

# LOVE-RESPECT-FLOURISH

St. Mary's Catholic School Newsletter

Issue 12 - 8th December 2023



## Advent Appeal

**Mr Johnston - Headteacher**

### Christ the King

(A reflection by Raymond Friel from Prayers for Schools)

**Judge of the nations –**

***This is what you said would be our final judgement:***

***What we did for the weak and vulnerable, the victims of our society.***

**For the hungry –**

***Whose crops have failed and go without food***

***Who go to Food Banks to feed their families***

**For the thirsty –**

***Whose water is unclean***

***Whose water sources are drying up due to human activity***

**For the strangers –**

***Who are new to our country and feel unwelcome***

***Who are lonely in our community***

***Who suffer ill health with not enough medicine or help***

***Who suffer from anxiety or depression***

***Because whatever we do to them, we do it to you.***

Advent is a time of waiting and anticipation of the Nativity and the celebration of God's love for the world. We are reflecting on this in school through a Living Prayer Wall in each form room, with Chaplaincy representatives leading the prayer life of their form class and dedicating prayers to a range of situations and people across the world.

The Catholic Church has a special vocation to take care of the poor and oppressed. We share this mission through our charity work, particularly in this season through the support for the Caritas Giving Advent Calendar, asking members of our community to bring in items of food and personal care to donate to those in need. We are collecting for the Cardinal Hume Centre in Westminster Food Bank Appeal and will be taking the donations we receive to the centre ahead of the Christmas holidays. Full details of this appeal are on the next pages, and I encourage you to take part, if you can, to ensure that as many people as possible can feel supported at what can be a difficult time of year for some.

Finally, I have shared here a related prayer extract (left) which I hope will encourage us all to think of others, and give what we can (material items, but also love and time) during this special season.



## Advent Carol Service

**Tuesday 12th December 2023**

at St Joseph and the Martyrs  
Roman Catholic Church, Windhill

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Tuesday 12th December 2023**  
Carol Service, 7.00pm

**Wednesday 13th December 2023**  
Scholastic Book Fair Ends

**Tuesday 19th December 2023**  
Christmas Dinner Day  
Christmas Jumper Day (with school uniform)

**Wednesday 20th December 2023**  
Last Day of Term ~ school ends 1.00pm

**Thursday 4th January 2024—START OF TERM**  
**Late start**—students in school by **11.30am**  
Bus companies have been informed and will rearrange their timings accordingly



St Francis of Assisi  
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

## Advent Giving Collection 2023



Download the calendar here →

If each form can aim to bring in as many items as possible from the list, then we will be making a positive impact to others who need our support and help at this time.

I understand that each family will have their own financial circumstances, and so any contribution will be gratefully welcomed.

Finally, if you can support your child to purchase any of the items from their own money, and to help join in prayer for those who may have nothing this Christmas time, then we can ensure that we bring the Advent message of Hope, Love and Joy to all those here on Earth.

**Monday 18th December is the final day for donating items.**

God Bless and thank you in advance for your support.

As Advent has started we are called as a Catholic School and community to support those less fortunate than us.

One way we can do this is through action; therefore we are asking all our students to support the Advent Giving Calendar at St. Mary's.

## Advent Giving Calendar

Advent is a special season in the Church's year when we prepare to celebrate the coming of Christ. However, with the cost of living crisis, many in our communities are facing difficulties.

This Advent Giving Calendar is designed for you to use this season as a time to think about those who might need some extra support this Christmas. You can follow along each day and make up a food parcel that you generously donate to a food project in your church or school, or one local to you.

### How to use the Advent Giving Calendar

- Ask your church or school if they run a food bank, food collection, a community meal, or any other kind of food outreach, and if they would like some donations.
- If you are not sure, contact us at Caritas and we can help you find a food project near you. Our contact details can be found at the bottom of this page.
- Each day in Advent, find the corresponding snowman on the calendar, which will tell you what you need to buy to add to your collection. You could team up with others too, and share the collecting between you.
- Take the collected items to your chosen food project. You might want to take them in early, to make sure they are there in time to help people this Christmas.
- Join the Advent Giving Calendar community online. Spread the word about the calendar and share photos of your collecting on social media.

Use the hashtag: #AdventGivingCalendar

and tag us:



### Not able to donate certain items?

- Give what you can, or donate something that you would like to receive.
- Ask your local food project what other help they may need. Perhaps you could volunteer this winter, or spread the word about what they do.

### If you need support with food

- Please do speak to your church or school and they can tell you what support there is in your area. You can contact Caritas too.

### Who made this calendar?

This calendar was created by Caritas Westminster, the social outreach charity of the Diocese of Westminster. One of our areas of work is to support parishes and schools that provide food to communities. There are over 300 food projects in the diocese, including food banks and pantries, food collections, food sharing and giving, and community meal initiatives. Almost all are run by volunteers, working tirelessly to end poverty and create connection and community through food. Use this calendar to help support their efforts this winter.





*"...not a little bit peckish because they skipped breakfast or haven't had lunch. But hungry because they haven't eaten for around three or four days...literally nothing" – Volunteer feedback*



**Thank you** for offering to help those in need who rely on the support of The **Cardinal Hume Centre Foodbank**. Based in the heart of Westminster, for over 30 years it has been providing a lifeline to local vulnerable families. Our donations come from generous individuals, families, parishes, and schools, and we need a steady supply. Opening hours are from 10am-4pm.

It is difficult for individuals and families who are already managing on extremely tight budgets to afford nutritionally balanced food items throughout the year and especially in the winter. 1 in 3 children in our area are classified as living in poverty, with many families and adults considered homeless, and vulnerable.

Here is a list of suggested items. Food parcels are great, and work best when they contain non-perishables that can make easy meals or simply ease the budget for a family in poverty. Basic / value priced items are perfectly fine. Some people are in fuel poverty, so they sometimes like things that can be eaten cold or with minimal boiling (some only have a kettle). **Note:** \* indicates an item we use the most.

What is very useful is low-value gift cards (physical, or digital), perhaps £5, £10 or £20 for Sainsbury's Tesco, etc. These give people the dignity to choose items they most need, especially if we don't have stock. Digital vouchers enable us to email the code to someone who is unable to get into the Centre.

### Dry items

- \*Bachelors Pasta n Sauce (or own brand)
- \*Biscuits and chocolate bars
- \*Breakfast cereals (basic brands)
- \*Couscous
- \*Flavoured microwave rice
- \*Flour
- \*Pasta (dried) (ideally with an accompanying sauce)
- \*Rice – white, brown, Basmati (not big sacks)
- \*Salt and Pepper
- \*Sugar (small bags)
- Cereal bars
- Dried fruit (e.g. raisins)
- Instant coffee
- Instant mash potato
- Muesli
- Packet noodles (ideally that just need hot water added)
- Soups – packet
- Spices (e.g. turmeric, dried garlic, chilli powder)
- Tea bags

### Toiletries and non-food

- \*Nappies (disposable, unisex). Size 3, 5, 6 are popular
- \*Baby formula powder
- \*Sanitary pads (not tampons)
- \*Shampoo / 2 in 1 / Conditioner
- \*Shower gel
- \*Toilet Roll
- \*Toothbrushes / \*Toothpaste
- \*Wet wipes
- Deodorants (unisex)
- Disposable razors
- Kitchen roll
- Soap / liquid soap
- Washing powder/gel
- Washing up liquid

### Liquids

- \*Cooking oil
- \*Long life / dry milk
- Long life fruit juice / squash

### Canned foods (with ring-pull lids ideally)

- \*Fish – Tuna, Salmon (not expensive options)
- \*Tinned fruit
- \*Tinned meat (preferably beef or chicken)
- \*Tinned tomatoes (cheapest is fine, often chopped)
- \*Tinned vegetables
- Coconut milk
- Pulses such as lentils or beans
- Rice pudding

### Jars

- \*Baby food
- \*Baby formula
- \*Pasta sauces
- \*Curry Sauces
- Hot Sauce / BBQ Sauce
- Honey
- Peanut butter

### Treats for kids

- \*Chocolate bars
- \*Muesli-type bars

### Gift Vouchers

£5, £10 or £20 for Sainsbury's Tesco, etc.

### Please Avoid:

Unusual items (octopus, truffle oil, etc), fresh milk, refrigerated or frozen food, bleach, opened/part-used items, out-of-date items, unlabelled food, packages that do not list ingredients, items where the labels are not in English, homemade items, cracked jars, catering-sized items (hard to carry them home!).



# St Mary's Catholic School

Invites you to our

## Carol Service

**7pm on Tuesday 12 December 2023**

In the Church of St Joseph's and the  
English Martyrs,  
Windhill, Bishops Stortford,  
CM23 2ND

*There will also be a collection taken on behalf of the Catholic Children's Society,  
which we have been supporting as part of our Advent Trust Charity efforts.*



*"But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favour with God.  
You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.  
He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High."*

**Luke 1: 30-32**



## Scholastic Book Fair

### The Book Fair has arrived!

**The Scholastic Book fair runs from Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December to Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December.** Students have already been visiting the fair in the library in their English and AR lessons. The fair is also open to everyone before and after school.

**Please don't send your child to school with cash as we can't accept it.**



Book Fair Gift Vouchers

**Pay for a voucher online here now:**

<https://bookfairs.scholastic.co.uk/gift-vouchers>

You will need to enter the school name or postcode before you pay. Then your child brings the voucher to school and exchanges it for books. There will be lots of stationery items to choose instead of cash change. Vouchers start at £5 and there are some great bargains!

**Remember that every book you buy goes towards free books for our school.**

**Use the school postcode to find our book fair on the Scholastic website: CM23 2NQ.**

### Bring back overdue books before the holidays

Remind students to check their library books and return or renew them before the end of term. Mrs Frino will be checking overdue books and issuing minus house points next Friday to students who have overdue items.



## You Said...We Did, November 2023

### You said, We did November 2023

**There is an adult at school I can talk to if something is worrying me.**

Form tutors have given all students a card to keep safe which highlights the staff they can talk to if they have a concern or issue at SMCS. On the back of the card are links to professional mental health services that students can access. There is also other support services that student's may need.

**WHO CAN I TALK TO IF I HAVE A CONCERN AT SCHOOL?**

If you have a problem or are worried about anything at school, remember that you can talk to **ANY** of these trusted adults on the same day:

- Your Form Tutor
- Your Learning Coordinator
- Miss McHugh (Designated Safeguarding Lead)
- Mrs Hayden (Mental Health Lead)
- Any member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Any teacher
- Any member of the Student Hub Team or the Learning Support Team
- Report it via the school website using the SHARP system

**DON'T GO HOME WITHOUT HAVING SPOKEN TO SOMEONE!!**

**LOVE - RESPECT - FLOURISH**

**ChildLine**  
0800 1111

**PRANK**  
0800 77 66 00 talktofrank.com  
Friendly, confidential drugs advice

**CrimeStoppers.**  
0800 555 111  
100% anonymous. Always.

**REPORT ABUSE**  
ceop.police.uk

If you live in Hertfordshire:  
**The Sandbox**  
Online mental health support for Children and Young People

If you live in Essex or London:  
**kooth**  
kooth is an online mental wellbeing community for young people

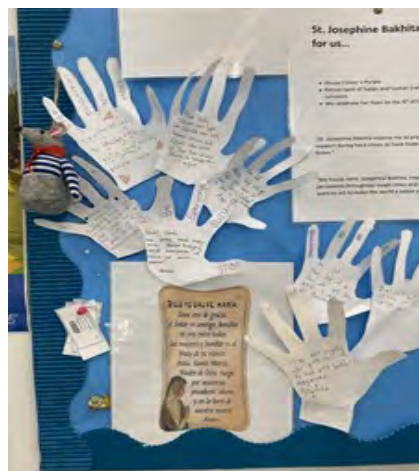
All assemblies will be starting with the above information to reiterate the support and signpost student's.

### Is bullying a problem at your school?

#### Anti-Bullying Week 13 – 17 November

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/anti-bullying-week-2023-make-noise-about-bullying>

All form groups across the whole school took part in Odd Sock Day on Monday 13 November, Anti-Bullying tutor activities created by the Learning Coordinator and Anti Bullying Reps, followed by a Form Pledge. Students were taught about the different forms of bullying, the impact that bullying has on people and where to report a concern to at SMCS.





## RE Department Competition ~ Winners!

We are delighted to announce the winners of the RE Department competition on the theme: "I Stand Up to Racism", and to share the winning entries with you here.

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2023 marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and we thought it fitting that students should be able to reflect on this milestone through consideration of an issue, which is still, sadly, evident today: racism. Students were asked to explain why they stand up to racism, with reference to Catholic Social teaching.



Mmasichukwu I 7T is the KS3 winner with a beautiful poster on the theme. They have reflected on the Christian belief that we are all made in God's image and have taken care over the presentation of the poster.



Christabel E 10B is the KS4 winner. The speech is heartfelt and original and reflects on what it means to stand up to racism.

### I STAND UP TO RACISM – CHRISTABEL E 10B

Imagine a world where the color of your skin doesn't define who you are within, or become a reason to be a vulnerable victim of an ignorant mindset from another human. A world where the love of mothers reaches beyond the graves of their children, their innocent children whose lives were selfishly taken by hearts hardened with hatred. Racism. Imagine a world without it. When society rejects you, who do you turn to? Where do you go? Standing up to racism isn't just about watching that one movie, participating in that lesson about slavery, paying attention in that black history month assembly; it's far beyond that. More than having colored friends to tell you about how it really is. A group of us walking together is 'intimidating', but walking by yourself makes you notice all the things you try to ignore. The old white woman who clutches her purse in that lift, the shop keeper that follows you around as you shop, or simply the looks of disgust as you walk down the road. Suddenly I feel out of place in. As if I don't belong. An anomaly.

Standing up to racism is living out day by day the words Catholic Social Teaching emphasizes, "Every form of social or cultural discrimination in fundamental personal rights on the grounds of sex, race, color, social conditions, language, or religion must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God's design." After all, the greatest commandment of all is to love the Lord your God with all your mind heart and soul, but how can you love God with a heart which despises others? How many arms of black mother's ache for the sons and daughters they'll never hold again? How can you say you love God but make others feel out of place, as if they don't belong.

An anomaly. Mother Theresa once said, "If you judge people, you have no time to love them". Standing up to racism is standing up to the change we are called to make as Christians. As humans. Imagine a world where the color of your skin doesn't define who you are within, I stand up to racism to make that world OUR reality.

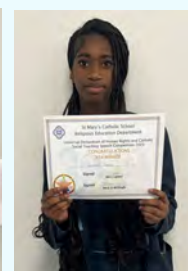


We were impressed by the thought and effort evident in both of the winning entries. Congratulations to them both. We hope they enjoy spending their £20 Amazon gift cards!

Well done also to Lucas B 7B and Daniel S 10A, who have been highly commended for their entries. We hope they enjoy their Christmas selection box prizes!

Thank you to all students who entered the competition. It was difficult to choose our winners as the quality of entries was impressive.

Look out for the next RE Department competition!  
Mrs Lewer



## Senior Inter House Volleyball

**This week saw our Year 13 students participate in the Senior Inter House Volleyball Competition.**

Students were eagerly awaiting this competition, with many taking the opportunity to practice in the run up to this event.

All students received positive house points for their participation and performance on the day.  
Congratulations to all involved.

*Mr Eddleston*

### RESULTS

| Position | Form | Total Points | Points Difference |
|----------|------|--------------|-------------------|
| 1st      | A    | 11           | +11               |
| 2nd      | T    | 11           | -5                |
| 3rd      | J    | 7            | -1                |
| 4th      | M    | 7            | -3                |





## Inter House Christmas Card Competition

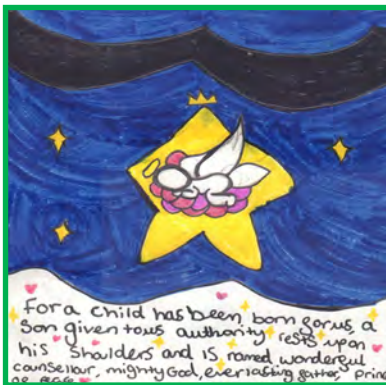
### Shown below are the winners of the Inter House Christmas Card Competition!

We received lots of excellent entries where students had clearly put a lot of time or effort into their design.

The Senior Prefects will now have the tough job of deciding the best entry from each Key Stage that will go forward as the school's entries into the Diocesan Christmas Card Competition.

Well done to all those who participated!

Mr Eddleston (House Coordinator)





## House System ~ Student of the Fortnight

The following students achieved the highest number of positive house points over the past fortnight. As a reward for this excellent achievement, they will receive an Achievement Postcard including an Invitation to Headteacher's Tea next term.

### Junior Inter House Competition

|            |    |    |
|------------|----|----|
| Anton K    | 7M | 37 |
| Diana C    | 7J | 34 |
| Nevaeh A-F | 7T | 32 |
| Chloe W    | 7A | 32 |

|           |    |    |
|-----------|----|----|
| Rico A    | 8A | 49 |
| Joseph M  | 8A | 46 |
| Natalie R | 8T | 37 |
| Elliot V  | 8K | 34 |

### Intermediate Inter House Competition

|             |    |    |
|-------------|----|----|
| Mckayla S   | 9R | 55 |
| Ethan M     | 9R | 53 |
| Leanita G-C | 9R | 50 |
| Violetta N  | 9R | 48 |

|           |     |    |
|-----------|-----|----|
| Yana D    | 10A | 28 |
| Barnaby W | 10B | 28 |
| Illia B   | 10M | 28 |
| Anna P    | 10K | 28 |

### Senior Inter House Competition

|           |     |    |
|-----------|-----|----|
| Johanna D | 11M | 19 |
| Ain Al    | 11A | 17 |
| Soffie L  | 11J | 16 |
| James C   | 11K | 16 |

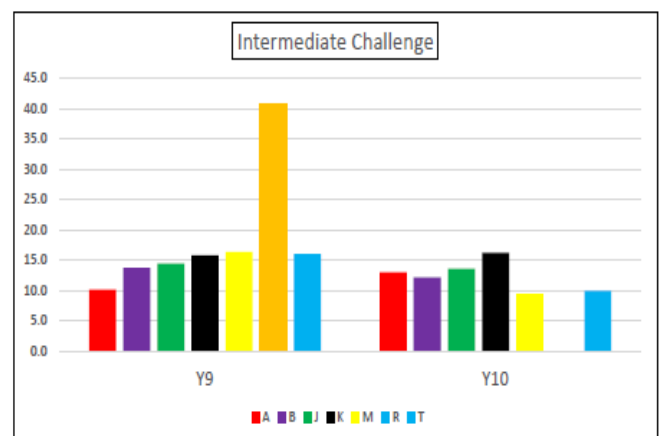
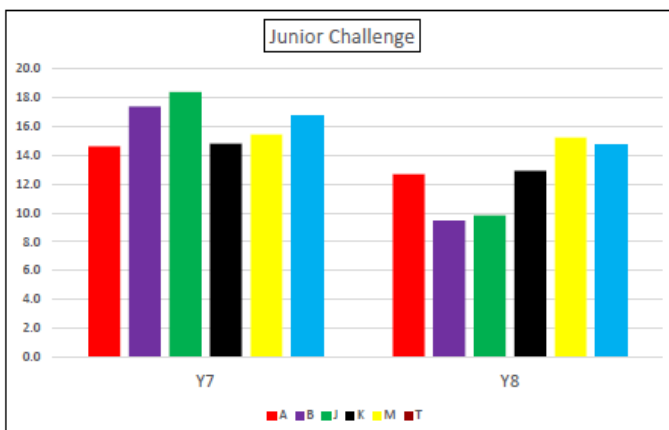
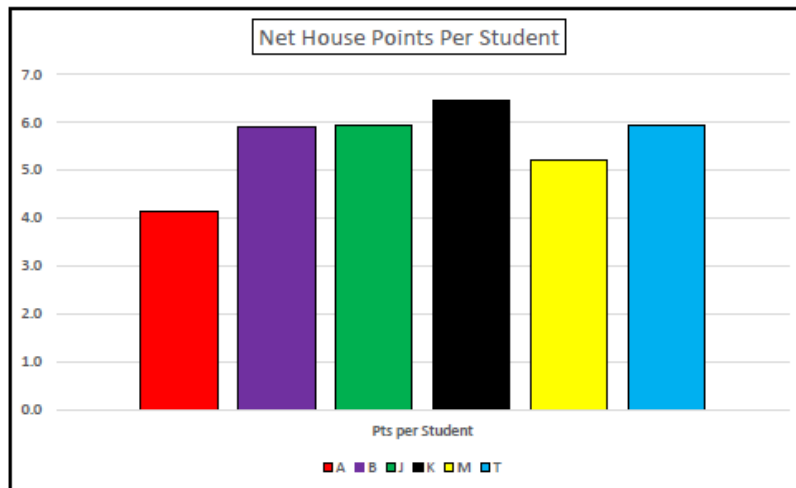
|          |     |  |
|----------|-----|--|
| Stefan W | 12J |  |
| Lucy J   | 12M |  |
| Thomas T | 12A |  |

|            |     |  |
|------------|-----|--|
| Kyan P     | 13T |  |
| Shevin H   | 13A |  |
| Benjamin C | 13A |  |
| Georgia L  | 13A |  |

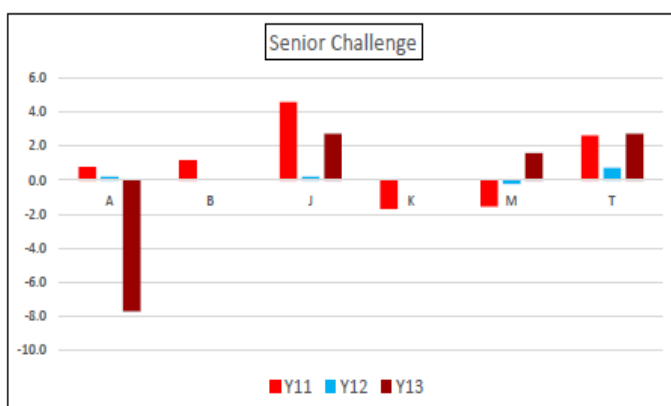




## House System ~ House Points Charts



## The Running Totals for the House Point Charts



## Artist in Focus

### Aeryn L, Year 13



#### Why do you study or love Art?

#### Tell us about your journey and who you are...

*I started drawing when I was very young. Examples included using my imagination to draw, and fantasy scenarios were my main inspiration. I saw it as a hobby at first but it has grown into something more serious over the years.*

#### Who inspires you?

*My imagination inspired me – I like to draw scenarios and these usually contain things I like and can easily draw. I like drawing under the sea scenes or video game characters as a favourite subject matter. I am really into anime-styled games such as Genshin and Honkai Star Rail, also Sailor Moon and Tokyo Ghoul are a favourite.*

#### Where do you want to go and what do you want to do when you leave St Mary's?

*I would love to go into voice acting or voice overs. I grew into a habit of changing my voice into characters and I would love to combine this with my love of anime and gaming.*

#### What advice would you give aspiring artists here at St Mary's?

*Don't draw what you have to draw – draw what you want to draw. This is why Art is so exciting – you can make it your own.*







## The Season of Advent

**Sunday 10th December  
Second Sunday of Advent**

On the Second Sunday of Advent we light the second candle, which is the symbol of PEACE. It is sometimes called the "Bethlehem Candle" as a reminder of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.



## We are hiring!



St Francis of Assisi  
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Click Here For Latest Vacancy Information

<https://www.stmarys.net/vacancies>