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Deputy Headteacher: Miss J. Paul

Date: Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021

[www.visitation.ealing.sch.uk](http://www.visitation.ealing.sch.uk)

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### Racial Justice Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021

At the beginning of his public ministry Jesus outlines his Mission in the synagogue in Nazareth:

***'He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favour'***

*(words found in one of my favorite childhood hymns)*

His ministry was one of compassionate involvement, concern for the disadvantaged. Aware of obstacles, including those of the Law, which limited joy and fulfilment Jesus acted. He confronted, sometimes angrily, what undermined a person's dignity.

The theme of Racial Justice Sunday 2021 is **A Time to Act**.

Racial issues and inequalities were identified nationally and internationally in 2020 generating awareness, emotion and outrage. In light of this Racial Justice Sunday 2021 is particularly significant.

May we join together as a community to ensure that everyone is treated equally and with dignity. May we bring our children up to be free from prejudice of any kind and to treat everyone, as Jesus did, with compassion and love.

### Let us Pray

Lord Jesus Christ, in your ministry you were approached by people of many different nations and cultures.

You listened to their cry for help, treated them with love and compassion, and brought them healing and wholeness.

In our own time may we provide, to all those who are suffering, the help that they need and the care that they require.

May we respond to the invitation of the Holy Spirit to dream of a world made new where the poor are not forgotten but are given the opportunity to live and flourish with good health and equal prospects.

We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.

*Amen.*

**THIS WEEK:** What fun we had in the snow last weekend. It felt like a blessing from God, a little respite from the difficulties we currently face.

God sends us these little gifts to remind us he is still there and is watching over us. We need to grasp more opportunities to feel God's presence in our lives. I was fortunate to be invited to evening prayer last night by a fellow headteacher. We shared prayers, a reading from the Bible and watched a hymn easily downloadable from youtube. It was a beautiful way to end the day. I slept all the better for it.

Maybe you could try this as a family. Gather together. Be still. Be silent. Maybe light a candle. Pray for those in need. Thank God for something good. Read a passage from the Bible, maybe your child's favourite Bible story. Listen to a hymn. Give it a go. It may just help to bring a little peace to your otherwise busy days.

**SNOW DAY:** Thank you to everyone who sent in pictures of them having fun in the snow. We have put them on the website in Parent Information/ School Closure/ Working at home.

**STAYING SAFE ONLINE:** With the increased use of online devices it is more important than ever that children are safeguarded against harmful materials that readily pop up when you put in a search or risk from meeting unknown people when playing online games.

Please see below the link to the 'Think you Know' website which gives advice on how to stay safe when using a phone, tablet or computer.

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

This website includes tips on how to set parental controls on devices, how to talk to your child about keeping safe online and what to do if they see harmful material and also activities you can do together around keeping safe. There are also a range of child friendly activities for all age groups.

Safer Internet Day is on **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February**. More information will be shared next week.

**CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK:**

We understand the impact that the extended lockdown is having on children's mental health and well-being. That is why it is so important to take regular breaks from the learning, go out for walks and do fun activities.

Children's mental health week takes place next week from 1<sup>st</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> February 2021. This year's theme is **Express Yourself**. The week will be an opportunity to shine a spotlight on children and young people's mental health through a range of fun and creative activities. Here at Our Lady of the Visitation, we know how important it is to support our children's mental well-being, now more than ever and by getting involved, we hope to raise awareness and ensure our children get the emotional support they need.

**Expressing yourself** is about finding ways to share feelings, thoughts, or ideas, through creativity. This could be through art, music, writing and poetry, dance and drama, photography and film - doing activities that make you feel good! Within our PSHE lesson next week, we will be introducing this theme and taking part in exciting activities that truly allow our children to express themselves.

If you would like more information on Children's Mental Health week or further fun resources and activities to support your child's mental well-being at home, visit:

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/parents-and-carers/>

**Miss Wright (4W) and Miss Parillon (6P) Lead teachers for PSHE in the school**

**KEEPING SAFE:** Although it does not always feel like it, especially if you venture up to Greenford Broadway, we are still in a lockdown situation.

The current situation with schools being closed is, we are told, to safeguard the whole community. We need to avoid crowds of people standing outside the school as this is how the virus spreads, and we need to limit the number of children in school to prevent the spread within the school. We have had more cases within the school community since January than we had between March and December last year. We need to continue to be vigilant and do everything we are asked during this current lockdown.

Therefore it is imperative that we follow government guidance and open the school to critical workers and vulnerable pupils only. We have had to change our criteria so that now both parents must be key workers.

It was disappointing to hear the Prime Minister announce, on the news, that schools will not fully open before 8<sup>th</sup> March. We understand how much pressure you are under and the difficulties you face having children at home.

**REQUESTS FOR PLACES:** We have had many requests from parents asking for places for their children because they risk losing their jobs. You have employment rights and jobs cannot be terminated because of government directives to keep children at home. **Please see [workingfamilies.org.uk](https://www.workingfamilies.org.uk) for further guidance and support with talking to your employer.**

Unfortunately we have reached our limits in most classes and only have a few emergency places left for critical worker families. We will continue to review each request individually but will only be able to accept requests that meet the government criteria.

**IN SCHOOL PROVISION:** A reminder that if your child is in school that you **MUST** notify the school office by 8.30am if your child will not be able to attend school that day.

The children **MUST** be in school by 8.50am. If your child is late you may risk not getting into school as the office is not always manned.

**DATES**

**HALF TERM:** Monday 15<sup>th</sup> to Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February

**PLEASE NOTE** – the school will be closed for half term. There will be no remote learning set for this period.

**May God keep you safe from harm today and always!**

*Miss K. Coll / Headteacher*