



HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kents Hill Road, Benfleet, Essex SS7 5PX
Telephone: 01268 792231 Fax: 01268 759274
Email: admin@holyfamily.essex.sch.uk
www.holyfamily.essex.sch.uk



Headteacher Mr P.O'Kane

Newsletter 328 Wednesday 22nd December 2016

We have had a lovely finish to the end of term. Mrs Hurley led Monday's final Advent assembly and some of our altar servers lit the three purple and one pink candle. If you and your children want to see the fifth and final white candle lit, then please go along to one of the parish Masses that Fr Eduard will be celebrating this Christmas—details can be found in this newsletter.

The children had their traditional class parties on Monday afternoon—thank you all so much for your generous donations of drinks, food and nibbles. Mrs Fisher managed to take a few pictures of Reception class and Years 1 & 2 who enjoyed some dancing in the hall!



Our Christingle service on Tuesday afternoon was a beautiful affair. Thank you to all of you for providing your child with a Christingle. When all the candles were lit during the liturgy, there was a tangible sense of awe and wonder in the assembly hall. I was pleased to see so many parents and grandparents squeezed in at the back of the hall joining in with our celebration of Christ the Light of the World.



We began the day today with our Advent Reconciliation Service which was a peaceful, solemn and reverent occasion. Afterwards children from Years 4,5 and 6 were able to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation from Father Eduard with an opportunity for individual confession.



After play the whole school joined together in the hall for a Christmas Hat Assembly where we all admired the creative ideas that adorned some heads. Philip Treacy, the celebrated London milliner has got some serious competition. I am sure some photographs will make their way onto the school website. There was a real festive atmosphere in the hall as Mrs Lewins was leading some extremely enthusiastic singing, whilst hat wearers and Christmas jumper wearers from each class paraded on the “catwalk.”

Today’s Christmas Dinner was the usual jolly affair. Tammy and her staff in the kitchen do a fantastic job each Christmas, preparing over 200 meals—all to a very high standard.

The term drew to a close with our traditional final assembly—Carols Round the Tree. I look forward to seeing all the children on 5th January 2017. I hope you all have a very happy, peaceful and holy Christmas with your friends and family.

I would like to thank you all for the support you have given the children and staff throughout the past term. I would also like to express my thanks for all the many cards and gifts that the staff and I have received in recent days—you are all far too generous.

Christmas Mass Details The children and staff have worked hard throughout Advent to prepare for Christ’s birthday at Christmas. You can help your child to give meaning to these Advent preparations by attending one of the Christmas Masses—times below:

Saturday 24 th December, 5.30pm	Holy Family Church	Carol Singing
Saturday 24 th December, 6.00pm	Holy Family Church	Vigil Mass for Christmas
Saturday 24 th December, 11.30pm	Holy Family Church	Carol Singing
Sunday 25 th December, 12.00am	Holy Family Church	Midnight Mass
Sunday 25 th December, 8.30am	St Thomas More, Hadleigh	Christmas Morning Mass
Sunday 25 th December, 10.00am	Holy Family Church	Christmas Morning Mass

Christmas Reconciliation If you would like to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation before you attend Mass at Christmas there are still some opportunities to do so. Tonight, there will be a Reconciliation Service for the Southend Deanery in Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Leigh-on-Sea at 8.00pm. A number of priests will be in attendance. Fr Eduard will be available for confessions on Friday 23rd December during a Holy Hour in Holy Family Church from 9.00am—10.00am. The Holy Hour will be immediately followed by Mass at 10.00am.

Ofsted 2016 If you are not registered for Parentmail, you can collect a copy of our recent Ofsted report and accompanying letter to parents on request from the school office. You can also view these documents on the school website by clicking on ABOUT US→OUR SCHOOL→OFSTED.

Whole school annual trip to The Pantomime During the first week of next term the children will bring home a letter requesting payment for our annual trip to the Wednesday Players Pantomime at The Palace Theatre. This year they will be performing Beauty and the Beast, the cost of which will be £12.50. Thank you.

Piano Lessons Lessons with Mrs Rothwell will commence on Tuesday 10th January 2017.

School Health Drop-in service If you have concerns about your child's health then you can use the Drop-in service where no appointments are necessary. The limit is 15 minutes per child but for more in-depth problems please contact the clinic directly to speak to a member of the school nurse team.

The locations are: Central Canvey Primary Care Centre, Long Road, Canvey Island, SS8 OJA. Phone 01268 686041 2-4pm 5th & 19th January; 2nd & 23rd February; 16th March 2017.
Oak Tree Children's Centre, Grovewood Primary School, Grove Road, Rayleigh, SS6 8UA. Phone 01268 686041 10th & 24th January; 7th & 21st February; 7th & 21st March 2017.



Left: Church at the reputed site of St Stephen's stoning, Kidron Valley, Jerusalem

Saint of the week In popular culture we refer to 26th December as Boxing Day, but for centuries Christians have known it as St Stephen's Day. Stephen is honoured as the first Christian Martyr. His name means "crown" and he was the first disciple of Jesus to wear the martyr's crown.

Stephen was one of the first deacons in the early Christian Church ordained by the apostles as helpers who looked after the widows and the poor. God worked many miracles through Stephen and he spoke with such wisdom and grace that many were converted to Christianity. Stephen was dragged from the city of Jerusalem to its outskirts where he was stoned to death. He prayed to God to forgive his killers as he was dying. He is a true inspiration to us all.

Attendance Nursery 88.8% RF 93.6% 1F 88.3% 2F 94.7% 3W 86.8% 4D 87.2% 5LB 98.3% 6F 96.4% Well done to Year 5 for the best attendance last week.

Mr P. O’Kane
Headteacher

Diary Dates

Thursday 22 nd December 2016—Wednesday 4 th January 2017	Christmas Holidays
Thursday 5 th January 2017	First Day of Spring Term
Friday 6 th January 2017	Mass for the Feast of the Epiphany
Wednesday 18 th January 2017	Whole School Theatre Visit (Beauty & The Beast—Wednesday Players, Palace Theatre)
Monday 6 th February 2017	Year 6 Danbury Residential Trip
Friday 10 th February 2017	Year 6 Return from Danbury
Monday 13 th February—Friday 17 th February 2017	Half-Term Holiday
Wednesday 1 st March	Ash Wednesday—Lent Begins
Tuesday 21 st March 2017	Hot Cross Run (Catholic Schools’ Cross Country Event) (tbc)
Monday 3 rd April—Friday 14 th April 2017	Easter Holidays
Sunday 9 th April 2017	Palm (Passion) Sunday—Start of Holy Week
Sunday 16 th April 2017	Easter Sunday
Monday 17 th April 2017	Public Holiday—School Closed
Tuesday 18 th April 2017	First Day of Summer Term
Monday 1 st May 2017	Public Holiday—School Closed

Monday 8th May 2017

SATs Week Begins

Monday 29th May- Friday 2nd June 2017

Half-term Holiday

Thursday 20th July 2017

Leavers' Mass (tbc)

Friday 21st July 2017

Last day of the school year

Monday 24th July 2017

Summer Holidays Begin

There is one more non-pupil day that needs to be set for 2016-2017 academic year