



ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

'Providing a Christ centred setting whereby everyone can live out the messages of Jesus with love, understanding and care'
St Nicholas Owen Catholic Multi Academy Company and St Mary's are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment

Designated Child Protection Officers: Ms O'Beirne, Miss Mosley, Mrs Brereton and Mrs Berry.

Child Protection policy available at www.st-mary-bh.dudley.sch.uk

February 2019



Principal: Ms O. O'Beirne

In the first week of March we celebrate Ash Wednesday, which starts the six-week journey of Lent. Just like Advent is a season of preparation for Christmas, Lent is a season of preparation for Easter. We teach children that Christians are called to a deeper commitment to prayer, fasting and giving during Lent. This is so that our faith is deepened and we are renewed ready to receive new life at Easter.

"...your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you." Matthew 6:19

In the scripture passage above, Jesus gives guidance about fasting, praying and giving: that they are about personal renewal, rather than acting for the sake of appearance. Children are encouraged to make commitments for Lent, but it is important to remember that fasting meals is not required by the Catholic church. However, often families and children will consider making small sacrifices during Lent, which you might like to discuss together.

Prayer, fasting and giving can be hard topics to understand – especially for children. Through the analogy of a winter garden that requires work to ensure new life can blossom in spring, it helps children understand what these three pillars of Lent really mean and how they can help them to prepare for the greatest feast of the Church's year. A version of the garden analogy is below, which you can refer back to with your child throughout Lent.

Into the Garden: Children are asked to imagine they are gardeners in winter - pruning back the dead wood, feeding the soil, watching and trusting God that new life would come. Lent gives the opportunity for the same process to take place in their souls.

Pruning is like *fasting* – just as the gardener needs to prune the flowers to help them grow, so Christians can choose to fast: to give things up and make sacrifices, making room for God's love to grow.

Feeding the soil is like *giving* - just as the gardener puts food into the soil to help the roots grow, so we can give from our resources e.g. money or time, to help others and to nourish our own soul.

Watching and trusting is like *praying* - just as the gardener watches the garden and waits, so we can make time for silence and prayer – to allow God the space to grow in us and speak to us.

Ms O'Beirne

Principal

School Life App—Parents Evening

Tuesday 9th April

Appointments will be available from 5.00pm to 7.20pm

Thursday 11th April

Appointments will be available from 3.15pm to 5.35pm

Please be advised that you will **ONLY** be able to book a slot for parents evening via the School Life App. Bookings will open on Monday 4th March and close on Friday 5th April.

If you are having difficulty with accessing the app please call into the school office and see Mrs Waterfield.



Don't forget
parents'
evening!

Congratulations

Congratulations to Jaden in Year 6!

Jaden entered Mike Wood MP's World War One Booklet Competition last year and from hundreds of entries, Jaden's entry has been selected to appear in the final booklet.

Jaden and her family have been invited to Parliament in March, where she will receive a prize, a copy of the final booklet and have a tour around the Palace of Westminster!

Well done Jaden, we can't wait to hear all about it when you get back!



CALENDAR DATES

Date	Event	Time
Friday 1st March	Class Mass—Year 1	9.00am—9.30am
Wednesday 6th March	Whole School Mass—Faith Leaders	9.00am—9.30am
Thursday 7th March	World Book Day	All Day
Sunday 10th March	Y2 & Y3 Mass of Commitment & 1st Holy Communion Children at St Mary's Church B. Hill	9.45am
Wednesday 13th March	Y5 & 6 Confirmation Meeting with Parents & Children at School	3.20pm—4.20pm
Friday 15th March	Class Mass—Year 6	9.00am—9.30am
Thursday 21st March	Y2 Class Assembly	9.00am—9.30am
Friday 22nd March	Whole School Mass—Year 5	9.00am—9.30am
Sunday 24th March	Y5 & Y6 Mass of Commitment at St Mary's Church, B. Hill	9.45am
Friday 29th March	Class Mass—Year 4	9.00am—9.30am
Friday 29th March	Y6 Transition day to Hagley RC	All Day
Friday 5th April	Whole School Mass—Year 2	9.00am—9.30am
Tuesday 9th April	Parents Evening	5.00pm—7.30pm
Thursday 11th April	Parents Evening	3.15pm—5.45pm
Friday 12th April	Mufti Day—Bring a Bottle for Summer Fair	All Day
Friday 12th April	Whole School Mass lead by Mini Vinnies	9.00am—9.30am
Friday 12th April	Children Break up for Easter	3.00pm
Monday 29th April	School Re-Opens to Children	8.40am
Thursday 2nd May	Enforced School Closure due to Elections (Except Year 6)	All Day
Friday 3rd May	Mufti Day—Bring a Jar of Sweets for Summer Fair	All Day
Friday 3rd May	Whole School Mass - Staff	9.00am—9.30am
Monday 6th May	May Day Bank Holiday	All Day
Wednesday 15th May	Y3 Communion Meeting with Parents & Children at School	3.20pm—4.20pm
Friday 10th May	Class Mass—Year 5	9.00am—9.30am
Friday 17th May	Whole School Mass—Year 3	9.00am—9.30am
Wednesday 22nd May	Y6 Confirmation Meeting with Parents & Children at School	3.20pm—4.20pm
Friday 24th May	May Procession	9.00am—9.30am
Friday 24th May	Sponsored Bounce	All Day
Friday 24th May	Children Break up for Half Term	3.00pm
Friday 31st May	Whole School Mass	9.00am—9.30am
Monday 3rd June	Inset Day	All Day
Tuesday 4th June	Children Return to School	8.40am
Friday 7th June	Whole School Mass—School Council	9.00am—9.30am
Friday 7th June	Y1 & Y2 Trip to Botanical Gardens	All Day
Monday 10th June	Y6 Confirmation Mass	7.00pm
Friday 14th June	Class Mass—Year 6	9.00am—9.30am
Friday 14th June	Y5 Trip to Wild Zoological Gardens	All Day
Wednesday 19th June	Y3 Communion Meeting with Parents & Children at School	3.20pm—4.20pm
Thursday 20th June	Y3 Trip to Sea Life Centre	All Day
Friday 21st June	Whole School Mass—Year 1	9.00am—9.30am

CALENDAR DATES CONTINUED

Date	Event	Time
Friday 21st June	Y6 Trip to Safari Park	All Day
Saturday 22nd June	Y3 First Holy Communion	10.00pm
Mon& Tues 24th/25th June	Y3 & Y5 Bikability	AM & PM
Thursday 27th June	Y4 Trip to Botanical Gardens	All Day
Friday 28th June	Whole School Mass—Year 4	9.00am—9.30am
Friday 28th June	Pre-School & Reception Trip to Wild Zoological Gardens	All Day
Friday 5th July	Whole School Mass—Year 3	9.00am—9.30am
Friday 5th July	Summer Fair	3.00pm—5.00pm
Friday 12th July	Whole School Mass—Year 5	9.00am—9.30am
15th - 17th July	Y6 Residential to Astley Burf	All Day
Thursday 18th July	Y6 Leavers Assembly	9.00am
Thursday 18th July	School Disco	
Friday 19th July	Children Break up for Summer	2.00pm
Friday 19th July	Whole School Mass—Y6 Leavers	9.00am—9.30am
Monday 22nd July	Inset Day	All Day
Monday 2nd September	Inset Day	All Day

Dudley Term Dates 2019/2020

2019 Autumn Term—Term Starts: Monday 2 September 2019 **Half Term:** Monday 28 October 2019 to Friday 1 November 2019 **Term Ends:** Friday 20 December 2019

2020 Spring Term—Term Starts: Monday 6 January 2020 **Half Term:** Monday 17 February 2020 to Friday 21 February 2020 **Term Ends:** Friday 3 April 2020

2020 Summer Term—Term Starts: Monday 20 April 2020 **Half Term:** Monday 25 May 2020 to Friday 29 May 2020 **Term Ends:** Monday 20 July 2020

"Lent comes providentially to reawaken us, to shake us from our lethargy." -- Pope Francis

During Lent this year, we will, as ever, strive to show we are followers of Christ through our actions. We plan to help the wider community, as members of God's family, by taking part in charitable acts for CAFOD, Black Country Foodbank and Father Hudson's Homes.

As part of CAFOD's Family Fast Day appeal, we are challenging our pupils to **give it up** this Lent – to give up something they like and donate the saved money or sponsorship to help build a better world. We will soon be sending a CAFOD envelope home with your child.

Black Country Foodbank have challenged each of our year groups to the "80 Can Challenge". As Lent lasts 40 days and 40 nights, each class will be in a competition to see who can collect 80 cans (or more!)

Fr Hudson's Homes have run their "Good Shepherd Appeal" during Lent for many years. On Monday, children will receive their collection box and a leaflet following their assembly in school.

Children may choose to donate their pocket money towards these causes and we thank everyone for their support in these fantastic causes.

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7

Attendance

As you know, good attendance is very important to us here at St Mary's and we are working hard to make sure that all children attend school as often as possible. I understand that children cannot help being ill, but I would urge parents to do their best to ensure that medical and dental appointments are made for outside of school hours.

I am no longer able to authorise holidays taken during term time. Please see our Attendance Policy on our website for details of fixed penalty notices which are now being issued by Dudley for holiday absences.



Mr Paul Weston, our Attendance Support Officer, will continue to monitor attendance and will issue letters to parents to alert them when their child's attendance falls below 95%, 93% and 90%. He will also be visiting homes of children whose attendance has dropped significantly.

Before the end of this term Mr Weston will be holding an attendance clinic. Invitation letters will be issued in due course.

Do you receive some benefits? If you do you could help us get extra funding for the school!

In order for the school to receive pupil premium funding, you need to complete a simple online form. If your child is eligible, pupil premium funding brings thousands of pounds into the school for up to 6 years – with major budget cuts and redundancies in the past, we need this precious funding to spend on the children. PLEASE take a moment to apply. If you qualify, your child will also be entitled to free school meals every day.

If you get **ANY** of the following support payments your child may be entitled to receive free school meals:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit Run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

Applying online is quick and easy and you don't have to produce any documents. Please visit this website and apply – there is nothing to be lost by applying and you could help us to access precious extra funding for the children.

<https://customer.dudley.gov.uk/free-school-meals/create/>



Reporting Illness

If your child is unwell, you need to report your child's absence to the school office by no later than **9.00am** either in person or by telephoning us on:
01384 818435.



Hand Washing is Important!

At this time of year a lot of children are off school with coughs, colds and sickness bugs.

As a school we try our best to encourage children to wash their hands especially after using the toilet. This is a major step in helping to stop the spread of infection.

Please can you speak to your child to remind them the Importance of washing their hands.

