



9th December 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

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

This week, as we light our second Advent candle in school, our **Gospel reading for the Celebration of the Word is from Luke 3:1-6**. In this passage, we hear John the Baptist's call to *“Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.”* He invites us to reflect on our lives and make room for Jesus by turning away from sin and embracing God’s mercy. This message reminds us that Advent is a time of preparation—not only for the celebration of Christmas but also for welcoming Jesus into our hearts and lives each day.

As we journey through the second week of Advent, the lighting of the **second candle symbolises peace**—a peace that comes from trusting in God’s love and preparing ourselves to receive Him. In school, we continue to mark this sacred season with prayer, reflection, and acts of kindness, reminding ourselves of the hope and peace that Jesus brings to the world. Let us take this opportunity to deepen our relationship with Him and share His love with others.

This week, our focus is on the **Catholic Social Teaching principle of the Option for the Poor**, which calls us to prioritise the needs of those who are struggling or marginalised. As we journey through Advent, we encourage our children to reflect on how they can respond to this call in their daily lives. Advent is a time of giving and preparing our hearts to welcome Jesus, who himself was born into poverty.

This Catholic Social Teaching principle reminds us that we are called to be Christ’s hands and feet in the world, bringing hope and love to others during this special season. By living out this principle, our children can experience the true joy of Advent: sharing God’s love with those who need it most.

Just a reminder that we will be hosting a **Carols for Caritas concert on 12th December at 6:30pm**. Tickets for this festive event are available on Parent Pay. There will also be a raffle with some wonderful prizes such as a £100 Marks and Spencer voucher, Sunday Lunch for two at Dakota and many many more! Raffle tickets are also available in advance on Parent Pay. It promises to be a delightful and festive evening.

On 13th December- we are also hosting a **retired parishioner party** here at school. It will commence at 11:15am, and will be a lovely occasion for us to join with local parishioners to celebrate the festive season. If you have a retired relative or friend who would like to attend- please email me at h.purkiss@stjamesheadle.co.uk by Tuesday 10th December.

The Travelling Nativity will continue to visit each Key Stage Three form until 18th December, and we hope it will inspire and enrich your child’s experience of Advent, keeping the spirit of Christ at the centre of our preparations.

This Wednesday, 11th December, we are holding a lunchtime Mass with Fr Louis from St Anne's Parish. This is a wonderful opportunity for our children to pause and reflect during the busy season of Advent, preparing their hearts for the coming of Jesus at Christmas. We encourage all children to join us in this special time of prayer and worship, as we come together as a school community to focus on the true meaning of Advent.



I have included our Advent prayer below for your own reflection at home, so you can join us in this journey of faith and preparation during this holy season.

Prayer for Advent

*Christ, come into our world of darkness
Light up our lives with your coming.
Fulfil all our longings with the joy of your birth
Strengthen our resolve to work for change in our world
And to share the hope of your birth that each Advent brings.
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 from Pope Francis, "*Advent is a journey that helps us to open our hearts and to wait for Jesus with joy and hope,*" reminds us to approach this season with faith and anticipation. As we prepare for His coming, let this inspire us to share joy and hope with others through acts of kindness and love in the week ahead.

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