

STUDENTS INVOLVEMENT IN PARISH COMMUNITY

Mount Mercy College was founded in 1966 under the trusteeship of the Sisters of Mercy and within their mission statement exists the commitment to foster a sense of caring and justice. In March 2008, the Sisters of Mercy joined with other religious congregations to ensure that the founding traditions are protected and maintained in a new structure called CEIST. The collective aims of CEIST are to promote spiritual and human development, to achieve quality in teaching and learning, to show respect for every person, to be just and responsible and to create community.

There is a spectrum of activities in the school that highlight engagement with community and the expression of faith. One example is the making of key moments in the school year through liturgy with events such as beginning of school year mass, Transition Year and Leaving Certificate Graduation masses and mass attendance in the parish for liturgical times of Advent, Lent and Easter.

The introduction of Religious Education as both a Junior Certificate and subsequently a Leaving Certificate examination subject has brought renewed awareness and understanding of key concepts such as community, participation and justice. Many students participate in their parish through choir membership, ministry of the Word and altar service.

Community Work is an integral part of the Transition Year programme where students are encouraged to work in local projects. Activities range from volunteering in crèches, primary schools, hospitals and nursing homes to working in organisations such as the Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind, the Cope Foundation and Brainwave. Gaisce, the President's Award is a challenge undertaken by many students that encourages participation by volunteering and community involvement. Throughout the year students collect for various charities through flag days, non-uniform days and the ever-reliable cake sale!

A special association has developed between the Hope Foundation and Mount Mercy College. Students raise over €25,000 annually to fund 'Mount Mercy' classrooms in Kolkata, India. A number of students visit the Hope schools, hospitals and homes in Kolkata every year to identify first-hand how money raised is put to excellent use.

An annual Fashion Show is organised and co-ordinate by students who select a chosen activity in their community that benefit from the proceeds. Another annual event is the Breast Cancer Awareness Lunch in Maryborough House where students, teachers, parents and staff from Cork hospitals gather for lunch, an auction and entertainment for a most worthy cause.

Collectively, these activities instil a sense of community, collaboration and participation in family, school and parish. The ethos of Mount Mercy College continues to foster the development of faith but more importantly to encourage students to put that faith into action and share their gifts, talents, time, energy and abilities with the community.

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