

September 2023

Welcome back to a new school year! We hope that this first newsletter finds you well-rested after the summer break. The beginning of a new school year is exciting and busy, and a time ripe for new resolutions. Children may have mixed feelings as they settle into new routines at school, and you'll be easing back into school-time routines as a family too.

This newsletter gives a glimpse of some of the Collective Worship resources that children will experience during September and suggests ways to support your family prayer times.

Education Sunday

Education Sunday is a special day dedicated to celebrating Catholic schools. It's one of the oldest **Days of Special Prayer** in the Church calendar and this year is the 175th anniversary!

Catholic schools are communities of faith, working in partnership with families and the local parish to nurture children in their learning and faith.

To celebrate this special year, children will receive a special message of encouragement from Bishop Marcus Stock – Chair of the Department of Education and Formation, for the Catholic Bishops' Conference in England and Wales.

<https://www.tentenresources.co.uk/prayers-for-home/parent-newsletter/>

Through the **Ten Ten Resources** [Online Parent Portal](#) for Collective Worship, you can access the Daily Classroom Prayers that children will be praying each day in school. Perhaps you could pray the prayers at home as a family too! Ask your child's school about the login details if you don't already have them.

September Assemblies in brief

Here's a glimpse of the September Assemblies with links to where you can read the Gospels and some prompt questions which you might like to explore further with your child/ren:

Follow The Leader

w/c 4th September

This assembly starts the new school year with an opportunity for children to reflect on their relationship with Jesus during the summer holidays and, through an imaginative reflection, consider how they want to follow Jesus during the year ahead.

Matthew 16:24

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+16%3A21-27&version=NRSVACE>

- Children will have different levels of knowledge and understanding about leaders depending on their age. You might like to talk to your children about leaders that they know starting with leaders in their school and then widening to leaders in the Church, our country and the world. Ask the question: 'What makes a good leader?'
- Jesus, the Servant King is a good role model of leadership. You might like to challenge children to look for examples of leaders serving others and encourage them to find ways to follow that example.

Education Sunday 2023: "Where Two Or Three Meet In My Name"

w/c 11th September

To celebrate the 175th Education Sunday, children are quizzed about aspects of schools, and reflect on how Catholic schools contribute to the mission of the Church. In a concluding time of prayer for pupils, families and school staff, Bishop Marcus Stock, chair of the Catholic Education Service, will offer some words of encouragement.

Matthew 18:20

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+18%3A15-20&version=NRSVACE>

- This is a good opportunity to encourage children to consider what is special about their school. Ask what they enjoy about their learning and think about the people who help them every day at school.
- You might want to talk to your children about your own school life or your faith when you were growing up, you might like to also share the experiences of their grandparents and invite them to notice the differences and similarities with their school today.

Forgive and Forgive and Forgive

w/c 18th September

In this week's Gospel reading, Peter asks Jesus how many times we should forgive someone who sins against us. Jesus says not seven times but seventy-seven times - in other words, no matter how many times somebody hurts us, we need to forgive them! Peter's question helps us to understand that daily choices to forgive others are needed.

Matthew 18:21

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+18%3A21-35&version=NRSVACE>

- Saying sorry and forgiving others can be challenging. The message of the Gospel is that we should always be ready to forgive. This might be an opportunity to talk about making good choices and ways of making up for the wrong choices we have made.
- You might like to talk about the Sacrament of Reconciliation with your child and say the Act of Contrition ('Sorry Prayer') together during family prayer time.

Deeper, Wider, Higher

w/c 25th September

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+55%3A6-9&version=NRSVACE>

Isaiah 55:6-9

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+20%3A1-16&version=NRSVACE>

Matthew 20:1-16

- Fairness is important for children and this Gospel may provoke interesting questions. The message is that it's hard to understand God's amazing generosity. God doesn't only give us what we deserve, He continues to love us and provide for us unconditionally.
- You might want to challenge your children to find ways to be generous by giving time and being more understanding with younger siblings or friends.

Prayer

*"If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let them forget about themselves and what they want, take up their cross and **follow me**." Matthew 16:24*

The daily classroom prayers for the first week of term remind children that Jesus is always inviting us to walk with Him. Children have the opportunity to prayerfully reflect on what it means to follow Jesus on 'sunny' days when everything is going well; on 'cloudy' days when we are troubled and on challenging days when it feels like we have a mountain to climb! Whatever the day brings, we can be sure that Jesus is there with us.

Perhaps you'd like to say this prayer together.

Dear Jesus,

Thank you that you are with us on the path ahead.

Thank you that you help us up the mountains in our lives.

Thank you that you are with us when life is going well.

Thank you for helping us to follow you through every step of this school year.

Thank you that you are with us and all of our friends and family.

We will walk with you!