



Collegium Sancti Laurentii

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From the Headmaster's Study

June 2024

Dear Parents,

I started this term by speaking in Assembly about the importance of everyone 'doing good' and giving their very best during the last cycle of the academic year and I have been impressed with how well everyone has done just that, across the board. Be it during academic studies, public exams, co-curricular activities, in House with their peers, there has been a peaceful but purposeful atmosphere across the campus with our core value of 'respect' at the heart of everything we do.

Highlights have included the many musical treats we have heard this year from Handel's Messiah in a packed Cadogan Hall, the orchestra on show at Prize Giving, to the rousing performance of Haydn's Nelson Mass as our Schola joined the local community to sing this special piece in the Abbey Church last weekend. It is also a great privilege to be able to come together every Friday for Schola Mass with exquisite singing in the beautiful Monks' Quire.



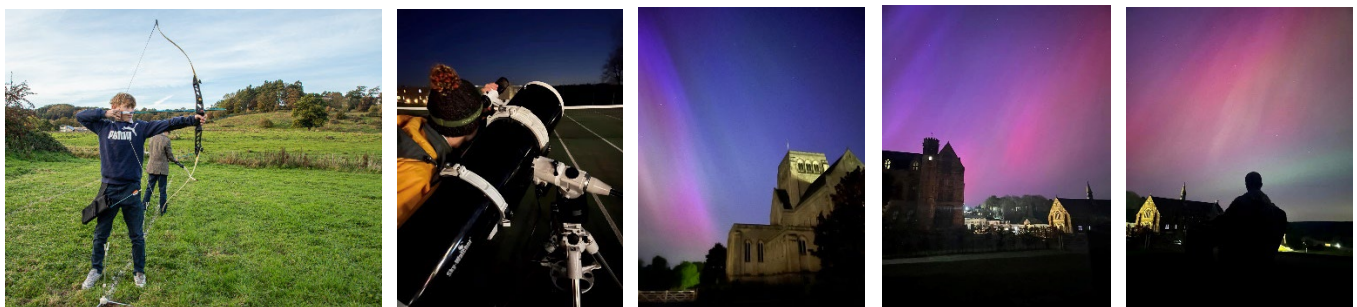
Despite the unseasonably cold weather, sport has continued to thrive in the valley and beyond. Our tennis players had a fantastic season with the boys on a 73% win rate and the girls on 83%. Special congratulations go to the 1st Girls Tennis Team for reaching the semi-finals of the Aberdare National Cup. Cricket was sadly impacted this season by the rain, but the sun put in a surprise appearance for the Emeriti Schools' Festival and the Under 13 Worsley Cup this week. A good number of our students have also participated in regional and county cricket performance pathways, and they will continue to progress through our full winter training programme under the guidance of newly appointed Yorkshire County Cricket Club Performance Pathway Coach, Haydon Jackson.



We were delighted to welcome Robin and Penny Dyer back for the blessing and opening of the Robin Dyer Cricket nets too – a fantastic facility which will be enjoyed not only by our students but by Yorkshire County Cricket, other local schools and clubs, and the MCC outreach programme. Our equestrians have continued to impress with placings for Poppy, Olivia, Elizabeth, Tamara and Miles at various NSEA County events across the UK. There was also an impressive win for OA Louis Pern (DO21) who was the youngest amateur rider to win the Macmillan Charity Race earlier this month – the race has now raised well over £200,000 to support people living with cancer. Well done team Ampleforth all round!



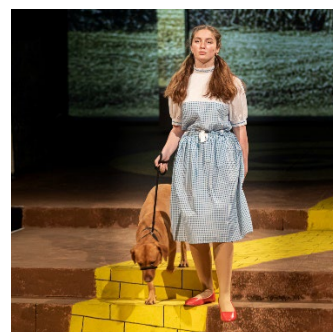
Whilst the focus this term has been on our academics and public exams, we have still offered our students a strong co-curricular programme. With everything from archery to karate, debating to fishing and chess to astronomy, there has been something for everyone to help them relax and refocus during the busy term. How blessed our astronomers were to catch a very rare glimpse of the Northern Lights this term too – that certainly doesn't happen very often! Year 9 students learnt so much about the cost of war during their trip to the Battlefields, where they paid their respects to all the missing at The Somme, especially the six OAs commemorated there. There has been lots of fun, as well as rivalry, at the inter-House Tennis competition, the Ampleforth Mile, and the much-loved House Athletics with the 32 (runners) by 200 metres relay continuing to delight the crowds. Our oldest school competition, the Nulli Secundus, rewarded our top Army and Air Force cadets. Well done to all.



This year has seen us out and about internationally for one of the first times since the pandemic. I thoroughly enjoyed rekindling friendships in Hong Kong with parents and Old Amplefordians alike; Harriet and Lizzie have been flying the flag for us in Madrid at the weekend, and my thanks to Mike for manning the Ampleforth stand at the Pembroke House Rugby Festival and School Fair in Kenya, and to Emma, Gabrielle and Chris for hosting drinks for parents and alumni in Malta. We are planning a number of trips for next year and will continue to spread the word amongst families that Ampleforth is on the up.



Two big events this term that have brought us together as a school community have been Confirmation and Exhibition. To share the sacrament of Confirmation in the Abbey Church with students and their families was a real honour and a highlight of the year. The rain stayed away for Exhibition which helped us to celebrate the many talents of our students in the classrooms, the CCF inspection, *Wizard of Oz* in the Theatre, and cricket and tennis in the Valley. Our Exhibition theme this year was music, and I couldn't be prouder of our talented musicians for their various performances throughout the weekend from Pipe Band to Big Band and starting with a moving Mass in the Abbey Church celebrated by Fr Abbot. We were delighted he joined us for Prize Giving the following morning as our special guest.



This week, a group of Year 12s travelled to Nottingham to spend time with students at Oakfield School, a school for children with physical and learning difficulties. Through their hard work and dedication, they have raised over £10,000 to take their Oakfield friends on a number of excursions including a trip to Alton Towers. Their selfless efforts, be it selling merchandise after Mass on Sunday through to the gruelling sponsored Big Walk, highlights how thoughtful and caring our students are, putting the needs of others first.



It's been a busy end to the academic year, and I congratulate our students and staff for their hard work and dedication. Marie and I look forward to seeing the fruits of your labours on results days. Meanwhile, I hope you have a peaceful summer with your families.

All best wishes,

Peter