

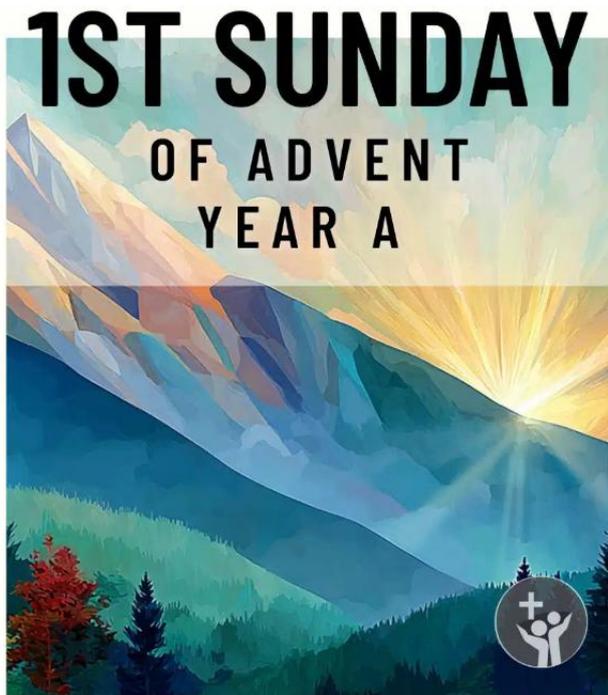


Well there is a definite chill in the air, twinkle of light, glimmers of hope and a tiny sprinkle of magic which all tell us the festive season will soon be upon us! As we enter the season of Advent this weekend, we are reminded of the four candles representing Hope, Peace, Joy and Love – all virtues and gifts given to us by Christ. Sometimes we must look hard for these gifts, but they are there...!

The next few weeks are exceptionally busy with lots of exciting events – please do scroll to the end of the newsletter for the list of Christmas dates and activities, which are also available on [our website](#).

As the last few weeks of term amp up in a variety of activities to celebrate the season and to help prepare our hearts for the Christmas may we remember to look for the gifts along with the twinkles, glimmers and sprinkles of magic.

1st Sunday of Advent – hope in the Lord's coming.



The 1st Sunday of Advent is a time of waiting and hope. We look forward to Jesus coming again, and we remember His birth in Bethlehem. Advent reminds us to be ready, not just for Christmas, but for the day when Christ will return. It is a season to pray, watch, and live in the light of the Lord.

The readings for the 1st Sunday speak about peace, joy, and staying awake. Isaiah gives a picture of all nations coming to God's mountain to learn His ways. The psalm is a prayer for peace in Jerusalem. Paul tells us to wake up and live as people of the light. Jesus warns us to be ready because His coming will be sudden.

In this first week of Advent, we light the candle of hope. We pray that You instil in us a spirit of watchfulness and readiness, that we may be prepared to welcome Him into our lives, our homes, and our world. May our celebration be a time of renewal, allowing us to grow closer to You and to one another. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

This fortnight at school

We have thoroughly enjoyed **class liturgies** from year 1 and 2 this past fortnight who taught us how to love others and to try to be saintly! The children led their worships through thoughtful prayers and reflections alongside considering how they could be more like St Andrew and Jesus. A huge thank you to Miss Torley and Mrs Winter for preparing the children so beautifully. November is **the month when we remember those who have died** and we have been thinking



of those close to us and remembering them in our prayers..

Bereavement

You will have seen my letter late last week informing you of the sad death of Mrs Ayers, former teacher at St Joseph's. We have been remembering Mrs Ayers this week in a variety of ways, from collective prayer in the hall, to smaller more personal prayers in class alongside the memorial book in the front office. The memorial book will be taken to Mrs Ayers' Memorial Service next Thursday, so if you would like to add your own personal family message please do so in good time.

Earlier this week, we also heard of the sad death of Bishop Thomas McMahon, former Bishop of Brentwood Diocese. Bishop Thomas is, to date, the longest serving Bishop of Brentwood. Bishop Thomas was exceptionally kind and loved visiting his schools; I particularly remember him visiting us at La Salette Primary School during my early years of teaching. Perhaps Bishop Thomas' most lasting achievement, was the building of a new cathedral at Brentwood; it was the first cathedral to be built in the classical style since Wren's St Paul's in London. He also inaugurated the Cathedral & Choral Trust to provide funding for the musical tradition which since his appointment to Brentwood he had promoted; and in 2000 extended the Choir School which earlier he had established. Requiescat in pace.

Walk Online Roadshow

Year 5 enjoyed the Walk Online Roadshow last week, where the children took part in engaging workshops hosted by eSafety Training experts; 'The 2 Johns', which covered essential topics, including staying safe while playing online games, navigating social media platforms like TikTok and Snapchat, the potential risks of the content they watch on YouTube, and online grooming. The children thoroughly enjoyed their session and came back to school very enthusiastic and informed!

Staff Development

Since September we have been working with a variety of colleagues to improve teaching and learning across the school for all the children. From Mrs Parker, our Trust Standards Lead, to colleagues from Treetops and speech and language therapists alongside the Elmhurst English Hub we have the quality of teaching and learning across all classrooms. Teachers and support staff are working hard to support children be the best they can be!

Bikeability

Year 4 and 6 took part in Bikeability last week, learning about road and cycling safety. The children were commended for their effort, great manners and kindness – well done years 4 and 6!

Maths Workshops

A huge thank you to Mrs Tapatau and the parents who were able to attend the maths workshop this week. It was great to hear all the different ways we can squeeze maths into our everyday lives alongside techniques and strategies to explain maths to our children.

Attendance

Class	Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Overall	Year to date
% Attendance this week	94.3%	87.9%	97.5%	94.8%	96.4%	96%	89.5%	93.7%	93.8%

Congratulations to Year 2 who achieved the best attendance this week. They will be rewarded with extra play next week. The target for each class is to achieve 96% attendance – some classes have some catching up to do – we can do it!

Pick up arrangements

Can I remind parents to ensure you let us know if someone other than yourself is going to be picking up your child as we cannot release a child to an unknown adult. Just send the office an email on:

admin@stjosephsprimary.thurrock.sch.uk

Parish Links

Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Church
Father Anthony Cho
30 Southend Rd
Stanford-Le-Hope
Essex
SS17 0PF
Tel: 01375 672167
Email - stanfordlehope@brcdt.org
Website - <https://www.ourladyandstjosephchurch.org.uk/welcome.htm>

Weekend Mass Times

Saturday

6.30 p.m. TILBURY

Sunday

9.00 a.m. TILBURY

11.00 a.m. STANFORD

5.30 p.m. STANFORD

Baptisms/RCIA: If you, your child or anyone you know would like to become a baptised Catholic then please contact our local parish via stanfordlehope@brcdt.org.

Christmas Looking Ahead...		
Date and Time	Event	What's needed...
Sunday 30 th November	First Sunday of Advent	
Tuesday 2 nd December 3.30pm	Phonics Parent workshop	Join Mrs Winter for a phonics workshop to further support your child's learning
Wednesday 3 rd December 9am + 2.45pm	Advent Prayer Service lead by the GIFT team	Join the GIFT team as they lead us in Advent prayer.
Thursday 4 th December	Your Shout Y6 Oracy finals 4pm	Invite only – please see letter from Mrs Tapatau and Mr Stephens
Friday 5 th December 9.15am	Y2 @ Mass	Join the year 2 class at Mass with Father Anthony
Friday 5 th December 3.30-5.30pm	PTA Christmas Fayre	Please come +enjoy the PTA fayre – it's not too late to lend a hand please contact Laura or the PTA team.
Sunday 7 th December	Second Sunday of Advent	
Wednesday 10 th December 9.30am + 2.30pm	EYFS + KS1 Nativity Performances – the presentation of the Christmas	Most costumes will be coming from school if any sparkly additions are needed we will send costume letters from your child's class teachers.
Thursday 11 th +12 th December 9-11am – may finish earlier.	PTA Christmas Wrap	Help needed wrapping presents, helping children to write labels and choosing presents for loved ones. Please see Laura and PTA team. Gifts are £2.50 each, limit of 3 per day can be prepaid for by Paypal (selecting Friends and Family) or cash on the day
Friday 12 th December 9.15am	YR and Y6 to Mass	Join Reception and year 6 at Mass with Father Anthony
Sunday 14 th December	Third Sunday of Advent	
Monday 15 th December	A Magical Christmas Jigsaw – De La Salle nativity (year 4 – invite only)	School uniform + a Christmas jumper/accessory and a packed lunch
Tuesday 16 th December 2pm	Y5+6 Christmas Carol Concert	Full school uniform
Wednesday 17 th December 12-1.30pm	Christmas dinner and Christmas jumper day!	Children to wear Christmas jumpers/accessories + have Christmas lunch
Thursday 18 th December	Pantomime in school.	Thanks to the PTA for funding this 
Friday 19 th December 1.30pm	End of term – school closes	