

Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College

Stakes Hill Road
Waterlooville
Hampshire
PO7 7BW

☎ 023 9225 9214

☎ 023 9223 0317

🌐 www.oaklandscatholicschool.org

✉ oaklands@oaklandscatholicschool.org



Edith Stein Catholic Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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Headteacher: Matthew Quinn B.Ed (Hons), M.A., NPQH

Our Ref: MQ/SM

9 September 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

I would not normally write to parents about issues outside of school, however, the death Queen Elizabeth breaks this rule. There are some events that are so momentous they define an age, a time or a moment. The death of Queen Elizabeth is one such event. In years to come people will say, *'Do you do you remember where you were when you heard that Queen Elizabeth had died?'* And you will. Today all students offered morning prayer for the Queen and Royal Family. St Paul, whose wisdom we listen to in his letters, wrote this to the Romans: "The life and death of each of us has its influence on others; if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord, so that alive or dead, we belong to the Lord. It is to God that each of us must give an account of our lives." The sentence in this piece of scripture that resonates with me is: "The life and death of each of us has its influence on others."

During Thursday evening I found it difficult to turn away from the television coverage, that at times was very moving. It was peppered by commentators standing outside royal residences asking the question, 'What did she mean to you?'. Most of us only knew Queen Elizabeth through the lens of the television, the vast majority us never had a conversation with her or even saw her in the flesh.

On three occasions I have been invited to the Commonwealth Observance Day at Westminster Abbey. During this, Queen Elizabeth dutifully waked up and down the Abbey, she was a small and diminutive figure, slightly stooped on each occasion masked by a wide brimmed hat. You could be left thinking what influence could such a person have?

Well the answer to this is found in something she said in 1947. Princess Elizabeth (as she was at the time) dedicated herself to the service of the peoples of the Commonwealth in these moving words: "I declare before you all, that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong. God help me to make good my vow and God bless all of you who are willing to share in it."

The legacy of her life of service is something that we all inherit. She served this country and others and the Commonwealth, she was a woman of enormous influence spiritually, politically and economically. Her genius was the use of soft power; the art of co-operation persuasion, community and diplomacy. As a country we stood stronger and taller, often during some tumultuous times because of her. This is just one aspect of the legacy she leaves behind and the influence that she has and will continue to have on our lives and that of our children.

Over 75 years despite misfortunes, sorrows and many disappointments, our Queen stayed true to her vow. Her example is a lesson to us all, her values driven by a deep faith, are more needed today than perhaps ever before in a society which claims rights before responsibilities and self-seeking before seeking opportunities for service.

So let us quite unashamedly give thanks to God for the dedication of Queen Elizabeth and pray earnestly for her and her family in this time of great sorrow. May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

There will now be a period of national mourning; the DfE will advise schools on any action we need to take now or at the time of Queen Elizabeth's funeral. I will keep you informed.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Quinn', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Mr M Quinn
Headteacher