

Chaplaincy and Prayer at SJF

Daily prayer is central to life at St. John Fisher and we wanted to take this opportunity to share with our wider community how we routinely pray at school.

All form groups begin their day in shared intentional prayer. All form tutors receive the daily prayers, as do all staff through the weekly Chaplaincy update email. Prayers are based on the scripture and theme for the week. Similarly, assemblies are delivered on the same theme and scripture, beginning with prayer. Prayer slides reflect the rhythm of the liturgical calendar both in colour, season and feast days. In accessing daily prayer at the beginning of the day, all students and staff are brought together as one spiritual community.

Additional opportunities present themselves for prayer in lessons and meetings throughout the day, as well as organised services. Students and staff also have full access to the Chapel for private prayer before school, at break, during lunchtimes and after school.

On a Wednesday lunchtime, prayer ambassadors (as well as other students who choose to drop in) meet. They offer prayers for their own intentions and those of the school, the world and our local community. This 'off-timetable' session allows students to spend time in prayer, and discuss scripture, as they choose. These students are currently engaged in writing the next series of whole school prayers for form time sessions and the upcoming services and Masses.



19-11-25



20-11-25



21-11-25



Our Celebration of the Word Chapel Services continue twice weekly. These take place in the Chapel within form time and offer students opportunities to be actively involved in planning them. This allows all form groups to visit the Chapel periodically over the academic year. Just as you would expect in any Liturgy of the Word Service, students are asked to consider the scriptural reading of the week, reflect with an examination of conscience, alongside; time for prayer and personal intentions. Additionally, students light a candle for their intentions and students write or choose a prayer or poem to be read at the service. This prayer or poem is themed to reflect our weekly Gospel value.

The importance of prayer, Masses and Services is reflected in staff and student voice. One attendee commented that the services are important because “They help strengthen my faith, they are an opportunity to participate in the liturgical year of the Church. They are the heart of the life of the school.” Another explained that “They are important as they allowed me to learn more about God and live my life in a Christian way. They helped me have a close relationship with God.” For another person, “It helps me to feel part of our Catholic community and gives me time to pray and reflect.”

Chaplaincy Visits and Retreats

On Wednesday 25th September, students from St John Fisher were joined by St Mary's, St Benedict's and St Michael's primary schools. We all travelled together to St George's Cathedral in Southwark for the annual Diocesan Schools' Mass.

Archbishop John's homily was on the Jubilee Year theme of Hope and the Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham. Special congratulations to Shannon who went up to the sanctuary to share with Archbishop John Wilson what hope means for Christians, which led him to comment that she should help him more often!



In September, we ventured on our annual pilgrimage to Aylesford Priory with our new Year 7 students. I'm delighted to say that this year, the weather was firmly on our side and the sun shone as we spent time as a community exploring the priory. On arrival we were greeted by Prior Michael who warmly welcomed us at the main shrine, regaling us with tales of the past and the history of the priory.

We then visited some of the Chapels before coming together for Mass which was celebrated by Father Kiw. The readings of the day, together with our student readers, in participation with the whole year group and some of our parents helped us to further come together as a community. Father Kiw reminded us in his homily of the importance of listening, to God, our parents, teachers and each other. The Responsorial Psalm was very fitting in its response: "The LORD takes delight in his people."

After games and lunch, we continued our exploration of the priory looking at the various forms of expression of artwork and reflecting on how these might express beliefs and Bible stories.

This annual day allows the students to make firm friendships outside the classroom setting, spend time in reflection and learn from each other as we appreciate the beauty in what we see around us.



At the end of September, we embarked on our biggest Chaplaincy adventure to date. Sixth form students, accompanied by Mrs. Drain, Mrs. Bennett, Mr. Jolly and Mrs. Lennon flew to the West of Ireland, Knock, to visit the Marian Shrine at Knock and see the wider local area. We spent time in prayer and reflection and in communion with one another.

The experience (despite the rain on some days) was truly uplifting. The staff and retreat guides at Knock Shrine were exceptionally welcoming and even the local restaurant, bus drivers, shop keepers and tour guides were keen help us make the most of our time and experience the delights of the local area.

It truly was a Pilgrimage of Hope in every sense!

All the staff and students felt that the pilgrimage was a valuable and enriching experience. One said that "It brought me closer to God," while another felt that "It helped me understand myself as a person and how to improve my relationship with God." Others appreciated the opportunity for quiet reflection, stating that "It is important to do less and just spend time."



Staff Spiritual Development

On Wednesday 8th October, we were proud to host the Deanery Schools' Staff Mass. Bishop Paul Hendricks kindly celebrated this Mass for us, speaking of his own experiences of education and the responsibility that this bears, thanking staff and governors for their dedication to young people. The reading from St Paul to the Corinthians reminded us that we receive the gifts of the Spirit and are to use them wisely for the good of all those in our care; 'The particular way in which the Spirit is given to each person is for a good purpose.'



A representative from each school was called forward to light a candle from our own Jubilee of Hope candle to mark our mission, and the light of Christ in our lives. Each school was then commissioned to take this light from the Mass into the wider community. The candles this year bore greater significance as they included a medal of Our Lady of Knock. These were gifted to our Deanery schools from our recent SJF Pilgrimage of Hope to Knock, Ireland.



In the commissioning statements, staff and governors made promises: to reflect the awe and wonder of creation in all teaching, to serve a life inspired by the Gospel, to promote forgiveness and healing, and offer themselves in love and service

Prayers were offered for staff, governors, and students, past and present and for all those in our local communities that we serve. It was a prayerful occasion for all involved.

As the year drew to a close, staff came together again in December to celebrate the achievements of the year and to pause and reflect in prayer, giving thanks to God. The Gospel message of the service reflected on the openness of children to hear and act on the Gospel and its values.

All Souls and Remembrance Services

On All Souls Day we held our annual memorial service for those who have gone before us. Just as the Church does in November, we continue to remember the dead, and all staff and students have an opportunity to light a candle for someone they wish to remember.



During the service in St. John's Gospel we heard; "I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going."

On the 11th November at 11am we took part in the annual Act of Remembrance for all those who have lost their lives in conflict. We were privileged to be accompanied by our own trumpet player Mr Kallend who played The Last Post and Reveille to mark the beginning and end of the silence.

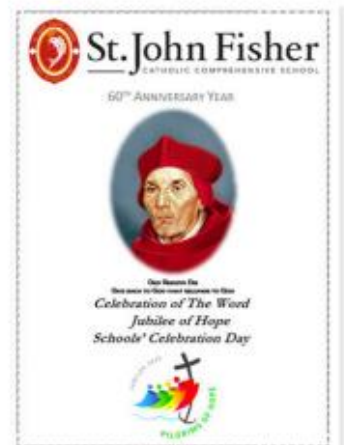
**When you go home, tell them of us and say,
For your tomorrow, we gave our today.**



The Pilgrimage of Hope

Friday the 21st November was Schools' Jubilee Celebration Day for the year of the Pilgrimage of Hope. To mark this occasion, we held a Celebration of the Word Service to give thanks for all that we have done and received, and to reflect on the message of Hope we continue to bring as Pilgrims of Hope. We reminded ourselves of our Jubilee Pledge and that the message of Hope does not end but is carried forward into all that we do.

This service was a joyful way to begin the day and we were accompanied by beautiful singing to enhance the liturgy.



Advent

Advent began on Sunday 30th November. From early December, our Charity Ambassadors delivered assemblies to all year groups, opening the season of Advent and lighting the first candle of our Advent wreath. In these assemblies, students focused on the message of Hope, on what it means to them in Advent and the hope offered in the birth of Christ. Ambassadors launched the Advent charity activities to raise funds for global, national and local charities.



Throughout the Advent season, staff and students took part in a variety of activities including a bake sale, a hamper raffle and Christmas crafts. The impact of these charity drives and fundraiser events was relayed to our students in subsequent assemblies in January. We are pleased to announce that over £150 was raised for our chosen charities in addition to collecting donations of toiletries, toys and clothes which were donated to local charities. Special thanks to our sixth form helpers, Mr Harris and all his Christmas elves!



Also at the beginning of Advent, Mrs Drain and Ms Turner had the privilege of attending the Mass of Induction for Father Godwin Alkali on Thursday 4th December. We keep Father Godwin in our prayers as he begins his priestly journey with St Michael's Parish, Chatham as the new Parish Priest. Father Godwin is new to the parish following the sad retirement of Father Peter Ehinmiro who also remains in our prayers.





Figure 6. The effect of the number of iterations on the accuracy of the proposed algorithm. The results are averaged over 10 trials.



St. John Fisher

CATHOLIC CONFERENCE SCHOOL

Advent Carol Service

December 2025



Order of Service	Song or Reading	Song or Reading
Opening Event	Class or Group (School or Choir) - singing by the class, with congregation participation	
Lighting of Advent Wreath	Students	
Opening Prayer	Catholic Priest	
First Reading	A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah - read by student	
Second Reading	A Reading from Luke - read by student	
Gospel	St. John's Gospel of Bethlehem - class and congregation	
Third Reading	A Reading from Luke - read by student	
Blessing of the Crib	Catholic Priest	
Choir	"Why did you choose?" - choir	
Fourth Reading	A Reading from Luke - read by student	
Cantor	Heart the Magnificat Angel Song - class and congregation	
Fifth Reading	A Reading from Luke - read by student	
Gospel	St. John's Gospel of the Light - class and congregation	
Sixth Reading	A Reading from Luke - read by student	
Cantor	Glenn Aeger - "Come to be with the Light" with congregation participation	
Closing Prayer	Catholic Priest	
Year 13 Ensemble	Christmas Medley - choir	
Choir	Students Choirs Singing to Father - musicians	

MISSION STATEMENT

St. John Fisher Catholic Conference School is a Catholic educational institution, spiritually and academically forming, educating and equipping students in their journey as active and responsible citizens in their community.

