



Learn
Love
Believe

A Christmas Message

As we approach the end of the Advent journey of preparation for Our Lord's birth, we need to remind ourselves of the great message which Jesus brought to us. Christmas is the celebration of the incarnation of God in Jesus. Traditionally, Christmas is about wonder and joy, of generosity and peace that brings families and friends together in celebration and we observe the holy traditions that make the season so captivating.

The Christmas story began over 2,000 years ago and there was born in Bethlehem of Judea, a babe whose life was destined to affect countless millions. That babe was Jesus Christ. He was born in the most humble of circumstances, into a life of poverty and vulnerability. As an adult, Jesus preached about forgiveness and reconciliation, humility and love. These are words in our mission statement, which we try to aspire to every day at school.

Recently, I held assemblies with our children where I talked of poverty which still exists today and how we can try to help and support our local communities, challenging each form to produce at least 3 hampers. I am delighted with the response we have had. Our build up to this magical feast has included Advent assemblies, the Carol Service and festive assemblies, with our Year 7 attending mass at St Marie's Church.

Christmas is a time for building bridges, healing wounds and supporting each other, bringing families together and celebrating all the joys of life, setting aside differences and divisions.

I thank you for all your support this year and I wish you a happy and holy Christmas. I invite you to consider these words just for a moment:

"To us a child is born, to us a son is given'. Today the mystery of Christmas is renewed: this Child who brings salvation to the world is also born for the men and women of our own time, bringing joy and peace for all. We approach the crib with emotion; together with Mary we go to meet the long-awaited of the nations, the Redeemer of humanity."

General information

The governing board have appointed Dr Mark Hargreaves as permanent Deputy Headteacher and Mr Dan Stewart as permanent Assistant Headteacher.

Mrs P Walsh, who teaches Spanish and RE but who also taught Business Studies for many years, has been appointed to a teaching post at Holy Cross College. Mrs C Rafferty has left to take up the position of SENDCO at the Elton High School. We wish them every success and thank them for their dedicated work here at St Gabriel's.

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Key messages for next term

Overall, the standard of uniform has been excellent this term. Thank you for your support. Should the weather deteriorate after Christmas and should the snow arrive, please could you always check the school website if there is any doubt about the school opening. Messages will be placed on the website by 6.30am.

Mobile phones must not be used in school during the day. If you need to contact your child with a message, please phone the school, not your child. If you do want the school office to get a message to your child could you please ring before 2.45pm. We will always try to get a message to your child. This is part of our mobile phone policy, which can be found on the website alongside all the other policies.

I would also encourage you to use the online payment system Civica for putting money on your child's dinner account. This saves the school canteen a great deal of time and also your child's time, as we only have one cash machine in school.

Can I also remind you that first aid in school is for emergencies only. We cannot deal with headaches, cold, flu, etc. If your child is really not well enough to come into school, please keep them at home. We can only deal with emergencies.


I am also extremely concerned about our children crossing major roads around Bury, especially Manchester Road and Knowsley Street. Recently a pupil from another local school was knocked down by a car crossing the road, but he did not use the pelican crossing nearby. I would be grateful if you would highlight the green cross code and the dangers of crossing major roads, particularly in winter time when it is dark and can be wet. We try to educate our children on various dangers through our PHSE programme, which is very extensive, so with your reinforcement at home, perhaps we can protect our children as much as we can to avoid accidents.

If you are attending any events or meetings in school, please do not park on the double yellow lines in the turning area. You are likely to be booked. This is especially so in the evening. You can park on single yellow lines off Bridge Road after 6.00pm. I am always surprised at how traffic wardens get to know about evening events and how totally inflexible they are.

On behalf of the governing board, staff and pupils, I wish you a happy and holy Christmas.

School re-opens on Monday, 7 January at 8.45am.

Yours sincerely



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Acting Headteacher

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