



16th March 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Sharing in the Prayer Life of St James' Catholic High School – Week 25

Thank you for your continued support in encouraging our pupils to attend the Chapel activities.

	Before school 8:15 am	Lunchtime 1:30	
Monday:	Morning prayer: All welcome	Mass at 1:30pm in the Chapel.	
Tuesday:	Morning prayer: All welcome	Knit and Natter	
Wednesday:	STAFF MORNING PRAYER: Expressive arts	Lent Big Walk – join the Chaplain and get some steps in!	
Thursday:	Morning prayer: All welcome	Youth SVP and Choir to visit Abbeyfield House P2 and 3 SVP meeting to debrief in (OR11)	
Friday:	Morning prayer: All welcome	Reel Faith: Connecting films/TV to scripture through discussion. The Mission	

Sunday 15th March was Week 4 of Lent Year A. It was Laetare Sunday and Mothering Sunday- a day to rejoice!

The Gospel reading was from John 9:1-41





The blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored



As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?' 'Neither he nor his parents sinned,' Jesus answered 'he was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

'As long as the day lasts
I must carry out the work of the one who sent me;
the night will soon be here when no one can work.
As long as I am in the world
I am the light of the world.'

Having said this, he spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man, and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.' So they said to him, 'Then how do your eyes come to be open?' 'The man called Jesus' he answered 'made a paste, daubed my eyes with it and said to me, "Go and wash at Siloam"; so I went, and when I washed I could see.' They asked, 'Where is he?' 'I don't know' he answered.

They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man. However, the Jews would not believe that the man had been blind and had gained his sight, without first sending for his parents and asking them, 'Is this man really your son who you say was born blind? If so, how is it that he is now able to see?' His parents answered, 'We know he is our son and we know he was born blind, but we do not know how it is that he can see now, or who opened his eyes. He is old enough: let him speak for himself.' His parents spoke like this out of fear of the Jews, who had already agreed to expel from the synagogue anyone





who should acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. This was why his parents said, 'He is old enough; ask him.'

So the Jews again sent for the man and said to him, 'Give glory to God! For our part, we know that this man is a sinner.' The man answered, 'I don't know if he is a sinner; I only know that I was blind and now I can see.' They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He replied, 'I have told you once and you wouldn't listen. Why do you want to hear it all again? Do you want to become his disciples too?' At this they hurled abuse at him: 'You can be his disciple,' they said 'we are disciples of Moses: we know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.' The man replied, 'Now here is an astonishing thing! He has opened my eyes, and you don't know where he comes from! We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but God does listen to men who are devout and do his will. Ever since the world began it is unheard of for anyone to open the eyes of a man who was born blind; if this man were not from God, he couldn't do a thing.' 'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away.

Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.

Jesus said:

'It is for judgement
that I have come into this world,
so that those without sight may see
and those with sight turn blind.'

Hearing this, some Pharisees who were present said to him, 'We are not blind, surely?' Jesus replied:

'Blind? If you were,
you would not be guilty,
but since you say, "We see,"
your guilt remains.'

This reading invites us to wonder: why do we sometimes refuse to see what is right before us? When we see Jesus' work in our lives, we sometimes suspect the integrity or authenticity of good actions or words. The man excluded for being blind and thought to be punished by God, is now excluded once he is healed because he is proclaiming his faith in Jesus.

There will be Mass in the Chapel on Monday lunchtime at 1:30 pm prompt.

There will be reflection sessions for KS3, in the chapel during RE lessons, this week and next week, based on a theme of the cross. Pupils will be invited to participate in the stations of the cross as part of a Lenten effort to commit more deeply to prayer.





ST JAMES'

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Pope Leo has asked us to give up harmful words, written or spoken. This week, our pupils are being asked again not to 'give up giving up'!

Our core value focus this week is Excellence and our Catholic Social Teaching focus is 'Option for the poor'.

We have been asked to support Caritas this Lent. Caritas is an umbrella organisation that incorporates 160 Catholic charities, and Cafod has close connections with Caritas. Supporting these organisations means that we are giving short term and long-term aid to people both locally and abroad, regardless of their race or religion. **Our community has been asked to fundraise for Caritas and to donate a minimum of £1 per pupil.** There is a link on 'ParentPay'.



Our staff, pupils and their families, are invited to join in the **Big Lent Walk**. They can do this individually or as part of our school collective effort. Individuals can either walk 5k a day for 40 days or add to our total 1000km by doing just one special walk with family and friends. We are asking all staff, students and parents to get involved at weekends and sharing pictures of their walks and their total km via email to Mrs Pardoe. These are being logged on our school page as we raise lots of money together. **Please get involved if you can.** You can run, walk or ride. Here is a link to our school

page:

St James' Catholic High School Big Lent Walk

- https://schools.walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/st-james-catholic-high-school-big-lent-walk?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=dssb-EM&utm_content=MPC

We only have two weeks left to reach our target and we are asking all pupils to donate a minimum of £1 to our appeal.

During Lent, we have been praying and focussing on one of the stations of the cross in the Chapel every morning. We are now up to the eighth station.

You might like to watch this during Lent and perhaps pray one of the stations each day...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b-ltq65b5hc>





This is a link to some stations of the cross prayers for young people. <file:///W:/Documents/Downloads/TeenStationsoftheCrossEnglish-PHL-2016.pdf>

In faith and family time this week, pupils will be asked not to give up, giving up. If they have not yet entered into a Lenten effort, it is never too late. **This is diversity week and we are asking our pupils and families to support the project in Bangladesh, to build floating gardens so that crops are not destroyed by floods.**

The Youth SVP group and the choir, visited a residential home for the elderly on Thursday 12th March and it was a very special occasion. The choir sang extremely well, 'Does Your Mother know?' (ABBA), *I get by with a little help from my friends* (Beatles) and *I Wanna be with you everywhere* (Fleetwood Mac) it was so good to see residents and carers enjoying the music and bopping along. (Does that make me sound old?). They liked it so much, they invited us back. Thank you to Mrs Wear for preparing the choir and giving your time. **Our Youth SVP group** were fantastic. They chatted with great confidence and respect and really engaged with the residents. It was a sight to savour. These pictures sum it up...





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It was a blustery day with a weather warning and a 25 minute walk to the home, so our group did well not to get blown away. Collectively, 19 pupils and 3 adults walked 79.8 km. It was a great way to contribute to the **BIG LENT WALK**.

Alma Hashemzadeh, a year 7 pupil, who is a secretary for the Youth SVP, wrote this...

Care home trip

When I first entered the care home, I was nervous and thought that everything would be awkward and silent but when I started talking to the people I was more at ease and let the conversation flow, although it wasn't easy to speak to people who I have never met before and it all went well. One thing that made me feel good was I knew that I made someone's day, you could see the smile and joy in their face.

Prayer for the week ahead: Lord, Thank you for the opportunities we have been given. Thank you for the friends we have made and forgive us when we complain that we do not have enough, without thinking of others in our global family, who often lack basic needs like food, water and shelter. We pray for those members of our families who are sick and those who are bereaved, that they may find comfort through the community of St. James' family.

Amen. St James: **Pray for us.**

Yours faithfully,

Mrs T McGeough
Lay Chaplain

