



## SCHOOL UPDATES

### OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOXES:

We are extending our deadline for our Operation Christmas Child appeal to **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> November**. I would urge you all to consider whether you are able to support us in donating as many boxes as possible this year. It doesn't take much to put together a box, but we know that your contribution will have a huge impact in the life of a child living in poverty this Christmas.

Please remember to wrap and secure your box (with an elastic band), label the box to say who it has been packed for (ie. gender and age group), and if possible, include the payment for shipping as requested in the packing instructions. If you have mislaid the original information, these can be found online at <https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/how-to-pack-a-shoebox/>.

Many thanks.

### REMEMBRANCE:

A massive thank you to all pupils who took part in Remembrance Day commemorations last Sunday. St Mary's had a particularly strong representation both from school and various other groups, and special commendation must go to Adam in Y6, who read our school dedication beautifully, and to Freya in Y5 and Clare in Y4 who laid wreaths on behalf of the school and the Royal British Legion. We continue to pray for all those whose lives have been in any affected by the atrocities of war, and of course for a world in which peace may prevail.

### ACTIVE TRAVEL PROMOTION WEEK:

We've had a great week in school with 'Biking Ben' who has lead various sessions with pupils across school – most notably a very well attended 'Biker's Breakfast' on Wednesday! It's been great to see the bike shed full of bikes and scooters this week – in spite of the autumnal weather; we continue to encourage 'active travel' to and from school at St Mary's, and would urge you all – where possible – to leave your car at home and to walk, bike or scoot instead.

### ATTENDANCE:

YEAR GROUP	AUTHORISED ABSENCE (%)	UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE (%)	OVERALL (%)
RECEPTION	2	0	98
YEAR 1	0.3	0	99.7
YEAR 2	0	0	100
YEAR 3	0	0	100
YEAR 4	0	0	100
YEAR 5	0.7	0	99.3
YEAR 6	0.6	0	99.4
AVERAGE	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>99.5</b>

A huge well done to everyone for an excellent week of attendance – especially for Years 3, 4 and 5 for maintaining 100% so far this week, with Year 3 for achieving 100% two weeks in a row!

#### SPORTS UPDATE:

Well done to our Y5 and 6 athletes who represented the school marvellously this week at the St Thomas More cluster athletics competition. Let's hope we can build on this success come the Summer months!

#### FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S:

Christmas Raffle - It's that time of year again when we start organising and collecting prizes for the Friends of St Mary's Christmas Raffle. In previous years we have been very fortunate to have received some extremely generous raffle prizes from the St Mary's community including gifts, vouchers and tickets for events. If either you or your employer is able to donate a prize towards the raffle, please contact the school office or a member of the Friends. Thank you.

Christmas Cards - Please can you ensure that all Christmas Card orders along with payment (cash or cheque payable to Friends of St Marys) are returned to school by Friday 16<sup>th</sup> November. Orders will be sent off to the printers Monday 19<sup>th</sup> November in order to meet print deadline for delivery early December. We will not be able to accept any late order forms.

"Thirsty Thursday" - The Friends will be selling yummy hot chocolate in the school yard Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> November from 3pm to help ward off the winter blues.

The next Friends meeting will be Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> November at 9am (all welcome).

#### REMINDERS

##### WINTER UNIFORM:

Please remember that all pupils should now be bringing a coat in to school each day, and it is recommended that pupils also bring a hat, gloves and a scarf as temperatures fall. Pupils must wear sensible, black school shoes (no trainers or boots); if – for whatever reason – pupils are unable to wear their school shoes for a short period of time, parents/carers must contact the school directly (by phone, in person, or by writing) to explain the reasons for this. Boots may be worn to/from school and during playtimes, but shoes must be sent in to be worn in school. Thank you.

##### NORTHERN CHILDREN'S BOOK FESTIVAL:

There are still tickets available for the NCBF2018 Gala Day, which will be held on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> November (10am – 5pm) at Gateshead Central Library and The Shipley Art Gallery. Tickets are free, and can be obtained at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ncbf-gala-day-2018-tickets-51541204129> and more information can be found at [www.northernchildrensbookfestival.org.uk](http://www.northernchildrensbookfestival.org.uk). The programme is aimed at children from 4-13 and will feature a number of interactive family sessions with award winning authors, illustrators, artists and story-tellers including Vivian French MBE, Steve Skidmore, Sophie Anderson, Guy Bass, Ross Montgomery, Alan Windram, Dominic Wilcox from Little Inventors, Simon Bartram and Liz Million.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING:

On Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> November, we celebrate the feast of Christ the King in the Catholic Church. The Feast day is a joyous celebration, and marks the last Sunday in the Liturgical Calendar before we then move in to the season of Advent. On this Sunday, each year, we also celebrate Youth Sunday – a day on which we recognise the importance of young people in the life of the Church.

At St Mary's, the young people of the parish will be leading parts of our Sunday worship. So that we may involve as many of our pupils as possible, I will be meeting next week with all those pupils who will be attending in preparation for the Mass. As such, it would be extremely useful if pupils know whether they will be in attendance at Mass or not. I will send out a letter to all those who will be involved next week. During the Mass, the pupils from Y4 who will be preparing to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion this year will also take part in a special Liturgy as part of their continued preparations, so it promises to be a truly uplifting and joyous celebration for all.

Please do come along, and help us to celebrate our young people and all they bring to our Church. I look forward to seeing many of you on the day.

Many thanks,

Mr J Wheatley

### YOUTH FRIDAY:

On Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> November, along with many other Diocesan primary and secondary schools, we will be celebrating *Youth Friday*: a time for young people to celebrate their special role in the Church, and to hear a special message from our Bishop – this year, around the theme of 'Joy'. In school, we will be sharing a special Liturgy (for pupils and staff) which has been put together by our Diocesan Youth Ministry Team (YMT) in preparation for the Feast of Christ the King. The YMT undertake wonderful work with young people over our Diocese (including our pupils at St Mary's), and each year we make a donation from school to support their ongoing work at the Emmaus Youth Village (Consett). This year, we will be donating the proceeds from our Christmas jumper day on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> December to the YMT.

DIARY DATES (19.11.18 – 23.11.18)

MONDAY – Extended deadline for Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes.

WEDNESDAY – Y5 trip to Jarrow Hall.  
Chatterbooks session 4/6.

THURSDAY – Family Learning – Early Maths 3/5.

NLT Under 11s Football competition at Gateshead Stadium (pupils involved will receive a letter).

FRIDAY – Youth Friday

SUNDAY – Feast of Christ the King (including Sacramental Preparation Liturgy 3: 'Saying Sorry') celebrated during 9:30am Mass at St Mary's RC Parish Church – all welcome!

