

# St Joseph's R.C. Middle School

Fortnightly Newsletter – Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021

## *Statement of the week: Sacrificial Love*

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Dear Parents, Guardians and Parishioners,

It has been lovely to have our school back after months of Lockdown during the Spring Term.

The children have not taken long to get down to work with a huge amount of enthusiasm and dedication. Finally being able to talk and meet friends has been such a relief to pupils in all year groups.

Both this week and last week staff have worked hard to settle children into daily routines whilst at the same time ensuring that curriculum is packed with wellbeing, STEM, and extracurricular activities.

All pupils have received welcome back Lenten assemblies and carried out a range of well-being activities in form classes. Pupils have also attended 'The Year of St Joseph' assemblies with Mrs Gelson.

Can I thank all parents for your continued support over the last few months taking time to support your child's learning journey at home. We are thrilled with the level of engagement from pupils across the school. All staff are equally delighted to move from live remote teaching, to real day to day contact teaching, that we were all trained to deliver - which has far greater impact.

The engagement in our after school sessions for Y5 and Y7 pupils using DfE Catch up and engagement funding has been pleasing. Can I ask all parents to support this as these lessons are hugely important.

I am also delighted to see our KS3 pupils starting practical science lessons in our science lab now that we have returned the furniture and organised the resourcing of the room. This hopefully will be replicated in design technology and food technology in the Summer Term as guidance allows.

We are trying to reduce restrictions and the pupils are delighted to be mixing freely in year groups on the school yard and eating in the school hall together. We can only do this if we are seeing parents and pupils supporting home testing arrangements. This is absolutely crucial to the safety and success of our schools staying COVID safe. Testing will continue over Easter and we will write to parents about this next week.

Can I remind parents that Fr Christopher is running confessions weekly at St Mary's during Lent from 6th March from 4:30pm to 5:15pm and Stations of the Cross at 4 pm on Sunday afternoons.

We are hoping to resume Pastoral class Masses after Easter, with the children visiting St Mary's Church weekly until the end of the summer. This will be confirmed hopefully next week.

### Celebrating the Year of St. Joseph

Pope Francis has proclaimed a special 'Year of St Joseph' The year of St Joseph is being launched in schools in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle from March 2021 in time to celebrate Joseph's feast day on 19 March. In the Apostolic Letter Pope Francis describes Saint Joseph as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father; a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows. Across both of our schools, we will be celebrating each of those attributes through liturgical prayer each month, reflecting on the Gospel stories about Joseph and commemorating his feast days.



### Twitter and Instagram

We have just recently created Instagram and twitter accounts under the handle @stjosephshexham. We will update these sites regularly and will try to give parents an understanding of what goes on during a typical day at St Joseph's!

### Weekly Newsletter:

Our weekly newsletter and Facebook site is a really important way of staying in touch. Please do take the time to read and digest it. Newsletters are sent home via ParentMail on a Friday afternoon and posted on Facebook. Each newsletter is also published on the school website under the 'Parent' section on the bar of the home page.

Our website began a complete revamp at the start of Spring and we aim to launch the most parent friendly website by the start of the Summer Term!

### Penny Challenge

During Lent we are asking our pupils to take the challenge of raising funds for a Special Needs school in Zambia. Please could you encourage your child to collect any loose change of any denominations in a Smarties tube or any other type of container.



On the morning of 26/03/21, each form class will gather on the yard to lay their pennies in a line. The aim being that they can see how far their form classes loose change can stretch to help other pupils less fortunate than themselves.

Please encourage your child to donate their coppers for this wonderful, worthwhile cause. They can bring their filled Smartie tubes into school before this date, and they will be kept in a secure place.

### Walk for Water

This Lent St. Joseph's Middle School has joined CAFOD'S campaign to give everyone across our globe, fresh, clean water. During our last week of Spring Term, we are going to walk/ jog or even run during one of our lessons for 20 minutes! We are hoping that you can support us through sponsorship.



We all know how vital water is in our lives but during the COVID pandemic more than ever. Imagine how tough it has been for those who do not have access to fresh clean water or must walk miles to

gain access. Please help us, to help such a sad, social injustice by supporting our Walk for Water Campaign.

If you would like to donate to this worth cause please send the funds via a single payment to the Walk for Water item on ParentPay.

### New Menu

Our school canteen has recently updated their menu. There will be a tri-weekly rota of different dishes. The uptake has been brilliant. If your child is currently on packed lunch, then I recommend at least sampling the new menu! On Wednesday a big hit was the 'build your own pasta' dish. Children were given the opportunity to add different toppings The children were given a choice of cheese or tomato pasta with additional toppings including : Breaded Chicken , Crispy Bacon Bits, Shredded BBQ Pulled Pork, Roasted Vegetables , Crispy Onions Chilli Con Carne!



### Census 2021

The census is a count of all the people and households in England and Wales. It builds a snapshot of life, based on housing, facilities, jobs, transport, people's ages and the languages spoken. The first census was held in 1801, and has been held every ten years since then (except in 1941 due to the Second World War). The last census was held on 27 March 2011 and as it asks the same questions about everyone at the same time, the census gives a detailed picture of the entire population and how life changes over time. This makes it easy to compare life in different parts of England and Wales. The census matters to all of us because the information it gives allows the central and local government, businesses and charities to plan for the country's vital services such as schools, housing, transport and healthcare. Next week in school, the children will learn about the census as an important historical document allowing us to see how life in the UK has changed during the 200 plus years that information has been recorded. Each class will take part in a variety of art & design activities all linked to the census as well as learning about how living conditions, jobs and families have changed. That's why it's so important for all grown-ups to complete it!

### BBC Young Reporter Award

One of our pupils Olivia was the North of England winner for the BBC's Young Reporter competition. We are so proud of her! We as a school understand the importance of the issues she has raised in this video and we support Olivia's mission! Well done Olivia, we see a future reporter in the making!

To watch her video please click on the link below!

[Olivia's Young Reporters Video](#)



### Canteen Competition Winners

As many of you will be aware we were running a canteen competition worth over £70.00. The aim of the competition was to design a logo that could be used as branding for our new catering service. The winner would receive £20.00 Amazon vouchers, £50.00 worth of school meals and they'll get their design printed on uniforms, signs and the canteen wall!

After much deliberation Mr Bell and Mr Naughton came to the decision that it would be Joe and Madeline's joint effort design that would be the winner. A special mention to Abigail in 7H as her design was outstanding too - she was awarded a runners up prize of a week's worth of free meals!



The image shows Joe and Madeline's design. Watch this space as it has now been sent to a graphic designer for a polished logo to be created!

### CCTV

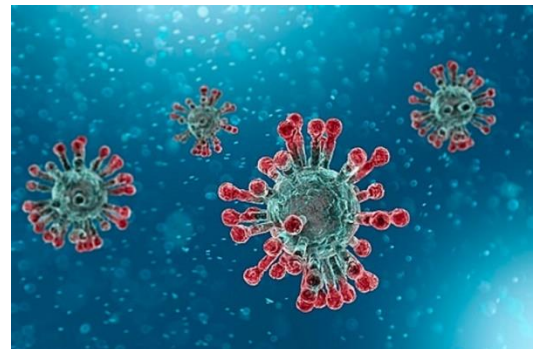
St Joseph's Catholic Middle School now operates a Closed Circuit TV (CCTV) system to improve security and ensure the safety of our staff, children and visitors whilst on site. Cameras will be located across the grounds and inside the buildings.

The system is set up in accordance with GDPR requirements and will be used specifically to:

- Maintain a safe environment.
- Ensure the welfare of staff and children.
- Deter criminal acts against persons and property.
- Assist the police in identifying persons who have committed an offence.

### COVID-19

Whilst the number of positive Covid-19 cases being identified in our communities is reducing, those cases are only a small percentage of the people who potentially have the infection as many will not have any symptoms. It is likely that the number of cases remains high; the infection is still being spread; and we know that cases can escalate very quickly if the conditions are right and people mix unnecessarily, for instance by continuing to hold events such as children's birthday parties. With our schools now fully reopened, it is vital that we all continue to do everything we can to prevent the spread of Covid-19.



We therefore ask that you ensure you, and your children are aware of the current rules and guidance and that you know where they are at all times. You can only leave your home for essential shopping, or for exercise. You can exercise with your household or support bubble, or you can meet with one person from outside your household. Please continue to maintain social distancing at all times, including when exercising, and when dropping off and collecting your children from school. We would also ask that where possible, parents wear a mask when on the school premises.

Can I also remind parents that if you have to take your child for a covid test please inform the school that you have done so as we have to log this with DfE . We would also need to be informed of the test result so that can be logged too. You can do this by either ringing the school office or by email to [parentcontact@hexhamstjosephs.uk](mailto:parentcontact@hexhamstjosephs.uk).



### Gospel

Jesus said, "Now the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you, most solemnly, unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest. Anyone who loves their life loses it; anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for the eternal life. Whoever serves me, must follow me; wherever I am, my servant will be there too. If anyone serves me, my Father will honour them. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all people to myself." By these words he indicated the kind of death he would die.

On behalf of Fr Chris, Governors and staff,  
may we wish you a happy weekend.

*Mr P Naughton*

*Fr Chris*

### Prayer to Saint Joseph

Holy Mary

St. Joseph

Illustrious son of David

Light of patriarchs

Spouse of the Mother of God

Chaste guardian of the Virgin

Foster father of the Son of God

Watchful defender of Christ

Head of the Holy Family

Joseph most just

Joseph most chaste

Joseph most prudent

Joseph most valiant

Joseph most obedient

Pray for us.

