

# SAINT MICHAEL'S SCHOOL



SUMMER 2021



**D**ear Parents, Benefactors and Friends,

The photos speak for themselves. They represent the crowning glory of any Catholic school, but especially a school run by a congregation dedicated to the promotion of the Catholic priesthood.

In recent weeks, two former pupils received the sacrament of ordination. Frs Emmerich Jeindl and Dominic O'Hart both look back at St Michael's as a defining factor in their journey to the Catholic priesthood. Were it not for the classroom education they received and the quiet influence of daily routines organised around the Mass and the Rosary, and all those little things that make up the Catholic ethos of our school, our new Fathers may have pursued a different path in life.

Indeed, the ultimate goal of a Catholic school, as of any Catholic work, is the salvation of souls. We measure our success from the standpoint of the soul's relationship with God. If our pupils continue in the practice of their Faith and in the service of their neighbour, the school has been successful. And if some pupils go on to *dedicate* their lives to God and to neighbour, then the school is truly honoured.

God's Providence often mixes happiness with a little sadness. We say goodbye to Fathers Barrett and Hennick, both of who return home to Canada and the US to resume duties there. Father Barrett has been with us for six years and was instrumental in founding and

*Father Dominic gives his first blessing to his brother, Fr Thomas. Fr Emmerich Jeindl stands with his family. Both fathers have brothers who are fellow priests.*

developing the Cadet Band. Fr Hennick has spent five years at St Michael's and has always startled the boys with his accurate knowledge of things they would term as « cool ». Both Fathers will be missed in and out of the classroom. They have offered the boys an example of steady dedication and evenness of temper.

Fr Hennick will be replaced by Fr Dominic O'Hart, who joins his brother as assistant Housemaster.

Finally, our dear Brother Ignatius, who has silently laboured since 2004 in the kitchen, who has never missed his chapel duties, who has always been ready to help, who has never asked anything for himself ... Brother returns to his native Philippines for some long overdue rest and repose. There he awaits his new place of assignment.

Between lockdowns, a plethora of state guidance and priests and teachers coming and going, St Michael's continues to provide a good school for its pupils, one where their Faith is set on a sure foundation of good academics and a general Catholic ethos. Deo Gratias for our new priests!

*Rev. John Brucciani, Headmaster*

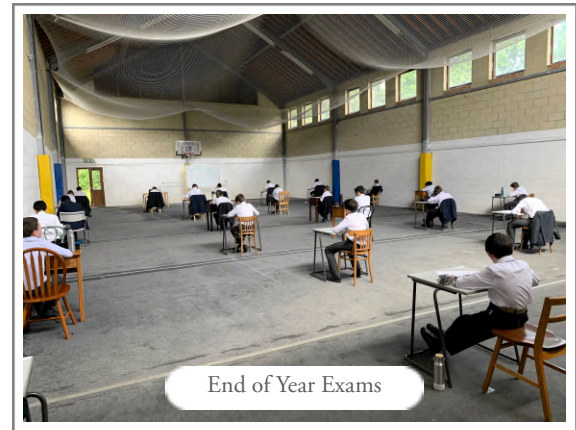


Thank you to Fr  
Barrett, Fr  
Hennick, and to  
Brother Ignatius  
for so many  
years of service!

Over the last few years, the school's curriculum and assessment have undergone quite significant reform. In 2018-19, the school introduced the English Baccalaureate to guarantee 8 GCSE subjects for every student. Since then, we have introduced Geography as a GCSE and Further Maths as a formal qualification. In support of good teaching, learning and assessment, the school moved to a one-hour timetable and introduced CAT tests (Cognitive Ability Tests) for all Year 7 and Year 9 students. These tests provide a baseline of expectations as pupils enter the secondary phase and set target and challenge grades at GCSE. Progress tests have also been introduced in English and Maths. All of this has given teachers much clearer indications of expectations and a gauge for progress. We have introduced Heads of Department to oversee the two main areas of the curriculum – Humanities (English, History, French & Latin) and Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Maths and Geography) – and reduced the number of staff in secondary, so that all staff are full-time and committed to providing the best opportunities for all students. In 2021-22, for the first time in St Michael's history, the school will have a suite of teachers teaching across GCSE who are all fully qualified teachers, something that most schools up and down the country would be unable to say.

The curriculum is of course broader than just the GCSE subjects, so form tutors have been re-established to provide first-line pastoral support for students during the school day, in support of what the priests provide for Day and Boarding students. A clear programme of PSHE (personal, social and health education), based securely on the school's Catholicism, has been developed in form time and assemblies, linked to the Church's liturgical year and feast days, safeguarding issues and those areas of broader interest in terms of careers and the wider world. We have enjoyed some fascinating insights from external speakers, from the worlds of a policeman, a parliamentary clerk, to speakers who campaign in support of the protection of the unborn. In addition, despite restrictions on resources, we have broadened the scope of extra-curricular activities, building upon the well-established cadet force to provide STEM club (science, technology, engineering and maths), drama, art, band and woodwork and extra sport.

From the beginning of the next school year there will be further, slight reforms to both the Key Stage 3 (KS3) and Key Stage 4 (KS4) curricula, which will see



some of these extra-curricular subjects incorporated into the main timetable. By broadening the KS3 curriculum (Years 7 & 8) we will be able to offer Art and Music alongside RK, Science, English, Maths, History, Geography, Latin and PE, in addition to form time, assembly and weekly whole school Mass and Benediction. This will provide a better platform for students to step out of primary education and to become accustomed to the additional demands of secondary education, without there being such a big jump into the structure of GCSE. Years 7 and 8 should, therefore, be a better transition for students and reinforce the fact that once students step into Year 9 and embark on their GCSE courses they are entering the 'business end' of their secondary education.

In KS4, we make a further addition to the suite of GCSEs by introducing Latin as a GCSE. We are able to do this due to the appointment of a new Head of Languages, Mrs Damiani, and by moving to Combined Science, which continues to provide students with access to each of the science subjects – Biology, Chemistry and Physics – with two GCSEs grades in Science at the end, allowing for a slight reduction in the number of science lessons per week. Collectively, this provides the perfect balance across the KS4 curriculum of five Humanities subjects (English Language, English Literature, History, French and Latin) and five Sciences (Maths, Further Maths, Combined Sciences and Geography). The Head of Sciences, Mrs Roch, has the following to add concerning changes to science from September:

In Years 7 and 8, students will have four lessons of science each week, two with Mrs Roch and two with Mr Friar. These members of staff will continue to teach their specialist subject with Mrs Roch teaching all of the biology and Mr Friar teaching all of the chemistry. The physics modules will be split

between the staff. We will continue to follow the Mastery Science course at KS3 and the emphasis on practical skills will remain.

In Years 9 and 10, students will also have four lessons each week; these will be split in the same way as at KS3. Pupils will study the AQA Combined Science Trilogy syllabus. Biology, Chemistry and Physics will be taught in separate modules and there will be an equal amount of each science in the course. At the end of the course science is examined by six GCSE papers, two for each subject. The marks are combined to give each pupil two science grades at GCSE. There is no impact on pupils at A level as a result of studying Combined Science at GCSE.

In academic year 2021–22 Year 11 pupils will continue to study separate sciences and take to GCSE examinations in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

And of course, the curriculum is based on Religious Knowledge (RK), and the daily practice of charity and the other virtues. RK has pride of place at St Michael's, and students are taught that all knowledge flows from our understanding of Our Lord and His Church. I would

encourage readers to read, or re-read, Fr Hennick's summary of the true meaning of education and how we seek to apply this at St Michael's (document forthcoming).

It is tempting to say that these latest changes are the last piece of the jigsaw, although the school will continue to review and look for improvements where and if necessary. The overwhelming goal of teachers and priests at St Michael's is, of course, to encourage students to know, love and serve God and our neighbour. A solid grounding in the understanding and practice of the faith, as well as the capacity to formulate clear and rational thought, which the academic subjects should provide, is of paramount importance. We have staff and priests who genuinely care for the well-being of the students and show practical charity in providing authentic Catholic education and instilling a desire to learn and understand the world around them, especially in understanding how the Faith protects them in a world where God is no longer present. St Michael's gives its pupils the intellectual and moral tools necessary to discern right from wrong, in the light of Divine Revelation. ✱

## AN APPRECIATION & AN INTRODUCTION

For friends and alumni of St Michael's, she has been a lighthouse and a foundation stone. She has epitomised the work ethic and led two generations of verb learners and studious speakers. She is remembered with affection by former students across the continent. Sadly, however, the time has come to say farewell to our esteemed colleague, **Mrs Dany Withers**, teacher of French since the foundational years of St Michael's School.

Mrs Withers will be replaced by Mrs Emiliana Damiani, who will take over the position of French teacher and subsume it into the broader role of Head of Languages. Mrs Damiani is a qualified and experienced secondary teacher, a fluent speaker of French and current Head of Classics. Her qualifications and experience thus enable the school to offer Latin to GCSE level after a rather long hiatus. Her TEFL qualification and experience also enable her to take on the role of English as an Additional Language coordinator and teacher, a position which has of recent years burgeoned beyond the capacity of the Head of Humanities who is also the sole English teacher.



We extend our warm gratitude to Mrs Withers and look forward to hopefully frequent visits. We also look forward to welcoming Mrs Damiani as a member of the Humanities Department.



May  
Procession  
2021

St Michael's  
pays honour  
to its Queen  
and Mother

Catholic  
schools  
belong to  
Our Lady.





# SCHOOL PRIZES 2021



For the second year in a row we were unable to hold the end of year prizegiving ceremony for the Senior School. It is a great, great shame that we were unable to publicly acknowledge and congratulate those pupils who have earned reward and recommendation.

OUTSTANDING STUDENT PRIZE - SECONDARY PHASE		
HUMANITIES	SCIENCES	R. K.
Jude Rexworthy (KS3)	Xavier Morley (KS3)	Jude Rexworthy (KS3)
Ralph Morley (KS4)	Basil Seeber (KS4)	Basil Seeber (KS4)

MOST PROGRESS PRIZE - SECONDARY PHASE				
SUBJECT	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 11
ENGLISH	Luke Sudlow	Andrew Millar	Peter Little	Basil Seeber
FRENCH	Nicholas Martinez	Francesco Debiasi	Jack Heath	Sam Sudlow
HISTORY	Sebastian Holmes	Xavier Morley	Joseph de Latour	Sam Sudlow
R.K.	Nicholas Martinez	Francesco Debiasi	Andrew Blatchford	Pius Barti
BIOLOGY	Luke Sudlow	David Lord	Joseph de Latour	Pius Barti
CHEMISTRY	Nicholas Martinez	Jude Rexworthy	Thomas Malliff	Thomas Martinez
PHYSICS	Sebastian Holmes	Marcus Sherry	Ralph Morley	Awen de Penfentenyo
MATHEMATICS	Dominic Pearce	Nicholas McInnes	Ralph Morley	Sam Sudlow
LATIN	Luke Sudlow	Francis Morris	Jack Heath	N/A
GEOGRAPHY	Luke Sudlow	Andrew Millar	Peter Little	Basil Seeber

<b>BEST SPORTSMAN</b>	Awen de Penfentenyo	<b>HIGHEST SCORER</b>	Pius Barti (football)
<b>BEST YOUNG PLAYER</b>	Andrew Millar	<b>TABLE TENNIS</b>	Joseph de La Tour
<b>MOST IMPROVED</b>	Peter Little	<b>TENNIS</b>	Joseph de La Tour
<b>BEST IN GOAL</b>	Andrew Blatchford	<b>CHESS</b>	Ralph Morley

2020-21 MERITS WINNERS
<b>Jude Rexworthy - 178</b>
Sebastien Holmes - 151 (Gold)
Xavier Morley - 148

## HOUSE WINNERS 2021

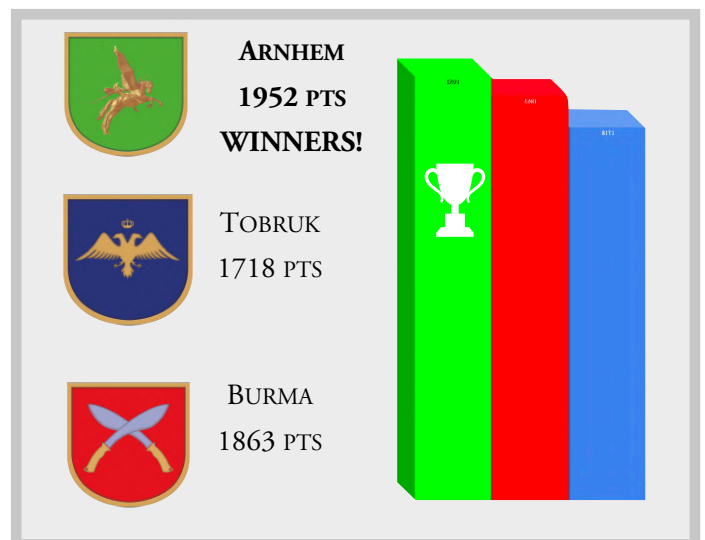
The **Inter-House Michaelean Cup** competition has been a close thing since Easter. Team members' individual merits make up the scores, but the various sporting competitions make the difference. Winners earn points for themselves and their teams. The decisive event that has tipped the balance is the Cadet Best Section award that goes, this year, to Arnhem. At the last minute, this award has placed Arnhem in the lead, ahead of Burma. Arnhem wins!

**Arnhem lifts the new Michaelean Cup, donated by a kind benefactor and which will take pride of place in the trophy cabinet.**

**CONGRATULATIONS TO  
ARNHEM HOUSE AND WELL  
DONE TO ALL ITS MEMBERS!**

*The Michaelean Cup acknowledges the team members' personal efforts and progress and their collective contributions to school life.*

**ACADEMIC (HALF COLOURS)**  
**JUDE REXWORTHY**  
Attained 178 academic merits in a single school year.



This term has been packed with activities designed to enhance learning and build confidence.

Junior 1 and 2 completed design technology projects. Many thanks to Mrs Roch who gave up her own time to help the children. Junior 1 designed and made bridges, and Junior 2 designed and built pullback vehicles. The project gave the children the opportunity for problem solving and evaluating their work.



In history, Junior 1 studied the history of the village and the school. The school grounds were known as 'The Grange' before they were St Michael's. The Grange is mentioned as a small holding in the Domesday Book! Junior 2s have been comparing British monarchs, so they visited Hampton Court to compare Tudor and Georgian lifestyles.



With very little rehearsal time, the children performed, 'A Tale of a Fair', a play about the nursery rhyme characters. They spoke and sang beautifully and had lots of fun. Sports Day took place in the gym due to the poor weather, but the children showed great sportsmanship, cheering and encouraging each other.



We were lucky enough to finish the year with a prizegiving outside. Congratulations to all the children on their hard work and excellent behaviour. Despite the Covid difficulties this year, our small class sizes and individual attention have meant that every child has made good progress. Finally, I would like to thank the Primary staff for their continuous hard work and dedication to the children, which made this term so special.

## First Communicants' Novena Prayer

My God, help me to make a good Holy Communion.

To Thy glory and for the good of my soul I wish to receive the Most Holy Sacrament.

Mary, my Mother, pray to Jesus for me.

My good Angel Guardian, lead me to the altar of God.

My patron Saints, pray for me that I may receive the Lord with a heart that is pleasing to him and with great profit to my soul.



1st Communions, 6th June

## English Literature: *Beowulf*, the Anglo-Saxon Language & Kennings

English literature classes train students to study not just the historical and biographical context of the text, but also the literary context. The latter offers openings for studying the evolution of the written text and the influences of various languages on modern English. Year 7 enjoyed Rosemary Sutcliff's modern novelisation of the Anglo-Saxon epic poem *Beowulf*. Reading *Beowulf* was an opportunity to understand Anglo-Saxon culture and values as well as to explore distinctive aspects of Anglo-Saxon language, chief among these being the kenning. A form of figurative language particularly suited to poetry, the kenning is defined as a circumlocution or "roundabout" way of describing a noun. In modern English translations the kenning usually features two unrelated, hyphenated nouns which together form a metaphor. Thus, in *Beowulf*, a "whale-road" is the sea and "sky-candle" is the sun.

Kennings are a wonderful introduction to poetic speech as both imagery and metre can be playfully introduced. Students can quickly produce poetry accurate in metre and rich in visual and conceptual detail. Having mined the monstrous Grendel for suitable kennings, students spontaneously composed a veritable litany of kennings in honour of the saint of the day... St George. *Opposite is the work of Nicholas Martinez and Luke Sudlow*

## ICT in Languages and Literature: Making a Start

Years 7 and 8 practised typing short compositions in Google Docs. Some students were already familiar with many of the features, while others benefited from assistance with simple and more complex skills such as: inserting and resizing images from Google Drive, inserting hyperlinks, manipulating fonts, colours and styles, wrapping text and sharing documents. Some students wrote monologues or short stories; others used Docs or Google Slides to make informative presentations. For the younger students, this was a valuable exercise in genre and purpose of writing and how these are linked to layout (bullet points, captions, images and titles). For older students, it was a chance to use their creativity in synthesising what they had learned in a new form of writing, applying their drafting, editing and proofreading skills via ICT.

Year 10 used the computers and software to record and play back their French dialogues. It is planned to extend ICT in both Latin and French classes next year. Students will use interactive exercises to build on their knowledge of vocabulary and to perfect their listening and speaking skills.



*Dragon-slayer  
God-lover  
Poor-defender  
Sword-master  
Virtue-friend  
Soul-freer*

*England-saver  
Soldier-patron  
Horse-rider  
Lance-charger  
Jesus-follower  
Christian-defender*

*Pagan-scarer  
War-fighter  
Idol-terror  
Armour-wearer  
Flame-fighter  
Christ's-martyr.*



**C**ongratulations to Pius Barti, who achieved his Certificate in Advanced English after only one year's full-time study in St Michael's School. A talented linguist, Pius also speaks German at advanced level along with his first language, Hungarian. Grateful thanks to all staff and students who helped Pius to achieve that elusive Advanced Certificate. We wish Pius well with his next goal...French!



**Brother Boniface** joined our religious community in April. He comes in anticipation of Brother Ignatius' summer departure.

A brother since 2012, Brother Boniface has seen action in a school, a priory, a seminary and a noviciate. He has been a sacristan, cook, housefather, schola master, organist and priest assistant. He comes to us all the way from the US.

Brother will soon be joined by Brother Dominic, also from the US! More next time.



# Monologue of a Hen (Bawkey)

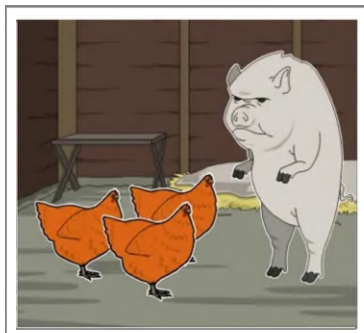
By Francesco Debiasi and Marcus Sherry

It was just a regular Thursday morning when I (Bawkey) and the others (Schooltrousers, Xovi, Schnitzel, Specleden and Hiphop) noticed Squealer emerging from the barn and making straight for us. By the time he reached us, he cleared his throat and oinked “What’s up, comrade-sisters? Our great leader Napoleon, as wise as he is, has decided to give 400 eggs a week for the production of our great windmill.” Squealer then left and as usual was escorted by a couple of dogs back to the barn.

“400 eggs a week,” I thought. That was absolutely absurd. I went back to discuss with the others what we should do. Some thought we should start laying eggs and some thought that we should plot to rebel against Napoleon’s plans and deeds and live our own life. I didn’t know what to do.

At the end of the day, we were in agreement that rebelling against Napoleon was the right thing to do even though we would have to suffer the consequences if we were to be unsuccessful.

We were creating plans privately in the next few days and were too busy to even think about laying a single egg and then Napoleon obviously carried out an investigation to check why we wouldn’t bother to lay any eggs. We hid on the rafters when it was dark and simultaneously, Napoleon entered the barn. He was looking for us. I realised that Hiphop wasn’t up in the rafters and they easily found her. They escorted Hiphop from the barn and we could then hear the squawking for help. Hiphop was dead.



## STEM Club

STEM Club incorporates aspects of science, technology, engineering and maths to solve problems. The aim is to have very practical sessions whilst thinking about the principles behind what we are doing.



This term has been '**Rollercoasters and Rockets**'. In the first half of the term students worked in House Teams to build a paper roller coaster. This was judged by Fr O'Hart who was looking at the construction of the roller coaster and how exciting it would be to take a ride on it! The winners were Jimmy Melgarejo, Francis Morris, Jude Rexworthy and Luke Sudlow representing **Burma House**.

In the second half of the term, students worked in the same House Teams to make a rocket fly as high as it could whilst safely carrying an egg back to earth. This time the competition was won by Andrew Blatchford, Xavier Morley and Marcus Sherry representing **Tobruk House**.

A « very well done » to both sets of winners, who worked well as a team to improve their rollercoasters and rockets over several weeks. STEM Club will be back in the Spring term of 2022!



# STMICHAEL'S CADET FORCE & SUNDRY



1st Camping Trip



Section Games



Passing Out - 2021



NCO Dinner



House Football Winners



New patio, new table!



Munchkins



Primary School Leavers



**Sandra Robson**, née Morley, left St M's in 1999 to complete her A levels in Oxford. After several years at the Ministry of Defence (Intell assessor and analyst), she now works in Further Education supporting students with learning difficulties, in particular as a Specialist Learning Mentor working with high needs students with autism.



**Elaine Haughian** completed her A levels at St M's in 2000 and went on to study history and English at Queen's University Belfast, then passed a post grad. in teaching at the University of Ulster. After five years in the workforce, she is now the happy mother of 9 and working harder than ever!



**Chris Sudlow** left St M's in 2005, picked up a 1st in French studies at the University of Reading and after several years of volunteer work at St M's and on missions in India and Australia, now works as an internal auditor for a PLC based in Guildford. He is soon to be married!

**OLD FACES!**



# SAINT MICHAEL'S SCHOOL

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16th July 2021

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

We hope you enjoy the school newsletter. It is good to record the children's progress and showcase the school's humble achievements. We are very blessed to offer St Michael's to families who face challenges on every side in regard to the education of their children.

The many Covid restrictions have made international travel extremely difficult. Consequently, we are no longer able to welcome foreign boarders as in years past, at least for the present time. They have always made a happy difference in the boarding house and classroom. Their absence is palpable.

We have had quite a few visits in recent months for enrolment in September 2023. Meanwhile, we look to another year that will be lean in numbers. While this gives us some much-needed flexibility amidst so many guidelines and restrictions, we are nevertheless more reliant than ever on our benefactors' generosity.

We are so grateful to all those who support the school on a regular basis, in particular via standing order. Such generosity is a life-saver, and I like to think, a soul-saver too. Without it, our school would not be able to exist.

Please continue to assist us in this great work of supporting families and preparing children to navigate an ever more complicated world. Their years at St Michael's will no doubt protect and strengthen them for the challenges to come. The devil really does desire the souls of children. St Michael's is a haven.

We have many maintenance jobs to complete this summer, from classroom repairs (floors, carpets, wiring, painting, installation of new counter tops in physics lab) to kitchen painting and maintenance, the installation of three new fire doors, repairs and replacement of items and equipment throughout the campus. We must carry out some urgent and expensive tree maintenance that requires outside expertise. A large chimney on the White House roof needs repointing and the guttering checked and maintained, all which necessitate a costly « cherry picker » rental.

Please consider a small gift to St Michael's to help us through the summer. I send out an appeal also to anyone who would like to help with tuition for poorer families. Our Lord will not fail to remember and recompense those who have sacrificed for the sake of His little ones. « Whatsoever you do unto the least of these, you do unto Me! » (Matt. 25:40)

At a time when there is so much anxiety and uncertainty for the future, what better thing to do than to ensure ourselves of God's good pleasure and a heavenly reward? The widow's mite was our Lord's favourite gift, worth much more than the rich man's abundance. She secured protection on earth and blessings in heaven. There was no better investment she could have made.

May God bless you all for your ongoing support and generosity,

Fr. John Brucciani, Headmaster

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<https://stmichaels-school.uk>

Name : ..... Tel : .....

Address : ..... City: .....

Post Code : ..... Email : .....

**I would like to make a donation of**  £50  £150  £  
 £100  £200



**I would like to help every month via Standing Order**

Gift Amount  £10  £15  £20  £30  £40  £

### Instruction to your Bank or Building Society

Please pay Royal Bank of Scotland, Newbury Branch, 20 Market Place, Newbury, RG14 5BD on the ..... day of each month until further notice.

**Sort Code 16-26-18 Acc. Number: 10191323 "Society of St Pius X - St Michaels School"**

**If you are a taxpayer you can increase the value of your donation by enabling us to reclaim tax via this Gift Aid Declaration:** **Gift Aid Declaration**  *Yes*  *No*

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give from the date of this declaration until I notify to the contrary.

*Please treat this donation [and all future donations until further notice] as gift aid donations.*

.....  
Signature(s)

.....  
Date:

Please notify us if you want to cancel this declaration, change your name or home address or no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/ or capital gains.

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.**