

Religious Education

2016 -2017

Our Catholic Faith is central to the day-to-day life of our school and all aspects of the curriculum reflect this.

Prayer Garden Statue



Discussions with both children and staff resulted in the purchase of a beautiful chainsaw statue of Mary, Our Mother as a focal point in our recently developed Prayer Garden. She was crafted over a number of months by chainsaw artist Andy Burgess and was made from solid oak. The end result is simply stunning and we look forward to seeing this truly unique piece of art in our prayer garden for many years to come.



May Procession

Following the installation of our chainsaw statue, we held a May Procession where Mary was crowned with flowers. Children lay flowers at Mary's feet as an offering and hymns were sung in celebration.



Displays

Displays across the school were used to reflect the positive Catholic ethos that we pride ourselves on. Children's abilities in all areas, including Art, P.E and English were recognised and celebrated.

Independent Worshippers

This year children have been encouraged to become more independent in their faith. Children have prepared and led weekly prayer services within their classroom, often sharing their own prayers.

Children from all year groups also took on a role in the 'Stations of the Cross' that took place during Lent.

Assessment and Monitoring

Following a dip in positive assessment outcomes in the academic year 2015 - 2016 due to long staff absence, 2016 - 2017 showed a vast improvement on assessments outcomes. Various forms of monitoring showed teaching was

pitched at the correct level and a variety of teaching method and cross curricular approaches were used.

Liturgy Leaders

The role of the Liturgy Leaders was further developed, with them taking on responsibility for monitoring class prayer focuses and leading workshops. Liturgy Leaders gained confidence in their role and undertook it with pride and passion.



Rosary Workshop

Throughout the months of October and May, along with a little help from Mrs Taylor, Liturgy Leader led Rosary workshops. Children were invited to create their own set of Rosary Beads to take home to pray with their family.

Sacraments

The sacrament of Confirmation was received by some of our Year 6 children. Coming together with St. Anthony's to welcome Bishop Robert Byrne as celebrant; a wonderful evening was shared by all for this wonderful event in the children's Catholic life.



The sacrament of First Holy Communion was received by some of our Year 3 and 4 children. Celebrating an intimate Mass in our own church, children were joined by their families for this special occasion.



Feast of St. John the Baptist Picnic

As with each year, the Feast of St. John the Baptist was celebrated within school with a whole school picnic. Both staff and children gathered together on the school field to rejoice in this special day.

Mission Weeks

Wanting to highlight the importance of our school Mission Statement 'We prepare the way by Loving, Living and Learning with the Lord' we held three mission weeks during the last academic year.

Loving Week

Loving Week was packed with lots of exciting activities! We showed love to ourselves by taking part in a P.E lesson where our sight was temporarily taken away from us making us think about how lucky we are to be able to see all of the wonderful things in the world. Some of us also took part in a 'Come Dine with Me' experience, thinking about showing our body love through what we eat. We also showed love to our neighbour by making and exchange friendship bracelets, holding a coffee morning for our families and friends, bringing toys in for a Christmas appeal and offering gestures of love to those who are special to us. Love was also shown to our world when our Eco Warriors went litter picking around our local environment. We also held a competition to design a plant pot and the winners were Amelia (FKS1), Logan (FKS2), Tiana (Y2) and Katelyn (Y5). Their wonderful designs will be painted onto class pots before planting bulbs for spring. To mark the end of the week we showed how much we love our school with a giant paper chain made up of everyone's thoughts and feelings about St. John's. We love our school so much that our paper chain reached all down the corridors!



Every class from Reception to Y6 enjoyed learning how to dance in a Bollywood style, based on how people dance during the Diwali celebrations. The music was Indian music with a good drum beat that helped us to stay in time and keep the rhythm.



Living Week

During Living Week children were learning about different faiths and homelessness through a range of different activities.

Children created a range of multi-cultural art for 'St. John the Baptist Art Gallery' which was then opened to parents. Children also had the chance to visit different places of worship.



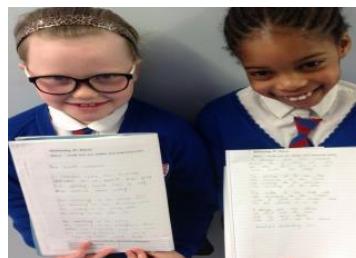
Focusing on homelessness, we welcomed a representative from St. Basil's come into school and deliver an assembly, where the children learnt all about the circumstances which can lead to people becoming homeless and the work St. Basil's do to help them. Our younger children then had the chance to experience what homelessness might feel like, creating shelters with materials they could find.



Some of our older children also took on the role of a homeless charity, preparing and serving food for people to eat. To end the week some of the staff team joined Birmingham Homeless Outreach, packing and delivering food to the numerous homeless people living on the streets of Birmingham.



Learning Week



During Learning Week children had the opportunity to learn lots of new things. Year 2 worked to learn the poem 'The Sound Collector'. They then used this poem as a template to write their own sound collector poems. Year 6 focused on new skills, the children practised recital of poetry and learned to use pen for portrait pictures and the whole school

begun to use Sol-fa to support singing in Hymn Practice. Year 1 enjoyed reading to nursery children, learning a poem about seasons; were taught how to bake a cake and held a 'reading tea party' which parents were invited to and exchanged reading stories for tea and a slice of our delicious cake!

St. Chad's Visit

Year Six visited St. Chad's to celebrate the end of the Year of Mercy. They joined a number of other schools to celebrate Mass, taking a banner to represent our school.

Cluster Celebrations

St. John's joined together with a number of neighbouring schools to celebrate Masses, monitor and moderate work and share good practice.

Journey to the Stable



In preparation for Christmas, Year Two went on a 'Journey to the Stable'. They started by hearing the story of the Shepherds, then we went to find the Star Inn and finally found where baby Jesus lay in his manger. They had lots of fun and enjoyed learning about the Christmas Story in a fun way.

Christmas Productions

EYFS performed 'The Bossy King' and Key Stage One performed 'Bethlehem is Buzzing'. Children they demonstrated their wonderful singing and acting skills.



Key Stage Two put on a wonderful Christmas Carol Concert, the children showed such enthusiasm as they belted out festive tunes leaving staff and families attending feeling festive and full of Christmas cheer!

Vocations Talk

Year Six had the pleasure of welcoming a visitor from the Diocese to discuss vocations with them. They then had the chance to ask Father John about his vocation as a priest.

Appointment of R.E Link Governor

We appointed a R.E Link Governor who will be responsible for supporting governor's understanding of R.E.

AGT Workshops

Two Year 5 children attended the G&T Liturgical Dance event at John Henry Newman. They said "We really enjoyed the morning because I like dancing and we made St Therese sacrifice beads."

Father John's Retirement Picnic



Sadly, after 7 years with us at St. John's, Father John retired. To celebrate his commitment to the school children created cards, wrote prayers, led a Mass and presented him with a personalised blanket, adored with pictures from his time with us.

Palm Sunday Prayer Service

Year Five painted a palm branch on a stone, and recorded some of the praises called out to Jesus as he rode into Jerusalem. Then, they held a prayer service, asking Jesus to show us how to welcome Him into our lives.

