

## St. Gerard's Primary School

### St. Gerard's Church Closure

Our church closed its doors for the final time on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> November. This was a day of mixed emotions. It was great to see so many familiar faces at the church and lovely to speak with so many of you. I felt very proud of our school choir who led us in song throughout the mass but particularly at the end when they sang in front of the altar. Many of our staff attended the Mass and I thank them for their continuing contribution to the Catholic Education of our children.

I felt a powerful sense of sadness when the Blessed Sacrament was removed from the tabernacle for the final time, leaving the church no more than a building.

It is our Faith in the Eucharistic celebration that makes us "Church" and while I can acknowledge this fully, it is still sad, as we are people of place and places matter in our spiritual and religious life.

We obviously begin a new chapter in our school and parish and we can only embrace the future with Hope and Joy in the risen Lord.

Our first Mass of the parish of Sacred Heart & St. Gerard's will be held on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November at 7pm in the newly refurbished Sacred Heart Church. It would be great to see many of you there.

### Our Final School Mass at St. Gerard's

We celebrated our final Mass as a school on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November and again a rather sad occasion. We held a coffee morning afterwards in the school and many thanks to those who came along. Proceeds from the day will go towards Missio. Moving forward in Faith, we will be bringing some items from the church into the school and will have further discussion with Fr. Parkes to finalise these arrangements.

On holidays of obligation, Mass will be celebrated in the school hall for our staff & children and we will use Sacred Heart Church, now fully refurbished, for the celebration of the sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Holy Communion.

Our church has served the community for a long time and for the school this will take some adjusting as we have had a very close relationship with our church and its proximity has nourished our school community for the life of the school, now in its 51<sup>st</sup> year. Keep all in our community, continually in your prayers.

### Mrs Devaney/ P4 Teacher

Mrs Devaney will be starting her maternity leave from Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November 24. We wish her and her family the best of luck at this happy time. Please keep her in your prayers with a special prayer to St. Gerard, the patron saint of expectant mothers. Mr. Rice will be taking over during her leave and will be based in P4 from Monday to Friday. He is taking over a great class and we wish him well.

### Christmas & Homework

Homework will stop for the Christmas period from Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December.



### St. Gerard Majella



Feast Day 16<sup>th</sup> October

### Lost Property

Since August we have amassed a large box of lost property. We identify lost property as uniform that has no name on it as we have no way of knowing who it belongs to. At the Christmas Fayre we will lay out the lost property for you to peruse. Please have a check if belongs to yourself. After the fayre we will recycle lost property into our preloved uniform for all.

### Cross Country Running Competition

Our children in P6 and P7 have been practicing for over a month now. On Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November our brave runners were at Dunbeth Park in Coatbridge on a cold fresh morning. We had a fantastic day and all the hard work was worth the effort. We had a first and second in our P6 boys' race which was fantastic but all of our children ran well with the mindset of, "Don't stop, keep going!". We now await the organisers full results and getting ready for the next meeting in January/February 2025.

## Christmas Events

It has finally arrived! The joy, excitement and general mayhem of Christmas begins with the first Advent Sunday on 1<sup>st</sup> December. We will be approaching Advent with a strong spiritual preparation as well as joining in the secular aspects of the season. Please look at the calendar at the end of the newsletter and put appropriate dates in your diary.

### Mini Vinnies Foodbank Reverse Calendar

Our Mini Vinnies are coordinating our FoodBank donations for Christmas. They will shortly be sending out information for donations through Advent. I have added these to the Christmas Countdown below. Last year we had an immense contribution from yourselves so hopefully we can repeat that kindness.

### Christmas Parties

On Christmas Party day children can come dressed for their party at 8.55am. If parents wish to take them home at lunchtime, please come to the main entrance to collect your child at 12.30pm returning for 1.20pm. Children will be given a packet of crisps, diluting juice and a chocolate bar. Where children have allergies, diabetes or other food related concerns, staff will make contact to ensure alternatives are in place. Again, please look over the calendar to see when your child's party day is.

## Christmas Fayre

We are preparing for the Christmas Fayre on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December from 3-5pm. Children will be released into parental/carer supervision in the normal dismissal manner. As previously, entry will be at the main entrance and children should be accompanied by a responsible adult. We will have usual Fayre events and activities and we are currently collecting donations for our hampers and for our raffles so please continue as your donations are greatly appreciated.

### Christmas Dinner/Jumper/Movie Day

The 13<sup>th</sup> December will be Christmas Dinner, Jumper & Movie Day. We will be raising funds for our local Homeless Charity selected by our P5 pupils. If children can bring in a cash donation on that day and pass to their teacher? Homelessness in Scotland and the UK is growing and can be a devastation experience for families as well as for individuals.

### Christmas Carols

On the calendar you will notice dates for P6 & P7 children visiting Tesco, Morrisons and Hatton Lea Nursing Home. They will attend these venues, on the dates shown so please save your shopping day for then and come along and have a singsong and a chocolate.

### John Wilson Photography

Individual and family photos will be on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December. Please ensure haircuts are in place by then. P1&P2 pupils should be collected at 12.30am to get dressed for their party which is the same day.

## St. Gerard's Christmas Countdown 2024

Week Beginning	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
25.11.24	Education Mass at Cathedral @7pm	Opening Mass at Sacred Heart@7pm			St Andrew's day
02.12.24	Food Bank Day 1 Tinned Soup/Veg/Bean	Food Bank Day 2 Toothpaste & Toiletries  P6/7 Morrisons Carols @ 1.45pm	Food Bank Day 3 Tinned Meats  Nursery trip to Summerlea	Food Bank Day 4 Cereals/ Porridge	Food Bank Day 5 Make a Bookmark  Nursery Christmas Jumper/lunch  School Christmas Fayre 3-5pm
09.12.24	Food Bank Day 6 Pasta & Rice  John Wilson Photography for Individual and family portraits  P1, P2 Party (Uniform for photo, collect to change into party clothes or bring in a bag)	Food Bank Day 7 Tinned Fruit Nativity Rehearsal (Free to our elderly family)  P7 Tesco Carols @ 1.45pm  P5 & P5/6 Summerlee Christmas Trip	Food Bank Day 8 Tea/Coffee Diluting Juice  P7 Hatton Lea Carols @ 2pm  Nativity @6.30pm	Food Bank Day 9 Chocolate  Nativity @2pm  P5 Choir at Airdrie Town Hall @6pm	Food Bank Day 10 Make a Christmas Card  Christmas Dinner/Jumper/ Movie  Teaching Staff Christmas Dinner @12.30pm  Non-Teaching Staff Christmas Dinner @1.20pm
16.12.24	P3 & P4 Party	P5/6 Party	P7 Party	Nursery Christmas Extravaganza – School Hall 2pm Seasons of Growth Celebration	Carol service (in school)  School Closure @2.30pm