



4th November 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

RE: Celebration of the Word – Half Term Two, Week Two

Last week, we held a beautiful **solemnity to celebrate All Saints' Day** on November 1st, 2024, in the Sports Hall. We are immensely proud of our children for their exemplary behaviour during the Mass, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to parents and governors for attending—this was the first time in over 30 years that we came together in this way. Father Mark from St Winifred's Parish kindly celebrated with us, making the occasion even more special. Your presence truly enriched our celebration of this wonderful school tradition. Thank you all for joining us! Images can be found on the St James' app.

On Thursday, October 31st, we also held a **voluntary lunchtime rosary session** led by a local parish member from St. Ann's Church in Heald Green. It was heart warming to see so many children in attendance, engaging in prayer and reflection. **Each participant received a set of rosary beads**, which served as a meaningful token to mark the end of the Month of the Rosary. This gathering not only strengthened our sense of family but also deepened our appreciation for this Catholic tradition. Thank you to everyone who joined us in this special moment of faith and connection.

This week, our Gospel reading and school Celebration of the Word is **Mark 12:28-34**. In this passage, a teacher of the law asks Jesus about the greatest commandment. Jesus responds by emphasising love—love for God and love for one's neighbour. **This timeless message of love and respect** for one another is particularly poignant as we approach Remembrance Day next week, a time when we honour those who sacrificed their lives for our freedom and dignity.

This Gospel teaches us the significance of compassion and perseverance in our relationships, reminding us that we should not shy away from expressing our faith and support for others. As we reflect on the sacrifices made by many, we are called to embody the love Jesus speaks of, ensuring that we recognise the inherent dignity in every person. Like the heroes and the fallen that we remember next week, we are encouraged to live with courage and a commitment to serve our community with kindness. In honouring their legacy, let us strive to follow the commandment of love, growing in faith and compassion towards all.

In connection with this week's focus on the **Catholic Social Teaching** principle of **Dignity** of the Human Person, we encourage our children to embrace the importance of respecting and valuing everyone in our community. This week, we invite students to practise this foundational principle at school and at home by showing kindness and support to their peers at school and family members. Simple acts like helping a friend with their work, listening to someone who needs to talk, or participating in class discussions can make a big difference.

We are currently planning some exciting **fundraising events for Caritas**- a Diocesan supported charity. The mission of Caritas is rooted in our Catholic faith, which calls us to love our neighbours and put faith in action through love/caritas. Bishop Mark has asked all local Catholic schools to support this worthy cause. Details of these events will be released next week but in the meantime- if you or a business owner you know would like to donate a raffle prize, please contact me directly at h.purkiss@stjamesheadle.co.uk - any donations would be gratefully received. These will be raffled at our upcoming Charity events this half term. We thank you in advance for your ongoing support with our fundraising efforts.



ST JAMES'

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Next week, we will be marking **Remembrance Day** in school with our children by holding a service and a two-minute silence. We will reflect on the sacrifices- both past and present- made by so many for our freedom. As Catholics, it is important to honour their memory, reminding us all to work towards a more just and loving world.

The month of November is traditionally a time in which the Catholic community remembers those who have died. Our school prayer for November reflects this theme- we say this each day in our lessons and we will take this time to remember all those we know who have gone ahead of us. I have included our **prayer** below for your own reflection at home:

Prayer for November

Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

We also continue with our **lunchtime prayer** each day:

Lunchtime Prayer

*Bless us, Oh Lord,
and these thy gifts which we are about to receive from thy bounty
through Christ, Our Lord.
Amen.*

This week's quote for reflection comes from **Pope Leo the Great**, whose feast day is celebrated in November: *"Be the kind of person that you would like to meet."* Let this quote guide our actions and choices, fostering a positive environment where we uplift and inspire one another in our school community and in our daily lives.

As always, I welcome any feedback you may have. Please feel free to reach out to me at **h.purkiss@stjamesheadle.co.uk**.

Yours Faithfully

Miss H Purkiss

Associate Assistant Headteacher