



Friday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

### Happy New Year!

Thank you all so much for the warm welcome that you have all shown to me at St Joseph's. I have absolutely enjoyed my first week and it has been a privilege to work with such wonderful children, staff and parents.

I would also like to welcome our new starters and say a big thank you for the buddies that have helped to settle them into our school family. They are a credit to St Joseph's.

### Epiphany Mass

It was lovely taking the children to church today to celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany. Just as the Three Kings brought gifts to Jesus, so gifts are exchanged amongst family and friends. Three of our Year 2 children dressed up as The Three Wise Men. Epiphany is a time where we reflect upon the journey that they took to visit the Baby Jesus.

An ancient Christian custom associated with the Epiphany is the blessing of homes with chalk. We adopted this tradition in our parish many years ago and it is a wonderful way to recognise this special feast. Father Philip invites you to adopt this custom in your family. Mrs Rowe blessed our school with the children this morning. It is an invitation for Jesus to be a daily guest in our homes, our comings and goings, our conversations, our work and play, our joys and sorrows. I pray that your 'holy doorway' will become a source of blessing for you, your whole family and all who visit your house.

### Blessing the Home

Using chalk, mark the lintel of your front door (front porch, step or wall as follows: 20 + C + M + B + 23 while saying: The three Wise Men, Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar followed the star of God's Son who became human two thousand and seventeen years ago. May Christ bless our home and remain with us throughout the New Year. Amen

Then all the family say together the following prayer: Visit, O Lord, our home with the joy of your presence. Bless all who live here, and all who visit us, with the gift of your love. May we show your love to each other and to all whose lives we touch. May we grow in grace and in love of you. Guide, comfort and strengthen us in your peace. Amen.

### Cultural Awareness

On Wednesday 1st February we will be dedicating a day to celebrating other cultures. As part of our day, we would love your help. Do you have experience of another culture, cuisine or tradition that you may be willing to share with your child's class? Would you be willing to come in and talk, share photographs or special items or food tasting with your child's class? Please contact [admin@stjo.uk](mailto:admin@stjo.uk) or your child's teacher. We hope to make this day a really immersive experience for the children with your help. Thank you in advance.

### Household Support funding

Household Supporting Funding is available (about £100) for gas and electric pre-payment meters for those eligible. Please follow the link below to apply. Just to let you know that funding is available on a 'first come, first served' basis. <https://form.jotform.com/223270371872354>

I hope you all have a wonderful weekend.  
Mrs Stephens

### Diary dates:

Friday 13th January – Yr 3 swimming starts.  
Monday 16th January – Waste project workshops  
Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February – Cultural Awareness Day

**Silver Award:** Maple - Barney

**Bronze Award:** Sycamore - Ralph