



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.

February is dedicated to the Holy Family

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

Our virtues for this half term are: - 'Attentive and Discerning'



28th February 2025

Dear parents and carers,

We have had a lovely first week back following the half-term break; although busy: - Members of our school choir sang at the Young Voices concert, which was an amazing event to be part of; and today we had a fun pet day in school, where members of staff brought their pets in to meet the children. Thank you for your kind donations for the shelter - they will make a massive difference to the animals in their care.

Our teachers have been working hard on the class newsletters for this half-term. Apologies for the delay in sending these out. All newsletters will be sent to you and placed on the website on Monday morning. Curriculum maps, homework and key dates will be shared for your child's year group within these newsletters.

At the end of this half-term, Easter break, we will be saying farewell to Mrs. Amy Davis. After 14 years of being at St. Mary's, Mrs Davis is now taking all of her knowledge of teaching and learning; and Senior Leadership to work at the Abbey School as Vice-Principal. Mrs Davis has given many years dedicated service at St. Mary's and I am sure will be missed by our families, children and staff. The staff and I want to offer our congratulations to Mrs Davis and thank her for all of her hard work over the years.



I wish you all a very happy weekend, and we will see you on Monday.

Mrs Yorke



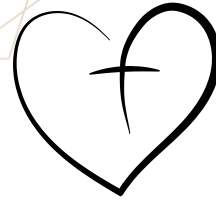
Catholic Life



This week's Gospel and Prayer

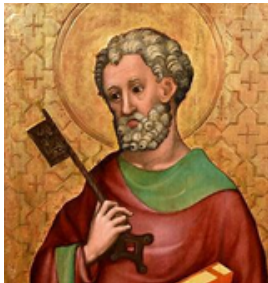
Luke 6:35

"...love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great...."



This week, we have learnt that:

- Growing love in our hearts flows from the inside out.
- All of our feelings matter and Jesus cares about how we feel.
- We can always make a choice to bless others, even when it's hard.



Year 6 Mass - 26.2.25
- St. Peter (Votive)

Y6 led a beautiful Mass dedicated to St Peter where prayers were said for the health of our current Holy Father, Pope Francis.



Our next Mass: - Whole School Mass - Ash Wednesday

Our next Mass in Church will be on **Wednesday 5th March 2025**, starting promptly at 9:30am

All parents are welcome to attend and to receive ashes.

Ash
Wednesday



Catholic Social Action



Mrs Yorke felt privileged to be with Catholic Headteachers this week in the Salford Diocese.

The group visited the Cornerstone Centre which is a day centre which support people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. This charity does fantastic work which has inspired Mrs Yorke to think about how we can help the most vulnerable in our community.

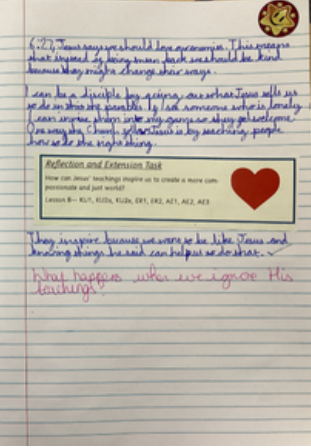
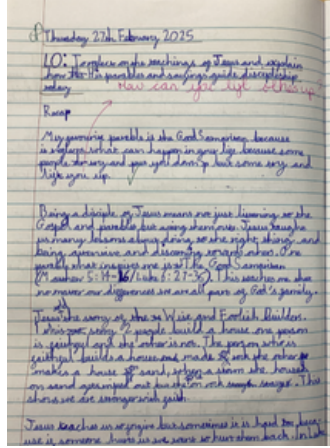
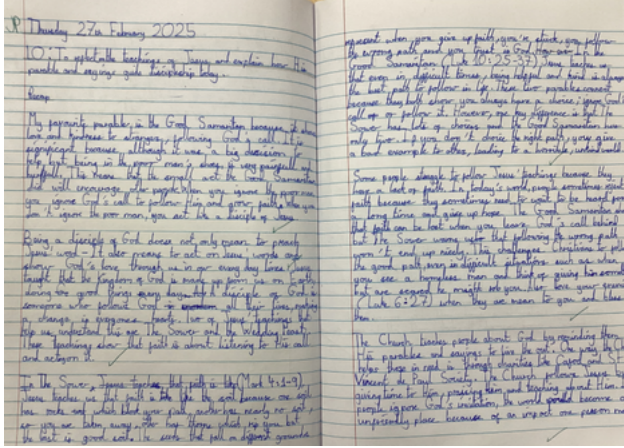




Catholic Life

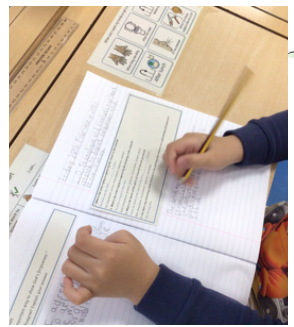
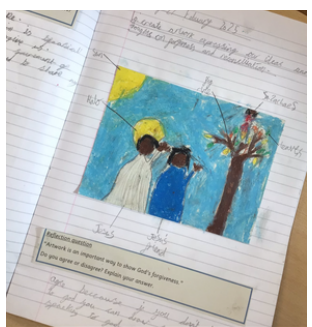


We're taking a moment to reflect on our Catholic life, prayer and RE learning this week:-



The children in Year 5 produced some fantastic writing explaining about how they could live as disciples of Jesus.

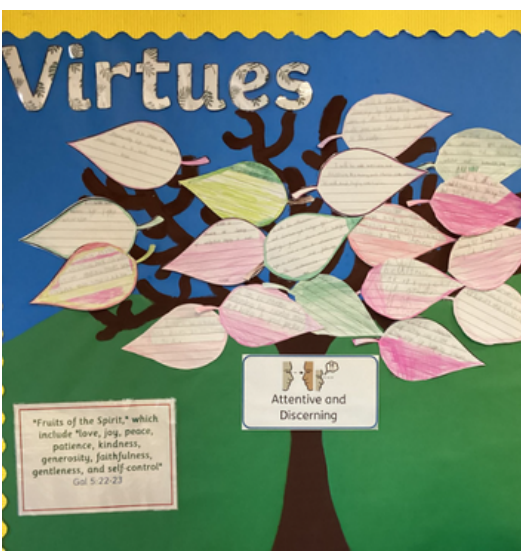
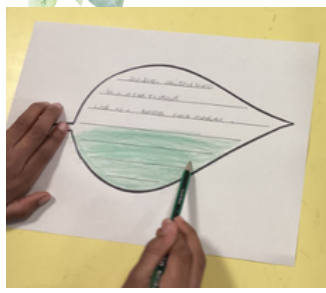
Year 3 have created artwork depicting forgiveness. They went on to analyse and evaluate their own work.



Year 2 planned prayer and liturgy this week. The children focused on the virtues, attentive and discerning. The children thought about how they are going to be attentive and discerning, this half term!



Some Year 2 'builders' visited Reception to talk about how we can help to 'Build God's Kingdom'. The most important tools in their tool boxes were not hammers and nails but showing love for each other and the Bible.



Young Voices - 26.02.25

On Wednesday 26th February, a group of enthusiastic and talented choir members participated in Young Voices. They did a fantastic job and it was really exciting for them to be part of such a large event!



Pet Shower - 28.02.25

On Friday, Year 1 held a 'Pet Shower' to raise funds for 'Pet Search Rescue West Midlands'. Children dressed up as their favourite animals or could wear their any clothes in exchange for donations for the sanctuary. The children had an opportunity to meet Miss Price's dog, Harry, and Mrs Yorke's snake, Cleo, and Dave the tortoise.



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MARVEL RIVALS



ESRB advise nobody under the age of 13 should play

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Marvel Rivals launched in December 2024 and amassed a player count of nearly 150,000 in mere weeks. This player versus player (PvP) shooter packs in a host of recognisable comic-book characters, pitting two teams of six against each other. Despite the game's cartoonish nature, there are several potential risks for parents and educators to be aware of.

IN-GAME CHAT

Voice chat allows players to speak to teammates and opponents within the game, but in a competitive environment, some conversations can become unpleasant. Text chat is equally prominent among those playing on PC and will be shown on the side of the screen. Moderation on chats is relatively lax, so it's important to recognise that potentially inappropriate messages could arrive at any time.

IN-GAME PURCHASES

While Marvel Rivals is free, there is an in-game store, selling character skins from recognisable movies and comic-book titles. Each season also includes a £10 Battle Pass (much like those seen in Fortnite and Call of Duty), offering a series of exclusive cosmetic items. These passes don't expire – but they can't be purchased once the next season rolls around, creating a fear of missing out.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With such a huge player base, it's impossible to predict whom your child will be teaming up with or playing against. They're virtually certain to run into strangers through voice and text chat, for starters. Most of these people will just be ordinary gamers enjoying the action, but there is the risk of some users behaving inappropriately with younger players – either intentionally, or because they don't realise that they're speaking to a child.

VIOLENT CONTENT

There's no gore in Marvel Rivals, and the violence depicted is comparatively cartoonish – but the playable characters available vary between more traditional superheroes and supervillains, and figures like Black Widow and The Punisher, who use more realistic firearms. Given the game's nature as a shooter, this may make some parents and carers uncomfortable as some players will be firing these weapons at each other.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

The game includes some innuendos and mature themes in the dialogue, which could expose youngsters to content unsuitable for their age, detracting from a safe and family-friendly gaming experience. As we mentioned previously, the content of the in-game chat could also be age-inappropriate, ranging from swearing to mature themes to potentially harmful content.

FAMILIAR CHARACTERS

The inclusion of iconic characters might make Marvel Rivals appear more approachable than other games in the genre, with recognisable heroes and villains like Spider-Man and Venom. This could lead to more interest from younger players, increasing the likelihood of children playing the game without properly understanding the risks.

Advice for Parents & Educators

FOLLOW ESRB RATINGS

The ESRB rating for Marvel Rivals says the game shouldn't be played by anyone under 13. Most children of that age will be able to appreciate the moral compass of the roster of characters (people can play as Hela, the Goddess of Death, for example), while also ensuring that the violence, however cartoonish, won't overwhelm them.



FAMILIARISE YOURSELF

The game's inclusion of fan-favourite characters like Iron Man and the Hulk, plus its increasing popularity, means that younger Marvel fans will likely be eager to see what the fuss is about. Since it's free, consider playing Marvel Rivals yourself to gauge how you feel about a child playing it. Alternatively, you could let them play against the game's AI in Practice Mode, until they're old enough to compete online.

MONITOR OR TURN OFF CHAT

Voice and text chat can both be adjusted within the in-game settings. If you're particularly concerned about exposing children and young people to them, however, you can disable both forms of chat in the game's settings. If a child wants to play alongside friends, remind them that they can use their console's party chat feature or host a call on a third-party service like Discord.



DISCONNECT PAYMENT OPTIONS

Parents should ensure that no payment options – such as debit cards – are linked to the game, to prevent unauthorised purchases and charges. Children can be tempted by enticing in-game offers without fully understanding the costs. Removing payment methods avoids impulsive in-game spending and instils a sense of financial awareness, teaching young people to be careful with their money.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Games Editor at the Daily Star and has been working in the gaming and tech industry for five years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new tools, he's also a parent and therefore understands the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, he has been published on sites including IGN, TechRadar and plenty more.



National Careers Week

NCW**National Careers Week - All Week**

Next week, children will have the opportunity to learn about a range of different careers. We have a full timetable of visitors including the Army, a barrister, a dentist, an engineer, a civil servant and many more!

**Harborne Library - 04.03.25**

Year 3 are visiting Harborne Library on Tuesday 4th March. 3T are leaving school at 8.45am and 3L are leaving school at 10.15am.

If any parents would like to accompany these visits, please email the School Office.

**World Book Day - 06.03.25**

The children will be celebrating the wonderful world of books all day on Thursday 6th March. Children may wear their pyjamas/cosy clothes and can bring £1 for the charity cake sale in aid of Book Aid International (more details below).

Charity Cake Sale - 06.03.25

Alongside the activities on World Book Day, we will be holding a charity cake sale to raise funds for Book Aid International. This charity provides new books, creates reading spaces and trains teachers/librarians across the world to spark a love of reading. They also provide thousands of new books every year to refugees who face the greatest barriers to reading and learning.

We would therefore be grateful for any donations of cakes (strictly no nuts) on Wednesday 5th and Thursday 6th March.

If your child would like to buy a cake, please send them into school on Thursday 6th March with no more than £1 in a named envelope.



*Let's eat
CAKE!*



**WE NEED
YOUR HELP**



It is truly a joy to see the children enjoying happier and more enjoyable lunchtimes since we introduced OPAL but we now want to move to the next phase!

We would like to use the space currently occupied by the Activity Trail to install a large sand pit and permanent mud kitchen (example images below to illustrate).



Our aim is to install these items in the second half of the Summer term. We would therefore be grateful for expressions of interest/offers of help from any parents who could offer either their time to help build a sand pit and/or mud kitchen and/or resources e.g.: pallets, wood, sand etc.

Please email the school office (enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk) with details of how you can help!

Thank you in advance for your help!

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

ST.MARYS SCHOOL PTA ARE HOSTING OUR
SPRING HOP DISCO

St.Mary's Parish Centre

FRIDAY 28TH MARCH 6.30-8.30PM

Tickets- Child £4 Adult £2

Come and have fun with lots of dancing, toys, crafts, sweets
and food



**PTA event: –
Spring Hop Disco**

Tickets will be on sale
from the PTA team next
week.

Dates for this half-term

Spring theme -

Spring 11 Virtues

WB 3.3.25

4th March 2025 - am

5th March 2025 - 10:00am

6th March 2025 - all day

WB 10.3.25

11th March 2025 - am

12th March 2025 - all day

12th March 2025 - 9:15am

14th March 2025 - 9:15am

14th March 2025 - 2:30pm

17th March 2025 - all day

18th March 2025 - am

19th March 2025 - 9:15am

20th March 2025 - all day

21st March 2025 - all day

24th March 2025 - 1:30pm

25th March 2025 - am

26th March 2025 - 9:15am

27th March 2025 - all day

28th March 2025 - 9:00am

1st April 2025 - am

1st April 2025 - pm

2nd April 2025 - 9:15am

3rd April 2025 - pm

8th April 2025 - all day

9th April 2025 - 9:30am

10th April 2025 - 9:00am

11th April 2025 - all day

WB 14.4.25

17th April 2025 - 11:00am

17th April 2025

Dignity of Work

Attentive and Discerning

Careers Week / Vocations week

Year 3 visit to Harborne library (8:45 3T and 10:15 3L)

Whole school Mass in Church for Ash Wednesday - parents welcome

World book day - wear pyjamas

British Science Week

Year 2 visit to Harborne library (8:45 2G and 10:15 2E)

Reception class trip to Attwell farm

Year 4 Mass in Church (and Year 3 classes attend) - parents welcome

Y2 Year group assembly

X-table check workshop for Year 4 parents

INSET day - school closed for all pupils

Year 1 visit to Harborne library (8:45 1L and 10:15 1F)

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

One life Pilgrims of Hope Retreat for whole school

Down Syndrome Awareness Day

Year 6 Confirmation Workshop with parents

Year 4 visit to Harborne library (8:45 4J and 10:15 4M)

Year 5 Mass in Church (and Year 6 classes attend) - parents welcome

Mothers' Day Inspire Event in school

Year 6 prayer service for parents

Year 3 visit to Harborne library (8:45 3L and 10:15 3T)

Parent Consultation Evening

Reception Mass in Church (with Year 6 buddies) - parents welcome

Parent Consultation Evening

Year 2 school trip - Coal mining tour

Whole School Mass - parents welcome

Reception prayer service for parents

Year 3 school trip to Birmingham Art Gallery

Holy Week

Year 6 Stations of the Cross in Church for KS2 and parent

Break up for Easter Holidays

Star of the week

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

Year RB	Jude	For striving for excellence across all his learning
Year RT	Isobel	For her fantastic independent letter writing.
Year IF	Chimdindu	For his thoughtful analysis and thinking like a geographer in geography.
Year IL	Oliver	For being an excellent role model in our class and always challenging himself to do his best
Year 2E	Rakeb	For being a kind and forgiving member of our class.
Year 2G	Cara	For being a kind and forgiving member of our class
Year 3L	Cillian	For his fantastic effort and attitude to learning all week!
Year 3T	Aayush	For settling in well into his new class and always being a kind, sensible member of the class.
Year 4J	Eleanor	For being an attentive member of class and her consideration towards others
Year 4M	Nathan	For excellent active participation in lessons and working hard on improving his behaviour
Year 5F	Bella	For her hard work in Maths
Year 5M	Noah	For always doing his best and for his excellent work in RE
Year 6O	Thomas	For consistently offering to help in the classroom
Year 6R	Lauren-Elise	For her thoughtful and detailed responses, particularly in her reflection questions in RE this week

