

FIRST TEACHERS

YOU ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT TEACHERS IN YOUR CHILDRENS LIVES!
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2023

Dear parents and guardians, welcome to our latest newsletter which aims to support and encourage a real community of faith between home, school and parish! As we enter the final part of 2023 and prepare for a busy season as parents and caregivers, we will explore some of the ways or faith can be celebrated at home as a family, together with our schools and parishes. This time of year, can be stressful and filled with demands on us individuals and as families, it is therefore even more important to lead by example as our children's 'First Teachers' and set aside time to reflect, pray and focus on our faith.

November - Saints and Souls



On the 1st of November we celebrate All Saints' Day, a holy day of obligation, dedicated to the Saints of the church. As Catholics we are required to attend Mass on All Saints' Day and there are many Parishes all across the Diocese where the obligation can be fulfilled, find our Diocesan parish directory here [Diocese of Paisley | Parish Finder | Paisley, UK \(rcdop.org.uk\)](http://Diocese of Paisley | Parish Finder | Paisley, UK (rcdop.org.uk)) It is an opportunity to explore the lives of the saints with your children, especially if

they are starting to prepare for 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. 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!](#) On the 16th November we have the feast Day of [St. Margaret](#) and the Feast of [St. Andrew](#) on the 30th, included are prayers to say together to implore these Saints who are important to Scotland to pray for us.

On the 2nd November we celebrate All Souls' Day which helps us journey through the rest of the Month of November, which we dedicate to the Holy Souls. During this month we pray especially for our departed friends and loved ones who are making their journey towards the eternal light of God. May we process our grief together as families and individuals and honour our deceased by praying 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

This year Advent begins on Sunday 3rd December and is an exciting time for children and families. It can also be one full of demands, expectations and stress and often the true meaning behind this season gets lost amongst worry, sadness or just sheer burnout! We must reconsider committing to spending time with God to make Advent Joyful and Peaceful. To exemplify to our children that we are preparing, not only to celebrate the birth of our Saviour but that we look forward to and prepare for his second coming.



Coming together with others to pray and explore our faith is a brilliant way to do this. For children age P4-7, the Diocese are running a Primary Advent Day on Sunday 26th November in St. Mary's church Paisley from 2pm-5pm. All are welcome from across the Diocese!

In St. Joseph's Parish Church Hall, Clarkston the St. Joseph's primary parent council faith group are hosting a Parent's reflection evening on Thursday 30th November at 7pm. This is towards the end of Catholic Education Week and will have a strong focus on preparing for Advent with prayer, song and reflection, followed by a time of socialising. ALL parents/caregivers from the St. Ninian's cluster and indeed across the Diocese are more than welcome to join us in this time of prayerful community and solidarity.

If you have teenagers, you well know engaging them in their faith can be challenging, especially when the worldly influence is hopelessness, despair and apathy. We can encourage our children and teens to have hope in the Lord by taking focus away from themselves and serving others. There is huge need as we enter this time of year and young people often respond enthusiastically to helping others, volunteering and providing companionship. When we give of ourselves we can meet Jesus in a new way. Pope Francis once said, **"Christian charity is not simple philanthropy but, on the one hand, it is looking at others through the eyes of Jesus Himself and, on the other hand, seeing Jesus in the face of the poor."** 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, prayers and activities that may be helpful in celebrating this season with your family and from all of us at the Family Life Commission, may your Advent be Holy, hopeful and blessed!

[Advent prayers \(cafod.org.uk\)](http://cafod.org.uk)

[Advent Prayers for Teens | Ave Maria Press](#)

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

[Advent Wreath Children's Craft](#)

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

[Diocese of Paisley | Marriage & Family | Paisley, UK \(rcdop.org.uk\)](http://rcdop.org.uk)