

NEWSLETTER

27th February 2019

Welcome Back!

I hope you have all had a lovely holiday and enjoyed the beautiful weather.

We are all greatly saddened by the news that Father John Leonard has passed away. Father John gave service within the Diocese of Leeds for over 58 years, including time spent in Bradford, Skipton, Chickenly and Mirfield.

Father John became parish priest at St Patrick's Church in Elland in 1991 and gave faithful service to the parish for twenty five years. He retired in 2016, at the age of 80, but continued to live in the church presbytery until his death on Thursday 21st February, 2019. Even in retirement Father John continued to come to important services, such as Christmas and requiem masses whenever his health allowed.

We all have many happy memories of the times Father John came to school. He loved to work with individual classes, and would celebrate the Eucharist or hold penitential services with small groups of children in their own classrooms. He had great affection for the children of the school and loved it when they come to church for services and particularly liked to have them read and to sing during services.

Father John will be greatly missed and we offer our condolences to his family

We have a memorial book in our reception entrance area if anyone would like to come and write a memory or condolence message in it.

In our Collective Worship on Monday we offered our prayers for Father John and we ask that he may rest in peace.

Reminder: Year 5 Ampleforth (13th to 15th March)

The children in Y5 will be going on a two night residential retreat. We have confirmed numbers to the Abbey and we would be grateful to parents for ensuring they have made all the due payments/instalments by the time we go or have spoken to the office team about a payment plan.

IMPORTANT PARENT INFORMATION

The so called “**Momo Challenge**” has once again raised its head with a lot of coverage both on national media and social media in the last 2 weeks.

Two Calderdale Primary schools in the last 24 hours have brought concerns to my attention since the return from the half term break.

It might be useful to remind you what this is about and the risks to children who access Momo related information on the internet.

The Momo Challenge is a form of cyberbullying that spreads through social media and largely through the use of mobile phones. After phone users are enticed to contact a user named "Momo", they receive graphic threats from that user and are instructed to perform a series of dangerous tasks.

The Momo challenge is apparently targeted at teenagers, however recent evidence suggests many younger children have accessed it.

Momo challenges and clips are also widely circulating right now on YouTube.

YouTube is owned by Google who recently released a press statement to the effect that: “YouTube clips that depict dangerous or emotionally distressing “pranks” have been banned from the platform.”

Despite this stance there is still remains a large amount of harmful material out there.

We know that many younger children are now using apps and games linked to social media whether they hold an account or not.

I have found it difficult to find direct parental guidance specifically on the Momo Challenge, however I have found the following American site about the most informative:

<https://smartsocial.com/momo-challenge-safety-guide/>

The following link is the NSPCC Net-Aware site that is also very useful for wider information on social media:

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>

ALWAYS SUPERVISE CHILDREN WHEN THEY ARE ONLINE AND ENSURE PARENTAL CONTROLS ARE SET.

World Book Day Thursday 7th March

Your child can come dressed as their favourite book character! We ask that you send a donation with your child that will go towards buying new and interesting texts and books for our school library. We continually struggle to find the funds in our school budget to replace our school stock of books so please be mindful of returning school reading books when children bring them home.

First Communion Dates

Family Catechesis Sessions start at school on the 11th March at 6pm.

Sunday 19th May 2019 – to take place at St Patrick's Church

Date's from the Church's Calendar - March

1st March – St. David, Patron of Wales, Women's World Day of Prayer

6th March – Ash Wednesday Children in Key Stage 2 will attend Mass at Church at 9.30am

10th March – First Sunday of Lent

17th March – 2nd Sunday of Lent

19th March – St Joseph

24th March – 3rd Sunday of Lent

25th March – The Annunciation

31st March – Fourth Sunday of Lent

SCHOOL FUNDING CRISIS

You may have heard or seen in the National Media the ongoing discussion around the very real issue of a funding crisis in our schools. St Patrick's as a very small school struggles with offering the same things that larger schools, with much bigger budgets do, and we have very serious concerns regarding the lack of investment and help for small schools in particular. The Governing Body and Leadership Team are continually faced with the challenge of managing our small school budget whilst continuing to offer the very best education we can for our children. We will be sending out further information to you about how you can help us to share concerns about the School Funding Crisis. As always we welcome your voluntary contributions to our school scheme (Contact Mrs Robinson in the office if you would like to set up or renew a monthly contribution) and donations to our fundraising events. Our PTA is desperately in need of more support to continue their fundraising efforts and I urge you as our school community to help in any way that you can as we face very challenging financial times. **Many thanks to you all for your ongoing and amazing support for the children at St Patrick's!**

God Bless,

Mrs Lomas