



## SCHOOL UPDATES

### LENT 2017:

On Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March, Mrs McTernan and our Y5 Mini-Vinnies – aided by Mrs Salmon and Mrs Skrobot (parents from Y3) – took the produce donated as part of our Worswick Welcome appeal to St Andrew's Church, Newcastle. The cans, jars and packets were greatly received, and will go to support the ongoing work of the project which offers a safe haven for some of our most vulnerable neighbours in Newcastle and Gateshead. Following the visit, the Mini-Vinnies put together a video to share with our wider community, which can be found on our Twitter feed (@whickhamstmarys).

This week, our pupils have been taking part in 40-minute sponsored activities to raise money for our Lenten charities: St Cuthbert's Care, and the Ukweli Home for Hope (Kasarani, Kenya). Taking inspiration from Sunday's Gospel, KS2 have been taking part in a 'water-carrying' challenge – considering how precious clean, safe water is, and how we can often take this life-giving resource for granted – whereas KS1 have been boogying their 40 minutes away in a Lenten themed dance-athon! Please could all funds raised from the sponsored events be sent/brought in to school by Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April.

Thank you for your continued help and support with our Lenten almsgiving.

### MISSION WEEK:

Next week we will be celebrating our Lenten Mission Week. The theme for our Mission, taking inspiration from the life and teachings of Blessed Oscar Romero, is 'We are God's Microphone'; over the course of the week, pupils will be experiencing 'Pilgrimage Afternoons', during which they will take part in a 'Way of the Cross' around our school grounds: a prayerful journey focusing on some of the themes of Holy Week in a creative and thought-provoking way. We will also be enjoying special Liturgies in school, and celebrating Mass on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March at St Mary's Church (9:30am) – sharing with our parish family some of our experiences from the week. Please pray for us, that we may be inspired and invigorated by our Mission to be God's microphone in our world today, and help us to celebrate the week by joining us for Mass on Thursday.

### COMIC RELIEF:

Tomorrow, we would like to invite pupils to come to school in their own clothes – adorned with all things 'Red Nose Day'. A suggested donation of £1 can be brought in to help support this wonderful charity – but please feel free to be as generous as you can. We have been running a joke competition in school all week to celebrate the event; you can see the finalists for EYFS, KS1 and KS2 on our school Twitter feed (@whickhamstmarys), where you will be able to cast your vote and decide who will be crowned champion in our Celebration Assembly on Friday.

### 'BIG PIE FRIDAY':

On Friday, Y5 will be taking part in 'Big PIE Friday', an event being promoted by PIE (Primary Inspiration through Enterprise), a charity who promote enterprise and links with local business to increase employment opportunities in the North East. On the day, the pupils will be completing two STEM based challenges (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths), competing against other participating schools in the North East. We will also welcome a PIE'oneer: a representative from the charity, who will oversee proceedings. We will report back in the coming weeks as to how the pupils get on.

#### MOTHER'S DAY SALE:

Thank you to all those who donated gifts for our Mothers' Day Sale, and especially to the volunteers who helped prepare, sort and wrap gifts this week; thanks to their help, the annual sale has been a wonderful success, raising £403 to go towards supporting learning opportunities for St Mary's pupils.

*Please note, the Friends of St Mary's cannot be held personally accountable for the choices made by your darlings, so please practice your best surprised faces for Sunday morning!*

#### SPORTING UPDATES:

We have had a particularly successful time in a number of sports this year, which goes to show the sporting excellence achieved by pupils at St Mary's.

Next week, the school football team will be competing in the North-Eastern Finals of the National League Schools Cup, representing Gateshead FC, at Sincil Bank Stadium: the home of FA Cup giant-killers, Lincoln City. The boys, who qualified for the tournament, fending off competition from other Gateshead Schools, were invited to be special guests at Gateshead's 2-1 victory against Woking on Saturday, during which the team – who had been given a tour of the ground and been introduced to the Gateshead squad prior to the match – were used as official 'ball boys'! We would like to thank Gateshead FC for all their generosity, and wish them well for their promotion push this season, as well as offering encouragement and support to our boys for their upcoming tournament.

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> final of the week will take place on Thursday for the Hi-5 Netball team, who will be taking part in the County Finals at Blue Flames, Longbenton. The team have done incredibly well, making their way through two rounds of competitive netball, to qualify for the prestigious event. Mrs Joyce is incredibly proud of the teams achievements, and we wish them well for the event – we know you'll do us proud!

Finally, a huge well done to the pupils in Y4 who took part in the Multi-Skills event at St Thomas More on Wednesday; the pupils demonstrated wonderful skill, enthusiasm and fair play, representing our school amazingly well. We're so proud of all the sporting achievements of our pupils – whether through representing the school, or otherwise – and are committed to providing sporting opportunities for all.

#### SKIPPING FESTIVAL:

As you may be aware, skipping fever has overwhelmed Year 3 in recent weeks, in preparation for the Gateshead Skipping Festival taking place this Thursday. At the event, pupils will be competing against a number of other Gateshead Schools in various events such as: 'run-jump-out', 'keep the pot boiling' and the skip dance performance, during which individual skills (including speed skip, double bounce and 'the pretzl'!) will be assessed. The pupils have made amazing progress with their skipping skills – which is not only great for health and fitness, but also an incredibly fun activity to take part in – and we look forward to hearing how they get on at the event.

#### PARISH ACTIVITIES:

The Children's Liturgy group at St Mary's RC Church would like to invite all pre and school-aged children to take part in Lenten craft activities, in preparation for Palm Sunday, following Mass on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March and Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April. The children will be helping to prepare for our Palm Sunday procession, which will – I'm sure – set a wonderful tone at the start of such an important week in the Church's calendar. All welcome!

## ACTIVE KIDS VOUCHERS:

As a school, we are currently collecting Active Kids vouchers (available from Sainsbury's) in order to purchase sporting resources for school. If you – or someone you know – shops at Sainsbury's, we would be very grateful if you could collect and send the vouchers in to school; they will be greatly received, and will go towards continuing to provide excellent sporting opportunities for all at St Mary's. Thank you!

## REMINDERS

### PARENTS' EVENING:

Please help us move forward as a school by sharing your honest opinions about the curriculum feedback given during Parents' Evening; you can do this by completing a very short (5 simple questions – no typing required!) parent voice survey at <https://tinyurl.com/jzvq6ud> or by scanning the following QR Code:



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### C2C RIDES:

A reminder that there will be an after-school ride on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March, from 3:15-5pm, and a whole-day ride on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March 9am-3pm.

### ADULT CHOIR:

All adults welcome, the next rehearsals are:  
29<sup>th</sup> March.

### FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S:

The next meeting for the Friends of St Mary's will be Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May, 9am at school. All welcome!

## THE WEEK AHEAD W/C : 27/03/17

### **MISSION WEEK 2017: "We are God's Microphone"**

#### MONDAY -

**Opening Collective Worship to mark the start of our Mission.**

C2C Ride 3:15-5pm.

#### TUESDAY -

**Pilgrimage Afternoon 1 – pupils taking part in a creative 'Way of the Cross'.**

#### WEDNESDAY -

**Pilgrimage Afternoon 2 – pupils taking part in a creative 'Way of the Cross'.**

Y6 Football Team (National League Schools Cup squad) taking part in The North-East Finals at Sincil Bank Stadium, Lincoln (all pupils involved will have received an individual letter with details for the day).

#### THURSDAY -

**Whole School Mass (9:30am) – all welcome.**

Skipping Festival for Y3 at Gateshead International Stadium.

Y6 Hi-5 Netball County Finals (at 'Blue Flames', Longbenton; all pupils involved will have received an individual letter with details for the day).

#### FRIDAY -

**Celebration Liturgy.**

C2C Whole Day Ride.

Big PIE Friday (Y5).

Last Gymnastics session of Term.