



RE Newsletter December 2019

Isaiah 9:6: For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace

Welcome to the December RE Newsletter; below you will find information of the Catholic Life of St Francis of Assisi school over the last term. You will also find information about what the Year groups will be learning next term.

From all of us here at school, we wish you a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year.

Looking Back....

Masses and Liturgies

Staff from our St John the Baptist Catholic MAT met at St Francis of Assisi at the beginning of September for a **Mass of Welcome**, led by Fr Paul. A few days later he was back with us to celebrate the **Start of Year Mass** for the whole school, helped by our school Junior Chaplains.

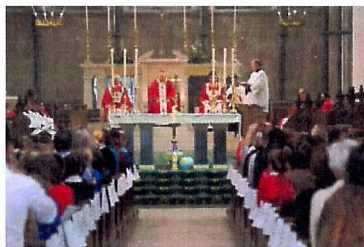
In October we celebrated **St Francis of Assisi Day**, and during the Mass (led by Year 4), classes throughout the school presented psalms that they had written in praise of God's wonderful world.

Our **All Saints Day** Mass in November was planned by Year 5 and celebrated by Fr Simon. We thought particularly of St John Henry Newman who had been canonised the previous week.

The **Advent Mass** was led, for the first time, by children from Year 2. Their paintings of Mary provided a wonderful focus to our prayers.



The **Diocesan School's Mass** at St John's Cathedral in September, attended by Junior Chaplains, Mini-Vinnies and members of the Rosary Club, involved children from Catholic schools throughout the diocese. It was an opportunity to worship together and get to know our wider school families.



Also, well done to Year 1 who welcomed Fr Simon into school to lead their **Advent Liturgy**.

Christmas Carol Service Many thanks to all of you who came to the Cathedral on the last day of term to celebrate Christmas with us. The singing and readings were lovely and it was heartening to see such a show of support from parents and visitors. Mrs Knowles spoke movingly about her support for her Kenyan school set up in memory of her son William and the collection at the end raised £537 to go towards this good cause. As soon as our school app is up and running, we will load photos of the school onto the 'Catholic Life' section of the app so you can see where the funds have gone.

Finally, a BIG thank you goes out to all the parents, family members and Governors who have made the time to join us in our worship this term...your presence and support is very much appreciated by all the children and staff. Our next Mass is on January 6th at 9:15 and all are welcome.

The Junior Chaplaincy Team has welcomed new members this term, all of whom were interviewed by a panel of existing Junior Chaplains from Year 2 upwards. The interview questions were planned and delivered by the children - 'Why do you want to be a Junior Chaplain?', 'How could you make your classroom more prayerful?' and 'Tell us about something that helps you to pray'. All the children who applied gave thoughtful answers and we were very impressed with the level of reflection demonstrated. The Junior Chaplains went on to work with the Diocesan **Ignite Team** in October, focusing on Mary during her special month. Junior Chaplains have also helped to set up and lead two masses and have overseen their own classroom worship.

Mini-Vinnies have expanded their Club to the new Year 4s and have already helped raise money for good causes. In September, they decided to support Histo campaign, which raised more than £466. In December, the Christmas Jumper and Cakes for Cambodia day raised £579 in support of Mrs Ludden's charity in Cambodia. Mrs Ludden has written:

"A huge thank you to Mrs Hope, Mrs Beaugeard, the wonderful mini-vinnies and everyone at St Francis for all your support and for raising such a tremendous amount for Support Cambodia at school this week. You are truly amazing! My friends are visiting Cambodia in February and have promised to take lots of photos of how the money is spent. Thank you for caring for others. Have a very happy Christmas and New Year - see you soon!"

Rosary Club Rosary Club - open to all children in Years 3 and above, takes place each Monday lunchtime. There are a number of children who attend regularly but there is room for more, so please encourage your child to come along.

Here is a summary of some of the themes your child will be learning about next term. An overview of the year's RE planning is available on the school website.

Epiphany

Our Epiphany Mass will be celebrated by Fr Simon at 9:15 in the school hall on Monday 6th January.

Lent

We will begin the season of Lent with a special Ashes Liturgy for all the children. They will also be exploring the themes of forgiveness and mercy. We will be offering the children opportunities to reflect on their own behaviour and experiences of forgiveness and being forgiven.

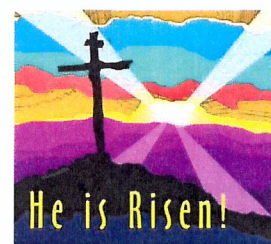


Holy Week

The children will all be learning more about the events of Holy Week and will be following Jesus as he makes his way into Jerusalem towards his death on Calvary.

Jesus is Risen!

We tend to think that Christmas is the most important time in the Church's year, but the Resurrection of Jesus is by far the most important for Christians. When we as Christians say that our hope is in the Risen Jesus, we mean it is our greatest hope. When Jesus rose on the first Easter morning, it was a brand new kind of life. He promises this same life to all who hope in him. No wonder that Easter is the greatest feast!



Here is a summary of some of the topics your child will be learning about this term:

Reception - Celebrating, Gathering and Growing

In the first half term, the children in the Reception classes will explore how their families at home and their church family gather together. They will be thinking of the many things we celebrate together. Throughout the topic, the children will be given opportunities to talk about their own experiences of celebrating and to describe how they feel. They will think about how we need others to celebrate with.

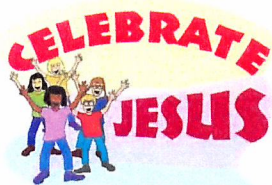


The children will think about how they gather together in school to talk to God and how God's family gathers together for Mass.

At home, you could help your children by:

- Looking at photos of family celebrations
- Planning a family celebration together
- Find some time to gather together as a family to talk to God at home
- Join your parish family as it gathers for Mass or other celebrations

In the second half of the term, the children will be learning about growing. They will explore Spring as a time when things begin to grow. They will prepare for Easter by investigating the many things in God's world which grow and will experience Lent as a time to grow in love to be more like Jesus. They will hear the stories of Good Friday and Easter Sunday and share in the school liturgies which make Holy Week very special for us.



At home you could help your children by:

- going for a walk and looking for signs of spring
- sharing stories and photos of your family as it grows
- reading your child's Bible together and sharing the stories of Easter Week

Prayers: In Reception this year The children will be learning: 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen'

Year One – Families and Celebrations

"The Christian family ... can and should be called a domestic church.

It is a community of faith, hope and charity"

Catechism of the Catholic Church

The children will learn about what it means to be a member of a family and a member of the school community.

They will learn what it means to belong to the Church family.

They will hear how Jesus' family took him to the Temple and think about why this was a special occasion. They will learn about some of the celebrations in the Church and why we celebrate these occasions.

At home you could help your children by:

- discussing the importance of celebrations in our lives
- encouraging the children to think about Church celebrations e.g. Christmas, Easter etc.



Change

After half-term the children will be looking at the ways in which we all change and grow. They will come to understand that Lent is a time to change and grow in preparation for the celebration of Easter.



The children will also be using this time leading up to Easter to focus on the prayers we use in class and in school – prayers of praise and thanks, as well as sorry prayers. They will be learning about how talking to God is central to their relationship with God and their faith. They will be using their prayer corners to help them develop their prayer life in school.

At home you could help your children by:

- praying together and sharing some of the prayers that you know
- reading the stories of Easter together from your child's Bible
- making an Easter garden

Prayers: In Year 1 this year the children will be learning: the school prayers.

Year Two - The Chosen People

"In order to gather together scattered humanity God calls Abram ... and makes him Abraham, that is, 'the father of a multitude of nations.' ... God formed Israel as his people by freeing them from slavery in Egypt ... he gave them his law so that they would recognise him and serve him as the one living and true God, the provident Father and just judge, and so that they would look for the promised Saviour."

Catechism of the Catholic Church



The children will learn that we are chosen by God. They will learn that God chose certain people to lead and guide his people. They will hear how God chose Abraham and Moses to be great leaders. They will also hear the stories of Samuel and Daniel from the Old Testament.

They will have an opportunity to reflect on how we, too, should always trust God. They will learn that God chooses unexpected people. They will have a chance to think about their own response to God.

The Good News

After half-term, the children in Year Two will learn that Jesus brought the good news of God's love and that this changed people's lives. They will learn that Jesus used God's love to help others.

They will reflect on how they can bring good news to their family and friends.

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**Good
News!**

At home you could help your children by:

- highlighting opportunities when they can give thanks to God
- reading stories about Jesus helping people, e.g The Feeding of the Five Thousand



"Jesus is sent to preach good news to the poor. Jesus identifies himself with the poor of every kind and makes active love toward them the condition for entering his kingdom."

Catechism of the Catholic Church

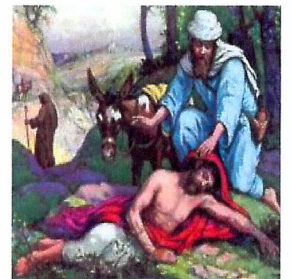
Prayers: In Year 2 this year the children will be learning the 'Our Father'.

Year Three—Being a Christian

"The greatest commandment of all: "Listen Israel, the Lord your God is the one Lord, and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: you must love your neighbour as yourself."

Mark 12: 29-30

Year Three will develop their understanding of what being a Christian involves. They will reflect on the joy and challenges involved in following Jesus and learn about these through the lives of Saints Peter and Paul. The children will reflect on their gifts and talents and the gifts the Church calls Sacraments, especially the Eucharist. They will explore how to use the gifts God has given to us to be a Christian.



At home you could help your children by:

- encouraging them to recognise and praise the gifts and talents of others
- talk about receiving Holy Communion and help them to make the link between receiving the gift of Jesus and becoming more like Jesus

Called to Change

"During his public life Jesus not only forgave sins, but also made plain the effect of this forgiveness: he reintegrated forgiven sinners into the community ... from which sin had alienated or even excluded them. A remarkable sign of this is the fact that Jesus receives sinners at his table."

Catechism of the Catholic Church

The children will develop their understanding that Jesus called people to change, to turn away from doing wrong and receive the love of God. They will learn that it is not always easy to change and will find out about some people who changed through the help of Jesus. They will learn that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is a celebration of God's love and forgiveness and begin to learn an Act of Sorrow. They will learn that Lent is a time to change in order to prepare for Easter.

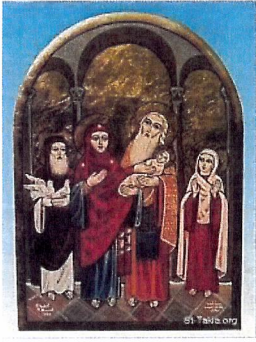


At home, you could help your children by:

- thinking about how Jesus changes our lives
- reading the story of Zacchaeus

Prayers: In Year 2 this year the children will be learning: Hail Mary

Year Four - Jesus the Teacher



The children will learn that Jesus was born into a Jewish family and revisit the story of the presentation in the Temple. They will learn that Jesus attended synagogue as a child and as an adult read the Torah.

The children will learn that Jesus came to show us the way to live, understand why Jesus used parables to teach people and know and understand some of the parables Jesus told.

The children will have a chance to appreciate the relevance of the parables for us today and recognise that Lent gives us an opportunity to live as Jesus wants us to.

At home, you could help your child by reading some of the well-known parables and talk together about what they mean for us today.

Jesus the Saviour

Jesus "is truly God and, as a man, truly human. His life, death and resurrection are the central event of all human history and at the heart of faith. His cross is the sign of his unique offering of himself for each and every human being."

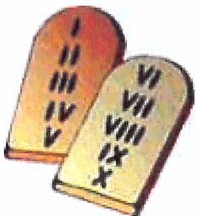
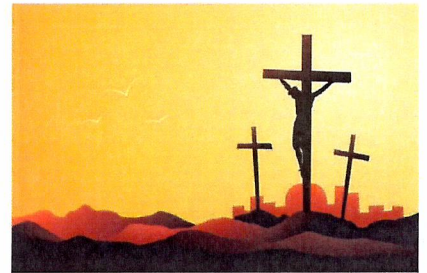
Religious Education Curriculum Directory

Year Four will learn that Jesus is truly God and, as man truly human, and learn that Jesus came to share our life so that we can share his life. They will learn that when Jesus died on the cross, he took away our sins. They will look closely at the events of Holy Week and Easter Sunday.

At home you could help your children by:

- reading the stories of Jesus' last week with them
- visiting church during Holy Week

Prayers: In Year 4 this year the children will be learning: 'Holy, Holy, Holy'



Year Five - The Commandments

The children will learn that God loves us and calls us into relationship with him.

They will learn that God gave Moses the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai because he loves us. The children will understand that the Ten Commandments are a gift from God to help us.

They will learn how Jesus summarised the Ten Commandments (Matthew 22: 36-40) and begin to understand how we can show our love for God by keeping his commandments with his help.

The children will also learn that God sent his Son Jesus into the world because he loves us, to help us understand and live God's law of love.

At home you could help your child by talking to them about how we try to live by the Ten Commandments.

Reconciliation

"There is no limit to God's grace, nor to God's mercy and forgiveness when we fail. Reconciliation is a sacrament of healing. Reconciliation makes present Jesus' call to conversion, involves contrition for our sins, confession of them to a priest, and absolution spoken by the priest in the name of Jesus Christ. In the celebration of the sacrament we acknowledge (confess) God's holiness and mercy and are reconciled to God and the community of the Church."

Religious Education Curriculum Directory



Year Five children will learn that sin is a failure of love and that when we sin we hurt ourselves and others and damage our relationship with God. They will begin to understand that God loves and forgives us if we are truly sorry and learn that God heals our friendship with him and others through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. They learn how we can prepare ourselves to receive this Sacrament and learn what happens during the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

At home, you could help your children by talking to them about what strengthens their relationships with others in their family, and their friendships outside the home.

Prayers: In Year 5 this year the children will be learning 'I Confess'

Year Six - Jesus, the Bread of Life

"At the heart of the Eucharistic celebration are the bread and wine that become in reality Christ's Body and Blood. Catholic faith adores this enduring presence of Christ not only within the celebration of the Mass but also outside it."

Religious Education Curriculum Directory

The children will learn that the Sacrament of the Eucharist is a thanksgiving for the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. They will begin to understand that in the Mass we participate in Jesus' sacrifice to God the Father and learn what happened at the Last Supper.

They will learn the different parts of the Mass and become familiar with most of the responses. The children will learn that the bread and wine are consecrated during Mass and become the body and blood of Jesus.



The children will have a chance to reflect on the sacrifice of Jesus and on the sacrifices they can make during Lent.

At home you could help your children by:

- bringing their attention to the Eucharistic prayer during Mass
- asking them during the week to explain what they have been learning during their RE lessons

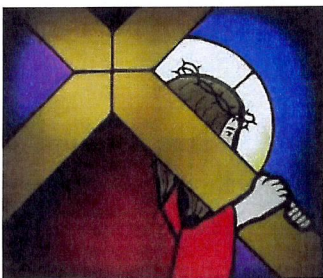
Jesus, Son of God

God's Self-Revelation and the covenant relationship reach their fullness in Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God. He is truly God and, as a man, truly human. His life, death and resurrection are the central event of all human history and at the heart of faith. His cross is the sign of his unique offering of himself for each and every human being. As truly God, Jesus reveals the truth and love of God; as truly human, Jesus reveals the perfect response to God and intimate communion with his Father - 'Abba'."

Religious Education Curriculum Directory

Year Six will learn that Jesus healed many people, brought others back to life and that His miracles led many to believe that he was the Son of God. They will learn that Jesus' enemies plotted to have him arrested, and learn about the arrest and the trial before the high priest. They will learn about Jesus' trial before Pilate and learn that Jesus was condemned to death and crucified. They will also learn what Jesus said before he died and about His glorious resurrection.

The children will have the chance to reflect on the miracles of Jesus. They will have the opportunity to make the Stations of the Cross and will reflect on the meaning of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus for us today.



At home, you could help your children by:

- discussing what they have found out in class and how it will affect their life journey
- looking at the Stations of the Cross in your church and talking about their relevance for us today.

Prayers: In Year 6 this year the children will be learning 'The Nicene Creed'.

Values Education

This term all children will be exploring the following values in their assemblies and in their classrooms:

January - Truthfulness

February - Compassion

March - Forgiveness

Prayers of Praise - Collective Worship

In school, we will be encouraging the children to join in with prayers of praise in assembly and in class prayer time.

We will be looking at traditional prayers and hymns of praise and worship, and incorporating them into our times of collective worship at school.

At home, you can help by saying together the 'Glory Be'.....

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.



Important Dates for This Term

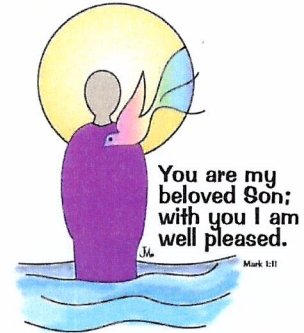
THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD - January 5th

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD - January 12th

THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD - February 2nd

THE FEAST OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES - February 11th

ASH WEDNESDAY - February 26th



ST DAVID, BISHOP, PATRON OF WALES - March 1st

ST JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY - March 19th

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD - April 5th

MAUNDY THURSDAY - April 9th

GOOD FRIDAY - April 10th

EASTER SUNDAY - April 12th

Prayers of Praise, Hymns and Sung Responses.

In school, we will be encouraging the children to join in with prayers of praise in assembly and in class prayer time. We will be continuing to learn and practise a wider range of hymns and sung responses and we will be incorporating them into our times of collective worship at school.

At home, you can help by saying together the 'Hail Mary' :

