



St. Anthony's Religious Education Newsletter.

Including Mark Ten Mission and Wellbeing Challenge

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2024

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT ST. ANTHONY'S**

Welcome to a new weekly update about Religious Education at St. Anthony's.

Our intention is to provide you with regular news about the work the children are doing in RE.

We will include information about their work in the classroom, the school's Catholic Life and, of course, Prayer Life.

We will try to ensure that all information is reader-friendly and relevant to the current week.

We hope that you will find it useful.

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

We have arrived at an exciting time in the school's year. Advent began on Sunday and our classes have been preparing for this important period.

Last week Year 1 and Year 3 children attended retreats within the school. This was a chance for them to reflect on and carry out work on the meaning of Advent.

All classes are due to begin their Advent curriculum topics over the course of the week if they haven't done so already.

## CATHOLIC LIFE

### FOOD BANK



All donations were collected on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November. Once again, we thank you for your generosity in supporting families in need at this current time. We invite donations for our next Foodbank on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December.

### SOUTH-WEST HERTS APPEAL



St. Anthony's Chaplaincy Team and Mini Vinnies are, once again, leading our Christmas appeal for South-West Herts. **Please refer to the campaign poster below** detailing items which could be donated to support families in need this Christmas. Your incredible support last year made a huge difference.

## PRAYER LIFE

### JUBILEE YEAR OF HOPE



Pope Francis has announced that 2025 will be a year of Jubilee – an event that happens every 25 years. The theme for the upcoming Jubilee is “Pilgrims of Hope”. The 2025 Jubilee began yesterday and will run until the Feast of the Epiphany in 2026.

Please see the Jubilee Prayer below that can be said at home and will be on display throughout our school.

## RECONCILIATION

The older children will have the opportunity to attend Confessions with Fr. Tim during the Advent period.

## SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY TEAM and MINI VINNIES CAROL SERVICE

For the last month, members of the School Chaplaincy Team and Mini Vinnies have been rehearsing with our previous headteacher, Pauline Wilson as we prepare for the carol service on Friday. They will attend midday mass at Holy Rood Church and after Mass, they will sing carols and read reflections for Advent.

We took part in this occasion last year and it was a very special afternoon helping the children and parishioners prepare for Christmas.

We want to thank both Pauline and governor, Juliette O' Beirne for helping us with the music for this event.

## CHAPEL

From today, our chapel will display purple and the children will have the opportunity to carry out small prayerful activities related to Advent. Children can attend the chapel with their classes for Collective Worship or by themselves during lunchtimes.

## CHAPEL OPEN FOR FAMILIES

On Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December, our chapel will be open for families who wish to pop in to offer a prayer or have a moment of peaceful reflection before the day starts.

**The chapel will be open from 8.30am to 8.50am. Please use the door where the Year 3 children go in to enter and exit the St. Francis building. The door is situated just past the Prayer Garden.**

## BLESSING OF THE CRIBS

Fr. Tim will be blessing the Reception cribs on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December.

## FEAST DAYS THIS WEEK

December 6<sup>th</sup> is the feast of St. Nicholas whose day is celebrated in many countries around the world.

December 8<sup>th</sup> is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

LITURGICAL COLOUR: **PURPLE**

**FROM Fr. TIM**

## **Many thanks to Fr. Tim who has written a reflection for us as we begin Advent.**

Advent is the liturgical season that precedes and prepares us for Christmas. It is a season of hope and of longing, of joyful expectation and of peaceful preparation. Advent is that time of the year when we prepare to welcome Jesus into the world and our lives again.

One of the most iconic symbols of Advent is that of the Advent Wreath.

It is a beautiful symbol of the eternity of Christ and his presence in our lives. As a symbol, however, apart from being lit on each of the Sundays of Advent, the deeper meaning held within each of those candles is often lost or unacknowledged. This is a pity because there is a richness in the wreath which offers a real opportunity for reflecting in a prayerful way this beautiful season of preparation for Christmas.

The Advent Wreath was first used as Christian devotion in the Middle Ages. Its design comes from the customs of the pre-Christian Germanic and Scandinavian cultures, where candles and greenery were used as symbols of light and life during the dark and cold winter. The Advent Wreath has always been a circular evergreen wreath with four or five candles, three purple, one rose and sometimes a white candle for Christmas Day placed in the centre of the wreath.

The candles symbolise the light of Christ coming into the world. The evergreen symbolises renewal and the circular shape the completeness of God. The candle colours come from the traditional liturgical colours of Advent, (purple and rose) and Christmas (white). Each candle is lit on the appropriate Sunday of Advent and then the candles can be lit each day according to the week. Overtime each candle was given a name and linked to a particular part of the Advent story.

Candle 1. Hope (purple)

Candle 2. Peace (purple)

Candle 3. Joy (rose)

Candle 4. Love (purple)

Praying with a focus on each candle can really help us to reflect as we journey through Advent. Just taking fifteen or twenty minutes each day to pray can enrich our appreciation of the season which so often can be overtaken by the need to shop endlessly, bake, send out invites etc. Simply giving a short period of time allows us to breathe and refocus on why we are doing all this preparation in the first place.

Best,

**Fr. Tim Mangatal**

## **JUBILEE PRAYER**

***Father in heaven,  
may the faith you have given us  
in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,  
and the flame of charity enkindled  
in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,  
reawaken in us the blessed hope  
for the coming of your Kingdom.***

***May your grace transform us  
into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.  
May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos  
in the sure expectation  
of a new heaven and a new earth,  
when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,  
your glory will shine eternally.***

***May the grace of the Jubilee  
reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,  
a yearning for the treasures of heaven.***

***May that same grace spread  
the joy and peace of our Redeemer  
throughout the earth.***

***To you our God, eternally blessed,  
be glory and praise for ever.***

***Amen.***

***Official prayer from Pope Francis for the Jubilee year 2025, "Pilgrims of hope"***



Dear Families,

Once again, this year, our School Chaplaincy Team and Mini Vinnie group have teamed up with South-West Herts Partnership, Family Support Service to support children and families who might be having difficulties with the rising cost of living.

Last Christmas, our school community gave with extraordinary generosity and helped to make a huge difference to families being helped by South-West Herts Partnership.

For this reason, our Chaplaincy Team and Mini Vinnie group, want to help again.

We are asking our families for a donation to help those in need this Christmas.

We have separated donations into different categories and allocated a category to different parts of the school.

**Please could we ask that all items are new.**

If you would like to be involved, could children from the following Key Stages or Year Groups please bring the following:

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| EYFS        | NEW HATS / GLOVES / SCARFS particularly sport and character themed items.                                |
| KEY STAGE 1 | NEW MINIATURE TOYS- For example- small LEGO sets, small toy vehicles, small dolls etc                    |
| YEAR 3      | CHRISTMAS SELECTION BOXES OR TUBS OF SWEETS OR CHOCOLATES - For example, Roses, Celebrations, Haribos... |
| YEAR 4      | NEW STATIONERY SETS- For example, Notebooks, pens, pencils, pencil cases...                              |
| YEAR 5      | NEW SMALL TRAVEL GAMES- EG: Uno and playing cards.   |
| YEAR 6      | NEW READING BOOKS and / or ACTIVITY AND STICKER BOOKS  |

**Guidance from South West Herts Partnership is as follows:**

**All gifts are new and unopened.**

**All gifts remain unwrapped so that they can be wrapped by the SWHP team.**

**All gifts are donated by the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at the latest.**

If you would like to get involved, please send you gift in with your child to give to your child's teacher. A member of the Chaplaincy Team will go to each class every day to collect any donations.

We hope we can make a difference and thank you.

**The children and staff of St. Anthony's School Chaplaincy Team and Mini Vinnies.**

# LOOK AFTER YOUR WELLBEING THIS WEEK



## TAKE NOTICE

Over the next 7 days, count your blessings. Spend a special time each day (maybe as you pray) to think of all the things that you can be grateful for in your life and how that makes you feel.

# Mark Ten Mission



## THE MISSION

HOPE OF ADVENT

Get to know Jesus better this Advent. Promise to spend time with him each day. Choose when and for how long this will be. Imagine how much better you will know Jesus if you spend an extra ten minutes with him each day. This could be in silence, sharing what has happened in your day. It could be reading from your Bible if you have one at home. Promise to spend time talking to Jesus and make sure to listen to what he says to your heart too.





# MISSION FILE

## GOSPEL

Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: 'There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near. 'But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap. For it will come upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth. But stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.'

As you slowly read or listen to the Gospel, which line stands out? Highlight it in the text. Pray about how God may be speaking to you through this line?

## Wonder Questions

What will it be like to stand before Jesus?

What would you say to him?

## WORD OF THE WEEK

# HOPE

## ADVENT PROMISE

Advent is a time of waiting, but it is also a time to grow closer to Jesus and know him better. Make a simple promise to spend more time with him this Advent.

How much time will you give each day just for you and Jesus to be together?

\_\_\_\_\_ minutes

What is your hope for Advent and how would you like to grow closer to Jesus?

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## MISSION

Make an Advent promise and get to know Jesus better this Advent. Promise to spend time with him each day. Choose when and for how long this will be. Imagine how much better you will know Jesus if you spend an extra ten minutes with him each day. This could be in silence, sharing what has happened in your day. It could be reading from your Bible if you have one at home. Promise to spend time talking to Jesus and make sure to listen to what he says to your heart too.

Draw the Son of Man coming again.

COLOUR