



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.

December is dedicated to the Immaculate Conception.

Our theme for the Autumn term is: 'Family and Communities'

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



Dear parents and carers,

10th December 2022

As we enter the third week of Advent, we light our 'Shepherds' candle' reminding us of the joy that we experience in the coming birth of Jesus. This pink candle is lit on Gaudete Sunday and we are rejoicing that we are half-way through our preparations. What a fabulous week we have had in school - enjoying our Christmas lunch, discos, festive dress and a visit from Santa. Next week, we have our nativities and Christmas Mass and we look forward to breaking up slightly earlier on Friday ready to begin our Christmas break.

It is beginning to feel very Christmassy with the sprinkling of snow that we are getting and the colder weather. If for any reason, extreme weather causes a decision to close the school, I will let parents know in the first instance on our school website and through our twitter feed. I will inform staff, who will then contact parents via our e-schools. The radio stations will also announce any closure. Temperatures have fallen so please ensure that your children are dressed appropriately for being outdoors. We still hold many of our breaks and lessons outdoors, even in winter. If the weather is too cold or icy though, we do keep the children inside. I look forward to seeing many of you this week during our nativities. We are currently gathering parent views about homework at St. Mary's as we are now looking at the homework policy. Please let us know what you think, using following link: -

<https://forms.office.com/r/i8Vd3U2mxH>

Mrs Yorke

This week's Gospel and Prayer

Matthew 3:3

"Prepare a way for the Lord, make His paths straight."

Father God,

We want to be your messengers. Help us to get our hearts ready so that we can spread your message of peace, joy and love to everyone we meet today. Amen

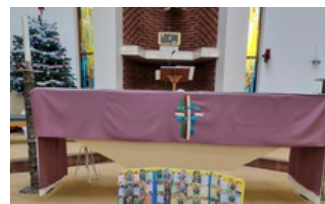
Reflecting on this week's Gospel message we learn:

- God has sent many messengers to help us.
- We can prepare our hearts for Jesus by saying sorry and starting again.
- We too can be messengers of the good news.

Catholic Life in School

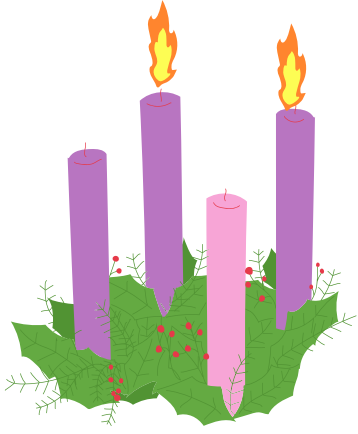
Whole School Mass - Immaculate Conception

On Wednesday, the entire school gathered for our Solemnity Mass of the Immaculate Conception. We reflected that Mary was born full of grace and without sin.



Whole School Mass in Church - 16.12.22 at 9:30am - Christmas -

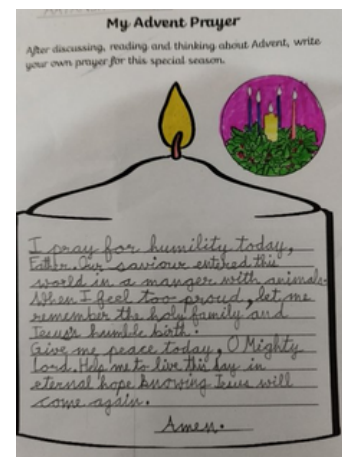
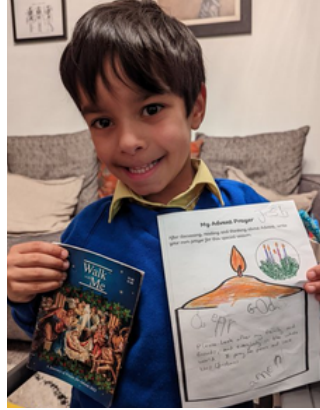
Our next Mass in Church will be on Friday 16th December 2022, starting promptly at 9:30am. The **whole school** will gather to celebrate our Christmas Mass and all parents are welcome to attend. Please sit in old part of the Church.



Second advent candle

The second Sunday of Advent symbolises Faith with the "Bethlehem candle" helping us think about the journey Mary and Joseph took to Bethlehem.

Advent prayer... at home



The elves are causing havoc



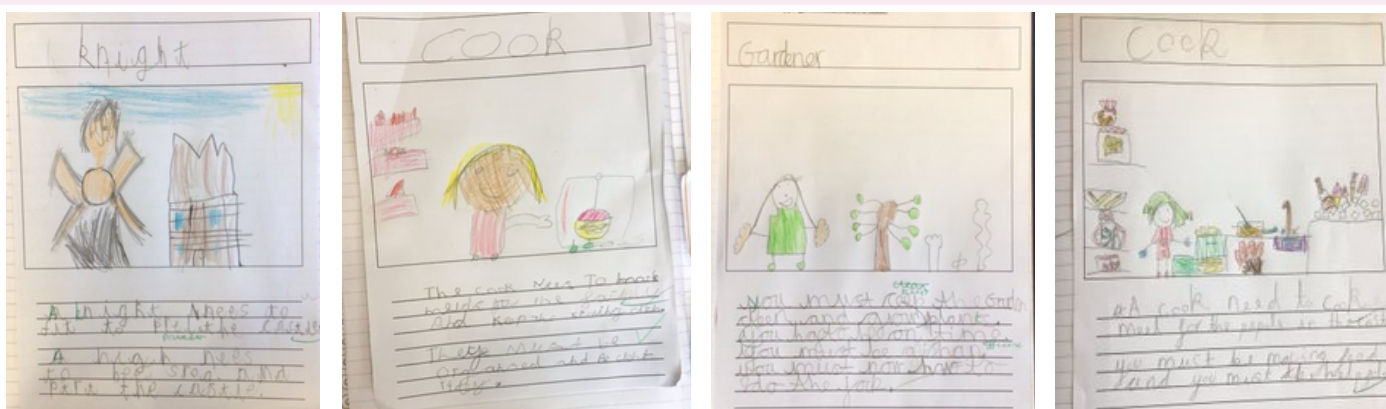
Reception news: -

Reception class have been learning about Advent and preparing for their nativity.



Year 1 news: -

Year 1 have been learning about the different roles of people in castles and the jobs they had, in their history lessons. They then created a job advertisement!



Year 2 news: -

Year 2 have prepared and led an Advent assembly in school.



Year 3 news: -

Year 3 have been improving their fitness this week.



Year 4 news: -

Year 4 have recreated an industrialised city into their very own city thinking about how we use space in a city. What a fantastic design! Thank you ADP Architecture for your input and support.



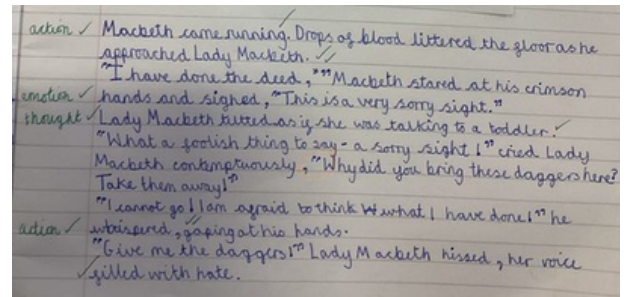
Year 5 news: -

Year 5 have been discussing how the Catholic Church cares for the sick and they wrote prayers. Thank you Father John for talking to us about the Sacrament of the Sick.



Year 6 news: -

Year 6 have been analysing the use of dialogue in Leon Garfield's version of Macbeth; they have further developed characters by blending dialogue with action and description.



Christmas Dinner Day!

The children really enjoyed Christmas dinner day.



The children really enjoyed their Christmas discos this week. Thank you PTA and all the staff for supporting them.



Christmas Jumper Day.
The children really enjoyed Christmas jumper day and meeting Santa. We're all beginning to feel very festive now.



Livesimply

Our children (and staff) are change makers!

School of
SANCTUARY AWARD
Welcoming People Seeking Sanctuary



The staff have bought hot water bottles for Hope Charity project this year rather than buying Secret Santa presents for each other.



Year 6 pupils visited St. George's, as part of our collaborative work supporting Hope Projects. The children spoke about our School of Sanctuary work and inspired the pupils at St George's, as they begin their journey towards achieving the award too.

St. Mary's Live Simply Approach to Christmas



As an alternative to Christmas cards this year, each child will be given a wooden bauble to decorate as a gift to their classmates. The children will hang their baubles on the class tree and bring them home to keep at the end of term.

TEACHER GIFT!



The cost of living is affecting us all. Rather than buying gifts for each other this year, the staff have each bought a hot water bottle that they will be donating to Hope Projects Charity.

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.

Christmas Charity



For our advent charity donations this year, we will have charity buckets at our Nativities and Carol Services.



We are also collecting items for St. Chad's Sanctuary - they are in desperate need for hats, gloves, scarves, stationary, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, shaving gel, deodorant and men's clothing.

Other News



We have applied for a grant to help fund our upcoming Forest School with Tesco.

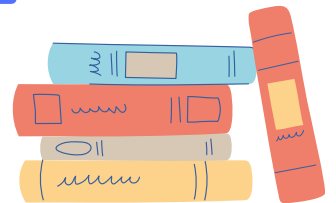
If you would like to help us collect the most blue tokens, you can shop at the Quinton store and use your blue token to vote for us.

Spread the word with your families and friends that if they shop in Tesco, Quinton, to use their blue token for St. Mary's.

Tesco Shopping - Quinton



Winter Mini Reading Challenge 2022 - Harborne Library



The Winter Mini Challenge encourages children to keep up their reading habits over the winter holidays, with a free-to-access website featuring rewards for reading and reviewing books.

Taking part in the Winter Mini Challenge is simple. Children read at least three books of their choice between 1st December 2022 and 20th February and add them to their online profile at www.wintermini.org.uk

Reaching their online reading goal will unlock a limited-edition virtual badge and a special Winter Mini Challenge certificate to print off and keep.

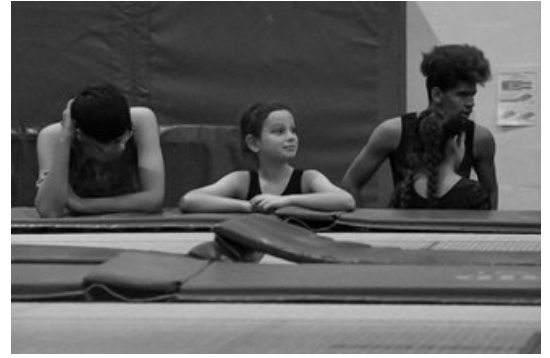
You'll find loads of other great resources on the website too, including games, book reviews, reading activities and content from the best children's authors and illustrators around. For parents, there is a Home Zone and Library Zone on the website with more information and top tips. Harborne Library also have a Facebook page so that parents can keep up to date with news and opportunities. Look out for special competitions for book bundles and much more!

It launches on 1st December and runs until 20th February, so sign up now!



Trampolining

Jackson did a wonderful job at representing Birmingham Bouncers and St. Mary's school in his first West Midlands Schools competition. He achieved 4th place – Great work Jackson.



Christmaths Challenge at Bishop Challoner

Big congratulations to children from Year 5 who came second at the Christmaths challenge. We are really proud of you. Thank you to Bishop Challoner Maths Department and Year 9 pupils for organising the day!

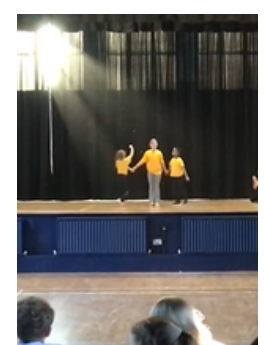
Piano, Guitar and Choir Performances

Well done to all our musicians who performed in the music concerts this week! What talented children we have at St Mary's!



PE Bournville Dance Competition

The children were wonderful in the dance competition this week considering that they only had a few hours to create and rehearse a dance. Great work and well done for coming third.

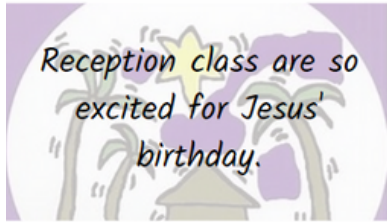


Nativities – WB 12.12.22

Year Reception

12.12.22 at 9:30am
in the Church

**RECEPTION
CHRISTMAS
STORY**

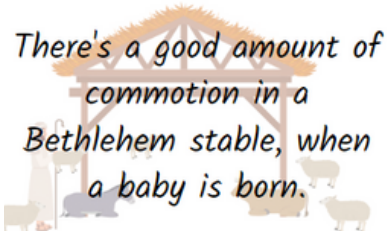


Reception class are so excited for Jesus' birthday.

Years 1 and 2

13.12.22 at 9:15am
and at 2:15pm
in the School hall

**BORN IN A
BARN**



There's a good amount of commotion in a Bethlehem stable, when a baby is born.

Years 3 and 4

14.12.22 at 9:15am
and at 2:15pm
in the School hall

SUPER STAR

Who is the true super star of Christmas?

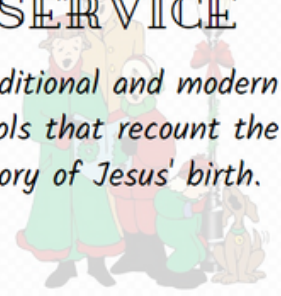


Years 5 and 6

15.12.22 at 1:45pm
in the Church

**CAROL
SERVICE**

Traditional and modern carols that recount the story of Jesus' birth.



Nativities are limited to two tickets per family for the nativities that are in school, due to space in the hall. Please bring your tickets with you for the nativities to avoid disappointment. We request that pre-school children, including babies, are not brought to the performances. The children of Reception class are very young and noise/distraction from pre-school infants and babies can make it very difficult for the children performing.



Raymond Briggs © 1994 and published by Penguin Random House

EYFS/KS1 Theatre trip

'The Bear' – Midland Arts Centre (MAC)

Thursday 15th December 2022

On Thursday 15th December, Reception class, Year 1 and Year 2 are off to the MAC to watch 'The Bear'.



Christmas Mass

Friday 16th December 2022 – 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.

Please remember that we are breaking up for Christmas on Friday 16th December earlier than usual...

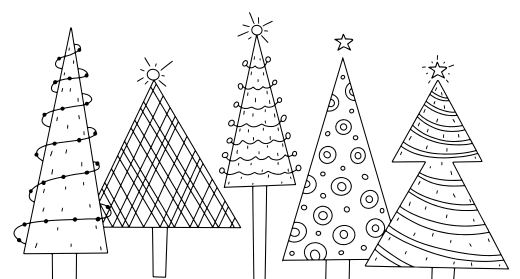
Break up for Christmas break!

1:40 finish time – Reception classes

1:45 finish time – KS1 classes

1:50 finish time – sibling group

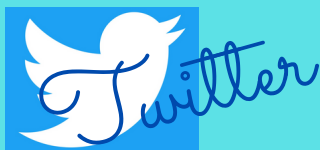
2:00 finish time – KS2 classes



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



Stay up to date with everything that is happening at St. Mary's by following us on our Twitter Page and giving us more likes!!!

If buying electronic gifts and new technology for your children this Christmas, please make sure that you speak to your children about keeping safe when using it...

Mobile phones, tablets and laptops can open up a world of exploration, learning and fun and children should be encouraged to make the most of the benefits. But there are also risks and dangers to being online - safety measures can be put in place - read this website to find out more.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/keep-children-safe-online-this-christmas-top-tips>

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 28th Nov – 2nd Dec

Class	YRB	YRT	Y1L	Y1F	Y2E	Y2G	Y3L	Y3T	Y4J	Y4M	Y5M	Y5F	Y6R	Y6O
%	94.5%	90.4%	91.3%	94.3%	94.3%	95%	94.3%	92%	99%	96.7%	95.5%	93.5%	90.3%	94.7%
Lates	11	4	2	6	9	4	6	7	5	4	7	6	4	5
Whole School Attendance so far this year						96.3%			School Target				97%	

Well done Y4J: - our Attendance Champions

Autumn theme -

Autumn 2 Virtues

12th December 2022 - 9:30am

13th December 2022 - 9:15 2:15

14th December 2022 - 9:15 2:15

15th December 2022

15th December 2022 - 1:45pm

15th December 2022 - 4:15pm

16th December - EARLY FINISH

Families and Communities

Faith-filled and Hopeful

Reception Nativity in Church

Year 1 and Year 2 Nativity

Year 3 and Year 4 Nativity

Reception and KS1 theatre trip

Year 5 and Year 6 Christmas Carol Service

Y5/6 Basketball at Lordswood

Break up for the Christmas holidays - Early Finish

1:40 finish time - Reception classes

1:45 finish time - KS1 classes

1:50 finish time - sibling group

2:00 finish time - KS2 classes

Dates for this term



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

Year RB	Florence	always trying really hard and making great progress in phonics
Year RT	Chloe	being so kind and helpful and also working very hard to improve her learning
Year IF	Wayne	trying really hard in his Maths work
Year IL	Georgie	always doing so well in all her learning
Year 2E	Daniel	working hard to improve handwriting and presentation of work
Year 2G	Sofia	imaginative ideas in her writing
Year 3L	Joshua	an incredible piece of Exciting Writing
Year 3T	Trinidad	having a superb attitude to learning and for an excellent presentation
Year 4J	Nathan	superb effort in writing and improved handwriting
Year 4M	Tiffany	always being very kind and caring to her peers
Year 5F	Melisanda	representing school at the Christmaths challenge and making us all proud
Year 5M	Deshane	fantastic work at the Christmaths challenge, representing school brilliantly
Year 6O	Dontae	constantly using beautiful manners and being so helpful around the classroom
Year 6R	Isabella	a positive attitude to learning and always trying her best

