



# St. Mark's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher Mrs. D. Linley



Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and carers,

I hope you are well and have had a good week. It was wonderful to see so many photos on Twitter and BGfL of the fantastic fun that was had by so many children outside in the snow on Monday. Your children will remember those moments having fun outside in the snow, I just hope you as parents got to have some fun too! 😊 As always, thank you for the excellent job you are doing supporting your children at home with their home learning. Remember, keeping your child in a routine will add structure to their day and it relieves some anxiety your child may be feeling in relation to all the change they are observing around them.



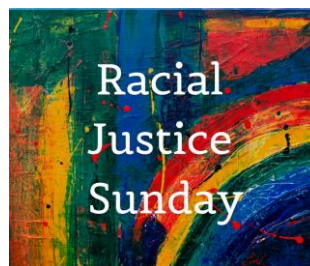
Racial Justice Sunday is this Sunday (31st January). This year's Racial Justice Sunday is more important than ever. The effects of the Coronavirus pandemic, the killing of George Floyd, and the powerful message on fraternity and equality by Pope Francis in *Fratelli Tutti* speak of the need to actively oppose racism and pursue racial justice with renewed vigour. Staff in school will be marking this day by completing activities on racial equality with the children on Monday. It is clear that it takes much more than a textbook to instil the values of a good, global citizen. Children need to put these values into practice, through activities that involve teamwork, dialogue, cooperation whereby they can recognise and respect the dignity of others. It is incredibly important that we teach our children about racism because sadly, it does exist in our society. Pope Francis's most recent Encyclical Letter, *Fratelli Tutti*, is very powerful and I would encourage you all to spend 5 minutes of your day (I promise you will not be disappointed!) to watch the video on the link below, it explains what *Fratelli Tutti* is about. More importantly, I hope you will also see that the messages in *Fratelli Tutti* is what we strive to promote as a Catholic school and what we are most passionate about.

<http://www.humandevlopment.va/en/fratelli-tutti.html>



Please see an outline below of what each class will be learning about in relation to Racial Justice Sunday (themes are taken from *Fratelli Tutti*):

- Reception: Similarities and differences
- Year 1: A stranger on the road - the good Samaritan
- Year 2: Opening our hearts to the whole world
- Year 3: Paths of renewed encounter
- Year 4: Different religions working together
- Year 5: Issues in society - what can we do about them?
- Year 6: A Better Kind Of Politics



As always, thank you for your support and for your hard work and commitment.

Take care and stay safe,  
Mrs. Linley and the St. Mark's Team



## **TOP STAR EARNERS OF THE WEEK**



Well done to the following children for earning the most stars this week!!

Safa(YR) Leonel(YR) Pearl(YR) Eva(Y1) Thomas(Y1) Ella(Y1) Rose-Marie(Y2)  
 Evie(Y2) Aaryan(Y2) Adam(Y3) Zuzanna(Y3) Oliver(Y3) Victoria(Y4)  
 Rohan(Y4) Holly(Y4) Lucy(Y5) Aanya(Y5) Ivy(Y5) Rhia(Y6)  
 Jeremiah(Y6) Flynn(Y6)

### **Congratulations and Well Done!**

We would like to say a big well done to the following pupils for receiving a Congratulations certificate this week. Keep up the great work!



**Reception:** Safa & Pearl  
**Year 1:** Anaiya & Isaac  
**Year 2:** Aaryan & Taon  
**Year 3:** Keeley & Zara  
**Year 4:** Taim & Victoria  
**Year 5:** Kimaya & Mya  
**Year 6:** Afreya & Tiya



# How many stars can you earn online with j2stars?

### **Food Parcels**

St Vincent de Paul have been putting together food parcels to help our families. These are available on a fortnightly basis to be collected from the school on a Monday. If this would be of help to you, please contact the school office and we can put your name down for one. As well as this, we also have food bank vouchers available from the school office for Great Barr food bank. If you find yourself urgently needing support with food parcels – PLEASE get in touch with us!



Thank you to all the children who have been enthusiastically getting involved with our live learning lessons on Teams. I know there have been some technical issues whilst we all get used to this new way of delivering lessons to our children, but we thank you for your patience and understanding whilst we try and figure things out. We are hoping moving forward things will run smoothly. The teachers are really enjoying seeing the happy faces of the children that are currently at home, we can't wait to have them back in school. Well done everyone, keep up the hard work!

## Prime Minister's Latest Update

I am sure many of you will have heard the latest announcement from the Prime Minister earlier this week. He has warned that the 8th March will be the earliest date on which school children can return to the classroom. When schools were closed to most pupils earlier this month, the Prime Minister said it would initially be until after the February half-term holiday. However, he announced to MPs on Wednesday that only by the middle of next month would the government have a clearer idea of the impact of the vaccine on the pandemic.

This is obviously disappointing to hear as many of us were looking forward to the children returning to school after the half term holiday. We will remain strong and hopeful that things will change soon. We will of course inform you of any updates we receive and will continue to stride on with all the home learning activities.

Thank you again for your continued support and hard work with the home learning at this difficult time. We will continue to provide support and guidance to all our families whenever it is needed. You are doing a fantastic job, especially as we know many of you have the added pressure of working from home too.

## Year 4 Update

*I would like to offer Mr Stanley a very warm welcome to St Mark's. Mr. Stanley has now taken over the teaching in Year 4. He is familiar with most of the children already as he has been supporting us at St. Mark's for a while. Mrs Khan hasn't left us yet - she will still be in school from time to time and will still be leading some of the Teams Sessions.*



### Helping Hands

**(Our Breakfast and After School Club)**

Parents who have children in school and who usually use Helping Hands will be aware that they had to close for 10 days to isolate due to a positive COVID-19 test. We can confirm that they will be open again from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February.

### Parking \*REMINDER\*

Please **DO NOT** to park in front of the school car park gates as this can cause an obstruction to anyone needing to access the car park. Many thanks

## Emotional Wellbeing

For any parents who may be a little concerned about their children's emotional wellbeing during this unprecedented time we have come across an Art course and a Mindfulness workshop which you might find of interest. The details are as follows:

<https://www.forwardthinkingbirmingham.org.uk/events/193-art-workshop>



## Art Workshop - [forwardthinkingbirmingham.org.uk](http://forwardthinkingbirmingham.org.uk)

Pause Online Art Workshop. This group is great for young people who may be struggling to figure out or talk about their emotions, and may find it easier using a different way to express themselves using the power of art!

[www.forwardthinkingbirmingham.org.uk](http://www.forwardthinkingbirmingham.org.uk)

<https://www.forwardthinkingbirmingham.org.uk/events/117-mindful-moments>



## Mindful Moments - [forwardthinkingbirmingham.org.uk](http://forwardthinkingbirmingham.org.uk)

Mindful Moments is a mindfulness group for children aged 6 – 11 years old. Sometimes our heads get really full of thoughts and feelings, and this can feel quite upsetting.

[www.forwardthinkingbirmingham.org.uk](http://www.forwardthinkingbirmingham.org.uk)

## A Prayer for the weekend...

*Father, thank You for this Friday. Thank You for seeing us through another work week and bringing us to the weekend. Father, we pray that this weekend will be filled with rest, refreshment, and quiet time with You. Our lives can seem so overwhelming and confusing, but we know that You are there by our side always.*

*Lord, thank You for guiding our path. We know that You are doing 10,000 things in our lives, even if we are only aware of a few of them. Lord, help us recognize Your Spirit. Bring us deeper into a knowledge of You, so that even in times of adversity, we can rest in the knowledge that You are with us.*

*Amen*

