

Latest School News

Gospel Reflection

Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection:

The second of the three great Johannine readings about water, light and life (which point to the baptisms of Easter) gives us the splendid account of Jesus bringing light to the blind man in the Temple. It is full of Johannine contrasts and irony. The 'Jews' or the Pharisees think they have the light and knowledge, but the more they abuse the man born blind, the clearer their own darkness and ignorance become. The more they try to thrust the blind man away from Jesus, the more they push him into seeking refuge in him. Much of the colouring of the scene comes from the controversies towards the end of the first century, when the Pharisees were the only branch of Judaism to survive after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. The New Testament shows that there was bitter opposition between those Jews who accepted the divine claims for Jesus, and those who rejected them. This is especially clear in the fear of the blind man's parents (recounted in the longer version of Sunday's Gospel) that they would be excluded from the synagogue if they accepted that Jesus' grant of sight was a sign of his divine mission. The doughty and ugnacious man born blind has no such hesitation!

Sunday's Gospel

Taken from the Gospel for Sunday 19th March 2023 - The Cure of the Man born Blind (John 9:1.6-9.13-17.34-38)

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. 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.' 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. '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

Weekend Mass Times at Our Lady of the Wayside Church

Saturday evening Vigil Mass for Sunday 5.30pm

Sunday Mass: 10am

Year 2 will be leading in our Parish/Family Mass on Saturday evening at 5:30pm. You are all most welcome to join us and afterwards enjoy a cup tea/coffee in St Aiden's Chapel.

There is a children's Liturgy of the Word at 10am Mass on Sunday.

Changes to the School Newsletter

On our last newsletter, we shared our plans to trial fortnightly newsletters. A number of parents expressed how much they valued and enjoyed our weekly newsletter (thank you for all your kind comments). We will, therefore, try our very best to continue with weekly newsletters. It does take a significant amount of time to write a weekly newsletter and some weeks it may simply not be possible, particularly when Mr Taylor reduces his Wayside working hours next term.

School Communication Update

Earlier this year, we introduced a new school communication app called Marvellous Me. We recognise how adults communicate and receive information is changing all the time and people are checking emails less and less. Throughout this year we have tried to communicate in both ways - emails through ParentPay and messages/notifications via the Marvellous Me app. We are now reviewing the effectiveness of our communication and what communication will look like for next term. To help us make the right decision, we really need to know your views and suggestions. Please share your views via our MS Form:

<https://forms.office.com/e/HjRVzz6BBn>

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Tomorrow, children in Year 3 will be receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. Please remember these children, and their families, in your prayers.

- Saturday 18th March - Class 3S
- Saturday 25^h March - Class 3M

Headteacher Vacancy

Following Mr Taylor's announcement, we can confirm the process to recruit a new Headteacher for Our Lady of the Wayside Catholic School has begun. The vacancy has been advertised with a closing date of Monday 27th March. We are hopeful of completing the selection process by early Summer 2023 Term. Further details, including information on how to apply, can be found on Our Lady and All Saints Catholic MAC's website - <https://www.olaas.co.uk/headteacher-our-lady-of-the-wayside/>

Staff Visit to India

During February half-term, Mrs Lloyd and Mrs Sallis visited St Mary's Educational Trust in India teaching classes during the day and spending time with the boarding children in the evening. It was an amazing experience for them both. They have shared their experiences with the children this week and will be sharing their experiences with parents during a parent coffee morning at 9:00am on Wednesday 22nd March - all are welcome. For this year's Lenten fundraising, we will be raising money (almsgiving) in support of St Mary's Educational Trust.



Homework Update

We have now completed Stage 1 of our homework review and we are able to share our Stage 1 outcomes, please see notes below. There are four stages:

Stage	Action	Dates
Stage 1	Gather and evaluate views of all stakeholders - parents, pupils and staff.	Spring Term 1
Stage 2	Using stakeholder holder views and educational best practice, create a draft homework policy.	End of Spring Term
Stage 3	Share the draft homework policy with all stakeholders and trial new arrangements with groups of pupils.	Summer Tern 1
Stage 4	Review trial outcomes and agree final homework policy and arrangements for September 2023 roll out. Share revised homework policy with all stakeholders.	July 2023

Stage 1 Outcomes

Parent voice questionnaire - 121 responses Pupils - 40 responses Teachers - 13 responses.

Headlines

- Majority of teachers and parents were in agreement that homework supports children's learning. Half of children supported this with over a quarter unsure on this statement.
- Nearly half of children said they did not enjoy homework - a quarter of parents supported this claim. A quarter of children said that they do enjoy homework and a quarter of them were unsure.
- All parties unanimous in agreement that daily reading is an important part of homework.
- Majority of parents and teachers in agreement that parents should support their child's learning at home.
- The majority of teachers and parents were in agreement (or unsure) that children who do not do homework at home should not have to do it in school. Over half of children, however, said that they should complete uncompleted homework in school.
- Half of the parents and children questioned said that homework can cause tension/worry at home. 66% of teachers echoed this.
- Children and parents unanimous in agreeing that Maths and English homework tasks help learning. Half of parents and children also agreed that creative/project-based homework tasks help learning.

Year 6 Visit to London

On Friday 3rd March, Year 6 children visited London. They visited London's Natural History Museum before arriving at the Palace of Westminster. The children had an amazing guided tour of the House of Commons and the House of Lords and they really impressed the guides with their knowledge of the Palace of Westminster and the UK's political system. The visit ended with an interactive workshop on how laws are created and passed in the UK. This visit supports our Year 6 curriculum on democracy and the rule of law.



Brain Teaser

Last week's brainteaser:

While on my way to St. Ives, I saw a man with 7 wives. Each wife had 7 sacks. Each sack had 7 cats. Each cat had 7 kittens. Kitten, cats, sacks, wives, How many were going to St. Ives?

Answer: none, it was you on your way to St Ives!

This week's brainteaser:

You want to boil a two-minute egg. If you only have a three-minute timer (hourglass), a four-minute timer, and a five-minute timer, how can you boil the egg for only two minutes?

Live Simply Award

Exciting news.... following a lengthy assessment process, Our Lady of the Wayside has been awarded CAFOD's Live Simply Award. The Live Simply Award is earned by communities and schools who can show how they have been:

- living simply
- in solidarity with people in poverty
- sustainably with creation.

A massive thank you to Mrs Sallis who coordinated this work and well done to our Eco and RE Councillors who met with the Live Simply assessor.



Anyone for Badminton?

Our school Badminton Club enjoyed a day out to the *All England Badminton Championships* on Wednesday. As a school, we believe it is really important to give children the opportunity to watch and to enjoy professional live sport. The children were amazed at the skill and the fitness of the players and how badminton is a truly global game. We've had a really active Badminton Club this year with 32 Year 6 children enjoying badminton.



Spring Term Book Swap

On Thursday, we held our Spring Term Book Swap where children had an opportunity to bring in a pre-loved book from home to swap for a different pre-loved book. It was lovely to see the excitement of the children as they chose their new book. We run termly book swaps with our next OLV Book Swap event arranged for **Thursday 18th May**. For this event, we are also trialling a parent book swap, an opportunity for parents to swap an old pre-loved book for a new book.



School Closure

I think we were all surprised by the amount of snow we received last Thursday and Friday. The decision to close a school is only ever taken after much thought and careful consideration. School leaders balance the impact of school closure on education, with the safety of pupils, their families and school staff. Every school, even schools within the same locality, have their own set of circumstances. This means you may find one school decides to stay open and another school just down the road closes. We are hoping that we will not receive any further snowfall this academic year!.

Teaching Vacancies

In the next few weeks, we will be advertising a number of class teacher vacancies for September 2023. We would like to reassure you that there are specific reasons for each vacancy and these vacancies are not due to a large group of staff leaving. For example, we will be advertising for a class teacher to cover Mrs Haines' and Mrs Hayes' maternity leave and a class teacher to replace Mr Way who left last October. We welcome applications from newly qualified teachers (ECTs) as well as more experienced teachers.

King Charles' Coronation Update

Wayside Womble Project – Action Required Please

Around 25 families have signed up for our 'Wayside Womble Project'. It is not too late to join. Here are all the details:

Linked to the King's Coronation is the Big Help Out Project. This initiative aims to encourage people to help out/volunteer in their local community. Our Lady of the Wayside School are keen to undertake a 'Big Help Out Project' within our school and parish community. After talking to the children, we have decided upon the 'Wayside Womble Project'. During the weekend of the Coronation, Our Lady of the Wayside families are invited to support their local community by collecting a bag of litter. There will be a special Wayside Womble Award for all children who have taken part. Below are some additional details:

What is the Wayside Womble Project? This is a project where Our Lady of the Wayside families collect a bag of litter from within their local community - just like The Wombles of Wimbledon! Here is a link to an episode from The Wombles - www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPpNLfJzIOQ

When are the dates for Wayside Womble Project? This project takes place during the Coronation weekend - from Saturday 6th May to Monday 8th May.

Will equipment be provided? Yes, a litter picker and a litter bag will be provided to each family on Friday 5th May. You will need to register beforehand.

What will happen to the litter we collect? Please bring your bag of litter to Our Lady of the Wayside School on Tuesday 9th May. The bags of litter will be collected by Solihull Council.

Is there a cost? There is no financial cost, just a bit of time litter picking as a family in your local area.

Does my child receive a reward for being part of the Wayside Womble Project? Yes, every child who completes this project will receive a special 'Wayside Womble Award', this will include a special badge which they can wear on their school uniform during the summer term. Please note, children will only have completed the project when they return their bag of litter on Tuesday 9th May.

How do we register for the Wayside Womble Project? In order to ensure we have enough litter pickers, we are asking for all families to please register for the Wayside Womble Project by **Friday 31st March**. Please click on the link below (please note, due to ParentPay settings you may need to copy and paste this link into your web browser). <https://forms.office.com/e/vvVBYV37jP>

Lenten Almsgiving

Almsgiving is the act of donating money or goods to the poor or performing other acts of charity. However, when defining almsgiving, it helps to understand the meaning behind the word itself. The roots of the word "alms" can be found in ancient Latin and Greek words meaning mercy and pity. Similarly, the root of the word "charity" comes from the Latin "caritas," meaning love. Charity, or almsgiving, is an outward sign of Christian love for others. Generally, it involves some type of sacrifice on behalf of the giver in order to provide for the needs of the other. In doing this, bonds of community are formed.

We have a number of almsgiving events planned during this Lenten period:

- **Thursday 23rd March** - Odd Hair Day in support of this year's Father Hudson's Care Good Shepherd Appeal.
- **Thursday 30th March** - Lenten Fun Day in support of St Mary's Educational Trust, India.

Coffee Morning

Mrs Lloyd and Mrs Sallis would love to tell you all about their recent trip to India. You are invited to a coffee morning on **Wednesday 22nd at 9am** in the Hive where you can hear all about it over a cup of tea or coffee.



Lenten Liturgies

During Lent, children have led our Lenten liturgies. On Monday children from Year 4 led our liturgy and earlier today children from Year 2. Our final Lenten liturgy has been arranged for Friday 24th March at 2:45pm, this is being led by Year 1 children.



OLW Netball Team

Despite losing to Dickens Heath this week, our netball team can be very proud of themselves as they played with much determination and skill. Today after school, they play Shirley Heath. We wish them all the best and extend our thanks to Miss Stanton and Miss Ebbutt for managing the team.



British Science Week

This week was British Science Week. The theme this year was 'Connections'. In school, children have been learning about famous scientists from the past and carried out scientific investigations with a connections theme. Here are a few examples of work from various year groups:

Year 6 researched the work of Isaac Newton and light. Using colour wheels, they proved that clear white light is intact made up of seven visible colours.

Year 4 learnt about how Alexander Graham Bell pioneered the way for sound to travel long distances. They had a great time investigating how to make sound travel!

In Year 2, children learnt about how we are connected to the Earth and how the Earth is connected to us.

In Year 1, children were nature detectives in Bills Wood. In the classroom, they learnt about dissolving through a connecting colour experiment. Bertie was so interested that he showed the colour experiment to his sister at home!



Mother's Day

There wasn't a dry eye in Reception on Thursday afternoon when reception mums attended a special Mother's Day event. Mums were treated to drinks on arrival, they shared a book with their children and listened to all of Reception perform a beautiful Mother's Day song.



Wishing all Mums a happy Mother's Day this Sunday.



St Patrick's Day

OLW Parishioners were treated to a performance of Irish dancing after Mass this morning led by some children from OLW school. The children looked beautiful and danced with such talent. A big thank you to Mrs Smith for organising this.



Our Lady of the Wayside Catholic School

School Newsletter

Friday 17th March 2023

Attendance

It is essential that children regularly attend school, poor attendance has a serious and long lasting impact on your child. To promote and encourage good attendance we publish weekly attendance figures.

Reception	Red Group 85.6%	Blue Group 90.0%
Year 1	Class 1C 85.4%	Class 1Y 86.4%
Year 2	Class 2F 84.5%	Class 2CS 88.4%
Year 3	Class 3M 87.0%	Class 3TS 84.0%
Year 4	Class 4C 90.6%	Class 4L 90.5%
Year 5	Class 5E 89.1%	Class 5V 85.2%
Year 6	Class 6O 88.4%	Class 6P 89.9%

Overall attendance for this week is 94.0%. Well done this week to Class 4C with an attendance figure of 90.6%

Some of our events for planned for next week:

Tuesday 10:00am – Upper Phase Mass

Wednesday 9:00am – Parent Coffee Morning

Thursday all day – Odd Hair Day for this year's Good Shepherd Appeal.

Friday 2:45pm – Lenten liturgy led by Year 1

Term Dates for Next Year

We are now able to confirm term dates for the academic year 2023-2024 and some of the INSET dates:

Autumn Term 2023

Term Starts: Monday 4th September 2023
Half Term: Monday 30th October 2023 to Friday 3rd November 2023
Term Ends: Friday 22nd December 2023

Spring Term 2024

Term Starts: Monday 8th January 2024
Half Term: Monday 12th February 2024 to Friday 16th February 2024
Term Ends: Friday 22nd March 2024

Summer Term 2024

Term Starts: Monday 8th April 2024
(May Day: Monday 6th May 2024)
Half Term: Monday 27th May 2024 to Friday 31st May 2024
Term Ends: Monday 22nd July 2024

2023-2024 INSET Days:

Day 1: Monday 4th September 2023
Day 2: Tuesday 5th September 2023
Day 3: TBC
Day 4: TBC
Day 5: TBC