



10th March 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Celebration of the Word – Half Term Four, Week Three

This week, we marked the beginning of Lent with a deeply atmospheric and reverent observance of Ash Wednesday. All children participated wonderfully in a **unified Celebration of the Word** on Wednesday morning, where children from each form led one another in prayer and reflection, engaging with the Gospel and the significance of this solemn season. At lunchtime, we were blessed to have Fr Samuel from St Ann's Parish celebrate **Mass** for our children. Additionally, our Prefects took on the special role of distributing ashes to each child during Form time. This was a beautiful and meaningful way for our young people to lead one another in faith. Photos of our Ash Wednesday observance are available on Blue Sky and our school app.

This week, our Gospel reading for the **Celebration of the Word comes from Luke 4:1-13**. In this passage, we witness Jesus spending forty days in the wilderness, where He is tempted by the devil yet remains strong in His trust in God. Jesus overcomes each temptation, showing us the power of having spiritual convictions and reliance on God. As we continue our Lenten journey, this passage reminds us to remain faithful in times of challenge and to seek God's guidance in moments of struggle. This half term, our Year 8 pupils have explored this passage in their Religious Education lessons, reflecting on its meaning and the lessons it offers us today. Through **studying artwork inspired by the story**, they have deepened their understanding and discovered new insights. I invite you to take a moment to reflect on the image used at the end of this letter and consider what it may reveal to you.

As we journey through Lent, our children have begun collecting for the **St Joseph's Penny appeal**, embracing the spirit of giving during this season of reflection and charity. They will be gathering any spare pennies they have over the coming weeks, culminating in an exciting penny race within each year group! If you would like to support our Lenten efforts for St Joseph's Penny, donations can be made through Parent Pay. Any contributions to this worthy cause would be greatly appreciated.

We will also be organising an **Easter fundraiser** here in school and would be grateful for any donations of chocolate (chocolate bars, Easter eggs, boxes of chocolate) for a raffle we will organise. These donations can be handed in to your child's Form Tutor. If you wish to make a monetary donation, you may do so via ParentPay. As always, we are grateful for any support you can offer to the Catholic Life of our school.

This week, we are reflecting on the **Catholic Social Teaching principle of Stewardship** within school, which calls us to care for God's creation and use the world's resources responsibly. It reminds us that we have a duty to protect and preserve the environment, ensuring that future generations can enjoy the beauty and abundance of God's gifts. In school, we explore this teaching by discussing how we can be good stewards in our daily lives, from reducing waste to caring for the world around us. Our children will reflect on this in form time, looking at the example of **St Francis of Assisi** and his deep respect for all of God's creation.

As part of our commitment to deepening our school's prayer life, we have introduced a new approach to our end-of-day prayer. Instead of a single shared prayer across all year groups, each year group now recites a **prayer that is most relevant to their age and stage in their journey of faith**. This March, Year 11 children are learning the Serenity prayer to help with during the upcoming exam season:



ST JAMES'

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

Amen

This week **St. Aloysius Gonzaga, the Form Saint for 11E- is our Saint of the Week.** A young Jesuit known for his purity, dedication, and care for the sick, St. Aloysius said "*I am not my own; I belong to God,*" which reminds us of the importance of surrendering ourselves to God's will and living for the good of others.

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

Yours faithfully

Miss H Purkiss

Associate Assistant Headteacher

