



SUNDAY 13TH JUNE 2021

# ST COLUMBA'S FAMILIES NEWSLETTER

Hi Families of St Columba's,

I guess you might have heard there is a football tournament starting today. Here's a story I was sent this week. Yes, it has a football theme, but it's real meaning is bigger than that. Hope you like it.

## Chosen

From *"With an Open Eye"* by Tom Gordon

Jack loved football. His granny's second cousin had played for Tottenham Hotspur in the 1930s, and though Jack never even knew where Tottenham was, it sounded very romantic and special. One of the first things he could remember was kicking a ball with his dad in the back yard. When he grew older, his bedroom walls were covered with pictures of his heroes.

But Jack was rubbish at football. The worst thing of all was waiting to be chosen when teams were being picked for a kick-about in the school playground. The two best players always picked the teams, of course. One by one – the best ones first, then the biggest and strongest, then the rest at random – the teams would be picked, until only Jack was left. And the ultimate embarrassment was that, even as the last one, he wouldn't be selected at all, and the kids would just turn away ready to get on with their game. Jack would watch from the sidelines pretending it didn't matter – but it always did. It wasn't that Jack didn't have any friends. It was just that he was rubbish at football, and who wants a rubbish football player on your team?

Jack's great hero was Janek Danowski. 'Big Dan', as Danowski was known by his adoring fans, had settled in the town after the War. He'd been a Polish schoolboy international and, now in his mid-twenties, had been snapped up by the city's premier club. He was the star player and had been the main reason why the club had won the league championship for the first time in thirty years. Big Dan scored goals for fun, and, a thoroughly nice guy, was the role model any parent would have been pleased for their kids to follow.

Imagine the excitement, therefore, when word went round that Janek Danowski was to come to visit Jack's school to show the pupils the League Trophy and to run a training session for the school team. On Monday morning, the head-teacher confirmed that the great Janek Danowski was to come to the school right enough – and the very next day!

Jack couldn't contain his excitement. When the whole school gathered in the gym hall and Janek Danowski walked in carrying the huge League Trophy, the cheer was the loudest thing Jack had ever heard. Sitting cross-legged in the very front row with Big Dan towering above him he clapped and cheered with all the rest. His greatest ever hero... right here in front of him... It was almost too much to believe.

Janek Danowski stood held the cup aloft, just as he'd done at the end of their league-winning season. Jack hoped he would look at him, so his great hero could, just for a moment, recognise he was there. But the problem with being little and being right in the front row is that people look over the top of you and catch the eyes of the big kids at the back. So Jack just cheered and clapped and watched. That would have to be enough.

Big Dan held his arms above his head one final time while the cheering subsided, the big cup in one hand and the other hand in a clenched-fist salute. And that's when it happened... In all the excitement Janek Danowski didn't realise that he was carrying the cup at a dangerously tilted angle. Indeed, no one realised it, until, tipping the cup over too far, the big silver top slipped off. The head-teacher noticed it, but too late. Almost in slow-motion, the top detached itself from the cup and landed – right in Jack's lap! He didn't try to catch it. But before he realised what was happening, the top of the League Trophy was nestling safely in his hands.

'Good caught!' shouted a booming voice as Big Dan bent down to retrieve the fallen top of the cup. At least everyone thought he was going to pick up the lid, but instead, a big arm scooped up a little boy in the front row with a silver cup's lid in his hands. Then, placing the cup carefully on the floor, Big Dan held Jack aloft where a moment earlier he had brandished the League Trophy. He took the cup's lid and placed it decorously on Jack's head. All the kids laughed, and so did Jack. 'A new trophy for now, you think?' boomed Big Dan. 'This man have good catch. Maybe he be our goalkeeper one day, you think?' All the school cheered – the second loudest cheer Jack had ever heard.

Later that day Jack stood against the playground wall as usual and watched the other kids play football, coached by the great Janek Danowski. But Jack didn't mind. Because he'd always remember the day he'd been chosen by Big Dan, even though he never really understood why. And maybe one day, who knows, the little man with the good catch might go on to even greater things.



Maybe there will be the chance to play football or other sports/activities at the Congregational Picnic. The Sunday School team are planning for **Family Sunday, 27th June & Congregational Picnic**. Children can take part in Sunday School Activities and have a get together in the Upper Hall during the Morning Service. If you would like to book a place, please contact the Church Office.

Following morning service, for those wanting to join the congregational picnic in Hyde Park, please bring your own picnic and meet outside the church entrance to depart at 12:15 or meet at the park - enter through Edinburgh Gate, cross the road and bridleway and turn left. We will be picnicking on the grass just beyond the manège. Please find attached a map of the picnic location.

Finally, a prayer for this weekend that goes with Jack's story.

Loving God,  
May we judge others the way you judge us.  
May we look beyond the skin,  
the colour, the language, the religion,  
and see the whole person  
and celebrate who they are.  
May God's blessing hold our community.  
May Jesus' grace shape our community.  
And may the Spirit's challenge be our future.  
Amen.

Thanks to Fiona for the new activities for this Sunday. Have a great weekend,

Angus & the Sunday School Team





P.S.

### **Women Making History Exhibition at London Scottish House**

Women Making History is an extraordinary exhibition that brings together artworks inspired by banners of the suffrage movement and highlights the continuing struggle to achieve gender equality. In June 2018, tens of thousands of women marched through the streets of Belfast, Cardiff, Edinburgh and London to mark 100 years since the first UK women were allowed to vote. This mass-participation artwork, PROCESSIONS, was commissioned by 14-18 NOW and produced by Artichoke. Now you can see these pieces up close for one exhibition only, hanging in the Drill Hall of London Scottish House, Westminster. Tickets are free but you require to register:

<https://londonscottishhouse.org/events/women-making-history-exhibition/>

