



St. Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School

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St. Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School, 841 Shirley Road, Hall Green, Birmingham, B28 9JJ

Friday 12th May 2023

Dear Parents,

*“The best laid schemes o' mice an' men /
Gang aft a-gley /
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain /
For promis'd joy!”*

I learnt that line of Robert Burns' poetry when studying John Steinbeck's novel 'Of Mice and Men' at GCSE English and it has never left me. Why has it come to mind now? Because I wanted this year's May Procession to be a real celebration of Mary, our mother, and involve the parish and the parents as well as our pupils. However, on Monday, the decision was taken to scale it down in light of a worsening weather forecast. Yet as I write this, the weather does not look as bad as feared. Luckily, we have the parish and school Corpus Christi procession taking place on Sunday 11th June and Father Paul can show us how to really process in style. There are plans afoot for food in our prayer garden afterwards and enjoy what will hopefully be a beautiful day.

Talking of beautiful days, I wonder how Year Six are feeling today. It is the end of their SATs – their statutory end of Key Stage tests, which the government and the DfE place so much emphasis on. For what it is worth, if SATs did not exist, we would still teach our children the same material in much the same way but I want you all to understand that education is far more than mere academic achievement (though that is undoubtably important). Rather, as St John tells us in the Gospel, it is about having faith and living life to the full, with all that entails.

Golden Book

Reception: Caelum Clifton for showing such an amazing attitude towards his writing this week. Caelum has produced a wonderful piece of work about 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', writing a sentence for each part of the story and reading it to the class. He has also tried very hard with writing sentences in phonics and focusing on his handwriting. Keep up the hard work, Caelum!

Year One: Alec Burns has had some great ideas this week when exploring our book in Literacy 'Stuck' by Oliver Jeffers. He has worked hard on forming sentences and practicing using capital letters and full stops. Well done Alec, keep up the good work! What a nice way to celebrate your upcoming birthday!

Year Two: Abhi Joy Mattapudi has applied himself unwaveringly this week, impressing his teachers with his listening skills. His focus on his reading has meant that he has produced some excellent pieces of work. Keep up the hard work!

Year Three:

Year Four: Aaron Arul Stephen lets his curiosity guide his learning: his inquisitive mind means he engages in all of his lessons, always trying to deepen his understanding of a topic. This week he wrote a beautiful prayer about finding the presence of our Lord in all things, building on what we have learnt about the Ascension. He is always impeccably mannered and presents all of his work immaculately. Well done, Aaron!

Year Five: Isla Byrne produced a wonderful piece of creative writing. She used a vast number of imaginative adjectives and varied her sentence openers. She was

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incredibly proud of this piece of work and this was evident in her presentation, her content and her smile after completing it. Isla has been working really hard this week and has been a support to her peers in Maths when looking at angles, feeling confident and totally secure with this learning. Keep up the amazing work, Isla!

Year Six: Jack Kelly for being focused, determined and resilient this week during our SATS. He has tried his very best with each and every test and has kept smiling throughout the week. He has also produced some excellent RE work: it was thoughtfully written and beautifully presented.

PTA Quiz

The time is upon us! This Saturday, we join together as a school and a home to host the inaugural SAB PTA Family Quiz. No hints from me regarding questions (or, more specifically, answers) save to say that if I were taking part, I would be brushing up on the songs played in our weekly Gifts from God assembly that take place on Friday. Obviously, that puts any children taking part at a distinct advantage! My thanks to Mrs Currington and Mrs Fitzpatrick for all the hard work they have put in, to the PTA committee and any other members, and to the families themselves who have paid to take part. Thanks also to Sherwood Dentistry for sponsoring the event!

Mass is at 5:30 on Saturday night and finishes just as the doors to the quiz open. Perhaps the staff will see you there? (This is my way of saying that we will be there, and that you are welcome as always).

Wednesday Word

THE GOSPEL IN CHURCH **Sunday 14th May 2023**



Jesus said to the disciples, "If you love me you will keep my commandments. I shall ask the Father, and he will give you a Helper to be with you forever. He will give you the Spirit of Truth. The world neither sees nor knows the Spirit, but you know the Spirit, because the Spirit is with you, and lives in you. I will not leave you orphaned: I will come back to you. In a short time the world will no longer see me but you will still see me. Then you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Those who receive my commandments and keep them are those who love me. Those who love me will be loved by my Father. I will love them, and they will see me as I truly am."

John's Gospel above alludes to the Ascension, which we will celebrate this coming Thursday with a Whole School Mass. All parents are welcome to attend! As Father Paul mentions in his bulletin, it is a Holy Day of Obligation and, as such, there will be a Mass at 7pm for those parents who can not attend the school Mass.

First Holy Communion

This was a resounding success. The children were wonderful (and wonderfully prepared) and both Masses managed to be spiritually uplifting at the same time as being excitingly poignant. Thank you to Father Paul for his time and beautiful homily; to Mrs Bresnen and the staff for the stewarding, direction and sash-pinning; to the parish catechists for their help in formation of our children and to the parents for their prayers. Our next celebration for our First Holy Communion children is their Going Forth Mass on Sunday 25th June, followed by their Communion breakfast in the parish hall afterwards.

A message from the PTA about First Communions...

A huge congratulations to children who made their First Holy Communion last weekend. They were well prepared for the day by their teachers and the parish catechists. We would also like to thank all of those from the PTA who were involved; from those who spent Friday evening decorating the room, those who made endless cups of teas and coffees on the morning and those who helped tidy up after. We are truly blessed to have so many people willing to give their time to help days like these become ones to remember.

I would also like to echo the above. The hall looked fantastic and the teas and coffees provided by the volunteers were much appreciated. Bear in mind that anyone who helped was giving up their own free time to make the day run smoothly and be so special. Staff come out of duty and obligation – because they care about the children and are employees of the school. Parents offer to help out at events such as these out of the kindness of their hearts and I could not be more thankful for this and for them.

Residential Meetings:

In preparation for the two residential trips happening in the last week of this half term, there are two parent meetings next week. These will hopefully provide a final opportunity to ask any questions about clothing, staffing, timings, money, etc.

For parents of children going to **Paris**, this will happen at **4.45 on Wednesday 17th May**. For parents of children going to **Boreatton**, this will happen at **4.45 on Thursday 18th May**.

I imagine the meetings will last about 30 mins and they aren't mandatory by any means but, as stated, will give an opportunity for any last-minute queries to be answered. Children are welcome to

attend also, but they will have the same information given that week during lesson time.

School uniform

As you will be aware, children can now wear summer uniform if they wish. For boys, this includes shorts and a pale blue polo shirt. For girls, this can be a pale blue blouse, polo shirt or blue checked / striped dress. Cardigans and jumpers (with or without the logo) are optional. Children can also continue in winter uniform should they wish. In the coming weeks, I will share more details about our uniform Swap Shop where older or outgrown items can be donated.

Both Concept Schoolwear, on the Stratford Road, and Monkhouse Uniform in Solihull stock our uniform and it does not matter whether children are wearing items with the old logo or the new. Talking of logos, our updated football kit will soon be unveiled...

Stories of Hope and Home

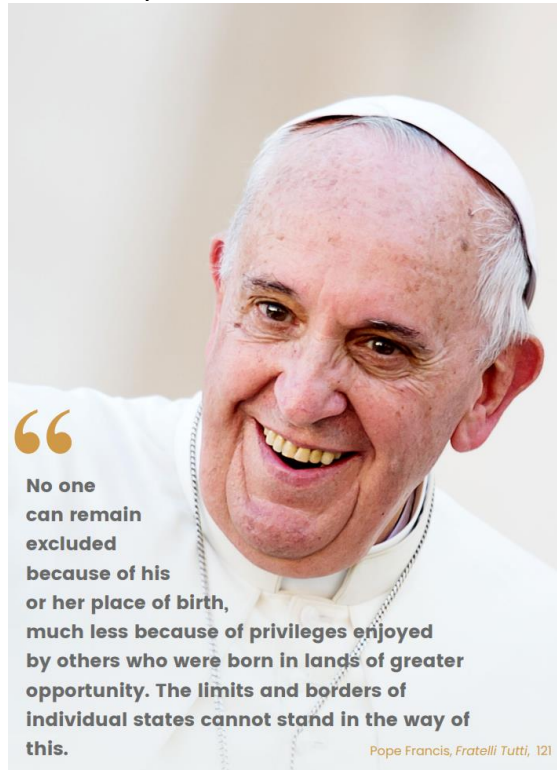
*“Every migrant has a name,
a face, a story”*

Pope Francis

This Monday 15th May, we have our Day of Action, asking businesses whether they would (if legally allowed) employ an asylum seeker. Children will be debating the issue amongst themselves and writing letters to their local MP, the Home Secretary and the Prime Minister. We live in a democracy and the educational value of this activity is learning that children have a choice and a right to express their opinion. This *is* political but it is *not* party political – rather, it is intending to bring about the change necessary to build God's kingdom here on earth. Our response to migrants and refugees is rooted in the innate worth of each human person. We must never exclude others from having the

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means to flourish and reach their potential as a creation of God simply because of where they were born.



An opportunity to celebrate our families...

A reminder that on Thursday 22nd June at 5pm, there will be a special Mass for the families of the children in Year Six. This year, St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary school says farewell to many of the youngest children in families which have been a huge and integral part of the school community. We thought a great way to celebrate this was to start a new tradition of a family Mass, which will happen annually. We will gather together in the prayer garden for a special celebration and unveil plaques which will have the family names on of those who are leaving our school family, adding more names each year. What better way to show our lasting legacy of formation here at St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School?

Finally ...

We are currently in the process of advertising for a Key Stage Two teacher to fill a newly arisen vacancy. Miss Atkins has found a new job at one of our very close Catholic primary school neighbours and we wish her all the best. Miss Atkins has worked with us for two years and has given a great deal to the school in that time, growing in experience and knowledge, as well as building good relationships with children and staff alike. We wish her all the very best when she leaves us in July!

A special thank you

Huge appreciation and thanks to Carys Henvey and Naomi Cunnane for raising so much money for the Mini-Vinnies last Sunday at the Party in the (car)Park. They are yet to count the money but I know they worked very hard all day!

Birthdays this week...

Happy birthday to Poppy in Year Three who was eight on Monday and to Mila in Year Two who was seven on Tuesday. On Thursday, Charlie, in Year Four, was nine and today, we celebrate Iyza in Reception's fifth birthday. Tomorrow, Alec in Year One is six and on Sunday, Cayden in Reception is five! What a bumper week of birthdays. I can feel a new tradition beginning next year to celebrate each child's birthday. Watch this space!

May dates for your diary

Sat 13th May: PTA Quiz at Parish hall. Doors open at 6:30 for a 7pm start

Mon 15th May: 'Lift the Ban' Day of Action

Wed 17th May: Paris Parent meeting 4:45pm

Thurs 18th May: Whole School Ascension Mass 9:30am

Thurs 18th May: Year Five and Six (children attending Paris) at Hall Green Library

Thurs 18th May: Boreatton Parent meeting 4:45pm

Fri 19th May: Year Five Class Assembly

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Mon 22nd May: Year Five/Six children departure for Paris or Boreatton Park

Thurs 25th May: Year Five/Six (children who attended Boreatton) at Hall Green Library

Fri 26th May: Children break up for half term

June dates for your diary

Mon 5th June: School re-opens for children

Thurs 8th June: Year Two at Hall Green Library

Fri 9th July: Keyboard and choir concert 2pm

Sun 11th June: *Corpus Christi* Parish Procession

Thurs 15th June: Year Three at Hall Green Library

Fri 16th June: Reception Class Assembly

Thurs 22nd June: Year Four at Hall Green Library

Thurs 22nd June: 5pm celebration Mass for Year Six families

Sun 25th June: Year Three Going Forth Mass

Thurs 29th June: Year Five at Hall Green Library

Fri 30th June: Reception Class Mass 2:30pm

July dates for your diary

Tues 4th July: Year Six at Hall Green Library

Sat 8th July: Summer Fete

Mon 10th July: Sports Day. Children can return to school or be collected directly from the venue

Thurs 20th July: Year Six Leavers Assembly 9am

Fri 21st July: Leavers Mass 2pm in the school hall

Tues 25th July: Break up at 2pm

Have a wonderful weekend and I shall see you all on Monday for the last two weeks of this very short half term!



Mr Clinton