

# FIRST TEACHERS

YOU ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT TEACHERS IN YOUR CHILDRENS LIVES!  
NOVEMBER 2022



Dear parents and guardians, greetings and welcome back to the second term from the Diocesan Family Life Commission! This newsletter aims to share some of how our Catholic faith is being taught and practised in school, and hopes to provide some help as you teach your children to grow in faith at home. As our children's first teachers in faith and love, most of our teaching is done by example,

but it is also important that we talk about our faith and pray together as a family. Praying and practising our faith with our children at home is one of the very best gifts we can give them!

## November – Saints and Souls

On the 1<sup>st</sup> November we celebrate All Saints' Day, a holy day of obligation, dedicated to the Saints of the church. This is a great opportunity to explore some of the Saints' inspiring lives with your children, especially if they are soon to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. The school may have already asked them to explore a saint, however, there is no need to buy expensive books etc, there are lots of great resources online. Here is a link to a great database of Saints that you can search for by category, for example, popular saints, female saints, patron saints etc. [Saints & Angels](#) For younger children, My Catholic Kids website has easy to understand information, [colouring sheets](#) or you could even have a little light-hearted fun playing [Saint Bingo](#)!

Following on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November is All Souls' Day. We dedicate the month of November to all the holy souls and it's a wonderful chance to pray together for any loved and lost family members or friends. What a brilliant opportunity to help our children (and ourselves!) process grief and loss through connecting with God and honouring the deceased. May we pray together, the Prayer for All the Faithful Departed, ***Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.***

## December – Advent

Advent is an exciting time and this year begins on Sun 27<sup>th</sup> November! In our Catholic faith we are preparing not only for the celebration of Jesus' birth at Christmas but also of the second coming. This should be a season of hope and joy

within our church, schools and our homes. Often, however, it can be a time of stress, sadness and worry with the pressures of modern life, money worries etc. How can we set aside time to focus on our faith and families, whatever that may look like, to model how to be still and marvel at God's works?

Having some fun activities to do together can help bring our focus back to Jesus, the reason for the season! They don't need to cost much either. Putting together an advent wreath with candles and found foliage is a fun idea (cheap battery powered tealights are great for fire safety reasons with young children). Creating a nativity scene together can be as simple as drawn and cut out figures, dough, lollipop sticks or for older family members you could get more complicated with cheap clay, found wood, or even recycled modelling. The possibilities are endless. Here are a few websites with some great ideas:

[Fun and Meaningful Ways to Celebrate Advent for Kids](#)

[Advent Wreath Children's Craft](#)

[100+ Simple Catholic Advent Crafts and Activities for Kids](#)

[Diocese of Paisley Advent Wreath Family Prayers](#)



Many of us find engaging teenagers a much harder prospect than younger children, especially in a society which shouts hopelessness and despair, but last year Pope Francis, addressing young people near Advent, stated, "The feast of the Birth of Christ does not clash with the trial we are experiencing, because it is the feast of compassion, of tenderness par excellence. Its beauty is humble and full of human warmth". Encouraging our children and teens to have hope in our Lord, who came to save us, can remind us of the same fact. We can, as families, reconcile through Confession, explore our faith by asking questions and serve others during the season of Advent, taking the focus away from ourselves. Young people often respond enthusiastically to helping others and Advent is a traditional time for giving alms. Some parishes have an Advent Giving (or Jesse) tree for giving gifts to those less well off, and it can be fun to be involved in choosing, wrapping and bringing these gifts to Church on Sunday. There are also the [SCIAF Real Gifts](#) for people that are hard to buy for or for meaningful teacher gifts Underneath are some interesting articles and prayers that may be helpful and from all of us at the Family Life Commission, may your Advent be Holy, hopeful and blessed!

[Advent Catholic Prayers & Advent Activities for Kids](#)

[Preparing Teens for Advent](#)

[Advent Prayers for Teens](#)

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