



Half-term Newsletter Autumn 2021

As you will have noticed, there was no Newsletter on the last day of the half term. The teachers were absolutely exhausted (in their words, 'crawling to half-term'), so I gave them the week off Newsletter duty and said I would take the reins! We still want to acknowledge our class stars and HT Awards though, so they will be added to next week's edition.

The final week was a busy one. On Monday, CAFOD carried out workshops in KS2 on the theme of Catholic Social Teaching. This fitted perfectly with our recent work around Fratelli Tutti.

Tuesday's collective worship was a real highlight for me. Our Year 2 Jacinta class led us in prayer and hymns based around their current topic. Despite having been at the school for two years, Covid has meant that their families haven't had the opportunity to come into school, see them and be an active part of their life here. So, it was wonderful to see over 40 family members present. It is quite a daunting task to read, perform, sign and dance in front of that many people, when you are still only little, so we were very proud of them.

The PTA 'Break the Rules' Day was a fantastic success. The kids had a brilliant time and it also raised valuable funds for the school.

As the nights are drawing in, the roads pose an even greater risk to children. On Wednesday we took part in Herts' 'Be Bright, Be Seen' campaign, with the children learning about the importance of wearing bright/reflective clothing if walking or cycling after dark and reinforcing the rules of road safety. Our crossing patrol woman has been a great addition to the community and is helping to keep our families safe on their way to and from school. Please be aware though, I have been told we must 'use her or lose her' as Herts carry out monitoring visits – if there is insufficient use at the crossing, they will redeploy her elsewhere. Therefore, please do let her do her job and stop the traffic!

Although there were a few issues, our first online virtual Parents' Consultations were generally a success. While different to a face-to-face meeting, I'm aware that telephone consultations are actually a lot easier for many parents for whom job or child-care commitments make evening appointments difficult. I hope that anyone who missed their opportunity, whether due to technology or another reason, has now been caught up. However, if not, please contact your child's class teacher who will set a time to call you. We ended the half-term with St John Paul II's feast day. Happy Feast Day to our Year 3 class!

Be who God created you to be and you will set the world on fire.



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Looking ahead to the next few weeks, we have lots of exciting things planned. Our Mission Statement is the central to everything we do at St Catherine's. The first part, 'Be who God created you to be' is about the children achieving their full potential – socially, emotionally and academically. We aim to nurture and celebrate the unique gifts, talents and attributes of each individual. The second part, 'and you will set the world on fire' is about encouraging them to believe they can make a difference in this world, and giving them the desire to do so.

Sunday sees the start of COP26, the United Nations' Climate Change Conference. Some of the most powerful people in the world are coming together in Glasgow to work together to agree action to tackle climate change. This is too important an event to ignore. Over the next two weeks, while COP26 is taking place, we will be teaching the children about the damage we have caused to our planet, what the future holds if we don't make a change, and how we can each make a difference.

As Catholics we believe we are Stewards of Creation – we have a duty to look after the earth and all of God's creation. We also have a duty to the most vulnerable. The destruction of land, oceans and forests is threatening the homes and livelihoods of some of the poorest communities globally. I know that this care for our world and vulnerable communities is shared by our brothers and sisters of other faiths as well as those of no faith – this is about what kind of planet your children will have to inhabit.

As part of our COP26 Unit, we are going to encourage our pupils to be agents for change. We want to guide the children on ways they can do this: writing to our MP, local and national businesses; sharing their views on social media; encouraging their families and friends; challenging me and the Trust to make changes and even peacefully protesting. If you have a particular interest or expertise in this area and are willing to help/take part, please email me at head@st-catherine.herts.sch.uk.

Thursday 4th November is Diwali, the Hindu Festival of Light. On Wednesday 3rd November, Year 2 upwards will be taking part in Diwali Dance Workshops. Our thanks go to Councillor Tim Williams, a former parent, who has granted St Cath's £1000 to pay for this and other enrichment activities. It is wonderful that the children will learn new dance skills, have fun and at the same time learn more about this important festival.

Finally, I'm delighted to say that Jack Pavey, our former pupil, is awake and out of intensive care. Thank you for all your prayers and best wishes – I know how much it has meant to his family.

Monday is an Inset day, so we look forward to welcoming the children back on Tuesday.

God bless,
Ms Kane