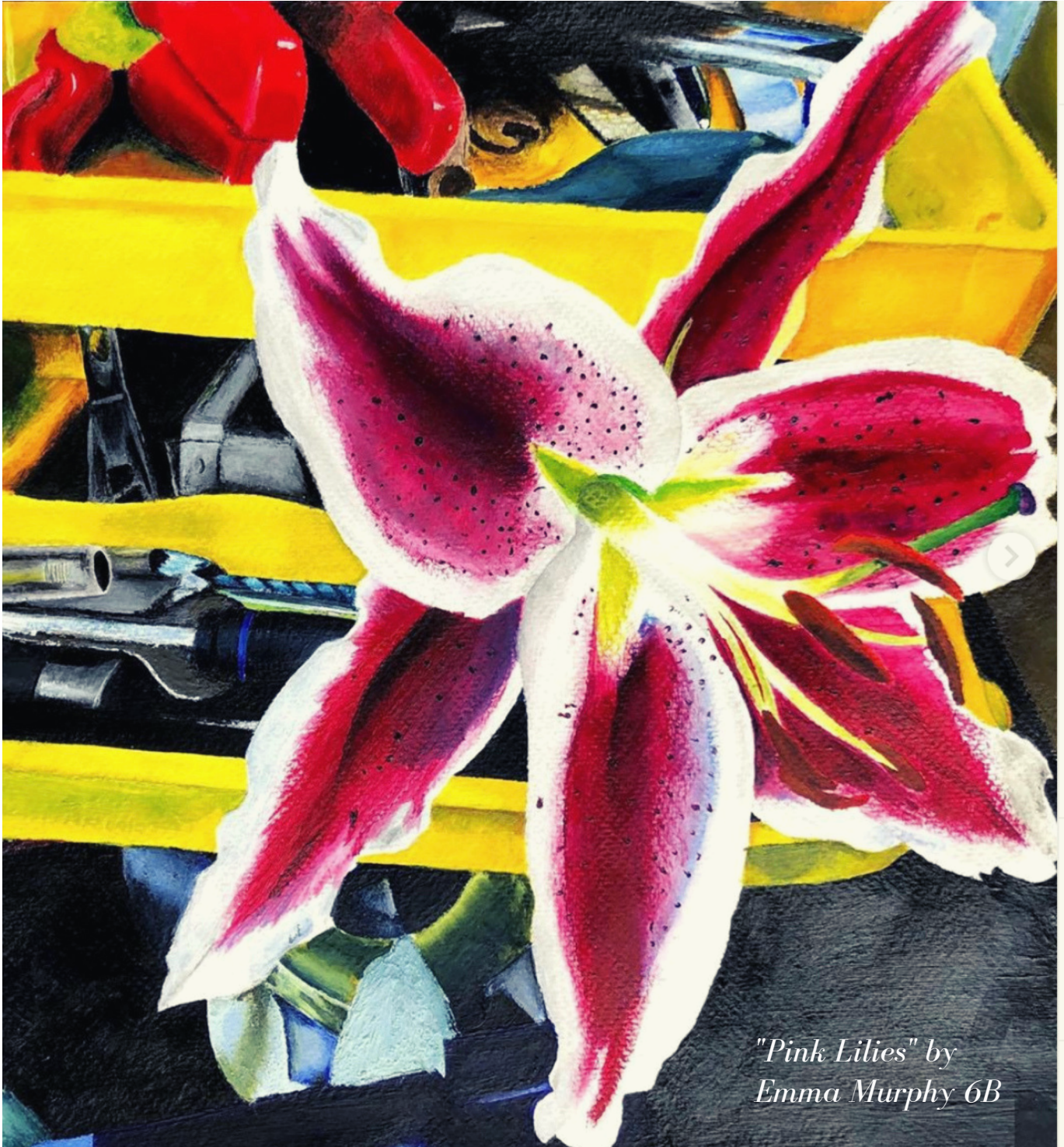


June 2020

Summer Edition

# GREENSCENE

Newsletter of the Loreto College Parent's Association



*"Pink Lilies" by  
Emma Murphy 6B*



# Introduction

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Dear Parents,

**Normally I would be thanking the staff and parents for all the help they have given to the students with their various activities and wishing the Leaving and Junior Certificate years all the best in their examinations. Little did we know! None the less Parent Association meetings were held, minutes were taken and plans were made.**

We started off 2020 with a wonderfully enjoyable PA walk on Bull Island. The planning by Sarah Hayes and her team for the Rumbek PA Lunch to be held in the Shelbourne Hotel in March 2020 was also progressing.

Then the corona virus started to migrate closer to Europe and the Department of Education advised that the schools would be closing from Friday 13th March, initially for a two-week period. Principals rushed to make arrangements as no one had contingency blueprints for how to deal with a Public Health emergency of this scale. St Patrick's Day in the words of the Taoiseach was "a day unlike any other".

Students and teachers were suddenly meeting each other only online when previously we had spoken about the importance of face to face interactions.

Suddenly online classes with the ubiquitous Zoom meetings became the classroom. The Information Technology and e-learning community were delighted as we achieved in one week what they have been trying for 10 years to achieve.

The students rose to the occasion and in the main took to the new learning environment like the St Stephens Green ducks take to the water. I am only guessing here but it was probably a steeper learning curve for the parents and teachers.

So the new norm continued, it was an experience like no other for everyone.

Congratulations to Ms Dempsey and the Staff of Loreto on the Green who continued to teach amidst all of the uncertainty; in particular for the examination years. The daily discussions on the Leaving Certificate examinations raised the stress associated with the examination to a completely new level for staff, students and parents! The decision has been made and students now await the results based on the calculated grades.

It is a new world for all but we are lucky to be based in a Western European country with a health service which in conjunction with Public Health measures was able to cope with this first wave of the pandemic. However, Covid-19 will have left consequences for all for many years to come with many of our rituals unable to take place. We are probably not even fully aware of the consequences at this stage

Many of our students have family members that became sick, parents who were trying to work from home or were working on the frontline. Home schooling became de rigour, probably creating way more online activity that we ever thought possible or would have advised.

The sixth years students have had a particularly difficult time not only with the uncertainty of the State examination but also with missing out on all of the normal rites of passage from secondary school including the Graduation Evening. However a wonderful End of Year Celebration was held by Zoom and was an emotional occasion for all involved.

A similar event for the transition year students also took place. It was wonderful to see everyone in uniform, well jumpers and blouses at least, and so excited with the photographs and memories from the years activities. Memories for the final year video are been collected at the moment.

Let's hope that in 2021 normality will have returned to life in Ireland and in Loreto on the Green. Whilst we adjusted quickly to the new norm of lockdown and teaching online reversing backwards towards normality, or maybe it will be a new normal, is going to be a much slower process.

In this new world whilst school trips etc. had had to be cancelled there has been an absolute plethora of activity with virtual sports days, virtual cooking classes, virtual school assemblies, raffles for fund raising for the Capuchin Centre, the awarding of a second Green Flag to the school for water conservation and much more. However, I think we will all welcome a return to a degree of normality.

Our sister school in Rumbek, South Sudan will have been severely affected by the Covid-19 crisis. As you know it not only provides educational opportunities but also looks to support the healthcare and social needs of their community. We will continue to consider how we can best help Rumbek in the short term.

We have postponed our PA Lunch until March 2021 when hopefully social distancing will be a thing of the past! The staff, students and parents will never forget 2020. In this difficult period the school has managed to educate our daughters, in a new innovative format that we just wouldn't have recognised four months ago. I would like on behalf of us all to offer a special word of thanks to Ms Dempsey and her staff.

Now the slow walk back to normality starts and considering how we have to dance around others when we are walking down an almost empty street, the ability to manoeuvre through a crowded street or school corridor, shoulder to shoulder seems like a strange concept.

We will manage and hopefully we will all come together again in the Shelbourne in March 2021 to again enjoy each other's company having thankful come out of this unprecedented Public Health emergency.

Best wishes,



Mary Clarke, Chairperson of the Parents' Association



# Parents Association Walk

by Anna Lalor 6T Class Rep

The Parents Association school walk took place over the weekend of Storm Jorge on Sunday 1st March.

At 11 am everyone gathered outside the entrance to St Anne's Golf Club. We set off on a crisp blue skied morning making our way through the dunes onto Dollymount Beach.

There was lots of chat en route as people fell into conversations with old friends or people they had just been introduced to. Although cold and breezy the sun shone until we reached the "Happy Out" coffee shop.

It seemed like the perfect opportunity for a 'sos beag', to take a little shelter and refuel with a warm drink.

After about half an hour the grey clouds lifted and the rain abated and were graced with sunny skies again. We arrived back to the Causeway Road within two hours and 7 km completed, feeling invigorated.

Thank you to all the parents and students who joined us on the day and supported this annual event. Sincere thanks to Orna Cuddy, PA 6B class representative, for organising and co-ordinating the school walk this year.



# Loreto Rumbek

April 2020 Newsletter

Dear Friends

Like the rest of the world we are all grappling with the new reality of Coronavirus. Our schools are closed for five weeks and already we are sadly hearing stories of students being forced into marriage. South Sudan is just beginning to register the reality of the virus as more cases are being reported from the capital city.

In Rumbek we are still in preparation mode. We now have twenty-five graduates working with us and many of them are out and about in the community each morning. It is hard for many in our local community to understand the challenges of Coronavirus, they are already grappling with so much.

Hunger is becoming more obvious as we wait for the rains to start. While there are many challenges there is much for us to be grateful for, Our clinic team are hard at work and our local community has been grateful for the food support and water.

Thanks to you all for your continued support. We continue to join hands with all of you as we pray for good health and protection in the weeks ahead.

Blessings and prayers for you and your families.

**From all of us in South Sudan**

*"While there are many challenges there is much for us to be grateful for. Our clinic team are hard at work and our local community has been grateful for the food support and water."*

# Loreto Sports

By Meagan Hoffman, Sports Coordinator

**While it was unfortunate that we missed out on the summer sports term this year, it was still a brilliant second half of the year for sport in The Green with some amazing accomplishments and brilliant performances.**

In January, we had huge success with our Senior Camogie team who won the Dublin C Camogie Final in a brilliant match, qualifying for our schools first ever All-Ireland Camogie Quarterfinal.

Our hockey teams also saw great results, in particular our Junior A and Minor A teams who both were this year's Runners-Up in their Leinster Finals held in Three Rock Rovers. All three of these finals were played in brilliant atmosphere's with hundreds of our students cheering and supporting our teams, showing the unbelievable spirit we have in The Green!

Our hockey successes didn't stop there, we also saw great success with our Senior 1 team who made it to the Quarterfinals of the Senior Plate competition, our Junior B team making the Quarterfinals in the Leinster League, our Minor C team having an undefeated season in their Leinster league pool, and our 1st Year A team making it into the Quarterfinals of the 1st Year Cup competition.

On the basketball court, we had top performances by our teams across many leagues. Our Senior A, 2nd Year A and 1st Year A basketball teams all made the East Leinster Quarterfinals, and we saw our Cadette B and 1st year B teams both make the Loreto Finals after brilliant seasons.



Our Cross Country team had continued success throughout the second half of the year, particularly with our 2nd year team who finished second in the East Leinsters, and fifth in the Leinster Championships. Alice Hickey (2nd Year) qualified individually for the All-Ireland Cross Country Championships where she finished seventeenth overall in the Junior race.

Our Equestrian team finished second in the Interschools Showjumping League this year, and Kate Horgan (3rd Year) finished first overall individually in the League. We also had a great start to our U14 Gaelic team who started their season undefeated, and were on track to top their league before the school closures.



# Sports Wall



# Spirit Week 2020

by Aoife Wallace 6M

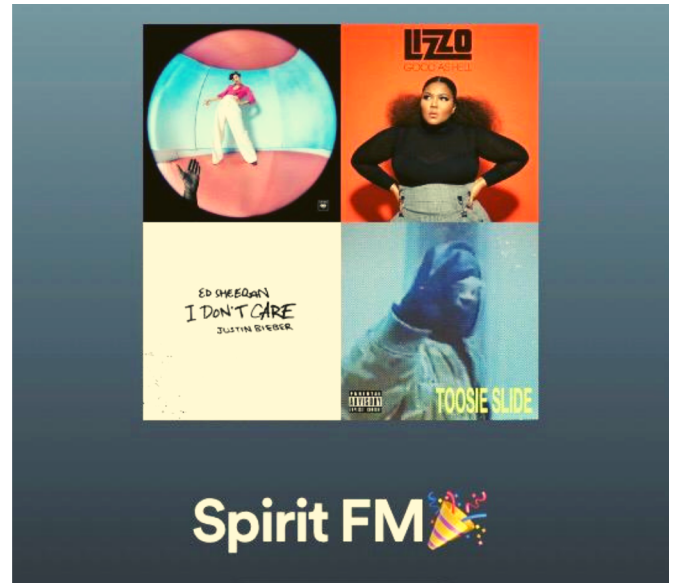
**Spirit Week 2020 was due to be held from the 27th of April - 1st of May. It is known as a fun, uplifting week for the school community and helps to spread happiness throughout the school. We were disappointed to find out that we would not be returning to school on time for Spirit Week. The Student Council decided to hold a Virtual Spirit Week to spread some entertainment during this uncertain and stressful time for everyone.**

Different activities and competitions were held every day and lots of staff and students got involved.

We started the week off by launching our Instagram page. We encouraged everyone to follow the account as it was our main point of communication for the week. Competition entries and fun questions were posted on it to keep the school community connected. During Spirit Week in school the Student Council normally play music over the intercom in the morning and during lunch so this year we decided to create a Spirit FM playlist on Spotify which was accessible for everyone. People sent in their requests through our Instagram page and we added these to the playlist throughout the week.

There were new competitions every day. Some of the most popular included a photo booth competition and matching the teacher to their baby photo. Thank you to all the staff for showing their spirit by getting involved in this activity!

We also collaborated with the Green Committee and Well-being Committee to run competitions. Some of these completions included nature photos and baking. It was great to receive so many entries. We also set a sports challenge asking people to send in videos of themselves showing off their tricks and skills.



On Friday we held class quizzes over Zoom and this was a lovely way to keep in touch with our classmates and get competitive! It was great to see so many staff and students getting involved and it really helped to keep the school community connected and having fun.

The Student Council decided that Spirit Week would be a great opportunity to raise some vital funds for charity during this pandemic. Maytime Music had been scheduled for the beginning of May and funds from this event usually go to the Capuchin Day Centre. We heard that the centre went from distributing approximately 650 dinner packages per day at the beginning of the outbreak to 870 per day in the weeks approaching Spirit Week so we decided to hold a raffle in aid of this amazing charity. We managed to raise over €2,500 for this incredible cause and we would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who donated.

This money will go a long way in supporting those in need during this difficult time. Our very first Virtual Spirit Week was a great success, helping to connect the community of Loreto College during this strange and unsettling time. Thank you to everyone who helped in spreading the fun and happiness that Spirit Week brings.



# The Student Experience: Covid-19



## An Unexpected Announcement

by Aoife O'Flynn 5th Year

**An unexpected morning announcement over the intercom interrupted our Thursday maths class on the 12th of March to inform us of the closure of schools for two weeks. This was a shock to everyone of course but rumours had been rife and the school was prepared. We all knew about the pandemic but what we didn't understand yet were the huge changes coming our way.**

On that Thursday afternoon the thought of doing classes through Zoom for the next eight weeks and not seeing six hundred Loreto uniforms walking to class everyday was beyond comprehensible for all of us. But as each week has gone by it has gradually become tolerable thanks to the support of the school.

Of course a maelstrom of emotion ensued: we were confused, a bit panicked and worried. What did it all mean? When would we be back? But even with all of these emotions we knew that we needn't worry because Loreto from Ms Demspey down had our backs. From the day we set foot in Loreto in first year we felt the incredible sense of community that fills the school all the way to the fifth floor and back. Though we may not be in our usual setting, amongst the busy hallways in Stephen's Green, this sense has not changed over the past few months.

With the help of social media we have managed to stay as connected as ever and not just in the classroom. Part of what makes Loreto so special are the activities that bring us together and the many many talents we share with each other. From the hockey pitch to the music stage the list is endless, and we've continued to keep the sticks swinging and the melodies chiming despite the recent circumstances.

Art Committee, Green Committee, basketball, Amnesty, tennis, mission possible, current affairs, ciorcal comhrá, wellbeing, you name it!

With the simple click of a button on Instagram we suddenly realised our favourite clubs and sports had gone virtual and not a day has gone by without a funny tik-tok or baking competition to get involved in and make us smile. Who would've thought we would have a virtual sports day? Regardless, as planned, on the 18th of May six hundred egg and spoon races took place in various back gardens all gleaming in their house colours. Neither would we have pictured ourselves doing our class quizzes, which are usually done over the intercom, but now instead with us sat with a cup of tea over Zoom in our own living rooms.

No matter the emergency, school will always be school. Within six hours of the fateful announcement, the teachers painstakingly explained the plan for online learning to every single student. As we left school for what would be the final time this year, we had been given time to prepare for the months ahead. We won't lie to you, there was definitely an adjustment period, but by Easter it was as if the learning had never stopped!

A typical day for a Loreto student is now a mixture of classwork, completing assignments and projects, and of course attending umpteen Zoom calls! Tests and exams have been relaxed for all students, with many teachers dropping them altogether in favour of project work or quizzes.

Deadlines and due dates are often flexible, and teachers are always available via email for any questions or concerns. SNA's have been zooming their students for one-on-one meetings to make sure they have support if they need it.

With the cancellation of our summer exams, a huge weight has been lifted off our backs (though with the rumours of Christmas exams going around, maybe slacking off entirely isn't the best idea!) In these uncertain times, the school has been nothing but understanding.

We are fortunate that we are used to using iPads on a daily basis, which has undoubtedly made the transition smoother. Throughout the weeks, each teacher has used technology to its fullest potential, and each has adopted a different style to online teaching. Audio files of pronunciations, recorded explanations, worked solutions and more, every aspect of learning is covered!

The function of 'breakout rooms' on Zoom has been invaluable in recreating the group work we would be doing in a classroom every day. Through them we can practice oral language skills, work through questions in small groups, and get together to discuss upcoming projects. A teacher can even share their screen with their class to present PowerPoints. Sometimes it feels like nothing has changed!

Outside of formal learning, our recently-graduated TYs are spending their last week of school learning engineering, songwriting, and more. Our guidance counsellor never fails to send us fifth years emails on interesting courses and webinars. Since March, more and more teachers have been sending links to Ted talks, lectures, and further reading to enhance our external knowledge as well as our exam subjects. Truly the school understands that not everything worth learning is on a curriculum!

As fifth years, we entered the online classroom terrified that we would lose valuable time and learning, but instead we have covered as much ground as we normally would have in the majority of our subjects. Practical experiments and art supplies are unfortunately out of our reach at the moment, but thankfully there is little else to catch up on!

From the first morning of lockdown we have had the Chaplaincy and support team in Loreto looking out for us. We are beyond fortunate to have a team who are so approachable, compassionate and professional. The pandemic was faced like all other challenges: head on. Each morning we woke to a morning reflection, some from our amazing Head Girl Ellen some from Ms Curtis, Ms Demspey and the Coiste na Gaeilge. They always helped to provoke a thought for the day and provide inspiration.

Within the school community some girls have had a particularly difficult time when close family members passed away. Unfortunately due to the pandemic the usual attendance of Ceiliúr and the Loreto community to these funerals, which normally provides such solace, could not happen. But even from a geographical distance the chaplaincy team and other staff members were constantly checking in and making it easy for everyone to reach out and pay their respects.

Ms Curtis hosted "Tea and Chats" each week which every year loved. We broke into breakout rooms with girls we may have rarely spoken to and surprisingly we found new friends. Every Year Head played their part and speaking as fifth years Ms Maverley kept in contact regularly with individual calls, class check-ins and assemblies. We can't deny that this entire experience has been strange and continues to be strange. The teaching staff have taken on a huge extra responsibility over the past eight weeks in being a reliable source of support for all of Loreto's students.

Although we all have to survive this challenging time at a distance, the school has undoubtedly gone the extra mile to ensure that no one has felt alone. The involvement and enthusiasm from both students and staff has kept our happy Loreto family in full swing during these strange and uncertain times.

Though we would have loved to have performed our Maytime music productions in the assembly hall or have had our spirit week dance parties side by side, we know that the values and traditions of the school will never falter.

As we write this article, we are anticipating the results of our Head Girl, Deputy Head Girl, and Caomhnóir election, who will lead the school through whatever we have in store for us next year. The transition to school at home and everything that Covid-19 has brought has shown us above all that the Loreto spirit goes far beyond the big red door!



# Different Times

by Tara Berry 3M

**Since the 12th of March 2020, our whole learning and daily lives have been flipped upside down. We no longer walk, take the bus, drive or cycle to school. All we have to do is step out of bed and go to the nearest desk, and the school day begins. Zoom calls, online learning and make-shift classrooms are the new normal now, things we wouldn't have thought possible six months ago. The turnover between sitting in a classroom surrounded by your whole class to sitting at your bedroom desk was lightning fast, and it took many of us days and even weeks to get our heads around it.**

And not all of it was school related. We haven't had the chance to hug relations and friends in nearly three months, and many of us haven't even seen them in person in that time. This is the world we are living in now.

However, not all of it is bad. This pandemic has given us a chance to relax, a chance to catch up with the people you live with, a chance to get healthier and most importantly, a chance to reflect.

Some people have taken up a new hobby, like baking, running, or reading. There have been yoga classes online, work outs, and lots of people have taken out their bikes and started to cycle again.

Carbon dioxide emissions around the world could fall by the largest amount since World War II this year, and the turtles thriving on California beaches are one of the many species benefiting from lockdown.

But we all must keep hoping that one day, we will all see our friends and family again, and build a better world.



# New Learnings

by Effie Clancy 1B

**This year has been very different from all my other years in school. A big part of that is the change from primary to secondary school but the other part is the pandemic that has come upon us this school year. I was not expecting for this school year to be as different as it has been. I have learnt so much over the past months since being in quarantine. I have learnt about the importance of family and friends. Not being able to see them over quarantine has been really hard for everyone and even though we are able to chat to them on Zoom or Skype calls it isn't the same as seeing them in real life.**

I have also learnt that there are different ways to learn than in the classroom. I miss the interactions with the teachers in school and sitting beside my friends everyday without worrying about spreading Covid-19 or keeping two meters away.

I learnt that even though a problem might start and has nothing to do with you it can come into your life unexpectedly and change it very fast. You have to learn how to deal with it and deal with it in the right way otherwise the bad outcome might end up happening to you.

My life outside of school and learning has changed as well. I have missed playing sports and meeting up with my friends. Sports have been a big part of my life since I was young and I play them almost everyday. I miss being able to have fun in training or playing matches against other teams. I have missed a hockey final for my club and a basketball semi-final for school.

I was so excited to play both of these games especially since they were both my first big sports games I would have ever played. Obviously I didn't get to play them but I also didn't get to experience either the feeling of loss or winning which is an important lesson in life.

As I mentioned earlier I miss meeting up with my friends. Even though we've been able to meet up with them for the past two weeks whilst socially distancing we weren't before that and really missed seeing them.

I just miss normal life but I don't think we will ever be back to a full normality or the way we were before this virus. The way we will think about life and hygiene will change a lot and that is good. We will appreciate the small things in life more and hopefully everyone will take something from this pandemic. Everything happens for a reason and I hope something good will come out of this tough time.

# Life in the Library

by Grainne Madden, Librarian

We are very fortunate that our Library is a bright, colourful and vibrant area in the school. It's a multi-functional space with computers, a binder, photo-copier and printers for project work, newspapers, magazines, reference books and of course loads of fiction. Our selection of books is quite current as we purchase books throughout the school year and once a year, because of the generosity of Parents at the 1st Year Parent Teacher Meeting book stall, we receive about 100 books that have been published in the previous 12 months.

In the past couple of years we have added bean bags and arm chairs and these have been a big hit. There is usually a queue at the Library door at 8.15 every morning and a dash to get to the beanbags and arm chairs once the door is opened. While the Library is popular with all the years, it's particularly popular with 1st and 2nd Years. First Years are not permitted to have iPads in the Library. Instead they are encouraged to play board games and cards with their new class mates, it's a great way for them to get to know each other. This year a large group of first years created a reading corner with bean bags and before school and at breaktimes they congregated with their books and read and chatted together.

Once a month, at 8.15 on a Wednesday morning, we hold a breakfast book club for 1st Years. Our attendance throughout the year was in excess of 20 which was great and there was lots of lively discussion about books and many good book recommendations were made.

With the new Junior Cycle English curriculum junior years have weekly reading classes and sometimes these are held in the Library. It's lovely to see 24 girls deeply engrossed in books. The Library is also very popular with TYs who have lots of project work throughout the year. It becomes particularly busy in the lead up to SciFest and the Young Scientist Competition and our large supplies of scissors, glue sticks and poster paper are in big demand.

We have a wonderful and enthusiastic Library Committee, this year our numbers grew to 32. The girls meet up regularly to come up with new ideas and suggestions. They help out with Library quizzes and competitions, organise the book sale and cake sale for World Book Day which raises funds for St. Michael's House, co-ordinate dress-up days etc. But the highlight of the year is building the Christmas Book Tree in the Library. The girls built a particularly beautiful book tree this year and were a fantastic help when it came to taking it down and putting 1,247 books back on the shelves!

Every year we take part in the Great Reads Award. Over the summer holidays school Librarians make a Junior and Senior short list of young adult fiction books recently published. During the first term Students are invited to read the books and then rate them online. An Awards ceremony is held in one of the Schools later in the year and each school is invited to bring students who can chat to the authors afterwards.



*A room without  
books is like a body  
without a soul  
- Cicero*

In 2018 we registered for the Wellread National Award. This Award was initiated by the Professional Development Service for Teachers and it aims to promote the importance of creating a culture of reading for young people as part of their personal and academic development. It seeks to involve all relevant stakeholders who impact on student learning including students, teachers, ancillary staff, parents, Boards of Management and the wider Community.

A Wellread Committee was formed and with the help of the Library Committee many initiatives were undertaken and documented. We were very proud to be presented with our PDST Wellread National Award in the Hodson Bay Hotel in November.

While the girls weren't able to borrow books from the School Library to read during their summer holidays this year, fortunately Public Libraries are now starting to reopen and books can be borrowed from there. There are lots of free online resources available, including Public Libraries and plenty of places where books can be ordered from.

For summer reading suggestions you can check out our lists posted on the School website. For more ideas, the English Department has set up an Instagram page where girls have posted reviews on some of their favourite books. I look forward to returning to the Library when the School re-opens and to seeing the girls again.

It's a wonderful, happy and uplifting place to work in.



# A Tribute to Keelin Shanley, Past Pupil

by Nicola Byrne



**Just a few months before she died, Keelin Shanley, my closest friend, remarked to me about how big a part Loreto on the Green had played in her life.**

Undoubtedly her greatest influences were her mum, Orna, a physiotherapist and Derry, a former dean of the faculty of Health Science in TCD. Together with her four much loved siblings, they were the bedrock of the enormous success she enjoyed as a journalist and broadcaster and, most importantly to her, wife and mother.

But Loreto, she said, gave her a close network of lifetime friends, a circle that closed tightly around her when she was given a terminal diagnosis of breast cancer in late 2016. Keelin came from a line of Green girls that included her mother, her aunt Bronagh McMahon and her grandmother Maura English.

I first met her when I joined the school in second year in 1981. I can still see her with one sock up, one down, the top button of her shirt undone and her gabardine belt flying. At that stage pupils would be fined between 5 and 10p for each of these minor transgressions of the uniform code but the small acts of rebellion seemed worth it. Soon the two of us were frequent visitors to head nun, Sister's Columbiere's office!

By her own admission, she was a shy child but she was also absolutely determined, a quality she never lost. And as her husband, Conor Ferguson, pointed out in his eulogy at her funeral service in February, she was whip smart.



If her uniform could be unkempt, there was never anything sloppy about her schoolwork. Her biology teacher, Claudine Prendergast, quickly recognised a brilliant student with a natural curiosity. "It was so good to teach someone who actually got it," she observed recently. And Keelin, sitting in the front row of Ms Prendergast's class in the extension at the rear of the school, really did get it. I can still see her big looping handwriting as she took biology tests for which she never got less than an A. She wrote quickly and fluently, while the rest of us trundled behind. The love of science was born here and in chats at her Monkstown home, and it eventually saw her progress to study Biochemistry at Trinity College.

Having worked in a university in Bologna, her career path diverged and she went right to the top of her next chosen profession as a broadcast journalist and later presenter of RTE's flagship Six One News.

Her 'Loreto girls', Deborah Pearce, Kyla O'Kelly, Fiona McHugh, Taffina Flood, Niamh Stephenson, Claire Long and others from that class of '85, followed each step. Our pride in her achievements always to the fore.

True to form, Keelin tried with all her might not to let her illness impinge on her career and her life with Conor and their beautiful children, Lucy (now in Loreto Dalkey) and Ben, right until the end.

She fought hard to be accepted on a trial for a revolutionary cancer treatment in Washington DC. Last June, I dropped her and Conor to the airport as she went out for the first bout of treatment. A couple of hours later, she messaged me from the plane with a picture of herself and fellow member of the class of 85, Elaine Egan, who was the captain of the Aer Lingus flight that day. They both looked so well, happy and delighted to be reunited. "Look who I bumped into!" said the message.

When she died on 8 February, her RTE boss, Jon Williams, said she was the best of everyone in that organisation. I think all Loreto girls everywhere would concur that she was the best of us too.







# Begin

by Brendan Kennelly

Begin again to the summoning birds  
to the sight of the light at the window,  
begin to the roar of morning traffic  
all along Pembroke Road.

Every beginning is a promise  
born in light and dying in dark  
determination and exaltation of springtime  
flowering the way to work.

Begin to the pageant of queuing girls  
the arrogant loneliness of swans in the canal  
bridges linking the past and future  
old friends passing though with us still.

Begin to the loneliness that cannot end  
since it perhaps is what makes us begin,

begin to wonder at unknown faces  
at crying birds in the sudden rain  
at branches stark in the willing sunlight  
at seagulls foraging for bread  
at couples sharing a sunny secret  
alone together while making good.

Though we live in a world that dreams of ending  
that always seems about to give in  
something that will not acknowledge conclusion  
insists that we forever begin.

# Farewell to the Class of 2020

by Anna Lalor 6T Class Rep

**It was many months ago that the graduation date for the class of 2020 was set. Alas for final year students across the world their graduation would be like no other.**

On Friday 15th May 2020 each of the sixth year girls dressed in their uniform, set up an area in their house with an iPad or laptop positioned so they and their families could participate in what was an emotional end of year ceremony.

Invitations had been sent through FlexiBuzz and we were to 'zoom in' ten minutes before the event was scheduled to begin. By 2:00pm the girls, their families and teachers had all convened as we waited fingers crossed that our broadbands and technology would not fail us in this most important hour.

The ceremony began with everyone being welcomed by Iníon Ní Ainle, the sixth year, year head.

A virtual roll call introduced each girl within her class, with a beautiful black and white photo and a voiceover of her name. It was then time for each of their teachers to show their support for the girls, holding up a page with one word they felt best described their class of 2020 it was wonderful to see all the teachers with their beaming smiles of farewell.

Sr Mary O'Connor shared with the girls and their families a wonderful story and asked the girls to bring the resilience they'd learnt and shown through these last months into their adult lives. We saw a wonderful culmination of photo images, video clips and tik-toks of the girls in their school environment over the last six years. It was filled with smiles and laughter throughout. The images were backed with their young first years voices right through to fourth year.





**Until we meet again  
may we contemplate at  
last shining windows a  
future forbidden to no  
one.**



Head girl Ellen McKimm spoke of her tribe, “the most extraordinary, bright, brilliant, talented, witty, fun spirited, supportive group of women I’ve ever had the privilege of meeting. Six years ago they were girls with dreams now they are women with vision”. Deputy head girl Mollie Lalor knew nobody when she joined the school and found the craziest, most amazing family that changed her life and inspired her to write a song about them. “The memories, pictures, feelings and endless laughter they shared are beautiful things to cherish”.

Caoimhnóir Aislinn McDaid spoke of how they were an amazing year group who were supported by some amazing people along the way. A year that liked to have fun, everything they did, they did with a smile on their face, with spontaneity and music blasting from a speaker.

The teachers were thanked for the support, care and attention they had shown the girls over the last six years. The three months from March to May haven’t been easy for these students or teachers with uncertainty and plan changes but the girls and teachers have shown resilience, embraced new ways of learning and always gave their best. There was a special thanks to Mr Hobson and Ms Prendergast their former year heads and Ms Kelly and Iníon for all their support.

Ms Dempsey paid tribute to the class of 2020 reminding them that their sixth year ‘lasts’ became ‘firsts’, being the first sixth years to be taught remotely and attend a virtual zoom assembly. These girls became adults in the midst of a pandemic and a revolution in teaching and learning. They showed their true spirit and resilience with an unending trust in their teachers and the school. These girls embody our Loreto values and it was an immense privilege to work with them. ‘Until we meet again may we contemplate at last shining windows a future forbidden to no one’.

Sincerest thanks to Iníon Ní Ainle who gathered, compiled and presented this wonderful farewell to the class of 2020. To the girls on the leadership team thank you for assisting and supporting Iníon as she gathered this wonderful tribute together.

And to Ms Dempsey and Mr Fitzgerald for all their support, help and reassurance and for daring to go ahead with this virtual end of year ceremony thank you.

The girls and their parents will be forever grateful. The girls look forward to a ceremony where they will physically leave through the big red door on the Green sometime in the near future.

# Couple of Reminders



## PA Annual Lunch in aid of Loreto Rumbek

The Parents' Association would like to confirm that the annual parents lunch, due to take place on August 29 has now been rescheduled to take place on Friday, March 26 2021.

Existing ticket holders can choose to transfer their tickets to the new date. Please send an email to: [lunchcommittee2020@gmail.com](mailto:lunchcommittee2020@gmail.com) with your name and order number. You will receive an email confirming your ticket has been transferred.

If you are unable to attend on the new date you can request a refund. Go to your Eventbrite ticket and click "Request a refund". You will shortly receive an email from Eventbrite confirming your request has been processed.

If you are unable to attend and would like to donate the cost of the ticket to Loreto Rumbek please email [lunchcommittee2020@gmail.com](mailto:lunchcommittee2020@gmail.com) stating the same.

Regards

**The Organising Lunch Committee**

## School Photographs for 2019-2020

Our wonderful school photographer (Mr Fionán O'Connell) has made available a number of school photos from the past year, via an online library.

The details are as follows:

Gallery: <https://www.fionanoconnell.com/loretocollege2020>  
Password: onthegreen