

10th March 2017

Dear Parent / Carer

It was great to see so many parents and parishioners at our Ash Wednesday Mass last Wednesday. The children were wonderful as always and it was a very fitting liturgy to mark the beginning of Lent.

Lent is that time of the year when we stop and reflect on what we do and how we do it. We do this in the context of our Christian faith and ask what would Jesus want me to do and how could I do that better.

During Lent we are traditionally asked to do 3 things:

Give UP, give AWAY, give Praise.

It was fascinating to hear what the children said when they were asked by Fr Gerard what they intended to give up for Lent.

The first said the usual: I'm going to give up sweets.

The second suggest something about our relationships with each other and said: I'm going to give up hurting others.

The third said something that I think reflects the true nature of SACRIFICE and was incredibly brave. He said: I'm going to give up using my mobile phone.

Well those of you with younger children might be surprised to hear that children have mobile phones, but I'm afraid it is very much the case that children have access to all the electronic devices that we as adults have. Access that, in my humble opinion, is not always essential and certainly not beneficial.

Excessive 'screen time' is a real issue for kids today. It is killing the art of conversation and dampening children's creativity and ability to interact with others. Wouldn't it be great if we could use the traditional sacrifice associated with Lent for the benefit of our children and of others. Giving up sweets, cakes and treats benefits us by losing the pounds or reducing the need for dentist visits. Sacrificing the time spend on electronic devices would benefit us by encouraging us to communicate, to make time for each other, to listen, to develop language and vocabulary. Put simply, giving up the 'screen time' could give back precious 'family time.'

As well as giving up, we hope you can also give away a little. Your children will be encouraged to collect odd change throughout Lent and take it to school to put in their Class Fish Bowl. The coins in the Class Fish Bowls will be gathered together and sent to CAFOD to help fund the development of Fish Farms in struggling communities in Africa. The CAFOD campaign is called 'Turn Little Fish Into Big Fish'. Please help us in whatever way you can to make a real difference to the lives of people less fortunate than ourselves.

Finally, Lent is a time for giving praise. Whatever your faith, no matter how strong your beliefs, you've chosen to send you child to a school with Christ at its centre. In school, we will be finding every opportunity to pray a little more and I know your children would love it if, as a family, you were able to find those little moments when you could pray, or speak, to God together. Why not just say a little thank you to God each day as you come to school and again as you go home. Why not think of someone different each day to ask God's help for. And finally, why not take a moment at the end of day to say sorry to God for the things we might not be so proud of. Little steps like this, not only make us feel better about ourselves, but truly strengthen Christ's place in our lives.

Yours sincerely,



Miss Griffin, who teaches our children some of their art lessons has asked KS1 to help her collect supplies for their next art project. She is looking for anything that would be suitable for textile art or weaving, such as **ribbon, string, wool, threads, pieces of fabric or fabric scraps**. If you have anything that you are happy to offer to school, please send it in with your child. Thank you in advance.

Easter Raffle

Every class has an Easter Egg to win! Tickets are 20p each and are available from the class teachers. All proceeds will go to our Lenten CAFOD appeal. Thank you for your support!

1ST Holy Communion Programme at St. Michael's and All Angels Church continues as follows:-

- 18th March – First Confession
- 1st April – “Body of Christ” (*No parent meeting*)
- 13th May – “Do this in Memory of Me” (Parent meeting)
- 10th June – Rehearsal at 10.00am
- **Sunday 11th June – First Holy Communion**
- 1st July – “To Love and to Serve” (*No parent meeting*)

ITEMS FOR YOUR DIARY

Date	Time	Event
Monday 20 th March		Year 6 Parent & Teacher Meetings (by appointment only)
Tuesday 21 st March		Year R Visit to Staunton Country Park
Tuesday 21 st March		Years 1 to 6 Parent & Teacher Meetings (by appointment only)
Wednesday 22 nd March		Years 1 to 6 Parent & Teacher Meetings (by appointment only)
Monday 3 rd April	TBC	Holy Week Liturgies – times to be confirmed
Friday 7 th April	15:15	Last day before Easter Holidays
Monday 24 th April	08:45	1 st Day of Summer Term
Friday 26 th May	15.15	Last day before Summer Half Term
Monday 5 th June	08.45	Back to School after Summer Half Term
Sunday 11 th June	10:00	First Holy Communion at St. Michael's and All Angels Church, Leigh Park
Thursday 22 nd June	10:00	St. Thomas More's Feast Day
Thursday 29 th June	14:00	Ss. Peter & Paul Feast Day (Holy Day of Obligation)
Monday 3 rd July	10:00	Phoenix Class Mass
Tuesday 4 th July	10:00	Delphinus Class Mass
Wednesday 5 th July	10:00	Columba Class Mass
Thursday 20 th July	14:00	Leavers Mass for Year 6
Tuesday 25 th July	15:15	Last day of Summer Term