



## ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

*"To Live Love and Learn in a Caring Christian Community"*

**NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2016**

**From our Governors:**

### **TOP PERFORMING PRIMARY – SUNDAY TIMES**

We were delighted to be listed 85<sup>th</sup> in the whole of England for our end of school SAT's results over a 3 year period. That is 85<sup>th</sup> out of about 17,000 primaries. These are fantastic results and we congratulate our Headteacher, Peter Coldwell, all the staff and the pupils.

### **GOOD NEWS**

We have received funding under the Priority School Building Programme (PSBP) to have a new school building built at last. The plans are still uncertain but we hope that the actual building work will take place during the academic year 2017-18 so that we may be able to move into our new building during the academic year 2018-19. We have many questions outstanding which we hope will be answered in the next few months and so we cannot provide any details yet. We will keep updating you via this Newsletter.

Whilst we are making plans for our new school building we are trying to convince the local authority that St. Joseph's should become a 2 form entry new school. This would mean that the local authority would need to fund the difference in the building costs to increase the size. If we were a 2 form entry school we could provide 15 more places for each year group. With thousands of houses starting to be built in Bishop's Stortford, the argument should be made but the local authority has not confirmed their agreement. On average 10% of families moving into these new houses will be Catholic. These new families are likely to want a place in St. Joseph's for their children. We are already oversubscribed and we are going to have to turn away even more practising Catholic parents in the future. We pray that the local authority will agree to fund this expansion. We will let you know when we hear.

Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year to you all.

**Suzanne Fitzgerald, Chair of Governors**

### **Staffing News**

It is with great sadness that we say goodbye to Mrs Sue Purcell at the end of this term. Mrs Purcell has been a highly valued member of our School Office team for over 16 years and associated with the school before that as a parent. We will miss her sense of fun and humour, as well as her keen eye for detail and ability to stay calm under pressure. As a keen musician, we have been blessed to have had her share her talents and wish her continued success as she begins the next stage of her musical life.

### **PRIMARY ADMISSIONS 2017-2018**

If your child was born between 1st September 2012 and 31st August 2013, you must have applied for a Primary School place to start in September 2017 by January 15<sup>th</sup> 2016.

Our School Information Form (SIF) is available to download from our school website: <http://www.stjosephs207.herts.sch.uk/schooladmissions.html>.

### **NURSERY ADMISSIONS 2017-2018**

If your child was born between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2014 you will be able to apply for a Nursery place from Monday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2017. Our forms will be available from that date on the above website address. The process closes on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March.

## ADVENT

During this season of Advent, we have been getting ready for the coming of our Lord. Fr Fortunato led us in a special Advent Service on the 1st December, where we heard how John the Baptist 'prepared the way' for the coming of Jesus. During this Advent, we are all invited to do the same. One way we can do this, during this busy time, is to find time in our day to connect with Jesus through prayer. Following our Advent Service, we were joined by 60 Sixth Form students from St Mary's, who led sessions and activities with each class on the theme of 'Christmas presence'. The highlight of the



afternoon was when Mr O'Connell, R.E. teacher from St Mary's, visited each class with his guitar and taught the children how to sing Silent Night in sign language! Many thanks to Mr O'Connell for organising such an exciting afternoon.

## THE CHAPLAINCY TEAM



The Chaplaincy Team were formally commissioned by Fr Fortunato at a whole school assembly dedicated to them in November. The children all introduced themselves to the rest of the school and talked about what made them want to apply to be part of the Chaplaincy Team. We listened to a reading from Luke's Gospel, where Jesus sent the disciples out in pairs to spread the Good News, just as our Chaplaincy Team will help to enhance the spiritual life of our school. Fr Fortunato then presented the Chaplaincy Team with their badges and blessed them before leading us all in prayer.

As part of the Chaplaincy Team's service to the local community, they organised a carol concert for some of the parishioners of St Joseph's. The singing club gave beautiful renditions of several popular Christmas carols and members of the Chaplaincy Team read from Matthew's Gospel and led us in prayer. Following the concert, the parishioners were served tea, coffee and cakes - many of which were baked by the Chaplaincy Team themselves! It was a wonderful afternoon and we have already had a number of requests for a repeat performance next year! Well done to the Singing Club and the Chaplaincy Team, you were wonderful, and thank you to Mrs O'Carroll for all of the lovely food!



## KEY STAGE 2

This term, Pine, Sycamore and Willow walked into town to collect primary data as evidence of change in Bishop's Stortford. Each class enjoyed the trip, finding evidence of change in South Street and Riverside.

A number of children in KS2 were invited to attend three enrichment days organised by the STAGE network this term. The enrichment days were enjoyed by all the children who attended.

Year 5 were very lucky to be invited to St. Mary's to see a performance of their Christmas show which they thoroughly enjoyed.

## PANTO TIME !!

On Friday 9th December all the children from Reception up to Year 6 had a wonderful time watching the Christmas pantomime, which this year was Peter Pan. The fantastic actors from Pyramid Productions had the children captivated with their singing and dancing. It certainly put us all in the Christmas spirit!



## SINGING CLUB



On Tuesday 13th December the year 5 and 6 children in the Singing Club attended the Bishop's Stortford Primary School's Carol Service at St. Michael's Church. Following a super rehearsal in the afternoon the children returned in the evening to perform 'The Angel Gabriel' as a solo school carol. Well done to our solo groups and thank you to Mrs E Roper who accompanied the choir. The church looked beautiful with candles on the window ledges and traditional carols sung. I think we all felt the true spirit of Christmas!

I would also like to congratulate our other soloists - Jessica Strachan and Orla Godfrey who sang the first verse of 'Once in Royal' and our two readers - Eleanor Robertson and Shriya Gioiella who shared the journey to Bethlehem.

K Roper

Music Subject Leader

## FOUNDATION STAGE

The children of Nursery and Reception delighted us all with their joyous performance of 'Christmas Counts', a charming retelling of the story of the very first Christmas. The children were very excited to appear on stage and perform to an audience. Setting the scene, a giant silver star shone amid a glittering night sky as the first of the Reception narrators delivered the opening lines of the familiar story. The children gave their best with characterful acting and catchy songs tunefully sung. Nursery appeared as angelic angels flying in the sky and Reception also provided a colourful assortment of characters from the Wise men to the Shepherds. We are very proud of the children's efforts. What a special start to Christmas.

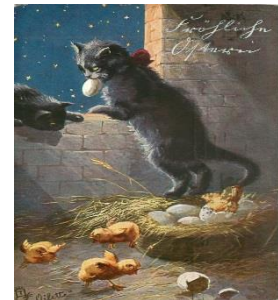


## EYFS ENTERTAINER

On Wednesday Nursery, Reception and Pre-School were highly entertained by Andy Clockwise – he showed the children magic tricks and got them involved in the hilarity. It was great fun!!!

## THE LANDLORD'S CAT

KS1 wowed a packed hall on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> and Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December with their Nativity 'The Landlord's Cat'. All the children sang their hearts out and remembered their dances and gestures too. A big thank you once again to parents for providing such wonderful costumes. Well done to everyone !!!



## SPORTING NEWS



The football league continues and the squad of boys are doing well. The girls had a competition hosted by our school where they showed off their Wembley Wonder! Training for all football has been really well attended and is now on hold due to poor light.

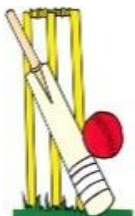
The year 3/4 children enjoyed their term of tennis, with some of the pupils developing skills from the summer term. Next term the club is open to year 5/6 children. Letters have gone out and places will be given on a 'first come first serve' basis.

Early Years and Year 1/ 2 children sports leaders from Hockerill school. break. KS1 will also benefit from



have had some multi-skills input from This will continue after the Christmas some gymnastics training led by Janine

Peart.



There was a new competition introduced for years 3 and 4 called rapid fire cricket. We took two teams to this inaugural event and they showed their fire by coming 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> respectively. To keep warm, keep active! You can also exercise in the house – perhaps some hula hoops and skipping ropes for Christmas? Enjoy the Christmas season.

## **DINNER MONEY FOR JUNIORS**

**Please note: Dinner money must be paid for either weekly or half-termly IN ADVANCE.** School meals are currently priced at £2.35 per day, £11.75 per week. If you wish to pay for next half-term in advance, the cost of school meals up to the February half term holidays will be £58.75. If you prefer, you can pay any amount of your choice to keep your balance in credit. Please pay online using the School Gateway system or by cash or cheque, making any cheques payable to Hertfordshire Catering Ltd.

**IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE CATERING MANAGER :** Two weeks' notice in writing to Mrs Thompson is required for any changes to the children's dietary pattern. If your child is coming into school late due to an appointment please remember to book their meal when you ring in. Thank you.

## **MILK ORDER**

Milk is available to all age groups through the school. If you would like your child to receive mid-morning milk please just visit [www.coolmilk.com](http://www.coolmilk.com) to register and place your order.



## **BAGS2SCHOOL TEXTILE RECYCLING**

As part of our Eco Plan the school continues to take part in the Bags2School textile recycling scheme. Collections for next year are booked for 19<sup>th</sup> January, 20<sup>th</sup> April and 21<sup>st</sup> June. Please fill your bags with all your unwanted household textiles and leave them in the bike shed before 9am on the collection date. Bags, full details of what can be recycled and where and when the bags can be left will be provided closer to the dates.

## **YOUR SCHOOL ASSOCIATION REPORT**

### **CHRISTMAS FAYRE**

Christmas came early for St Joseph's when the School Association's efforts raised more than £1,000 at the Christmas Fayre.

The organisation of this year's fayre, on Friday December 2<sup>nd</sup>, was taken over by committee member Sam Soames for the first time.

Families came out in force to support the event, with many parents and also teachers volunteering to look after stalls, man the door, help set up for the fundraiser and clear up afterwards. There was a good range of stalls, food served and a great atmosphere.

Sam said: "Thank you everyone who volunteered and everyone who supported the fayre. Your help and support was fantastic and, importantly, the children seemed to really enjoy themselves." The exact total raised will be known once it is added to the money from the iPad draw and luxury raffle.

### **CAKE BAKES, QUIZ AND DISCO**

New and regular events have helped continue to raise funds this term. Newly-elected co-chair Andy Faulkner organised the first quiz in recent years with former Bishop's Stortford Observer editor Paul Winspear taking on the role of quiz master.

A total of 11 teams battled it out for the honour of being quiz champions and enjoyed a hot meal as part of the evening. A grand total of £763 was raised from the night.

The cake bake on October 20<sup>th</sup> saw a record number of helpers volunteer in the morning to get the plates of cakes ready, which made the job easier for all. A total of £270 was raised. Thank you for your cake contributions.

The disco was another success with teachers kindly stepping in to run it again. The children danced the afternoon/evening away and raised £831.

### **100 CLUB**

The School Association's successful 100 Club raised around £500 this year with lucky winners picking up cash prizes. Lisa O'Connor, who runs the fundraiser with Ali Crockett, said: "Please consider joining our 100 Club. You could be one of our lucky monthly winners by only giving £1 a month, plus the added bonus of contributing much-needed funds to our school." The school office can help provide a joining form.

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Chairperson for the past two years, Liz Weatherhogg stood down at the AGM in November, leaving large shoes to fill. Mr Coldwell thanked her for her hard work and presented her with flowers on behalf of the school.

Andy Faulkner and Tanya McConn were elected to share the position and will now be co-chairs for the coming year. Mark Prince remains treasurer and Anna Watkins, secretary. All committee members were nominated and elected, as is a legal obligation of the Association's charity status. More information about the School Association and its committee members are attached at the end of the newsletter.

### **GIVING MACHINE**

As you complete your Christmas shopping, and all year round, please remember the School Association can get free donations as you shop.

TheGivingMachine is a fundraising organisation designed to help charitable causes raise money online. By signing up and shopping online you will generate a free donation. There are over 2,000 of the most popular stores taking part in the programme, including Amazon, eBay, Marks & Spencer, Next, Tesco, Sainsbury's, John Lewis and Ocado, making it easy for you to make a difference without it costing you a penny more than the normal purchase price of your item.

Please sign up to [www.thegivingmachine.co.uk/giver/join/?pbid=3](http://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk/giver/join/?pbid=3) and click join and then enter your details.

### **WHAT YOUR FUNDRAISING HAS DONE**

All money raised from our events goes directly towards our children, to enhance their education and overall school experience.

Last year, the Association raised £19,000. This helped subsidise school trips, pay for playground equipment, shows and exciting visits to be staged for pupils and much more.

Thank you for all the money you have helped raise. We are always looking for new ideas for events and volunteers to help us organise them.

\*Please email us on [stjosephsschoolassociation@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:stjosephsschoolassociation@hotmail.co.uk)

Our next meeting is January 12th at 7:30pm in the school staff room. Everyone is welcome.

### **GENTLE REMINDER FOR THE BEGINNING AND END OF THE DAY**

Please can you make sure you do not drive into the main staff carpark at any time of the day. Dropping children in the car park can be dangerous and also interferes with staff being able to park.

In the afternoons please do not come onto either playground until the bell goes at 3.30pm. It is very distracting for the teachers as well as the children.

### **The Hope of Christmas**

God, our dayspring and our dawn,  
We turn to you when we fear the dark  
And all around us weep.  
We pray you greet us with your shining light  
That we may spread your warm embrace  
And kindle the hope of Christmas  
In all whose lives remain in shadow.  
Come and be our strength  
O Lord, our hope and our salvation.

**Amen**



**We wish you and your family a peaceful Christmas holiday and look forward to the pupils starting back on Monday January 9th.**