

Dear Parents, Carers and Parishioners,

As we approach the second Sunday of advent, it has been wonderful to continue on our journey of preparation to celebrate the birth of Christ. Stay awake, be ready! This was the timely message in Picasso Class' inspiring liturgy this week. Thankyou children.

We have been very busy in school recently and have been working hard to create heartfelt Christmas messages for the people who live in local care homes, as we support the 'Hearts for Homes' campaign. Some of our children will deliver these hearts to the care home residents in the coming weeks and we are sure there will be lots of smiles and maybe a few tears!

Thank you to the children and staff of Mondrian class, who have been planting bulbs in order to brighten up the entrance of our school. The children really enjoyed getting their hands dirty, but weren't very impressed by the worms!

Our children enjoyed some special birthday celebrations with their friends in class and those who have birthdays in December are already looking forward to some fun on the last day of term.

Penshaw Food Bank – Thank you so much for the continued overwhelming response. It is fantastic to see our school community coming together to make a difference to those in need. We have been working with the parish and have managed to secure a number of brand new toys and gifts which will be included in family hampers. Donations of food or gifts can still be made at the front of school and are greatly received.

Chocolate Raffle – As always, our chocolate raffle has been a huge success and the children enjoyed winning a chocolate treat, which we are sure they will share with you all!

Christmas - We will be doing our very best to keep Christmas the special time it always is in school. However, some things have to be a little different. The details of Christmas parties and all other events, including Christmas lunch arrangements can be found on our school app calendar. Please be assured that, although parties are on the same day for some classes, the bubbles will be kept separate.

We took delivery of a very special gift for all of our children today and really appreciate how thoughtful people can be. The gift is a book called 'A Time for Magic,' written by Father Christmas to remind children that their friends at the North Pole are by their sides, now and always. It is dedicated to the children of Our Lady Queen of Peace 'for showing exceptional courage, imagination and kindness in the year 2020.' It is a book that we will share and treasure.

During this second lockdown, every evening there will be a reflection shared live at 6pm on the Parish of St. John XXIII Facebook page, link below. This is an opportunity for us to pause and be together in prayer each evening.

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/ParishStJohn23/>

While the churches are closed, and Our Lady Queen of Peace undergoes refurbishment, Mass is celebrated daily at 10am from one of the presbyteries. Please follow the link below.

<https://www.churchservices.tv/penshaw>

Please find below the link to the St John XXIII parish newsletter.

<https://www.washingtoncatholic.org.uk/Group/Group.aspx?ID=177845>

You can also receive the newsletter via e-mail by registering your details on the link below:

<https://forms.churchdesk.com/f/7KvL7LbKT4>



People of hope prayer

In this season of Advent, inspire us to be people of hope.

Encourage us not to be greedy for material possessions, but for justice and truth.

Enflame us with a love for others, which crosses boundaries of race, religion and nationality.

Stir within us a desire to fight for the integrity of creation and appreciate the immense beauty of the earth.

Be with us, Lord, at this time, that we may be a people of hope.

Amen.

I hope you have an enjoyable weekend, take care, God bless and stay safe.

Mrs Maher