



Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Primary School

Newsletter — December 2019

‘We welcome everyone into our community to live, love and learn together in the light and example of Jesus Christ’

www.olfatima.bham.sch.uk

‘Attentive and Discerning’

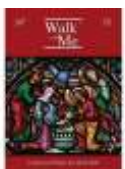
Pupils at Our Lady of Fatima School aim to be **attentive** to their experiences and to their vocation and **discerning** about the choices they make and the effects of those choices.

Advent

Last Sunday was the first Sunday of Advent. As the children are all busy preparing for their Christmas celebrations here in school, may we also remember that even amid our busy schedules and Christmas preparations, we must try not to be consumed by the commercial aspects of Christmas, but we should make time to prepare spiritually as we wait to celebrate the Saviour’s birth. Pope Francis’s message this Advent is one of encouragement for us to reflect on the contrast between our daily routine and the unexpected coming of the Lord. The Gospel, the Pope said, is not trying to frighten us, but “to open our horizons”, giving meaning even to everyday occurrences and making us surprised by the life that is presented each day with its newness. In order to do this, we need to learn to not depend on our own securities, our own established plans, because the Lord will come at an hour which we don’t imagine.



Advent Preparation of Prayer: Walk With Me



This year's Diocesan Walk with Me journey of prayer focuses on the words of the prologue of St John:

‘the Word, who from the beginning is with God, who became flesh and who made his

dwelling among us’. (John 1:14). Advent invites us to keep watch and stay awake. We should be alert and watchful for all signs of the coming of the Saviour into our world, the signs of his abiding presence. We are asked to listen: God sends messages to us long before we catch sight of His presence in our lives. Listening to those quiet words of the Lord prepares us intimately for His coming. Finally, we are asked to welcome: we are encouraged to see Advent from God's perspective. God wants to be with us, for we are God's beloved, chosen people. We welcome this coming of our God. God waits until we are ready... He never forces himself upon us. He is ever-loving. His love is patient, kind and gentle. That is why, in the fullness of time, God sent His Only Son to us.

Children’s Liturgy at Our Lady of Fatima Parish Church

Attendance is encouraged at 11.00 am Mass on Sundays at church for children to join a new Children’s Liturgy Group. This will be led by Mrs McGuinness with a team of volunteers. Please come along to Mass and after the first hymn Father Long will direct the children to the church hall with the adult volunteers so that they can explore the Mass and messages of the reading in a more meaningful way, at their level. We are most grateful to Mrs McGuinness and her team for preparing for and leading this Liturgy.

Goodbye and Good Luck


We are sad to announce that Mrs Zorescu will be leaving at the end of this term. We offer our appreciation to her for all her hard work and for the care she has brought to the children and their families during her time at Our Lady of Fatima School. She will be missed by our school community. We wish her the best of luck in her future career.


We welcome Miss Turner who will be teaching Year 1 from January 2020.

Inspire Workshops- Thank you

Thank you to all parents (and some grandparents) from Years 1-6 for the exceptional support given to this term's Inspire Workshops. The children thoroughly enjoyed sharing their understanding of our new approach to the teaching and learning of safe use of the internet. With an ever increasing use of electrical devices to help us to learn, it is so important to ensure that all children learn how to stay safe online. Our KS2 pupils should also be vigilant to safe ways of using social media so that they interact safely with people they know. Parents should be aware of any social media sites their children are using as guidelines suggest that children should be 13 years + to have social media accounts. We appreciate the additional arrangements parents made to be present at the workshops. Thank you also for the valuable, positive and developmental feedback received. The final workshop for Reception Class will take place on Tuesday 14th January 2020 at 9.10 am.

Charitable Donations

 So far we have raised **£221.14** from voluntary Harvest cash donations from the Harvest Service and 'Brighten Up' non-school uniform day. There will be a 'Bake Off' in the new year, before Lent begins, with proceeds going towards CAFOD...watch this space!

 The Book Fair raised an incredible **£913** this year enabling us to have free books worth **£548**. All children will benefit from this.



The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal raised **£26.35**



We donated an amazing **103** Christmas boxes through Operation Christmas Child. This is a tremendous amount of Christmas boxes.

THANK YOU so much for your generosity and kindness. These will be processed and sent to Liberia this year. This practical task of giving meant so much to the children as they learnt that by giving to others, they receive huge rewards of satisfaction and spiritual growth. You have all made a special difference to the lives of others by your charitable donations. **THANK YOU** to thank all pupils, parents and relatives for their tremendous generosity once again during this term.

Christmas Services



The Infants and Juniors are now busy preparing for their Nativity Play and Carol Service and we look forward to welcoming parents and family members to these services. KS1 parents, please choose to attend either of the Nativity performances, as it may not be possible to attend both due to numbers. We appreciate that parents like to share these precious moments with family who cannot attend and are aware that these events may be photographed or filmed, but please remember that these images are for **private viewing only** and **must not** be displayed or shared on public social media locations, in line with our E-Safety and Social Media policies and GDPR regulations.

KS1 Nativity: Thursday 12th December at 9.15am or 2.15pm.

KS2 Carol Service: Tuesday 17th December at 9.15am.

Our Lady of Fatima Church Christmas Services

Mass times over the Christmas period are as follows:

Sunday 22nd December

9am & 11 am Mass for the Fourth Sunday of Advent

Tuesday 24th December (Christmas Eve)

5.30 pm: Nativity Play and Vigil Mass for Christmas



8 pm: Readings and Carols

8.30 pm: Christmas Mass

Wednesday 25th December (Christmas Day)

9am & 11am Christmas Day Masses

Thursday 26th December (St Stephen's Day)

10.00 am Mass with renewal into the Guild of Saint Stephen.

Hagley Pyramid Concert



Tickets for the Year 5 performance at Birmingham Town Hall on Thursday 13th February 2020 are available to purchase from school for £10 each ticket. If you are struggling to find a Christmas present for grandparents, friends or family, a ticket to the concert would make a lovely Christmas gift. Please pay for tickets on ParentPay.

Eligibility for Free School Meals



The DfE use a formula for allocating money to schools and the percentage of children entitled to free school meals significantly increases a school's budget. The school subscribes to a Birmingham service that checks a family's eligibility to Free School Meals. It is very simple to use and avoids any need to provide proof to the school. Once registered, parents do not have to do anymore. We would encourage all parents, regardless of income to log on to the site and register: <https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/birmingham/school> or give the school office your NI number and date of birth and Mrs Hayden will do this on your behalf.

Christmas Celebration Meals in School



Mrs O'Brien and Mrs Smith are planning special Christmas menus for the last week of this term- Monday 16th – Friday 20th December. Our traditional Christmas lunch is open to all

pupils on **Wednesday 18th December**. Parents of children who already have a cooked lunch at school need not order this meal, but those children who normally have a packed lunch but would like a Christmas lunch on 18th December must complete the order form, which is being sent out separately by **Friday 13th December**, so that Mrs O'Brien can order the additional food required. Reception Class and KS1 pupils' payment is covered by Universal Free School Meals, but they still need to order a Christmas lunch, should they want one. If your child normally has a packed lunch, but would like to take the opportunity of having Christmas themed lunches during the last week of this term, please also complete the order form which will be distributed separately.

Special Christmas Lunches:

Monday 16 th December:	Chicken Curry
Tuesday 17 th December:	Brunch
Wednesday 18 th December:	Christmas lunch
Thursday 19 th December:	Burgers
Friday 20 th December:	Pizza/Fish

Please note: Snacks will not be sold on Wednesday 18th December.

Christmas Parties will be on the afternoon of **Thursday 19th December**. Children may wear party clothes all day. Your child will bring home a labelled party food box to be filled with party food you know your child will enjoy. No foods containing nuts please. This is **in addition to, not instead of** their lunch. There will be a special guest appearance from a white bearded gentleman dressed in red at the class parties.

Christmas Hats

Your children are welcome to wear party hats for their parties and their Christmas lunch (18th December) and their class parties (19th December). These should be made at home and may remain in school for both events.



PTA Events

Thank you to the many families who supported the Firework Disco. A magnificent £850 profit was made. The PTA will be putting this money straight back into school, purchasing extras towards your child's education.

The PTA's Christmas Infant and Junior Discos will take place in the Church Parish Hall on **Thursday 12th December.**



Infants 6—7.30pm

Juniors 8—9.30pm

Infant parents are asked to stay with their children and Junior parents will be asked to provide an emergency telephone contact number. If any parents are available to help at either of these events, please contact: olfpta@gmail.com

School Website

Our school website is regularly updated with recent events that have taken place in school. School information and policies can also be found on the website. Please do take the time to browse the website as it really does offer parents a good opportunity to keep up to date with the busy, productive school life. www.olfatima.bham.sch.uk

Parking

There have been several recent complaints from residents, delivery drivers and parents who are concerned about a small minority of parents who still park on the yellow zig zag lines or block the school drive when dropping off or picking up their children from school. This is illegal and dangerous to the safety of the children and families. Weather conditions should not compromise safety; please be considerate at all times when parking near the school premises. Our School Council have also raised concerns to Birmingham City Council on behalf of the pupils.

Reminder – Changes to End of Day Collection

From Monday 9th December 2019, Years 1 and 2 are to be collected from their classroom exits instead of the playground.

Advance Notice- Year 2 and Year 6 Parents

In the new year Mrs Levack and Miss O'Connell will be holding Parent Information Meetings to inform all parents about the end of Key Stage Assessments (SATs) which take place in Summer 2020. A separate letter will be issued to all Year 2 and 6 parents nearer the time.

Advance notice of these dates for your diary:

Year 6: Tuesday 21st January 2019 at 2.30 pm

Year 2: Thursday 30th January 2019 at 2.30 pm

Pantomime

On **Tuesday 17th December** the children will be treated to a wonderful pantomime production of 'The Wizard of Oz' in school. This has been fully funded by the PTA- thank you to all families who have supported their events this year to enable this to be possible.

Christmas Jumper Day

Friday 20th December will be a non-uniform day to allow the children (and staff!) to wear a Christmas jumper or a Christmas t-shirt for the day. We are suggesting a £1 donation which will be sent to the 'Save the Children Fund'. Through UK Aid Match the government will match every £1 raised by schools and so this is a most worthwhile event.



And finally.... The staff would like to thank all pupils, parents and staff for their continued support and commitment. Partnership at all levels is essential for the happiness and success of our pupils. The whole school community is what makes Our Lady of Fatima School the special place it is. On behalf of the staff, we wish all families a very happy, holy and peaceful Christmas.

With God's blessings.

Dates for the Diary are attached for this term, please check any that are relevant to you or your child, especially with Christmas Nativity Plays, Carol Services and other events.

Sun 1 Dec

Advent begins

Sun 1 Dec	Year 4 Mass readers at OLF
Mon 2 Dec	9.05 am Advent Mass in school
Mon 2 Dec	6.30 pm Full MAC Board Meeting
Thurs 5 Dec	1.40 pm Reconciliation Service for Years 4-6
Sun 8 Dec	Year 6 Mass readers at OLF
Wed 11 Dec	6.00 pm Academy Committee meeting
Thurs 12 Dec	9.15 am and 2.15 pm KS1 Nativity
Thurs 12 Dec	6.30 pm onwards PTA Christmas Discos in the church hall
Sun 15 Dec	Year 5 Mass readers at OLF
Tues 17 Dec	9.10 am KS2 Carol Service
Tues 17 Dec	1.40 pm Christmas Panto
Wed 18 Dec	Christmas Lunch
Thurs 19 Dec	Christmas parties and visit from Santa
Fri 20 Dec	Christmas jumper day
Fri 20 Dec	BREAK UP for Christmas holidays

Pupils and staff return to school on **Tuesday 7th January 2020**