

Advent at Oratory Primary

What is advent and how do we prepare at our school?

As a Catholic school, we will be using this opportunity to encourage the pupils to remain focused on this period of the Liturgical Year and not to jump ahead to Christmas. Advent is about preparation and waiting and it is important we do not skip past this important time in the Church's calendar.

We will be preparing in several ways:

- ★ Using purple cloths on our prayer tables in each class. Purple is the colour of Advent.
- ★ Lighting our Advent Wreath and learning about its meaning.
- ★ Making Advent Calendars and Advent Promises to encourage us to prepare our hearts and minds for Jesus.
- ★ Setting up the Christmas crib using Mary and Joseph at first, so that we are reminded of the sequence of the Christmas story.
- ★ In the younger classes, taking turns to take the Posada bag home. Posada is an old Mexican tradition where young people dressed as Mary and Joseph travelled from house to house asking for a room for the night and telling people about the imminent arrival of Jesus in the weeks leading up to Christmas. Modern day Posada uses nativity figures of Mary and Joseph who travel from place to place. This gives each 'host' the chance to create their own celebration in their home worshipping with the real message of Christmas, making room for Jesus in their lives.



Christmas at Oratory Primary

How do we celebrate Christmas at our school?

Although Advent ends on Christmas Eve, we also want the children to be able to celebrate the wonder of the Christmas season together, and so in the last week and a half of term we will:

- ★ Create and share gifts and cards (including setting up our Christmas Post box).
- ★ Add joyous decorations to the Christmas Tree made by Loosh Club.
- ★ Add all the figures to the crib.
- ★ Celebrate together through our Carol Service and Christmas Lunch.

In January we will return to school in time to celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany together. The children will be making crowns to add to the tree.

What are the particular arrangements for special events at this time of year?

Infant Nativity Plays

Our infant nativity plays are on the 14th and 15th December at 2pm in the school hall. Due to limited space, the show is repeated on each day so please only attend ONE performance. When you arrive in the hall, you will see that some chairs are reserved for staff. Please keep these chairs free. After the performance, the Parents' Association will kindly provide refreshments while you wait for your child to get changed into uniform again. We would really appreciate it if some junior parents could volunteer for this so that infant parents can concentrate on the performance, please contact your class rep if you can help. When the children are ready you will be asked to collect your child from the classroom, and you may also take any siblings from the juniors.

Junior Carol Service

On Monday 18th December our Junior Carol Service will take place at the Oratory Church. The service will start at 7pm, however, all children must arrive at 6.40pm. The pupils must be clean and tidy in appearance, wearing white shirts and blazers. At the end of the service, the children will process down the aisle, and wait with their teacher outside where you can collect them. Please let the teacher know that you are taking your child. This is a religious service, and **NO PHOTOGRAPHY IS ALLOWED**. Please ask your friends and relatives too, as unfortunately every year there are a handful of people who sadly do not respect this request and need to be reminded during the service. We would be grateful if some parents could volunteer to carry the heavy benches back to their original positions at the end of the service, please let your rep know if you can help.

Children's Day

Tuesday 19th December is Children's Day. Pupils attend school wearing their own clothes (a Christmas jumper would be fun!) and enjoy lunch that the Parents' Association will very kindly provide. The infants will have an entertainer in the morning and the juniors have a disco in the afternoon. The children always have a wonderful day, as do the parents who very kindly organise the catering and decoration of the hall! If you are helping on the day, we ask that you do not bring extra food, as we need to monitor ingredients for children with allergies. Also, photographs should not be posted on social media. We ask for a donation of £2 per child to cover the cost of the entertainment. Please give this to the class teacher on the day.

