



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

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.



November is dedicated to the Holy Souls.

Our theme for the Autumn term is: 'Families and Community'

Our virtues for this half term are: - 'Intentional and Prophetic'

Dear parents and carers,

29th November 2024

This weekend, we enter in to the season of Advent, a time of spiritual preparation before Christmas. The first candle on our advent wreath - the "prophet's candle", represents 'hope', reminding us that Jesus is coming. It is important to take time this weekend to explore this theme and to think about what we hope for as we prepare for Christmas. Please use the prayer and reflection, included on page 2 of this newsletter, to explore 'hope' and the beginning of Advent, with your family. I am sure that you will join us in praying for peace and hope for resolution in our world soon.

We are entering a really exciting time in school, with school concerts, discos and nativity rehearsals, but also deep prayer and preparation. Within this newsletter, I have outlined the events taking place in school over the next few weeks. Any further information will be shared through future newsletters and email. Our advent prayer bags will begin to go home from next week and we look forward to seeing photos of children praying with their families at home.

Thank you for your support for our Christmas charities - we have a lovely collection of toys for our Toy appeal appearing in the foyer and items to support Birmingham Shelter too.

It has been brought to our attention that sometimes our emails from school go to your junk email box. Please will you have a look at this folder and direct any emails from enquiry@stmarys to your inbox so that you do not miss any important communication from school.

Finally, I am sure that you'll join with us in celebrating the birth of Freddie, born to Mr and Mrs Richards yesterday afternoon, weighing 8lbs and 6oz. Both baby and mommy are doing well. Your St. Mary's family are praying for you all and we can not wait to meet him.

I wish you all a very happy weekend,

Mrs Yorke

Congratulations!





First advent candle

The first Sunday of Advent symbolises Hope with the "prophet's candle" reminding us that Jesus is coming.

As we embark on this special first week of Advent, we invite you to join in reflection and connection as a school family. During this season of hope, we come together to ponder the promise of better times ahead.

scripture

"For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." - Jeremiah 29:11

reflection

Hope Amidst Challenges In light of the world situation, particularly in Palestine and Ukraine, where conflict and uncertainty persist, we reflect on the theme of 'hope.' As a school community, let us contemplate the profound impact of hope in navigating through challenging times and fostering a collective vision for a better future.

open question

In what ways can we, as a school community, contribute to fostering hope and building a better world for all in the face of global challenges?

Task

A Creative Reflection We invite families to express their thoughts and aspirations in creative ways. This could be through artwork, poetry, prayer, a short video, or any form that resonates with your family (see ideas). Share your creations with us, and let's collectively illuminate the spirit of hope that binds us together. All collective work will be displayed in the school hall.





Catholic Life

This week's Gospel and Prayer



John 18: 33-37

"I am a King. I was born for this, I cam into the world for this: to bear witness to the truth; and all who are on the side of truth, listen to my voice".

Reflecting on this week's Gospel message we learn:

- Jesus is the true King
- Jesus wants us to know the truth of God's love for everyone
- We can be like Jesus the King by listening to Him and following His example

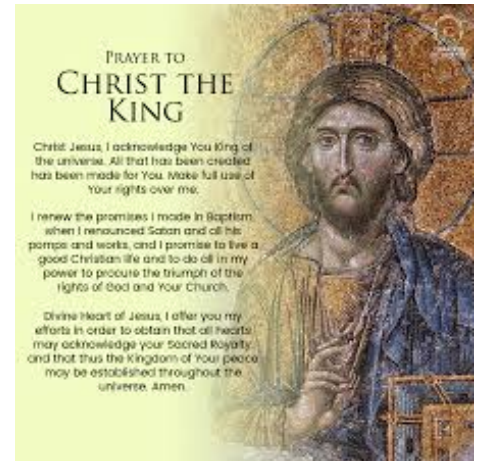
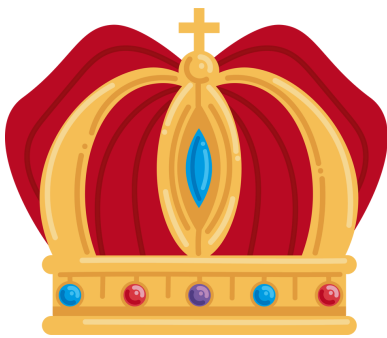


Lord our God, You alone are the Most Holy King and Ruler of all nations. We pray to You, Lord, in the great expectation of receiving from You, O Divine King, mercy, peace, justice and all good things. Protect, O Lord our families and the land of our birth. Guard us, we pray, Most Faithful One.

Year 2 Mass - 27.11.24

-Christ the King

Thank you Year 2 for your beautiful readings in Mass this week, as we learnt more about what Christ the King can teach us about service and love of others.

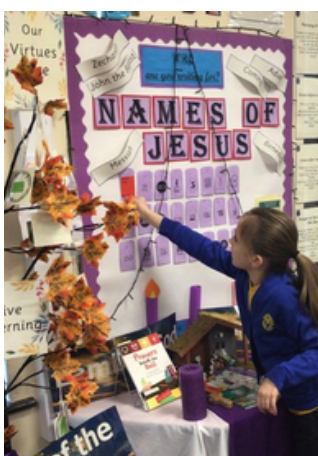


Our next Mass: - Whole school Mass

The Immaculate Conception

Our next Mass in Church will be on **Friday 6th December 2024**, starting promptly at 9:30am. This is a whole school Mass for the Feast of Immaculate Conception.

All parents are welcome to join us and we ask that you sit in the old part of the Church.



We will be using Missio digital advent calendar to guide us in prayer throughout December. We will also be sharing 'walk with me' reflections as a staff.



Year 4 Harborne Library Visit - 3.12.24

Year 4 will be visiting Harborne Library next Tuesday.

4M will leave at 9:00am

4J will leave at 10:45am

If you are a parent who would like to attend and support walking to and from the library, please let the Year 4 staff know.

The Christmas Discos on 3.12.24 (KS1); 4.12.24 (Reception class) and 5.12.24 (KS2) will be held in the school for an hour straight after school. Tickets are priced at £3 and parents can pay for this via School Gateway. The PTA will be supporting the event by providing drinks and a snack for the pupils. All money raised will go towards the purchase of an additional, outdoor classroom. An exciting project that we hope lots of families support us in fundraising for! The cost of the disco includes wearing non-school Christmas clothing on the day that your child is attending their disco. If your child is not attending the disco, they can still wear Christmas non-school uniform on that day and we ask for £1 please towards our fundraising. Thank you.



WREATH MAKING WORKSHOP

Wednesday 4th December 2024



Come and join us on Wednesday
December 4th 7-9pm
in St. Mary's Parish Hall.
Make your own Christmas wreath
Everything included plus a glass of
mulled wine & a mince pie
£25 per person
All proceeds go to St. Mary's RC primary
school

Santa Dash - 6.12.24

On Friday 6th December, St Mary's will participate in this years School Games National 'Santa Dash.'
Please come to school in your usual uniform for that day but you are encouraged to wear a Christmas accessory. This could be a Santa hat, reindeer antlers or Christmas headbands/hair bobbles.



Christmas Dinner will be served on Wednesday 11th December!



We will send more information about this but please put the date in your diary - if your child normally brings in a packed lunch on a Wednesday and would like to opt in for Christmas Dinner, please confirm this with the school office.

Christmas Jumper Day - 12th December 2024

Thursday 12th December children may come to school in festive clothing which may include a Christmas jumper/t-shirt or Christmas colours / head gear. Please ensure the children are dressed appropriately for the weather and wear shoes and a coat suitable for outdoor play. There is no charge.



On 13th December, a special event is being hosted in our Parish Hall. Carols by candlelight will showcase music by David Fisher and St. Mary's School choir. Tickets from St. Mary's Parish Office in office hours. Come and join us to raise funds for 'Shelter' winter appeal.

Carols by Candlelight
Friday 13th December



Christmas Mass

Friday 20th December 2024 - 9:30am

On the final day of the term, all children and staff will go to Church for Christmas Mass before we break up.

What a wonderful end to the term!

Parents are welcome to attend - please sit in the old church.

TEACHER GIFT!



The cost of living is affecting us all. Rather than buying gifts for each other this year, the staff have chosen to support St Chad's Sanctuary Christmas Wish List - and will be collecting adult gloves, scarves and hats.

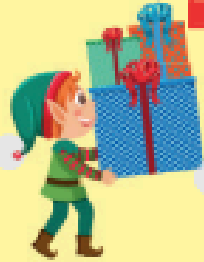
We have so many families who buy gifts for staff and we are so thankful for your generosity, but this year we would like to ease any pressure families may feel and ask for your prayers as our Christmas gift instead (and support for our charity work).

We have been asked to support the Birmingham Irish Association Initiative again this year, to provide toys for children who in Birmingham who may not receive a Christmas present this year. Our families and staff have always been so generous at supporting this initiative.

Details can be found below: -

Toy Appeal

Christmas 2024



Please give new toys (unwrapped) for our local children in Birmingham for all age groups ranging from 1-15 years



COLLECTION DATES:

Monday 4th November - Thursday 12th December

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL





St Catherine of Siena Primary School, in Great Colmore Street B15 2AY, support **Birmingham Christmas shelter** every year. This year, the school will open between 24th-28th December to serve those who need food and clothing. Last year, 400 guests received fresh clothes and toiletries in those four days.

St Catherine's have asked our schools to support by collecting items for the Birmingham Christmas Shelter - they need: - **toiletries, biscuits, crisps, cordial, clothing.** If you would like to support, please bring any donations to the school office over the next few weeks.





School Fund

Our School Fund is a vital source of income for our school.

It pays for the 'extras' such as Inspire workshops, curriculum resources, Christmas activities, theatre or performances as well as subsidising school trips.

These 'extras' are enjoyed by all year groups at St Mary's throughout the year.

Contribution to this fund is entirely voluntary and we are very grateful to those parents who regularly support the school in this way. However, in the last few years the amount of school fund received has dropped quite significantly. There are probably many reasons for this, but perhaps the most obvious is remembering to send in a donation every year, half term or term.

We understand that some families may find donating to us difficult, especially with the current cost of living crisis. With that in mind we have decided to alter the way our donations are done and hopefully make it easier to maintain.

Several parents make their contribution by standing order and we are very grateful to them all.

As we have been accepted as a charity for tax purposes, we can claim the tax on donations to school fund by parents who are taxpayers if those parents sign a Gift Aid Declaration.

This means that for every pound you give we get an extra 25p from the Inland Revenue, helping your donation to go further.

Consequently, by setting up a standing order for say, £2 per month per child or £5 per month per family for parents with multiple siblings who attend St Mary's, you will guarantee the school a monthly income on which we can reclaim tax.

Please consider this option seriously. If you feel unable to sign up to a monthly payment, why not pay a one-off payment of £20 per child per year or £50 per family per year, again with a Gift Aid declaration.

A Gift Aid declaration and standing order form has been emailed out to our families. If you wish to gift aid your donations then please complete and return these to school at your earliest convenience.

*For those families who **do** wish to gift aid, we have set up the account listed below for donations.*

Account Name: St Marys School Fund – Gift Aid Account

*Sort Code: **30 - 19 - 14***

*Account Number: **03595246***

As always, we are extremely grateful for the support that we receive from the parents at St Mary's and appreciate you helping us be able to put on these events and treats for the children, which hopefully make their time at St Mary's more fun and memorable. If you have any queries or concerns, please contact the school. We ask you to be assured of the confidential manner in which the school will treat your details.

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

If you have a concern that a child is being harmed, is at risk of harm, or you receive a disclosure (intentionally or unintentionally) you must contact one of the following staff members as quickly as possible:



Amy Davis	Louise Yorke	Rachel Jones	Rachel Richards	Sharon Tame	Laura Noone	Jade Preedy
Deputy Headteacher	Headteacher	Senior Teacher	EYFS Lead	School Counsellor	AHT	AHT
Lead DSL	Deputy DSL	DSL	DSL	DSL	DSL	DSL

Alternatively, email DSL@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

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. Good attendance is 96% and above 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 25/11/24-29/11/24

Class	YRB	YRT	Y1L	Y1F	Y2E	Y2G	Y3L	Y3T	Y4J	Y4M	Y5M	Y5F	Y6R	Y6O
%	99.3	98	96.6	96.3	95.6	95	90.6	98.6	99.3	97.3	91.6	95.3	94	94.8
Lates	4	1	2	4	3	8	2	4	0	1	3	1	3	1
Whole School Attendance so far this year						96.4%		School Target				97%		

Well done RB and 4J: - Our joint attendance champions!

Dates for this half-term

Autumn theme -

Autumn 11 Virtues

3rd December 2024 - am
3rd December 2024 - 3:30-4:30
4th December 2024 - 3:30-4:30
4th December 2024 - 7:00pm
5th December 2024 - 3:45-4:45
6th December 2024 - all day
6th December 2024 - 9:30am
9th December 2024 - 1:30pm
10th December 2024 - am
11th December 2024 - lunch
12th December 2024 - 9:30am
12th December 2024 - all day
13th December 2024 - all day
13th December 2024 - 9:00am
13th December 2024 - 6:45pm
13th December 2024 - 7:00pm
17th December 2024 - 10:15am
17th December 2024 - 2:15pm
18th December 2024 - 2:15pm
19th December 2024 - 2pm
20th December 2024 - 9:30am
20th December -

Families and Communities

Intentional and Prophetic

Year 4 visit to Harborne library (9:15 4M and 11:00 4J)
PTA event - KS1 Christmas Disco in school hall (children only)
PTA event - Reception class Christmas Disco in school hall (children only)
Annual Wreath making workshop in Parish Hall - £25
PTA event - KS2 Christmas Disco in school hall (children only)
Santa Dash - wear a Christmas accessory for our Daily Mile
Whole School Mass - Feast of Immaculate Conception in Church (Parents welcome)
Penitential Service for Years 4 - 6 (children and staff only)
Year 3 visit to Harborne library (9:15 3L and 11:00 3T)
Christmas dinner day in school
Reception Nativity in Church (for parents)
Christmas jumper day in school
Year 3L non-school uniform day for their class Saint - St. Lucy
Year 3 Prayer Service for all Year 3 parents
Choir sing for Carols by Candlelight - meet at school 6:30pm
Carols by Candlelight in St. Mary's Church (all welcome)
KS2 Theatre Visit at Malvern Theatre 'Sleeping Beauty'
Year 1 and Year 2 Nativity in School Hall (parents welcome)
Year 3 and Year 4 Christmas Assembly in School Hall (parents welcome)
Year 5 and Year 6 Christmas Carol Service in Church (for parents)
Whole school Christmas Mass for all children, staff and parents
Break up for Summer holidays
1:40 finish time - Reception classes
1:45 finish time - KS1 classes
1:50 finish time - sibling group
2:00 finish time - KS2 classes

Star of the week

Congratulations to the following children who have shone in school over the last week:

Year RB	Roshan	<i>For being very sensible when visiting church.</i>
Year RT	Raey	<i>For his fantastic writing about how Mary felt when she found Jesus in the temple</i>
Year IF	Isabelle	<i>Striving for excellence with her exciting writing!</i>
Year IL	Raghuveer	<i>Fantastic effort in his learning and for listening attentively.</i>
Year 2E	Alex	<i>For a week of excellent behaviour and learning. We are so proud of you! Keep it up.</i>
Year 2G	Shawn	<i>Always being a fantastic member of the class!</i>
Year 3L	Aila	<i>For her fantastic descriptive writing in English!</i>
Year 3T	Tomas	<i>Trying really hard on his handwriting and presentation this week!</i>
Year 4J	Adadike	<i>For her love of learning and participation in class.</i>
Year 4M	Krishan	<i>For trying very hard to complete all of his work this week! Well done!</i>
Year 5F	Rudi	<i>Working really hard and having a fantastic attitude towards learning.</i>
Year 5M	Emiliano	<i>For working really hard completing group work in English</i>
Year 6O	John	<i>Always being helpful and kind to his classmates and teacher</i>
Year 6R	Nisha	<i>For her excellent efforts in maths this week</i>

