



Governors Newsletter Christmas 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

Christmas is a great time for remembering! If we are able to, we visit family members who, sadly these days, often live far away. We remember the Christmas story – how Our Lord Jesus Christ was born in a stable at Bethlehem.

The Christmas Crib – a gift to the world by St Francis

Saint Francis spent the Christmas season of 1223 near the village of Greccio in the valley of Rieti, weary in mind and body. There he sent word to his friend, the knight, Giovanni di Vellita, "If you want to celebrate the Feast of the Lord at Greccio, hurry and diligently prepare what I tell you. For I wish to recall to memory the little child who was born in Bethlehem. I want to set before our bodily eyes the hardships of his infant needs, how he lay in the manger, how with an ox and ass standing by he lay upon the hay." Giovanni began immediately. People prepared torches and candles to light up the night. The manger, also called "crib" or "creche", was prepared in the cave, and a live ox and ass brought in. When Francis came to the friars' hermitage, he was delighted.

The great evening arrived. People began to come in procession, carrying their torches and candles. The woods rang with their song. They were rediscovering the joy of childhood and the love of family. The great Teacher of the New Testament, Jesus, was not an austere and remote figure, but a person who shared their lives, and lived close to the animals on which all mutually depended, just as they did. The people crowded to the midnight Mass, at which Francis as deacon read the Gospel story and then preached. His use of the word "creche" gave further impetus to its later popularity.

After St Francis's death in 1226, the custom of having the crib at Christmas spread widely through Europe, and remains with us today, to remind us, too, of the joys of childhood, and the love of family.

Celebrating our School's past, and looking forward to the future

Next year we will be celebrating our School's 50th year – a tremendous milestone! There are two important dates for your diary already for the NEXT academic year!

- On Thursday 10th November 2020 at 6.00 p.m., **Mr Happy's Circus** will be at the School to set the new year off with a bang! We hope that the whole of our School and Parish community will be there.
- On Tuesday 29th September 2020, **Bishop Declan** will be visiting the School. The day will start with a School Mass at 10.30 a.m. and will be followed by the Bishop's visit to the School. We would love you to be there.

We are also hoping to have a **commemorative timeline** on display in the School, to remember our past. This will celebrate the hard work, idealism and determination that have helped design and build the School and provided many milestones along the way to today.

We are also looking to the future. We hope to bury a **time capsule** in the School grounds, containing objects that sum up our lives today, and express our hopes for the future. What should such a time capsule contain? We will be asking you and your children for your views.

Whatever we do, it will be fun and exciting!!

Christmas wishes

I wish you and your families every blessing this Christmas. Amid the tinsel, the food and the drink, I hope you find time to remember that tiny, vulnerable, newborn baby around whom the celebrations revolve.

May God bless you and your families

Kindest regards

Peter

Peter Taylor (Chair)

On behalf of the School Governors

Thank you to retiring Governors

Mr Ian Brewer and Mr Phil Mann are stepping down as Governors. We would like to thank them very much for their outstanding contribution to the work of the Governors and the life of the school and send them both our good wishes.

Seeking new Governors

We are looking to welcome new Parent and Foundation Governors on to the Governing Board. The work is varied and interesting and gives an opportunity to be closely involved in the life of the school.

If you would like to know more about the work of Parent and Foundation Governors, please contact the Chair, Peter Taylor, via the school office. You can also find useful information by following these links:

<https://www.inspiringgovernance.org/>

<https://schools.cliftodiocese.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/School-Governor-Booklet.pdf>

Gift Aid

We are always grateful for regular or one-off donations to the school, no matter how big or small, as they directly benefit our children and provide them with an enriched education.

If you are donating, or would like to donate, please could we request that you complete a 'Gift Aid Form' in order that we can reclaim the tax on donations, thus making a larger contribution to your child's educational journey. Gift Aid forms are available from the school office. Thank you!

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



“Created by God to love and learn”