

Emmaus Catholic MAC

Autumn 2024 News



Dear Colleagues, Families and Friends

I hope that you are all well and looking forward to the rapidly approaching Advent period.

There has been a lot happening in our Emmaus schools since I last wrote to you at the start of the Autumn Term so I thought I would take the opportunity to share some of the highlights and key successes with you.

Back in September I communicated the updated Emmaus mission, vision and values. Please find below a quick reminder of what they are:

Our Mission:

As a family of schools, united in Christ and working together as one, we exist to deliver excellent Catholic education and faith formation to every young person, in every school, every day.

Our Vision:

Transforming Lives: inspiring ambition and empowering young people to change the world.

Our Values:



Serving Together



High Expectations



Inclusion



Nurturing Faith



Excellence

Our staff and young people live out our values every day. Listed below is just a snapshot of the types of successes and achievements that our Principals tell me have recently taken place in our schools, all of which reflect one or more of our Emmaus values:



At **Our Lady of Fatima (OLOF) Catholic Primary School, Harborne**, as part of the Harvest Festival Celebrations, the OLoF Mini Vinnies organised a collection for Quinton Foodbank who reported back that, at 316kg, it was the largest donation they have ever had from any of the schools/churches they work with. Certainly, something to celebrate and thank you so much to the generosity of our OLoF community.

Our Lady and St Hubert's (OLSH) Catholic Primary School, Oldbury celebrated Remembrance Day together by each pupil planting a poppy on the school grounds. Referring to the children, school leaders said, "it was not lost on them how poignant a moment it was. Each poppy was placed so delicately as if it were something truly special. The silence that accompanied the moment created something that for me was so memorable."

On Monday 11th November, all of the classes at OLSH had their own moment in front of the poppies as part of special prayer services in order to take time to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

Our Lady Queen of Peace (OLQP) Catholic Primary School, Worcester is really proud of achieving Gold in Water Smart Schools Award (Royal Life Saving Society UK), collecting a large donation of food during Harvest for Worcester Foodbank, for raising £136 for MacMillan Cancer Support during the coffee morning and of the Mini Vinnies who attended the Parish Friendship Group for fellowship and biscuits!

St. Ambrose Catholic Primary School, Kidderminster has worked with a number of charities as part of their support for the wider work of the church. As Catholics, we are called to work together for the Common Good. St Ambrose, therefore, chooses charities that link with their RE curriculum structure and points to their work with local, national and international communities.

All Emmaus schools (with the exception of St. Joseph's, Stourbridge who have already been awarded it) are currently working towards achieving the Live Simply Award:



The St. Ambrose Live Simply Ambassadors organised donations to the Foodbank at the Harvest Festival, a hamper raffle for CAFOD and the Year 6 Poppy Appeal raised over £300. This is a true example of our Emmaus value of **Serving Together**.

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, Brierley Hill is also moving forward with its Live Simply journey. Staff and pupils were delighted with the food donations received for the Black Country Foodbank which demonstrates the school's commitment to the Catholic Social Teaching of giving 'Option to the Poor' by demonstrating their solidarity with those most vulnerable in society.

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Stourbridge, St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Warndon and Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary School, Worcester are extremely proud to have achieved the Fair Access Award from @englandfootball for their football offer, ensuring fair access to girls and boys for clubs, curriculum and competitive fixtures.

St. George's Catholic Primary School, Worcester welcomed a new Principal, Ms Cairns, to the school from 1st September. Ms Cairns reports that the school has taken part in Black History Week in Autumn 1 and for the first time they also took part in Anti-Bullying week from 11th – 15th November.



At **St. Wulstan's Catholic Primary School, Stourport**, all pupils have taken on leadership roles that culminate in leadership and social action projects. A group of year 6 pupils have been inspired by a Geography topic on Rainforests to identify a worldwide concern about endangered species. They have set up a leadership group called Wildlife Warriors who are planning projects and fundraising activities to address this concern.

St. Gregory's Catholic Primary School, Bearwood welcomed Ofsted in the last week of the summer term who found that despite the significant leadership turbulence that the school had experienced over the previous five years, they saw nothing less than Good during the inspection and reported that 'this is a school with ambition where pupils are genuinely valued and cared for'. The inspector also identified that the school is in a place to make rapid improvements, and it is absolutely doing just that. The introduction of the I'm A Clever Writer initiative has seen a significant improvement in the quality of writing across the school and there are plans to build on this further during 2024/25. The school is placing great emphasis on

pupil leadership and has recently appointed their first ever pupil leadership team consisting of a Head Boy, Head Girl, two Deputies and House Captains.



Inspection of St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School

McKean Road, Oldbury, West Midlands B69 4BA

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The highlight of the term for **St. Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School** was a two-day Section 5 Ofsted inspection on 1st and 2nd of October which saw every category move from Requires Improvement to Good. This is testament to the hard work and commitment of every single member of staff in the school and we have now embarked on the journey to take the school to outstanding in every area.

Reading has been a real focus at **St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Droitwich** this month. The school started 'Non-Fiction November' with a parent workshop. This included sharing ideas with parents around 'reading for pleasure.' After this session, parents were then invited into school to share a book with their child and also visit the school library. Over 90 parents attended this session with the children. The St. Joseph's Reading Ambassadors have also welcomed the local librarian into school and every class will be visiting the local library this year.

The school also celebrated the first ever 'Michael Rosen Day' on Tuesday 12th November. This included the opportunity to watch a live session with Michael as well a whole school 'book swap.'

The pupils and staff at **St. Philip's Catholic Primary School, Smethwick** have been very busy this term. Mrs Hinton, Principal, outlines below areas of focus:

- Working towards our Live Simply Award.
- Working with the Argos team to support our disadvantaged children with food parcels and uniforms.
- Launch of the football tournament led by Mr Padaton.
- Into Film launch - all children visiting the cinema to support with visual literacy and appreciation for the Film industry.

- Black History Month Celebrations in school.
- Bikeability for upper KS2 children.
- Launch of knife crime awareness for year 5 and 6 pupils.
- Launch of anti-bullying theme linked with our CPP values.
- Fundraising for Brushstrokes for Harvest.
- Mini Vinnies project for Toy Appeal.

We wish to give a special mention to Mrs Elizabeth Horobin at St. Philip's Catholic Primary School who has served our school and the community of Smethwick for 40 years. Heartfelt thanks to you Mrs Horobin for the love, dedication and support that you have selflessly given to the children and families of St. Philip's – you are so greatly appreciated.



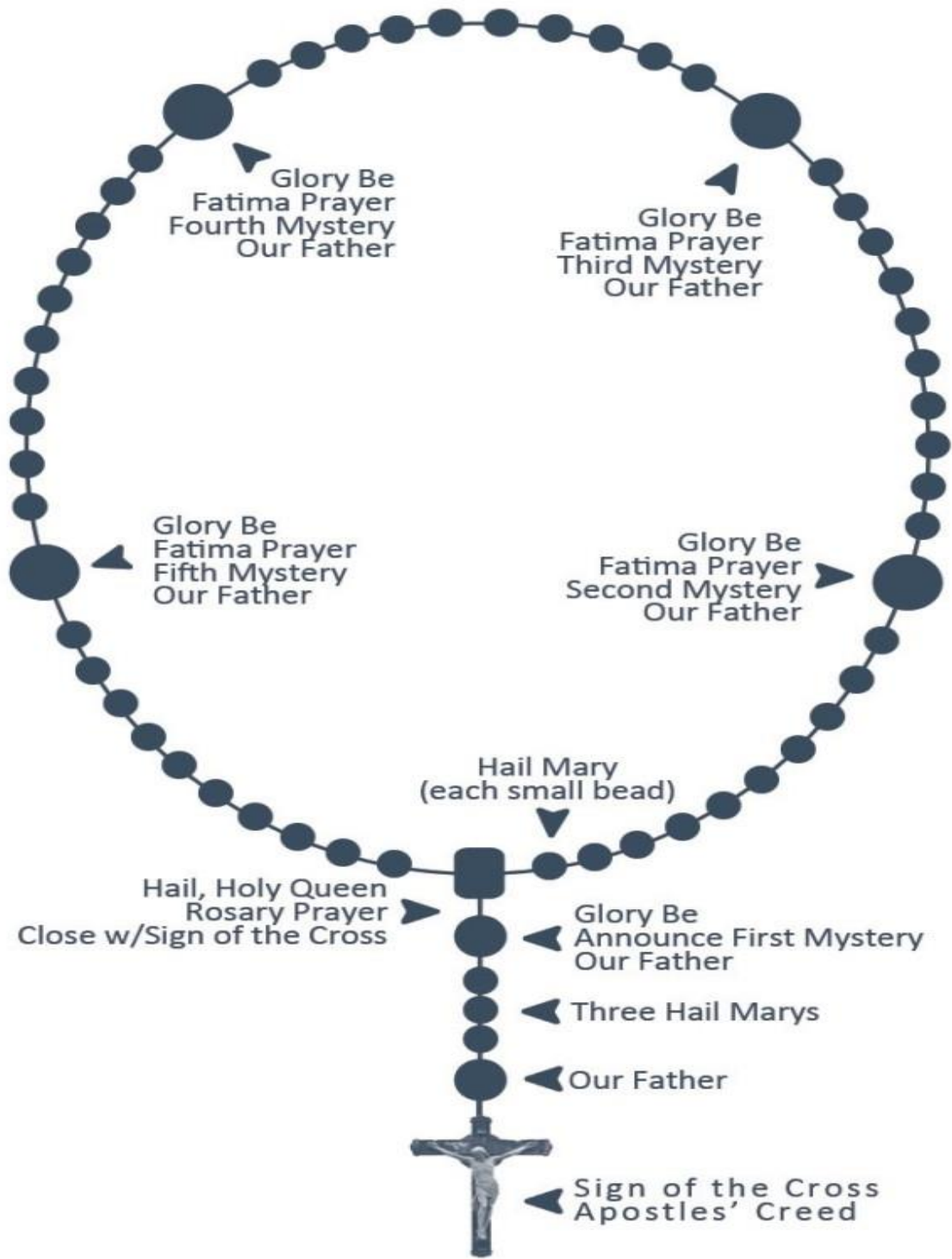
Hagley Catholic High School

On 10th October 2024, the whole Hagley School community embraced the wear it yellow theme for World Mental Health Awareness Day and wore yellow ribbons on their uniform to show solidarity with all those battling with poor mental health. This then launched the Bee Kind initiative in school to focus all our efforts on everything we do coming from a place of kindness.

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary, Stourbridge were also delighted to be recently awarded the Artsmark Silver Award, demonstrating their commitment to the Arts. To achieve this award, the children were given opportunities to perform, take part in lunchtime and after school clubs, launch a Mass band and choir and also hold the school's first Art Exhibition. Huge thanks to Mrs Cangiano who led on this initiative for your hard work, commitment and brilliant achievement.



One of our Emmaus priorities this year is to pray together more as an Emmaus family. This does not mean we have to be in the same place at the same time, but that we will commit to joining together in prayer during the same time/period. We did this in October, the Month of the Holy Rosary. October falls during the liturgical season known as Ordinary Time, which is represented by the liturgical colour green. On Friday 18th October, the entire MAC came together to pray the Rosary in aid of world peace and unity. In addition, our schools have outlined below other prayer initiatives which took place during the month of October.



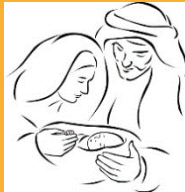
Hagley Catholic High School	Years 7, 11 & 6 th form prayed a decade of the rosary together while Years 8, 9 & 10 prayed a decade together in forms. The whole school prayed a decade of the Rosary at the same time in AM registration on Friday 18 th October.
Our Lady and St Hubert's Catholic Primary School	Every class in KS2 prayed the Rosary daily whilst KS1 prayed a Hail Mary per day. Children brought in Rosary Beads from home to use in their prayer time. On Friday 18 th October, the whole schools prayed a decade of the Rosary for world peace.
Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Primary School	Throughout October, OLoF Mini Vinnies led lunchtime Rosary Clubs. The first Gospel assembly in October focused on how to pray the Rosary and this was followed by teacher-led and pupil-led prayer and liturgy in class with a Rosary focus. On Friday 18 th October, the whole school joined together to pray the Rosary as part of Aid to the Church in Need.
Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary School	Throughout October the school held a Rosary Club twice a week during lunchtimes to pray the Rosary. On Friday 18 th October, KS1 morning and KS2 afternoon, prayed a decade as part of Aid to the Church in Need. Parents were also invited to 'Stay and Pray' with their children.
St. Ambrose Catholic Primary School	Throughout the month of October, the school followed the Mark 10 Mission Rosary Challenge. On Thursday 24 th October the school gathered as a whole school with Canon Lamb and parishioners to pray the luminous mysteries. The school created an entrance display for all to see. They also supported the Parish retreat day by making rosary rings and prayer cards for the parishioners and visitors.
St. Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School	Throughout the month of October, children at SFX embraced spontaneous prayer opportunities, provided by school Liturgy Leaders, to pray the Rosary during their lunchtime.
St. George's Catholic Primary School	The school held a whole school Rosary assembly on 7 th October. Staff had CPD led by the RE Lead and resources were shared for use in class. Children were provided with weekly opportunities to pray the Rosary led by Liturgy leaders and the RE lead. On Friday 18 th October, every class prayed an allocated decade of the Rosary at the same time.
St. Gregory's Catholic Primary School	In their Monday Gospel assembly, the school joined together to say a decade of the Rosary. The Chaplaincy team also led prayer groups at lunchtimes for pupils and staff who wished to say a decade of the Rosary.
St. Mary's Catholic Primary School	A catechistically accurate calendar was created, outlining the correct mystery for the day, with a supporting PowerPoint for each mystery. Every class, every day, celebrated the specified mystery. Mark 10 resources were used. An overview was stuck into RE books and dated every day to show the commitment to the Rosary and the celebration of the school's patron saint. A PowerPoint was created for the school foyer to display the current mystery focus. Evidence and pupil voice was captured in the floor book.

<p>St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Droitwich</p>	<p>There is a dedicated 'Prayer Room' in the school. Children from Years 2 to 6 were given the opportunity to pray the Rosary at lunchtime each week led by the RE Lead. Prayer Leaders also read the Emmaus prayer which has been linked to a QR code by the SHINE display in the main school entrance. The school signed up to the ACN International 'One Million Children Praying the Rosary.' Fr. George also joined the Prayer Leaders when all classes were reciting a decade of the Rosary at 2.30pm on Friday 18th October 2024.</p>
<p>St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Stourbridge</p>	<p>Liturgy leaders led Rosary time during Wednesday lunchtimes. All classes used the Mark 10 Mission resource to pray the Rosary throughout the week. On Friday 18th October all children prayed a decade of the Rosary as part of the Aid to the Church in need – this was led by Fr. Philip and parents and families were also invited to join in.</p>
<p>St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Warndon</p>	<p>Celebration of the Word on Monday, decade led by children; Tuesday before Mass decade said, led by children, Friday celebration assembly decade led by Principal.</p> <p>Weekly staff prayer on Tuesday morning – decade of the Rosary was said. Rosary was said in classroom Prayer and Liturgy each week.</p> <p>On Friday 18th October the school prayed the Rosary as part of the Aid to the Church in Need.</p>
<p>St. Philip's Catholic Primary School</p>	<p>Prayer and liturgy were dedicated during the month of October to Our mother Mary. Classes led on a decade of the Rosary weekly. Prayer liturgies were planned for classes to lead on Rosary on Wednesdays. On Friday 18th October, linked to the Aid to the Church in Need, the whole school prayed the Rosary with the Mission Team leading on two decades of the Rosary.</p>
<p>St. Wulstan's Catholic Primary School</p>	<p>Mini Vinnie's led the Rosary time during Wednesday lunchtimes.</p> <p>All Key Stage One and Key Stage Two assemblies had a Rosary focus.</p> <p>On Friday 18th October, all children prayed a decade as part of the Aid to the Church in Need.</p>
<p>Central Team</p>	<p>At the team meeting on 17th October, Executive Team colleagues were introduced to the Holy Rosary and how to pray the Rosary. The different prayers, their order, the mysteries were explored. The session ended with a familiar prayer to all, 'The Lord's Prayer'. On 18th October some central team members joined our schools in praying a decade of the Rosary, as part of the Aid to the Church in Need.</p>

THE EMMAUS ADVENT JOURNEY

Our opportunities to come together in prayer and faith as a family will continue in December via our Emmaus Advent Journey. You will see from the information below that each school has been linked sequentially to a special part of the story. We have taken the story right back to the beginning, with God's first promise in Genesis and the prophecies that first foretold the coming of Jesus.

- Each school will create a prayer display, in a focal area, to represent their allocated part of the Advent journey by 29th November 2024.
- All schools will provide pictures of their prayer display, so that we can piece them together and capture this special Emmaus Advent journey in a montage.
- St Francis Xavier Primary colleagues will lead an Emmaus prayer service via teams in December. All schools will be invited to join this service, and all schools will take part through readings.



Emmaus Advent Journey



I

God's first Promise: Genesis 3:15

Christmas marks the beginning of God's process to restore our relationship with Him through a New Covenant. The first promise God ever made was about Christmas. In Genesis, we read that when Adam and Eve first sinned in the Garden of Eden, mankind was separated from God's presence. In theological terms, God promised that through the Seed of a woman would come one who would crush the head of Satan. This is the first promise of a Savior and the first great act of God's grace after our tragic act of rebellion.

***'And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel.'***



HAGLEY CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL
SEMPER FIDELIS

2

Humble Beginnings: Micah 5:2

Bethlehem was a small town, insignificant in comparison to bigger cities in the area. In the Message Paraphrase of Micah 5:2, Bethlehem is referred to as 'small among the clans of Judah'. However, as we see in scripture, it foretells that a ruler will come out of this town.

***'But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times.'***



OUR LADY
AND ST HUBERT'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

3



Jesse Tree: Isaiah 11:1

The Jesse tree represents Jesus' family tree. The name is taken from Isaiah 11:1, in which Jesus is referred to as a shoot coming up from the stump of Jesse, the father of David. The ornaments on the Jesse tree tell of Jesus' ancestors, and of the events leading to Jesus' birth.

***'There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.'***

4



Sar Shalom: Isaiah 9:6

Through the prophet Isaiah, God revealed that a child would be born who would be called the Prince of Peace. In Hebrew, the word for "Prince" ("sar") indicates a leader or captain, and the word for "peace" ("shalom") means "completeness." When Jesus came to earth, He came to lead a broken world to a place where we could be made whole again.

***'For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.'***

5



A special visit: Luke 1:30-31

The angel Gabriel told Mary that she will give birth to the Son of God, and she responds with immediate surrender to her role in God's plan. She had no assurance of a comfortable outcome. A virgin engaged to be married, she likely knew how difficult giving birth to and raising Jesus would be. The only assurance Mary received was God's Word, and it was enough for her to say "yes."

***'And the angel said to her,
"Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God.
And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son,
and you shall call his name Jesus.'***

6



The Power of Belief: Mary and Elizabeth Luke 1: 39-45

Something powerful happens when we trust God enough to not only hear what He says, but *believe* it. If you believe what God says is true and that His plan for you will lead to the best possible outcome, that trust results in peace and blessing. After Mary encountered the angel and submitted to God's plan for her life, she visited her cousin Elizabeth, who was also miraculously pregnant after experiencing infertility for years. When Elizabeth heard Mary's incredible news, she was filled with the Holy Spirit.

***'When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting,
the baby leaped in her womb,
and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.
In a loud voice she exclaimed:
"Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!"***

7



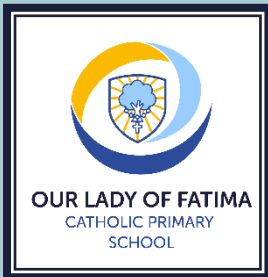
God Isn't Far Away: Matthew 1:20-25

In Joseph's dream, the angel revealed that the birth of Jesus would fulfil centuries-old prophecy and end the separation that had existed between God and man since the first sin in the Garden of Eden. Joseph learned that Jesus would be "God with us."

'an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,^[a] because he will save his people from their sins.'

²² All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ 'The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel'^[b] (which means 'God with us').'

8



The flight to Egypt: Matthew 2:13

King Herod was threatened by the birth of Jesus. He felt that a baby boy had no place in taking the title of King. God wanted to protect His only Son from the very beginning, and so sent forth an angel to warn Joseph of dangers that lay ahead.

'When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.'

9



Humble Hooves - The journey: Luke 2:4-7

When we think of Christmas, we often think of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem, the city of David in which Jesus was born. The pregnant and delicate Mary riding on a donkey, Joseph confidently leading the way as her husband and protector with staff in hand, the demanding and dangerous trip to Bethlehem, finding no room available at the inn upon their arrival and thus settling in a stable.

'So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.'

10



The Light Has Come: Luke 2:4-7

Christmas is here! It's time to celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ—the Light of the World! Jesus was born in a stable in Bethlehem. God wanted to show us that Jesus Christ came to bring salvation to everyone - not just the rich and powerful, but the poor and downtrodden.

'While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.'

I1

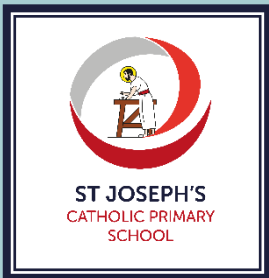


The Amazing Were Amazed: Luke 2: 8-20

Can you imagine what the shepherds experienced when an army of “heavenly hosts” appeared that Christmas night? They were simply tending their sheep in a field, and suddenly: a sky full of angels. It’s likely they had heard of angels, but seeing one was probably both terrifying and amazing. Imagine hundreds of angels shouting praise together to make what must have been a deafening, glorious sound. What an incredible moment!

‘An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.’

I2



Faith Without Hesitation: Luke 2:15-16

Luke 2 says that when the angels told the shepherds the Good News about Jesus’ birth, they “hurried off” to find Him. Instead of waiting around and letting doubt creep in, they responded immediately.

‘When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.’

I3



God’s Heart for The Whole World: Matthew 2:1-8

Magi were known to be astrologers, which explains why God used a star to guide them to Jesus. He knew how He could get their attention!

‘After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, ‘Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.’

I4



King, God, and Savior: Matthew 2:9-12

In Matthew 2:11, the Magi bring Jesus three famous gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

‘After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.’

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR IN SUPPORT OF FR. HUDSON'S CARITAS

This December, Emmaus Catholic MAC is supporting the Reverse Advent Calendar Appeal in support of Fr. Hudson's Caritas. Your school will be contacting you shortly with details of how our Emmaus communities can get involved to support this initiative. Thank you in advance for your support.

THE DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE WARMLY INVITES YOU TO SUPPORT OUR 2024 REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

Throughout Advent, every child, young person and member of staff in a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Birmingham is invited to show their love and support for those in need by contributing at least one item to the diocesan Reverse Advent Calendar.


This year we are collecting toiletries which will be donated to Father Hudson's Caritas to support people living on the streets or those arriving new to the country as asylum seekers or refugees. Father Hudson's Caritas is desperately in need of the following items:

- ◆ Deodorant
- ◆ Body wash
- ◆ Sanitary products
- ◆ Toothpaste
- ◆ Toothbrushes

◆ ...or any other hygiene products you would like to donate

Please add an item or two to your weekly shop during Advent and add it to your school Reverse Advent Calendar.

Never tire of working for a more just world, marked by greater solidarity. - Pope Francis



I hope that you have enjoyed hearing about the many initiatives and successes taking place across our Emmaus schools and look forward to updating you further in the New Year.

With very best wishes

Suzanne Horan

Chief Executive Officer