

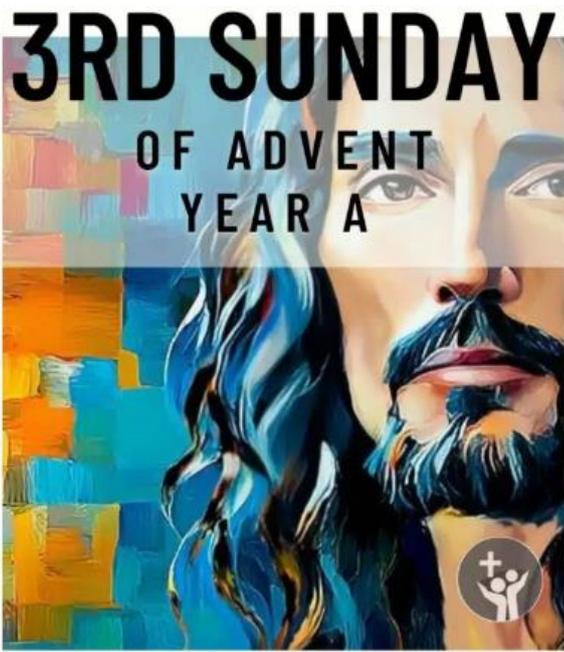


As we step into the Third Sunday of Advent—Gaudete Sunday—we enter a week centred on joy and anticipation. The soft glow of the pink candle reminds us that even in the busiest days of December, there is room for hope, gratitude, and moments of celebration. We are seeing our classrooms filling with that same spirit: children growing in kindness, curiosity, and community as we journey together towards the Christmas season.

In this fortnight's newsletter, you'll find highlights of all of the super things we've been doing along with some "Looking Ahead" information (please remember that all dates are also available on [our website](#).) and along with ways you can all join in with the Advent spirit at home. May this week bring your family peace, joy, and a renewed sense of togetherness.

Wishing you a joyful Third Week of Advent!

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent – hope in the Lord's coming.**



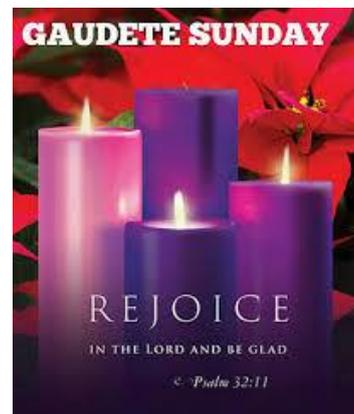
The 3rd Sunday of Advent, called Gaudete Sunday, is a time to rejoice. Even as we wait for Jesus, we can find joy in knowing He is near. Isaiah tells us that the desert will bloom and the weak will find strength. James reminds us to be patient and trust in God's timing. Jesus shows that God's promises are being fulfilled through His works.

This Sunday encourages us to stay hopeful. Joy does not come from perfect circumstances but from God's presence among us. We are called to look for signs of His goodness and to wait with faith. Our joy grows as we remember that Jesus brings healing, peace, and new life to the world.

***God of joy and promise, as we light the third candle of Advent, open our hearts to the gladness You bring. In the midst of waiting, fill us with hope; in the midst of darkness, shine Your light. Strengthen our faith, deepen our peace, and help us prepare with joy for the coming of Christ, our Savior and our Lord. Amen.***

### **Advent at Home**

Gaudete means "Rejoice!" — because we're getting close to Christmas! Have a go at a Joy Hunt - make a list or draw all of the things that bring you Joy. Perhaps you'll spot them in your home or nearby; share them with a friend so that you are spreading your Joy far and wide just like the disciples!



### **Advent – Stay and Pray**

The GIFT Team hosted their first Stay and Pray sessions to mark the beginning of Advent. They led their visitors beautifully through reflections and prayers appropriate for the first week Advent. A huge “well done” to them and a thank you to Mr Stephens for preparing them so beautifully.



### **Christmas Fayre and Christmas Wrap!**

We've had some super PTA events over the last fortnight with the Christmas Fayre and the Christmas Wrap! The Christmas Fayre was so much fun, and it was brilliant to see our community come together to meet Santa, drink a hot chocolate, splat a sprout and take part in the all-important raffle!! The Christmas wrap is ongoing as I type... with the patter of excited footsteps whizzing down the corridor to choose their gifts! A huge thank you to Mrs Kennard and the PTA team for organising these events and for you all to support them all so brilliantly. Thank you.



### **Oral Health Visit to EYFS**

Last week Reception class had a special visit from the local dental team who helped support their learning about keeping healthy and particularly in keeping their teeth shiny and clean! The children thoroughly enjoyed their session and have been keen to tell us ALL about it! Well done Team Reception!



## The Nativity

Wow! What can I say?! Reception class, Year 1 and Year 2 wowed us on Wednesday with their superb nativity. They danced, sang, and narrated impressing us all with their skills and talents in retelling the most important story of all – Jesus' Birth. A huge thank you and well done to all of the adults who supported the children in being ready to perform – with our youngest children being only 4 - this is no mean feat! Thank you also to those of you who were able to join us for the event – we hoped you enjoyed it as much we did!



## Attendance

Class	Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Overall	Year to date
% Attendance this week	67.2%	86.3%	84.6%	88.1%	93.6%	84.7%	86.9%	84.4%	93.3%

Congratulations to Year 4 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:stanfordlehope@brcdt.org).

<b>Christmas Looking Ahead...</b>		
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> December	Third Sunday of Advent	
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> 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 <sup>th</sup> December 2pm	Y5+6 Christmas Carol Concert	Year 5 and Year 6 children to wear their PE kit to school.  <b>Full Winter uniform must also be brought in within a separate bag. This includes shoes, a tie and a blazer.</b>  <b>No exceptions.</b>
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> December 12-1.30pm	Christmas dinner and Christmas jumper day!	Children to wear Christmas jumpers/accessories + have Christmas lunch
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> December	Pantomime in school.	Thanks to the PTA for funding this 
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> December 1.30pm	End of term – school closes	
<b>Spring Term</b>		
Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> January 8.40am	Back to school!	
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> January 9.15am	Open Morning for new Reception children (September 2026)	