



Archdiocese of Birmingham

# ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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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: 'Options for the Poor and Vulnerable'

Our virtues for this half term are: - 'Faith-filled and hopeful'



1st March 2024

Dear parents and carers,

Happy St. David's day, the Saint who once said "Be joyful, keep the faith, and do the little things"... what wonderful advice as we begin to move in to our third week of Lent and maybe find our good resolutions wavering a little.

We have had another wonderful week of learning in school - and the newsletter is filled with photos for you to enjoy. I thank parents for their feedback about OPAL. Please rest assured that we are still in the very early days of launching this change to lunchtimes. The whole process will take 18 months to complete. We are currently introducing and embedding different games and are gathering your child's voice in Play Assemblies to ensure that the lunchtimes are tailored to the needs of all children. Next week, we have Careers Week taking place in school - thank you to the parents who have volunteered to come in and speak to our children about the range of careers out there. We also continue our Lent charity work and are asking parents to support our 'Big Lent Walk' fundraising for CAFOD.

<https://schools.walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/st-marys-big-lent-walk2025> - we have so far walked 77km of our 200km target and received £32 in fundraising. Our target is £350. Please help us reach it. Our week will conclude with Thursday's world book day and Friday's whole school Lent retreat. Have a great weekend everybody.

Mrs Yorke

### *This week's Gospel and Prayer*

*Genesis 22:17*

*"I will shower blessings on you, I will make your descendants as many as the stars of Heaven and the grains of sand on the seashore." Genesis 22:17*

Reflecting on this week's Gospel message we learn:

- We receive blessing from God as we are Abraham's descendants.
- We also receive blessing from heaven through our relationship with Jesus.
- We can share our blessings to bless others as we GIVE, ACT and PRAY this Lent.

Dear God,

Thank you for blessing us!  
Help me to be full of faith like Abraham.  
Show me how I can bless others by  
sharing your love.  
Amen

### Catholic Life in School

Year 4 Mass - 28.2.24 - 2nd Week of Lent

Year 4 led a beautiful mass on prayer and fasting for the second week of Lent.



Y2 Mass - 3rd Week of Lent

Our next Mass in Church will be on Wednesday 6th March 2024, starting promptly at 9:15am. Year 2 children will be leading our Mass and Year 1 children will attend too. All parents are welcome to attend.



# Catholic Social Teaching

## Building the Kingdom

### Options for the Poor and Vulnerable



Year 6 investigated poverty in the world by playing the biscuit game: some continents have more than they need; others do not have enough. What are the solutions to poverty and what can we do to help during Lent.

The Spiritual Council have been out in Community litter picking. We had some wonderful comments from the general public. We collected so much rubbish. We were happy to help but sad that so much litter is thrown on the ground.



Year 1 are spending their Friday afternoons with the residents at Heathcote House. Today, they played games and drew some lovely drawings.



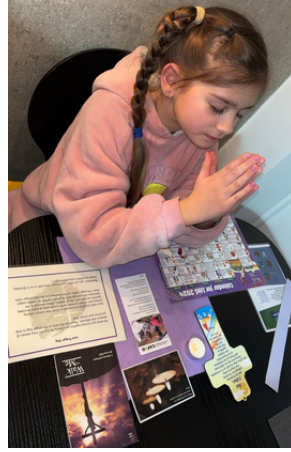
# Our Lenten Journey

## Lenten Prayer bags



"During this Lent, let us all ask the Lord: Make our hearts like yours."

-Pope Francis



## Charity: - CAFOD Just one world

KS2 are walking 200km for CAFOD this Lent - please sponsor us!

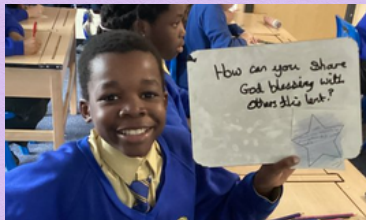
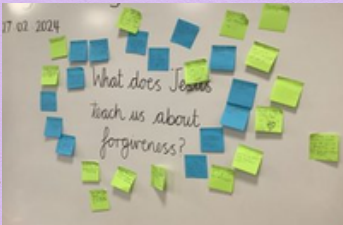
<https://schools.walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/st-marys-big-lent-walk2025>



## Prayer and Liturgy



Mrs Davis asked the children to reflect on their blessings as their 'Go Forth' - "How can you share God's blessings with others this Lent?"



In KS1 prayer and liturgy, Mrs Russell helped the children to think about what they are fasting from this Lent. The children used role play to think about the changes they can make and how they can follow Jesus' example.



## Fasting



# Prayer Areas

*Our classroom prayer areas help the children to reflect and pray more fully each day during Lent.*



## Lent Reflection

*During Lent, we are called to pray as a way to connect with God and reflect on Jesus' sacrifice. Prayer is a way of communicating with God and growing in a relationship with him. Through prayer, we find comfort, hope and strength in knowing that God is with us during our 40-day journey through Lent and beyond.*

# Prayer

## scripture

*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." -*

*Philippians 4: 6-7*

## reflection

*Prayer during Lent focuses on our need for God's forgiveness. It's also about repenting (turning away from our sins) and receiving God's mercy and love. We offer our petitions to God, knowing that He will always listen. This is the time to pray and strengthen our relationship with Him.*

## open question

*What will you pray for, this Lent?*

## Task

**A Creative Reflection** Create your own prayer to God. This may be a prayer of praise, asking, saying sorry or thanks. You could create a prayer intention— draw a picture or write a name of somebody you would like to pray for. Share your creations with us. All collective work will be displayed in the school hall.



PRAY



*Reception news: -*

Reception class have been enjoying their Maths learning this week.



*Year 1 news: -*

Year 1 have been counting from 20-50, on the tens frames.

The children went on a nature/object hunt to find different objects to fill their tens frames up!



*Year 2 news: -*

Year 2 Mathematicians have been multiplying and dividing by 10.



*Year 3 news: -*

In DT lessons, Year 3 have been learning about food from around the world and they have identified what food grows seasonally, in the United Kingdom



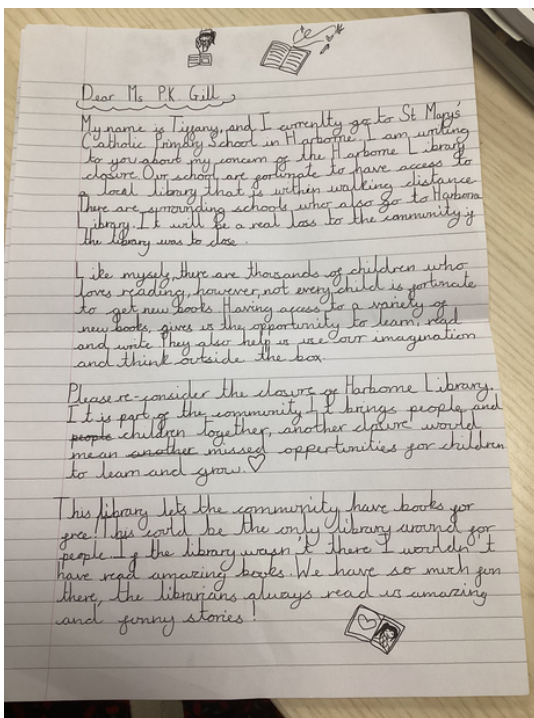
## Year 4 news: -

In RE lessons, Year 4 learnt about the rite of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.



## Year 5 news: -

Year 5 have been affected by the latest news of Harborne Library and have written to the local MP. They have also have been analysing sources in History to determine how and why we know about the Anglo-Saxons.



"I thought the Anglo-Saxons were just 1 tribe, but they were actually made up of 3, how awesome!" - Harry

## Year 6 news: -

Scientists in Year 6 used their 'working scientifically' skills, learning about variables (independent, dependent and controlled), applying them when investigating how to alter the brightness of a bulb.

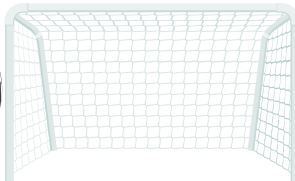


## Reception Trip to the farm



## U11s boys football

Our U11 boys played the first round of the HMS Birmingham Shield this week, but Barr View Primary School claimed a well-deserved victory. Well done to everyone involved and thank you to our parents for making the journey across Birmingham!



## LKS2 Badminton Festival

Children from Year 3 and Year 4 had a great time at the Racket Pack Badminton Festival.





*Supporting our Lenten charities: -  
FOCUS Birmingham, CAFOD, homeless charities...*

**Year  
R**

*Reception class will be baking cakes to sell at our Easter bonnet parade. Children will bake the cakes at home with their parents and money made will go to local charity - FOCUS Birmingham*



**Year  
1**

*Year 1 will be visiting our residents at Heathcote House during Lent - gifting them with their time. The children are looking forward to reading, singing and playing games with the residents.*



**Year  
2**

*Year 2 will be inviting members of the parish and local community in to school for a special tea party to celebrate their learning about Queen Victoria*



**KS2**

*KS2 are taking part in The Big Lent Walk!  
All KS2 children will be asking for sponsorship to walk 200km collaboratively over Lent. Your donations can change lives! All money raised through the Big Lent Walk will help fight poverty globally in countries like Afghanistan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan.*



**Year  
5**

*Year 5 will be learning about rivers in Summer and water distribution around the World. They will explore the question: 'Is there enough water for everyone?' This Lent, Year 5 will complete their Big Lent CAFOD walk, carrying buckets of water, to raise awareness of water poverty.*



**Year  
4**

*Additionally, Year 4 children will continue their collection for homeless charities. Year 4 have been reading 'The nightbus hero in class' and would like to support local homeless charities during Lent - they will be asking for donations and working closely with parents.*



**Spiritual  
Council**

*Community tidy up - litter picking in our local area around St. Mary's and high street - parents welcome to join us! Staff too!*





### OPAL - Week 1 Update

First of all, a very big thank you to everyone who donated resources. We are currently sorting them and will have them out on the playground very soon.

It's been a busy week of outdoor play and fun! The children have enjoyed dress up, play with fabrics, imaginative play with pots, pans and utensils (they created a pizza takeaway), multi-activity games with Coach Redmond, chalking, small world play, wheeled play (Reception and KSI), music and dancing, drawing, Lego and Duplo and much more!

The weather hasn't stopped play but it has made things a little more challenging. However, OPAL's philosophy is that rain should not be barrier to children having enjoyable playtimes.

We're at the very start of our OPAL journey and we have implemented the 'quick wins' to get us started - we are now in the crucial phase of gathering pupil voice, reviewing what works and planning the next stage of the project to move onto bigger and more exciting things!

Thank you for your all support!

## National Careers Week – Week beginning 4th March 2024

*Children can dress-up in what they would like to be when they are older on Monday 4th March. We would like to get the children excited by the breadth of careers available to them when they are older. We welcome anybody who would be willing to talk to the children about a job they do.*



## Praying for Vocations to the Religious life – WB 4.3.24

*This week, we will pray a daily Prayer for our seminarians, men in formation for the permanent diaconate and for a greater awareness of God's call in our homes, parishes, schools and universities.*

*Heavenly Father,*

*We ask you to send labourers into your harvest.*

*Inspire, in the hearts of your people, vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life.*

*Bless our families with a spirit of generosity, so that those whom you call have the courage to give themselves to your Church in faith.*

*Through Christ our Lord.*

*Amen*



## Year 4 Harborne Library Visit – 5.3.24

Year 4 will be visiting Harborne Library next Tuesday.

4J will leave at 9:00am

4M 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.

## WORLD BOOK DAY - THURSDAY 7TH MARCH 2024

This year, our world book day theme is 'comfort' so children may come to school wearing lounge wear and whatever they're most comfortable in. As part of the day, children will be reading for pleasure and at the end of the day, we will share an end of the day 'bedtime story' with hot chocolate! Reading and books will be celebrated throughout the day with lots of activities planned by teachers.

We need children to be in comfortable but practical clothes as we lounge around in reading corner and bean bags / cushions throughout the day. Parents have asked about book characters – this is not something essential for this celebration and we would prefer the 'lounge wear / pyjama' theme.

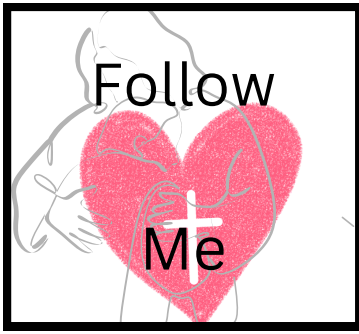
Our next book fair will be in school the week of parents' evening

WB 18.3.24.



## Remember Me - Whole School Lent Retreat - 8.3.24

On Friday 8th March, the staff and children will be taking part in a retreat day during this important season of Lent. OneLife Music lead engaging, provoking and enthusiastic retreats designed specifically for this important and precious time of observance. We will use this opportune time to reflect as a school family on what it means to be a follower of Christ. There will be opportunity for prayer, giving and acting on our beliefs through music, sharing and offering.



### Reminders



### Parents' Consultations

We look forward to welcoming you to our Parent Consultation Evenings this half term.

#### Booking is open for your Parent Consultation Evening Appointment

To book you will need to log on to eSchools using your parent log on details.

If you have forgotten your eSchools username and/or password, please contact the school office or send an email to [forgottenpassword@stmaryrc.sch.uk](mailto:forgottenpassword@stmaryrc.sch.uk)

*Parents' evening appointments will be carried over two days -  
Tuesday 19th March 2024 and Wednesday 20th March 2024.*

Our consultations will be hosted in the school hall.

After consultation with the teacher, your child's teacher will give you your child's books to look at.

You will then have time to look at the books in one of the Year 3 classrooms. In the other Year 3 classroom, we will have the book fair. Please do not take photos of the books - we have photos of children often stuck in and we do not have all the necessary permissions for the books to be photographed.

There will be a parent questionnaire to complete too.

After looking at your child's books, please leave them with the TA in the classroom and you can either go to your next appointment, or leave the school via the playground and main gate.

The appointment with the class teacher will last for ten minutes and timings will be strictly kept to. Please do not arrive any earlier than 5 minutes before your first appointment to help us keep numbers in the hall to a minimum and to allow for a timely well-organised evening.

Your children (those attending the school) will not be allowed to attend the appointment in the hall, if they are with you, we can look after them in the Year 2 classroom. If you need an interpreter, this should not be your child. It would be preferable if pre-school children, babies and older children do not attend the appointment so that you are able to focus on the consultation.

We are unable to look after pre-school children in our classrooms.

During parent consultations, key staff will be available for you if you have any concerns. Our SENDCo, Mrs Fowler, will be sat at a table in the hall. No prior appointment is needed,

but if you would like to speak to Mrs Fowler about SEN, she will be available.

SLT (Mrs Yorke and Mrs Davis) are also present in their offices, should you need to discuss anything with them.



## INSPIRE Workshop (Mothers' Day) – 12th March 2023

*We will soon enter the fourth week of Lent – our theme is gratitude and giving thanks.*

*We will be hosting a special INSPIRE workshop for **one parent** to attend in school.*

*On Tuesday 12th March, mums (or any family member over the age of 18) have the opportunity to come in to school and to work with their child on an area of the school curriculum.*

*Please find the timings for your workshop below...*

**NB – Please note that Year 2 have already held their INSPIRE workshop before this date to fit in with their marvellous middle and Indian cooking experience.**

*Please sign up using the school gateway, so that registers can be created and we know who is coming in to the building on this day.*

*All children will take part in their lesson, even if a parent or family member is unable to attend.*

**Please note that we do not have the room for more than one parent per child to attend.**

*We look forward to showcasing our lovely learning to you.*

*Unfortunately due to the nature of the INSPIRE, with a parent joining in with a lesson, it is not appropriate to bring pre-school children and babies to this event.*

*Teas and coffees will be set up for adults to purchase throughout the school day and money made will go towards our PTA projects. Prior to the workshop (or afterwards if you are about to attend another workshop) – please make your way to the school hall and you will be guided to the next lesson.*

*Please arrive 10 minutes before your first workshop.*

start time	workshop	where
9:00–10:00	Year 4 prayer service + go forth activity	hall
10:15–11:15	Year 3 DT sewing activity – Egyptian collars	Y3 classes
11:30–12:30	Year 6 Confirmation Workshop	hall
12:45–1:45	Reception and Year 1 gardening session	outside
2:00–3:00	Year 5 music workshop	Y5 classes



### Parish News



#### **Year 3 First Confession – 9.3.24 9:30 and 10:30**

*Year 3 children will celebrate their First Reconciliation/Confession, in St Mary's Church, – with parents and adults able to approach any of the priests for either their own Confession, – or for a blessing or to ask for a prayer for someone.*

**Miss Ruhan and Mrs Fowler leaving at Easter.**

We have two of our teachers leaving us at Easter, who are moving on to new Schools and challenges.

Miss Ruhan is excited to work in a different type of school setting in a different role. She has served St. Mary's as a teacher, maths lead and staff Governor and will be greatly missed. We wish her every luck and success in her new role. We have appointed Miss Price (no relation), who is a very experienced teacher and will be teaching in Year 2 with Mrs McConnell in the Summer term.



Mrs Fowler is leaving to continue as a SENDCo in another school. This term she has been working closely with our SEND team as part of our handover. Miss Thompson will be Acting SENDCo in the Summer term. Mrs Fowler has made such a difference to our SEND provision, these past 3 years and again we thank her for her commitment to the children. We wish you every success in your new school.



This is an Operation Encompass School

**KEEPING SAFE**

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



**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 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024 – 01<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

Class	YRB	YRT	Y1L	Y1F	Y2E	Y2G	Y3L	Y3T	Y4J	Y4M	Y5M	Y5F	Y6R	Y6O
%	93%	99%	96.2%	97%	90.3%	97.6%	98%	97.6%	97%	98.6%	92.3%	93.3%	96.1%	98.2%
Lates	2	1	4	0	0	3	3	3	0	1	3	2	5	3
Whole School Attendance so far this year						96.4%			School Target				97%	

Well done RT: - our Attendance Champions

# Dates for this term

*Spring theme -*

*Spring 11 Virtues*

*WB 4.3.24*

*WB 4.3.24*

*4th March 2024 - all day*

*5th March 2024 - am*

*6th March 2024 - 9:15am*

*7th March 2024 - all day*

*8th March 2024 - 9:15am*

*8th March 2024 - all day*

*8th March 2024 - all day*

*WB 11.3.24*

*12th March 2024 - am*

***12th March 2024 - all day***

*13th March 2024 - all day*

*13th March 2024 - 9:15am*

*13th March 2024 - 10:00am*

*15th March 2024 - 9:00am*

*19th March 2024 - evening*

*20th March 2024 - 9:30am*

*20th March 2024 - evening*

*21st March 2024 - all day*

*21st March 2024 - 9:00am*

*WB 25th March 2024*

*26th March 2024 - 2:00pm*

*28th March 2024 - 11:00am*

***28th March 2024 -***

*Options for the Poor and Vulnerable*

*Faith-filled and Hopeful*

*Careers Week in school with key speakers*

*Pray for vocations to the religious life*

*Dress up as your favourite career / what you would like to be when you're older*

*Year 4 visit to Harborne library (9:15 4J and 11:00 4M)*

*Year 2 Mass in Church (and Year 1 classes attend) - parents welcome*

*World Book day - children may come to school dressed in their pyjamas*

*5-a-side girls football tournament*

*One Life Lent Retreat 'Remember Me'*

*International Women's day*

*British Science Week*

*Year 2 visit to Harborne library (9:15 2E and 11:00 2G)*

***Mothers' Day Inspire workshops in school***

*Malympics Day in school*

*Reception class Mass in Church (alongside their Year 6 buddies) - parents too*

*School Council visit to the Council House*

*Year 6 prayer service for parents*

*Parent Consultation Evening*

*Whole School Mass in Church - 5th week of lent - parents are welcome*

*Parent Consultation Evening*

*RT non-school uniform day for St. Teresa of Calcutta*

*Reception Prayer Service for parents*

*Holy Week*

*Reception Easter Bonnet Parade and cake sale*

*Year 6 Stations of the Cross in the Church for KS2 and parents*

***Break up for Easter 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	Isabelle	Fantastic independent writing this week with her mermaid storybook!
Year RT	Sia	Wonderful writing about our farm trip this week!
Year IF	Finn	For his enthusiasm and fantastic contributions in topic!
Year IL	Anicet	Having a fantastic week in school!
Year 2E	Max	For trying harder in all lessons. Keep it up Max!
Year 2G	Melissa	Fantastic behaviour all week and wonderful PE!
Year 3L	Kush	For his fantastic behaviour all week!
Year 3T	Henry	Trying incredibly hard with his work and a great improvement in his handwriting.
Year 4J	Sam	For stepping in and doing a lovely job with reading at Mass.
Year 4M	Aayansh	For being a joy to teach and you will be greatly missed!
Year 5F	Leo	Working really hard all week and making good choices.
Year 5M	Aoife	Amazing progress in her writing across ALL subjects.
Year 6O	Sebastian	For being an excellent role model!
Year 6R	Olivia	Consistently hard-working and enthusiastic.

