  **St Gregory’s Catholic Primary School**

**‘Loving and Learning’**

**Newsletter 3 21st December** **2023**

This half-term we are **Attentive** and **Discerning**.

We are at the end of the first term of this academic year and what a term it has been. I have now been here for two terms and my overwhelming feeling is of pride in the amazing pupils we have here at St Gregory’s. The Christmas performances we have had in the last two weeks have once again demonstrated how wonderfully talented the children are – from the youngest in the EYFS and pre-school Nativity to the oldest in yesterday’s Christmas Carol Concert (and if you did not see ‘Christmas in U.K.’, you missed a treat), they have all been magnificent. A massive thank you to all the staff who prepared the children for the performances and a special mention to Argos who provided costumes for EYFS and KS1.

Over the last month or so, I have taken a number of visitors around the school. All have commented on the confidence, articulacy and politeness of our pupils.

Last week, we had the joy of having Mass celebrated in school again when Monsignor Tim Menzies kindly responded to my invitation to visit St Gregory’s. Thank you to Monsignor Tim and to our friends from the parish who attended.

**School Closure Thursday 21st December**

Today, we unfortunately had to close the school due to a major leak in our main water tank. I am glad to report that this has now been fixed and that the children will be able to have the planned parties tomorrow. Thank you for your cooperation this morning – we appreciate that parents/carers had to make changes to their planned day with very little notice, but we had no choice. Hopefully, that will be the only Christmas surprise before we break up tomorrow.

**Friday 22nd December**

Children who are having parties tomorrow can come to school in their own clothes. The wearing of West Brom, Wolves or Birmingham City tops in the vicinity of Mr Paine is not recommended...

School will end at the usual times.

School re-opens on Monday 8th January. All the information you need can be found on our calendar on the website.

**Goodbye**

Sadly, tomorrow we say goodbye to long-standing members of staff – Mrs Cooper and Mr Wareing. Both have been committed and hard-working members of our team and they will be greatly missed by their colleagues, pupils and parents/carers. I am sure that I speak for the whole school community when I wish them both the very best of luck in their future. They will always be part of the St Gregory’s family.

We also say a temporary goodbye to Mrs Kiernan who is beginning her maternity leave. Again, all of us wish her the very best and look forward to seeing her and ‘the babby’ some time in 2024.

In January, we will welcome Mrs Smith to Year 3 and Mrs Adams to Year 6W. Interviews are taking place tomorrow for the maternity cover and I will share the name of the successful candidate when they are appointed.

**Please can you pray for:**

Peace, particularly in the Holy Land and Ukraine; all refugees and those who have had to leave their homes; all those who will be alone at Christmas; all those who will be struggling for whatever reason at this time of year; Mr Wareing; Mrs Cooper and Mrs Kiernan.

**Christmas at Our Lady of Good Counsel and St Gregory the Great**

[Our Lady of Good Counsel & St Gregory the Great – Three Shires Oak Road, Smethwick B67 5BT (0121) 429 1743 (catholicbearwood.co.uk)](https://catholicbearwood.co.uk/)

Friday 22nd
7.15pm Confessions and Service of Reconciliation

Saturday 23rd
11.30am Holy Mass (Portuguese)

5.00pm Holy Mass (for SUNDAY)
Sunday 24th December
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)
Holy Mass 10.00am

Sunday 24th December
CHRISTMAS EVE
4.30pm Holy Mass for the Vigil of Christmas

Monday 25th December
CHRISTMAS DAY
Holy Mass 10.00am

It does not matter if you are a regular Mass goer, a lapsed Catholic who has not attended Mass in years or even if you are not a Catholic – ALL are very welcome.

On behalf of the staff at St Gregory’s, can I wish you and your families a happy and holy Christmas. We look forward to seeing you in January.

A traditional Irish blessing:

*May the Blessings of Christmas be with you,*

*May the Christ Child light your way,*

*May God’s holy angels guide you,*

*And keep you safe each day.*

Rev Mark Paine

Principal