

# THE HOLY MARY TIMES

## HOUSE PRIDE AT HOLY MARY!

*House Captains Lucia Fontcuberta and Cislá Moreno de los Ríos present Holy Mary's House system.*

Over many years, British schools have harnessed their students' sense of competition through the traditional House system. This year, Holy Mary has decided to introduce this system to promote good behaviour, positive relationships and motivation. Houses are extremely important in the daily life of students, and their implementation has been well received by all students. In the words of Juan Mendez-Trelles of Year 10: 'Houses are very efficient, as they encourage unity and teamwork and also are an opportunity to socialise with people that you don't see very often'.

Audax, Concordia, Virtus, Magnanimus: these are all virtues that are considered crucial in a well-rounded person and are greatly valued by our school. **Audax**, led by Jacobo Richi (Y12), represents the values of boldness and daringness, which are symbolised by a fox.

### IN THIS ISSUE

Creative Writing.....	p. 2-3
Debate.....	p.4-5
Science.....	p. 6-7
Sport.....	p. 8
Reviews.....	p. 9
Comic.....	p.10



**Concordia** which is headed by Micaela Resusta (Y12), presents the values of both harmony and peace, and the house mascot is an owl. **Virtus** exemplifies the ideals of excellence and courage, which are highlighted through its emblem: a ram. Lucia Fontcuberta (Y12) is the captain of Virtus. Finally, generosity and loyalty are the values of **Magnanimus**: a house led by Cislá Moreno de los Ríos (Y12), and represented by a bear.

A large aspect of houses is the competitiveness they engender. Holy Mary has organised many contests already between houses, such as creative writing, maths, ping pong and other sports. We encourage all students to participate as this is a wonderful opportunity to prove your skills in a variety of contexts and be

rewarded with house points or other prizes.

Sol Aramburu (Y9) told us: 'Houses are very motivating for sport and create a friendly yet competitive environment. It's fun!'. More competitions are on their way!

A frequently asked question is how house points are earned. Well, let us tell you some of the easiest ways:

- ★ Being polite
- ★ Making an outstanding effort in class
- ★ Winning a competition
- ★ Producing high quality work
- ★ Helping your teachers or classmates

Do this for your houses and remember: every time you win house points, they are earned for the entire house!

# CREATIVE WRITING COMPETITION

*Gabriela Leyva (Yr 9) and Fabiola Moreno de los Rios (Yr 10) won Holy Mary's Creative Writing Competition! Here are their stories:*

## **"A Dangerous Family", by Gabriela Leyva, Year 9:**

My family is probably the most exceptional group of people you will ever meet. We had all been scattered around the world for 100 years: while I was living in Vienna, my parents were discovering the regions of America and my little sister was getting married in a beautiful village in China. However, no matter how far we are from each other or for how long, we will always remain united by one secret. The center of our existence. We have been keeping that secret with our lives and if someone gets in our way-- well, too bad for them. But the brutal murder of my older brother Darius triggered a very dangerous bomb.

For the first time in more than 150 years we decided to get back together and act as a normal family for the sake of our own survival. It was a normal winter night in Bulgaria: I lay on my bed, devouring a thrilling novel I bought while visiting Paris. The crackling fire warmed my icy bones and I was completely absorbed in the storyline, until a horrendous thud from our front door brought me back to reality. I adjusted my corset and messy curls while rushing down the stairs.

"Abba, Imma, is everything alright?", I asked out of breath. My sister and I were both born in Israel so we still call our parents by their Hebrew names. But their alarming expressions told me everything I had to know. My

father's fists were clenched with menacing force while my mother's hands trembled and her bloodshot eyes were lost in the wall behind me.

"No,no," I whispered, "no, we were doing so well--" I croaked, almost sobbing.

My mum's expression faded into sympathy and sorrow.

"It's going to be okay Nastya. But our neighbours reported suspicious actions to the mayor, therefore his son and his son's wife will come for dinner in an hour. I need you and Lada to get the house ready while I prepare dinner."

As expected my mother acted logical and calm, always knowing what to do.

I focused on cleaning the house and stopped feeling sorry for myself; I was still enraged by the behaviour of this town but they had nothing to do against us. As planned, we heard a knock on our door an hour later. A tall man emerged from it. I wasn't expecting such a handsome and young couple to come in. The mayor's son was outstandingly beautiful, with wavy dark hair, parted in a classy but interesting way, and his deep green eyes sparkled with excitement and intelligence. I observed his full lips for a second but what caught my attention the most was the sound of his heartbeat. 1,2 1,2 1,2- he seemed nervous to be there, but definitely knew how to hide it. I imagined his heart pumping delicious blood to every

single part of his body. I could even smell its familiar scent.

"Dinner's ready" I murmured so that only my family could hear me; my sister Lana chuckled, but my dad gave me such a threatening stare I wished I had kept my mouth shut. Oh, in case you hadn't already noticed: yes, we are vampires. We were all turned 200 years ago and no one, not even the stupid mayor's son, would put us in danger.

"Come in please" said my mum in a friendly tone.

We had dinner and managed to get through the night by talking about the economy, friends we had in common and religion- all painfully tedious topics which adults like for some reason I will never comprehend. But then something happened- something I could've dreamt in a nightmare. The mayor's son and I were both alone in the kitchen area getting a drink while the rest of the family sat in the living room. Then I caught him staring at a very particular place: the blood cabinet, where we keep all of our blood bags. My heart was painfully hammering against my chest. I had no idea why he was looking there but I panicked and told him to accompany me to the living room. Instead he insisted and opened the door, I gasped and instinctively attacked him. Or at least attempted to, because before I could dig my teeth into his neck he grabbed me by the shoulders and showed his monstrous fangs and whispered into my ear

“Relax, I just wanted to get a real drink” and left to go to the living room.

My mind couldn't even process what had just happened.

“He's one of us ” I muttered to myself in shock, still staring at where he'd been a second before.

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### “The Diary”, by Fabiola Moreno de los Rios, Year 10

It had been fourteen years since she'd last seen it, but the place looked exactly the same. Not a single thing had changed, the lawn was freshly mowed and smelt of cut grass. The same black Chevrolet was parked on the driveway, not a single speck of dust could be seen on the car; her father had hated it when anything was dirty. Just as much as he had hated her. Abigail had always despised how everything had to be so clean, it even drove her away. Among other things, she couldn't stand how her house had to be perfect, how she had to be perfect, for her father wouldn't like her if she wasn't.

Abigail stood watching her house from the sidewalk for a few minutes: her whole childhood stood before her. She did not have a happy childhood: she was an only child and was constantly mistreated and looked down by her parents. After her father died, Abigail left home and had no intentions of ever coming back. However, now that her mother had died, she had received a letter saying that she needed to come back and clean out the house.

A sense of dread filled her body

as she turned the keys in the lock and pushed the door open. Abigail was in shock: everything was exactly how she remembered it. The same white peonies sat in a vase at the entrance, the same smell of stale cigarette smoke and detergent hung over the room. Abigail walked around the house, still astounded at how everything was in its place. She summed up her courage to walk up to her room, a room filled with bad memories and secrets, a place where she had suffered and had been at her worst. The door creaked as she pushed it open: the wooden floor was covered in a thick layer of dust, and so was everything else. Her parents had not been here- nobody had been here, not since she left. Abigail was overjoyed and relieved. She walked over to where she kept her most prized possession- something that, if seen by anybody else, could ruin her life and destroy her. Her diary. A bound notebook, given to her by her father when she turned twelve. The year Abigail had run away, she had started to write in that diary; here, she wrote about everything. Her darkest, deepest secrets were permanently marked in ink. Abigail sat down on the dusty floor and started to read the

diary.

“I can not stand this anymore” it read “I dread having to be so perfect, I am tired of this, and one day, my parents will pay for what they have done to me.”

And so they had done: the week before Abigail ran away, she had followed her father into the woods carrying his shotgun. She stood behind him and said “I hate you”, just as she pulled the trigger and the bullet raced through her father's head. Her mother had then lived the rest of her life suffering, grieving for her loss. But Abigail didn't care about that: her secrets were safe in her diary, in this house, and that was all that mattered.

# *BIDEN'S AMERICA: HEADING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION?*

*Juan Méndez-Trelles Sabugal and Eugenia Jiménez-Laiglesia Heredia, Y10, discuss the new American president's national and international agenda.*

The US president Joe Biden seems desperate to improve the relationships between the US and its allies, whilst warning and threatening its enemies. Under different circumstances, this might be seen as a reasonable and right thing to do; however, we must highlight that the US is facing a worldwide pandemic and an unprecedented snowstorm in Texas, which means that people are dying from COVID, the country is undergoing a second economic depression and millions of Texans have lost their houses and properties, and are currently forced to live in scarcity. It is thus shocking that during such difficult times Biden chooses to publicly challenge its enemies: Russia and China. He stated in his first speech as president that “the most effective way to meet that challenge [of Foreign Policy] is to build a united front of friends and partners to challenge China’s abusive behavior”. Similarly, with regards to Russia, on the 17th March 2021, in an interview for *abc* he stated he thought Mr Putin was a killer. When asked: “Do you think Mr Putin is a killer?” Biden responded: “Yes, I do”, adding that “Mr Putin will pay a price” when asked by *abc* about Putin’s election meddling. Challenging those countries which happen to be very powerful, big and have a strong economy despite recent events, is quite a stubborn thing to do. Instead of defying them, he should sum up forces to overcome this virus that makes every citizen in the world equal in death’s eyes. He should focus on working together with those powerful countries to destroy the virus, to lift the American economy and to help those people in Texas who are desperate to sleep under a warm roof again. Americans do not need a war now, they do not need an unreasonable confrontation that can question America’s resurrection from all the tragedies that have

hit her. It is wise to have friends that can help you in time of necessity rather than creating enemies that can permanently damage you. There will be time to deal with China and Russia, there will be time to show them who’s boss, but it is obvious that 2021 is not the year to fight off these forces, because America has a big wound that has to be healed.

Furthermore, Biden’s approach to immigration is not very sensible. He said during his speech:

“It is a moral failing and a national shame when a father and his baby daughter drown seeking our shores. [...] Trump’s obsession with building a wall does nothing to address security challenges while costing taxpayers billions of dollars. Most contraband comes in through our legal ports of entry”. And yet, migrants enter the US and are crammed in facilities in Texas, which has been recently slaughtered by an abnormal snowstorm. Millions of Texans are living without a job, without food and a house, and the last thing these people need is thousands of migrants who, like them, need help and demand care; there are enough Texans to worry about now, and Biden should be seeking America’s progress and prosperity. There will be a time in the future to deal with other problems like immigration.

Finally, I feel like Biden has taken a wrong step in announcing his commitment to the Paris agreements on Climate change. A commitment means a compromise and to fulfil that compromise, money has to be invested, which is what the US is lacking now. It seems hilarious that an administration like Biden’s focuses on climate change during a worldwide pandemic that has wiped out entire American families, and that has left millions of American’s unemployed. Biden’s mindset is focused on the future when his mindset is needed in

the present. Americans need a strong administration that will do anything to protect, defend and fulfil America's needs, not a weak administration that thinks about climate change, and opens its door to migrants,

putting diplomacy first rather than putting America first. Yes, America should be first.

*(Juan Méndez-Trelles, Y10)*

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Joe Biden's administration seeks the reparation of US alliances that were damaged under the Trump administration. It also aims to return the US to a "position of trusted leadership" with democracies such as Russia and China. Biden wishes to strengthen the alliance between the US and Europe. He also recommitted the US to the NATO (the North Atlantic treaty organization, an alliance between 30 European and North American countries) alliance and collective security. One of his most well-known actions so far has been to re-join the Paris climate agreement (from which Trump withdrew from in 2017), and he also took many other steps to combat climate change like committing to conserving at least 30 percent of lands and oceans by 2030. One of the most important things people were worried about after the election was how Biden was going to deal with the covid-19 pandemic. Joe Biden and Kamala Harris have promised to listen to science; ensure that public health decisions are informed by public health professionals; and restore trust, transparency, common purpose, and accountability to their government.

All of these promises are clearly a response to Trump's messy handling of the pandemic, as they even vowed to fix Trump's testing-and-tracing fiasco to ensure that all Americans have access to regular, reliable, and free testing. This means doubling the number of drive-through testing sites, investing in next generation testing, and establishing a U.S. Public Health Jobs Corps to mobilize at least 100,000 Americans across the country. All of these aims against COVID-19 gravely contrast Trump's, who claimed that the outbreak would be temporary: "It's going to disappear. One day, it's like a miracle—it will disappear." And "99%" of COVID-19 cases are "totally harmless" (the virus can still cause tremendous suffering if it doesn't kill a patient, and the WHO has said that about 15% of COVID-19 cases can be severe, with 5% being critical). Biden is currently in a place where he is forced to make critical decisions to help the country in this economically vulnerable time and to revert the damage Trump made during his presidency.

*(Eugenia Jiménez-Laiglesia Heredia)*

# SCIENCE

*Celia Reigada and Maia Rodriguez, Y10, report on two incredible scientific achievements.*

## Exploring Mars

By Celia Reigada

Mars: the red planet, more than 245.86 million km away from the Earth, is finally within our reach. The efforts made by an exploration program started by NASA in 1994 are being paid off. The first success of the company was Exomars, an orbiter launched in 2017.

### **Environment:**

Mars may once have been warm and wet, but it is now a cold and barren place. The atmosphere is made out mainly of carbon dioxide and contains ultraviolet and other forms of radiation because of the lack of field to protect it.

The main processes that shape the planet are sediment, carbon dioxide ice, and landslides. However, the amount of information that we still lack about this planet fills us with many questions, such as: what do we make of the large volcanoes on the surface? What is the temperature inside Mars? And most importantly, is there life today on the red planet?

### **Aim of Mission:**

The goal of the Mars Exploration Program is to:

- provide a continuous amount of scientific information weekly to the NASA database that can then be discussed in scientific conferences and produce reports on it;
- discover the planet through a series of robotic orbiters, which

give us a view of the surface of the planet, but also of its soil from samples taken by the robots;

- Find out about the formation of the planet and how was it created;
- To find the potential of Mars to host the human race in the future and the resources that it can supply to us.

### **Why did they choose Mars?**

Mars is the most accessible place in the solar system and exploring Mars provides the opportunity to question the evolution of life and how the planet was formed. It is also a place of interest to host the human race in the future if any catastrophes happen and it's also filled with rich resources that may be needed.

### **The Research:**

Scientists from all over the world are taking part in this project, by sending in proposals for the program of Research and Analysis in Mars that helps NASA to know more about Mars and its system. The Mars Data Analysis Program is another research program that is mainly dedicated to make sure that the data recollected in the Mars missions arrives to the central. The results collected are then used in scientific conferences and reports about Mars that helps us expand our knowledge of this planet.

Technologies have significantly developed throughout the last



years. There have been numerous improvements that have led to innovation in machinery for the discoveries. The Mars Ascent Vehicle was created to return materials and, in the future, humans as well, investing in propulsion systems to survive the long trip to Mars (nearly 942 hours from the Earth!). Protective technologies are also being developed to ensure the safe transport of materials like sealing and sterilization of these samples.

### **Resources:**

The NASA agency is looking for exploration zones on Mars where humans can land if we travel there, containing water and oxygen to survive. Water has been found to be able to be extracted from ground ice underneath Mars's surface and oxygen from carbon dioxide that forms the atmosphere of the red planet.

### **Missions:**

NASA's Perseverance Rover took the picture above. Its job on the planet is to research signs of ancient microbial life (in other words, life on the planet) and also to seek habitable conditions for humans to live here. It also researches Mars geology and past

climate. It was launched on the 30th of July 2020 and arrived on the 18th of February 2021. Its exploration is long term as it will stay there for one Mars year (about 700 days) and it's a key for the development of Mars's exploration. It contains a drill that takes samples of rocks and soils to be later on studied in laboratories on Earth.

## The race for vaccines

By Maia Rodriguez

We have been cohabiting with COVID-19 for a long time now. We understand that to bring this pandemic to an end, a large share of the world needs to be immune to the virus. The safest way to achieve this is with a vaccine.

Antibody development typically takes numerous years. However, COVID-19 vaccines developed in a brief span of time. As a consequence, people became reluctant and caused an enormous controversy as to whether to get a shot or not. So, how did scientists develop what is now the fastest arriving vaccine?

While many are thrilled by the prospect of immunization – three in four adults globally have said they would take it up if it were available – the unusual speed with which these products have been developed and tested has prompted anxiety among others. While 72% of Americans said in May that they would definitely or probably get a vaccine, that had dropped to 51% by October. Prof. Larson, who runs the Vaccine Confidence Project at the London

Exomars rover 2022 and insight lander are also key missions to find out if life ever existed on Mars, looking for evidence about it by studying deep inside Mars. The first ever mission sent was in 1969, when Mariner carried out a series of solar system explorations that analysed Mars's atmosphere and its surface, and brought back to Earth the first closed up pictures of Mars.

School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, argues that anti-vaccine sentiment flourishes when people do not feel a sense of dignity or control over their own lives.

We should acknowledge that, as soon as the modern coronavirus was distinguished and its genetic material was sequenced, researchers worldwide started studying it in earnest. Along the way, they shared imperative research results with other scientists. This high level of participation made a difference to better disperse important information through the medical community about the infection itself, how it causes illness, and potential vaccination and treatment methods.

Furthermore, early on in the pandemic, funding was poured into the development of COVID-19 vaccines. This funding, which came from both public and private sources, allowed companies to effectively conduct the necessary vaccine research and clinical trials.

Clearly, we have come a long way, and the answers to our questions about this planet are closer, thanks to all the missions that are being carried out.

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Despite the quick development of the vaccine, no corners were cut concerning their science. The current vaccines were still tested rigorously in human clinical trials to assess their safety and effectiveness. The most common short-term side effects include discomfort at the injection site and mild flu-like symptoms. Allergic reactions to the vaccine can happen but are rare. The potential long-term effects of the vaccine are currently unknown.

This leads to the last question: should children get the shot if the disease has very few adverse consequences for their age group? On one hand, it is essential so they can protect the elderly. On the other, as mentioned before, we are uncertain about the long-term effects it might have on children when they grow older. In spite of such uncertainties, one thing remains clear: receiving the COVID-19 vaccine is crucial for preventing the illness and stopping its spread.

# SPORTS

*Lucía Rodríguez de Robles Conde, Y10, reports on important moments in the world of sport which happened during the course of the last term.*

## Australian Open



Novak Djokovic won the 2021 Australian Open after defeating Russia's Daniil Medvedev in the men's singles finals.

The 33-year-old Serbian athlete, ranked number one in the world, won 7-5, 6-2, 6-2 in less than two hours. Medvedev, 25, is ranked fourth.

This is Djokovic's ninth Australian Open title and 18th Grand Slam title, which puts him just behind the all-time record of 20 Grand

Slam wins jointly held by Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer.

## Formula 1

The Spanish driver Fernando Alonso set the tenth fastest time of the second day of the preseason tests at the Sakhir circuit (Bahrain). The sensations on his return were fantastic, especially because he was able to do 128 laps, two complete grands prix, and because he set that time with the C2 tires, one of the hardest components. Few conclusions can be drawn yet, but the best time was for Valteri Bottas (Mercedes) on the C5 tires, Hamilton had a track start and finished penultimate, and the McLaren proved to be very fast. Lando Norris was fourth with the C4s.



## Football



The Champions League tournament is approaching its final!

As expected, PSG has beaten Barcelona and got its ticket to the quarterfinals. Borussia Dortmund won against Sevilla, and FC Porto against Juventus. This week, we will know which teams will access the semi-finals, after an exciting series of matches : Real Madrid vs Liverpool, Porto vs Chelsea, Bayern vs PSG and Manchester City vs Dortmund.

# REVIEWS: CHRISTOPHER NOLAN'S TENET

*Anna Antignac, Y10, reviews the mind-bending action epic film.*

The movie “Tenet” is a 150-minute performance directed by the one and only Christopher Nolan. It starts with The Protagonist (John David Washington). Our hero is captured by the enemy, tortured, and takes a cyanide capsule, as he was ordered to do in his training. He survives, and his loyalty to the system leads to a promotion, a top-secret assignment that involves a new technology that has the potential to rewrite human history. Teaming up with a mysterious partner named Neil (Robert Pattinson), our hero tracks inverted bullets to a villainous Russian arms dealer named Andrei (Kenneth Branagh). To get closer to this wealthy madman, The Protagonist uses Andrei’s wife Kat (Elizabeth Debicki), who hates her abusive husband but is being blackmailed into staying with him.

So, what is this movie about really? There can be many layers of interpretation, but arguably “Tenet” is about the consequences of unchecked

power. If one is so rich and powerful that they can shape world events, why not try to shape humanity too? If, on the one hand, Andrei might remind us of a classic Bond villain, on the other Nolan’s obsession with time-twisting concepts (like Inception or even Interstellar) and his love of classic action make “Tenet” a unique, original cinematic experience.

“Tenet” can be a hard movie to engage with, but that doesn’t take away from its beauty on a technical level. It’s an impressive film to experience, bombarding the viewer with sound design and gorgeous cinematography. The movie never falls in terms of technical elements and even performance. In particular, one is struck by Robert Pattinson’s work, as he acts in a playful register that he’s not often “allowed to use”.

The reactions to Tenet went from one end of the spectrum to another. A surprising

number of people were exhausted by a story that doesn’t make sense even as it’s trying to explain itself to you; others embraced the film’s energy, which starts with intensity and doesn’t fall through the whole film.

I belong to the latter group, as I found the movie something different from the usual and predictable blockbusters, and I recommend it to anyone curious to try something different.



The amazing event of the

# EASTER EGG HUNT

Written and illustrated by Gonzalo B.

Hiya Folks! Chuck Anderson and Jeffrey Carley here. Today the whole community has gathered for an amazing event named the Easter Egg Hunt. The whole town has 30 minutes to collect as much eggs as possible!

Allright Kids! Now are you ready?

That's right! And the whole town can egg'sly wait!

Ha Ha! You snore you lose, sucka!

GO!!!

AAARRGH!

Wow! My first easter egg! I can't wait to-

CRASH!

ARGGHHH-

Uh Chuck... isn't this chocolate filled with sugar?

Well wouldn't that make them you know... **crazy**?

Yeah so?

10 seconds later...

Help! Please oh my god! HELP! HELP!

THE END