



# BISHOP CHALLONER SCHOOL



## Alumni News

SUMMER ISSUE 2018



# Message from the Headteacher

I very much hope that you will enjoy the summer edition of our alumni magazine.

I am delighted that we are able to keep in touch with so many of our former pupils and staff who keep a life-long connection to Bishop Challoner. We are very proud of the hugely diverse paths that our alumni take in life and we hope that you will encourage others to join the alumni network.

We are always keen to hear of your career paths, personal developments and achievements. It was fantastic to see so many of you at our Remembrance Mass last November and it was good hear many of you rekindling old memories and sharing stories.

We are pleased to announce the launch of our new school website which aims to provide our parents and prospective parents with information important to their son or daughter's needs. We are always keen to update our alumni section and to include your stories on our page.

We continue to maintain academic rigour and my focus over the past year has been on raising academic achievement and ensuring that we have the highest expectations of all our pupils. Our pupils continue to be challenged and supported by the staff in a caring, nurturing and supportive environment.

Our pupils are supported in their journey of faith to provide them with a sense of perspective and we can all be proud of our associations with Bishop Challoner and the Catholic values which have been upheld by generations of Bishop Challoner pupils and staff and are still evident today.

With warmest wishes.



*Mrs Paula Anderson*





*Chapel of the  
Annunciation*



*First Holy Communion  
June 2018*



*Junior Rosary Procession  
May 2018*

# Pastoral Care and Living Faith

The word Catholic finds its root in the Greek word *Katholikos* which means all-encompassing and whilst Bishop Challoner is a Catholic School we welcome, respect and embrace people from all faiths and cultural backgrounds. We offer a supportive environment where our Christian values permeate the life of the school, particularly the command of Christ to love God and to love our neighbour. Throughout the year we provide opportunities for our pupils to develop their personal, spiritual journeys through regular times for prayer, reflection, meditation, assemblies and retreats.

Whole school masses take place throughout the year to mark special occasions or events. A community Mass takes place each Wednesday which is also open to the wider community and each Friday a Year Group Mass takes place. These more intimate masses are celebrated in the Chapel of the Annunciation, which is at the heart of our school. Last year the Chapel was decorated with beautiful icons from the Holy Land. The Chapel was blessed by Archbishop Peter Smith, for the Feast of the Annunciation, on Saturday 25th March and provides a spiritual oasis of calm and peace.

It is a little over a year since I joined Bishop Challoner and it has been a pleasure working closely with pupils and staff as they continue on their spiritual journeys. Whilst it is challenging to work with such a wide range of pupils at different stages in their faith development, it has also been refreshing, largely due to their enthusiasm and openness to new experiences of prayer and spirituality.

Working with the junior as well as senior pupils has also been a new experience for me. I feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to walk alongside them on their journeys as God's grace continues to positively effect their lives. It has been a particular joy to help the junior pupils to prepare for their First Holy Communion, which took place in the Chapel of the Annunciation on 16th June and also to help the senior pupils to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation, which took place at St Edmund's on 7th May, where we joined the whole parish community.

I pray that God will continue to pour out his blessings upon our school community and that all who visit our school will experience his love and his all-encompassing embrace.

G Lohan  
School Chaplain



*"Pupils throughout the school have a highly developed spiritual understanding; their appreciation of the Catholicity of the school permeates every aspect of its life".*

(ISI 2016)

## A message from our Head Girl 2018/19



Since joining Bishop Challoner shortly before Year 7, I have enjoyed every opportunity the school has offered me. The family like environment has helped me to become a more confident and outgoing individual making me proud to be a student at the school.

After achieving my 10 GCSEs and gaining a sport scholarship I chose to stay on at the sixth form to study A levels in physical education, psychology and geography to hopefully progress to the RAF in the near future.

Since joining Bishop Challoner in Year 7 I have made many strong bonds from reception upwards due to joining the fencing team as soon as I went into Year 7. I now frequently help out with coaching the younger pupils and assisting at their competitions. This has helped me become an adaptable and approachable pupil for everyone in the school.

I am passionate, determined and motivated and I believe it is my responsibility to help represent the school internally and externally with the great ethos it holds, as well as act as a role model and be a confident voice for all pupils.

I am honoured to be elected to the role of Head Girl and will do my best to contribute to the school as much as I can.

I would like to congratulate Oliver on achieving Head Boy, and look forward to working with him in the future.

**Gabriella Stubberfield**

## and Head Boy 2018/19

I am truly honoured to have been chosen as Head Boy for Bishop Challoner.

Challoner is a school that has been in my family for two generations with both my father attending – and also being Head Boy – as well as my younger sister, and immediately after joining in Year 7 the family-like environment made me feel instantly at home.

On GCSE results day at the end of summer last year, I was ineffably proud to receive the equivalent of 7 A\*s and 3 As. I chose to study History, English Literature and Religious Education, as well as the Extended Project Qualification, with the aim of pursuing a History degree at university. I hope to have the same success as at GCSE in my A-levels next year.

I am a dedicated, motivated individual and I always strive for perfection, which are traits that will be thoroughly beneficial as Head Boy as I will work hard to bring students' ideas into fruition.

It is imperative for all students to be excellent ambassadors for the school, however as Head Boy I will be representing Bishop Challoner far more than I ever have, and therefore, I shall continue exponentially to be a proud advocate of the school that I love.

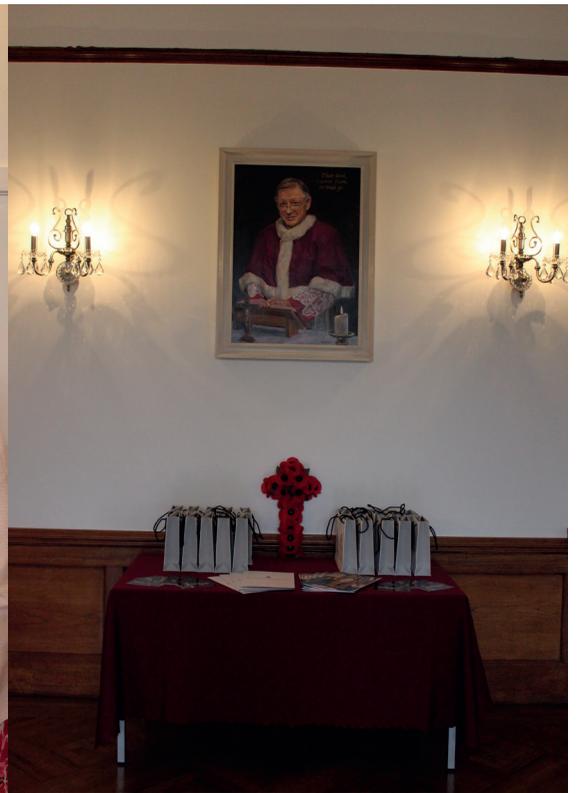
I am excited to work closely with Gabriella to both improve and show-off our unique school.

**Oliver Meade**



# Remembrance Mass

On 11th October 2017, our Alumni joined staff and Trustees for a Remembrance Mass in the refurbished school Chapel of the Annunciation. This was followed by light refreshments and a viewing of the recently commissioned portrait of the late Canon Jack Madden by esteemed artist Jeff Stultiens.





# In focus

## *Tom O’Gorman*

Hello - I am Tom O’Gorman, I joined Bishop Challoner in Year 6 back in 2008, as a small, shy boy in a completely new environment.

I’d be lying if I said I loved the school straight away, I dreaded the thought of a new school, and at first was reluctant to accept the change. However, it didn’t take long for me to realise how much I enjoyed being here; there’s such a strong emphasis on being a community, an undeniable effort to make everyone feel welcome, which I experienced first-hand.

Throughout the 8 years I spent here, being Head Pupil and Fencing Captain, I’ve learned valuable life lessons that stick with me; from the many teachers that have shared their sense of value and ethos, helping to mould me into the young man I am today.

One thing I’ve always felt strongly about at Challoner is how the school helps the individual find their passion, and facilitates them to thrive in it.

My time was coming to an end at Challoner and I had to make a decision what to do for the future. Initially I had plans to take a degree related to sports science and maths, and received offers from universities such as Loughborough and Leeds.

However, alongside this I started dancing, doing an extra A-Level. Being the only student, I was taking class in my lunch times and any free time I had. At one point I was dancing outside on the field and on the top landing due to not having a time-tabled room!

This didn’t discourage me, or the newly found love to give it all I had; it soon grew into an extraordinary passion that I just had to explore further. Challoner established this new subject and made it accessible to not only me, but also others who wanted to dance. If it were not for the changes made to the curriculum and time-table, tending to the needs of every individual, I certainly wouldn’t have had the opportunities I’ve enjoyed.

After much thought and discussion I decided, after A-Levels, to follow this new passion. Taking a gap year to explore dance, learn as much as I could about this new world and immerse myself in it.



I attended Trinity Laban Conservatoire on a one year diploma course, which entailed intense training, and days which could easily stretch to 12 solid hours with rehearsals.

Nevertheless I loved it; the intensity, constant physical and mental challenge, the sense of physicality combined with artistry, the feeling of pure fulfillment.

It was a hard decision to turn down my university offers; I was going against the norm to follow what I truly believed I wanted to do – and at that point with a real lack of experience and training.

And now, I’m still training! - working towards my degree at Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance. I feel truly privileged to be associated with such an esteemed world-renowned school and am so excited to see what the future holds for me. Without Challoner, I’d never have thought I’d be where I am today.

I still have my career ahead of me, and with the solid foundation Bishop Challoner gave me - helping not only me but so many other students find their passion - I know we will continue to strive to do our best.

# Getting involved

## *Tony Pluckrose*

I started in the kindergarten at Bishop Challoner and I have a copy of a black and white whole school photograph from May 1972. Appearing in the photograph are the headmaster Robert Nee and, as young men, David Shaw, Peter Newsham and Charles Sciberas, all of whom will be well known to any alumni of a similar vintage to me. The sixth form fashions were long hair, kipper ties and flairs; it is a true 1970's photograph.

Robert Nee was a dominant figure in the school throughout my time there. I am sure that many reading this will recall a man who swept through the school wearing his academic gown at all times and most often smoking a pipe. My recollection is that he seemed to be uncannily aware of most of what was happening, most of the time.

I carried on from kindergarten through the whole school and left the upper sixth at the age of 18, in 1985. My memory is of a school that had the great advantage and sometimes disadvantage of a small school, namely you could you not get lost or forgotten. There were some memorable and dedicated teachers in 'the senior school'; in addition to those mentioned above, stalwarts included Francis Mohan (Latin), Edmund Westrop (History), Peter May (French), Carole Wright (Economics) as well as Mr Emmanuel (Physics), Mr Medley (Maths) and Mr Styles (Chemistry). Robert Nee also taught Politics. The teachers all had strongly individual characters and I am sure that any reading this of a similar age to me will recall them and also the nicknames they were given. I was surprised on a recent visit to the school to find that mostly the same classrooms were used for the same subjects; it was a trip down memory lane.

I made some great friends at school and have kept some of these friendships throughout my life. For me school days were happy days, in particular the sixth form years.

On leaving Bishop Challoner I went on to read Engineering Science at Magdalen College Oxford, graduating in 1988. I then qualified as a Patent and Trade Mark Attorney and have been a partner at the London firm of Boulton Wade Tennant since 1994.

In my patent work I advise clients in the automotive and aeronautical sectors. My trademark clients include companies in the telecommunications, publishing, computer game, fragrance and financial industries. In my job I have seen the huge strides in technology that have been made in the last 30 years. When I left school a smartphone was the stuff of science fiction and few would have believed that an aircraft could ever fly non-stop from the UK to Australia or that human DNA would be fully mapped and medicines based on this new knowledge. It is an obvious thing to say the Internet has changed all our lives in the period.

It is clear today that a good education is more important than ever. The new jobs that have been created in the last 30 years are in 'the knowledge economy' and thus it is vital that the young of today are taught well, including being taught how to learn for themselves, so that they can continue to learn and develop after they leave school.

It was a great honour to be asked to give out the prizes at last summer's senior prize giving. The school has changed a lot since I left, not least the move to a mixed school. However, I was delighted to find that the school has retained the benefits of a small school environment and the teaching staff I met clearly had a desire to get the most out of each student, treating them as individuals and preparing them for the challenges of the Internet age. The Christian ethos of the school also remains strong and it is worth all alumni visiting the new chapel, a far cry from the subterranean chapel when I was at school.

I was lucky enough to hand prizes to my godson and his sister, making the evening even more memorable. My godson is the son of Lance Meade, a close friend to this day, who was Head Boy in 1984-85. I was delighted very recently to learn that things have come full circle and that young Oliver Meade will be following his father's footsteps as the new head boy. I remember helping Lance with his speech, I wonder if Oliver will also need a hand...





## BISHOP CHALLONER SCHOOL

To support the school with your time and professional knowledge, please contact us via the following:

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