

St Mary's Catholic Primary, Churchdown, Gloucester

Catholic life of the School *including* Chaplaincy

From 2021-2 onwards

2021-22

St Mary's Chaplaincy group

St Mary's Chaplaincy group is well-established over approximately 8 years, with a strong core of pupils.

We meet after school for an hour every Tuesday throughout the year with staff members, Mr Wadley and Miss Payne. This also used to be led with Fr Kevin Hennessy (former parish priest).

During Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown, meetings had to be suspended due to class bubbles not mixing and many pupils were accessing home learning only.

When school resumed properly, in September 2021, further Covid outbreaks in school meant we could not re-establish group meetings until the end of October. By then, a new Chaplaincy team needed to be re-established, as most pupils had left the school for KS3 or left to go back to their home countries of Italy and Spain.

The Chaplaincy commissioning at Clifton cathedral had to be cancelled in November, due to restrictions on larger gatherings. This was a pity, as the chaplaincy group were set to lead worship at the cathedral and all had been organised and practised for.

Instead, we held our own commissioning service during a KS2 assembly at school, which was kindly led by Father Paul Brandon.

Photograph shows the new Chaplaincy team holding their certificates and wearing their badges at Chaplaincy commissioning on 25.11.21

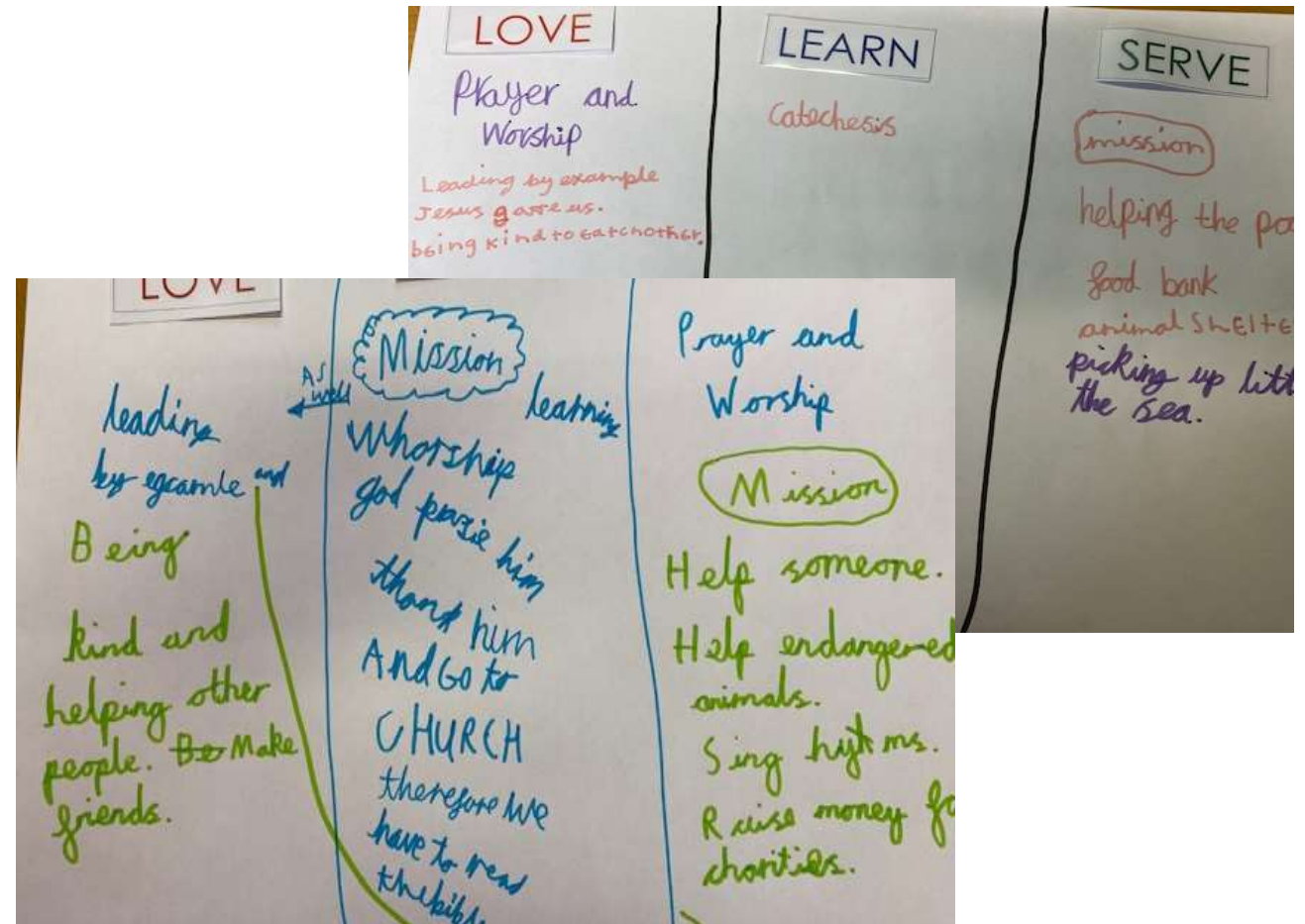


October 2021 Exploring our mission

Welcoming our ten new chaplaincy members (Y2-6) on 19.10.21, when our group was finally able to meet again, was a joy.

We began by exploring our purpose as a Chaplaincy group within the school as a 'People of Hope' and in the light of our school Mission Statement to 'love, learn and to serve'.

A few examples of children's shared ideas



November 2021: Prayer, worship, sunflowers and Harvest

During November 2021, our Chaplaincy sessions were spent in times of prayer and worship (initially practising songs for the Chaplaincy Commissioning Service in Clifton, that was cancelled, due to restrictions on larger gatherings).

We prepared some art work for our CAFOD 'Live Simply' display to celebrate the work and achievement of the School achieving the CAFOD 'Live Simply' award on 13.7.21.

The children also contributed to decisions to the school Chaplaincy Plan. One of these was to respond to the local GL3 foodbank in Churchdown as part of the school's Harvest gift.

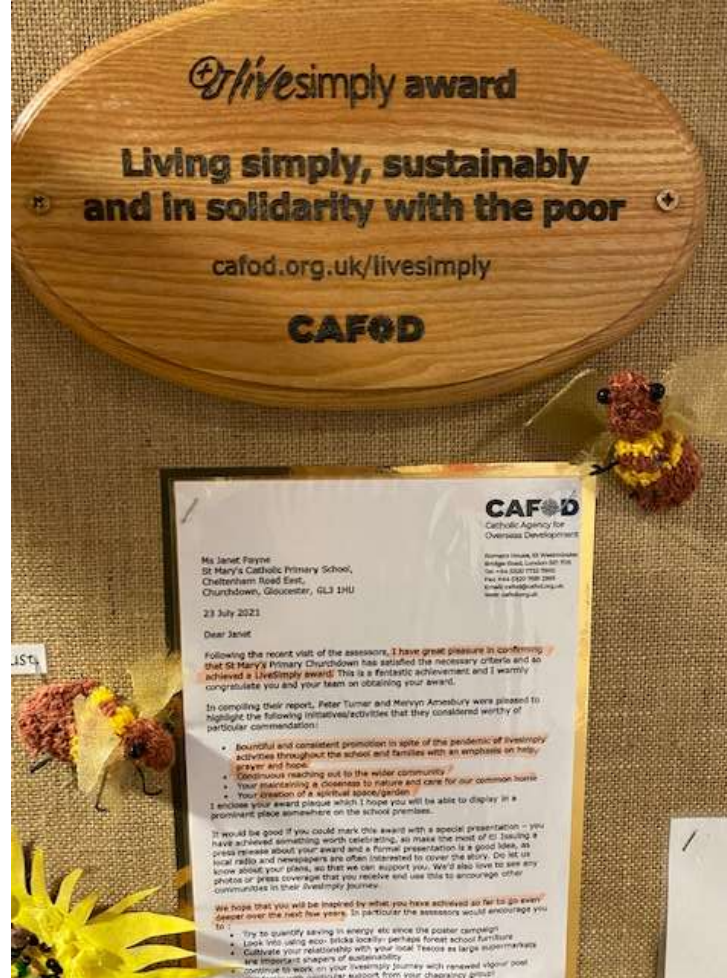
The children promoted the Harvest giving by designing posters to go on the school gates, in the church narthex and in the newsletter.

The children enjoyed painting and embellishing sunflowers to decorate the display; all classes had planted the raised beds as part of Forest School sessions in the summer, including sunflowers to improve the school environment for wildlife.



Sunflowers in full bloom in August. These were planted in class Forest School sessions.





Just some of the many donations for our Harvest appeal for the GL3 Hub food bank, 'Hungry no More', who were overwhelmed by the generosity and quality of provisions donated. Over 70 carrier bag loads filled two cars! Volunteers kindly sent a chocolate bar for each child as a thank you ☺



Presentation of CAFOD 'Live Simply' award 25.11.21

Father Paul Brandon presented the CAFOD 'Live Simply' award at our Chaplaincy commissioning service.

Hannah Y6 and Saffan Y5 are long-standing older KS2 Chaplaincy members, who received the award on behalf of the School.



First Holy Communion 2021

After a very long wait, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, pupils were able to celebrate their First Holy Communion.

Here are pupils from Y4, Y5 and Y6 receiving their First Holy Communion certificates from Fr Paul Brandon at the Chaplaincy commissioning service at school on 25.11.21.



Remembrance

November 2021

As part of their class topic and to mark Remembrance, Y2 attended a **Remembrance Service** held outside St John's Church in Churchdown, along with another local school.

Children's thoughts and reflections ...

'Its special, because we were praying for all the people who died. After the war had gone off, poppies grew and we remember them by having poppies.... I felt really sad when I heard that some people died doing the fight' .. (Navea)

'We were praying for soldiers who died in the war - and some livedI felt very sad, because some soldiers died in the war.'
(Nadia)

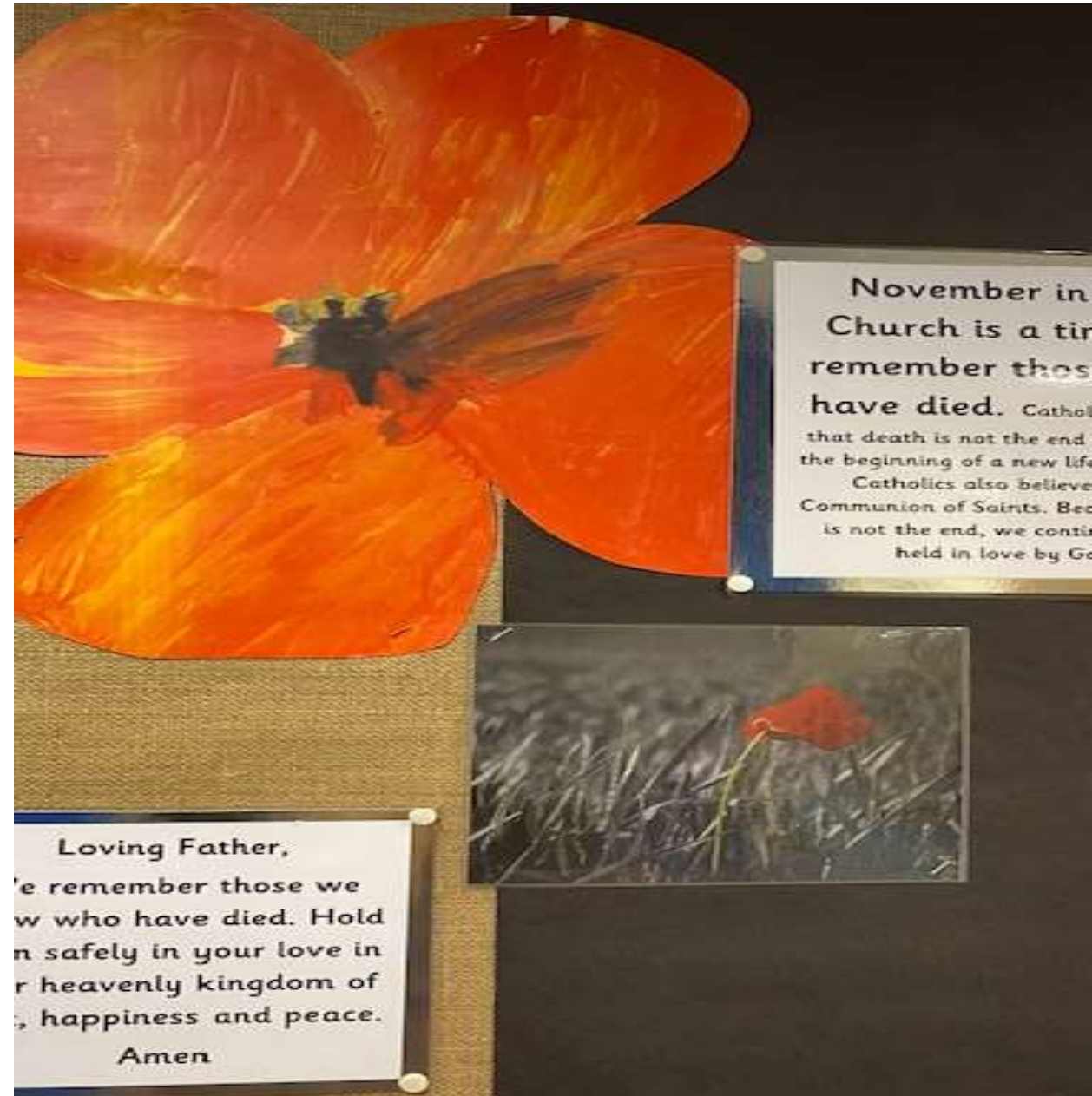
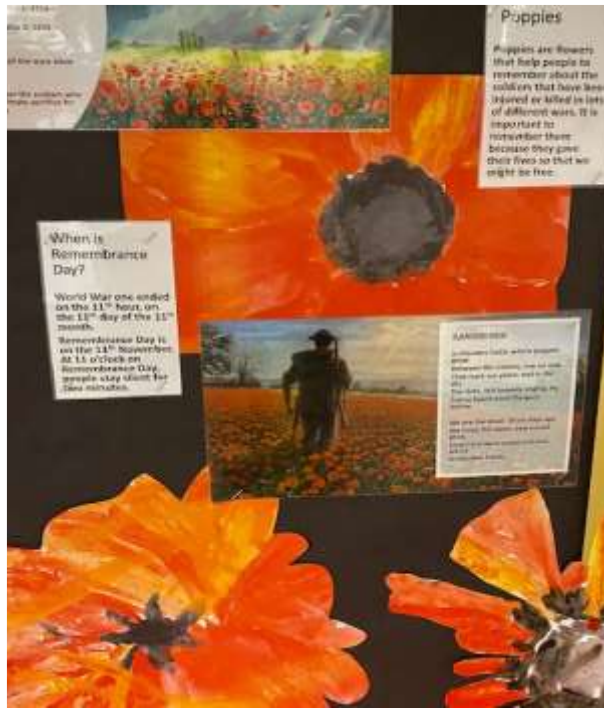
'It was special to me because I got to read for them.I felt sad for all the soldiers who died.' (Henry)

We walked to St. John's Church and took part in the memorial service. We listened to prayers, shared our own readings and had our minute silence whilst listening to 'The Last Post'. We laid a wreath and also laid our own heart to commemorate the soldiers.



Remembrance Reflection display

Our entrance hall board and prayer/reflection table in the shared library area in November was decorated with some beautiful paintings of poppies contributed by Y2 pupils, who had created them as part of an art day for their Remember topic.



Pupils were able to write the names of people they knew who had died onto a poppy to remember and pray for them.



Advent 2021

Despite further Covid-19 restrictions, we were so pleased to be able to hold Christmas services for the children and their families this year.

Here are some photographs from the Infant Nativity – held in the school hall.



Advent 2021

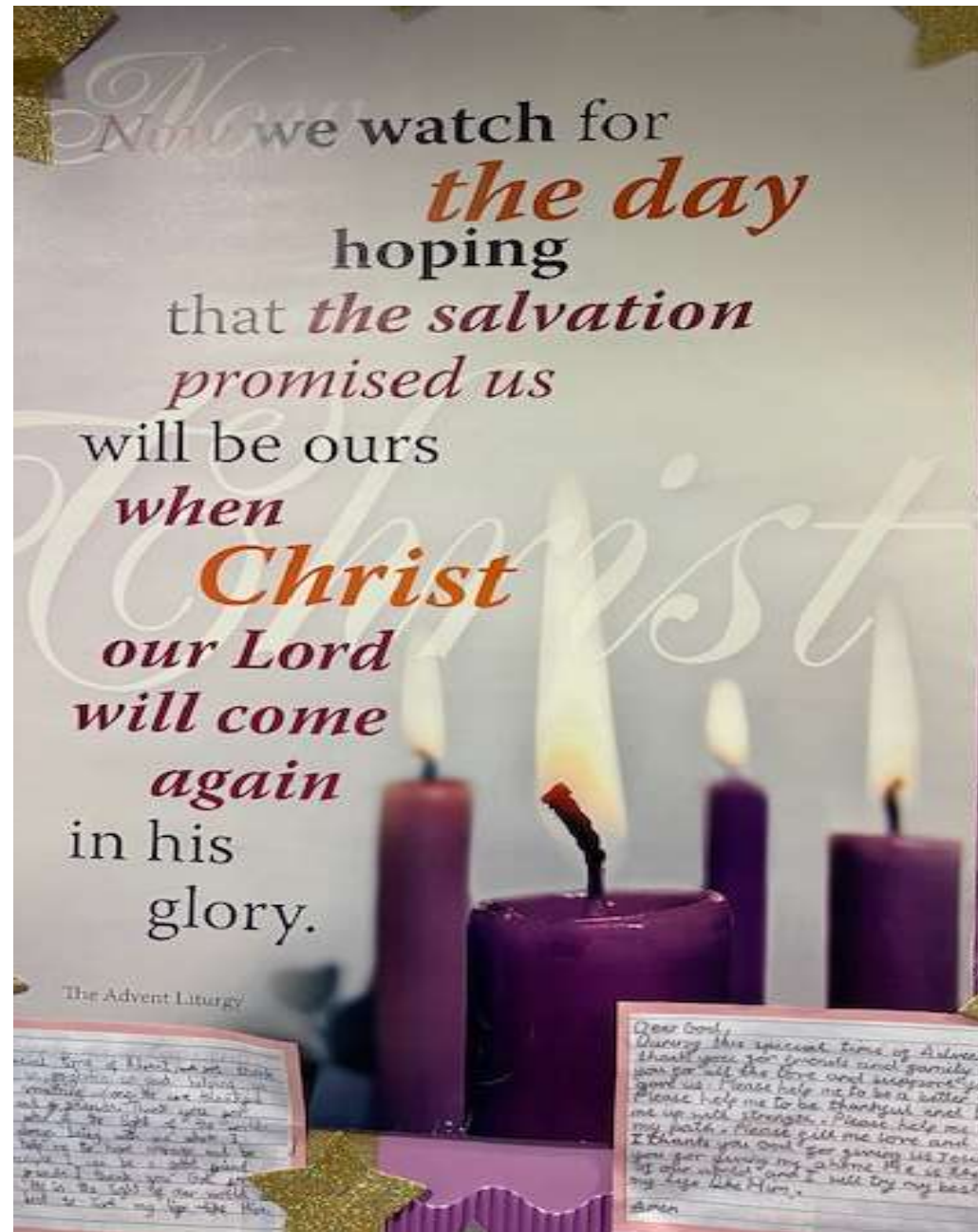
Father Paul kindly allowed the school to host the Junior carol service in Our Lady's church.

A huge well done to the Juniors and supporting staff, who managed three concerts in one day and evening!



Advent prayer display

The Chaplaincy group made some fabric-tied stars to decorate the Nativity scene in the shared library area and entrance hall.

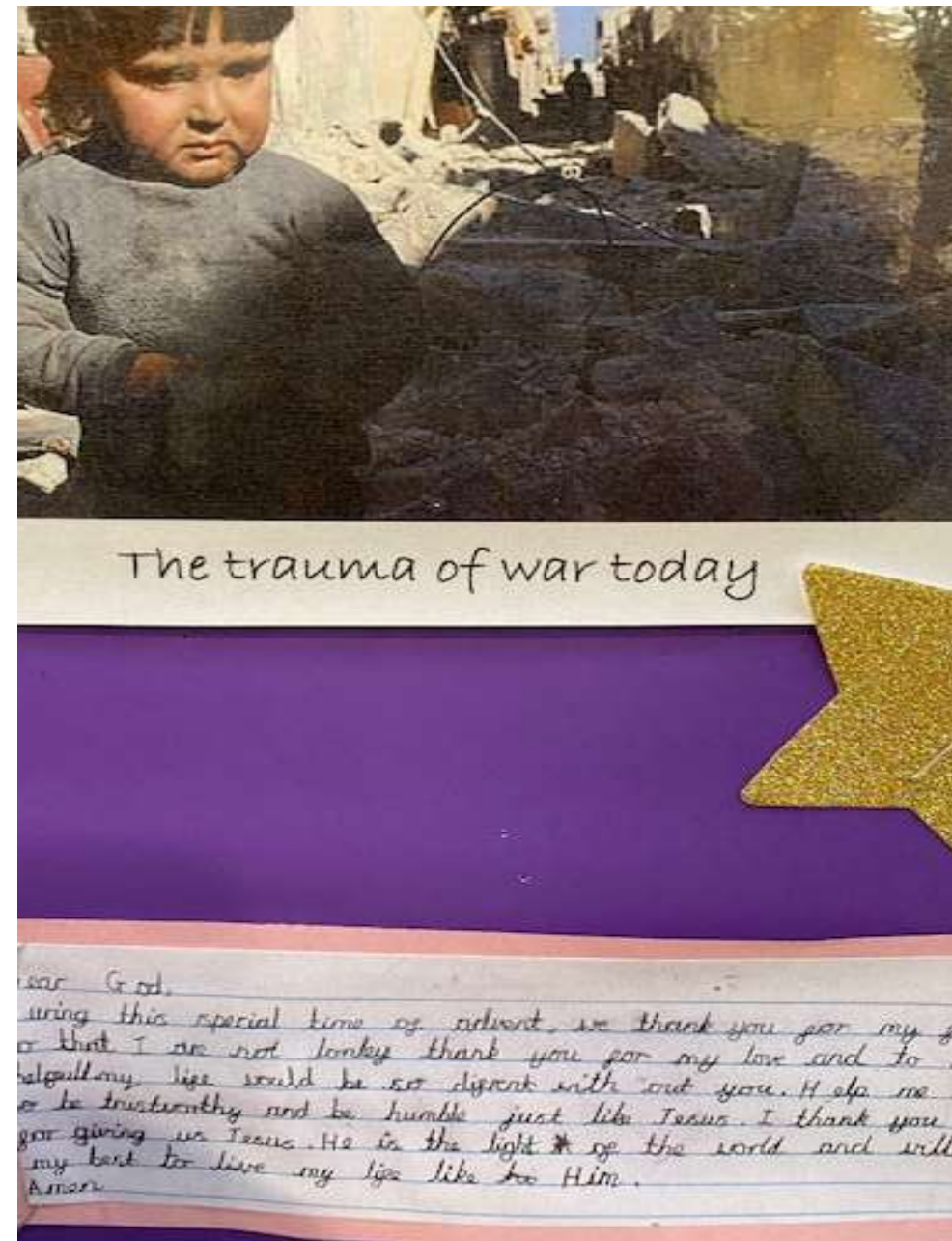
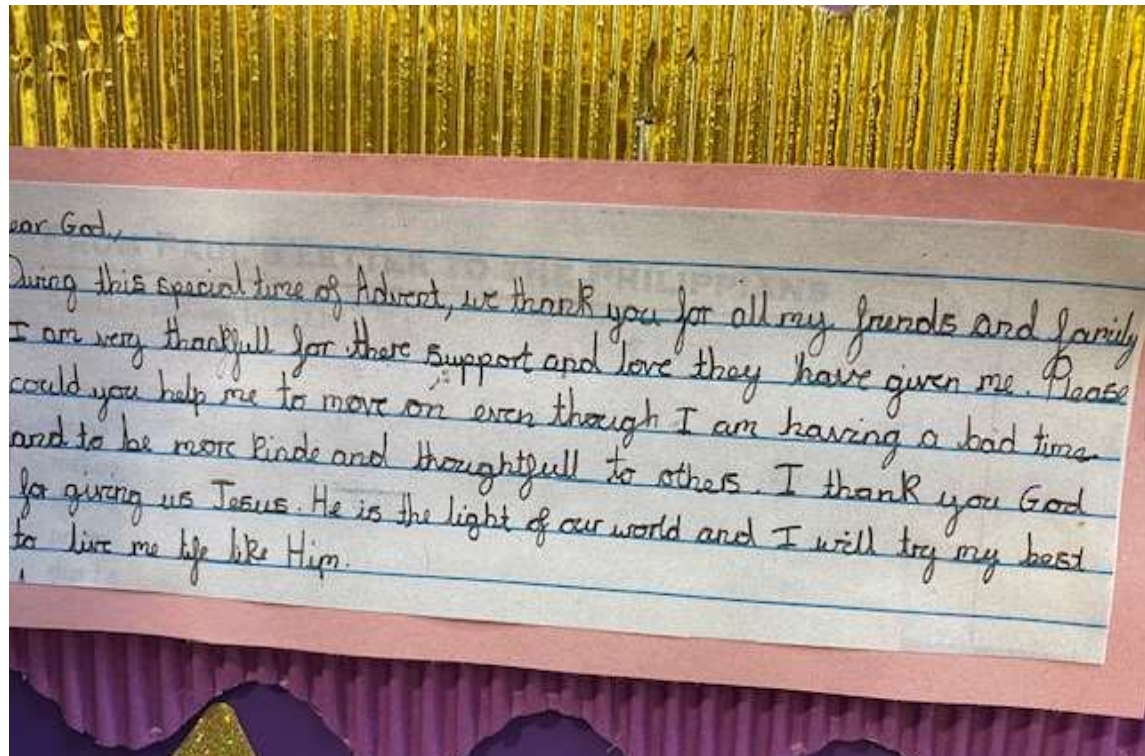




Advent prayers and reflections

Y4 prepared their own Advent prayers, which they shared in pupil-led class reflection time during Advent.

Some of these prayers were displayed.



Epiphany Mass

Father Paul celebrated an Epiphany Mass in church with pupils on Friday 7th January.

Readings were led by Y4 pupils on this occasion.



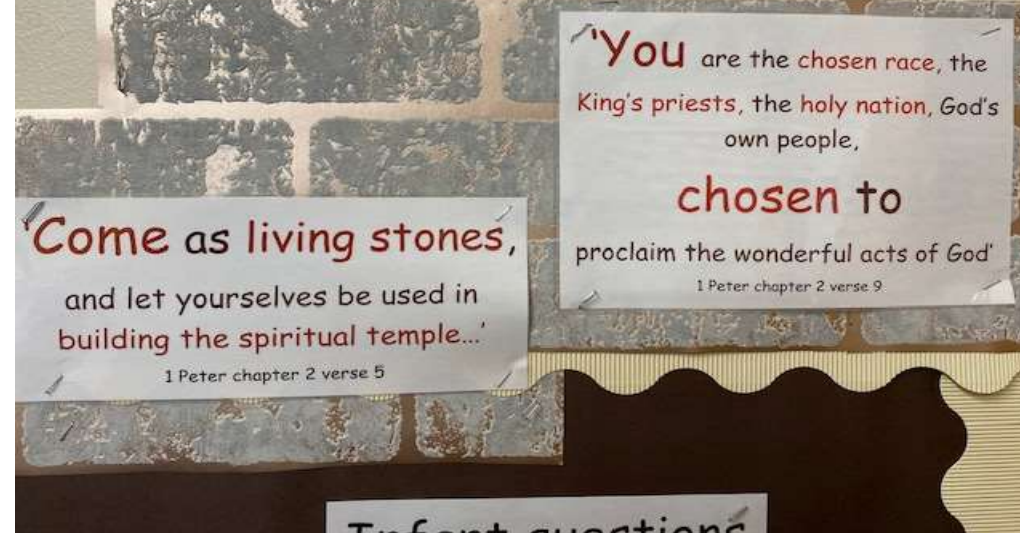
Synod October 2021-2023

Pope Francis has called a Synod of the Catholic Church. *Synod* is a Greek word, meaning a *meeting* or an *assembly*.

He is asking everyone in the Catholic Church some important questions to determine how we, as the Church, can be an effective witness of the Good News in the modern world.

Bishop Declan also calls us to be a '*People of Hope*'. He asks us to:

- * think about how we can work together and listen to each other's thoughts and ideas;
- use our special gifts to serve God and each other;
- *spread the Good News of Jesus to everyone we meet through the way we treat others;
- listen to God when we pray.



Synod questions for pupils form part of a listening wall in the Junior corridor

Each Key Stage will be learning about the Synod and thinking about these questions following a special reflective session. Children's responses will be captured on the listening wall, then collated and sent to the Bishop via the Diocesan office in Clifton.

Infant questions:

How did you talk to God during lockdown? Do you think he listened to and helped you? How?

What do you know about the church?

When do you go to church? Why?

What do you like and not like about going to church?

Junior questions:

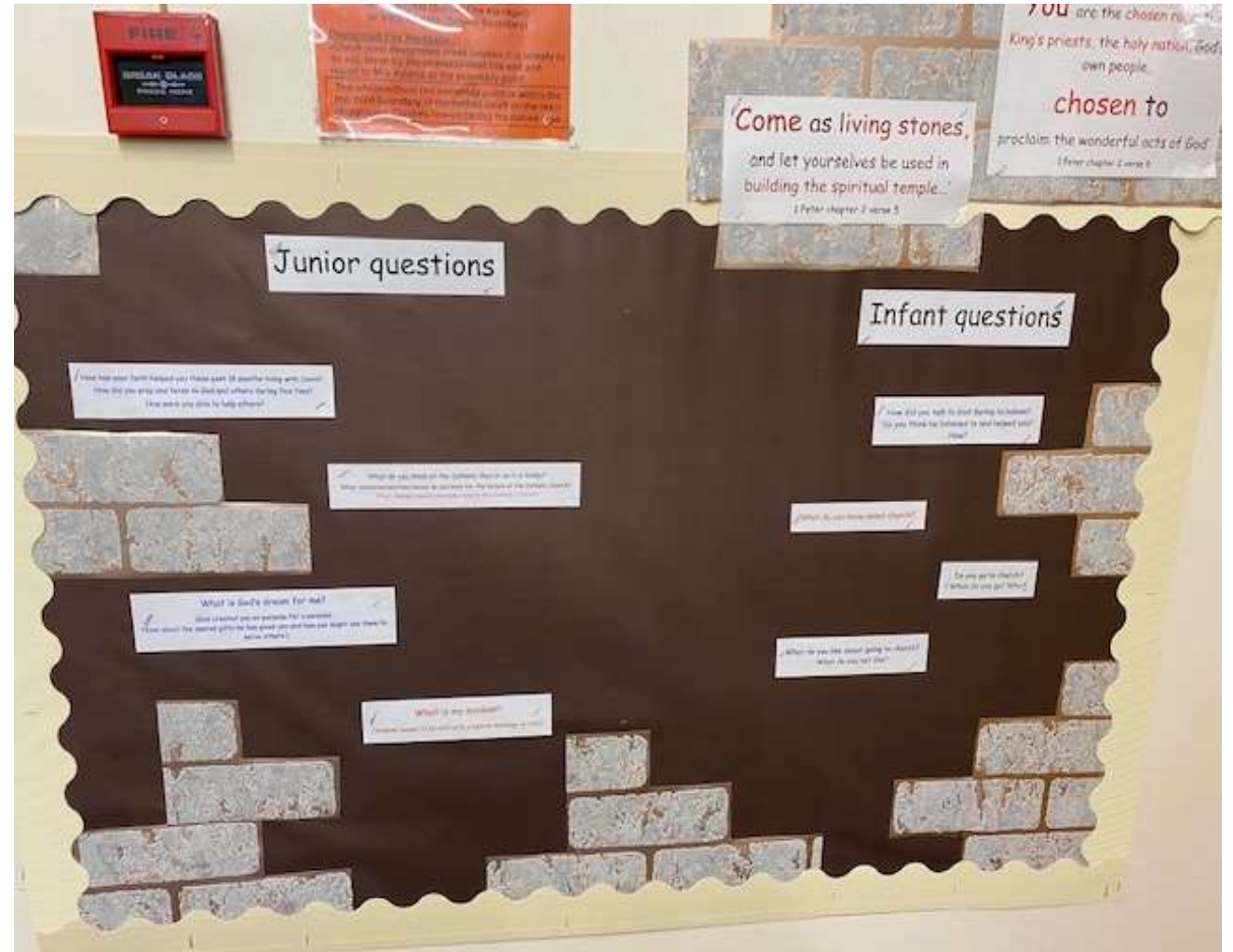
How has your faith helped you these past 2 years living with Covid?

How did you pray and listen to God and others during this time? Were you able to help others?

What do you think of the Catholic church as it is today? What concerns, worries and issues do you have for the future of the Catholic church? What changes would you like to make?

What is God's dream for me? *Realise God created you on purpose for a purpose and think about how you can use your special gifts to serve others*

What is my mission?



Pupil's Synod responses

See over next few slides for response to question 1 (prayer during lockdown)
Responses to other Synod questions may be found in Y2-6 listening form (March 2022)



Y2-6 Synod responses

Here are the children's responses to the first Synod question about how they prayed during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown

What has your faith meant to you these past 18 months, living with Covid?

- *How did you talk to God during lockdown?*
- *Do you think he listened to and helped you? How?*

Y2 PUPIL responses:

Pupils spoke particularly of praying for help to do their school work and to 'try my best', to learn more things and for Covid to end.

They were sure God listened e.g. 'Yes, he always listens to us'; 'He listened to me when I prayed; I felt closer to Him'. They spoke of God helping them to sleep, helping them to be calm and 'when I got scared, he helped me.'

Only one pupil said, 'No, because he doesn't come to me.'

Y3 PUPIL responses

Pupils spoke of playing with their mum and doing homework and helping, so their family would be happy.

They spoke of needing friends to help them and praying for their family.

'He heard me and helped me when I did a prayer to Him.'

Y2-6 Synod responses

Y4 PUPIL responses

Pupils said they had prayed/'talked to God'/'had quiet time with God'/'I told God to look after people'/'spending time with Him', 'worshipped' and meditated especially when they were feeling down and when times were tough and they were feeling lonely.

Children spoke of God encouraging them: 'He was there for me and looked over me.'

Some said they had watched online Mass, 'did a prayer book' and read the Bible.

All children felt God always listened and most felt God helped them always (a few said 'sometimes' or 'no'). They felt God helped them by helping them feel safe, protecting them, 'getting me through the pandemic', ending lockdown, stopping them being bored and 'he let me go to school' and 'he helped me feel better about my life.'

Y5 PUPIL responses

Many Y5 pupils spoke of praying 'when they were down in the dumps' or because they were 'so frustrated' and praying for God to look after their family and friends, especially for elderly relatives because they were e.g. 'she was home alone and had no company to talk about her feelings'. One spoke of praying for those who had died of Covid.

All children who responded had the assurance that God heard their prayers e.g. 'I think he listened and gave me happiness' and e.g. 'I think he did listen because I felt better after I did it.'

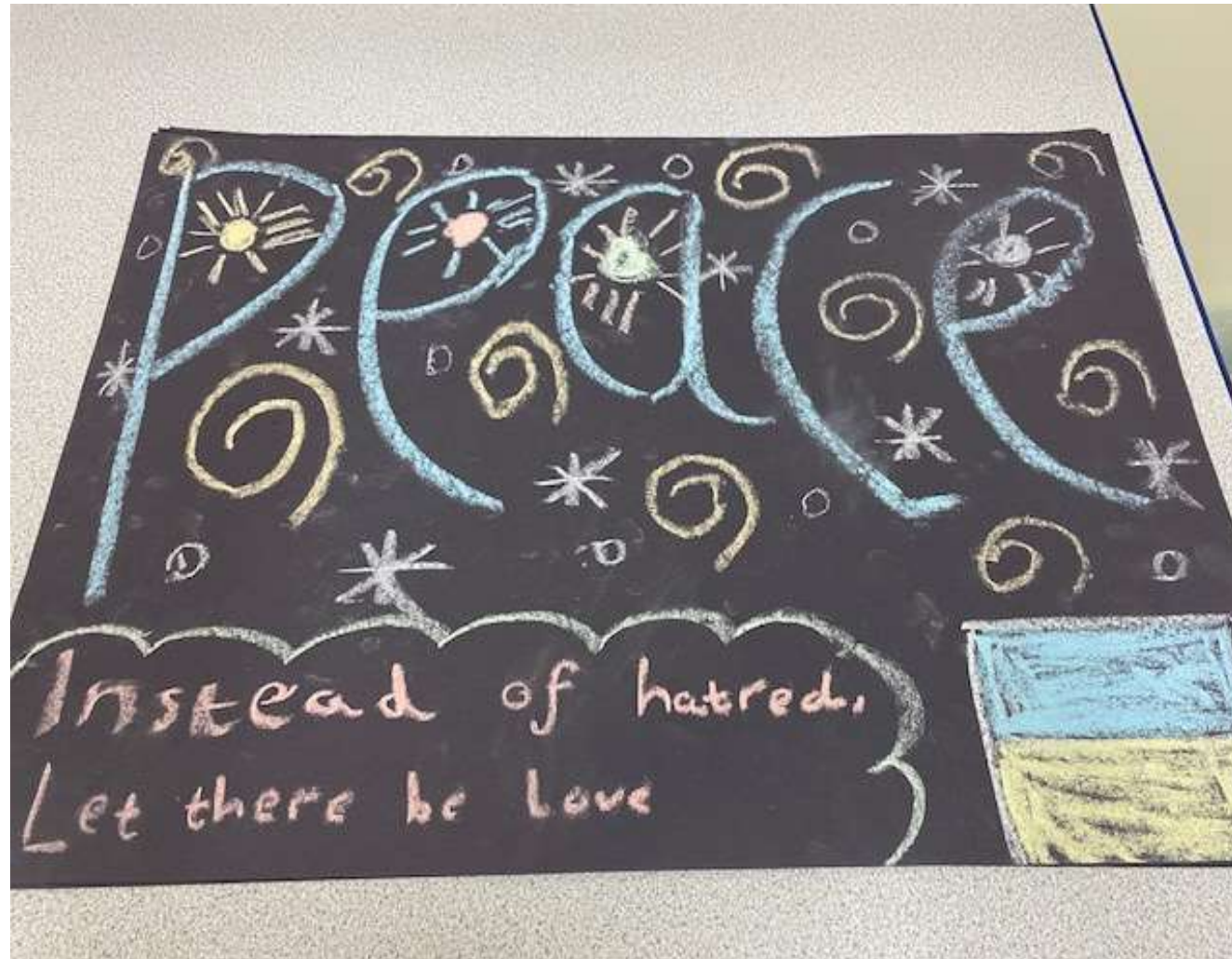
Y6 PUPIL responses

One pupil spoke of praying and telling God about their feelings: 'I said a prayer about not liking lockdown.'

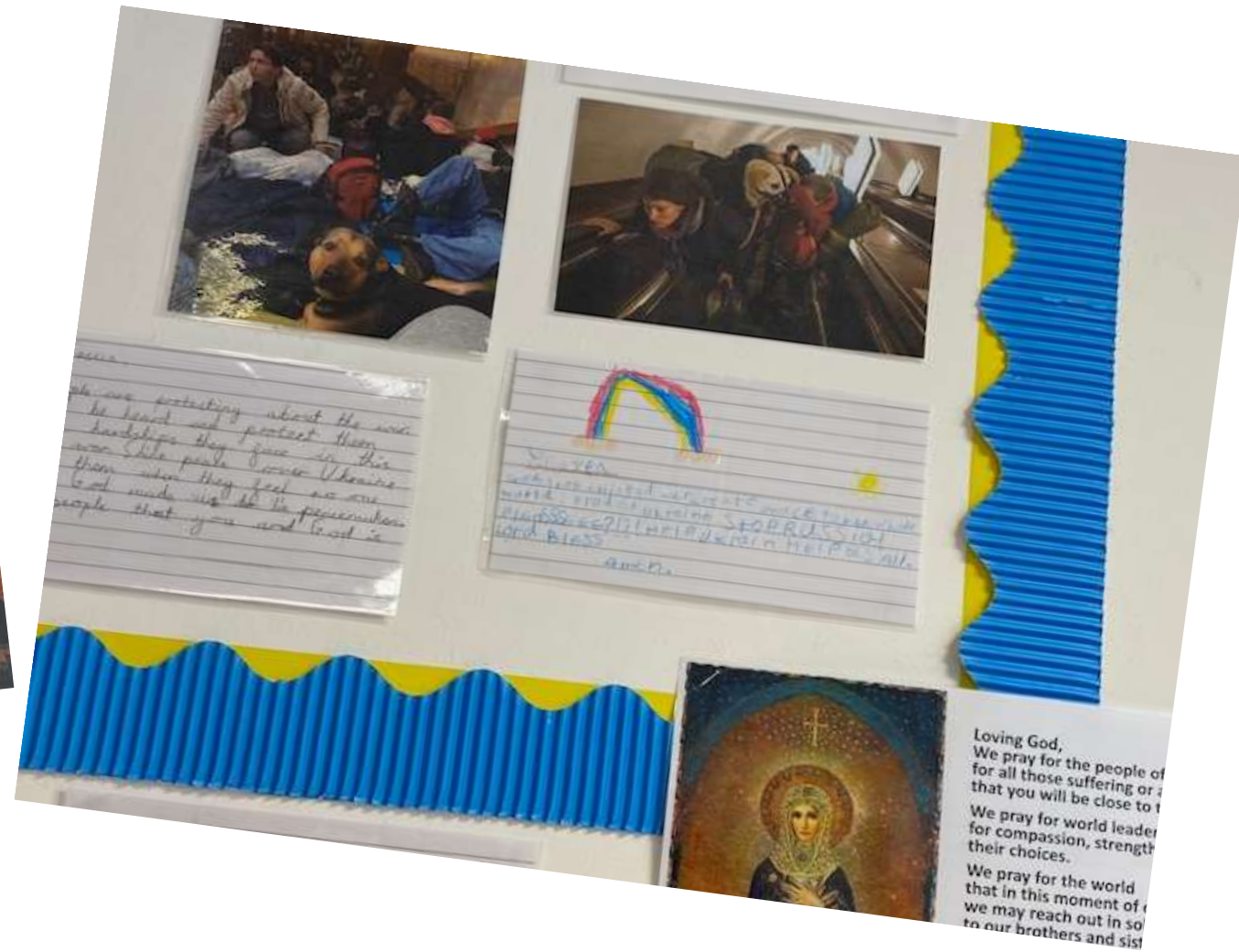
Another spoke of 'talking to God through prayer a lot during lockdown.'

One pupil said, 'Mum was sick and through prayer she was healed.'

Members of the Chaplaincy group have been praying for those caught up in the current conflict in Ukraine during their Tuesday after-school meetings each week.



Some of the children's prayers are displayed in the shared prayer space in the library workroom



Donations from St Mary's for those fleeing conflict in Ukraine

... just some of the gifts that came in each day



Thank you to everyone, and to Mrs O'Loughlin, who organised the collection – *seen here* at Waterwells collection centre in Quedgeley.

It took **5 articulated lorries** to transport everything to Poland - only one van had been planned.



Little Way Partnership Chaplaincy Retreat Day at St Peter's High School on 26.4.22

Together with many of our Partnership of schools' Chaplaincy groups, St Mary's Chaplaincy members – [at last](#) – were able to meet together; lockdown restrictions have meant that we have been unable to join together for over 2 years!



Thanking God for creation and caring for our common home

(which Pope Francis spoke of in his letter, 'Laudato Si') was the theme of our retreat day, and continues St Mary's ongoing focus on CAFOD 'Live Simply' work

A Y10 student from St Peter's had planned a nature trail around the grounds. Pupils had to spot items and reflect on how they might help wildlife to thrive. The trail ended with prayers about caring for nature in the Garden of Remembrance.



Everyone enjoyed the nature trail ...



Dandelions provide early food for bees

Birds or wasps might nest in this nesting box



Young saplings have been planted, such as crab apple, which will eventually form a hedgerow, where birds and other creatures will find food and shelter

A pond provides essential drinking water for many creatures, as well as a habitat for amphibians, such as toads, frogs and newts



The bug hotel provides a place of shelter for many minibeasts, as well as a warm place for lizards to bask

We had a time of fellowship and reflection ...

We did some wax resist art work of different animals ...



and played 'The Climate Change' game



A very late and welcome **lunch** followed some **sports** outside, concluding with a time of **quiet reflection**, when we **wrote and shared prayers** on the theme of creation. During this time, we considered how **we are the *most precious* part of God's creation**.

Lunch



Quiet reflection and prayer



Two members of EYFS helped to create our Easter garden for the prayer table in the library area this year.



The Clifton Diocesan Emmaus Project

- As part of St Mary's ongoing CAFOD 'Live Simply' award work, we are getting involved over the next few years with **the Clifton Diocese Emmaus (water pump and tree-planting) Project**, which is one of Bishop Declan's chosen charities and a number of Catholic schools are participating.
- **The aim of the Emmaus Project** is to: **bring clean water to villages and schools; *help farmers afford seeds to plant fruit trees* in the Masaka District in South-West Uganda.
- **Why is it so important?** ... *¼ people (about 8 million) in Uganda do not have access to clean water; many, who already live in poverty, have to use 22% of their wages to buy clean water from water vendors; many farmers can only grow enough food to eat (subsistence farming); funds to help buy and plant seedling fruit trees and access to clean water would enable farmers to grow more – enough to sell, too; since the COVID 19 pandemic, another 10% of people in Uganda have become very poor.*
- **Other stakeholders:** The Emmaus Partnership is working together with the Masaka and District Land Care Chapter (MADLACC) and with the International Tree Foundation (ITF)

We have a display in the library



The Chaplaincy group explored the **Sustainable Global Development Goals** and saw that the Emmaus Project included many of these goals.

We have highlighted them in green font

Pupils also came up with some ideas to kick-start our fund raising at St Mary's and decorated some posters

- No poverty
- Zero hunger
- Good health and well-being
- Quality education
- Gender equality (e.g. families affording to send girls to school)
- Clean water and sanitation
- Affordable and clean energy
- Decent work and economic growth
- Industry innovation and infrastructure
- Reduced inequalities (some girls can afford to go to school or make a living farming)
- Sustainable cities and communities (no longer growing just enough to survive, but there will be sufficient left over to sell)
- Responsible production and consumption
- Climate action
- Life below water
- Life on land
- Peace and justice; strong institutions (justice for farmers)
- Partnerships for the goals



Year 6 leavers' retreat at Prinknash Abbey

14.6.22 *Journey Theme*
(pupil comments in blue)

We began our morning with worship and prayer and then a circle time, where pupils shared their favourite memories of their time at St Mary's. A few children brought along some old photographs

It was then time for a break to have a drink and a cake outside.

'Eucharist Journey' Stations then formed part of our morning reflection and discussion.

'I really enjoyed our retreat, especially the Circle Time about sharing our precious memories...' (Lola C)

'I enjoyed Circle Time – sharing our memories and discussion when we were in groups.' (Evie R)



At the first Station **'Welcome'**, we reflected on our Baptism.

Pupils reflected on the significance of the sacramental signs of Baptism and also the scallop shell, the symbol of the pilgrim, with its many grooved lines leading from an outer rim to a central base, representing our many journeys to one end – heaven.

Image below shows pupils with lit electronic candles praying



'I liked the interactivity, when we went around the different stations.' (Emilia)

'The activities were good and I learnt a lot of new stuff.' (Oscar)

Discussion and reflection and writing prayers at stations 2 '**Forgiven**' and 3 '**Peace**'. *(pupil comments in blue)*

Mrs Fredrickson, the Y6 teacher (and Deputy Head teacher) led **station 2: Forgiven** focusing on the cross and the story of the Lampedusa Cross. The pupils can be seen writing prayers for refugees, which were then used during the afternoon Mass.



'I liked going around in the little groups and doing activities. It was fun.' (Layla)

'It was fun when we went round all the stations and discussed everything with the teachers.' (John James)

The Head Teacher, Mr Jordan, led **station 3 'Peace'**. Pupils explored the meaning of 'shalom' and things that help them to feel at peace. They also wrote prayers for those who were unwell.



Reflecting and discussion at Stations 4,5 and 6: Invited, United and Sent

At Station 4: **Invited**, pupils enacted the Last Supper and reflected on the Eucharist and our call to love and serve others. This is enshrined in our School's Mission Statement.

At Station 5: **United**, pupils investigated some chalices used during the Holy Communion and the meaning of inscriptions and images on them. They also considered how the wine, shared from one chalice, symbolizes our unity as one Body of Christ. Pupils reflected on precious times spent with their own families and wrote prayers of thanks on the back of golden chalices, which they also decorated with gems.

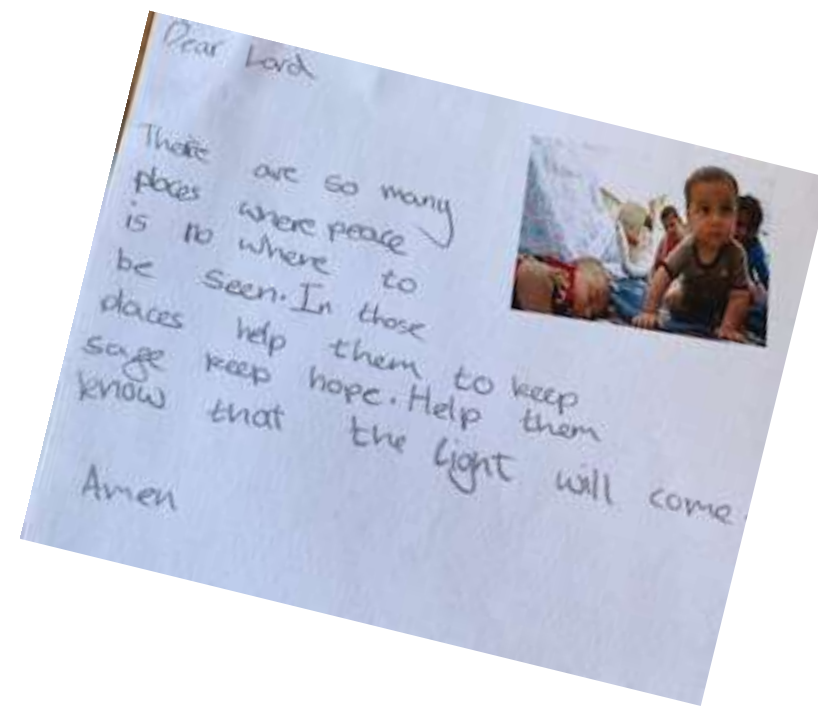
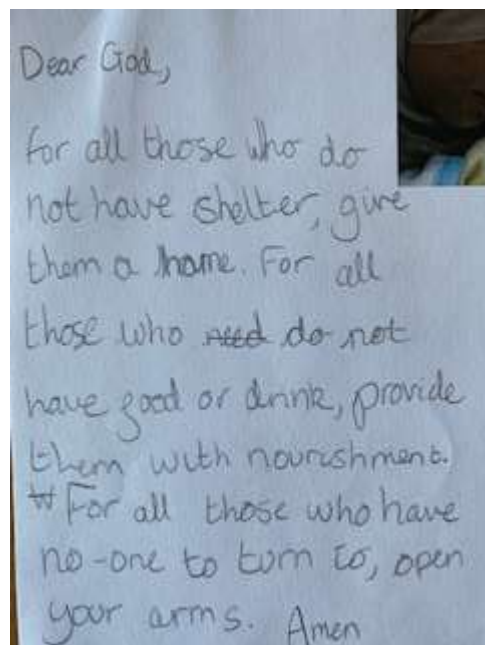
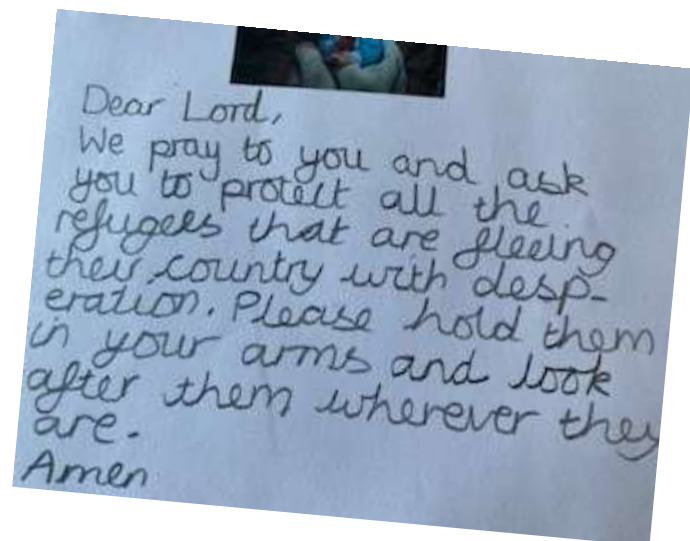
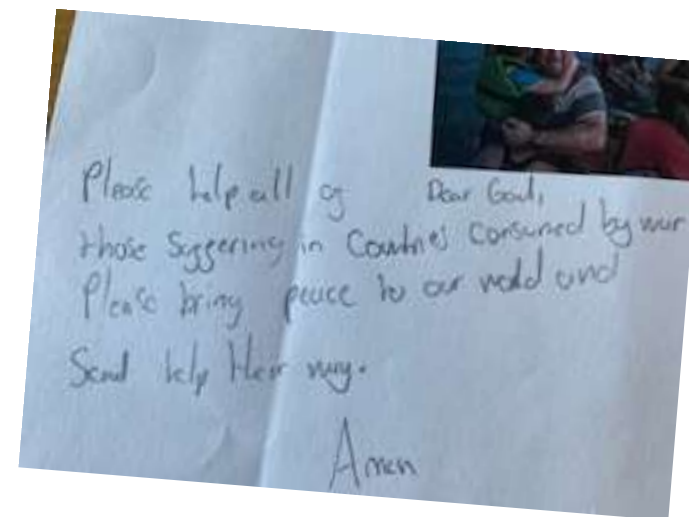
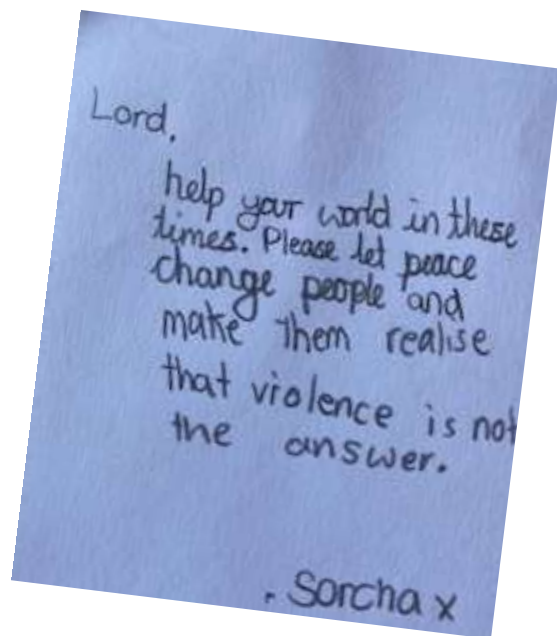
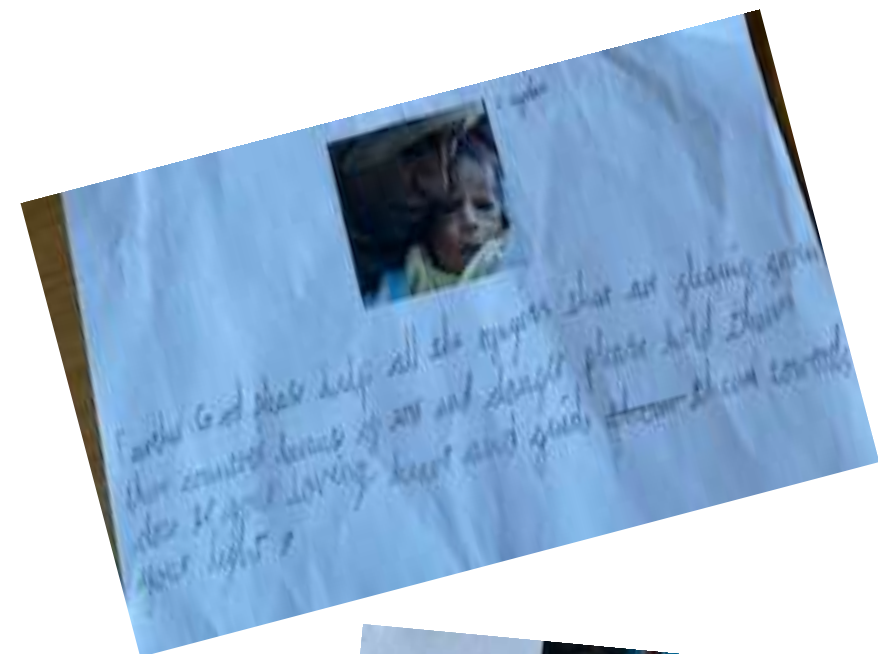
At Station 6: **Sent**, pupils reflected on the resurrection of Jesus and his call at the end of every Mass '*Itē isa est*' (meaning 'Go, you have been sent' (as ambassadors for Christ) to tell others of the Good News of Jesus' resurrection and to live every day as a light to others. This station was led by Mandy Baker (St Peter's High School Chaplain).

Pupils wrote about how they could 'aspire to be more', rather than 'have more' on CAFOD cards.

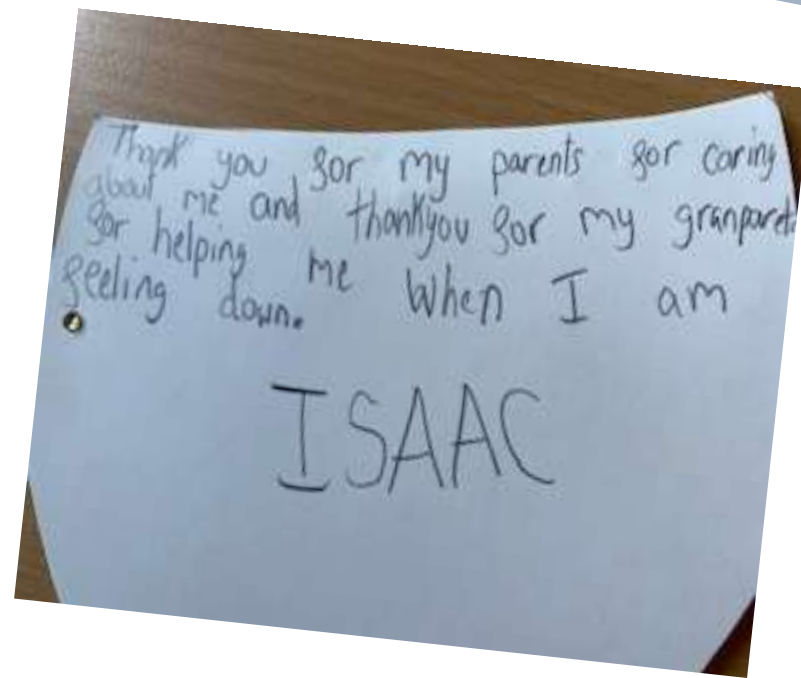
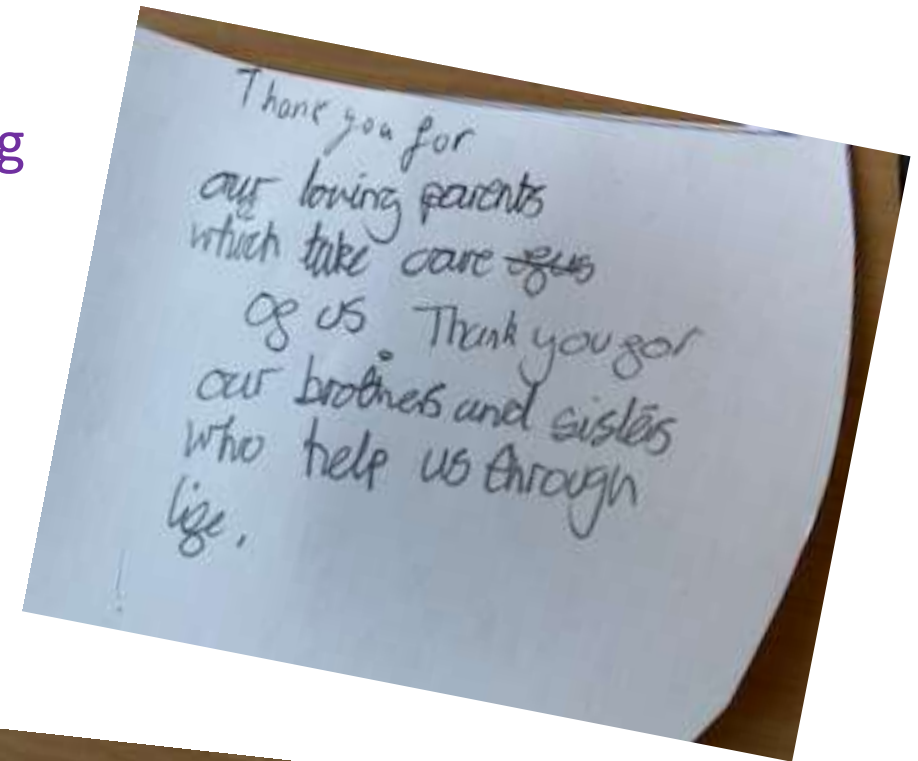
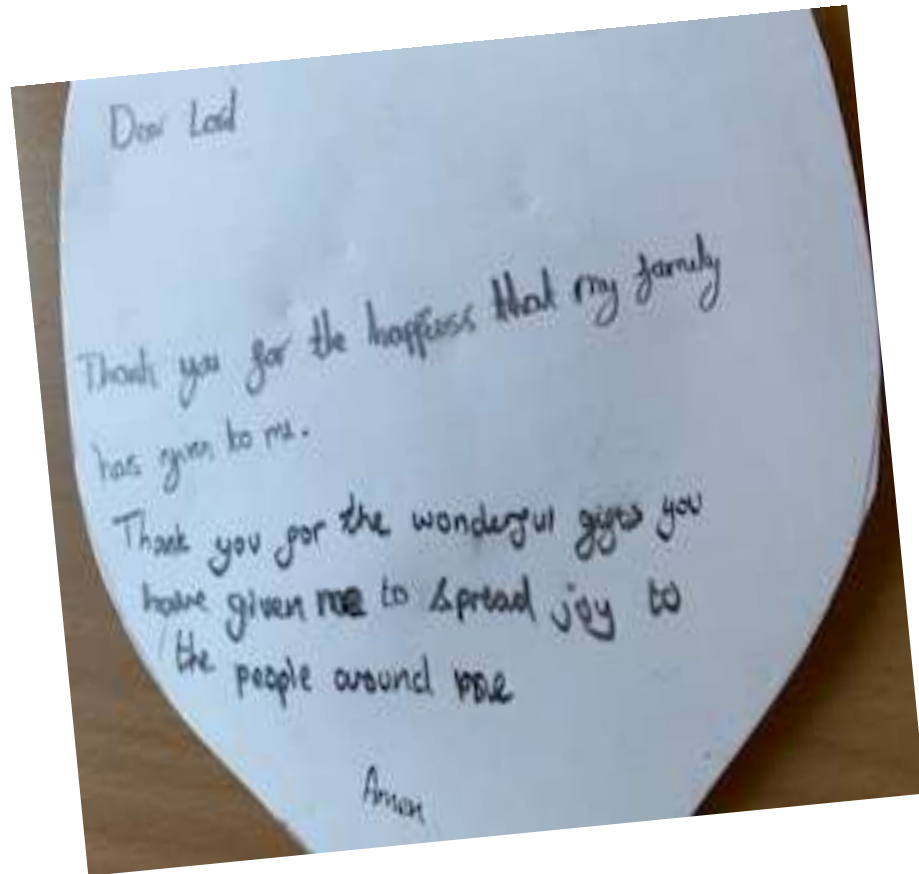
'I enjoyed meeting Mandy Baker, Emmaus walk and the stations ...'
(Ollie)



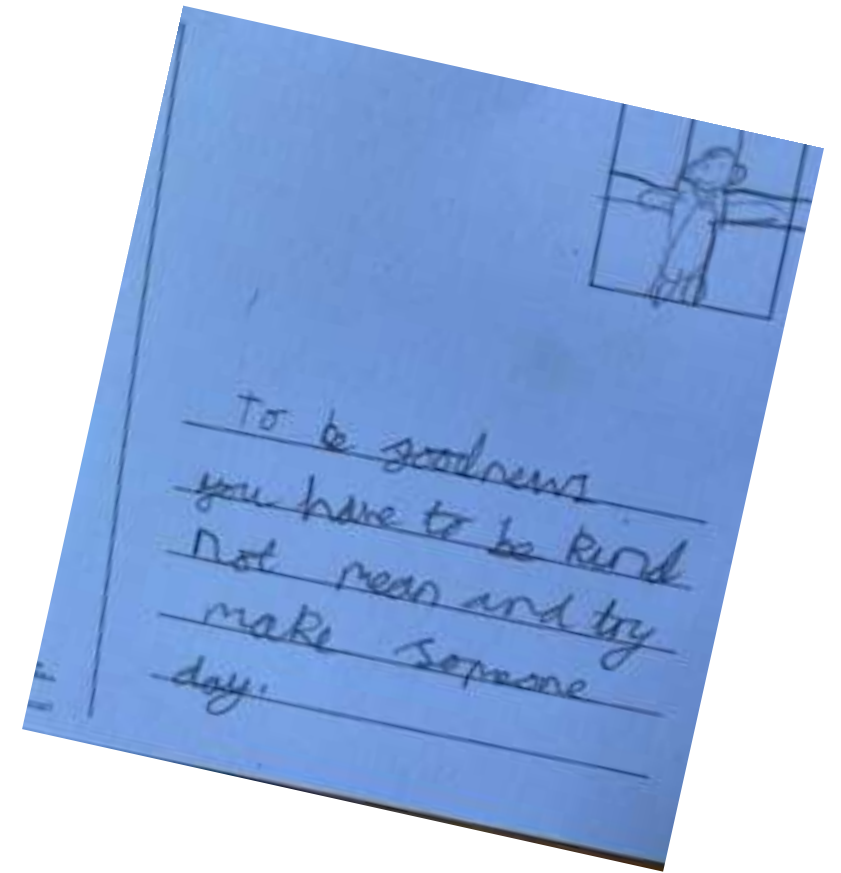
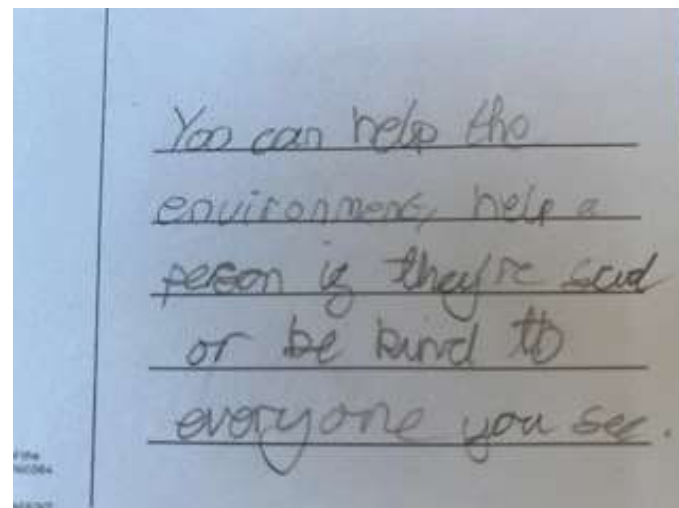
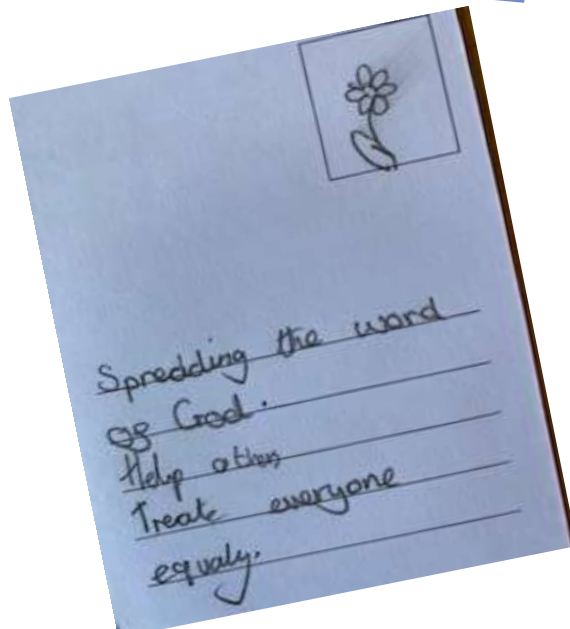
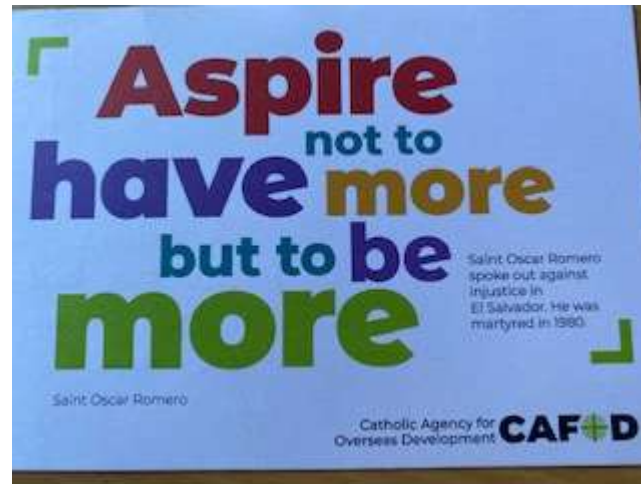
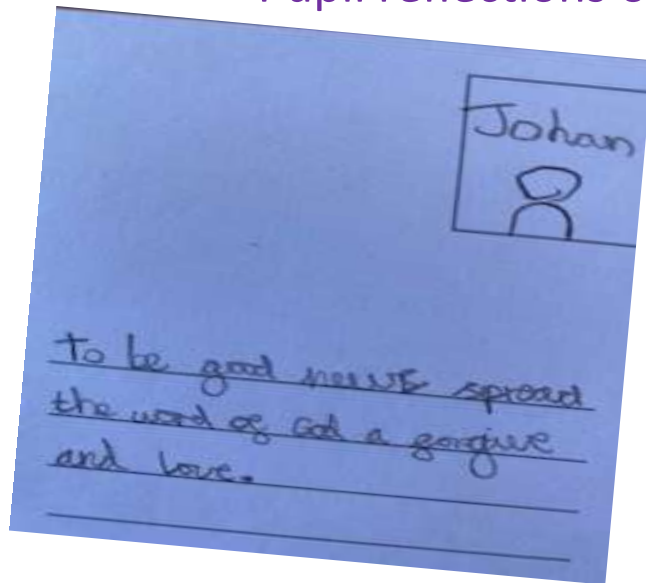
Pupils' prayers for refugees



Some of the pupil chalice prayers of thanksgiving



Pupil reflections on how to 'aspire to be more than to have more' (using CAFOD postcards)



Emmaus Walk to the Old Abbey at Prinknash *part of our afternoon retreat day*

Following a picnic lunch, Mandy Baker led an Emmaus Walk from the new abbey precincts to the old abbey. We were blessed with glorious weather as we sang and prayed along the way.



'I really enjoyed the Emmaus walk, because it was nice singing the songs and walking through Prinknash Abbey all the way to the chapel.' (Hannah)

'I loved the lovely walk to church and way back.' (Ryan Pe)

'I enjoyed meeting Mandy and I also enjoyed the walk up the hill while singing songs.' (Amelia)



Afternoon Mass at the old abbey chapel, Prinknash.

Images (left) show pupils leading prayers they had prepared during the morning reflection sessions.



Our retreat day culminated in a celebration of Mass.

We would like to thank Father Paul, our Parish priest (at Our Lady's, Churchdown) for preparing a homily about journey so beautifully – as always – and for coming to celebrate Mass with us.

We would also like to say a big 'thank you' to Father Stephen and the staff at Prinknash, for allowing us to use the beautiful chapel for the celebration of Mass and the conference room for our retreat day.

'On our retreat, we did many things but I really liked the Mass and of course the lovely cupcakes Miss Payne made.'

*'I love retreat, and the chapel, and the Emmaus walking'
(Alvina – EAL pupil)*



'I will remember the little Emmaus walk and the Mass.'



2022-3

Pupil-led liturgical prayer

Liturgical prayer follows structural patterns found in Church liturgy i.e. a service based on the structure of the Liturgy of the Word in the Mass

The Season of Creation

1st September – 4th October

Preparation of liturgical prayer and reflection:

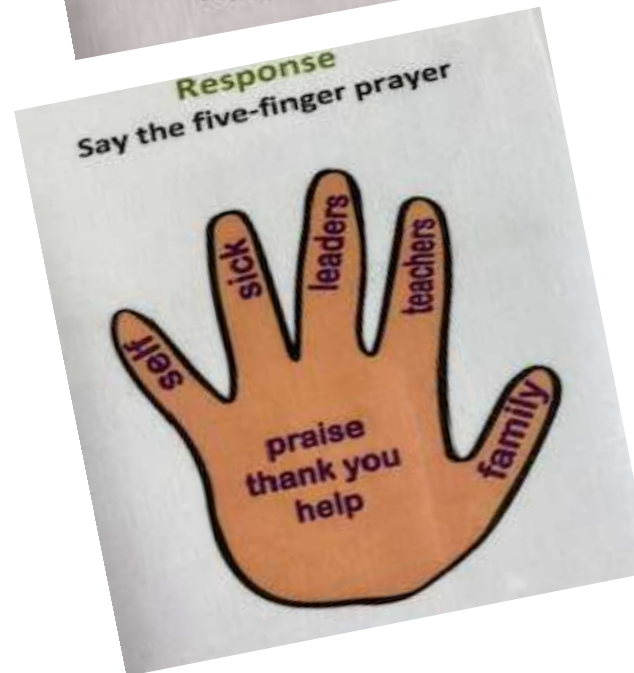
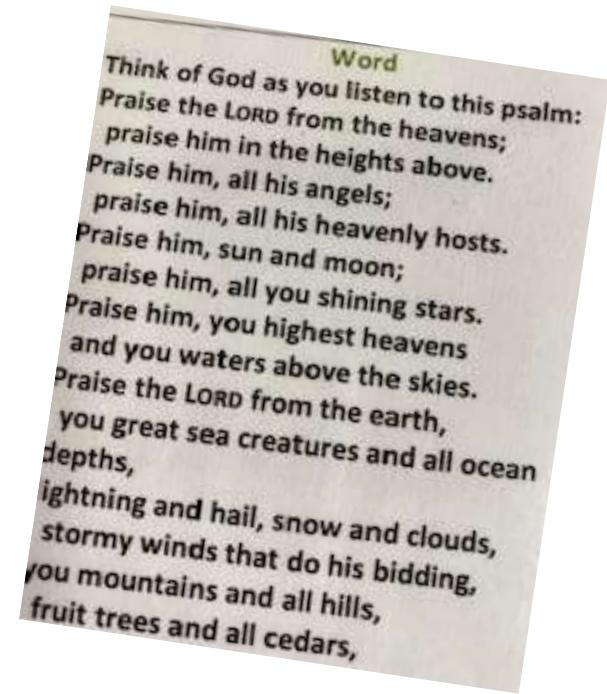
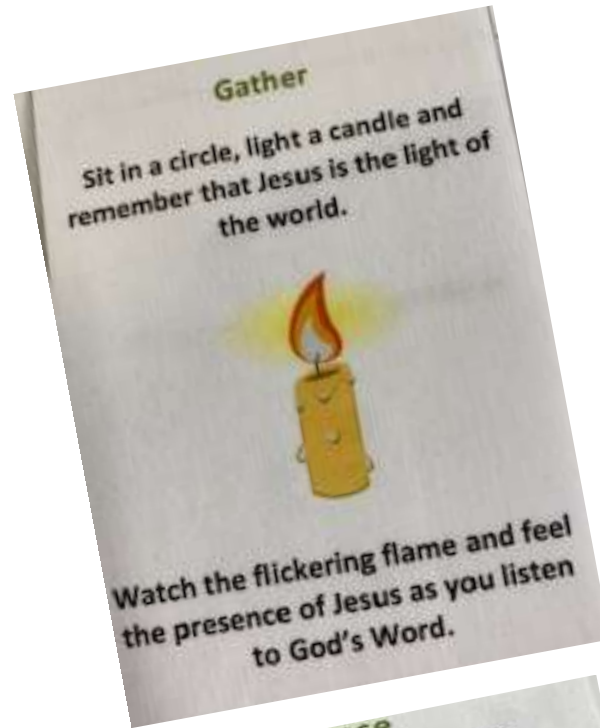
Three pupils from each class (Y1-Y6) are meeting with the RE Subject Leader on a rota basis every two weeks to prepare a short liturgy which reflects the current Church season e.g. Season of Creation, Advent, Lent etc.

Pupils select from a variety of cards for the 'Gather', 'Word', 'Response' and 'Mission' to build a liturgy.

Pupils then take the liturgy back to share with their class and a simple 'mission' is left on the class altar for all pupils.

Y3/4 pupils this week chose the 5-finger prayer, as they felt it was a special time to pray for leaders i.e. Queen Elizabeth and her family, following her death recently. (see pictures)

EYFS pupils will start preparation when they have settled in, later in the year.



Y6 leading liturgical prayer outside (October 2022)

Three Y6 pupils had prepared liturgical prayer
on the these 'Season of Creation' for their
class.

They chose to meet outside, where pupils
could look around at creation.

: '



Y5 altar, showing **leaves with
pupil reflections**, following
pupil-led liturgical prayer **on
the Season of Creation**



Celebrating the Season of creation

On 21st September 2022, as part of ongoing 'Live Simply' focus, Esther Rumsey (a high school student from our Little Way Partnership school, St Peter's High) and Molly (from 'Action for Conservation' charity) came to lead an outdoor environmental session for Chaplaincy members.

Esther spoke about her love of nature and explored the meaning of the word 'conservation' with pupils by discussing the relationship between people and nature and how we must conserve/look after it in order for it to survive.



We were blessed with fine weather and a calm and peaceful time in the Forest School area....

The pupils **made crowns** by bending willow branches and gathered Autumnal items to decorate them.

Pupils then did some **journalling**: they chose items in the outside area they thought were interesting to write or draw about in notebooks provided.





Chaplaincy Commissioning 4th November 2022 at St Peter's Junior School, Gloucester

21 Chaplaincy pupils from St Mary's joined other schools from the Little Way Partnership cluster of schools from the North of the Clifton Diocese.

Mgr Liam Slattery, the Vicar General, led the Mass of Commissioning on behalf of Bishop Declan.

In his homily, he talked about the **role of a Chaplaincy team: to be a special example of what it means to be a child of God; to teach others to know God, to love God and how to love one another.**

Mgr Liam also talked about our patron, St Therese of Lisieux, who did little things to show God's love, and how to live as a child of God.

He spoke of the importance **of listening in love, speaking in love and acting in love to show others around us something of the face of Christ.**



During the
Commissioning service,
everyone made special
promises during an act
of dedication

We promised

To be a people of prayer, to
listen closely to God's Word and
try to do what God wants;

To try to help others, to be a
friend to those who feel alone,
to work for justice and to be
peacemakers;

To live in the way God wants, to
forgive others, to put others
first, to care for our world and to
show by our actions that we love
God.



Pupils receiving
their chaplaincy
badges after the
act of dedication



Fund-raising event for the Emmaus Project

December 2022

planned by Chaplaincy members

Tescos Community champion, Emma, from Churchdown store, came to help distribute 240 doughnuts the store had kindly donated at breaktime.

Pupils were able to bring a board game to share for the last hour of the afternoon, during Golden Time.

With the very kind help of Tescos and support of parents, **£140 was raised through voluntary donations.**



Carol singing at Tescos, Churchdown 6th December 2022

to collect for Teckels animal shelter,
Whitminster, Glos

planned and led by the Chaplaincy team

Chaplaincy pupils went carol singing at
local Churchdown Tesco store on 6th
December.

It was great to get in the festive spirit
again, as this event had been cancelled
over the last few years, due to the
Covid-19 pandemic.

Sadly, we couldn't go the following
Tuesday afternoon, due to snow and
ice.

In just the half hour we sang, we
collected £50 in donations from
customers and two large shopping bags
of pet supplies were also collected to
take along to Teckels.



Infant Nativity

December 2022

Pupils in EYFS and KS1 performed two wonderful shows for parents, impressing everyone with their singing, dancing and acting to **relay the message of Christmas.**

Many thanks are owed to the parents and staff who helped prepare the children so well and for all of their support to provide such wonderful costumes.



EXPERIENCE CHRISTMAS

Pupil-led reflection by Y6 for
younger pupils

On Dec 8th-9th, Y6 pupils led a series of reflective stations around the church for each class in turn.

The pupils led reflection and prayer beautifully through the Advent themes of:

* preparation; (preparing our hearts and homes);

- the Annunciation;
- Promises foretelling Jesus' Birth;
- the Journey to Bethlehem;
- the Message (to the shepherds) &
- the Gift (God's gift of Jesus to the world).

During pupil conferencing on 16th January, one Y3 pupil said of the 'Journey' station: 'It made me think about how hard it must have been for Mary and Joseph – for her to have a baby and then get married, and the long journey!'

A Y2 pupil recalled the Preparations station: wrapping red ribbon around pine cones and thinking and praying about how 'God's love wraps around us and the world.'



Junior carol service December 2022

Junior pupils led their annual Christmas carol service during an afternoon and early evening near the end of Term in Our Lady's church.

It was very much worth braving the icy conditions to come!



Heading into Lent 2023

Reflecting on

St Thérèse of Lisieux

St Mary's is partnered with a cluster of other Catholic schools in the north of the Clifton Diocese, called **'The Little Way' partnership**.

The name is taken from the **'Little Way of Love'** advocated by **St Thérèse**.

This year, the partnership has highlighted the importance of pupils exploring her life and message.

At St Mary's, *we have reflected on how her 'Little Way of Love' links to the values in our school's Mission Statement:* to **'Love, Learn, Serve'** and how we can live that out in our daily lives at home and at school.

The **Chaplaincy group** prepared an **assembly** on St Thérèse for the whole school for **during Lent**.



Chaplaincy-led assembly St Thérèse of Lisieux and her 'Little Way' of love

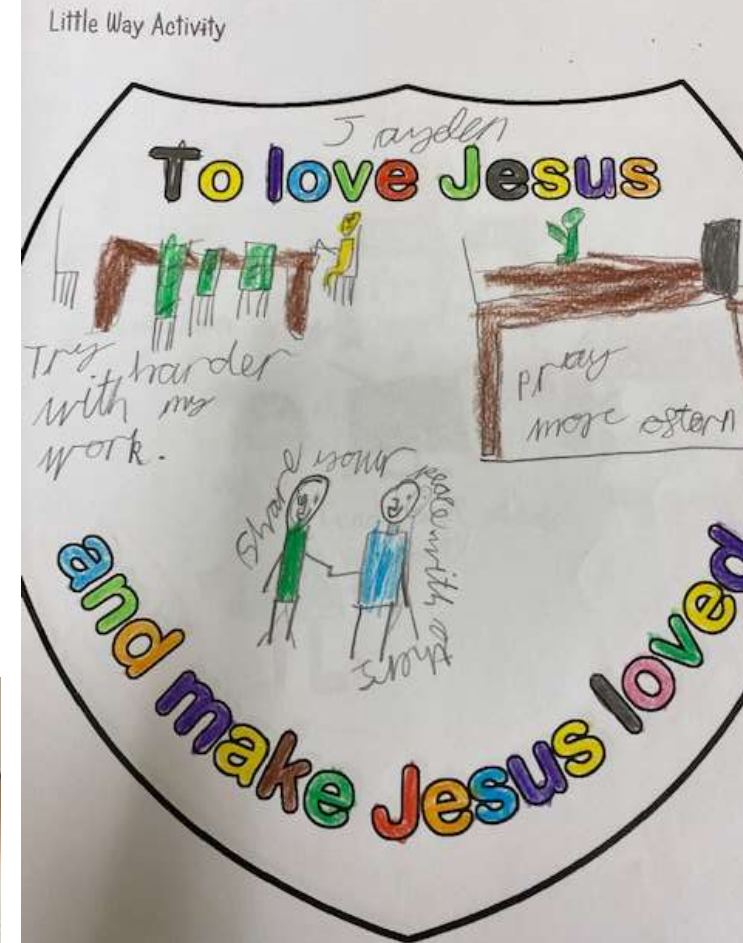
Pupils led a whole-school assembly
on 7th March 2023.

We reflected on how St Thérèse's
Little Way of Love is

reflected in our school's Mission
Statement (especially to 'love' and
'serve' others)

We also raised awareness to pupils and staff
of our affiliation to the Little Way
Partnership.

In Chaplaincy meetings, pupils had prepared
some of the ways they want to try and follow
St Thérèse's Little Way of love during Lent
(see illustrated examples)



Monitoring of pupil-led liturgical prayer

Liturgical prayer follows structural patterns found in Church liturgy i.e. a service based on the structure of the Liturgy of the Word in the Mass. It typically includes a gathering activity, reading of the Gospel, a reflection on it and a mission for the week ahead.

Following staff training, pupils from EYFS to Y6 now plan liturgical prayer with their class TA on a rota basis each fortnight, which is prepared for a class reflection session led by the pupils. Little ones in EYFS and Y1 do this with adult support.

On 26.4.23, the RE subject leader and RE Governor visited classes to monitor pupils planning or leading liturgical prayer. Pupil conferencing of a sample of pupils from each class was very positive.

(Images opposite show Y1)



Here are some pupil responses to pupil-led liturgical prayer: Jesus on the road to Emmaus (Easter unit)

Images opposite show **Y1** considered responses written on butterflies, displayed on the class prayer table.

Pupil voice reveals their understanding of the Easter story, the ability to reflect on Scripture and what it means to them in their life.

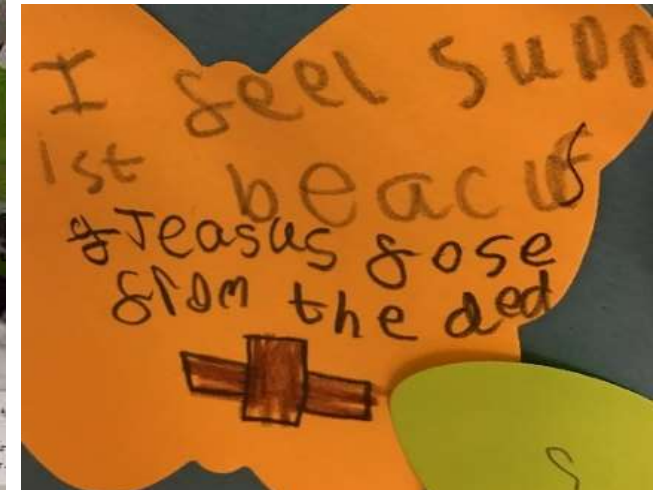
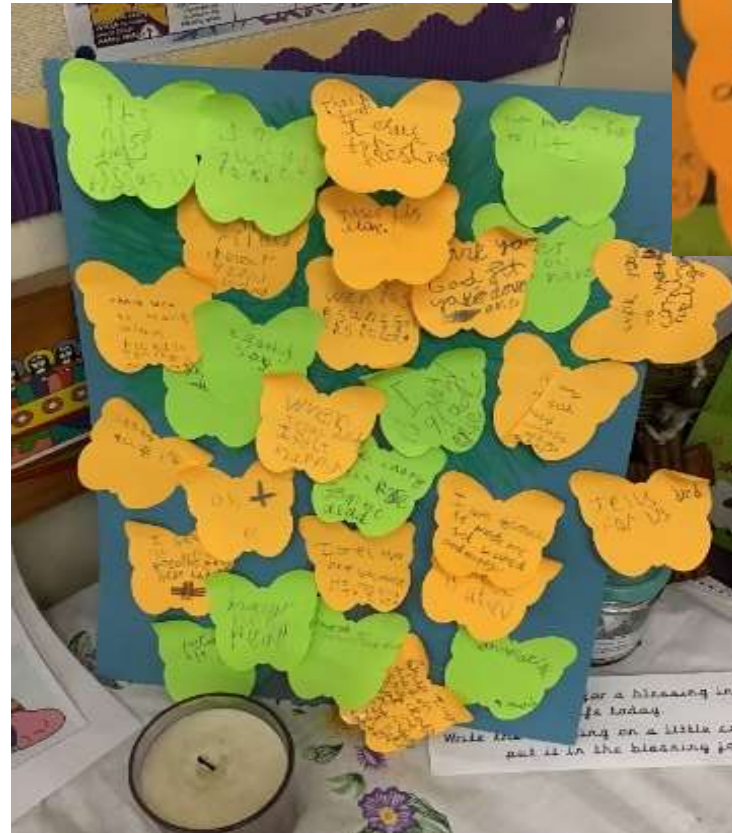
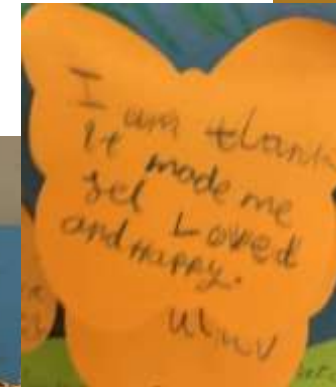
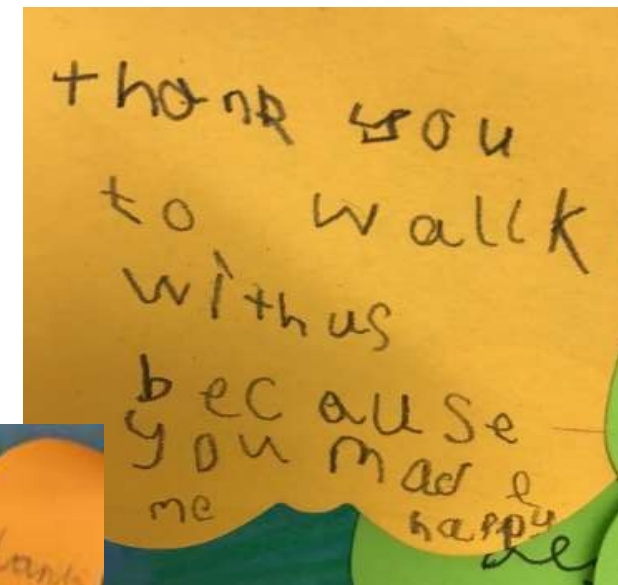
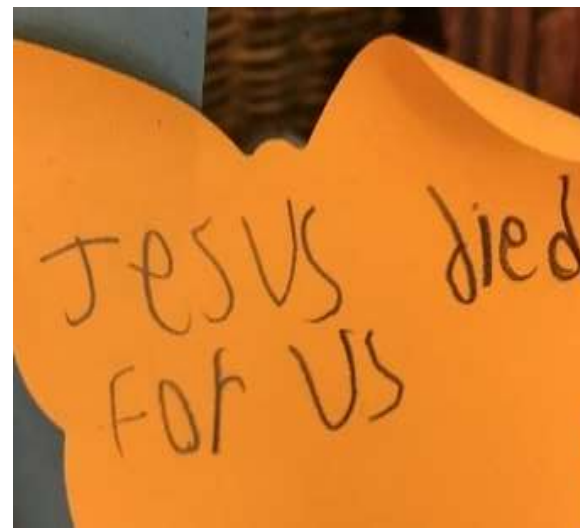
'Thank you to walk with us because you made me happy';

'Jesus died for us';

'It is nice that Jesus is risen';

'I feel super because Jesus rose from the dead;'

'I am thankful - it made me feel loved and happy.'



Ascension Day Mass

Thursday 18th May

KS2 classes attended Mass at Our Lady's Church with parents and other parishioners.

Father Paul Brandon led the celebration.

Image shows view of part of the sanctuary



Year 6 leavers' retreat at Prinknash Abbey

23.5.23 *Eucharist Journey Theme*

We began our morning with worship and prayer and then a circle time, where pupils shared their favourite memories of their time at St Mary's. It was then time to take a break and a cupcake outside.

'Eucharist Journey' Stations then formed part of our morning reflection and discussion.

Our special thanks go to Mandy Baker, Chaplain of St Peter's High School, who supported the day and to Louise White (Diocesan RE Director) who we welcomed to join us for the morning.

A huge thank you to Prinknash Abbey for allowing us to use the meeting room and the beautiful chapel and outside area once again and to father Paul Brandon, from our Lady's, Churchdown, for coming to celebrate Mass.



Pupil comments after the
retreat day: sharing and making
memories together (morning session 1)
& picnic lunch (after Eucharist Journey)

*'I really liked and will remember circle time
when we shared our memories'*

*'I liked it when we got cupcakes and the circle
time (sharing memories) ... it was extremely
fun and peaceful.'*

*'I enjoyed everyone sharing their times at St
Mary's'*

'We had fun sharing memories'

*'I also liked it at break, because we had a
cupcake each. They were yummy!'*

*'We sat in groups outside and eating lunch
on the grass'*



At the first Station
'Welcome', we reflected
on our Baptism.

Pupils reflected on the significance
of the sacramental signs of Baptism
and also the scallop shell, the
symbol of the pilgrim, with its many
grooved lines leading from an outer
rim to a central base, representing
our many journeys to one end:
Heaven.



At Station 2: 'Forgiven', focused on the cross and the story of the Lampedusa cross

The Lampedusa cross was made from the wreckage of a boat carrying refugees across the Mediterranean Sea, and which was wrecked off the coast of Lampedusa, Italy on 11th October 2013 311 Eritrean and Somali refugees were drowned on route from Libya to Europe.

Inhabitants of Lampedusa helped to save the lives of 155 others.

After meeting some of the survivors (Eritrean Christians) in the church on Lampedusa, Francesco Tuccio, the island's carpenter, was moved by their plight but felt frustrated that he could not make a difference to their situation.

The best he could do was to use his skills as a carpenter to fashion each of them a cross from the wreckage of the boat as a reflection on their salvation from the sea and hope for the future.

The cross is therefore a symbol of hope that Jesus' death brings forgiveness and a new life, which starts now, in this life and continues into the next.



Responding to reflection: 'Forgiven' station 2

Images show pupils writing prayers (or poems) for refugees, partly in preparation for the afternoon Mass.



Station 3: 'Peace'.

Pupils explored the meaning of 'shalom' and things that help them to feel at peace.

Shalom means more than 'peace' as in peace and quiet, or not quarrelling; it is a peace that can be known deep in our spirit.

"Shalom" is taken from the root word 'shalam', which actually isn't the word for 'peace', but 'wholeness' – it means, "to be safe in mind, body, and spirit;

i.e. it means completeness, fullness, healing, being strengthened - this is what we wish for people when we offer the 'peace' in Mass; it is the peace that Jesus gives.



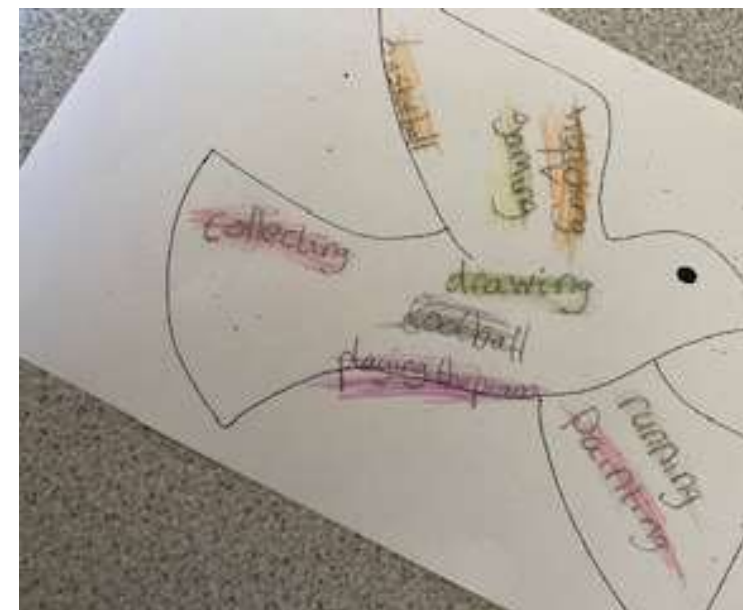
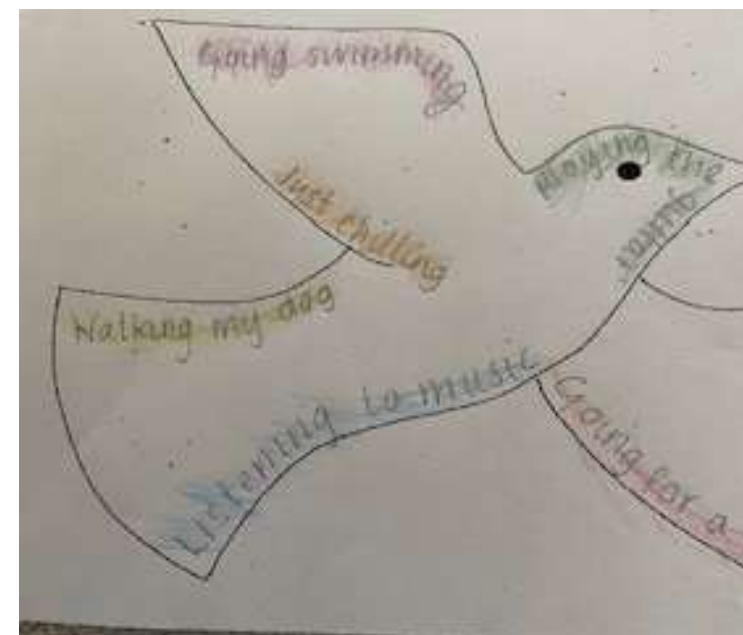
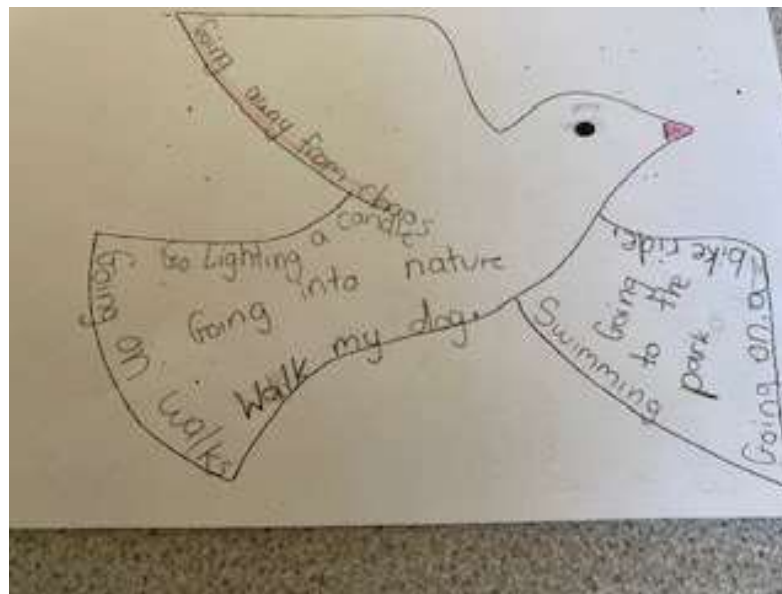
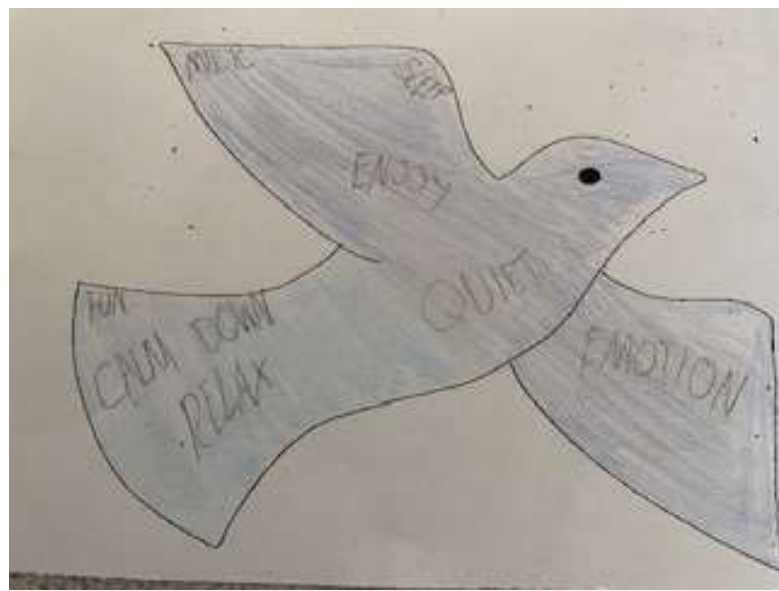
Many pupils commented on how much they enjoyed the **Peace station**

'...the best part was the peace station and when we got to plan with our friends..'

'My favourite part was the Peace station ... it showed us how to make time for ourselves and calming down – having peace ...'

'you could draw things that are relaxing and peaceful things...'

'I really liked the peace station, because you get to colour and it was also quite relaxing..'



Station 4: Invited

Pupils enacted the Last Supper and reflected on the Eucharist and our call to love and serve others.

This is enshrined in our School's Mission Statement.



Station 5: United

Pupils investigated some chalices used during the Holy Communion and the meaning of inscriptions and images on them.

They also considered how the wine, shared from one chalice, symbolizes our unity as one Body of Christ and pupils discussed special times they spend together as a family.

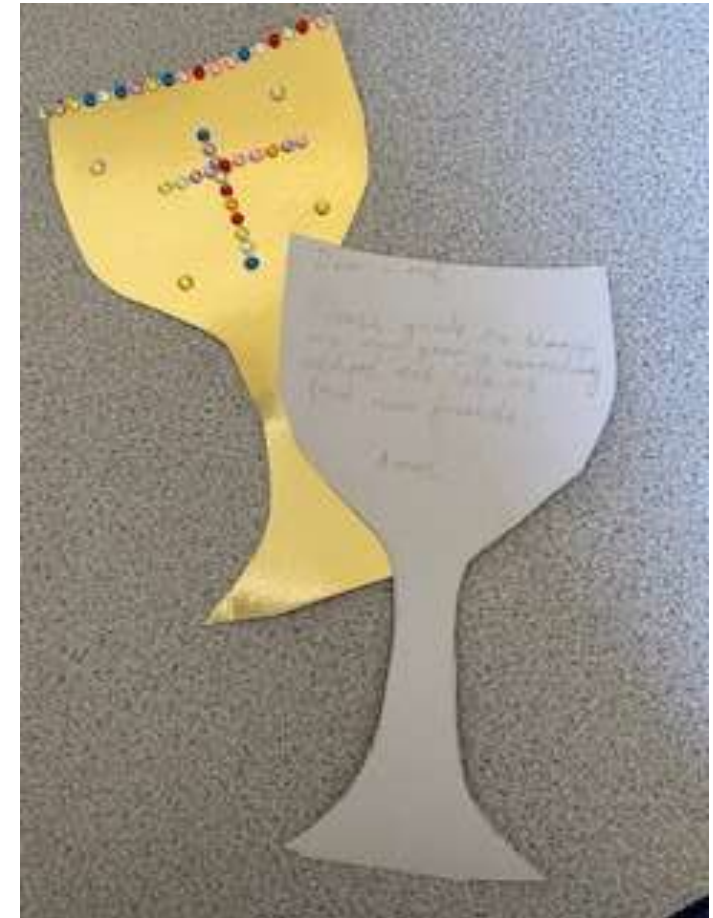


Station 5: United

Pupils reflected on precious times spent with their own families

They wrote prayers or reflections of what they were thankful for and for the next stage of their journey at high school

on the back of golden chalices, which they also decorated with gems.



Station 6: Sent

Pupils reflected on the resurrection of Jesus and the call at the end of every Mass *to be ambassadors for Christ, to tell others of the Good News of Jesus' resurrection and to live every day as a light to others.*

Pupils reflected and wrote about how they could '*aspire to be more*', *rather than 'have more'* on CAFOD cards.



Emmaus Walk to the abbey chapel

After lunch, Mandy Baker (St Peter's High School Chaplain) led us on an Emmaus walk up the hill to the old abbey chapel, stopping at intervals to reflect on the Journey to Emmaus.

'We walked to the chapel singing, which was very enjoyable.'

'Also, I enjoyed the pilgrimage as we all got to join in.'



In the old abbey chapel: afternoon Mass

Father Paul Brandon celebrated Mass on the theme of Journey, reflecting on our own journey and how God walks with us.

'I enjoyed being there, because I felt I was closer to God and I will always remember the St Mary's memories.'

'I enjoyed the retreat day because all of the stations were fun and it helped me get closer to God.'

