

Prayer & Reflection



Week beginning: **Monday 8th December**

Theme – Peace and Kindness

Season of Advent – Week 2

The second candle on the Advent wreath represents Peace. Like the first candle, it is also purple.

Often called the “Bethlehem Candle,” the second Advent candle reminds us of Mary and Joseph’s journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem before Mary gave birth to Jesus.

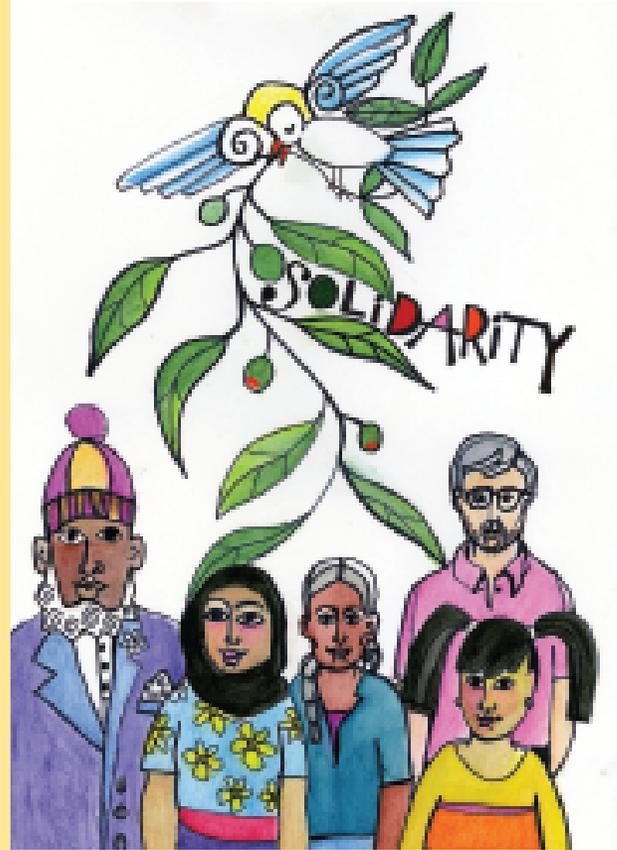


Peace is a key principle of Catholic Social Teaching

Peace is more than the absence of war. It is learning to respect ourselves, each other and the planet we share.

And it begins with each of us, one day at a time...





SOLIDARITY

We are one human family whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they may be. Loving our neighbor has global dimensions in a shrinking world. At the core of the virtue of solidarity is the pursuit of justice and peace. Blessed Pope Paul VI taught that "if you want peace, work for justice."¹ The Gospel calls us to be peacemakers. Our love for all our sisters and brothers demands that we promote peace in a world surrounded by violence and conflict.

Kindness can make a difference

There are many stories about Kindness. A well known story for children is from Aesop's Fables about the Lion and the Mouse. In Africa, a tiny mouse accidentally disturbs a lion from his rest. To the mouse's surprise and delight, the lion IS KIND and decides to let her go free. Later, when the lion is caught in a poacher's net, the mouse nibbles through the rope and, returning the KINDNESS favour, sets the lion free. Both lion and mouse happily return to their families.



The Parable of the Good Samaritan is a biblical story told by Jesus in the Gospel of Luke that teaches people KINDNESS: to love and help others, regardless of their differences.

The story

A Jewish man is traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho when he is attacked by robbers and left for dead. A priest and a Levite pass by without helping him, but a Samaritan stops and cares for him. The Samaritan cleans the man's wounds, carries him to an inn, and pays for his care.



Our neighbor is anyone who is in need, and we must go as far as we can to help, unconditionally.

Luke 10:29-37
THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Kindness can make a difference

Jesus taught kindness through his words and actions, and the Bible offers many examples of his kindness:

- Forgiving:** Jesus taught to forgive others as God forgave us.
- Compassionate:** Jesus showed compassion to the poor and downtrodden, such as by healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, and touching the leper.
- Kindness is a lifestyle:** Jesus' example shows that kindness is not just a feeling or a season, but a way of life.
- Treat others as you wish to be treated:** The Bible says to treat others the way you wish to be treated.
- Be kind to enemies:** The Bible says to love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who abuse you.
- Be humble and patient:** Kindness is linked to humility and patience.



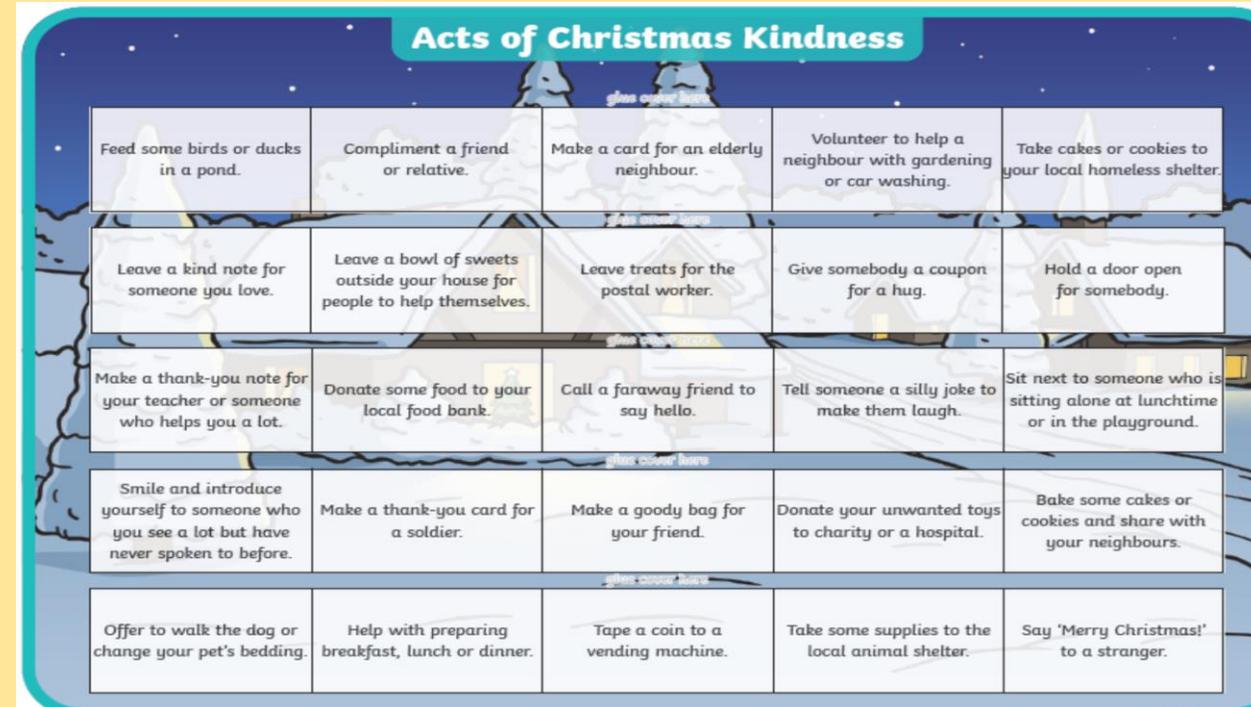
Kindness can make a difference

During this season of Advent, the school will be promoting the use of Kindness advent calendars.

REFLECTION – ADVENT CHALLENGE

Are you willing to PARTICIPATE and set a goal to complete the Kindness Advent Calendar?

This is a way as a school to show that we follow the teachings of Jesus, and that KINDNESS IS OUR LIFESTYLE.



The image shows a grid titled "Acts of Christmas Kindness" with 20 boxes, each containing a different act of kindness. The grid is set against a background of a snowy winter scene with trees and a blue sky.

Acts of Christmas Kindness				
Feed some birds or ducks in a pond.	Compliment a friend or relative.	Make a card for an elderly neighbour.	Volunteer to help a neighbour with gardening or car washing.	Take cakes or cookies to your local homeless shelter.
Leave a kind note for someone you love.	Leave a bowl of sweets outside your house for people to help themselves.	Leave treats for the postal worker.	Give somebody a coupon for a hug.	Hold a door open for somebody.
Make a thank-you note for your teacher or someone who helps you a lot.	Donate some food to your local food bank.	Call a faraway friend to say hello.	Tell someone a silly joke to make them laugh.	Sit next to someone who is sitting alone at lunchtime or in the playground.
Smile and introduce yourself to someone who you see a lot but have never spoken to before.	Make a thank-you card for a soldier.	Make a goody bag for your friend.	Donate your unwanted toys to charity or a hospital.	Bake some cakes or cookies and share with your neighbours.
Offer to walk the dog or change your pet's bedding.	Help with preparing breakfast, lunch or dinner.	Tape a coin to a vending machine.	Take some supplies to the local animal shelter.	Say 'Merry Christmas!' to a stranger.

KINDNESS ADVENT CALENDARS TASK

Susanne our chaplain will have copies of the Kindness Advent calendars this week.

STEP 1

Collect a calendar from the chapel.

STEP 2

Start this week with more than one act of kindness each day to CATCH UP as we are now in the second week of Advent.

STEP 3

TICK OFF the acts of kindness on your calendar.

STEP 4

Write a summary of your acts of kindness and how it has made you feel.
Hand in your summary to Susanne, the school chaplain.



**PLEASE
PRAY
FOR ME**

Prayer for Kindness

Dear God,
Thank you that we can be kind to one another.
Thank you for the teachers and families who teach us why we need to be kind.
Thank you, God, for the kindness and love that you show us.
Please help us to forgive our friends for any fallings-out.
Please help us always to give people a second chance.
Please help us to say sorry and start again.
Amen.



St John the Apostle and Evangelist, pray for us. Amen



inspirati a christo
Go Forth Today and
Be Inspired by Christ

Sunday Gospel = Second Sunday of Advent



THIS WEEK'S GOSPEL READING

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew 3:1-12

John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

It was of him that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said: A voice of one crying out in the desert, Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. John wore clothing made of camel's hair and had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey.

At that time Jerusalem, all Judea, and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him and were being baptised by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins.

When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance. And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.'

For I tell you, God can raise up children to Abraham from these stones. Even now the axe lies at the root of the trees. Therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

I am baptising you with water, for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in his hand. He will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Reader = the Gospel of the Lord.

RESPONSE = Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.



REPENT

for the
kingdom
of heaven
is at hand.



Matthew 3:2

Knowing-Jesus.com

Explanation of this week's Gospel reading



In this gospel reading John the Baptist appears. He tells the people to repent. Turn around. Get ready. Someone greater is coming. He will bring the Holy Spirit and fire. John reminds us that real faith is shown in our actions. We must bear good fruit.

There are two key messages from this gospel reading:

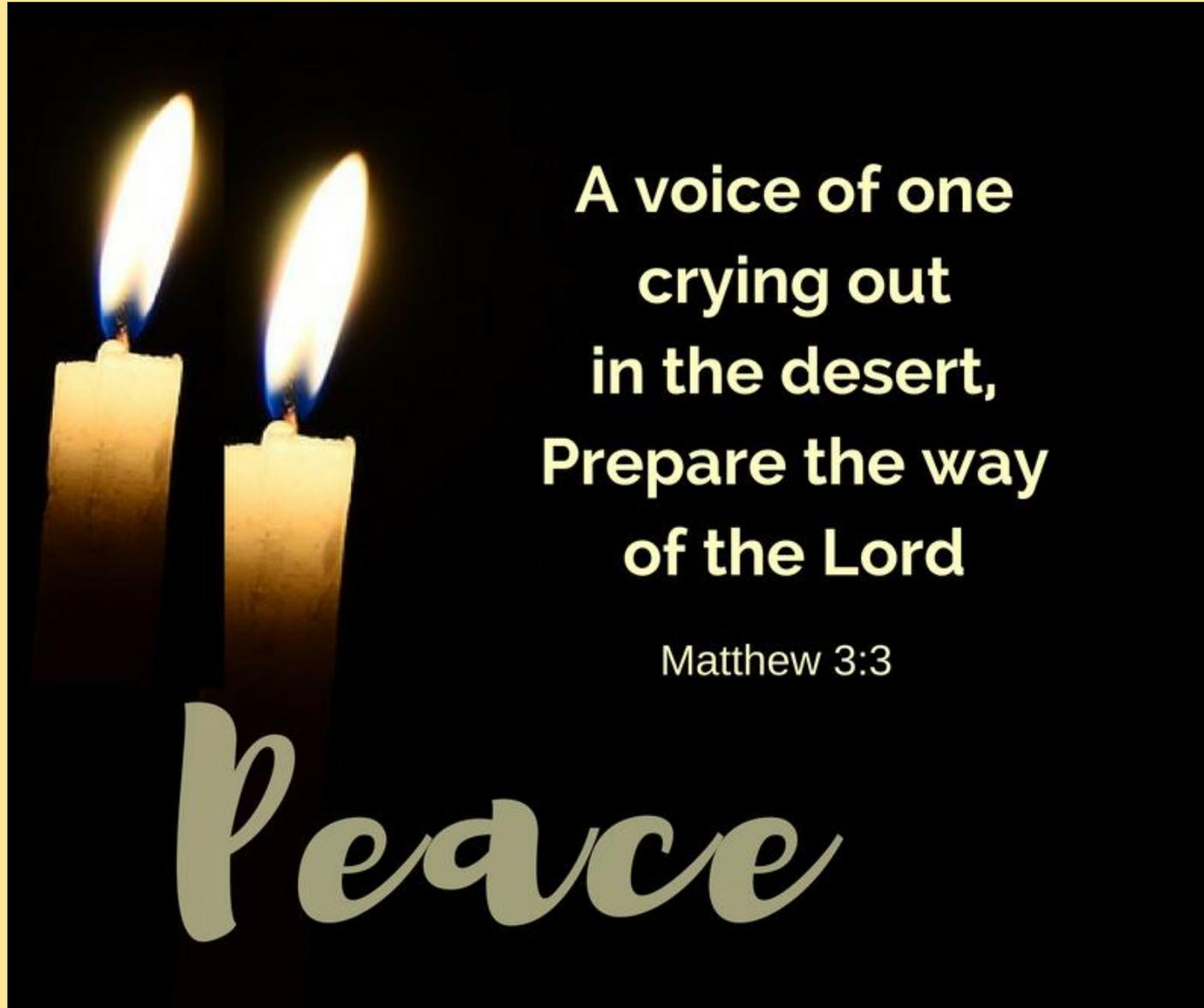
- 1. Repentance and Conversion:** John the Baptist calls for repentance. Advent encourages us to change our hearts and live better lives.
- 2. Preparation for Christ:** John prepares the way for Jesus. Advent invites us to prepare our hearts for Christ's coming. We are encouraged to reflect and to be ready. This gospel reminds us to live with hope, repentance, and unity as we await the coming of Jesus at Christmas.



REFLECTION TASK

Embrace Repentance (Change of Heart/Action): John the Baptist calls for a change in attitude and lifestyle, not just an outward show of piety. Reflect on specific actions or attitudes you can change to align your life more closely with God's justice and peace. This might involve mending a relationship, practicing forgiveness, or being more generous with your time or resources.

WORD OF THE WEEK



**A voice of one
crying out
in the desert,
Prepare the way
of the Lord**

Matthew 3:3

Peace

Prayer of St Francis

Lord make me a channel of your peace
Where there is hatred, let me bring love,
Where there is injury, pardon
Where there is doubt, faith
Where there is despair, hope
Where there is sadness, joy
Lord, grant that I may not seek to be consoled as to console
Understood as to understand, loved as to love
For it is in giving that we receive
In pardoning that we are pardoned
And in dying we are born to eternal life. Amen.



inspirati a christo
Go Forth Today and
Be Inspired by
Christ