

Dalkey Diary

ISSUE 19 | JAN 2026

Celebrating Mary Ward Week

Today, we begin Mary Ward Week. While it is unusual to begin a week on a Friday, January 23rd is a very important date in our Loreto tradition. It was on this day in 1585 that Mary Ward was born. 441 years ago a flame was lit that would prove unstoppable, and thus Loreto began. January 30th marks the anniversary of Mary Ward's death in 1645, ending our celebration of Mary Ward Week.

The Theme of Mary Ward Week this year is 'Where one is, we all are'. This underlines our Loreto Community that is scattered throughout the world, as Loreto is now present in 24 countries worldwide. We are a truly international community educating girls in six continents. While the context varies, the ethos and mission remains the same.

Over the next week we will be looking at the role of Irish sisters, led by Theresa Ball, in establishing many of these schools. The Loreto Sisters left Ireland with a vision to educate and empower women around the world.

Today we are considering the important role our school played in these sisters' farewell. How Teresa Ball came here to say a final goodbye to her sisters and how she chose to be here at the end of her life.

Next week, there will be a number of activities, including our partnership with a Loreto school on the other side of the world.

- *The Ember Team*

Mark your Calendar

Jan 29th	6th Year Mocks begin
Jan 29th	Subject choice information meeting for TYs and TY parents
Feb 5th	Junior Cycle Mocks begin
Feb 6th	Spring exams begin for 5th Years
Feb 9th	TY Work Experience Week
Feb 10th	Spring exams begin for 1st and 2nd Years
Feb 13th	School closed for mid-term break

The full school calendar can be found on both the website and via our school app



Queen's University Belfast Talk

Today, Louise Carey addressed 5th Year students on the opportunities available at Queen's University Belfast, outlining its diverse course offerings and innovative research.

She encouraged students to undertake extensive research to ensure they choose the course and university best suited to them.

6th Year Talk from the WRC

The 6th Year Business and Home Economics students welcomed staff from the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) to Loreto Abbey recently.

The talk centred on industrial relations conflict and the rights and responsibilities for employees in the workplace. Students learned about what they are entitled to in terms of pay, rest breaks and working hours along with what steps to take in the event of a dispute.

It was an excellent opportunity to bring course content to life and link it to the real world. Thank you to Ellen and Dolores from the WRC who spoke to our students and took time to answer questions.



TY Leadership Conversations

On Monday, the TYs were lucky to have an inspiring presentation from Maria Cristina Villarroel, physician scientist and senior director of oncology. During this talk, we learned about Maria Cristina's life and how she overcame many challenges to get to where she is today. She also showed us how life doesn't need to have one path, and everyone has the option to change their minds about life choices.

Maria Cristina moved to Ireland from Barcelona in 2022, as a temporary move with her family after living in several countries. They then decided to stay in Ireland as they enjoyed their lifestyle and surroundings, indulging in Irish culture and even taking up the national sport!

With her first daughter being born prematurely, and only having six weeks of paid maternity leave, Maria Cristina found herself staying home for six more weeks of unpaid leave. Having to find space between family and work can be difficult, especially with a premature child.

She also spoke about how she was fired for becoming pregnant, discussing how women often have to change their lifestyles for their jobs. Maria Cristina is now able to show up strong in her work, even with having four children to look after, and shows just how capable and committed women are.

Towards the end, she spoke about her hobbies and how she finds time for herself. She encouraged us to explore our passions and hobbies while prospering in work – and that it's ok to have a little fun after school and work, making the whole room laugh and smile. She is such an inspiration and we are so lucky to have had her come in to speak to us.

- Holly Matthews Kearns, Everly Jordan and Christina Greenwood (TY)



New Amiga Noticeboard

Our second year Amigas were hard at work this week designing their new school noticeboard. The notice board exists to alert all students to the names and roles of the Amigas.

Bí Cineálta (Be Kind) is the name of our anti-bullying policy and it seeks to promote positive relationships in our school community. An important aspect of this is our Amiga Team. Each class has two anti-bullying ambassadors, called Amigas, and their role is to promote the fact that our school is a welcoming place and to report any potential issues to staff. The Amigas will play a central role in our second annual Bí Cineálta week later in the spring.



Kate McLaughlin



Méabh Hargaden



Leia Lawlor

Photography Club

This week, students in the Photography Club were challenged with the prompt 'Where Things Go Quiet' and asked to try to capture moments of peace and stillness in their everyday lives.

The three pictures which stood out this week included those by Kate McLaughlin (TY), Méabh Hargaden (1st Year), and Leia Lawlor (3rd Year). Well done to everyone who took part.

New members welcome! If you are interested in joining photography club, please email Ms Flood.



Cross-Country Success

Well done to all our cross-country runners (and Ms Coyne!) for braving the awful weather on Wednesday at the East Leinster Schools XC 2026 in Phoenix Park.

Congratulations to Megan Brunt who came 1st in the Senior Girls, as well as to Isabelle Higgins (10th) and Hannah Walsh (15th) who also both qualify for the Leinster. The Senior team also came 2nd overall.

In the Inter 2500m, well done to Kate McLaughlin and Amy O'Brien, who had a top 24 finish.

Olatz Cole Garcia took 3rd place in the Juniors, while Lucy Hanley and Emyrose Tomkin Beddy ran in the Minor 1500m, with Emyrose taking 4th place and also joining those through to the Leinster.



CPR4Schools

1st and 2nd Year students are engaging in the Irish Heart Foundation's CPR4Schools programme over the next week. Students will learn about basic CPR techniques, AED locations in the school and local community, as well as what to do in the case of an emergency.

To go alongside this, students are creating online posters and information videos highlighting the steps involved in CPR.



Trocaire and Aidlink Talks for 6th Years

This week, 6th Year students attended two very informative and engaging presentations organised by the RE department.

On Wednesday, Trócaire delivered a talk led by Stephen Farley, which focused on the organisation's work on the ground, with emphasis on their projects in Rumbek. Students gained a clear insight into the realities faced by communities and the practical ways Trócaire supports development and humanitarian efforts.

On Thursday, Ann Cleary from Aidlink presented to the group, sharing her personal and inspiring journey into working with the organisation. Her story highlighted the impact of dedication and compassion in international aid work and strongly resonated with the students.

Both talks were informative, engaging and undoubtedly increased the 6th Years' awareness of global justice issues and the vital work carried out by aid organisations.



Get Ready for Monthly Music Monday!

Next Monday, all staff and students are invited to Monthly Music Monday, an informal recital in E01 at lunchtime. This is the first of 2026 and promises to be a great show!

This is a fun opportunity for students to play for enjoyment or showcase what they've learned so far in the term, and learn from doing it in front of an audience.

If you would like to take part, please email Ms Penston - all are welcome to get involved.

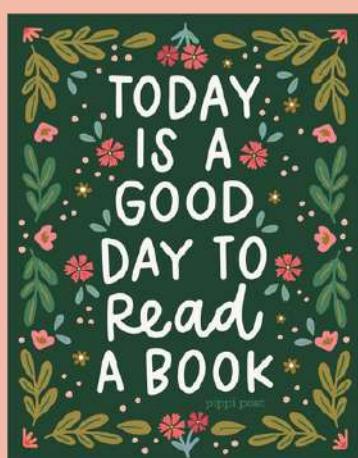
Even if you don't want to perform, please come and support your fellow students!



Snap a 'Library Shelfie'!

Do you have bookshelves worthy of a 'shelfie'? January 28th is Library Shelfie Day and your chance to give your books the attention they deserve!

Send a book pic and you could be in with a chance to win a prize! Pics can be of your current read, your favourite book, a stack of books you want to read, or a whole bookshelf. Just email them to library@loretoabbeydalkey.ie by Tuesday 27th.





Subjects Insights Workshop for TYs

This week, our Transition Year students took part in a Subjects Insights workshop, led by our 5th Year students. Here they gained first-hand advice, insights and perspectives on the various Leaving Certificate subjects.

Through peer learning and honest discussion, students will be feeling a little more informed about the decisions that lie ahead regarding their subject choices for Senior Cycle.



Leinster Semi-Final for Senior A

Huge congratulations to our Senior A hockey team who beat Newbridge in the quarter-finals of the Leinster Shield earlier this week, and will now progress to the semi-finals.

The semi-final match vs St Gerard's will take place in Loreto Abbey Dalkey at 4.30pm on Monday January 26th. All supporters are welcome!

All-Ireland Semi-Final for Senior A

Best of luck to the Senior A basketball team who have their All-Ireland Cup semi-final on Thursday January 29th.

The team will be playing against Presentation College Kilkenny and Our Lady's Terenure, with one team qualifying for the All-Ireland final. The games will be held in Oblate Hall, Inchicore. All support is welcome!

This Week's Hockey Results

Well done to all teams taking part in home and away fixtures throughout the week.

Minor 2 won 4-0 vs Mount Sackville

Junior 3 won 3-1 vs Kilkenny College

Senior 1 won vs Newbridge

Senior 2 won 3-0 vs Our Lady's Terenure

This Week's Basketball Results

Well done to all teams taking part in home and away fixtures throughout the week.

Minor C1 won 42-6 vs Minor C2

Junior C lost 43-35 vs St Killian's
Junior C won 28-18 vs Sion Hill

Cadette B won vs Loreto on the Green

Senior B lost 26-23 vs Loreto on the Green

ARE YOU HAVING A NEW YEAR CLEAR OUT?



Do you have **unwanted Christmas gifts** that need a new home?



Or **books you know you won't read**, despite the best of intentions?



What about **second-hand books** in excellent condition?

IF YES, THE LIBRARY IS HAPPY TO TAKE THEM OFF YOUR HANDS!

Our library book drive continues and we are still looking for **donations of new or second-hand books** in excellent condition. A link to the library wish list can be found in the parent app.

