



'Live, love and learn in a caring Christian community'

### **Newsletter December 2024**

Dear Parents,

We have had a busy and exciting end to our term; I know the children all enjoyed their Christmas crafts and activities.

#### **Our Advent preparations...**

A huge thank you to our Year 1 children, who helped us to prepare for the coming of Jesus with their Advent liturgy – they reminded us of the importance of getting our hearts ready to celebrate the birth of our Saviour.

Fr Marco has, as usual, been a regular and welcome visitor to the school during the Season of Advent; he came to bless our Advent wreath and to offer the children and adults the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

#### **... And Christmas celebrations:**

The children have really enjoyed their Christmas craft activities this week; the cleaning team have coped remarkably well with all the glitter!

Our Chaplaincy Team and some of our singing club brought joy to some of the parishioners when they joined them for refreshments and a Christmas singalong after Mass on Wednesday.



Our EYFS and Year 2 children did a wonderful job of retelling the story of the birth of Jesus.



EYFS



Year 2

### **Invitation from the Parish:**

On Saturday 21st December, starting at 10.30am – 1pm in the parish centre, we are offering a special nativity-themed family gathering for all those of primary age and their parents (EYFS - Yr 6). We will be exploring the meaning of the nativity, playing games, doing some art and craft and finishing up with a bring & share lunch. There is no need to book – just come along! Please bring your contribution for the bring & share with you when you arrive (If you can email to let us know what you plan to bring even better!). Children should be accompanied by their parent(s)/adult for the duration of the event. We look forward to welcoming you and seeing you all for this family celebration!

For more information, please contact Sophie: [bstortfordcatechist@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:bstortfordcatechist@rcdow.org.uk)

### **Awards Assembly**

Each half term, we recognise the children who have made a huge effort to follow our school rules.

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| <b>S</b> | Safe choices and listening.                                      |
| <b>A</b> | Always remembering to be honest, kind and gentle.                |
| <b>I</b> | I do the best I can, and I help others to do the same.           |
| <b>N</b> | Noticing and acting when someone needs help.                     |
| <b>T</b> | Treating ourselves, our community and our property with respect. |
| <b>S</b> | St Joseph's is a place where we follow in Jesus' footsteps.      |

This half term, we say a huge 'well done' to the following children:

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| <b>S</b> | Jack M, Noah S, Elliot, Sean, Levi, Sebastian Co, Claire B, Ruramai, Amelia H, Shanaya, Marcus, Eleanor.       |
| <b>A</b> | Zachary, Louie, Nichola, Finleigh, Emma-Rose, Aoife, Sophia F, Marina, Hannah, Jack L, Kayden, Ayomide.        |
| <b>I</b> | Matei K, Abrao, Delilah, Tabitha, Julia D, Sophia Co, George W, Daisy, Rafael S, Rafael G, Taylor, Nicholas K. |
| <b>N</b> | Abigail, Jessica, George J-E, Penelope, Juliette O, Erin H, Gabriela C, Poppy L, Jake, Adam N, Maja W, India.  |
| <b>T</b> | Ugochukwu, Daniel, Mia S, Ramsey, Christian, Oscar D, Olivia W, Jude, Harel, Alice G, Bethan, Henry.           |
| <b>S</b> | Leonor, Aurelia, Adam B, Oliwia H, Scarlett, Edward B, Bethany, Fin C, Peyton, Lily K, Charlotte W, Michael.   |

### **House points:**

St Margaret Clitherow – 2715

St Pope John Paul II – 2632

St Anthony – 2715

St Bernadette – 2713

St Oscar Romero – 1694

Congratulations to the children in St Margaret Clitherow and St Anthony, we look forward to rewarding you all in January.

**Staffing update:**

Sadly, Mrs Blackburn and Mrs Poultney will be leaving the Family of St Joseph's at the end of this term. We thank them for their dedication to the school community and we wish them both the best for the future.

We are in the final stages of recruiting teaching assistants, and further information will follow in January.

We welcome Mrs Bysouth, who will be teaching Sycamore Class on Thursdays and Fridays from January until July.

**'New' Headteacher**

Finally, I want to thank you all for your many kind words and encouragement since my appointment as permanent headteacher was announced. I have truly been overwhelmed by the support I have received. After a gruelling interview day on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December, I was absolutely delighted to accept the position. St Joseph's is a very special school, and I feel deeply honoured and privileged to continue to serve our community as headteacher.

Many people have asked me over the last few days about my vision for the school; I could talk for hours about what I want to achieve here – for the children and the whole community, but the words of this hymn sum it up for me:

*Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live, a place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive. Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the love of Christ shall end divisions.*

*All are welcome in this place.*

*Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone to heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known. Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face; let us bring an end to fear and danger.*

*All are welcome in this place.*

**A Christmas Prayer:**

Jesus, you came to bring light to darkness,  
Jesus, you came to bring peace to our conflicts.  
Jesus, you came to bring joy to our sadness,  
And to bring love to our fears.

We celebrate your birth and thank you for your saving grace.

Amen



On behalf of all the staff, I wish you and your families a peaceful and joyful Christmas, and we look forward to welcoming you all back to school on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

Ann Cassidy-Jones  
Headteacher