



19th December 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Autumn Term Week 15 Headteacher Update

Firstly, I would like to start by thanking all of you for your continued support of the school throughout this first term. This has been an extremely long term, but it seems to have raced by. Looking back over the last 15 weeks has been a pleasure and once again the St James' family have lived out our core Values. Our Autumn Term newsletter will be sent out to you this week and I ask that you read it, especially for your child's specific Year group. It really does highlight the fantastic school, children and staff we have.

As expected, our Expressive Arts faculty put on a phenomenal performance of Matilda last week. A huge thank you to all families and friends who supported the event. The performance showcased the vast talents that lie within our Catholic school. The feedback from audiences, including St Simon's, was brilliant. The children and staff should rightly be extremely proud of their efforts, a big congratulations to all of those involved.

At this time, quite rightly, the general focus of our attention is on Mary herself who is not only central to the narrative of Christmas, but also to the history of salvation. God called and chose Mary personally by name to be the Mother of Jesus. In faith and humility she agreed to what was asked of her but neither asked for, nor looked for this great honour and responsibility. It was through her courageous act of faith that God breaks into our world and our lives. Yesterday's Gospel also highlights another person through whom God worked, Joseph. Like Mary, he too was called by name. He heard the word and message God had for him through an angel. Like Mary, he was encouraged with the words, 'Do not be afraid.' In faith and humility, Joseph also said 'Yes' to what God was asking of him. Like Joseph, we can all feel unworthy of the honour of welcoming Jesus into our hearts and homes. God chooses ordinary humans to be part of his plan for the world. It is through Mary, Joseph and countless millions throughout history that God's kingdom is proclaimed and built. Today, each of us is called by God personally with these words: 'I call you by your name, do not be afraid. You are precious to me and I love you.' I have been overwhelmed with our children living out our second value of Faith as demonstrated by last week's donations for Stockport and Chelwood Foodbanks. The generosity of our families demonstrates the love and care they have for others and as we said to the children, you really have made a huge difference to the lives of those who will benefit, so thank you.

On Wednesday, school will finish at 12.15pm and the buses have been booked for this time. Our children will follow a different timetable which will afford them a spiritual reflection on the true meaning of Christmas, an assembly led by their Head of Year, our annual Christmas quiz and finally a Form party.

I hope you have a fantastic holy Christmas and a very happy New Year when it comes. Our staff will also be taking a well-deserved break over Christmas period, spending time with their families, and as such will be unavailable via email, thank you in advance for not contacting them. A reminder school re-opens on 9th January, if you need anything in these final three days, please contact headteacherpa@stjamesheadle.co.uk

Yours faithfully

Mr A Pontifex
Headteacher