



Reflection

Our virtue for the next few weeks is thankfulness.



- To be able to offer thanks, to be able to praise the Lord for what He has done for us: this is important!
We can ask ourselves: Are we capable of saying "Thank you"?
How many times do we say "Thank you" in our family, our community, and in the Church?
How many times do we say "Thank you" to those who help us, to those close to us, to those who accompany us through life?
Often we take everything for granted! This also happens with God. It is easy to approach the Lord to ask for something, but to return and give thanks... This is why Jesus so emphasizes the failure of the nine ungrateful lepers: "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was no one found to return and give praise to give praise to God except this foreigner?"

Prayer

God our Father, help each one of us to be thankful for the gift of your creation. Help us to be thankful for our own gifts, our loved ones and those we encounter in our work and on life's journey. Through our Lord, Jesus Christ Your Son who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen

Macmillan Coffee afternoon

Thank you to all who were able to donate, buy buns or attend our Macmillan coffee afternoon. We raised a super £221.90.

Thank you also to our super Mini Vinnies for their excellent salesmanship.



Harvest Festival

Thank you all those who came to our harvest festival today led by our brilliant Mini Vinnies and to all who were able to donate tins for the SVP food bank. Your generosity is appreciated and will help many people.

NEWSLETTER – 6 October 2023

Rosary Day



The children took part in our Rosary day in advance of the feast day of Our Lady of the Rosary on Saturday. We will be celebrating the Rosary throughout the month of October and all the children received a set of Rosary Beads. It was lovely to see so many of our family members join us for a special collective worship.

Curriculum year group meetings

Thank you to all who have attended or watched the curriculum meetings for Year 1, Year 2 and Year 5. If you wish to catch up on parent meetings, these they can be seen on the school website. The Year 5 one will be added asap.

Sacramental preparation – from Father Michael

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I just wanted to update you all about the plans for sacramental preparation this academic year (2023-24). Given the large numbers we are dealing with in the Parish of Our Lady of Kirkstall and after discussion with the team of catechists we are going to return to the model that will be familiar to most of you, although the sacramental preparation for confirmation will be a bit different this year. We can't yet provide you with exact dates and how to enrol etc but we hope to do so in the next few weeks. In summary this means:

1. **For current year 3 children** (and older) who have not made their 1st reconciliation or confession, the sacramental preparation will begin around the beginning of Lent 2024 (possibly slightly before) with the dates to be confirmed soon.
2. **For current year 4 children** (and older) who are preparing for 1st Holy Communion (and who have made their 1st reconciliation already), the sacramental preparation will begin after Easter (dates to be confirmed soon) with the celebrations for 1st Holy Communion taking place on a weekend in June (exact date tbc) as per last year
3. **For current year 5 children** who would like to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation the plan is to enrol/begin sessions towards the end of this current academic year aiming for the celebration of the sacrament in the first term of year 6 (i.e. around November 2024).
4. **For current year 6 children** who would like to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, the sacramental preparation will be done **during the already timetabled monthly sessions, starting on 19th November (NB. the October 15th session is now cancelled)** with the last session taking place in April and the celebration of Confirmation shortly after in April/May 2024.

The main thing therefore to note right now is that unless your child is in year 6 and wants to prepare for the sacrament of confirmation you no longer need to attend the monthly catechesis sessions. Thank you all for your patience and understanding!

God bless

Fr Michael
Parish Priest



NEWSLETTER – 6 October 2023

Ready Steady Read

To celebrate and encourage a lifelong love of reading at home and school, we are running a week-long sponsored reading challenge between **Monday 2nd October and Sunday 8th October**.

The project is being organised in conjunction with Usborne and all the money raised will go towards brand new books for our school. In addition to the sponsorship money, Usborne will also donate up to 60% of the total raised in extra free books to the school. This means that for every £600 raised we will get an extra £360 in free Usborne books!

Please help us to enhance our reading resources for pupils by encouraging your child to spend a small amount of time each day either reading to themselves, to others, or being read to. They can read books, comics, magazines, newspapers, menus, websites, recipes, poems, leaflets, instructions – anything with words! Listening to audiobooks or to stories read by an adult also counts towards their total minutes read.

Children can return their reading log, sponsorship form and sponsorship money to their class teacher as soon as they have completed the Ready Steady Read challenge. Please ensure we have received these by **Monday 16th October**.

We will award all those who participate with a special certificate, and those in each class who have read for the greatest amount of minutes, or who have raised the most amount of sponsorship money throughout the seven day challenge, will be announced and celebrated in our celebration assembly. Those who take on our sponsored reading challenge will also be given the opportunity to select the books which will be purchased for their own classroom.

We look forward to having lots more books for your child to read, share and enjoy!

Reception phonics meeting

On Thursday 12th October Reception parents are invited to join Miss Roberts for the Reception parent's phonics meeting at 3.30pm in the Reception classroom.

Parent's Evening

Parent's Evening will be held on Tuesday 24 October 4 - 6.30pm and Thursday 26 October 4 – 6.30pm in the school hall. Booking will open on Monday 9th October 2023 from 7.30am via the link below.

<https://stmaryshorsforth.schoolcloud.co.uk/>

A guide on how to use the booking system is also attached to the newsletter.

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many games which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

AMONG US

A multiplayer 'social deduction' game set in outer space, Among Us enjoyed a surge in popularity in 2020, and has since maintained a dedicated fan-base (globally, around 60 million regular players each month) thanks to its unique nature, simple premise and ease of access across numerous platforms. The game's on-screen action revolves around danger, disguise and deception – and there are certain parallels to be drawn with some of the real-life risks that parents and carers of young Among Us players need to be aware of.



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SENSITIVE PREMISE

In Among Us, up to three players are secretly assigned to be alien imposters, tasked with murdering their colleagues while the survivors try to unmask them. While the concept's not far removed from traditional games like Wink Murder or TV shows such as The Traitors, some parents may feel uncomfortable about their child playing a video game in which deception and killing are prioritised.

VIRTUAL VIOLENCE

The on-screen death of characters may be fundamental to the gameplay of Among Us, but the majority of the animations depicting this are deliberately cartoonish and only appear very briefly. However, it is worth bearing in mind that the game has a PEGI age rating of 7 – meaning that certain elements (however heavily stylised they may be) could still upset some younger players.

CHAT BETWEEN PLAYERS

With up to 15 people participating in each game online, a large part of Among Us' appeal is speculating with fellow players who the imposters might be and making accusations. This dialogue through the in-game text chat can occasionally become heated – and could, of course, involve your child being put into contact with people (including adults) who they don't know in real life.

GOING OFF PLATFORM

While Among Us provides basic ways to communicate, many gamers prefer to use external services such as Discord: a popular app which offers voice and video chat functions. These undeniably make cooperation easier, but also create a potential route for children to hear inappropriate language – or for strangers to message them privately in an environment which isn't regulated by the game itself.

IN-GAME PURCHASES

Among Us is free to download on mobile devices, and costs less than £5 to obtain on console and PC. A related longer-term pitfall, though, is that the game also includes options to pay for upgrades such as removing ads on the mobile version or adding cosmetic touches to characters (such as different costumes). It's certainly possible that a child could spend a significant sum without realising it.

Advice for Parents & Carers

CONSIDER SOFTER ALTERNATIVES

Although Among Us is hugely popular with young gamers, it's possible that some children might find the murder themes unsettling. If so, plenty of similar social deduction games are available (in both digital and traditional board game formats) which downplay the potentially grislier elements: some centre around undercover spies, for instance, and there's even a Marvel superhero-themed variant.

CHAT ABOUT CHATTING

You might feel it's prudent to talk to your child about the risks associated with voice chat while gaming, explaining in particular that strangers online aren't always who they claim to be. Keeping the conversation relaxed will reinforce your child's confidence that they can always come to you with any online concerns – not just about Among Us, but any potential future issues as well.

DISCUSS DISCORD

In general, Discord is an excellent app for keeping online communities together because of its use of dedicated individual servers, which allow comprehensive control over who can join – and who can't. Once you're familiar with the platform, you could set up a secure server for your child and their friends to communicate during games of Among Us, with no access for people they don't know.

AMONG US, AMONG FRIENDS

When your child and their friends get together, they can enjoy a private game of Among Us by choosing a 'local' lobby – that is, only people connected to the same WiFi (your home network, for example) can enter. This prevents any random online users – who may be total strangers – from joining and removes the need for voice chat, as the players are all physically in the same location.

STOP SURPRISE SPENDING

If you're concerned about the possibility of your child racking up an unexpected bill on Among Us' microtransactions, you could consider using a prepaid card with a set limit. Likewise, you could specify in the game's options that adult authorisation is required for every purchase – or you could make sure that no payment methods are enabled on the device that your child plays the game on.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Editor in Chief of gaming and experts site GGRecon and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new tools, he's also a parent who understands the value of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including IGN and TechRadar.



Headteacher Awards

Reception – Aoife M & Charles D

Year 1 – Ruby T & Ernie E

Year 2 – Jasmine L & Harrison S

Year 3 – Olive S & Alexander TF

Year 4 – Leonardo Z & Nina A

Year 5 – Freya W & Alanna D

Year 6 – Zachary J & Evie I

Virtue Awards – Thankfulness

Reception – Ellie Mae A

Year 1 – Sienna B

Year 2 – Jack Y

Year 3 – Betty T

Year 4 – Ayden Y

Year 5 – Arthur T

Year 6 – Rosie T

Please note changes or additions in red. *denotes parents welcome

October

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|-----------|----|---------------|---|
| Monday | 9 | | Year 6 Residential |
| Thursday | 12 | 3.30pm | Reception phonics workshop for parents* |
| Friday | 13 | 9.30am | Year 4 and Year 1 Mass in church* |
| Wednesday | 18 | 9.30am | Year 6 Leeds United Primary Choices |
| Thursday | 19 | 9.15am | Year 3 class assembly* |
| Tuesday | 24 | 4.00 – 6.30pm | Parents Evening* |
| Wednesday | 25 | 9.15am | Year 4 class assembly* |
| Wednesday | 25 | 2.00pm | Reception stay and play session* |
| Thursday | 26 | 4.00 – 6.30pm | Parents Evening* |
| Thursday | 26 | | School closes |
| Friday | 27 | | Training Day |

Parish News

CHRISTMAS CRAFTS AFTERNOON

A Christmas Crafts afternoon will be held in Holy Name Church Hall on Saturday, 14 October from 2-4.30pm, in aid of the Catholic, primary school being built in Nekemte, Western Ethiopia, by Father Melaku (Verona Fathers/Comboni Missionaries), based in Horsforth. Tickets: £5 for adults and £3 for children aged 5-11. Materials and refreshments included. Tickets on sale after all Masses this weekend. Places are necessarily limited; please buy your tickets as soon as possible to support the children of Ethiopia. Any queries, please phone Stef Howard on 0113 225 3474.

SUNDAY MASSES (Saturday Vigil)

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| Holy Name | 6.30pm |
| St. Mary's | 8.15am |
| Holy Name | 9.00am |
| Assumption | 9.45am |
| St Mary's | 11.00am |
| Holy Name | 11.15am |