

# FOCUS

on

ST MARY & ST THOMAS AQUINAS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
[www.stmaryandthomasquinas.co.uk](http://www.stmaryandthomasquinas.co.uk)



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*'Together we strive for excellence, inspired by the joy of the Gospel.'*



19th March 2021



## Year of St Joseph

St Joseph, most watchful guardian and loving father.  
~ pray for us ~



### Children settling back into school

What a great return to school it's been. There have been so many happy, smiling children, delighted to see their friends and teachers. Please remember, if your child is struggling with their return to school, we are here to help, so please phone the school office on 0191 4143116.

Unfortunately, because of the social distancing measures in place at school, it is very difficult to speak to parents privately at the beginning or end of day.

If you wish to speak to a member of staff, then please don't hesitate to phone school and we will arrange for a member of staff to phone you back.

There has been lots of talk in the press about the need for 'catch-up', once all children are back in school. Here at St Mary and St Thomas Aquinas, our first priority is your child's well-being, which is why all of last week and a large section of this week, has been ensuring that children are engaged in carefully planned well-being activities.

Throughout the rest of this term we will be giving children many opportunities to re-establish friendships with their peers and relationships with staff.

Alongside the many well-being activities the children have been doing this week, they have also been involved in some gentle assessments to ensure that teachers can provide accurate teaching for your child. Just after a break from school, like the summer holidays, learning for some children is sometimes forgotten or needs refreshing. All of our staff are very skilled at this and have a range of strategies and resources to aid this. Things have been very different for all of our children over the past months but they have continued to learn; some have been working very successfully at home with great support from their families, whilst others have been in school. Alongside the curriculum, all of the children have learnt to be more independent, more resilient etc. as they have adapted so maturely to many different situation they have been faced with.

I'm sure, like me, we are all very proud of all of our children here at St. Mary and St Thomas Aquinas. They have and continue to do so, a fantastic job!  
Well done children!

### Erasmus Project - Europe through my Eyes

We are currently taking part in an Erasmus project with partner schools in Italy, Spain and Romania. The aim of this project is to learn about the lifestyles, traditions and cultures of different European countries. The project title is 'Europe through my Eyes'.

We are currently working on 'My European Family' as part of the project. Through this, the children will think about;

- family life
- different things that families do together - activities, hobbies, holidays, trips out and games
- traditional family meals

We would like to create a montage of English family life. So if over the next few weekends and the Easter holidays you do something nice as a family (a family meal, play a board game, play a game outdoors, have a nice trip out etc) then can you send your photos into school to the following email address

[hazelandagreen@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:hazelandagreen@gateshead.gov.uk)

### Erasmus Project Website

Keep up to date with our Erasmus project work on our project website. [www.europethroughmyeyes.co.uk](http://www.europethroughmyeyes.co.uk)  
All the work that the children have already completed linked to landmarks can be accessed on the website. It would be wonderful if you could post some comments on the children's work.

Thank you

## SVP Ozanam Camp - Holy Island 2021

Applications are now open for 2021. You will find information regarding the application process below.

For those of you not familiar with our camp, it has been running on Holy Island every summer since 1954 and the aim of the camp is to provide a safe and enjoyable week away in a unique location, where children can engage in a variety of mainly outdoor activities, make new friends and get some much needed time away from screens! The 'camp' is a purpose built hostel, with dormitories containing bunk beds for eight children. The maximum capacity is 64 per week (a slight reduction from previous years), and we are usually full up! The camp is run exclusively by volunteers who are all subject to Enhanced DBS Clearance (Criminal Record Check) and required to undertake annual training. For more information on the camp, please visit our website:

<http://www.svholyislandcamp.co.uk/>

Direct link to application form - [https://svpl.formstack.com/forms/children\\_s\\_application\\_form\\_2021](https://svpl.formstack.com/forms/children_s_application_form_2021)

The application process is exactly the same as last year, so those of you who applied then will already be familiar with it. Unfortunately, our camps have been hit badly by the block on income over the last year due to the Covid-19 restrictions, so we are forced to increase the cost to £135 per child, per week. However, we can work with you to agree a payment plan if this would be helpful. We will again be allocating places on a 'first come, first served' basis, so please apply as soon as possible. Online applications can be submitted from our website (address above).

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The major change to camp in 2021 from previous years is that all our weeks will now be 'mixed gender' weeks, i.e. we are inviting both boys and girls to attend together. As you may be aware, we have been already been operating with mixed helpers for a number of years, and the National SVP Committee have a wish for all camps to be mixed in terms of both children and volunteers. For Holy Island, this means we can now offer completely equal opportunities to both boys and girls. Of course, whilst the boys and girls will attend the same week, they will have separate dormitories, toilets and shower facilities.

**Visit the website for available dates.**

Please ask your child to talk with their friends before deciding which week to apply for. Although many children attend on their own each year and have a great time, we do tend to get a number of drop outs as children discover that their friends have applied for different weeks and they will not be together. If your child has a best friend or two that they would really like to share a room with, please note that in the comments section of the online form.

If there is anything at all you would like to ask or discuss, please contact our team at any time via the email address below. Unfortunately, due to the fact we are all working full time on our day jobs, we do not have a phone number for you to call. However, if you would rather discuss a matter over the phone, please email us with your name and number and we will call you back as soon as we can.

**Holy Island Applications Team (Rob Curran, Eileen Stout, Joe Hollamby)**

**Email: [holyislandapplications@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:holyislandapplications@hotmail.co.uk)**

### Easter Holidays

School closes at 3.15 p.m. on Thursday 1st April (this is not an April fool, it's true!) and re-opens again on Monday 19th April.



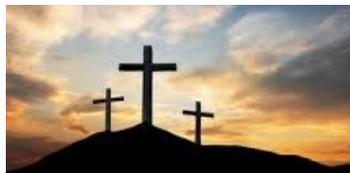
### Palm Sunday—Sunday 28th March

[God's Story: Palm Sunday - YouTube](#)

[Luke 19 The Triumphal Entry - Bible Video for kids](#)

“Lent is a journey during which the Lord ask us to follow three steps: almsgiving, prayer, and fasting.”

*Pope Francis*



### Forthcoming Election

Advance notice that school will be closed to ALL pupils on Thursday 6th May as our school will be used as a polling station as in previous years.



**Jesus always welcomes anybody who wants to follow him.**

We follow Jesus whenever we are kind, helpful, try to make peace and put others' needs before our own. We can be sure that Jesus is always waiting and wanting to help us to follow him.

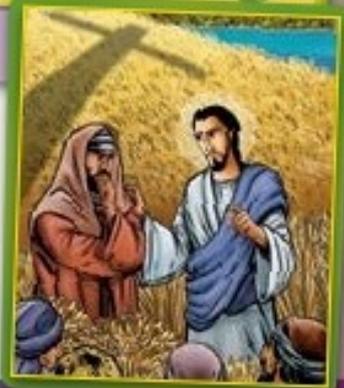


# 1 Our Special Time Together

Enjoy reading the Gospel overleaf (or below for younger children)

Jesus said to his friends, the disciples, "If you do not bury a grain of wheat, it stays just one grain. But if you bury it in the ground, it dies, and then produces a rich harvest. In the same way, those who are willing to give up their lives to help others will be given everlasting life. Whoever serves me must follow me. When I am lifted up from the earth, I will bring all people to myself." By these words Jesus made it known how he would die.

**What did Jesus say we must do to serve him?** Which words stood out for you in this Sunday's Gospel, and why? What does the Sunday Gospel picture make you think about?



# 2 Wednesday's Word is ...

**FOLLOW**



# 3 Loving God & Each Other

"Are you a parent or grandparent? Be holy by patiently teaching the little ones how to follow Jesus." *Pope Francis*

Following Jesus includes respecting and caring for those who sometimes may be rejected or neglected. Ask your child if they know what 'to follow someone' means. Who impresses them? Who sets them a good example which they would like to follow? How has that person made things better for someone, for a family, for friends or for your school? It may help your child if you can talk about a person whose example you follow, or have followed.

"Let us ask for the grace to follow Jesus faithfully, not in words but in deeds."

*Pope Francis*

We can follow Jesus in the simple things we do in our lives every day, and make life better for all the family and everyone around us. In this coming week, how can we follow Jesus, even in little ways? Perhaps you can: be a good listener if someone is sad and wants to share their problems with you; find regular time to pray for others; be kind and generous; go out of your way to support anyone who needs your help.

Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for giving your life for us and for calling us to **follow** you, so that our world may become a better place. Amen.

## Gospel Gallery

**WEDNESDAY WORDSEARCH**

SMARTSEARCHERS FIND THESE EIGHT WORDS EITHER **ACROSS** OR **DOWN**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>HOLD</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>LOSE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>HELP OTHERS</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>SERVE FOLLOW</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>EVERLASTING LIFE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUPERSEARCHERS FIND THE WORDS **BACKWARDS** OR **DIAGONALLY**



Search for at least three differences between this picture and the colour one. Then draw them in before colouring.

Cross out the letters **U C Z** in the jumbled words below to find 4 real words.

**zearcuth clifutezd pecopulez Wuhzenc**

Jesus said, "\_\_\_\_\_ I am \_\_\_\_\_ up from the \_\_\_\_\_, I will bring all \_\_\_\_\_ to myself."

### DID YOU KNOW?

The Church dedicates every Wednesday to St Joseph, the Patron Saint of Families. The Wednesday Word Family Time is also dedicated to St Joseph.

This Friday, 19th March 2021, the Church celebrates his feast day. Find out more about St Joseph at: [wednesdayword.org/home/st-joseph.htm](http://wednesdayword.org/home/st-joseph.htm)

Write a promise and then draw a big smile on Smiley

**This week I will try my best to...**

.....  
 .....

