On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Matthew 2:11

Christmas Message From The Headmistress

The Christ in Christmas:

If you ask most people what they like best about Christmas, I suspect that one of the top answers would be ‘the presents’; the surprise of the unexpected gift, the delight of just the right toy. All of these contribute to the joy associated with the bundles left wrapped beneath the Christmas tree.

If you ask others what they dread most about Christmas, I suspect that one of the top answers would again be ‘the presents’; the fear of disappointment, the burden of debt and the cost of wish-fulfilment.

It is very easy, but grossly mistaken, in today’s society to believe that our valuing of the worth of another person can be measured through the cost of how much we spend at Christmas. It is not the cost of presents that demonstrates the depth of our love, but rather the quality of our presence amongst those we love that shows whether we truly care. It is easy to swipe the card and punch in the digits for the purchase; not so easy to spend time bringing joy to others by doing what we would not normally do in order to bring pleasure to each other.

For the people of Newtown, Connecticut USA, for those families with men and women serving abroad, and for those spending the day working in emergency services, our hearts and our prayers go out to each and every one of them. For these families know more than most, how even the most wonderful present cannot replace or make up for the absence of a loved one. Whilst for the bereaved, the first Christmas without their loved one can be one of the hardest times. The recollection and celebration of lives past for those who mourn can never substitute those whom they miss so deeply.

For me and also for you there must be little doubt that the best thing about Christmas is not so much presents, but remembering the Christ in Christmas. However you or I encounter the Christ-child this Christmas time, may the joy of Christ, born anew, keep our hearts peaceful, and, as President Obama said this week in his message to the people of Newtown, ‘inspire us to look for the sun to rise every day’.

God bless

Mrs Titus

Mass Times - The Shrine Of Our Lady Of Willesden

Father Stephen, Father Joseph and Father Vanders have published the busy Christmas Mass schedule! We hope that you will attend some of the services during the Christmas period to celebrate the birth of our Saviour. Families may wish to attend the following Masses: Family Vigil Mass December 24 at 6pm; Midnight Mass December 24 at 12 midnight; Christmas Day Mass at 9.00am, 10.00am and 11.15am; Sung Mass with the Brazilian Community December 30 at 11.00am.

Attendance

During week beginning 10 December 2012, only Class 6N achieved 100% attendance. It is has been disappointing to note that absence has been unusually high in recent weeks. We are aware that some families have chosen to take their children out of school for a family holiday. The vast majority of our parents who rightly observe the ‘no holidays’ school rule can be assured that the small minority ignoring this rule will be reported to Education Welfare. Consequences for absence in school term time includes penalty fine notices and, potentially, imprisonment.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all the staff at St Joseph’s

Children return to school on Monday 7 January
Christmas Mass and Nativity Performances

As you would expect, this week has been very busy with joyous celebrations and also times of reflection as we remember the greatest gift - the birth of Jesus Christ.

Year 1 and Year 2 presented wonderful Nativity performances for parents, staff and other children. It was a joyful experience to watch the children interpret the events of 2,000 years ago with enthusiastic acting and their beautiful singing voices.

Year 3 to Year 6 classes attended a Carol Concert service at The Shrine Of Our Lady Of Willesden on Wednesday morning. It was great to see so many parents, extended family members and the wider community joining in with our songs as we praised the birth of our Saviour.

Please remember to check the website during the Christmas holidays for more news and photographs from all our Christmas events.

London Schools Symphony Orchestra - Free Tickets!

There are 30 free tickets available for St Joseph’s children to attend the LSSO concert at the Barbican on the evening of January 9th 2013. Parents must accompany their children (as this is NOT a school trip) so you must purchase an adult ticket by calling the box office on 020 7638 8891, quoting 090113 for a reduced price on the adult tickets. When you call the box office, please make it clear you are also claiming a free child ticket as well as purchasing the adult ticket. If you do attend, please let Mr McCourt know about your experience so we can source similar events.