accounts for the mega wagon wheel pizzas being consumed in record time that evening. The food was served at midnight after the students were handed a footballing education as my colleagues yet again remained unbeaten. But their spirits never dropped as they continued playing (mainly FIFA) into Saturday morning. I



must commend all involved for making it such an enjoyable occasion. Well done.

Mince Pie Morning

On Tuesday the 6th December, the Transition Year Home Economics classes hosted a Mince Pie Morning in aid of Saint Vincent de Paul.

They had been very busy on Monday producing what was some very tasty mince pies. Just over 349 euro was raised. It certainly got us in the festive mood for the Carol Service that afternoon. It was good to see so many parents there in support. Many thanks to Ms Karen Marren for making it all possible.



David Campbell, Tom Brophy, Cathal French, Harry Callaghan, Ruslan Tsatiev, Killian McQuaid and Billy Flannery, TY Mince Pie Morning.

Hampers

We are ready to take delivery from the wholesalers for the hampers. Over the Thursday and Friday it will all be counted sorted and packed into 220 hampers ready for delivery on Saturday morning the 18th. It really is a unique opportunity for the students to experience the culmination of SVP fund raising from the Soccer Marathon and to experience first-hand the difference they will be making to families less fortunate than ourselves. I thank all the parents who helped with the delivery.

Volunteering

The generosity of spirit amongst this group is very evident. On the 11th of November 35 students helped out with bag packing in Cornelscourt for the Blackrock Alzheimer Society. The group raised €2799.15. We particularly appreciate the many compliments from the staff and customers on the boys' "impeccable manners, general behaviour and helpfulness". Many thanks to the TY boarders who helped out with the remembrance Mass in the College on November 30th. A very special liturgy, enhanced by their presence. 60 students volunteered to take part in the SVP envelope drop on Wednesday the 7th December. The group distributed letters in the local area about the Saint Vincent De Paul Christmas appeal. Finally on 18th December 20 students took part in the Cycle for Machakos collection in Dundrum. It is great to see the students so selfless with their time. Great work.



Roberto Brusasca bag packing for the Blackrock Alzheimer Society

Family Mass

It was great to meet so many parents and grandparents at the Transition Year Family Mass on Sunday 4th December. It was the first year we had the TY Mass this side of Christmas and I feel it worked very well, reminding us of the talented musicians and singers we have in the year. Particular thanks to Fr Marc Whelan who said the Mass and met with a group of TYs the week before to get a real sense of everything that goes on in the year and all the students are involved in.



On behalf of my colleagues in Transition Year; Mr O' Neill, Mr Savage and Mr Sullivan I wish you a very peaceful and Happy New Year.

Ethan R Ryan with his mother at the TY Family Mass

Dates for your Diary

Monday 9th, Tuesday 10th, Friday 13th and Monday 16th January – Part two of The Leadership Course
Friday 27th January – Transition Year Parents' Social
Monday 13th – Friday 17th February – Work Experience

Fifth Year



The second half of term one highlighted the busy and productive work ethic of Fifth Year students who continue to make significant contributions to school life through their courteous and cooperative manner and their vast involvement in and contribution to extra-curricular activities.

SVP Fundraiser

Congratulations to Fifth Year students for raising much needed funds for the St. Vincent de Paul's Christmas Appeal. On Wednesday 7th December, over half the year group was involved in some way with the Poker Classic, FIFA Tournament and Raffle. Fancy dress, good humour and generosity ensured that all enjoyed a wonderful evening. Niall Brady was victorious in the Poker, with Adam McGovern coming second. Conor Lynch's FIFA skills saw him take victory over Robert Abernethy. The House Captains once again were excellent in their organising of this event. Thank you to the 5th Year Parents' Committee 2015 for their help and to all parents who donated. Special thanks is offered to the local businesses and the number of families who donated so generously to the raffle.

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Many thanks to the College Pastoral Department for organising the celebration of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception for Fifth Years on 8th December last.

A number of Fifth Years contributed meaningfully as cantors and servers to this year's Remembrance Mass for those in our community who have passed away in the past year. We thank and commend them for their much appreciated involvement.

Carol Service

In full voice the Fifth Year group provided strong leadership at the recent whole school Carol Service. Whilst all participated commendably, the Fifth Year members of the choir and the orchestra are of particular note for their remarkable leadership of the year group and performances.



Harry Kearns, Charlie Byrne, Neil Houlihan and Stephen Ryan singing at the Carol Service

Cross Country

Our annual Blackrock College Cross Country Invitational took place on the 16th of November on what was thankfully a lovely sunny day. The standard was exceptionally high as we extended the invite to schools outside east Leinster. Congratulations to the seniors who won gold, with Conor Halpin and Patrick Fahy finishing in the top 5, and Harry Kearns finished 8th. We wish them the best of luck in future competitions.

Basketball

Building on their commitment to training, Fifth Year basketball players have had a great season so far, and are into the East Leinster U19 League semi-final. The players earned a big win against Drimnagh Castle in the quarter final and we encourage the players to continue their hard work going towards the semi-final and into the All Ireland League.

Rowing

Fifth Year rowers have been at full training for the last few months and numbers continue to grow steadily. We commend their commitment and wish them well.

Soccer

The Fifth Year members of the senior soccer squad continue to impress with a considerable 6-1 victory against Old Bawn C.S. The senior squad have won their group and qualified for a home semi-final. We wish them the best of luck as their season continues.

Model UN /Debating

Blackrock College MUN continues its success with yet another memorable conference in Rathdown School on Friday 18th & Saturday 19th November.

Representing the nations of The Russian Federation, Portugal and Egypt the boys debated issues such as Maternal Mortality, Libya, Small Arms, Light Weapons, and Bee Decline.

The Delegation of Russia were amongst the top honours at the conference, winning an Outstanding Delegation Award along with Terenure and Newpark.

Individual Distinguished Delegate Awards went to:

- * Scott Donohoe (6th Year)
- * Mark Heavey (6th Year)
- * Ben Heapes (5th Year)
- * Chris O'Flaherty (5th Year)

We would like to thank also John Heavey (6th Year) and Simon Huggard (5th Year) for their exceptional work as chairs and their dedication, and Mr Smyth too.

Show

Fifth Years presence in this year's show, *The Crucible*, was remarkable. The sensitivity, passion and conviction of the Fifth Years added to the wonderful production. The contribution of students to the various scenes and roles is of note as is the efficient and professional work of the crew and front of house members who ensured all ran smoothly. A huge congratulations to all involved.



Member of the cast of 'The Crucible'

Leman Auditions

Fresh off the back of their *The Crucible* performances many Fifth Years were eagerly auditioning for this year's Leman Festival concert and we look forward to seeing those successful in securing a highly coveted slot perform in the National Concert Hall on Sunday, February 5th.

House Rugby

The House Fourths and Fifts squads have had a promising start to the season and are building strong teams from high numbers. All are looking forward to their Leagues in the New Year. The House Thirds are training hard and continuing their good form with a recent win over High School. They have made big improvements since the start of the year. The House Seconds are enjoying good levels of integration with Fourth Year players, with their most recent win being against Terenure on Wednesday. All House players are commended for their good attitude and commitment.

Fifth Year is strongly represented on the Senior Team and look forward to the draw. All are looking forward to improving over the Christmas training sessions.

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 14th January:
Saturday 28th January:
Thursday 2nd February:
Sunday 2nd April:

5th/6th Year Student Career Talks I
5th/6th Year Student Career Talks II
5th Year Parent Teacher Meeting
5th Year Family Mass

The Arts



Gaudete Gaudete! Rejoice Rejoice!

This was the spirit in which the Choirs and the Orchestra combined together to transform the sports hall into a celebratory space, and a wonderful occasion where the boys joined in music, song and prayer to bring the essence of the Carol Service truly alive. The tremendous singing from the choirs supported by the shimmering swells of the brass section, and the



The choir singing at the Carol Service

elegant string playing added a festive and uplifting air to the occasion. The congregational singing was ably led by our choral leaders from 6th Year. Our three brilliant soloists, Chris Wong, Bill Madigan and Alan Francis sang 'O'Holy Night' beautifully, supported by our wonderful young singers in the Corless Choir.

Another stunning piece was Jerusalem sung by our 5th Year soloists: Harry Kearns, Stephen Ryan, Charlie Byrne and Neil Holohan. This was definitely one of the highlights for all involved! The Music Department would like to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate all the boys who constantly give their time and share their talents with us. We wish you a very Happy Christmas Jingle and look forward to hearing you all sing and play music in the New Year.

The Crucible

To say that the play was a resounding success is an understatement. We are very proud of our boys and the girls of Mount Anville. Their commitment, energy, talent delivered a complex story and did so in a very professional manner. The curtain came down after four sensational nights to resounding applause. We look forward to more dramatic drama from our talented young people in the New Year.



Members of the cast of 'The Crucible'



ART CLUB PRESENTS

A FOLIO OF PICTURES BY

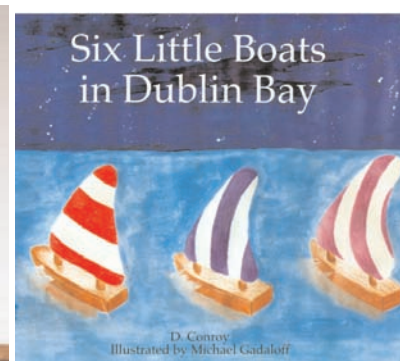
MATTHEW KENNY



Matthew Kenny (Sixth Year) presents a folio of pictures



Sam Bourke Kennedy, The art club are in the process of linking the College Art Collection to digital information codes for smart phones.



This recent publication in aid of the Simon Community was illustrated by Third Year Michael Gadaloff. The story is set around Dun Laoghaire and Monkstown and would be an ideal present for young children.



Only two projects succeeded in qualifying for the BT 2017 Young Scientist Competition:

Sam O'Carroll & Fergus Woods (TY) with a project entitled "Protein Glue".

Tadhg Egan & Ryan O'Connell (TY) with a project entitled "Does Music Affect Performance in Sport?"

Nationwide there were 2091 projects submissions, so it is an amazing achievement to be one of the 550 projects to qualify. We wish our students the very best of luck in the competition. Unfortunately the following projects did not qualify:

Conor Williams (5th Year) whose project was entitled "A Case for Guidelines on the Safe Use of Water in the Home".

Ross Phelan & Niall Brady (5th Year) whose project was entitled "An investigation into the viability of Stent Technology in water pipe repair".

Ruairi Moore (TY) whose project was entitled "Replacing plastics with environmentally sustainable alternatives".

Daniel Cullen (TY) whose project was entitled "The effects of energy drinks".

Luke O'Brien (3rd Year) whose project was entitled "Going for Gold! A statistical analysis of Olympic flagbearers".

John Huggard (3rd Year) whose project was entitled "A theoretical cure for cancer".

Michael Lucey (2nd Year) whose project was entitled "Me and my Dog: The effects of pet ownership on the quality of life of teenagers".



Chemistry Lecture

On November 22nd Fifth & Sixth Year Chemistry classes were given a talk by Dr. Michael Ryan of Science Foundation Ireland about careers and opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

Senior Science Table Quiz

Six of our final year students competed in science quizzes held in TCD in November.

Our senior science B team comprising James Kelly, Dylan McCarthy and Ross McCann came 13th and our senior science A team comprising Chris Aylward, Mark Heavey and Joseph O'Donnell came fifth in the Dublin Regional Senior Science table quiz held in on Thursday 17th November.

Team A qualified for the National Final of the ISTA Senior Science Quiz which was held on Saturday 26th November in TCD. The competition amongst the 40 teams present was intense and our team did well to finish 13th in Ireland.

Staff Table Science Quiz

Members of the Science Department held the second Staff Table Quiz in the staff room during lunchtime on Tuesday 15th November. It was a fun occasion for all. Our thanks go to Ms Jennifer Groves for the time and energy she put into organising this event.

Snapshot of 2nd half Term 2016



Jude O'Reilly and Michael Nealon (2nd Years Rock vs RBAI)



David Fitzgibbon (4th Year) and Tom Maher(5th Year) (Rock V RBAI)



Ella Long, Jack Crowley, Conor Hoffman and Riley Dargan in 'The Crucible'



David Heavy and Mark Dunne (Sixth Years) Rock V RBAI



Cian Reilly (6th Year) reading "The Journey of the Magi" at The Carol Service



Leo Downes (5th Year) and Callum Byrne (3rd Year) at The Carol Service



Cian Hennigan with his father at the TY Family Mass



Tim Darcy and his father Frank Darcy at the TY Family Mass



Annual Transition Year Mince Pie Morning
Matthew Mullin Fund, Andrew Hendrickx, David Campbell, Harry Callaghan, Killian McQuaid, Ross O'Reilly, Rob Lenehan, Dylan Connaughton and Shane Bresnan

Snapshot of 2nd half Term 2016



Brian McGlone who won the Classical Association of Ireland Centenary Medal for best result in Classical Subject –Classical Studies, Greek and Latin – in the 2016 Leaving Certificate pictured with Ms Geraldine FitzGerald and Ms Sarah Henchy.



Michael Ryan, Mark O' Donohue and Drummond McGinn (TY) interview Taoiseach Enda Kenny for BCR



Conor O' Neil, Lochlann Gallagher, Adam O' Sullivan, Shore Oluborode and Drummond McGinn who volunteered at the Annual Children's Christmas Party, Holy Family National School, Monkstown.



Mark Dunne, Carl Delaney (winner) and Rhys Macken (Sixth Years) on Christmas Jumper Day



Mr Killian Grumley Traynor conducts the College Orchestra & Choir at the Carol Service



Conor O'Neill, Michael McDonald and Michael Ryan working in Biodiversity Site



Cianan Quinn and Cian Hennigan interview Luke Fitzgerald



Members of the cast of 'The Crucible'



The Crew on the final night of 'The Crucible'

News from the Past



10 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE CLASS OF 2016



1 Leaving Cert 2016

- 8 boys scored over 600 points
- 302 As in Higher Level papers
- 93 boys (47.4%) attained over 500 points
- 134 boys attained over 450 points (68.5%) – a new high

2 The Libermann choir won the Frank Hughes Cup, for the 3rd year in a row, at the Wesley Inter-Schools Music Festival in March 2016.

3 The following boys were awarded 1st Class honours at the Wesley Inter-schools Music Festival 2016: Shane Conlon (6th Year) in the Classical Solo Singing (O17), Shane O'Connell (6th Year) in the 'Own Performed Song' (O15), Declan O'Sullivan (6th Year) in the Classical Acoustic Guitar (O15)

4 David Hardiman, Conor Gallagher, Tim Maguire, Jordan McDonald, Ross O'Toole and Rory Patterson travelled as Helpers on the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes from Monday 7th September to Friday 12th September 2015.

5 Brian McGlone won the Classical Association of Ireland Centenary Medal for the best result in Classical Subject – Classical Studies, Greek and Latin – in the 2016 Leaving Certificate. Brian sat Latin. This is a great achievement and honour for Brian, his family, his teacher Ms Henchy and the College.

6 Trinity College Entrance Exhibition Awards were awarded to Declan Norton, Matthew O'Callaghan, Ruairc O'Leary, Bernard O'Sullivan and Adam Stanley. Congratulations!

7 UCD Scholarships & Awards
Congratulations to James Byrne, Martin Conlon, Shane Conlon, Alexander Considine, Robert Coyle, Daniel Doyle, Rory Fitzpatrick, Joseph Glynn, Sean Hassett, Andrew Hickey, James Huggard, Brian McGlone, Alexander Murphy, Marcus Ó Faolain, Rory O'Brien, David O'Mahony, Declan O'Sullivan, Stephen Rooney, Neil Stokes (Academic High Achievers) Emmet Burns, Steven Kilgallen, Richard Mouatt, Gavin Mullin (Sport Scholars) Tommy O'Brien (Academic High Achiever and Sports Scholar)

8 Ben Layden successfully secured a place on the highly sought after Quilter Cheviot School Leaver Summer Business Programme.

9 26 students from the class of 2016 travelled to Kenya last summer to continue the work done by Rock Boys in 2011. Through the Roar Campaign, Union Donations and other school wide fundraising initiatives €70,000 was raised to contribute to the Rock Reaches to Kenya Project.

10 Caelan Doris, Conor Dean, Gavin Mullin and Tommy O'Brien are members of the Ireland U20s Squad.



Sixth Year



The run-in to Christmas has been a very busy time for everyone in Sixth Year. This is a brief summary of events and achievements.

CAO Talk for parents

On Tuesday November 15th Mr Menezes gave a very detailed and informative talk to the sixth year parents on the CAO process. It was great to see so many parents in attendance, however if you were unable to attend, the PowerPoint used on the night is available on the school website or by emailing nmenezes@blackrockcollege.com.

Carol Service

On Tuesday December 6th the whole school assembled in the sports hall for the annual Carol Service. This event is one of the highlights of the school year and it was fantastic to see the congregation of students join in the festive pieces. The Choirs and Orchestra were simply exceptional and a huge thanks to Ms O'Connor and Mr Grumley-Traynor for their preparation and leadership of the boys. Special mention goes to Bill Madigan, Alan Francis and Chris Wong who sang 'O Holy Night'. They were outstanding. Well done to all involved in what was a wonderful liturgical occasion.



Ross McCann reading at the Carol Service



Oisín McEnroe plays in the College Orchestra at the Carol Service

SVDP 24hr FAST

Eighty Five 6th Years took part in the annual 24hr sponsored FAST in aid of SVDP. All of the boys taking part in the FAST, along with those who sponsored the Dean, were entered into the raffle. The FAST finished on Friday 2nd December at 1:30pm when the boys all had a meal in the school canteen. A huge thanks to the Parents' Committee for their help in organising the prizes for the raffle, in total 47 prizes were donated and the draw itself in the canteen was a memorable occasion. To Mary, Albert and the catering staff, thank you very much for the meal. And very importantly €3,640 was raised through the sponsored fast and the raffle, well done to all involved.

The Crucible

Mr Toirleac O'Brien never does things easy and this year was no exception. Moving away from a musical production, Mr O'Brien brilliantly produced this year's show, *The Crucible*. Each night was a full house and this is a true testament to the time, effort and talent of all those involved. Our 6th Years Eoin Joy, Sean Byrne, Harry Doherty,

Sam Briggs, Riley Dargan, Matthew Hally, Jack Crowley, Conor Hoffman and Roy Geary were simply amazing. Their dedication in preparing for the show was admirable, their talent astonishing. Congratulations to all involved – another great production.



Senior Science Team

Congratulations to Chris Aylward, Joseph O'Donnell, Mark Heavey, Dylan McCarthy, Ross McCann and James Kelly who competed in the Irish Science Teachers Association Table Quiz held in TCD. As a team, Chris, Joseph and Mark qualified for the All Ireland Final where they finished a very respectable 13th.

Basketball

We congratulate Captain Robert Somers and the basketball squad on reaching the East Leinster League final by beating CUS in a very tight semi-final. The final against Larkin C.C. was held on Friday 9th of December in the Oblate Hall, Inchicore. The team gave it their all but lost out to the talented Larkin C.C. team by 11 points, we congratulate the boys on reaching the final and wish them well for the remainder of the season.

Castle Rugby

Castle Rugby continues to gather momentum under the stewardship of Jack O'Carroll and Jeremy Loughman. In the lead up to Christmas the team played Belvedere twice and Clongowes, each match being won or lost by a single score. We wish the squad well for the forthcoming League Campaign.

SCT

The SCT continue their preparations for the 2017 Cup campaign. We wish Cian Reilly, Captain, the squad and their coaches well for the upcoming campaign. Please **'Be There'** to support the team on cup days.



Mark Dunne scores a try (Rock V Michael's)

Cheerleading

Matthew Barry has been chosen as the Head Cheerleader for 2017. Michael Taaffe, Rhys Macken, James Cronin, Rob Young and Robert Somers have been chosen to complete the cheerleading committee. We wish Matthew and all the cheerleaders well for the season.

Chess

Chess continues to thrive in 6th Year. The school chess team including Ben Murphy, Joseph O'Donnell and Des Roche lost out to current Leinster Champions, Gonzaga, in a recent league match.

Soccer

Jack Reilly and the Senior Soccer team produced a brilliant display in beating Old Bawn C.C. in their last group game of the league. Blackrock have topped the group and have qualified for a home semi-final. Special thanks to Mr O'Brien, Sean O'Dowd (2015) and Brian Horgan (2014).

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a very Happy Christmas and good fortune for 2016.

Dates for your Diary

January

Monday 9th
Thursday 12th
Saturday 14th & 28th
Wednesday 25th
Friday 27th

Classes recommence.
6th Year Parent Teacher Meeting, 12:45 until 15:45.
Career Talks I & II (5th and 6th Year)
Career Interviews @ 7:30pm
Parents' Coffee Morning Gleasons 9.30 am

February
Friday 3rd
Sunday 5th
Thursday 9th

Parents' Coffee Morning Gleasons 9.30 am
Leman Festival Concert
Past v Present Debate @ 7:30pm

Pastoral Care Programme



In Christian tradition the word 'liturgy' is associated with the participation of the people of God in the celebration of divine worship and the Catholic Church highlights three particularly important aspects of meaningful liturgy. These are

- the full, conscious and active participation of all the faithful who are present,
- the celebration of Eucharist as the most important act of worship &
- the understanding of Sunday as the pre-eminent day for the liturgical assembly.

Since our return from the October mid-term break, the Blackrock College community has participated in a large variety of liturgies where God's presence has been celebrated and experienced by many. Two of these significant gatherings took place on Sunday mornings in the College chapel which was filled by families of Third and TY students. The Eucharist has also been celebrated each weekday morning at 8.15am and has marked two other very important occasions during November and December.

Finally, each of the liturgies outlined below involved the active participation of all the partners within the college community from Priest to Parent and from Pupil to Staff Member and it is important to highlight this contribution to the very active liturgical life of the college. From setting chairs to unlocking doors, from accompanying one's son to singing in the choir, from lighting candles to administering Eucharist, from serving mass to welcoming people, from preparing readers to carrying banners, from printing leaflets to serving teas, the list is endless...a very special thank you to all!

Third Year Family Mass – Sunday 13th November

Fr. Paddy Moran CSSp, the newly appointed Director of Spiritan Youth Services in Ireland was the chief celebrant at the 3rd Year Family Mass. In his homily, he reminded all present that every person has the capacity to 'do great things'. The O'Sullivan family led the congregation in the 'Family Faith Prayer', a copy of which was given to each family after Mass. Being celebrated in the month of November, another special focus during this gathering of the third year community was on family members who had died.

November & Mass of Remembrance – Wednesday 30th November

Throughout the month of November every RE class in the college was offered the opportunity to remember the dead within their families and communities through class prayer services. These were led by their religion teacher and held in our space at the back of the chapel. At the conclusion of each service, all present were invited to add the names of loved ones who had died to the Blackrock College November List of the Dead.

On Wednesday 30th November, this list of names was placed on the altar during the annual Mass of Remembrance when bereaved families associated with Blackrock joined the Spiritan and College Community in the chapel to give thanks to God for the lives of their loved ones and to find comfort and support in the celebration of the Eucharist. Fr. Tom Nash the main celebrant for this moving and uplifting liturgy reminded all present that 'They whom we love and lose are no longer where they were before, they are now wherever we are.' Many present also commented on the contribution made by the TY Boarders to this prayerful and appropriate event through their service both during and after Mass.

Transition Year Family Mass – Sunday 4th December

The Second Sunday of Advent was marked in the College with the celebration of the Transition Year Family Mass. The main celebrant was Fr. Marc Whelan CSSp (class of 1980), the Spiritan Provincial in Ireland. In a homily that was extremely well researched and received, Fr. Marc urged the TY students 'to stretch themselves, to be surprised, to be grateful and to emerge as deeper Christians' at the end of this special year in their lives. A unique feature of this celebration of the Eucharist was the invite extended to grandparents of the boys to attend this Mass. A special prayer for Grandparents was prayed by all during the Liturgy of the Word and a copy of it was presented to each family at the end of Mass. Fr. Marc is hoping to accompany the TY students as chaplain, on their pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in May 2017.



Ryan Fitzgerald with his grandmother, mother and sister at the TY Family Mass

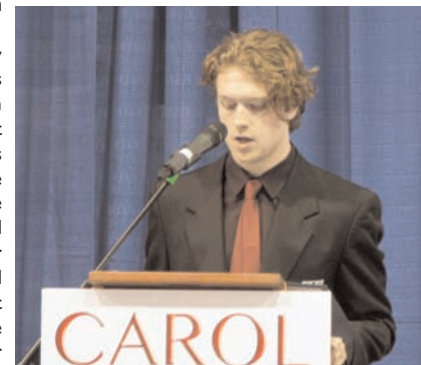
Dalkey & Monkstown Parish Mission – Thursday 17th November

Another feature of the Transition Year Family Mass was the use of the song 'Remain in Me, I am the Vine' during Holy Communion. This piece was composed by Curtis Stephan who is an American Catholic composer, musician and inspirational speaker. Curtis was invited to Ireland by Dalkey (175 years) and Monkstown (150 years) parishes as part of their respective celebrations, to assist a renewal of faith, commitment and parish involvement among teens and young adults. During his visit to Blackrock, accompanied by Erin Horomanski a lay youth worker in Dallas, Curtis spoke to and performed for our 5th Year students, led our senior cycle choir classes in a liturgical music workshop and performed at our Thursday tunes event! A busy morning that was very well received by all participants.



Carol Service – Tuesday 6th December

The Blackrock College community gathered in the Des Places Sports Hall for our annual Carol Service on December 6th. Once again the 1st Years from Willow Park joined us (1150 students were present!), where the Class of 2017 led the congregation most prayerfully and joyfully in word, music and song. Our college chaplain Mr Goan reminded all present that Christmas is about 'Presence' more than 'Presents' as he urged people to make time in their lives to be actively present for family, for self, for friends and for Jesus. As Mr MacGinty noted, it was a 'tremendous occasion', featuring the gifts and talents of so many people.



Roy Geary reading 'The Journey of the Magi' at the Carol Service.

Feast of the Immaculate Conception – Thursday December 8th

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception fell on a school day this year, so the Chaplaincy Department and Spiritan Community arranged Masses in the chapel for each year group. We thank the celebrants; Fr. Paddy Dundon (3rd Year & 5th Year), Fr. Tom Nash (Transition Year) and Fr. O'Brolchain (2nd Year & 6th Year) for leading the celebration and our RE teachers who delivered the homily. A wide variety of teachers and students participated in liturgical ministry on this day and a special thank you goes to Ms. Aoife O'Connor and Gavin Jones (TY) who provided the music for each Mass.

Finally...

In the New Testament the word 'Liturgy' also refers to the living out of the Gospel message through active charity and the service of one's neighbour and since October there has been plenty of pastoral activity within the Blackrock College community that reflects both Christian service and charity.

From 28th November to December 9th, students from RE45 participated in the Matthew 25 Programme where the focus is on service within the world of disability. Each Wednesday evening since mid-term, Ms. McMahon, Mr. Walsh, Ms. Marren and Mr Tom Ryan have continued to co-ordinate the Soup Run on city centre streets with teams of TY students and the Legion of Mary. Within all years, under the guidance of the Deans and the leadership of the House Representatives, fundraisers for the College's St. Vincent de Paul Christmas appeal have been very much in evidence. From supporting Duck Races to the 24 hour Fast, from participating in a Poker/Playstation Fifa night to the annual Soccer Marathon (details of all events are outlined elsewhere in the newsletter), students throughout the college have once again done their bit in trying to ensure that for those who are in need, Christmas 2016 may be a time where Joy, Peace, Love and Happiness may be experienced.

A Happy and a Holy Christmas to All!

Green Schools



Promoting Biodiversity

The College is working with Willow Park First Year and Willow Park Junior School as part of a Green Campus to achieve the An Taisce Green Schools Biodiversity Flag. We are fortunate to have a very enthusiastic and energetic committee led by Chairperson Conor Bailey. The committee is working hard on a wide variety of projects designed to heighten our awareness of biodiversity and enhance our grounds as an educational resource. The committee was also delighted that the Brent Geese Project (Willow Park, Blackrock College and BirdWatch Ireland) was part of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council's success at the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards scooping the Sustainable Environment Award. It has been a busy first term and the photo collage provides an insight into the various biodiversity projects that are underway.

Committee 2016/17

Coordinator: Mr Cathal Copeland

Chairperson: Conor Bailey (6th Year)

Vice Chairperson: Josh Warren (5th Year)

Secretary: Michael Ryan (TY)

Action Plan Coordinator: Conor O'Neill (TY)

5th Year: Conor Little, Hugo Murray and Karl Conroy.

Transition Year: Michael McDonald, Adam O'Sullivan, Andrew Ryan, Andrew Russell, Eoin Flanagan, James Gibney, Max McKenna, Patrick O'Connell, Ross Fitzpatrick, Drummond McGinn, Tom Moreland and Ruairi Moore.

3rd Year: Will Boyle.

2nd Year: Charlie Mullin, Mark O'Brien, Alex O'Keefe, Matthew Doyle, Andrew Ryan, Joey Haughton, Matthew Gibney, Scott Graham and Stephen Corr.

Mr Brian Herlihy (Deputy Principal), Mr Gerry Aylward (Parent/Teacher), Ms Claire Lewis (Teacher) Ms Kathryn Cummins (Housekeeping/Accommodation) and Mr Fintan O'Connor (Maintenance)

The Green Schools Committee, chaired by Conor Bailey (6th Year), would like to acknowledge the support and encouragement of the College management, subject, grounds, administration and maintenance departments.



Alder Buckthorn (Brimstone Butterfly Project)



Grey Squirrels



42 Economics Students preparing bird feeding station



Adam O'Sullivan and Andrew Ryan restoring the Crocus Holocaust Memorial Garden

Sport



Athletics

The expansion of our athletics programme has reaped many rewards as Blackrock performed incredibly in both the Leinster indoor and National indoor combined championships. In what was an exceptionally competitive field all boys excelled with most getting personal bests in Athlone. Athletes achieved personal bests in each event on what was a challenging and gruelling day, competing in all five events; hurdles, shot, long jump, 200m and 800m.

3 teams of four competed at junior, intermediate and senior level culminating in two of our senior athletes Shane Keane (6th Year) and Peter Murphy (4th Year) qualifying for the All Ireland on November 12th. Unfortunately Peter couldn't compete so Rolf Jager (6th Year) took his place. Both Shane and Rolf performed admirably finishing 5th and 6th respectively. We greatly look forward to seeing how both Shane and Rolf fare when they compete in their specialist events in the final term. Should anyone be interested in further participation in the Athletics Programme, training is held Tuesday and Thursday at 4.00pm by the tartan track and 7:30 am on Friday in the Sports Hall.

Badminton

The badminton season is underway with Blackrock having two U14 teams as well as an under 16 and under 19 team. In the under 14 both teams started with great vigour, with the A team winning out 5-1 and the B team winning a full 6-0, both against De La Salle, Churchtown. The under 14 squad members are as follows; Alex Bolger, Alex Cronnelly, Darragh Dempsey, Stephen O'Nualann, Andrew Ryan, Ben Ryan, Nathan Van Steenberge and Darragh Harrison, all from 2nd Year.

Representing the under 16s vs Gonzaga, Luke O'Brien, Oisín Mason and Shaiyann Awan (3rd Year) all won their singles matches while Andrew Ryan (2nd Year) narrowly lost his, giving Blackrock a commanding lead going into the doubles. The win was secured with a tight doubles victory. The final score overall was 4-2 to Blackrock. The under 16s will continue their league games after the Christmas Holidays.



The Senior Badminton Team: Conor Fitzpatrick, Oisín McEnroe, Luke O'Brien and Kevin O'Donnell.

The senior team (under 19s) were in action against Gonzaga College. Oisín McEnroe and Kevin O'Donnell (both 6th Year) won their singles matches 30-19 and 30-25 respectively. Conor Fitzpatrick and Ross Brandon (both 5th Year) lost two hard fought singles matches before both doubles pairings lost tight matches meaning the overall score was 4-2 to Gonzaga. The team had much better luck against Terenure College and won three of their singles matches and one of their doubles, with Blackrock winning overall 4-2. Our first home game was a tough fixture against St. Aidan's, with a number of excellent rallies and close games. Blackrock came out on top 5-1. The final game in the section saw Blackrock play Wesley College with again the score line resulting in a Blackrock win 5-1. Congratulations to the U19s team who look forward to the quarter finals after the Christmas holidays.

Chess

The Chess Club meets twice a week after school on Monday and Tuesday with their coach, Lukasz Goralski. It is open to all years.

The senior team consists of Ben Murphy, Joseph O'Donnell and Des Roche from 6th Year and Patrick Hassett and Joseph Eigbefoh from 5th Year. The team had a bye in their first round against St. Peter's College Dunboyne. The second round saw the team travel to Gonzaga, to play their A team. Gonzaga is the current Leinster league holders with members representing Ireland at the World Chess Olympiad. Everyone played to the best of their ability but unfortunately lost 5 nil to a very experienced team.

The U16 junior team are made up of Fergus Woods, Michael McDonald, Robert Kelly (4th Year) and John Cawley, Eoin Whooley (2nd Year). On Thursday 17th November the junior team played St. Benildus College A team. All team members had strong games but unfortunately the luck wasn't with Blackrock with the final score being 4 and half - half to St. Benildus. We wish both teams the best of luck in their remaining league matches in the New Year.

Cross Country

November 16th marked our annual Blackrock Cross Country invitational with over 400 students from schools across all of Dublin participating on our grounds. The standard was exceptionally high as we extended the invite to schools outside East Leinster this year in order to provide greater competition.

Blackrock fared very well at junior level coming in 5th place. The intermediate team came in 4th place, Liam Blackburn (3rd Year) and James Crowley (2nd Year) performing particularly well finishing in 9th and 16th place respectively.

Sport



A fine performance by the seniors saw them claim gold with Conor Halpin (5th Year), Patrick Fahy (5th Year) finishing 4th and 5th respectively whilst Ross McCann (6th Year) and Harry Kearns (5th Year) finishing 7th and 8th. A fantastic team performance! We look forward to seeing how the boys fare in the East Leinster Cross Country Championships this coming January.

Golf

In Golf news the senior golf team beat Dunshaughlin Community College in the Leinster match play semi-final and went on to win the final beating St Kieran's Kilkenny. Congratulations to James Cronin (Captain) and team.



Rowing

The Blackrock College rowers competed in the Leinster Indoor Competition on Saturday 26th November. In the under 14 category (a four minute time trial) MJ Power, Dan Casey, Mark Kenny, Daniel Kyrychenko, Peter O'Grady and Jack Tiernan (all 3rd Year) had excellent performances with Peter O'Grady finishing second and Daniel Kyrychenko placing third.

James Cronin (Captain), Ronan Cowhey, Patrick Sommers, Jack Small, Robert Abernethy.

The under 16 team comprising of Louis Crowe (3rd Year) James Gibney and Andrew Ryan (4th Year) and Johnny Kavanagh (5th Year) had to compete in a 2km time trial. Again an overall strong team performance with James Gibney taking first place. The next Indoor event is the National Championships in January.

The Muckross Head of the River Regatta took place on Saturday 3rd December at the national rowing centre in Cork. Blackrock entered into 10 different races at both individual and team level, with notable results being an individual 3rd placing for Louis Crowe and out of the 10 events entered Blackrock finishing in the top 5 in six of those events. Congratulations to all involved.

Rugby

Senior

The second term is always a busy one for cup squads as we move closer to the main cup draw; this year has been no different. A number of high profile and high intensity friendly matches have taken their toll and the depth of the squad has been hugely tested.

The collective have stood up to the challenges thrown in their path though with hard-fought close victories against RBAI and St Michaels straight after midterm, and then more comprehensive results against Belvedere and Crescent after that; Clongowes and Castletroy await this side of the Christmas break, before we build through the final stages of our preparations during the holiday period thereafter.

It has certainly been an excellent term for the group as a whole with great team spirit evident throughout the group. The leadership group of Captain Cian Reilly and his Vice-captains Charlie Ryan and Andrew Murphy should be congratulated in their roles in this. We wish them and all the squad well over the next few months.



Tom Roche (Rock V RBAI)



Robert Harvey, Milo Byrnes, Naoise Golden (2nd Year) (Rock V RBAI)

Junior

The junior squad continues to gather steam ahead of the Cup Campaign. The juniors have had fine wins over Clongowes, Belvedere and Crescent. Hugo O'Malley was elected Captain of the juniors with Mark Morrissey and Sam Small as Vice-Captains. The countdown to the 1st round of the cup has commenced and further matches against St Munchin's, Ballymena, CBC Cork and Gonzaga will take place prior to the cup. A strenuous two months await the squad with preparations on-going throughout the Christmas break.

Senior Soccer

After the disappointment of losing out in the Leinster Cup the soccer team have really impressed in their Metropolitan League campaign. Wins against Coolmine CS (6-0), Templeogue College (4-1) and Old Bawn (6-1) ensured the top spot in their group and a



Senior Soccer Squad

home semi-final against the winners of Marian College and St. John's, Ballyfermot. After Christmas the Leinster Shield will also commence so there is plenty still to play for.

Table Tennis

It has been a quiet term for table tennis with a lot of matches cancelled and rescheduled – a busy January ahead! Of the teams in action, junior 2B go into the Christmas break in a good position with a 6-0 win against Mountrath, but dropping to an unfortunate 3-3 draw against Glenart. Junior 2A had a better result against Glenart, through to the Junior Cup Last 16 with a 4-3 win, joining Blackrock A and Blackrock B who enjoyed byes to that round. Still to come before Christmas are matches for Senior A against Woodbrook and Marian, and for Minoa A against DLs Churchtown.

Tennis

Congratulations to Colm Kelly (2nd Year) on his performance at the Leinster under 14 Championships held in Leopardstown. Colm made it to the final 16 then into the final unfortunately just losing 7-6, 7-5. A great performance!

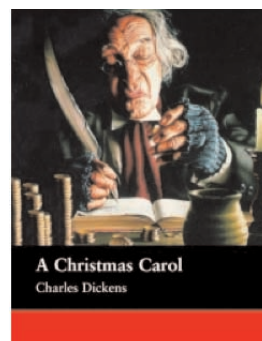
U-16 Basketball:

Since the October Midterm Blackrock under 16s continued their positive end to the first term of basketball by beating St. Michael's 27-21 in a very tight game and in doing so won the group and qualified for the East-Leinster quarter final. Here they came up against a very good Drimnagh Castle side who in the last thirty seconds edged a 40-36 win. While the loss at the quarter final stage was very disappointing, Captain Harry Moraghan and his squad will know that there is a lot more potential left in this squad and can look forward to next season with much optimism. Second Year Basketball will begin in the first week back in January.

U-19 Basketball:

Blackrock qualified for an All-Ireland quarter final which saw them play away from home against Ardscoil na Trinoide in Athy. On a tricky surface Blackrock managed the game well and won by a score of 36-20. Blackrock will play St. Munchin's in the All-Ireland Semi-final of the schools cup in the National Basketball Arena on December 20th. In the East-Leinster quarter final of the league Blackrock were outstanding as they defeated Drimnagh Castle 61-23 in what was to date the best performance of the season. Next up was CUS in the semi-final, Blackrock battling sickness amongst the team and playing well below their best withstood a huge test of character. Blackrock who were behind by a point with one minute to go went on to win by three points and now face Larkin Community College in the final.

Photos courtesy Rock Photography
www.rockphotography.ie



Reflection

At the end of *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens Scrooge declares,
"I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year."
Even when stress is highest and temperatures outside chilliest, there's something about Christmas time that brings joy and generosity to otherwise mundane moments. Find ways to harness that attitude throughout the year, and you'll be a better man for it.