Dear Parents

The children have been busy preparing for Christmas over the last few weeks and we hope you enjoyed their Christmas performances. Thank you to everyone who has supported the Christmas activities and performances in school as the children really do enjoy this time of year in school and performing for their parents.

Thank you to the parents of the Infant children who were understanding of the challenges we were having with the heating on the Infant site this morning. The children’s welfare is always paramount in every decision we make.

This week the children made baby Jesus figures ‘Bambinelli’ and these were taken to Mass yesterday morning where they were blessed by Fr Michael. The children will take these home and one suggestion is that the Bambinelli is wrapped and then opened as a family on Christmas morning where the youngest member of the family would place it in the crib. ‘A gift of the presence of Christ in your home this Christmas’.

It is lovely to finish the Autumn term and the year on a happy note and to prepare the children for the joyful celebration of Christmas. As this is the final newsletter of 2019, I would like to wish everyone a very Happy and Holy Christmas and every blessing for the New Year. I also thank you for all the gifts and cards you have sent into school for the staff as it is very thoughtful of you and very much appreciated.

This Sunday is the Fourth Sunday of Advent when the “Candle of Love” will be lit in Church. This candle reminds us that God loved us so much that he sent his only son to Earth. The final “Christ Candle”, the white candle in the centre, stands for Jesus Christ himself and is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. At this time of celebration and great joy we should remember in our prayers those who are facing difficulties.
The first Mass in the New Year, the **Feast of the Epiphany**, will take place on **Wednesday, 8 January 2020 at 9.15 am in Church** and we hope you will be able to join us to welcome 2020.

**Rudolph Run!** Thank you very much to everyone who has sent in their sponsorship money for the John Taylor Hospice situated in Erdington. You managed to raise over **£1,000.00** which is a tremendous amount and will help fund the fantastic work they do in supporting patients and their families through very difficult times. A special thank you to Declan (John 1) for being the top fund raiser through his sponsorship and who managed to raise over **£200.00** – well done Declan!

**Year 6 Day Retreat to Alton Castle – Thursday, 23 January 2020.** Letters have been sent home with the Year 6 children regarding the above visit that will be a Day Retreat rather than a residential visit. The day will be focussed around team building and will involve various games including at least one outdoor activity. Consent and Payment is needed by Friday, 17 January with payment being made by ParentMail.

**Reception Intake September 2020**

Please remember that if you have a child who will be starting school in September 2020, you need to apply online for a school place. Applications are to be made online at [www.birmingham.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/schooladmissions) and the closing date for applications is 15 January 2020. **Please be aware that attendance at a nursery class does not give a child automatic priority for a place at school – you still need to make your application for a school place.**

Please note that there will be **NO After School Clubs for the first week back in January**. Children will need to be collected at their usual home time.
Swimming - Mary 4 ONLY
Children in Mary 4 will be swimming after Christmas starting on **Thursday, 9 January 2020**. Letters were sent home last week with all the details. Please remember to send their swimming kit into school on Thursdays.

**John 4 - PE Kits**
Please note that John 4 will **NOT** be swimming after Christmas and will therefore need their PE kits in school.

**Christmas Mass times at SS Mary & John Catholic Church**
Please come and join in the wonderful celebration of Christ Jesus’ birth at SS Mary & John Catholic Church where all are welcome.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day &amp; Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Mass Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 24 December 2019 : Christmas Eve</td>
<td>6.30 pm</td>
<td>Carols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.00 pm</td>
<td>Solemn Mass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 25 December 2019</td>
<td>11.00 am</td>
<td>Parish Mass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Day : Feast of the Birth of Christ</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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We currently have a number of vacancies for support staff within the central team at the MAC. To view the vacancies and to find details of how to apply, follow the link **http://johnpaulii.co.uk/vacancies**

Happy Birthday to the following children who will celebrate their birthdays over the Christmas break:

- Kyana (M6)
- Isabelle (M5)
- Troy (Nursery)
- Malia (M5)
- Nikola (J6)
- Moiz (JR)
- Szyomon (M3)
- Kha’nia (M1)
- Theo-Chris (J5)
- Payton (M6)
- Olaf (M4)
- Ethan (JR)
- Denis (J6)
- Nikola (M4)
- Benedict-Grace (M5)
- Ion-Catalin (J2)
- Arayah (M3)
- Zidan (MR)
- Mariyah (M1)
- Ka’mani (J2)
- Amelia (J2)
- Madie (J6)
- Christian (M5)
- Jorgie (M1)
- Saron (M1)
- Lauren (M1)
- Hadi (M6)
- Emmanuel (M6)

I wish you all a very blessed and joyful Christmas with your families.

Yours sincerely

Mrs M Lynch and the SS Mary & John Team
Principal
We look forward to welcoming the children back to school on MONDAY, 6 JANUARY 2020. Doors open at 8.45 am.

Wishing all our families a Happy and Holy Christmas and Best Wishes for the New Year!