

ST MICHAEL'S SCHOOL

BURGHCLERE - CHRISTMAS 2021

Dear Parents and Friends,

When are happy to share with you a few highlights of the autumn term at St Michael's School.

The school is a happy, studious little place. We have 58 pupils this year, a number we hope to see increasing as families discover that there is a school for their children, eager to teach their minds and nourish their hearts with good learning and happy friendships.

There are many more items of news and anecdotes to tell, but limited space only allows us to give you a few snapshots of school life. It is a real honour to lead our teachers and staff who work so hard, animated by a love of their profession and of the souls over which they have charge. Christ is at the centre of all that we do at St Michael's.

Please pray that the school remain always faithful to its primary purpose, which is to pass on to pupils the knowledge and love of Christ and of His creation, and the role they must play to help restore all things in Christ. Every child has talent and potential and it is our task to help these to develop and flower into knowledge and virtue. Unlike other schools, we can tap into the treasures of divine grace without which our efforts would be vain. Holy Mass is the climax of all our efforts. How wonderful to bring children to our Lord and watch them feast at His divine banquet.

This November, we applied for planning permission to build a new church for the school and parish. The submission marked the end of the first stage of the project, thus very much in progress. It is a very ambitious project for such a small school, but one that must be brought to fruition if we are to have a future. The present chapel

D esigned to encourage and reward good academic performance and general behaviour, bronze merit awards have been presented to the following pupils who have gained more that 40 merits during this first term:

Victoria Year 7 Luke Year 8
Natalia Year 7 Dominic Year 8
Amelia Year 7 Nicholas Year 8
Benedict Year 7 Andrew Year 9
Thomas Year 7 Xavier Year 9
Leon Year 7 Marcus Year 9
Miriam Year 7 Ralph Year 10

Joseph Year 7



Bravo and congratulations to these pupils! We hope they will be deservingly rewarded at home for their good conduct.



For more information: www.stmichaelarchangel.co.uk



building is in very poor condition and cannot last much longer.

The new church building will provide greater privacy and security to the school, in line with very stringent safeguarding obligations incumbent on all educational institutions. It will also allow for better pastoral care of the growing parish. The new church is therefore essential to St Michael's.

Archbishop Lefebvre, our founder, was an intrepid church builder, both during his missionary career in Africa and as founder and first superior of the Society of St Pius X. He used to say that when there is an apostolic need and it is prudent to move forward, God will always bring it to completion. We rely entirely on God's good Providence to bring to fruition this great project of a new church. Providence speaks and acts through the generosity of our benefactors without whom our children would have no school.

It is no longer the time for half-measures. We must give what we can to build up God's kingdom.

Finally, St Michael's celebrates this year its 30th anniversary. But more about this in another letter!

We assure you of our ever grateful prayers, especially in these difficult times, and we wish you all a happy and holy Christmastide and New Year.



Fr John Brucciani, Headmaster

History, a different approach

hat makes the study of history at St Michael's different from elsewhere? Ultimately, our students will still leave with the History GCSE, and hopefully at a level higher than they would otherwise have achieved. But if we were to reduce the study of history, or indeed any subject at St Michael's, to the end qualification, we would be guilty of the utilitarian error that most schools have fallen into, consciously or otherwise.

This is not to say that our students are not well prepared for the GCSE exam, quite the reverse. But exam success will come not because it is the end in itself but as a consequence, hopefully, of a deeper, better, understanding of history than they would have received elsewhere. As Hilaire Belloc once commented, a historian of the Middle Ages cannot understand the period without truly understanding the Mass. But you cannot give what you have not first received. So History that isn't taught through the lens of God's relationship with man, and the benefits of responding to that or the concomitant consequences of turning away from God, really misses the point.

It doesn't take a psychologist to understand why so many people suffer from despondency today. It is, in part, because they don't understand the world around them. They can't make sense of what they see. And of course the world isn't the way it is today by accident. We haven't suddenly been plunged into insanity; it's been steadily increasing for hundreds of years and now seems to be manifesting itself again in very particular ways.

The world wants students to believe history follows a continuous line of progress, which leads to improvements in every generation. This is only partly true, and dependent upon how it is taught can be very wrong. It explains why we encounter so many negative views of the past, especially about the Middle Ages. It helps to explain how ideas and movements such as the Scientific Revolution, the so-called 'Enlightenment' and the French and Russian Revolutions have been portrayed so positively and yet brought such darkness and error into the world.

History at St Michael's therefore is trying to help students make sense of the world today by understanding how we have got here, and why a right understanding of history can only be achieved by tracing events through time and dispelling some of the myths that have become established. In Year 7, we challenge the misconceptions about the medieval world and consider its many achievements. Students understand why the oft-cited accusation that the Crusades were examples of early Christian imperialism and aggression is totally false. Students also take a look at what life and freedom meant for people in the Middle Ages. As we step into Year 8, we trace the long-standing process, begun at the Renaissance but which really takes off at the Protestant Revolt, and

follow the consequences of erroneous ideas through the next four hundred years, exploring the Thirty Years War, the Scientific Revolution, the Enlightenment, the French Revolution and nineteenth century Liberalism along the way, all of which need to be understood to fully appreciate the horrors that are unleashed on the world in the twentieth century.

By Year 9, therefore, students should have a sufficiently broad understanding of the world (and it can only be broad as there's simply too much to cover!) to be well-placed to tackle the modern world at GCSE. As I've stated before, part of the reason we begin the GCSE in Year 9 is to give students the time and opportunity to explore the required topics in a breadth that would not otherwise be possible if we stuck rigidly to exam board requirements.

The four modules that we study at GCSE at St Michael's have been chosen for the flow and relationships between each topic. After studying the causes, events and effects of World War I, we move into the immediate impact this had on Germany and the way the world had changed as a result of the Great War. Students look at the early struggles the new German republic faced, before understanding the rise of the Nazis, who lead the world into its second form of totalitarian government. The first, of course, comes in Russia, reshaped during WW1 and beyond by the tragic events of the 1917 revolutions that bring communism to power. Students are able to look at the devastating impact communist ideology had on that country, before returning to the midst of WW1 to examine the origins of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Rather than an ancient, biblical struggle, as is often believed, it is modern Britain and France that shape events there.

All of these issues will be explored in light of assessment requirements, which encourage students to deepen their knowledge and begin to organise and apply that knowledge in a skilful, precise way. Ultimately, history is a fabulous subject to encourage students to learn how to think and organise their ideas so that they can be well-equipped to identify and avoid modern intellectual and philosophical errors and understand that there are alternative ways to think and live.





DRAMA CLUB -

his year's project has been the somewhat ambitious one of staging Twelve Angry Men by Reginald Rose. Originally written as a screenplay, it is a work of deceptively simple and dramatically challenging dialogue which raises themes of perennial interest. The plot line is straightforward: twelve jurymen are entrusted with deciding the guilt and the fate of a nineteen year old accused of patricide. The drama itself is a challenging one for young people as they re-enact the entrapment of several strangers in the same room. Interestingly, the characters are only designated by their jury numbers, suggesting that they represent us; they symbolise every human being. Finding that time hangs heavily on

their hands, the characters reveal conflicts and contrasts both internal and external...

Surprisingly enough, the guilt or innocence of the accused youth is not the central preoccupation of the play. Central, instead, to the drama are the themes of personal responsibility, truth-seeking and self-knowledge. The key to the resolution is not whether the boy is certainly innocent, but whether or not there is a reasonable doubt of his guilt. With a skilfully perceptive hand, the writer shows just how many obstacles block the way to an incisive and decisive recognition of truth. Peer pressure, groupthink, lazy indifference, preoccupation with desires of ease and pleasure, prejudice, cynicism, fear and personal hurts combine to render slippery and uncertain the characters' grasp on truth. Will justice and integrity win the field?

Each play brings its own peculiar challenges: last year's brought the difficulty of synchronising the stage changes as well as representing several settings and flashbacks with limited staging facilities. This year's play challenged the students to inject

nuance into their dialogue and to remain in character for extended periods. After the initial excitement of script reading and role choosing, students were tempted to flag in their efforts at the crucial midway point, before the pressure and excitement of Show Day pressed them to take that last leap forward. As for any achievement, the pressure to give up and to give in presses hard on the cast in the last few weeks. That is why notable mention must be made of our brave captains in Year 11, Samuel Sudlow, Awen de Penfentenyo and Thomas Martinez, who in their respective roles as actors and understudies set a valiant example of line learning - on top of their GCSE studies. Nor should we forget Xavier Morley, who stepped in and integrated seamlessly for the last three or four rehearsals.





Not theatre, but the real thing! Waiters duly attired for the termly Cadet NCO meal, hosted by Fr Holden and Sergeant Christian Brucciani.

THEATRE TRIP YEARS 9-11

Pupils and staff attended an enthralling performance of Macbeth at the Whitty Theatre, Wokinghm, as part



of their GCSE's English Literature Program. Seeing a play is vital to understanding the literary genius that shines through the story sequence and the interplay of characters.

Theatres have been closed for over a year. Ms Murphy jumped at this opportunity and did not regret it! The adaptation was perfect!

SCIENCES

he new academic year has started very well with the Year 11s making **Maths** excellent progress towards their exams next summer. Having seen a super video on measuring the radius of the earth using basic GCSE trigonometry, I've decided that when the weather is warmer, I will head for Combe Gibbet with some of my classes and see if we can take measurements that enable us to find the radius of the earth. Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 will take part in the various UKMT online challenges but a team challenge is looking unlikely. To keep you all occupied over the Christmas holidays, here are some examples of the type of problems that the UKMT come up with to test the Year 7 and 8s!

Billy has three times as many llamas as lambs. Milly has twice as many lambs as llamas. They have 17 animals in total. How many of the animals are llamas?

A5 B6 C7 D8

improve next time.

his term pupils have had the chance to create a document about a specialised cell. Thanks to their ICT lessons with Fr Dominic, the pupils had a good

Science YEAR 7

grasp of the skills needed to produce a document and there were some excellent results. They also spent time

ear 8 had a chance to create a poster about The Solar System for the Primary School, also using Google documents.

reviewing each other's documents, learning from other people's good ideas and reflecting on how they could

uring the month of September, a Geography very excited group of year 10 pupils headed out to The Chase, in

Woolton Hill, to complete the first of two required pieces of fieldwork. Their task was to look at how a tributary of the River Enborne, which runs through this piece of National Trust land, changes as it flows downstream.

Pupils worked in groups to collect data including: the cross profile of the river channel; the velocity of the river discharge; and observation of any river landforms. This data was then used, along with secondary data, to decide how the tributary changes.

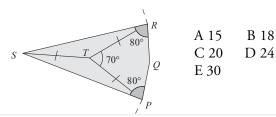
Fieldwork gives pupils a chance to see natural examples of the theories and concepts that they have studied, as well as giving them a chance to master practical skills. Information from fieldwork is needed to answer some of the questions in paper 3 of the Geography GCSE.

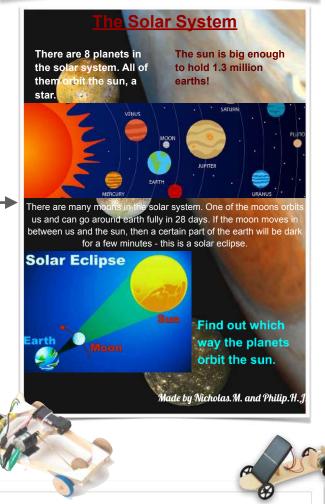
As always, the pupils were a pleasure to take out and a credit to St Michael's.

The diagram shows an equilateral triangle, a square, and one diagonal of the square. What is the value of x?

A 105 C 115 B 110 D 120 E 135

In the diagram PQ and QR are sides of a regular n-sided polygon, ∠SPQ = ∠SRQ = 80°, ∠PTR = 70° and PT = ST = RT. What is the value of n?



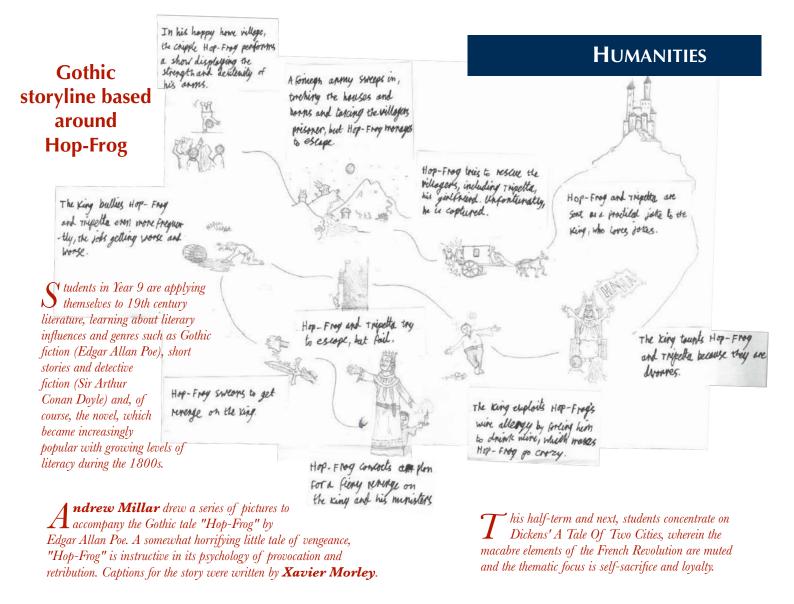


Easter Term STEM (

Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths

MARVELLOUS MACHINES

Years 7 to 9, Wednesdays 3.30pm. £20



Latin

S tudents at St Michael's study Latin up to GCSE. They are introduced to the subject in Year 7,

when they start discovering the language, mastering some of the key vocabulary used up to exam level as well as exploring its origins. For students starting a Classical subject this raises important questions: "Why do we learn Latin?" "Why is it such a useful subject to study?"

While often considered a "dead language", Latin is very much alive, and constitutes the base of so-called romance languages such as French, Italian, Spanish, as well as the root of many English terms. Exploring the origins of Latin words enables pupils to widen their English vocabulary and comprehend the meaning of more complex and intellectual literature. It also encourages them to piece together elements of the wider jigsaw of European idioms. When teaching Latin to pupils who speak other Latin-derived languages, they are often taken aback by just how similar so much of the vocabulary is to the original Latin. This is also helpful when learning a new European language later in life.

Latin uses a very logical and structured phraseology. It has been proven that learning Latin improves critical thinking and problem-solving skills. While not language-based, these skills can be applied across the curriculum in other subjects as well. Interestingly, many people who study Classics at university often choose careers which involve thinking skills, rather than linguistics, as their prior knowledge of Latin has been helpful in making their choice.

Although there may not appear to be an apparent link to Latin, there are many other careers to which this can be relevant, such as legal and medical professions, which use Latin terminology. In more recent times, links have been made between studying Latin and having a good understanding of computer coding.

For Roman Catholics this is not just a classical language, but it is also the language of the Church. Learning this language brings the added advantage of developing a greater understanding of the words used in the liturgy.

We are proud to offer Latin studies at St Michael's, grounding our children's education and widening their horizons.

News from the Primary Phase

The run up to Christmas is a joyful time in Primary. It follows another busy term.

The Infants learnt about the Great Fire of London, seasons, fairy tales and different materials. We explored a beautiful woodland that inspired poetry writing.

All the children took part in National Poetry Day, and the finalists performed for their families, who in turn shared poems with them.

Cookery has been a feature of this term. Each class learnt to chop, grate, rub in and roll pastry.

J unior 1 learnt about the Stone Age to the Iron Age and was able to visit Andover's Iron Age Museum. The trip was very interesting with plenty of displays, including an 80,000 lego brick model of the Danebury Hill Fort.

Junior 2 travelled by train to London to visit The Natural History Museum. As part of their geography studies, they experienced the "earthquake room" where they looked at natural disasters. They also took part in the national Primary maths challenge. Congratulations to Joseph and Harry who achieved a bronze award.

The school council met to discuss playtime games and to establish a weekly chess club. This has proven very popular, with some of our younger children giving the older ones quite a challenge!

The children visited Burghclere cemetery to pray for the Holy Souls in November and remembered those who died in all wars.

For Advent, we created a Jesse Tree, with readings from the Old Testament for each day. St Nicholas visited and gave each child a specific challenge to improve behaviour. In preparation fo the Christmas play, we learnt by heart traditional carols and readings. The Infants dressed in traditional costumes to accompany what turned out to be a delightful performance of narration, readings and traditional carols

The benefactors were not forgotten. Each Monday, after Primary Mass, prayers are offered for all those known and unknown to us who help the school. We are so very grateful for your support.

Wishing you a blessed Christmas!

Annalisa Webb, Head of Primary



Mr Malliff, Head of Secondary

As Head of Secondary, Mr Malliff is a member of SLT and manages the Teaching, Learning, Curriculum and Assessment at St Michael's School. He is also the Teacher of History. Mr Malliff undertook his BA (Hon.) in History at the University of York, gained QTS through a PGCE at the University of Cambridge and received his MA in Modern Church History through Heythrop College, University of London.

Mr Malliff joined the school in 2018 and has years of experience in and with schools as a teacher, and as a manager in central and local government and the private sector.

Mrs Roch, Head of Sciences

As Head of Sciences, Mrs Roch manages the Science Department, which includes the teaching and assessment of Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics.

Mrs Roch undertook her Bachelors Degree in Biology, English and Chemistry at Keele University and gained QTS through Keele University. Mrs Roch runs the STEM club each spring and helps in the preparation of the annual Carol Service.

Mrs Roch joined the school in 2008 and has extensive experience as a teacher and Head of Department across Berkshire and Hampshire schools where she has also served as school governor.

Mr Friar, Science Teacher and SENCo

Mr Friar teaches Chemistry and Physics within the Science curriculum. He undertook his BSc. and MSc. at the University of Bristol and gained QTS through a PGCE at the University of St Mark and St John.

As SENCo, Mr Friar is responsible for coordinating special educational needs across the school. He has recently gained the National Award for SEN Coordination through the University of Middlesex, which makes him a fully qualified SENCo.

Mr Friar joined the school in 2017 and has previous experience outside of schools, as well as teaching in other settings. He plays a key role each year in the STEM club and preparation for the annual Carol Service.

Mrs Damiani, Head of Languages

As Head of Languages, Mrs Damiani manages the teaching and assessment of French and Latin across the secondary school, and she provides one to one support to students whose first language is not English. Mrs Damiani undertook her BA (Hon.) in French with TEFL at the University of Exeter and gained QTS through a PGCE at Oxford Brookes University and her MA in French Interpreting and Translation from the University of Bath.

Mrs Damiani was schooled by the French Dominican nuns of St Pré, France. She joined St Michael's in 2021 and has extensive experience as a teacher in independent and preparatory schools. Mrs Damiani is hoping to run a cookery class in the summer term.

Miss Murphy, Head of Humanities

As Head of Humanities, Miss Murphy manages the Humanities Department, which includes the teaching and assessment of English Language, English Literature and Drama, and the management of French, History, Latin and EFL. Miss Murphy undertook her BA (Hon.) in English and German at University College, Cork, and gained QTS through a Graduate Diploma at St Patrick's College, Dublin. Miss Murphy has a Bronze Medal from LAMDA for Speech and Drama and runs the Drama club, through which the school enjoys a secondary play each Christmas.

Miss Murphy joined the school in 2011 and has extensive experience as a teacher in various settings and across all age groups.

Mrs Blatchford, Maths Teacher

Mrs Blatchford is responsible for the teaching and assessment of Maths and Further Maths across the secondary school. Mrs Blatchford undertook her BSc (Hon.) in Science and Education at the University of Exeter, through which she also gained QTS. Mrs Blatchford oversees the annual Maths Challenge across KS3 and KS4 and plays a key role each year in the STEM club and preparation for the annual Carol Service.

Mrs Blatchford joined the school in 2007.

Ongratulations to Mr Friar NEW SENCO!

graduate Certificate National Award for SEN
Coordination. In view of an already punishing teaching
schedule, this is quite an achievement! A qualified
SENCo on staff allows the school to better meet the
needs of academically vulnerable pupils who by
identifying and addressing any special needs.

Behaviour

Creative

Spiritual

Academic

THE FOLLOWING STUDENTS HAVE BEEN AWARDED

FULL COLOURS

ANDREW BLATCHFORD, following a successful season with the Andover Men's Cricket Club.

HALF-COLOURS

JUDE REXWORTHY,

For an exception tally of academic merits in 2020-21.

MARCUS SHERRY

For designing and creating a working metal forge.

EDUARDO NAVARRO LUKE SUDLOW THOMAS MALLIFF

for achievements in Drama





On Armistice Day St Michael's Cadet Force was invited to Amesbury Abbey Care Home to lay a wreath in the presence of retired officers and soldiers and their families. Their marching skills and general decorum were much admired and commended. It was an honour to parade "for real".



It takes three months to earn the beret!



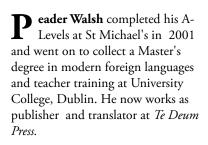


New Faces! A fter an unforeseen month visa delay, fter an unforeseen six Fr Jonathan Steele has finally arrived from the US. Ordained in June 2021, he replaces our much missed Fr Hennick who will soon take up his new post in Scotland. Fr Steele is a musician. He will take charge of the Cadet band and also study ways to locate and develop the hidden vocal skills of our boys!

rother Dominic Tomaszycki joins us from the USA. He pronounced his first vows as a religious brother of the Society of St Pius X in 2010 and took final vows in 2017. Brother Dominic takes over Brother Ignatius' role in the kitchen, a job he is very familiar with and enjoys very much. That's a relief! We are incredibly blessed to have not only three priests in residence, but two religious brothers. Archbishop Lefebvre, our founder,

liked to call the brothers "guardian angels of the community." They provide precious material help to the priestly community and support the communal life of prayer and religious observance in the priory.

Old Faces!







he now Fr Martin Griffiths, FSSR, was ordained to the sacred priesthood in 2020 after completing his studies at Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary, Nebraska, USA.

ominic Griffiths attended St Michael's from 1998 to 2002. He pronounced his first vows as a Redemptorist in 2007 and took the name of Br Martin Mary of the Crown of Thorns.



PLEASE HELP US IMPROVE AGEING EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATIONS

NEW BLINDS - DORMS AND CLASSROOMS

This summer, we installed blinds in the lower dorm. What a difference they make: clean, practical, efficient!

We have received an **unbeatable quote** to install the same heavy duty, blackout roller binds in the upper dorm, tough enough to resist teenage enthusiasm! **Quote £600 total.**

With the installation of projectors for each classroom, kindly gifted a year ago, we now need proper blinds in the classroom to give to rest the strain on the children's eyes in 3 classrooms.

Dorms - black out heavy duty blinds £80 per window, 12 windows.

£600

Classrooms £160 each x 3 classrooms

£480

SITE AND INTERNET SECURITY

B urglars visited in November, broke through the roof of the workshop and stole £5000+ of tools and equipment. We have decided to go ahead with a longterm plan of improving site security with cameras, motion detectors and alarms in vulnerable parts of the school property. The police have warned us that schools are very popular burglary targets.

This has led to a long overdue data network overhaul. The new network allows us to integrate and monitor the new site security equipment and also provides cyber protection for our computers, network and internet usage. These are important factors in themselves. They are also Ofsted requirements.

Item	Price	Number	Total
Flood lights	£210	4	£840
Security Cameras	£46	9	£414
Motion Sensors	£12	15	£180
Cabling, conduit	£400	1	£400
Advanced Router	£350	1	£350
Smart Switches	£90	3	£270
Wifi access points	£80	12	£960
Labour	Fr. T. O'Hart		Priceless
Total			£3414

CLASSROOM FLOORING

Current carpets are stained and rotten. This summer, we installed new laminated flooring in Year 9.

The terrible carpet smell in Year 11 obliges us to remedy the situation during the Christmas holidays.

1 Classroom floor = 30.5 m² = £400 each (x3 classrooms floors to renew!)

COMPUTERS

As the demand for digital fluency increases, we hope to replace our old computers that are no longer adequate for pupil needs. These will be controlled by our new router to ensure maximum pupil safety.

1 Chromebook = £150 each (x6)



WHITE HOUSE - SOUTH FACE RENDERING

Beaten and buffeted by the weather, the South facing walls of St Raphael's House are in need of repair and protection. This will solve the damp and mould problems on the inside walls. Project expense:

- Install scaffolding
- Remove old render so that building can breath
- Protect windows and doors
- Install new, breathable, white-coloured render (no maintenance)

£26 000 (materials and labour)

SAINT MICHAEL'S SCHOOL

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the day of each me	of Scotland, Newbury onth until further note Acc. Number: 1019 B oost your don by the charity	Branch, 20 Mice. 1323 for the containing by 25p for the tax y	Aarket Place, Newbury, RG14 5BD on credit of St. Michael's School. For every £1 you donate. Gift Aid is reclaimed rou pay for the current tax year. To you as a current UK taxpayer.		
	llowing donations to	the Society of	St Pius X (please tick the correct boxes)		
this donation		all donat	ions for the 2019-20 tax year		
all donations for the	2017-18 tax year	all donat	ions for the 2020-21 tax year		
all donations for the	2018-19 tax year	all donat	ions from 6th April 2021 until further notice		
* *			ax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the are it is my responsibility to pay any difference.		
Signature			Date:		
Please notify us if you was pay sufficient tax on your		~ .	our name or home address or no longer		

God bless you for your kindness! Return form to address above. Questions? Call us at 01635 278137.

HOLY MASS OFFERED FOR ALL OUR BENEFACTORS ON THE 1ST FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH.