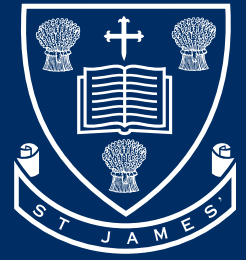


# School Newsletter

December 2021



As we approach the end of our Autumn Term and prepare for the most joyous occasion of Jesus' arrival at Christmas, we take the opportunity to reflect on another busy term which has presented a myriad of challenges and opportunities.

In September, we thought that perhaps this term would be more settled than last year but the past few weeks have shown us that Covid can still present us with so many uncertainties. Testament to our St James' family is that despite everything they have faced, they have continued to demonstrate our three values of Family, Faith and Excellence in everything they have done. We witness on a daily basis examples of the children looking after each other, supporting charity events and striving for excellence in everything they do.

Our Year 7 have settled so well into life at St James' and are a real credit to you as parents and carers. It has been fantastic getting to know them, they are a delightful Year group and we are sure they will continue to approach school life in such a positive and engaged way and go on to do great things in their time at St James' and beyond. Celebrating their Welcome

Mass with them back in October was a wonderful witness to all that is great about our school community.

We place great emphasis on our purpose "to educate and develop global Catholic citizens" and this term our children have had many opportunities to participate fully in school life including a plethora of charity events for Christian Aid including cake sales, Christmas candy cane delivery and guess the number of sweets in the jar to name but a few. The Wellspring and Chelwood Foodbank collection has also benefited from the wonderful generosity of our school family and a huge thanks goes to all those who contributed to the gift boxes for refugees. Our children have engaged in extracurricular activities across all areas of school life and our Christmas Showcase, that can be viewed on our website, is testament to the many talents of our young people.

If you do not already do so, I would encourage you to follow us on Twitter @StJamesCheadle and to visit our website [www.stjamescheadle.co.uk](http://www.stjamescheadle.co.uk) as it is full of useful information including the latest news updates.

Our school term will end on Wednesday 22nd December at 12.15pm, we have various activities planned for the final day allowing students to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas, as well as spending time with their Forms.

We hope that Christmas will be a time of true reflection, the universal feast that sings of the gift of life. With so much consumerism surrounding Christmas we run the risk of losing its spiritual significance but instead may we discover the message of hope that emanates from the mystery of the birth of Christ. At Christmas, we remember something very concrete and important for man, something essential for Christian faith, a truth that St John summarised in these few words: "The Word was made flesh."

I would like to wish you a peaceful, happy, holy and healthy Christmas with all good wishes for the new year. We look forward to welcoming our staff and children back to school on Monday 10th January at 8.30am.

**Mr A Pontifex**, Headteacher



Follow us on Twitter:  
[@StJamesCheadle](https://twitter.com/StJamesCheadle)



# YEAR 7

We couldn't be more delighted with the way Year 7 have settled into life at St James'. Despite being very nervous when they started in September, they have impressed us all with the calm way that they have adapted to all their new routines and expectations. It was also fantastic to meet our new parents at Parent Tutor Evening in September which was very well attended. Year 7 are already living out our school values of Family, Faith and Excellence and it has been a real pleasure seeing them integrate into school life so successfully.

## Faith and Family

At the start of this term each Year 7 Form enjoyed a retreat day at Savio House that focused on our theme of gifts and talents. The day was filled with activities which helped pupils to recognise their own unique gifts and talents as well as celebrating the gifts of others.

The work done on the retreat days fed into the Year 7 Welcome Mass that took place at Our Lady's Church, Edgeley. Father Martin's homily inspired us all when he spoke of the importance of using our unique gifts and talents. It was a perfect way to welcome new pupils and their families into our community. Pupils have learnt the importance of respect, care and compassion for others this term. This kindness has been obvious in the impressive contributions to gift boxes for refugee families and in the many fund-raising activities being planned for Christian Aid. Each Form has nominated a team of Form representatives who are doing a fantastic job of coordinating the fund raising effort.

During Form time and PSHCE Year 7s have displayed great character and have been working together on icebreaker and team building activities as well as healthy living and safety online with a main focus on good mental health and resilience. Every opportunity to impress us and to let their talents shine has been taken. A large number of Year 7 contributed to European Languages Bake Off competition with Maoist Rafaela B, Isabel B, Joseph D, Grzegorz M & Issy B being recognised as Star Bakers.

Year 7 were also well represented in the National Poetry Day competition. We were very proud of all the entrants, but a special mention must go to the overall winner Miriam A and KS3 winner Joe L.

Eco Club and Equality Club both see many Year 7 pupils contributing to the weekly meetings and all of this reflects the genuine enthusiasm that our Year 7s have towards school life, key global issues of sustainability, stewardship and British Values.

## Excellence

The huge number of value points received by Year 7 has been celebrated each week in assembly when many pupils have been rewarded with the popular fast-track or free lunch passes. In the termly data, Year 7s have shown an incredible attitude to learning, completing work to the best of their ability and immersing themselves in new and exciting subjects. 132 Year 7 pupils received grade 1 or 2 for their positive attitude to learning in all subjects, earning a place in the 1,2 Club. A special mention, however, must go to Poppy H, Leia H and Katie M for receiving all ATL 1s in their subjects.

Sporting excellence has also been evident this term with Year 7 footballers winning an invitational tournament at Manchester United where they played 9 games, won 8 and drew 1, whilst conceding 0 goals throughout the competition.

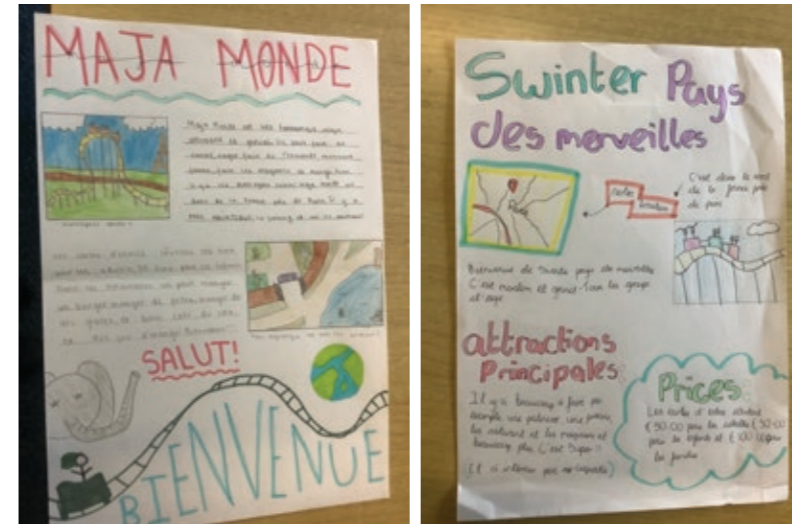
We celebrate excellent performance from both girls and boys in the cross country. Well done to Eva, Finlay, Harrison & Conor in qualifying to represent Stockport in the Greater Manchester cross country.

The Year 7 girls netball team shone when they played against Kingsway winning 12-1.

There is clearly a lot of talent within Year 7 with some beautiful pieces of work having been produced this term. I am confident that students will continue to show this great passion for learning in 2022.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Form Tutors; Mrs Brown, Miss Frost, Mrs Clark, Mrs Birch, Mrs Bray, Miss Outhwaite, Miss Duffell, Mrs Doyle and Miss Nagdee for their care and support. Their kindness and hard work have contributed to the positive way in which the Year 7 pupils have settled. We hope that Year 7 have enjoyed their first term as much as we have, and we would like to thank them for showing such positivity, humour and enthusiasm. Wishing you and your families a peaceful Christmas and a happy new year & we look forward to welcoming Year 7 back in the new year.

**Ms Woods & Dr Nye**  
Heads of Year 7



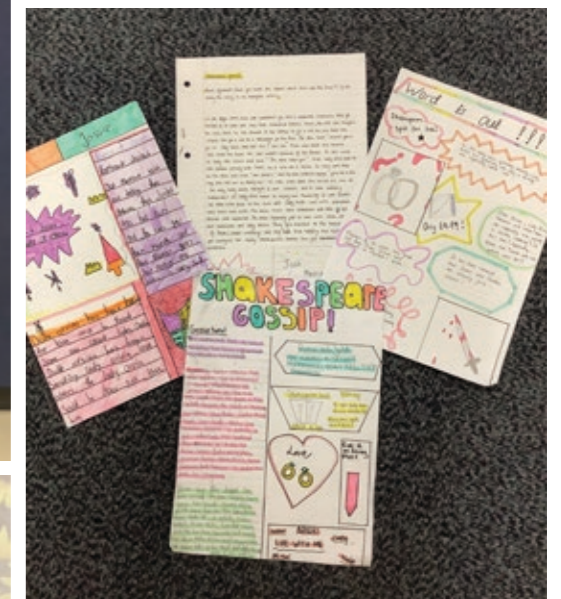
## What 7S have to say about the best bits of this term...

Ben B has been impressed by the extraordinary passion for learning in his lessons.

Moray M said meeting all his new teachers has been great.

Gabe's best memory has been Savio whilst Joe L has enjoyed learning a new language and studying new subjects like Textiles and Resistant Materials.

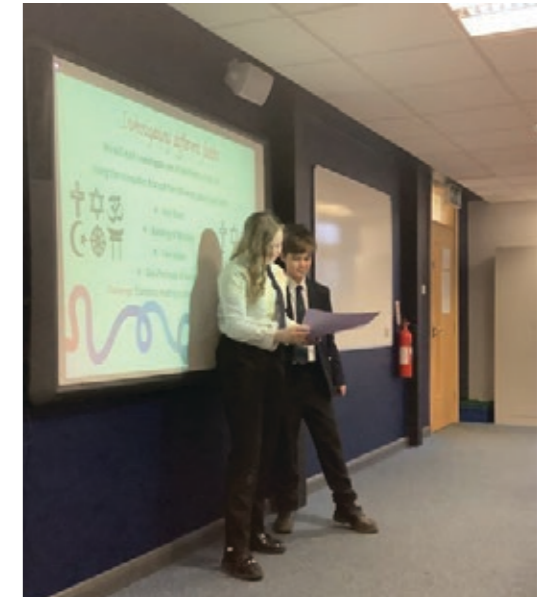
For Caitlin and Ansel the best part of this term has been making new friends and feeling that everyone wants to be your friend.







# YEAR 8



I have been incredibly impressed with Year 8 this term, especially in seeing them replicate the good habits and attitudes that held them in such good stead last year. Their approach to lessons is mature and sensible, whilst they participate in events outside of the classroom with great gusto. In doing so, it has been really evident that Year 8 have been following our school values of Family, Faith and Excellence.

## Family

This year, students are invited to a careers talk specifically tailored to their interests. These career breakfasts are a great way for students to hear first hand experience of certain jobs and can hopefully inspire pupils to consider what they would like to do once they have left school.

Attendance at clubs has been brilliant with many Year 8s enjoying activities such as History film club, Eco club, STEM club and the Equality group where they presented information about other faiths and have looked at diversity. We have also had guest speakers coming in to inform us about a range of issues, from knife crime to having a positive mindset. Some of our students even got a sneak peek of a new book by author Mat Sullivan when they met him in the library. Their performances representing their school in the Arts and athletically has also not gone unnoticed, with a 3-0 football win over Barlow a definite highlight.

## Faith

8M showed off their baking skills with Mrs Doyle during a Biblical bake off, a fondant Moses sailing down an icing river Nile in a chocolate cornflake basket being a particularly excellent example. Clearly baking is a strength of Year 8 with superb entries in the European Day of Languages baking competition at the start of the academic year.

On 28th February and 1st March, Year 8 will be attending a retreat at Manchester Rugby Club. These days will provide an opportunity for students to bond, learn more about their faith and consider the sacrifices and changes we all make during Lent. There will be a letter with more information about this in the new year. The Year group have been brilliant at preparing Christmas boxes for the refugee families showing the warmth and kindness that they have for others.

## Excellence

In the recent termly data, a fantastic 82% of Year 8 students made it into the 1,2 club for attitude to learning. Six of those students received a 1 in every single subject; a terrific achievement. Those students were:

- Job C
- Ethan M
- Leia J
- Leah R
- Humaira N
- Lucy W

Possessing an excellent attitude to learning is so important because it enables a greater understanding of the content of lessons and allows students to reach their potential. It has been great, therefore, to see lots of teachers praise students for their excellent work. I especially enjoyed Max's description of New York city in his English assessment:

"As I got out of the yellow cab, the first thing that hit me was the blinding lights. It felt like I had been reborn. The neon signs were everywhere, lighting up the roads with their vibrant colours. They made the city feel alive at night."

Since starting here at St James', the students have shown excellence in all manners of ways. I have been delighted to be able to reward them with queue jump passes and free lunches and am so proud of their efforts. They show the good humour, politeness and diligence I expect from St James' students and I am sure that they will continue this in the new year. Our

attendance of 94% is good but I am hoping it will be even better in 2022. Attendance is so crucial to students' understanding of topics and to their enjoyment of the social aspect of school. If any students are worried about catching up on work missed or any other obstacles that may impede their enjoyment of school, I am always available for a conversation as is Miss O'Hara in Emmaus. Homework club is available on Tuesday lunchtimes and every day after school.

Thank you for all your support in ensuring that our students reach these high demands. I would like to express my thanks for the hard work and care shown by my Form Tutors- Mrs Bennett, Mr Walker, Mr Hall, Mr Murphy, Mrs Malins, Miss Todd and Mrs Gill. Year 8 are so lucky to have such wonderful Tutors. I hope you and your family have a restful and peaceful Christmas.

**Mr Cawley**  
Head of Year 8





# YEAR 9

I am sure that you, as parents and carers can hardly believe your children are in Year 9. Nor can I! Time has gone by so quickly, despite those periods of interminable lockdown. It has been lovely to see the pupils once again and to see how much they have grown, some of them are now very tall indeed! Attendance at school is so important and Year 9 are currently at 94.8%, which is 5% above the national average. The fortnightly attendance lottery drawn during assembly has seen some very worthy winners gain Amazon vouchers.

We have managed to get back into the swing of some of our normal activities once more. It was great to see so many pupils in Year 9 get involved in the "European Day of Languages Bake Off" back in September, with winners in different categories;

"Best representation of a German flag" – Imogen M  
 "Spectacular presentation" – Nicole  
 "The Star of the Show" – Efe  
 "The Hollywood Handshake" – Gracie-Lea ... whose cake was described by Year 8 boys as the best thing they had ever eaten!

There have been some outstanding ATL scores achieved in the first termly data, with the following pupils gaining ATL 1s across all their subjects:

Megan A, Revel, Harry C, Gracie-Lea, Thomas M, Declan, Amy M, Quinn, Alisha

This is an amazing achievement, well done!

Over two thirds of the Year group achieved ATL scores of 1s and 2s which is also fantastic. Congratulations to all those pupils. The new value passes awarded to pupils who have a high number of value points each week in each Form, has been a great success, with pupils enjoying jumping the queue at lunchtime or getting a free snack. The following pupils have achieved over 75 value points already this term!

Kynon, Emily S, Josh A, Hannah, Jamie, Quinn and Pheobe. Amazing! Keep up the good work!

Pupils will be beginning to think about their options for next year. More information about this will follow in January. It is important that pupils continue to work hard in all areas of the curriculum this academic year, whilst they still have access to this broad area of study.

There have been some great sporting achievements over the first term. I managed to get down to a Year 9 mixed hockey match

against Bramhall one evening, where despite not regularly playing together and not having had much practice, the determination of our pupils shone through and they held the more experienced Bramhall to a 0-0 draw. Alfie did a sterling job in goal, Lilia was strong in defence and Joe and Liam worked hard to take the ball forward.



Year 9 have been busy raising money for our school's chosen charity this year, Christian Aid. 9S and 9E joined forces to hold a penalty shootout at lunch time, where pupils paid to take a penalty. Jay and Rory took turns in goal and made some great saves, under lots of pressure! They managed to raise £35.



9C spent an evening baking and held a cake sale one break time, where they managed to raise a staggering £106!!!!



9M have been raffling off some wonderful edible treats. As this goes to press they are still selling tickets. I am sure they will raise lots of money.



9A and 9J are both asking for pupils to guess how many treats are in the jar in order to win it. Again, I am sure they will be very successful in their fundraising.

Thanks to all the families who have donated an item for our shoebox appeal for refugee families. It will mean so much to the recipient to receive a box of presents at Christmas.

I hope you have a wonderful, relaxing Christmas with your family and friends. I'm really looking forward to accompanying the pupils on the retreat in January.

God bless

**Ms Cheshire**  
 Head of Year 9





# YEAR 10

I have been incredibly proud of how Year 10 have embraced the first term of their GCSE courses. Pupils returned in September with enthusiasm and an eagerness to learn and this has been reflected in their termly data. I was delighted to see that 96% of pupils achieved either a grade 1 or a grade 2 in their attitude to learning. This is a significant increase from the data from term 3 of Year 9. Well done.

## Faith

It's certainly been a busy term, however I am glad to say we were able to step back from the busy school day and reflect on how we treat others and how it is important to make others feel good about themselves. We did this by going on a retreat day to Animate Youth in St Helens where the pupils took part in workshops and completed activities that allowed them to reflect and refocus on what's important in our everyday lives. We had a fabulous time and the pupils were thoroughly engaged and represented St James' beautifully. The feedback from the trip was very positive and when I asked pupils what they took away from the day they said, "How important it is to show and have respect; how a small act of kindness can go a long way" and "Things you say can affect someone in a way you may not know and that mental health conditions are not always visible from the outside" and "Respect others and respect yourself".

I would also like you to keep in your prayers some of our Year 10 pupils who have received the sacrament of confirmation or are preparing to do so in the coming weeks.

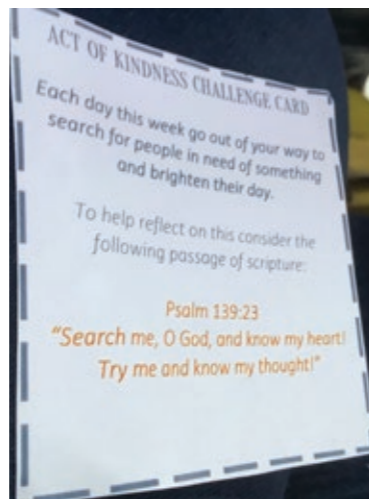
## Family

We have been asked by our prefect team to put together some fundraising ideas so that as a school family, we can raise money for our school charity which is Christian Aid this year. At the time of writing, I know that there are some good ideas coming from each Form group and I know that we will work hard to ensure that we make our fundraising a success. I always talk to the pupils about the importance of recognising that too many people in our world live in poverty and poor conditions, and as global Catholic citizens it is vital that we play our part in trying to make a difference no matter how small.

To this end we are also collecting gifts in order to fill Christmas shoeboxes for refugees who have arrived recently in our local community. A huge thank you to everyone who has contributed so far.

## Excellence

As I mentioned previously, there has been an upsurge in numbers of pupils gaining 1s and 2s in their attitude to learning, and I would like to mention in particular, those pupils who have been given all grade 1s in their data. Anna A, Antonia A, Amber C, Hayden C, Charles D, Neha J, Corin R, Kimberley A, Qiya C, Oliver F, Daniel F, Wayne G, Charlotte H, Thomas K, Yasmin McD, Kate R, Callum M, and Aaliyah R. In the past this group has been very small so I am delighted to see lots more names on there, well done.



In PE, our Year 10s were given the chance to develop their leadership skills and taught the Year 5s and Year 6s of Neville Road some hockey drills. The teachers of Neville Road complemented our Year 10s on their enthusiasm and patience.

The following students took part: Ella A, Alycia G, Amber C, Yasmin McD and Darcie L.

As we come to the end of our first term of Year 10, I want to thank the pupils for their hard work and praise them for the way in

which they have embraced any changes that we have had to make. Their resilience has really shone through. I would also like to thank parents and families for their ongoing support as always and I would like to wish you and your families a very merry and peaceful Christmas and a happy and prosperous new year when it arrives.

**Mrs Linford**  
Head of Year 10





# YEAR 11

Year 11 have had a really busy half term. They have had some big decisions to make about their post St James' pathways, college applications to complete, and have just completed their mock exams. Along with the stresses and strains of these events, some of our Year 11s have found the time to lead other aspects of our school life including charity events, running lunchtime clubs and activities for younger pupils and leading on aspects of faith in our school.

The people best placed to recap on the term are our Year 11 leaders so the following was written by Lottie, Dylan, Kamilla and Ruben, our Head Girl, Head Boy, Deputy Head Girl and Deputy Head Boy:

During September and October, representatives from Loreto College, Xaverian College and Aquinas College hosted the Year 11 assemblies, giving us a flavour of what to expect during our lives post-16. All 3 colleges have a lot in common in the sense that they all promoted their strong extra-curricular activities, mainly musical productions, sport teams, the Model UN etc. Since all 3 colleges are Catholic, there is a strong emphasis on learning about different faiths every week in Form sessions. In the Careers and Apprenticeship conventions a few weeks ago, new career opportunities were there to learn about, such as working as a doctor in the RAF, demonstrating that there are also different pathways aside from college.

The best way to describe the prefects at St James' is young role models who embody our school values; Family, Faith and Excellence. As family prefects, we help the younger students to make them feel comfortable and supported as they transition to secondary school life. Faith prefects this year have participated in charity works and led morning prayer every week, further reinforcing the importance of the religion in our school. Our Excellence prefects have run weekly Year 7 lunchtime clubs including homework clubs.

Every Form in each Year has put ideas forward of how to raise money. Examples are: penalty shootouts, cake sales etc. During the month of remembrance, prefects were encouraged to sell poppies and we managed to raise a significant amount of money. In this Advent season, we have been bringing shoeboxes filled with toys and necessities for families less fortunate than ourselves. Through this we are showing how we are global Catholic citizens. I am sure that all our Year 11s are looking forward to a well deserved rest after an extremely busy first term and I hope to see them all fit and raring to go again in January.

**Mr Gallagher**  
Head of Year 11



## ATTENDANCE

Despite continuing challenges due to the Covid pandemic, our pupils' resilience is shown by our good school attendance. This is consistently around 3% higher than the national average; an achievement we can all be proud of. During the winter months attendance is usually lower due to seasonal colds and viruses. It is important that your child attends school as much as possible so that their gap in knowledge is impacted as little as possible.

We continue to acknowledge good short-term attendance by holding a fortnightly attendance lottery for each Year Group. This incentive is to reward attendance of 100% for a 2 week period. The lucky winner is pulled from a draw and wins a £5 Amazon voucher. By way of recognising and treating our pupils who have attained 100% attendance since the start of the academic year, Christmas selection boxes will be handed out in the last few days of term. We will also be awarding the Form with the best attendance in each Year Group with a tub of Celebration sweets to share in Form time.

Please remember to inform the school by 9.00am if your child is going to be absent. Please do not email your child's Form Tutor, but call the absence line on 0161 482 6900 (option 1) or email the Attendance Officer on;

[c.hanley@stjamescheadle.co.uk](mailto:c.hanley@stjamescheadle.co.uk)

Excellent attendance at St James' is taken very seriously, our students must strive to attain 100% attendance.

Wishing you and your families a wonderful festive period.

**Mrs Hanley**  
Attendance Officer

## SPIRITUALITY

As we draw to the end of the term and ever closer to the celebration of Christmas Day and all that means for us, may I wish you a happy Advent! It's so easy to miss Advent, to get caught up in the practical preparations. But Advent is so much more than that; its slow, purposeful waiting - looking towards the celebration of the birth of our Saviour, but also looking towards the coming of the Son of Man. It's a time to take stock, a time to reflect and refocus, and a time to pray.

During this busy term, students have been able to take time out to reflect and pray. Year 7 students have all made Christingles, and had the opportunity to think about Christ as the Light of the World and reflect on Christ's light in their own lives. I hope these Christingles now take pride of place in your Christmas decorations, perhaps next to your Advent wreaths. Other students have had the opportunity to be led through a guided meditation, imagining a conversation with Jesus and spending time resting in the presence of God's love. Students who enjoyed their service before Advent began were also led through a guided meditation, or were guided through praying with Lectio Divina, or reflected on Oscar Romero and created their own Salvadoran crosses. There has been lots of reflection and trying new things this term in the Chapel, with students embracing these opportunities. It's been lovely to be a part of! It was also lovely to be able to join Year 10 students on their retreat led by Animate, the youth team of the Liverpool Archdiocese.

As part of our understanding of family, and developing ourselves as global Catholic citizens, lots of fundraising has been going on. On CAFOD Harvest fast day in October students donated £298.02. There have been ongoing fundraising activities for our nominated school charity this year, Christian Aid; including penalty shootouts and a number of well appreciated and attended bake sales! Well done to those Forms who have done a fundraising activity so far, and we look forward to what the new year will bring.

On the last day of term, staff and students will gather virtually again to celebrate an Advent Liturgy. Students from across Year groups have contributed to this liturgy, which has its focus on the Advent Wreath. A special thanks to Mrs Clark and the students who contributed to the wonderful music.

As you read this, I have just finished my time at St. James' and have moved on to Sixth Form Chaplaincy. It has been so wonderful to journey with students and staff here over the last eight years, and a real privilege to share faith, questions and liturgy with everyone. I have been very blessed. Have a joyful Christmas break. God bless,

**Mrs Bennett**  
Lay Chaplain

St James' Catholic High School  
St James' Way, Cheadle Hulme  
Cheadle, Cheshire, SK8 6PZ

0161 482 6900  
[www.stjamescheadle.co.uk](http://www.stjamescheadle.co.uk)

With God  
all things are possible

Matthew 19:26



Follow us on Twitter:  
[@StJamesCheadle](https://twitter.com/StJamesCheadle)