



# Le Chéile Secondary

## Christmas Newsletter



### Message from the Deputy Principal

Dia daoibh gach duine / Hello everybody,

It is with great joy, hope and pride that I am writing to wish you all a very special Christmas. This time last year, we had enjoyed a very busy first term and had just finished a very successful Whole School Evaluation (WSE). Nobody in the world could have predicted the challenges that we were to face in the following months, both in our personal and our professional lives, but throughout this time, we continued to show our determination and resilience to make the best of every situation.

One of the biggest challenges of the year came on March 12<sup>th</sup> when Le Chéile had to close its doors to our wonderful students. The hearts of the school community remained firmly open, however, and kindness, care, commitment and compassion could be seen throughout those tough months. Teaching and Learning also continued through our online platform and our teachers and SNAs remained steadfast in their resolve to support our students in whatever way they could.

This August, after months of planning, I am proud to say that our pupils returned safely to our school. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, the hustle and bustle of school life has resumed in the "new normal" and that wonderful energy that can only be experienced in a school can be felt again. Le Chéile is a happy and safe place for our students and while our smiles were initially covered with our masks, we have learnt to read each other's expressions through the eyes, the subtle expressions we would never have noticed before and the tone of our voices. Life has been far from perfect for the families of our school community – jobs have been lost, money is tight, some people have felt very low or anxious and a lot of us haven't seen or hugged our loved ones in a very long time. But we need to take one day at a time and when it all seems too much, I like to read the spiritual poem by Helen Steiner Rice as a reminder that "This too shall pass."

We hope that Christmas will be a (safe) reprieve from the hardships of the last few months and remember - the most important gift you can give the loved ones in your life is your time - It is precious, only you can give it and it cannot be bought or sold.

We look forward to welcoming back your children to our school in January and we pray and hope for a fantastic 2021 for us all.

Nollaig shona daoibh ar fad/Happy  
Christmas all!  
Ms. Ní Dhonecha

### Message From The Principal



'May you have the gladness of Christmas which is hope; The spirit of Christmas which is peace; The heart of Christmas which is love'

Writing my Christmas message always forces me to take time out from the busyness of school life to reflect on the year that has passed. I am sure you will all agree that this year has been a year like no other. Our school community has faced many challenges this year, the school closures in March, remote learning, calculated grades for our Leaving Cert students and the cancellation of the Junior Certificate State Examinations. However in spite of these challenges we experienced many moments of joy, our Le Chéile Day celebrations, the big Kahoot quiz, the virtual fun run, our Awards Ceremony, our end of year assemblies and our beautiful 6th Year prayer service as we sent the Class of 2020 off on their new adventure.

Our greatest joy came in August as we re-opened the school to our wonderful students and once again witnessed the corridors and classroom filled with laughter and learning. Our students have, as always, been a credit to their school and their families in engaging with learning, supporting one another and working hard to keep our school a safe learning environment. After such a difficult year the celebration of our Feast Day on the 2nd October with Mass live streamed to our school community and the unveiling of the Le Chéile Blessing was a particularly special day.

We have continued to flourish as a school in spite of our 'new normal'. Over the course of the term we have had success with Young Scientist and Scifest, the students have been involved in leadership training through the LiFT programme, we have students involved in the Digital Champions programme, we have welcomed guest speakers (virtually), our students have been interviewed on the radio and for the television, the TY's even managed to travel to Glendalough before the lockdown and the list is goes on!! I am grateful to our teachers who continue to give their time so generously to ensure that our students have such a broad and balanced educational experience. We talk often of our root beliefs and core values, values which are Gospel values rooted in the person of Jesus Christ, and which guide and direct all that we do here in Le Chéile. In this season of Advent we reflect on our core value of Hope and Gratitude and remind ourselves of all that we have to be grateful for and hopeful about. I would like to acknowledge all in our school community, our parents, students, teachers, SNAs and ancillary staff for being beacons of welcome, wisdom, witness and hope in these challenging times.

The Christmas season is a very special time and brings great opportunities for spiritual re-growth and reunions with family and friends. It can however also be very challenging for some and this year, more than ever our thoughts and prayers are with those who are dealing with the loss of loved ones or anxiety over the health of those close to them. As the term draws to a close I am delighted to take this opportunity to wish each of you a peaceful and blessed Christmas. We look forward with hope and optimism to a brighter 2021 and to welcoming our students back on the 6th January rested and with a renewed enthusiasm.

Leona Harrington , Principal.

## Message from the Deputy Principal

Happy Christmas to you all. I would like to start with a huge appreciation for the wonderful Le Chéile welcome you have extended to me. I can't believe the 1<sup>st</sup> term of this academic year is drawing to a close. I feel so privileged to have had the opportunity to get to know you all and work with you these past few months. I really look forward to our next 2 terms together.

I have been so impressed by how remarkably you have adapted to the new 'normal' we are living in. Guidelines and rules for managing the pandemic were set and you all took these in your stride and did not let this get in the way of your learning.

Our incoming Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate students are quietly working away preparing for their examinations, focusing on looking forward rather than dwelling on the past. This all brings to mind a wonderful quote from a former U.S president Theodore Roosevelt. "It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done it better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who comes short again and again.. who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly."

I see unbelievable courage shown by our students every day. Making their greatest effort and not knowing what the outcome may be. And this is all that will ever be asked of you. To make your best effort.

We thank you for the exceptional effort you make when you come to school, we thank you for the exceptional effort you make by being your best self every day and making the school a nicer place to be in. Thank you for an exceptional start to this year. Come back rested and ready for more of the same next year...To dare greatly. On time. In your correct uniform!!

Ms Emer Walsh



# Feast Day Celebrations

By Mrs. Lattin

Annually in Le Chéile Secondary School we hold a whole school Feast Day that everyone is encouraged to participate in and attend. The main point of the Feast Day is to come together as a school to reflect and celebrate on our school and achievements. Our Feast Day coincides with the Feast Day of the Guardian Angels on October the 2<sup>nd</sup>. On Friday morning, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, the school held a beautiful mass with Fr. Eoin. This mass was live streamed from our school's You Tube Channel.



Students tuned in from their classrooms with their Tutors. This way we could all attend this Mass safely as a community. As the Mass opened, many musically gifted members of our school, performed a socially distanced version of "The Blessing". This beautiful song was performed in loving memory of Dr Syed Waqqar Ali. The video has almost reached an amazing 5,000 views on YouTube to date.



Following this, the annual School Leadership Awards were presented to students who are ambassadors or hold positions of responsibility within the school community. Nearly 200 leadership awards were presented during the ceremony which demonstrates once again how amazing our student body is.

The second years are awarded their angel badges by their Year Head Mr. Mc Cann and promised to take care and to be a guardian to the new 1st year students. 6<sup>th</sup> Year Prefects, Head Girl and Head Boy were also announced during this ceremony. Jessica Odemena was announced as the school's new Head Girl and Philip Palvliy was announced as the new Head Boy. Jessica exclaimed that "it was a joyous experience!" and Philip reported "this memory will be ingrained with me forever..!" Furthermore, our last years' Head Boy Stephen and Head Girl Mary also attended the ceremony and shared some parting words with the students and new student leadership team.



After the ceremony finished, the whole school were given ice creams to celebrate. Thank you to Mrs. Harrington for this lovely token. It was a feast day we will never forget, for good reasons only!

# Hip Hip Hooray for our LCAs!

A big well done to all of the efforts that have been put in by the 6th Year LCA class. They received their results from 5<sup>th</sup> Year a couple of weeks ago. They all did very well and seemed extremely happy with their results from last year. To celebrate their hard work Ms Lattin (Year Head) , Ms Barron (Tutor) and the LCA students had a Mc Donalds and watched a movie in school. "It was lovely for our work to be acknowledged, it was a real treat" stated Ashely . They were certainly the envy of all of the pupils and teachers ! A massive congratulations to our LCA students !

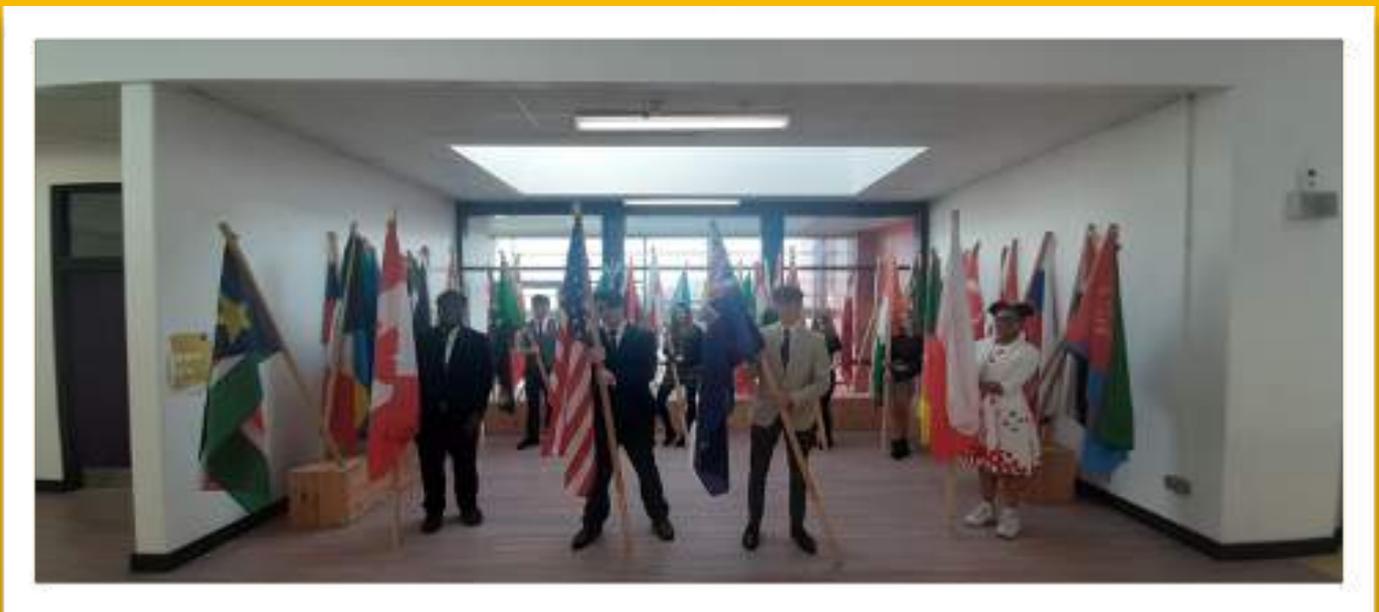


*L-R Caitlin Magee, Michaela Cullen Rooney , Morgan Boland, Ashley Nicole Lynch and Rebecca Glennon.*

## Model United Nations

A class of the T.Y's from Le Chéile have participated in their own small committee (The Human Rights committee).

*Cont.on following page*



## Model United Nations (M.U.N)

The issue that was discussed was , “Methods to ensure equality between men and women”. Students lobbied and co-operated to create different resolutions to the problem. Three resolutions and two passed successfully by the committee.

Many students that participated enjoyed debating and the process of coming up with the resolutions to the problem. Delegates representing Singapore and the United Kingdom successfully got their resolutions to pass. They were treated with pizza for their excellent efforts in solving this global issue!

Tensions between the U.S.A and the UAE skyrocketed but all delegates negotiated and came to a compromise. Ms. Leddy is looking forward to the next group of T.Y's to participate and in the next M.U.N module.

*Alex Marszalek, TY Student.*



## The Autonomy Of Basketball

Well done to Gerard Nipales and John Madeja whose video, “The Autonomy of Basketball” placed third in this year’s Reel Life Science competition. We are proud of you !

# TY Diary : Glendalough Walking Trip

On Tuesday, 15th of September all TY classes went on an astonishing walk to Glendalough. We all gathered together outside the school to wait for the buses to leave at 8am .We were all wearing heavy jackets in case it started raining. After a long drive through the mountains in the freezing cold we finally arrived at our destination.

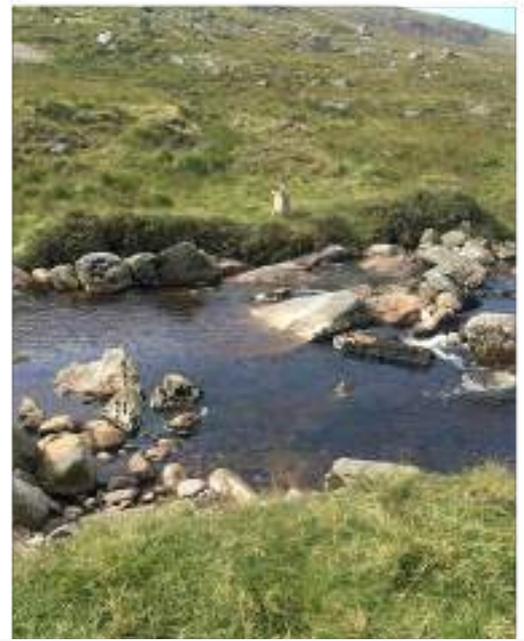
Once we arrived we grabbed our things and headed on the walk.

We all paraded through the trees and passed the lakes. Once we passed the lakes all we saw was rocks in the distance. We came to what looked like ruins of old buildings across the field. Once we arrived here we took a break and saw a lot of deer. We all had to take our jumpers off because we were sweating. We began walking again but this time in a zig zag uphill. The sun was splitting the rocks.

It was hard but we made it to the top and we began crossing the top of the hill. When we were at the top the view was beautiful. Finally we arrived at the wooden path going down towards the trees. Once we came downhill we stopped to have some lunch in the woods.

While we were eating we all talked to different people and this brought us closer as a TY group and was a great start to the year ahead. We were all exhausted but we kept walking downhill. After we made it down a very steep hill we went to visit the round tower and visit some old tombstones. After our trip around the graveyard we walked back to the car park and boarded our buses. Once we left the area we turned on the speakers and had a karaoke party we sat on the bus jamming out to some of our favourite songs. We left Glendalough with new friendships and many amazing memories.

*Kacey and Sarah Mangan, TY*



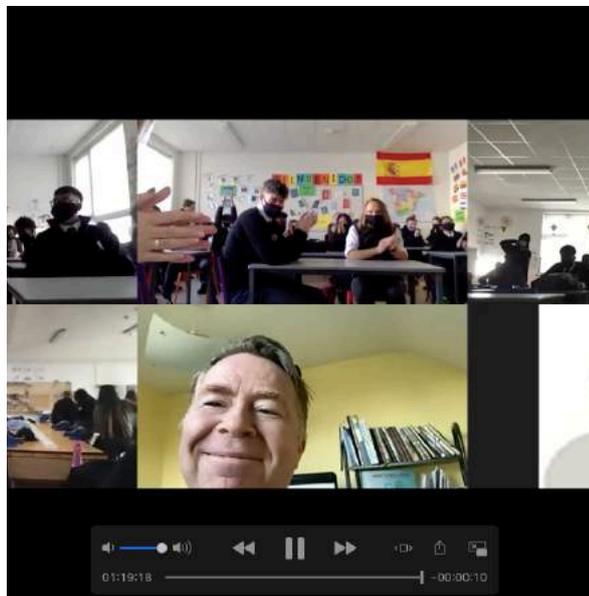
## 6th Year Motivational Talk with John Doran

On the 14th of October, the 6th years received some motivational words from published author and TED Talks speaker, John Doran. Due to the current restrictions, John was unable to physically come into school. He happily chatted with our 6th year students and their Tutors via Zoom.

Usually this type of talk would happen face to face but due to Covid restrictions we had to meet via Zoom.

Hopefully this talk inspired our current leaving cert candidates to continue to excel and continue to be their best selves. "I really enjoyed the anecdotes, they made me laugh and think about my future more seriously"- Tayra, 6th Year pupil.

Thank you John !



*Distinguished TED Talks speaker John Doran, talking the talk via Zoom to our 6th Year pupils!*

"European Week of Languages" is a week in Le Cheile in which we celebrate the diversity of European languages spoken in our school community.

Each year we run a multitude of fun activities to celebrate, and while many activities we would normally have weren't possible, we still had many fun events. One of the events was the tongue twisters in a variety of European languages. For example a German tongue twister that was shared was "Der Grubengräber gräbt die Gruben. Graben Grabengräber Gruben? Graben Grubengräben Gräber? Nein! Grabengräber graben. Grubengräber graben Gruben." The tricky tongue twister roughly translates to "The gravedigger digs graves. The ditchdigger digs ditches. Do ditchdiggers dig graves? Do gravediggers dig ditches? No! Gravediggers dig graves. Ditchdiggers dig ditches."

What a mouthful! Another way we celebrated the vast variety of European languages is sharing facts about bi/multi-lingual celebrities, such as Shakira, who is extremely talented when it comes to languages as she speaks English, Spanish, Portuguese, French and Italian absolutely fluently. That's a total of 5 European languages spoken by a single person. Facts about Europe or European languages were another activity. Teachers and students would make posters containing facts relating to the celebration. Below are two posters that were created and posted by a member of staff in school.

*Luke McKay Tracy, TY Student.*



# PUMPKIN CARVING

The spookiest time of the year....Halloween was approaching!

To make the most of this occasion, the TY students carved frighteningly wicked pumpkins!

If this wasn't fun enough, a competition was also held for the most creative, the best worst, the funniest and the overall best pumpkin!

From sketching their designs to plunging their hands into the slimy insides of the pumpkins, the TY's had a blast! Mr Walshe played a spooky soundtrack in the background whilst we worked away !

Our Principal Ms Harrington and Halloween enthusiast Ms Cahill, judged the competition and chose a worthy winner.

It would be an utter understatement to say that it was just a fun day.

All in all, the TY's went home with sweets on their left hand and their petrifying pumpkins on their right.

*Lara Cacho, TY Student.*



# Litter Bugs

In October the two TY classes went out around the school premises to clean, and pick up litter to make the community a better place.

The two classes went around with plastic gloves and rubbish bags picking up the rubbish. After the clean up, the school, Astro pitch, courts and courtyard looked much cleaner and a more pleasant place for a school community.

We as a school community would like to keep our wonderful school and facilities clean for the students and staff of Le Cheile for a more enjoyable learning environment and for our own well-being.

The experience was "humbling" according to Micheal Orimolade. "It has taught me to think about others and the surroundings of our school".

*Daniel Moore, TY Student.*



# Spooktacular Annual Dress



The last day before the October midterm...

The students and staff of Le Chéile Secondary School held our annual "Dress Up" day! Ranging from cute 'lil toddlers to creepy clowns, everyone dressed to disgusting perfection!

The day began with a spooky and spectacular virtual assembly and then came several classes of Halloween-related activities.

If that wasn't good enough, it's said that some classes were even given treats! So much for a healthy Halloween!

*Saniye Guler, TY student.*

## In November, We Remember.

During the month of November, all Le Chéile students participated in a "November Remember Prayer Service."

The prayer room was beautifully lit with Le Chéile candles, and a sense of tranquility could be felt throughout the room. This was a lovely service that began with students taking some time to remember those who have sadly passed away, while also thinking of others who may have suffered difficulties during the past year. During the service, students watched the AMAZING 'Le Chéile blessing' video (A video I would highly recommend watching if you haven't already), which showcased the beautiful singing skills of many students. As a student who's been in Le Chéile for nearly four years now, I believe this video truly showed what it's like being part of the Le Chéile family, and the love that comes with it. A big thank you to Father Brian who organised this service, which allowed students to reflect and connect with people who may have passed, in a calm and caring way.

*Colm Lynch, 5th Year Student.*



# Words of Wisdom from our Head Boy and Head Girl

My name is Philip Pavliy and I'm this year's Head Boy. The day I became Head Boy is a day I will remember forever. When I was in TY (2 years ago) the first Head Boy and Head Girl were announced at our feast day ceremony. When I saw OJ walk onto the stage after being named that year's Head Boy, I said to my friends "That's gonna be me." And lucky enough, I can proudly say that I am this year's Head Boy.

Being Head Boy is really important to me because I think I can really (along with Jessica Odemena, this year's Head Girl) make a difference in this school for the better and for the years to come. Although there's more pressure on me to thrive and do my best it's a challenge I happily welcome since this is something I've wanted for years.

This year, as Head Boy I really want to change any of the bad in the school so it can be even more amazing than it already is. To our (mainly) junior students, make sure you treat the school with respect because for the next 5 or 6 years, this will be your home away from home.

To our senior students, you're approaching your last years in this amazing school, so if there is an assignment due, or test coming soon, try your hardest and surpass your limits. At the end of every term, if you can, look back and think to yourself "Will I change anything I cannot accept and (more importantly) will I accept the things I cannot change."

I hope both staff and students realise how good this school is and try their best to take care of each other, because WE are the school.

*Philip Pavily , 6th Year Student.*

Hi! My name is Jessica and I'm Le Chéile's Head Girl for this year. It is an incredible privilege to be able to represent the students of Le Chéile in this way, and I'm grateful for having this role every day.

As Head Girl, I hope to be a voice for every member of the school community, and to be a leader who is confident, compassionate and understanding. I hope to be a role model for everyone in our school who have things to say but don't have the confidence to say them - to serve as an example that everyone's voice matters and that this is a space in which everyone is valued.

To all the junior students, and to senior students who have more time left in secondary school than I have - here's a piece of advice. Make the most of the time that you have. Enjoy the little moments of laughter in class, the sitting with your friends at lunchtime, the mask-covered smiles you get from teachers in the corridor - those moments are precious and are the things you'll remember when you've moved on to new stages in your life.

I have gotten so much from my time in Le Chéile, and I'm honoured to have this opportunity to give something back before I leave. When I graduate next year, I want you all to believe that I have contributed to our school in the best way I can - by being the best leader and person that I can be.

*Jessica Odemena, 6th Year Student.*



# Le Chéile wins School of Distinction: Innovation Award from Trinity Access, Trinity College Dublin

by Ms Coughlan



**Le Chéile has been recognised by Trinity Access, Trinity College Dublin, for their ongoing work in creating a college-going culture in their school.**

The Schools of Distinction Award, conferred by Trinity Access, Trinity College Dublin, recognises and showcases the efforts of schools nationwide to transform their school culture and to develop innovative approaches to teaching and learning. The scheme recognises the often extraordinary work being successfully undertaken by schools in challenging conditions and with limited resources. It encourages participants to draw on their own school and community resources and the resources of the Trinity Access project in Trinity College Dublin to support educational innovation and change.

This School of Distinction: Innovation Award, recognises the creative and innovative ways that schools are embedding a college-going culture. They have active, student-centred programmes that support our 3 core practices of Pathways to College, Mentoring and Leadership in Learning in their school. Innovation Award winners support and encourage their teachers to explore innovative teaching methodologies, engage with other excellent teachers through our Community of Practice and establish Community of Practices within their own schools. This award scheme aims to support the development of 'college-going' practices and a student-centred, innovative learning environment across schools nationwide.

Mrs Harrington (Principal) said, "We are delighted to be part of a nationwide movement to promote the importance of post-secondary education. Winning the School of Distinction: Innovation award recognises the ongoing work of our staff and students"



Cliona Hannon, Director of Trinity Access says, "We are delighted to recognise the innovative, leadership and community focused work that these schools have achieved in an extraordinary year. We hope to share the learning from these beacons of creativity with all our other school partners. A warm congratulations from all in Trinity Access".

Cliona Hannon, Director of Trinity Access says, "We are delighted to recognise the innovative, leadership and community focused work that these schools have achieved in an extraordinary year. We hope to share the learning from these beacons of



## Our 6th Year Mentor System

We are delighted to announce that last month we began our 20/21 mentoring programme. This successful initiative sees each 6<sup>th</sup> year being mentored by a teacher. Each mentoring relationship is focused on developing college awareness and empowering students in their choice to participate in third level education. Mentors provide guidance in areas such as achieving academic goals, navigating the CAO and career paths. Furthermore, support and advice is also given in relation to stress management and wellbeing. Students were provided with a brochure, highlighting key CAO dates and providing an outline of the mentoring programme entails. Meetings are arranged between mentors and mentees at key points throughout the year. This special mentoring relationship is beyond the classroom experience and helps raise and enrich students aspirations. I can say with confidence that each mentor is excited to support their mentee on their journey at this time.



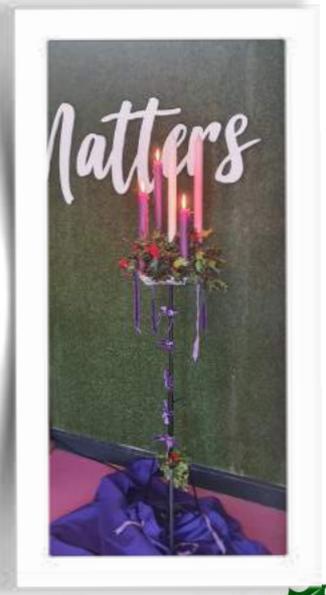
# Le Chéile Christmas Market

The Le Chéile 2020 Christmas market is...

A market full of joy and spirit for our Le Chéile students and staff. Everyone comes together as a community and buys homemade products for the festive season. A lot of work from our Le Chéile students have been put in to make the market as outstanding as possible for everyone to enjoy. What makes our Le Chéile Christmas market special is that we all come together as a team and support each other. This years' Christmas market will be a little bit different because of COVID 19.

As vendors we will be kept our distance and went from class to class to show our potential customers our products to see if they were interested or not. We are so pleased to announce that we sold out of most products after our first day of selling! Another successful year at the Christmas market!

*Ciara Hogan and Jadine Allen  
TY Students.*



*Merry Christmas to one and all  
from us all at Le Chéile Secondary  
School.*



<p>What is the wettest animal at the North Pole?</p>  <p>The rain-deer!</p>	<p>What do elves eat for breakfast?</p>  <p>Snow flakes!</p>	<p>What do you call Santa at the beach?</p>  <p>Sandy Claus!</p>
<p>Where do snowmen go to dance?</p>  <p>A snow ball!</p>	<p>What did the gingerbread man put on his bed?</p>  <p>A cookie sheet!</p>	<p>What do you call an old snowman?</p>  <p>Water!</p>
<p>Where does the snowman keep his money?</p>  <p>In a snowbank!</p>	<p>What did one angel say to the other?</p>  <p>Halo there!</p>	<p>Which one of Santa's reindeer has bad manners?</p>  <p>Rude-olph!</p>

## CHRISTMAS word search

U	H	E	G	K	N	P	W	T	S	I	F	S	I	U	C
R	O	T	S	S	F	R	E	I	N	D	E	E	R	R	A
Y	L	G	M	O	H	E	L	N	S	A	H	A	S	A	N
L	I	C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	W	S	Z	X	D
I	D	T	F	N	G	E	N	L	N	N	P	M	A	J	Y
G	A	F	E	A	L	N	Y	S	T	R	E	E	S	A	C
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R	I	E	N	T	P	A	S	T	O	C	K	I	N	G	S
L	A	R	A	S	H	L	A	D	A	X	D	L	E	L	F
G	I	N	G	E	R	B	R	E	A	D	I	Y	V	O	P
H	A	N	S	F	I	T	F	U	D	R	I	B	B	O	N

CHRISTMAS  
SANTA  
HOLIDAY  
TREE  
ORNAMENTS  
PRESENTS  
SNOWFLAKE  
GINGERBREAD

MERRY  
ELF  
TOYS  
CANDYCANE  
STOCKINGS  
LIGHTS  
REINDEER  
RIBBON



Printables.se

*Nollaig Shina Agus Athbhlian faoi  
mhaise daoibh go léir ó gach dine as  
Meánscoil Le Chéile.*

