



St. Anthony's Religious Education Newsletter
Including Mark Ten Mission and Wellbeing Challenge
Wednesday 25th February 2026

Barry O'Byrne

It is with great sadness that we share news of the death of St. Anthony's first headteacher, Barry O'Byrne.

Barry led the school when it first opened in 1974 until his retirement in 1999.

A person of deep faith, he laid the foundations for the community we are today. From staff being called by their first names to our Mission Statement, Barry leaves a legacy at St. Anthony's based upon Gospel values of faith, hope and doing good for others.

Barry continued in education for some years after his retirement, working for the Catholic Teaching Inspectorate. He always attended our annual Christmas Lunch and never missed an opportunity to go on his walking tour of the school to say hello to everyone. We will miss him.

We send our condolences to Barry's family and we will remember them in our prayers.

May he Rest in Peace.

PRAYER LIFE

LENT

The Journey of Lent Begins

As we begin the season of Lent, we enter a special time in the Church's year: a season of reflection, prayer, and preparation for Easter. Lent invites us to pause and think about our lives, to make space for God, and to grow closer to Jesus.



During these forty days, we remember the time Jesus spent in the desert. Like Him, we are called to listen more closely to God and make choices that bring love and kindness into the world. Lent is a time to pray a little more, to give up something that distracts us, or to do something extra for others.

In school, we can help one another on this journey. Whether it's through a kind word, a helping hand, or saying sorry, every small act of goodness helps us prepare our hearts for the joy of Easter. Together, let us walk with Jesus this Lent, asking God to bless our efforts to grow in faith, hope, and love.

OUR SCHOOL CHAPEL

Our school chapel will also reflect the spirit of Lent. It will be open every Thursday morning from 8:30 to 8:55 for families who wish to spend a few quiet moments in prayer before the start of the day. Everyone is warmly invited in this peaceful space in the spirit of hope and faith.

A sign will be in place on the Key Stage 2 Playground directing you to the chapel. Children, you are welcome to use the chapel if your parents are unable to.

During this first full week of Lent, we keep the Church's purple colour as a reminder to pray more, give to others, and try to make good choices. In school, our prayers focus on asking Jesus to help us grow closer to Him each day.

Focus for Prayer Around the School

Early Years

Our youngest children will be praying about how much God loves them and how special they are to Him. They will thank God for their families, friends and the world around them, and learn to talk to Jesus in simple, quiet ways that they can understand.

Years 1 and 2

Children in Years 1 and 2 will be praying about being kind and forgiving, just as Jesus is kind and forgiving to us. They will bring to prayer the people they love, anyone who is sad or in need and ask God to help them make good choices at home and in school.



Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2, the children will be praying for a deeper understanding of Jesus' journey through Lent and Holy Week, and for the courage to live out their faith in daily life. They will remember people who are suffering or treated unfairly, pray for peace in our world and ask the Holy Spirit to guide them to be peacemakers, carers for creation, and a sign of hope to others.

CATHOLIC LIFE

WATFORD FOODBANK COLLECTION DAY

As this Thursday marks the last Thursday of February, we will once again be supporting the Watford Foodbank. Your generous donations make a real difference to local families in need.

If you are able, please bring in any non-perishable food items such as tinned goods, pasta, rice, or long-life milk. Donations can be left in the collection boxes in the school entrance.

Thank you for continuing to show kindness and compassion to others during this season of Lent.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

From Desert to Garden

This half term, our RE learning moves into *Branch 4: Desert to Garden*. In this unit, the children will be exploring how Jesus' journey through Lent, Holy Week, and the Resurrection shows us that God can transform times of difficulty and challenge into new life and hope.

Through Scripture, prayer, and creative activities, the children will reflect on key moments from Jesus' Passion, Death and Resurrection, and think about what this means for their own lives today. They will be encouraged to notice where they see signs of God's love at work, and how they can help bring hope, kindness and forgiveness to others at home, in school and in the wider community.

As we journey through Lent and this new branch of learning, we pray that our children continue to grow in faith, understanding and compassion,



trusting that God can always lead us from “desert” places into the new life of Easter.

Year 5 Lisbon at St. Michael's Church

On Tuesday, Year 5 Lisbon visited St. Michael's and All Angels Church in Watford for their retreat day.



We are very fortunate to have such great links with St. Michael's and grateful to them for the chance to use their beautiful church. The children had a day of art, craft and reflection centred on the Stations of the Cross. It was lovely that St. Michael's new vicar, Fr Kudzayi, introduced himself to everyone too.

PARISH LINKS TO HOLY ROOD CHURCH WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/watford/wp-content/uploads/sites/103/2026/02/Newsletter-22.02.26.pdf>

PARISH LINKS TO ST. BEDE'S CHURCH WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/croxleygreen/wp-content/uploads/sites/95/2026/02/20260222-NEWSLETTER-2026-1.pdf>

FEAST DAY OF THE WEEK 22nd February

The Feast of the Chair of Saint Peter is a day when we remember that Jesus chose Saint Peter to be the first leader of the Church and gave him a special job to look after all believers.

We thank God for Peter and for the Popes who have followed him, helping to keep us a united family of the Church.



THANK YOU CORNER

We give thanks for the life of Barry O'Byrne, the first headteacher of St. Anthony's School.

Loving God,

We thank you for the life and dedication of Barry O'Byrne, the first headteacher of St Anthony's School.

We are grateful for his faith, his hard work and the foundations he helped to lay for our school community.

Bless him, Lord, for every child he encouraged, every family he supported, and every member of staff he guided with wisdom and care. May the seeds he planted continue to grow in our school today: kindness, respect, a love of learning, and a deep trust in you.

Help us to follow his example by serving others and continuing to Grow and Learn with Jesus.

Amen.

Prayer for the First Week of Lent

***Loving Jesus,
as we start this first week of Lent,
help us to make more room for you in our hearts.***

***Show us how to be kinder in our words,
more helpful in our actions,
and more ready to forgive, just as you forgive us.***

***Give us the courage to give up things that get in the way,
and to take up little acts of love
at home, in school, and with our friends.***

***Walk with us this week, Lord,
and help us to grow closer to You
on our journey towards Easter.***

Amen.



LOOK AFTER YOUR WELLBEING THIS WEEK



GIVE

Visit the chapel at least once this week and offer a special prayer for someone during this Lent period.



Mark Ten Mission

This week we reflect on the beginning of Lent and its meaning.



THE MARK 10 MISSION

MISSION FILE

GOSPEL

MATTHEW 4:1-11

At that time: Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

And the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' But he answered, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."'

Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the Temple and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you", and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone."' Jesus said to him, 'Again it is written, "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."'

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, 'All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve."' Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

WORD OF THE WEEK

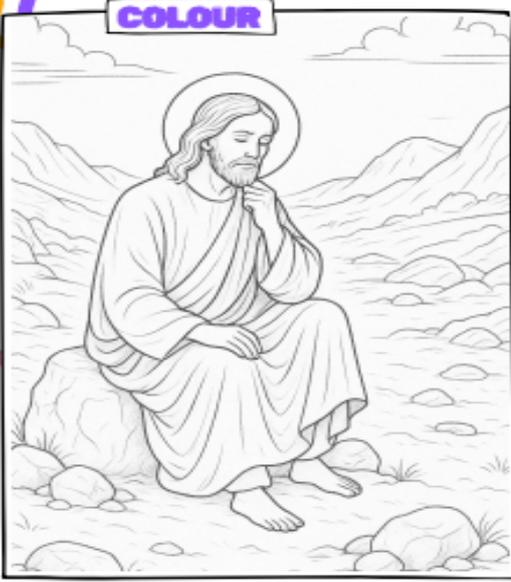
PRAYER

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P | Q | P | I | E | J | L | G | S | O | Y |
| E | V | R | C | K | G | F | I | A | W | K |
| N | S | A | W | M | T | M | V | K | S | T |
| A | O | Y | D | I | O | X | I | O | M | H |
| N | L | E | M | E | T | A | N | O | I | A |
| C | I | R | A | P | Z | Z | G | U | J | S |
| E | T | D | I | F | N | N | Q | E | S | G |
| B | U | Q | N | L | A | Z | I | M | J | V |
| O | D | X | X | U | Z | S | L | B | Q | Q |
| E | E | N | Y | P | Z | A | T | W | B | E |
| G | Z | Z | L | Y | U | C | J | I | K | U |
| R | M | K | Z | A | A | O | V | R | N | L |
| Y | S | I | L | E | N | C | E | C | P | G |

WONDER QUESTIONS

WHY DID THE SPIRIT LEAD JESUS INTO THE WILDERNESS TO BE TEMPTED? DO YOU THINK THE DEVIL USED GOOD TACTICS AGAINST JESUS? DO YOU THINK HE STILL USES THEM TODAY?

COLOUR



MISSION

PRAYERFULLY DECIDE WHAT TO FAST FROM AND SACRIFICE FOR JESUS THIS LENT. ASK JESUS WHAT HE WOULD LIKE YOU TO FAST. REMEMBER, IT SHOULDN'T BE IMPOSSIBLY HARD, BUT IT SHOULD BE DIFFICULT, SOMETHING THAT YOU WILL NOTICE GOING WITHOUT. THE KEY IS TO SACRIFICE IT FOR JESUS, TO REMEMBER YOU ARE DOING IT FOR HIM AND AS A WAY TO GROW IN LOVE FOR HIM THIS LENT.

WORD SEARCH

PRAYER / FASTING / ALMS
GIVING / SILENCE / SOLITUDE
ASH / PENANCE / METANOIA



THE MISSION

THE MEANING OF LENT

PRAYERFULLY DECIDE WHAT TO FAST FROM AND SACRIFICE FOR JESUS THIS LENT. ASK JESUS WHAT HE WOULD LIKE YOU TO FAST. REMEMBER, IT SHOULDN'T BE IMPOSSIBLY HARD, BUT IT SHOULD BE QUITE DIFFICULT. THE KEY IS TO SACRIFICE IT FOR JESUS, TO REMEMBER YOU ARE DOING IT FOR HIM AND AS A WAY TO MAKE MORE SPACE IN YOUR HEART FOR HIM THIS LENT.

