

February 2024

As we move into February, Spring is in the air and there are just a couple of weeks to catch our breath before Lent begins. We're well and truly into the new year!

If you have the feeling that you're constantly trying to juggle the needs of your family and having to prioritise an ever-increasing list of must-dos, take comfort in the Gospel for the week commencing 4th February – Jesus knew what it was like to be busy and He took time away to reset.

But despite His busyness, Jesus prioritised prayer – it's always possible to find time for the things we value. As this is a special Year of Prayer (a time of preparation for the Jubilee Year in 2025 - more on that later in the year!), perhaps this is an opportunity to try to prioritise prayer time in your family life.

This newsletter shares some of the content children will experience in school throughout February and suggests ways for you to engage with them about it. We hope it is a useful resource for your family prayer time.

Look with Compassion

Jesus was full of compassion and He always noticed people who were excluded. There are plenty of examples in the Gospels, including the story of Jesus healing someone with leprosy – a disease that forced sufferers to exclude themselves from society. Jesus' reply to the man's request for healing, "Of course I want to!" reminds us that He is always ready to help us and His welcome applies to all of us.

In the week beginning 12th February, children learn about the work of Fr Damian, a missionary priest who followed Jesus' example of compassion and welcome, making caring for others his life's work.

Why not watch the video of Fr Damian's story with your child:

www.tentenresources.co.uk/prayers-for-home/parent-newsletter/

People can be excluded for many different reasons and Jesus shows us that we should extend compassion and welcome to everyone.

With your child, why don't you...

- *Talk and give examples of other role models who show compassion and consider the dignity and the needs of the person first.*
- *Encourage a conversation about friendship. Who are the people that we include in our friendship groups? Are there times when we exclude others? Who can we show compassion for today?*

Introducing our Lenten series: Perfect Promises

This Lent, our assemblies follow the theme of God's **Perfect Promises**. Children will listen to some familiar and not-so-familiar stories from the Old Testament, taken from the First Readings of the Sunday Masses in Lent.

Starting with Noah and the theme of 'Hope', children will learn about God's promises to us and His unchanging love and commitment. We'll explore further themes of blessing, guidance, presence and belonging, leading to the revelation of Jesus, as the fulfilment of God's Perfect Promises.

With your child, why not...

- *Explore what we mean by the words: hope, blessing, guidance, presence and belonging.*
- *Read and enjoy these stories from the Old Testament:*

Noah and the Flood: Genesis 9:8-9

Abraham and Isaac: Genesis 22:1-18

Moses and God's Law: Exodus 20:1-17

God's People Sent Away: 2 Chronicles 36:14-23

Belonging to God: Jeremiah 31:31-34

Prayer

It is right to turn to Jesus and ask His help, and to be thankful, because we know that He wants to hear and help us. His answer may not be what we want to hear but Jesus knows and loves us.

The daily prayers of the week beginning 12th February encourage children to spend time with Jesus, bringing their own needs and wants to Him.

These sentence starters might encourage active participation in family prayer time.

- **Thank you for...**
- **Please help me to...**
- **I'm worried about ...**
- **I want to say sorry for...**

You might like to use this short prayer to conclude your family prayer time.

**Lord Jesus,
We place ourselves in your hands.
In the name of the Father
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen**