



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.

December is dedicated to the Immaculate Conception.

Our theme for the Autumn term is: 'The Dignity of the Human Person'

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



Dear parents and carers,

15th December 2023

This weekend, we enter the third week of Advent and we light our 'Shepherds' candle reminding us of the joy that we experience in the coming birth of Jesus. The pink candle is lit on Gaudete Sunday and we are rejoicing that we are half-way through our preparations. We have had a wonderful week in school - enjoying our Christmas lunch, Charity work, receiving our bronze award for Rights Respecting Schools and watching the Reception Nativity this morning. Next week, we will continue with our Nativities and we conclude our week with Christmas Mass at 10am. We look forward to breaking up **slightly earlier on Friday 22nd December ready to begin our Christmas break.** If you are attending the KSI nativity or LKS2 nativity, please be aware that there is limited space in the hall. We are trialling not 'ticketing' the events, but we only have space for 1-2 adults per child. There will not be space for pushchairs and prams, try not to bring these, as they will have to be left outside of the hall.

A gentle reminder that if your child has a school meal, please remember to check School Gateway regularly and to keep outstanding balances down to a reasonable level. We now have quite a few parents owing more than £100. We appreciate that this may be a more difficult time of year to clear this, so we will send reminders out in the new year. If you have any questions regarding your child's school meals account, please contact the office.

I look forward to hearing the choir sing this evening at our 'Carols by Candlelight' event. I am sure that it will be very special. One more week to go. I look forward to seeing many of you, at our nativities, next week.

Mrs Yorke

This week's Gospel and Prayer

Mark 1:2

"Look, I am going to send my messenger before you".

Reflecting on this week's Gospel message we learn:

- Advent is a time of preparation for celebrating Jesus' birth at Christmas and when He comes again
- John the Baptist and the angels were messengers of the good news
- We too can be messengers, sharing God's message of love through our words and actions

Father God,
 As we get ready to welcome Jesus,
 Open our hearts to listen to your Word.
 Open our hearts to share your love.
 Help us to be messengers of your love
 Through all that we say and all that we do.
 Amen



Catholic Life in School

Whole School Mass in Church - 22.12.23 at 10:00am - Christmas -

Our next Mass in Church will be on Friday 22nd December 2023, starting promptly at **10:00am**. 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.





Third advent candle

As we approach the third week of Advent, let's unite in joy and celebration. The "Shepherd's Candle" lights our path, reminding us of the joy the world experienced at the coming birth of Jesus.

As we bask in the glow of the 'Shepherd's Candle', may joy illuminate our hearts and unite us in the spirit of celebration.

scripture

"Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs." - Psalm 100:1-2

reflection

Cultivating Joyful Hearts

In this season of Advent, symbolising joy, let's reflect on the infectious and transformative nature of joy. When we give generously, we bring joy to ourselves and others. What brings you joy? What are the things that are priceless to you? How can we infuse joy into our lives, celebrating the blessings that surround us, much like the world celebrated the birth of Jesus?

open question

How can we foster and spread joy within our school community, bringing light to each other's lives?

Task

A Creative Outpouring -

Families, channel your reflections into a creative expression of joy! It could be a poem, a dance, or any form of artistic expression that radiates joy. Share your creations with us, and let the joy within our community shine even brighter.



Advent prayer... at home



It has been wonderful to see our children using the Prayer Bags with their families at home.

Please post photos of your children using the prayer bags and we will include them in upcoming newsletters.

and in school

Believers themselves must constantly feel challenged to live in a way consonant with their faith and not to contradict it by their actions. They need to be encouraged to be ever open to God's grace and to draw constantly from their deepest convictions about love, justice and peace. Landato Si



As we lit our second Advent candle, the children came in to school wearing purple as a reminder that this week is about "Faith".



The staff at St. Mary's have swapped Secret Santa and bought pyjamas for local baby banks, food banks, the Community Hub and City Mission. To support those who need a little help this season.



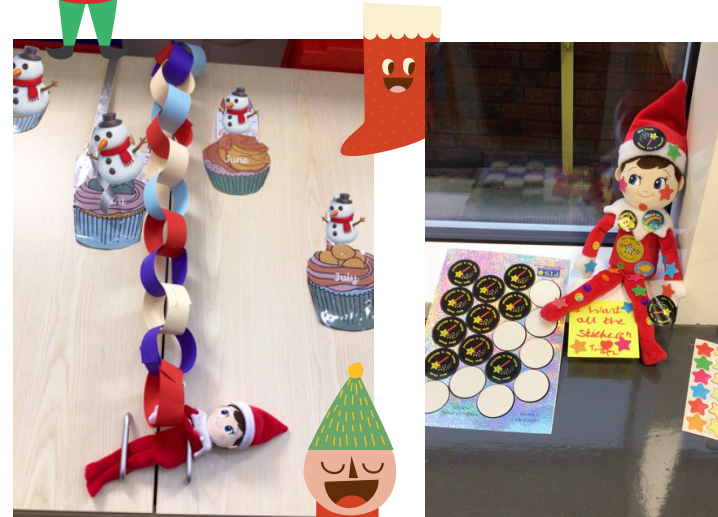
Thank you Miss Busby for delivering more than 40 pyjamas from the staff to support children in need this Christmas.



More mischief from the elves

St. Lucy

Wonderful home learning Adél, who on the feast day of St. Lucy listened to a podcast all about her, whilst colouring in a picture of her special Saint. And a lovely prayer service for parents led by the children in Year 3.



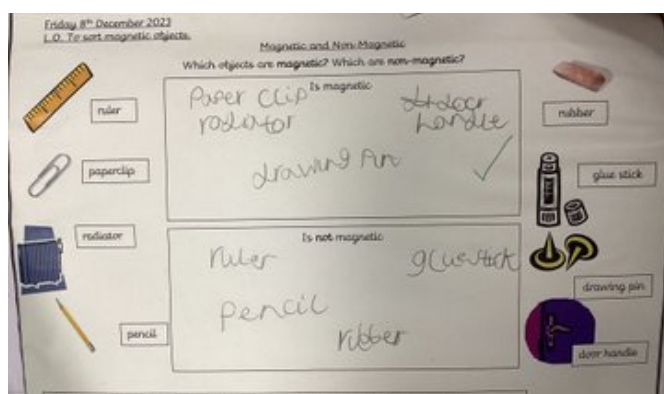
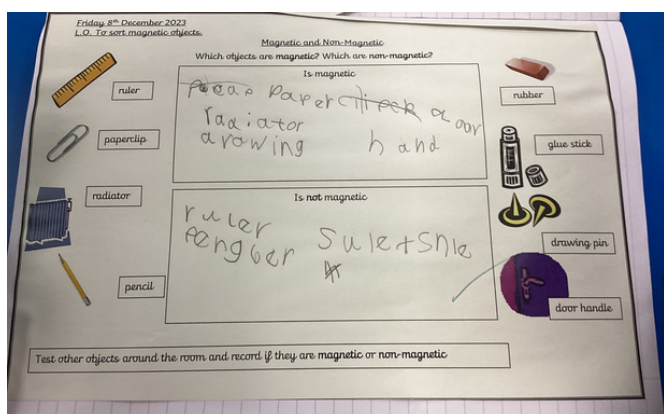
Reception news: -

Reception have been drawing pictures of elves and making salt dough decorations.



Year 1 news: -

Year 1 have been looking at magnets in their Science lessons



Year 2 news: -

Year 2 have been exploring the properties of 3D shapes.



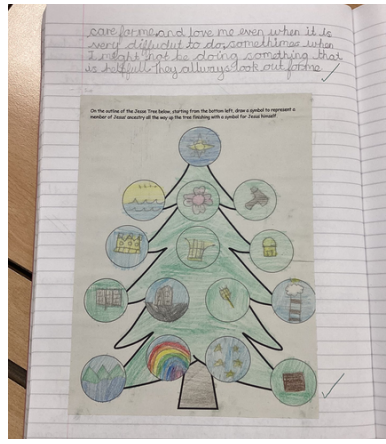
Year 3 news: -

Year 3 wrote an innovated narrative based on 'The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane'.



Year 4 news: -

Year 4 have been learning about the ancestry of Jesus through the Jesse Tree



Year 5 news: -

Year 5 celebrated their Maya art repousse pieces. They were inspired by Maya designs, patterns and animals and worked in metal to recreate them. They've also had a wonderful afternoon cooking quesadillas for their topic. Inspired by the Maya and Mexican cuisine



Year 6 news: -

Year 6 finished their health related fitness unit today and completed their assessment: their results show how much progress they have made since the start of this half term. Well done, all!



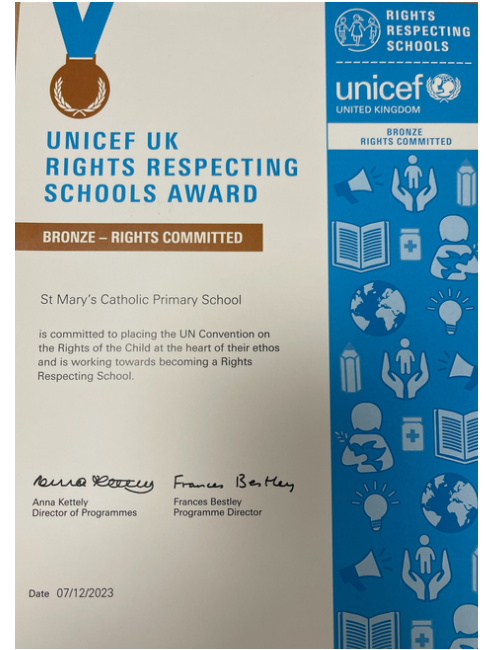
Christmas Dinner Day 13/12/2023

Our kitchen staff, Led by Mrs Brown, outdid themselves with a beautiful Christmas dinner which was enjoyed by all.



We achieved bronze!

Thank you to our #RRSA monitors who have worked really hard towards our Bronze Award! We received our certificate today! Fantastic leadership!



Thank you to all our parents for your support for our Christmas toy appeal with Primary Tolkien schools. We received so many toys... You've been so exceptionally good and generous that we had a visit from two Santas!!! .

Christmas Cards

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

IF EVERY CHILD IN A CLASS OF 30 WROTE A CARD FOR ALL THEIR CLASSMATES, THERE WOULD BE 870 CARDS WRITTEN IN JUST ONE CLASS!
WHAT WOULD BE THE TOTAL FOR YOUR ENTIRE SCHOOL?

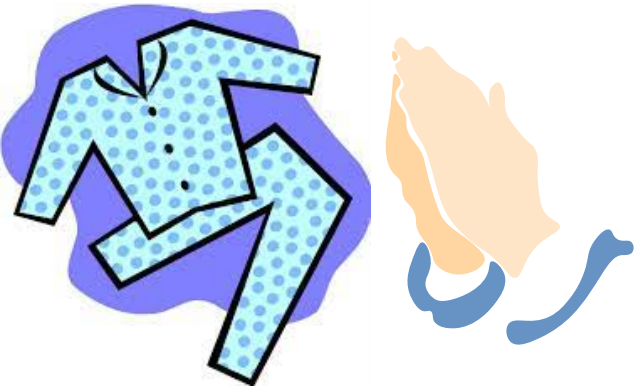


SO WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?

As an alternative to Christmas cards this year, our CAFOD club children have chosen to support the 'World Gifts' charity appeal.

They have designed posters and written to parents. By following this more sustainable approach instead, we hope to reduce our imprint on the environment and any money saved can be donated on School Gateway for our charity appeal. So far we have made: - **£335.50**

TEACHER GIFT!



The cost of living is affecting us all.

Rather than buying gifts for each other this year, the staff have chosen to purchase pyjamas which will be distributed between

Local baby banks, food banks, The Community Hub (Faraday Road) and City Mission

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).

Staff News



At the end of term Miss Hunt will sadly be leaving St Mary's Catholic Primary School.

We would like to sincerely thank her for all the hard work that she has done since September and would like to wish her all the best in her new role.



Year Reception

15.12.23 at 9:30am
in the Church

RECEPTION CHRISTMAS STORY

Reception class are so excited for Jesus' birthday.

Nativities – beginning 15.12.23

Years 1 and 2

19.12.23 at 2:15pm
in the School hall

THE INN- SPECTORS

The inn-spectors are in Bethlehem and they are not pleased. A stable is no place for visitors and their newborn baby, and, it really is a health and safety nightmare! Can the inn-spectors be convinced that the stable really is fit for a King?

Years 3 and 4

20.12.23 at 2:15pm
in the School hall

WHO TOOK THE MARY OUT OF CHRISTMAS?

At Christmas time, who do we think of? Jesus, the shepherds, the wise men, even the innkeeper. But the most important woman at the heart of the Christmas story, and central to it, is Mary. Join us, as we explore the Christmas story, through the eyes of Our Lady.

Years 5 and 6

21.12.23 at 2:00pm
in the Church

CAROL SERVICE

Come and join us for traditional and modern carols that recount the story of Jesus' birth.

The children are very excited to share their nativities with you. Due to space in the hall, we ask for you to limit how many adults attend them. We have space for 2-3 adults per child in the school hall. There is more room in the Church - the more the merrier in the Church for Reception (15.12.23) and Y5 and Y6 (21.12.23). We have limited room in school hall - toddlers are welcome but please limit prams and pushchairs coming in to school. Thank you.

West Midlands Children's Theatre

On 18th December, all children from YR-Y6 will enjoy the action packed pantomime, "Sinbad the Sailor", an adventure loosely based on the tales from 1001 Arabian Nights. The children will join Sinbad as he journeys across the seven seas to find his fame and fortune. To make the experience financially accessible for all this Christmas, we are bringing the theatre to St Mary's! A payment of £1.50 per child has been set up on School Gateway. Payment is due in advance of the performance date by 30th November please. Thank you.



Christmas Mass

Friday 22nd December 2023 – 10:00am

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

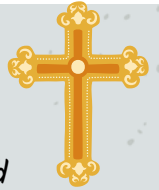
What a wonderful end to the term!

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





St Mary's Parish Penitential Service and Christmas Mass times:



Penitential Service - Tuesday 19th December at 7:30pm, where two or three visiting priests together with the various Friars will be seated around the Church and will be ready to offer you the peace and forgiveness of Christ in your preparation for Christmas

Christmas Eve Sunday 24th: 6.00pm and 8.30pm - both these are 'Midnight' Masses;

Christmas Day 25th: 8.00am; 9.30am and 11.30am (no evening Mass)



In the Church on Monday 10th December: Years 4, 5 and 6, together with their teachers, had the opportunity to confess and receive the forgiveness of Jesus at the School Penitential/Reconciliation as part of their preparation for the Birth of Christ.

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



Attendance and Punctuality: -

Our attendance for last week was -

Week 11/12 - 15/12 2023

Class	YRB	YRT	Y1L	Y1F	Y2E	Y2G	Y3L	Y3T	Y4J	Y4M	Y5M	Y5F	Y6R	Y6O
%	95.6	96.3	84.6	95.5	90.3	99	96.6	98	95.6	96	93	95.3	96.4	93.1
Lates	5	7	7	5	8	1	2	1	7	9	6	1	3	1
Whole School Attendance so far this year						96.57	School Target					97%		

Well done Y2G: - our Attendance Champions

Autumn theme -

Autumn 11 Virtues

18th December 2023 - am

19th December 2023 - 2:15pm

20th December 2023 - 2:15pm

21st December 2023 - 2pm

22nd December 2023 - 10:00am

22nd December -

Dignity of the Human Person

Attentive and Discerning

Theatre Show in school for the children 'Sinbad the Sailor'

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 - KSI classes

1:50 finish time - sibling group

2:00 finish time - KS2 classes

Next week: -



Miss Preedy and Mrs Tibbatts were so impressed with their English group that they were all given a Head teacher Award this work. How fantastic! Keep up all of the hard work Year 6.



Star of the week

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

Year RB	Harry	For his truly excellent prayer during our Nativity performance!
Year RT	Isabella	For being a wonderful Mary in our Nativity performance!
Year 1F	Sophia	For going above and beyond with all her work!
Year 1L	Zikora	For always being a fabulous member of Year 1!
Year 2E	Aaron G	For being a helpful, considerate, polite and hardworking member of our class.
Year 2G	Harper	For being a bright and positive member of our class.
Year 3L	Phoebe	For her super attitude and effort especially during our exciting write!
Year 3T	Jiantrine	For superb reading during the prayer service and singing beautifully during nativity practice.
Year 4J	Aadya	For her excellent effort in her work.
Year 4M	Alicia	For always going above and beyond in all aspects of school life.
Year 5F	Abigail	For always working hard, being attentive and resilient.
Year 5M	Max G	For a fantastic write up in his topic work.
Year 6O	amelie	For asking really inquisitive questions during lessons.
Year 6R	George T	For working really hard to improve his handwriting this week.

