



Archdiocese of Birmingham

# ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Vivian Road, Harborne, Birmingham, B17 0DN

Telephone: 0121 464 2141

Email: [enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk)

[www.stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk](http://www.stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk)

Headteacher: Mrs L. J. Yorke M.Ed.



St. Mary's mission: To love God above all things by: learning together, loving ourselves, loving each other, loving all people, loving life itself and constantly striving for excellence worthy of our God-given gifts.

## March is dedicated to St. Joseph

Our theme for the Spring term is: 'Dignity of Work'

Our virtues for this half term are: - 'Learned and Wise'



Dear parents and carers,

31st March 2023

We now enter our holiest of weeks, 'Holy Week' and the children will attend a service every day as they journey with Jesus to the cross. On Thursday, Year 6 will lead us through Jesus' passion with the stations of the cross in the Church at 11am. Parents and the Parish community are invited to join us on Thursday at 11am in the Church for the Stations of the Cross.

In Thursday's newsletter, I will post dates for the Summer term. It is likely that there will be more strike days at the start of next half term. Potential strike days are planned for Thursday 27th April and Tuesday 2nd May. Teachers are in the process of deciding whether they will be striking if these days go ahead and based on this, a decision will be made on how 'open' the school can be. Please have alternative provision for child care on these dates in case your child's class / year group is closed. Communication will be sent out on the day we return to school.

Thank you for your support this term. Our feedback from parent questionnaires last week is highly positive and we will share our findings with you in the upcoming weeks.

Mrs Yorke

### This week's Gospel and Prayer

John 11 : 25-26

*"I am the Resurrection and the life... whoever lives and believes in me will never die."*

*Jesus, be the reason that I live.*

*As I continue my journey through Lent, help me to trust that you want to meet me where I am at. Be my guide as I GIVE to others, Be my strength as I ACT by making good choices, Be my friend as I PRAY and get to know you more.*

*Amen*

Reflecting on this week's Gospel message we learn:

- Jesus wants to be the reason that we live, because following Him is how we can truly live life to the full.
- When Jesus is the reason that we live, we want to GIVE, ACT, PRAY not just during Lent but all year round!

### Catholic Life in School

#### Whole School Mass - 22.3.23 - Washing of the feet - 5th week of lent

We had a beautiful Mass yesterday where the choir sang, children offered their Lenten promises and Fr John washed the feet of 12 children.



#### Year 3 School Mass - 3rd Week of Easter - Votive St. Mark

Our next Mass in Church will be on **Wednesday 26th April 2023**, starting promptly at 9:15am. Year 3 will be leading our Mass and Year 1 will also be attending. All parents are welcome to attend.



*Reception news: -*

Reception class enjoyed meeting all the different exotic animals.



*Year 1 news: -*

Year 1 have been practising their throwing, catching and balancing skills.



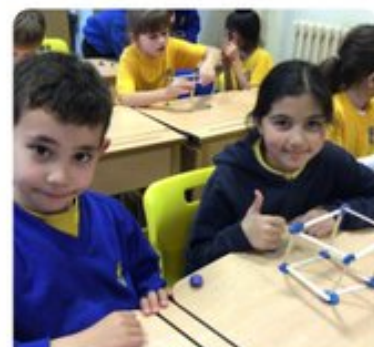
*Year 2 news: -*

Year 2 have designed dangerous dragons in DT lessons.



*Year 3 news: -*

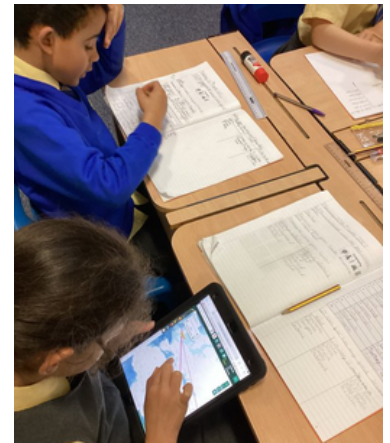
Year 3 have worked hard to create 3D shapes using modelling materials.





## Year 4 news: -

Year 4 have enjoyed using digi-maps to explore food miles from countries around the world to the UK



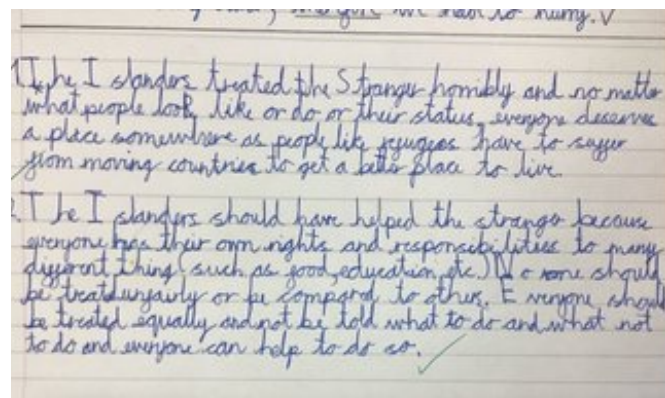
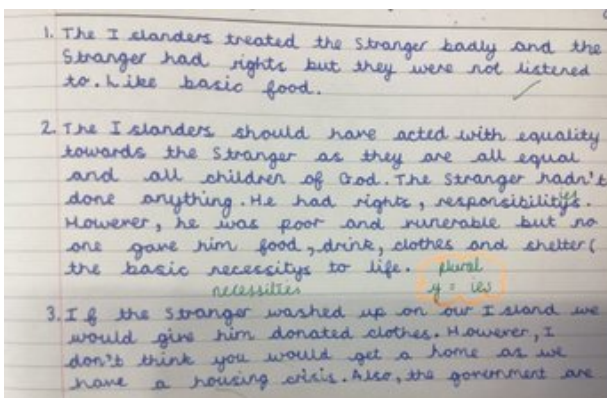
## Year 5 news: -

Scientists in Year 5 have been finding out if there is a link between the size of the parachute and the time that it took to fall to the ground.



## Year 6 news: -

Year 6 have been studying 'The Island' by Armin Greder and exploring the themes of Catholic Social Teaching within the text.



If you are interested in registering your child in an after school football club, please contact Mr Markall with your child's name and class on: 07734938963





More amazing Power Projects about Extreme Survival from Year 3. Great work everybody. Your teachers and Mrs Yorke were very impressed with all of your hard work.

Other News

Thank you PTA for providing the animal man on Monday as a special treat for the children. All the children had a marvellous session and learnt so much about all the different types of animals. The children enjoyed the cake too!





## Next Week is Holy Week

*Holy Week is the most important week for us at St. Mary's. We will be journeying with Jesus to the foot of the cross. Each day, next week, the children will attend a service that is led by another year group that takes them through the Passion of Jesus... We began today with Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, where palms were waved and the people sang Hosanna!*

*Thank you Year 1, Reception and Year 2 for leading us in our Palm Sunday service.*



### Y6 parent meeting – Monday 3rd April 2023 at 3:45pm

*Miss Horton and SLT invite Year 6 parents in to school to discuss the upcoming residential. The meeting is for parents only. Children will be dismissed as normal at 3:30 or will attend their booster group. Parents will then be let in to the building. If your child is still with you, we will look after them in one of our rooms, whilst you attend the meeting.*



### Reception Easter Bonnet parade – Tuesday 4th April at 2:00pm

*Parents are invited to join their children in the school hall on Tuesday afternoon as they parade and show off their Easter bonnets. Children are able to come to school wearing their own clothes on Tuesday.*



### Y2 Fundraising Non-school uniform day – Tuesday 4th April 2023

*As part of Year 2 Lenten charity fundraising, the children have been writing persuasive letters to Mrs Yorke asking if they can raise money to help endangered animals. 2G thought about the effects of climate change on polar bears and 2E reflected on the dangers facing Bengal tigers in India. The children would like to 'adopt' one of these animals through the WWF. On Tuesday 4th April, Year 2 will have a non-uniform day with a special treat in the afternoon. Children are asked to donate £2 towards helping these amazing animals. 2E can dress in orange and black to represent their tiger and 2G can wear white to represent their polar bear.*

**The Passion of our Lord Jesus – Stations of the Cross – Thursday 6th April – 11am**  
*Parents and the Parish Community are welcome to join us in St. Mary's Church on Thursday 6th April at 11am, as our Year 6 children lead us through the Stations of the Cross.*





*This half term, each year group will be supporting our Lent work. Find out what your child will be doing and how you can support them...*

**Year  
R**

*Reception class will be praying for those who need our prayers. They will say prayers for: those within our school, parish and community; those who are in a position of power and making decisions; and those who are affected by poverty and war.*



**Year  
1**

*Year 1 are keen to care for the school environment. They will ensure that any litter is picked up in our playground and that the plants are being watered. Caring for God's planet begins with caring for the school, that we all share, and taking responsibility over looking after it.*



**Year  
2**

*Year 2 are finding out ways that we can look after God's creatures. They are particularly interested in fundraising to 'save the tigers' - they're putting their campaign together during Lent.*



**Year  
3**

*Year 3 want to help the local community and have decided to go litter picking throughout Lent in the local area. The children will be placed on a rota with a small group of children going each week.*



**Year  
4**

*Year 4 will be supporting our food banks during Lent - they will be asking for donations and encouraging the staff to volunteer. More information about who we will be supporting during this time to follow.*



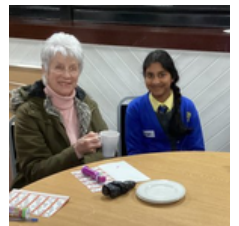
**Year  
5**

*Year 5 have learnt about the world water crisis and have explored the question: 'Is there enough water for everyone?' The children would like to complete their CAFOD walk whilst carrying buckets of water to raise awareness of water poverty.*



**Year  
6**

*Year 6 will be attending the Dementia drop-in group at the Parish Centre every Thursday morning in small groups to play games and speak with the residents.*



**Individuals  
/ groups**

*Other groups of children are collecting for charity too and have ideas for how we can change our lives and grow closer to Jesus during Lent - more details to follow.*

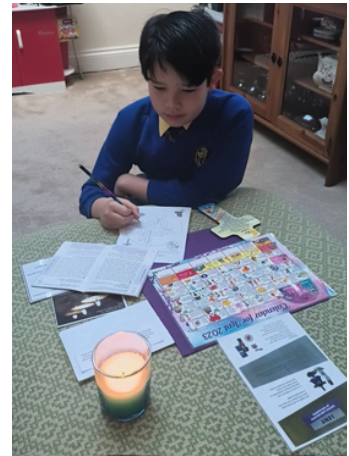
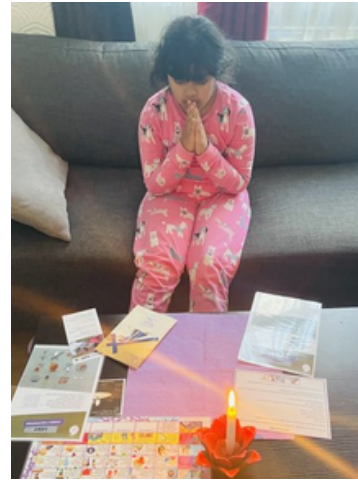




# Our Lenten Journey so far...

## Lenten Prayer bags

*It has been wonderful to see so many of you enjoying your prayer time with your families at home...*



## St. Mary's Charity Work for Lent...

The children have taken part in the Big Lent Walk. We are more than half way there to our total. We've got a lot of walking to do next week to reach our target!



Reception class led their beautiful prayer service for their parents.





Year 2 led a brilliant assembly about Lent.



*Supporting our Lenten charities: -  
CAFOD*

*At St Mary's, we are working together, to take on the Big Lent Walk!  
The whole school will be walking 200km in 40 days throughout Lent.  
Each class will contribute to this total and will walk 9 miles.  
This will take place throughout this half term.*

*We are taking part in this walk as part of our Lenten charity work.  
We will be supporting CAFOD and raising money to fight global poverty.  
Any donations to this cause will be greatly appreciated.*

*All donations will go to CAFOD.  
If you are happy to donate, you can  
donate via the link below.*

<https://cafod.enthuse.com/pf/st-marysb17>



### Parish News



**St Mary's Church remains open 8:00am - 4:00pm**  
*St Mary's Church remains open from 8.00am until 4.00pm  
each weekday, - for private prayer, visits to Shrines, private  
prayer before the Stations of the Cross either in the old  
Church (graphic 3-D images) or the new Church (abstract,  
symbolic), or to light candles with your children.*



**Stations of the Cross - every Wednesday in Lent - 7pm**  
*The Stations of the Cross take place each Wednesday in  
Lent, in St Mary's Church, at 7.00pm, for half an hour.*



We are an operation encompass school. Therefore school is working alongside the police to ensure support for any child who has been involved in or witness to domestic abuse. Please find more information about this on our website or contact the school office.

*Pastoral Team*

**If you require any support from school please speak to a member of our pastoral team**



At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, facts and tips for adults.

## Helping children and young people with MANAGING DEVICE STRESS AND ANXIETY

The internet and advances in the capability of digital devices have afforded us arguably the fastest period of technological and social evolution in living memory; creating opportunities for us to interact with people anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day. It's also, however, blurred safety boundaries and added new stresses for young people, who are often less aware of the hidden hazards. With almost half of 10-15-year-olds experiencing bullying online and algorithms pushing content in front of our children every day, it's important to know how to address some of these challenges.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

#### LIVING ONLINE

The internet is rife with sophisticated algorithms that learn from our online behaviour and try to predict our wants and needs. That's very helpful in some respects, but it can make the online world difficult for children and young people to negotiate. Content can be brought to them at any time - it may not always be appropriate, and children may not have the ability or the support to deal with it.

#### PUSHY NOTIFICATIONS

Content is also directed at us through notifications from our app - letting us know we have a new message or social post to read, for example. While that's useful in some circumstances, it conditions us to keep going back online (and is designed to do so) and can be a near-constant demand on your child's attention. As such alerts become more common, are we experiencing an 'attack of the pings'?

#### BLURRED BOUNDARIES

There are now so many ways we can communicate online in real time (the instant messaging apps) or with a delay (such as on social media) that it's possible to be constantly in conversation. Young people often prefer quickfire exchanges of text - but using fewer words can cause misreading, miscommunications through the lack of non-verbal cues like facial expressions or tone of voice.

#### DIGITAL DEPENDENCY

As devices allow access to immediate external help in challenging situations, it's a concern that children may not be developing the inner confidence to work things out for themselves. Likewise, group membership is hugely important to young people - both in digital and 'real life' - and being excluded from online conversations can cause damaging feelings of loneliness and isolation.

#### DISGUISED DISTRESS

Children often haven't yet developed the emotional resources to deal with many of the setbacks of everyday life, so identifying when it's specifically something online that's worried them can be tricky. A certain level of stress is a normal response to a problem; it spurs us into action to keep ourselves safe. If the stress is excessive, though, it can lead to overwhelming and potentially lead to anxiety or depression.

#### ANTI-SOCIAL SOCIALS

Social media can bring people together in hugely positive ways. Sadly, it does also have a darker side, including 'troll' war arguments which can escalate quickly and have harmful consequences. With so many people looking on, 'group shaming' situations are also common - while there are continual opportunities for young people to compare themselves negatively with other social media users.

### Advice for Parents & Carers

#### LEARN THE BASICS

It's impossible to keep up with every online change or every new app. The best option is to make yourself aware of the fundamentals of how the internet operates, so you can help your child to keep safe - and why content reaches them. Devices and the digital world can be confusing, so learning to understand them better will give you the confidence to talk to your child about them.

#### PUSH DISTRACTIONS AWAY

Notifications to our phones and tablets can be helpful, but they sometimes make one wonder who's really in charge: the person or the device? Checking our phone as soon as it goes off is an easy habit to fall into - especially for young people. Try switching off non-essential alerts on your devices and encourage your child to do the same; you should both feel less triggered and more in control.

#### KEEP CHECKING IN

Healthy emotional regulation balances three systems: threat, drive and grounding. Down the various rabbit holes of the internet, however, that balance can easily slip away - so it's important to help your child manage their emotions when they're online. Check in with them regularly when they're on their devices, and remember that 'distraction' and 'relaxation' aren't always the same thing.

#### TALK IT OUT

If a child mentions a comment that's been directed at them in a text chat or on social media, it may sound minor but can actually have a much bigger effect than we realise. In our evolved brains, any perceived threat can get internalised while our body reacts as if we were in physical danger - raising stress levels. It's always worth encouraging your child to get any concerns out in the open.

#### LOOK FOR THE SIGNS

This is tricky - and may depend on the child's age - but any sudden changes in behaviour is worth looking out for. If your child seems to be checking their phone or tablet more, doesn't want to be parted from them, or appears unusually secretive, anxious or withdrawn, it could be a sign that something is amiss in relation to their device - and, possibly, that they're in need of extra support.

#### BE KIND: UNWIND

Be kind to yourselves as parents and carers. Remember that we're all in the same boat, trying to safely guide our children through this complex, fast-moving digital environment. Getting into the habit of having natural, relaxed conversations with your child about their online life (and yours) can level the playing field and make it far easier for them to open up to you about any concerns.

#### Meet Our Expert

Dr Carole Francis-Smith is an experienced counselling psychologist who specialises in promoting safe and ethical online communications. She consults with and offers regular training to businesses and organisations, supporting positive and effective online communications - often considering some of the more hidden aspects of the various mediums.

Source: [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) | <https://www.nationalonlinesafety.com>

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**Summer uniform**

Children should still be wearing their winter uniform, as the weather is still unpredictable and can be cold. Children may begin wearing their Summer uniform when we return after Easter...

**Girls' Summer Uniform**

- Yellow summer dress
- Black shoes



**Boys' Summer Uniform**

- Grey shorts
- Yellow polo shirt
- Black shoes

**PE**

- Blue shorts
- Yellow t-shirt
- Black, blue or white trainers / black indoor pumps



**Standard Assessment Tests (SATs)**



Please note the following:

- Year 6 SATs take place **Tuesday 9th May – Friday 12th May**
- Year 2 SATs take place during the month of **May**
- Year 4 Times Tables Check from **5th June (3 week period)**
- Year 1 Phonics Screen Check takes place Week Beginning **Monday 12th June**

**Please do not book holidays for any of the above dates.** Further details will be given out nearer the time.

**Do not book holidays during term time**

*This is a reminder that holidays during term time are unauthorised. If you intend to take your child out of school during term time, we ask that you complete a holiday request form at least 2 weeks prior to the leave date where possible. Parents may be fined by the Local Authority for taking unauthorised leave of absence. Children need to be in school every day so please ensure holidays are only booked during school holiday time.*

*Good attendance, continues to be a school and government priority.*

*Remember below 95% is a concern and below 90% is classed as persistent absence. If you have any problems with regards to getting your child to school or you are struggling to improve your child's attendance, please speak to Mrs. Yorke or Mrs. Davis.*

*We will announce the attendance for the previous week in this section of the newsletter each week.*

**Attendance and Punctuality: –**

Our attendance for last week was –

**Week 20<sup>th</sup> March – 24<sup>th</sup> March**

Class	YRB	YRT	Y1L	Y1F	Y2E	Y2G	Y3L	Y3T	Y4J	Y4M	Y5M	Y5F	Y6R	Y6O
%	91%	95.3%	99.3%	94.7%	97.7%	99.3%	96%	99.7%	94.3%	98%	95.5%	99%	94%	96.3%
Lates	6	2	5	2	3	1	1	5	5	1	4	3	2	6
Whole School Attendance so far this year						95.5%			School Target				97%	

**Well done Y3T: - our Attendance Champions**



Spring theme -

Spring 2 Virtues

WB 3.4.23

3rd April 2023 - 1:30-3:00pm

3rd April 2023 - 3:45pm

4th April 2023 - all day

4th April 2023 - 2:00pm

6th April 2023 - 11:00am

6th April 2023

The Dignity of Work

Learned and Wise

Holy Week

Reconciliation Service for Y4-Y6 in Church

Y6 parents meeting - about Residential - in hall (parents only)

Year 2 fundraising non-school uniform day in school

Reception class Easter Bonnet Parade

Y6 Stations of the Cross in Church

Break up for Easter break!

1:40 finish time - Reception classes

1:45 finish time - KSI classes

1:50 finish time - sibling group

2:00 finish time - KS2 classes

Dates



Year RB	Sophia	for her truly fantastic farm design this week
Year RT	Charlie	writing two super sentences about Charlie Horse
Year IF	James	his super work and effort in Maths
Year IL	Maya	always being a kind and polite member of the class
Year 2E	Amelia	being a hardworking and conscientious member of the class - always
Year 2G	Savannah	always being polite and friendly
Year 3L	Arthur W	continued effort and hard work
Year 3T	Shiza	kindness and consideration to all
Year 4J	Claire	fantastic behaviour in and out of school and at all times
Year 4M	Benjamin	trying his very best in everything that he does
Year 5F	Rose	fantastic attitude to learning and always working hard
Year 5M	Adrian D	brilliant progress and effort in maths
Year 6O	Amelia	bringing such joy to the Dementia Group
Year 6R	Nana	working really hard this week

