

# Saint Ambrose College

## Sixth Form Weekly Newsletter

Friday 7th November 2025



Good afternoon Parents & Carers,

We wait in anticipation for the invitation to interview from the 'hallowed spires' (Oxbridge). I hope I will have some good news to report next week. In that vein Mr Newman (Loreto) and I plan to use our collective talent base to provide the boys and girls with the required preparation.

We have several events for our diary coming up but for many of our boys. However, Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December is an important day. We will have boys playing Rugby against Cheadle, the Houses participating in the Christmas Fair, two teams at MGS for the model MUN. Whilst Mr Bancroft's boys will be at the Crown Court adorning their whigs for the northern mock trials. We wish all boys participating the very best and we thank our wonderful teachers for giving their time to ensure that your boys have these opportunities.

It has been so good to hear about the cross-country success on Wednesday, please read the report from James O'B below...

*'On Wednesday, our Senior boys team took on the North west round of the English schools Cross Country cup at Sedbergh school- a fixture and venue we have become well accustomed to over the past few years. Due to the loss of a number of our experienced runners from last year, the team sported a new look and qualification for the national final seemed a steep feat. The sixth form representation on the team consisted of James and Liam O'B, Gabriel McG and new addition Charlie B. The dramatic rainfall the previous day only escalated the difficulty of the terrain with the underfoot conditions being some of the worst we'd seen at the infamous Sedbergh School course. These conditions and the constant sharp hills spelled for the tough day out on the course. Strong runs from all involved, with the standout being Liam O'B, who finished 6th, meant that the team managed to qualify 3rd for the national final- an outcome even Mr Aspinwall didn't anticipate. The next challenge comes on the 6th of December, where the team can hopefully use this momentum to earn the school's best finish on the national stage.'*

I realise how disappointed the boys were regarding the defeat against Kings Macclesfield in the National cup. However, the fixture on Saturday against Sandbach saw a superb comeback and a reminder to those in authority over Cheshire rugby that their churlishness is unforgiveable. The forthcoming Cheshire final is Sandbach against Kings when if good sense had prevailed, it could/should have been our third consecutive Cheshire Cup final. The irony will not be lost on our rugby supporters when you read Joseph M's match report. I wish all our rugby boys every success against Scarisbrick Hall on Saturday.

*'With another 2nd team dropping out, we faced Sandbach with two strong sides. After a thoughtful minute silence for the remembrance weekend, the first team came out raring to go, showing great structure and intent. The growing scoreboard allowed the players to try a few new moves and combinations that paid off handsomely. By halftime, we were 50 points up.*

*The second team carried the momentum after the break, adding several well-worked tries through hard running and support play. The match was called early with the score at 72-0 — a dominant and composed performance by both the Ambrose sides, showing the clear squad depth in this year's senior rugby group.'*

In other good news from the rugby pitch I would like to congratulate five of our Year 12 boys who continue to be heavily invested in the Sale Sharks programme. Joseph E has written this report about their experience thus far this year at the Sale Academy. We are very proud of their endeavours and hope that they will follow in the footsteps of Dan Green, Rafi Quirke and many others who have gone before.

*'In Year 12 we have five students who are a part of the Sale Sharks u17 academy squad – Myself (Joseph E) Jack H, Lorenz D'a, Gabrielle McGr and Finn Gr (left to right). We have all enjoyed the program very much,*

*taking part in weekly Monday night training sessions at Carrington training ground and matches against other elite academies across the country, in which all five of us have been selected for. In a preseason tournament at Malvern college all four of my teammates were selected*



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*to play a year up in the u18 squad showcasing their abilities at an even higher level. To achieve this level the training is intense but has made us all better players over the last two years, also thanks to the professional team of coaches and other members of the academy team. After the new year, fixtures begin to step up with multiple tough games against teams such as Saracens, Newcastle and Harlequins to name a few, in which we all hope to be named for the team selected to play.'*

The eagerly awaited report from James O'B's trip to Stanford is now included in this newsletter.

*'Over the half term, I was lucky enough to fly out to California on an official visit at Stanford university. After a long 11 hour flight I was thrown into a jam packed evening, meeting all the team over a barbecue. Luckily, the team were fairly accustomed to British humour after experiencing a year with fellow Englishmen, James Dargan, who looked after me for the majority of the visit. The second day opened with a scenic long run along the bay followed by a meal courtesy of the coach (a running theme of the trip). The main event of the afternoon was a golf cart campus tour that showcased the brutal scale and mesmerising, instantly-recognisable Stanford architecture fused with sports facilities that would not be out of place in the professional sphere. The highlight of the whole tour, however, was a comment from an LA raised member of the team who said, when there was some light drizzle, 'Stanford has the worst weather in the world, here in winter it rains multiple times a week'. The recovery room flexed machines some hospitals would be lucky to have and the new facilities, athletic and academic alike, stand unparalleled to anything back here. A dinner with the coaches in Palo Alto rounded off a busy day that even made my blow up mattress comfortable. Monday began with another trip to athlete dining for breakfast, its closest relative being a 5 star all inclusive buffet (with a healthier twist) and a run with one of the third years- Leo Young. I then joined one of the first years in an economics lecture which gave me an insight into academic life at Stanford. The trip then culminated with a series of meetings, after a lunch at the athlete cafe, starting with an explanation of the Stanford project by the head coach who later shared his university roommate at Villanova was from Stockport! One of the highlights of the trip was my meeting with the academic advisor who explained the interplay between academics and athletics and how he individualises the plan around each person's season. We finished with following meetings with the personal trainer in the gym and part of the physio team. The 3 day trip felt like it spanned a week and confirmed that all sectors, both with running and academics, were scalable to the greatest magnitude at Stanford. Since, we have confirmed this is the path I want to pursue with the coach and are currently in the process of completing the application. Hopefully I have good news and confirmation by mid December!'*



In addition, I received a deeply moving and thought provoking recount from Louis H about his and Xavier B's recent trip to Auschwitz with the 'Lessons from Auschwitz' group. It goes into some detail which I feel is worthy of the read so I have add it at the end of my newsletter.

On Wednesday night we welcomed hundreds of parents and boys to our Sixth Form Open Evening. It was a great night enhanced by the speeches made by our Head Boy Tobi A, and two new boys Rory L and Mikhail A. We also had dozens of Sixth Formers helping in all departments. Our thanks to all the boys.

Many of our boys have embarked on 'Movember'. Mens mental health is an issue that in the past has been ignored. Phrases such as 'man up' or 'grow a set' are statements that have no context or application in our world. We are constantly aware of the major pressures younger men feel as they deal with the expectations and demands of life in 2025. We have led an assembly before half term introducing a team of Sixth Formers who are here for your son if he feels that 'adults' are not those who he can confide in. We are here for all our young men, whether big or small. We would be very grateful if you could give generously to the boys who are developing a range of upper lip growths. Please see some of the just giving sites and view the progress of their moustaches. <https://uk.movember.com/mospace/15516338?firstvisit=true>

Finally, I would like to share with you a new display. Which will be placed in the main reception. This display celebrates the hard work of Mrs Bastin and Mrs Yaxley and the rest of the PTA in securing so many extra items for our boys. I attended the SAPA meeting on Tuesday

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evening when our new Chair undertook his office and we thanked the outgoing Chair and Treasurer for all their industry over the last four years. Please support our community at the Christmas Fair on the 6<sup>th</sup> December so we can continue to give our boys the 'extras'.

I wish you and your family a wonderful weekend.

Kind regards,  
*Stephen Brady*



*'Xavier and I recently had the privilege of taking part in the Lessons from Auschwitz project, representing St Ambrose in a regional programme that included a day visit to Oświęcim, Poland. Visiting the sites of Auschwitz and Auschwitz-Birkenau and learning about the atrocities committed there and across Europe during the Holocaust, was an unforgettable and deeply eye-opening experience. The Holocaust was the systematic, state-driven murder of Europe's Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators. From 1942 onward, the Nazis carried out a coordinated plan of annihilation in which millions were deported to purpose-built death camps and killed, while many others were worked to death in concentration camps. This genocide relied not only on Nazi leadership but also on the complicity of hundreds of thousands across Europe. Alongside the Jewish victims, groups such as Roma, political prisoners, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Poles, and Soviet POWs were also imprisoned, exploited, and killed through starvation, forced labour, brutality, and disease.*

*Before the visit, we attended a seminar exploring pre-war Jewish life in Europe and the gradual shift from peaceful integration to systemic persecution. During this session, Janine Webber OBE delivered a powerful lecture recounting her life story and the personal impact of the Holocaust. Born in Lvov (now in western Ukraine, but a Polish city in the inter-war period) in 1934, she experienced oppression first-hand - fleeing the city and hiding her Jewish identity as a young girl. Her story was especially harrowing, not least because she confessed that she still suffers nightmares of the "boots" of Gestapo officers hunting her, even at the age of 91. She closed her talk by emphasising the need to fight racism and injustice, urging us to treat everyone with kindness and respect. While the Holocaust was a uniquely horrific event, she stressed that its roots lay in ordinary people normalising hostility toward minorities simply because they were "different." To prevent history from repeating itself, she implored us to confront injustice wherever we encounter it - a message Xavier and I will carry with us into the future.*

*One of the most striking aspects of the Holocaust was the systematic dehumanisation of groups the Nazis deemed "undesirable," including Jews, Roma and Sinti, Slavs, LGBTQ+ people, and disabled people. The regime used institutionalised stigma and propaganda to strip these groups of their humanity and their ability to resist persecution. Walking through Auschwitz-Birkenau and seeing the vast collections of personal belongings - shoes, utensils, glasses, crutches, and prosthetics - as deeply moving. These items stand as some of the last remaining traces of the 1.2 million people murdered in and around Oświęcim.*

*The "Book of Names," which records 4.3 million victims of the Holocaust, further illustrates the scale of this attempted annihilation - not only of a people, but of an ideology, a culture, and an entire way of life. Despite the painstaking work of historians, the identities of an estimated 1.7 million victims remain unknown. This work of remembrance forms part of the broader mission of Yad Vashem, Israel's official Holocaust memorial. Yad Vashem is dedicated to preserving the memory of those who were murdered, recording survivors' testimonies, honouring Jewish resistance and the non-Jews who risked their lives to help, and leading global efforts in research and education to ensure the lessons of the Holocaust are never forgotten. Xavier was particularly struck to find his family name, Burczak, recorded in the Book of Names, with dozens of victims sharing his surname - a powerful example of the Holocaust's enduring impact on families today. The project helped us appreciate that the Holocaust is*

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*not merely a historical event but a tragedy with profound and lasting consequences. Understanding its human cost is essential to understanding many of the issues facing the world today. Yet, despite our visit and all we learned, Xavier and I realised that we can never fully comprehend the extent of what occurred - both because of the Nazis deliberate destruction of records and the unimaginable horror of their crimes. Even so, we now feel more able to reflect personally on the immense loss of humanity we encountered.*

*While at Auschwitz-Birkenau, we also visited the site where the Polish friar Maximilian Maria Kolbe gave his life for another prisoner. St Kolbe volunteered to die in place of Franciszek Gajowniczek and was later canonised by Pope John Paul II in 1982, who declared him a martyr of charity. The Catholic Church honours him as the patron saint of political prisoners, families, journalists, and prisoners. His profound selflessness, even in the face of death by starvation, inspired me to take his name at Confirmation. Pope John Paul II described him as “the patron of our difficult century,” and his deep devotion to Mary earned him the title “apostle of consecration to Mary.” St Kolbe stands as a powerful example of compassion for those in need, and his story continues to inspire devotion to goodness, even in the darkest of circumstances.’*

**By Louis H**

