

CathCom Reach

Christmas is for adults

A time for celebrating the birth of Jesus

A time for children

A time for family

A time for remembering loved ones no longer with us

A time for doing something for those less fortunate

A time for giving

A time for sharing

A time to celebrate

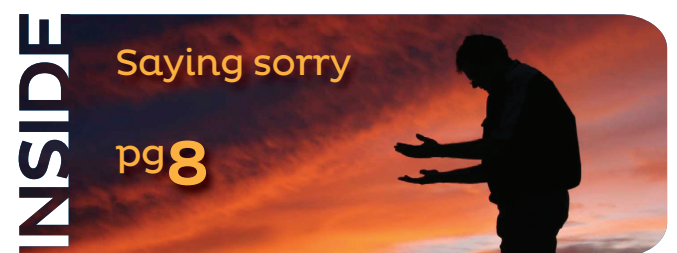
A time to forget work for a few days

A time to relax and enjoy yourself

A time to look back

A time to look forward to a new year

What does Christmas mean to you?



"The real reason for celebrating Christmas is that it happened once. And that one time changed the world. The infant born that first Christmas grew in wisdom and age and strength; he suffered and died and rose again; and he saved his people from their sins.

"This saving feast, for once and for all, has given birth to a special child who becomes the model and pattern for our human growth and wholeness. The real secret of Christmas—if we must treat it as a secret—is that the feast is for...adults!" (Christmas is for Adults . . .

. William Freburger, "The Secret of Christmas," Catholic Update, 12/85)

So make time this Christmas to ponder the great mystery of the Incarnation – God made man! A good way might be by reading the Christmas story with your children, or building a crib with them and thanking God together for the gift of Jesus. Or you could pay a visit to the crib in your local church over the Christmas period.



Out of the mouths of babes

A teacher from a primary school asks her students to write an essay about 'family time', and what they would like God to do for them.

In the evening while marking the essays, she read one that made her very emotional.

Oh God, tonight I ask you something very special: make me into a television. I want to take its place. Live like the TV in my house. Have my own special place, and have my family around ME. To be

taken seriously when I talk. I want to be the centre of attention and be heard without interruptions or questions.

I want to receive the same special care that the TV receives when it is not working. Have the company of my dad when he arrives home from work, even when he is tired. And I want my mum to want me when she is sad and upset, instead of ignoring me.

And I want my brothers to fight to be with me. I want to feel that the family

just leaves everything aside, every now and then, just to spend some time with me. And last but not least make it that I can make them all happy and entertain them. Lord I don't ask you for much. I just want to live like every TV!!

After reading it her husband said "Who are his parents? Poor child"

She looked up at him and said: "We are his parents, our son wrote that!"

Listening to God – Word Bearers

Advent is upon us. Advent is about waiting and listening. I am sure that you have strong memories of waiting for the birth of your child. That time of preparing your home and rearranging your life to make space for the arrival of a little person. The upheaval of any birth teaches us patience and the necessity of attentiveness. We have to be attentive to our bodies and make space for new beginnings. Isn't it amazing that this is the process through which God chose to come among us. The waiting for your child has an echo in the life of Christ as Mary awaited the birth of her son. In the last edition of Reach I began to walk through the Rite of Baptism with you, now I will continue this reflection with a seasonal perspective.

After making the sign of the cross on the forehead of the child, we begin to listen to the Word of God. Simply put, we begin to tell our story through the scriptures. In the Gospel of John we have a wonderful overture of how God loves us. We hear that in the beginning was the Word – Jesus. To be people of the Christian story we have to be 'Word bearers'. One of my favourite Gospel passages comes to us from St. Luke. It is the very familiar story of the Angel Gabriel coming to Mary in her home in Nazareth and asking her to be the mother of Jesus. "Rejoice, highly favoured one, the Lord is with you!" this statement captures what we try to grasp when we recall the Christmas story. God was with his people in Palestine 2000 years ago. God is with his people still in 2012.

That particular Gospel story proclaims familiar words. We have all heard the story, but how have these words changed us? God's choice of Mary begins with his presence in her life. The Lord is with her. God's choice of Mary makes her 'full of grace'. If grace is God's gift, then Mary was full of God's gifts. There is no point in asking what Mary did to deserve such gift; she didn't do anything to deserve them – for it was a gift. Gifts depend on the generosity of the giver, not the worthiness of the receiver.

Luke doesn't tell us so much about what Mary does, but he proclaims what God has done

through Mary. God freely chose Mary to be the mother of his son. God's choice of Mary is the result of God's freedom to choose from among all women the one who would be the mother of Jesus. When God chooses Mary, his choice makes her worthy, just as his love made her full of grace. The difference between us and Mary is not that she was chosen and we are not; rather, it is that she responded wholeheartedly to what God asked of her whilst we often remain hesitant and half-hearted about responding to what God asks of us. The truth is that God has chosen all of us. God desires that we, you and I, be full of grace.

Like Mary, we face God's choice for us; like her, we are challenged to say 'Yes'. If we could see ourselves as God's choice rather than some kind of mistake, we might be keener to say yes! God has chosen every single person; God has a role for each of us. God waits for our choice to put our freedom at his service. It strikes me that Mary's response to Gabriel is not 'Why?' but 'How?' When Gabriel responds that it is through the power of the Holy Spirit, all hesitation is gone.

Bringing your child to baptism is a response to that call from God. We are a chosen people. Making space for God in our lives is crucial, for in that space we come to an awareness of how much we are loved and how precious we are to God. The feast of Christmas is the great remembering of how close God wants to be to us. This feast needs that Advent waiting so that it can be celebrated well. We need to spend time with the knowledge that we are 'highly favoured' by God. We need to let this word settle into our being. Perhaps we don't really believe that God has favoured us; maybe we have reached the stage where we don't think, or more devastatingly, don't believe that we are worth anything anyway. So today, let that be God's word to you: "Rejoice, highly favoured, for I have chosen you.. Yes, you! Rejoice!

And let that knowledge revive us.

May God bless you and all your loved ones throughout this holy season.

Fr. Damian



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Dear Reader

As we approach Christmas – we hope that this issue of CathCom Reach will give us all the chance to take a bit of time out at this busy time of year to think about the deeper side of our celebrations. The expectancy of joy and celebration at Christmas puts pressure on us all to deliver our families a wonderful few days regardless of the money and emotional resources we have available.

Christmas can bring with it a range of feelings from the joy of seeing loved ones, to the pain of missing those that can't be there. We hope that this issue might give us the opportunity to stop and think about our lives. Despite the pressure to just focus on everything that needs to be done.

As ever we would appreciate your feedback about the paper to help us know what you would like to see here. We also look forward to your children's entries to name the Children's Paper – details of the competition are inside their paper.

From all of us at Reach we hope that your Christmas brings you peace in whatever form it may take.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Nick and David

Catholic Social Teaching

Solidarity

“We are all one family in the world. Building a community that empowers everyone to attain their full potential through each of us respecting each other’s dignity, rights and responsibilities makes the world a better place to live.”
(*Sollicitudo rei socialis* – ‘On Social Concern’ (1987))

Solidarity is an important concept for Christians and is one of the most mystical and deeply human founding concepts of the social teaching of the Church. It is based on the belief that together we can make a difference and together we are much stronger. **When we value fellow human beings we respect each other as unique individuals and we can stand up for what is right for one another.**

John Sentamu, Archbishop of York speaking about the importance of Solidarity said “Solidarity is an important concept for Christians. It is the idea that together we can make a difference. **Solidarity is not just about unity of message or vision, it is about valuing our fellow human beings and respecting who they are as unique individuals**



It is also about standing up for what is right. **Christians need to realise that their voice is important and relevant in society** – when we have spoken out on issues such as Fairtrade or global poverty, we have delivered the change we seek because **together we are much stronger than when we are apart”...**



...Peacemaking is an integral part of Catholic social teaching, inviting people to be informed and act in conscience when demands are made of them that challenge the Gospel of peace.

This includes inter-personal relationships, relationships between communities and states – the active solidarity for the common good of the entire human family

Pope Benedict XVI in 2007 challenged Christians to be true peacemakers – bringing forgiveness and nonviolent solutions to situations of hurt and violence. Referring to the Gospels of the Beatitudes he said “...this Gospel is rightly considered the “magna carta” of Christian nonviolence; it does not consist in surrendering to

evil—as claims a false interpretation of ‘turn the other cheek’ but in responding to evil with good, and thus breaking the chain of injustice. **It is thus understood that nonviolence, for Christians, is not mere tactical behavior but a person’s way of being, the attitude of one who is convinced of God’s love and power, who is not afraid to confront evil with the weapons of love and truth alone. Loving the enemy is the nucleus of the ‘Christian revolution,’ a revolution not based on strategies of economic, political or media power. The revolution of love, a love that does not base itself definitively in human resources, but in the gift of God, that is obtained only and unreservedly in his merciful goodness.”**

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What will you give?

A Childs Story

When I worked as a volunteer at a Hospital I got to know a little girl, she was suffering from a rare and serious disease.

Her only chance of recovery was a blood transfusion from her 5 year old brother, who had miraculously survived the same disease and had developed the antibodies needed to combat the illness.

The parents explained the need for a transfusion to their son, and the doctor explained the situation and the procedure to the little brother, and asked the boy if he would be willing to give his blood to his sister.

I saw him hesitate for a split second before taking a deep breath and saying that he would do it if it would save his sisters' life.

As the transfusion progressed, he lay in a bed next to his sister and smiled, as we all did, seeing the colour returning to her cheeks. Then his face grew pale and his smile faded.

He looked up at the doctor and asked with a trembling voice, "Will I start to die right

away?"

Being young the boy had misunderstood the doctor and had thought that he was giving all his blood to his sister, yet in spite of that he had still been willing to do it.



How many times in our life are we asked to give less than that and yet we will hesitate!!!

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Year 7 pupil, 2012.

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(Section 5 inspection June 2012)

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Bellerive FCJ Catholic College

Inspectors said 'Bellerive FCJ is an outstanding Catholic College committed to its vision of personal and academic excellence.' It will come as little surprise to parents that Bellerive FCJ Catholic College is an oversubscribed school that expects high standards from everyone who attends it.

The school's latest inspections are testament to its achievements. 'Judged as outstanding in five out of eight categories helps staff, students and parents to feel confident we're moving in the right direction,' says deputy head teacher, Mr Higgins. 'We aim to challenge the most able to reach well above what they perceive possible, and to ensure all lessons are inspiring so as to develop confidence and determination in every pupil.'

The principles of the school were rooted when founded in 1844. The Sisters of the Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ) established a school in Liverpool to uphold their beliefs in community responsibility. To this day, Bellerive is renowned for its support for causes and charities, local and national, in and out of school, often raising money in imaginative and innovative ways.

In the 19th century Bellerive became one of the first schools to teach Science to girls. The progressive FCJ Sisters, who established the school, would be proud of the achievements of the modern generation of pupils, whose successes led to Bellerive being the first school in Liverpool to be awarded a Sciences specialism and has since added specialisms in Maths & Computing, and Applied Learning. These days, in addition to offering education to around 900 girls from ages 11–18, the school also admits boys to the sixth form.

There is great emphasis at Bellerive, not just on academic achievement, but also on personal development. This starts with providing every student with a caring setting that offers strong pastoral care. A Year 7 pupil's description of Bellerive seems to embody everything the school stands for: 'What gets me out of bed every morning is the fact I can go to school and be creative, and use my brain for hundreds of things, even if it's a simple equation. I can discover new things, learn about things and gain knowledge that will help me in the future. My motivation is knowing that after my years of schooling, of hard work, of passion and of worry, I could change someone's life, I could live my dreams, I could be somebody.' The success of the school is illustrated at regular school reunions, which are always well attended by alumni who have achieved eminence in different areas. Many former pupils have gone on to enjoy success at all levels including academic and professional. A number have graduated from some of the UK's top-ranked universities, including Cambridge, and then gone on to make names for themselves in an array of careers, from the civil service and parliament to medicine, law and engineering. Future goals of Bellerive include the addition of buildings and achieving even more outstanding grades in inspections – all well within the school's reach.

Are YOU feeling stressed



Stress self-help tips

The key to managing stress is to take steps to allow you to feel in control of the situation. Some of the following self-help tips can be useful for you to get on top of the stress you are experiencing:

- **Take charge of the situation.** One of the most helpful ways to 'take-charge' of stress is to make a list of all the things that are contributing to you feeling stressed. Look at this list and try to change the way you deal with each stress or by writing a possible solution

- **Make time to relax.** It is important that you make time for yourself – time for your mind and body to relax. Practice relaxation techniques such as yoga or deep breathing exercises. The more you use these techniques, the calmer you will feel

- **Be more assertive.** Many people end up stressed as they take on too many social or work responsibilities. Help yourself by not saying 'yes' to everything you are asked to do.

- **Organisation.** Make sure you arrange your day so that you have enough time to fit in the important things. Don't overcrowd your diary – this will leave you feeling stressed

and deflated by what you have not got round to doing, when in actual fact, you should feel proud of yourself for what you have achieved.

- **Weekends.** Use the weekends wisely. Don't fill every waking hour with never-ending tasks – help yourself by making time to relax.

- **Preparation is key.** Many people find that if a stressful event is coming up (a presentation or exam), having plenty of time to prepare and practice helps increase self-confidence tremendously. Being more prepared means less stress on the

Self-help tips for immediate stress relief

There are times when no matter how hard you try, you can't avoid the stress. So what can you do to help yourself? When faced with a stressful situation, it can sometimes be very useful to have a few techniques to help relieve stress quickly. Try these out for yourself:

- **Laughter.** Distract yourself by reading something funny, talking to someone who is funny or sharing a joke with someone. Humour helps relieve the symptoms of stress by producing 'feel-good' chemicals in the brain

- **Deep breathing.** Learn a few breathing techniques to help you relax which you can carry out anywhere. You can seldom go wrong with the advice to count to 10 before responding to a stressful situation

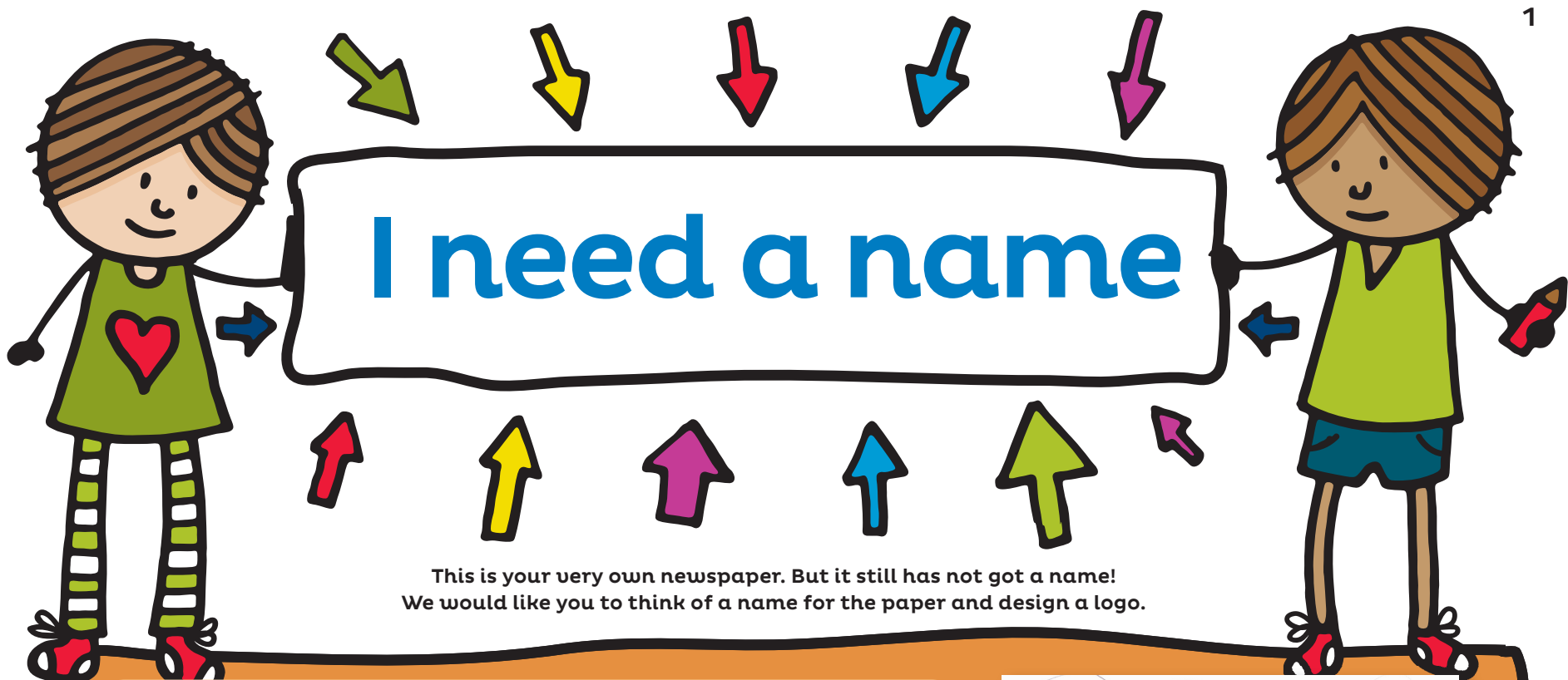
- **Take a walk.** Get away from it all and clear your head by taking a brisk walk. Sometimes a change of scenery and some fresh air can help you forget the stress by which you find yourself surrounded by

- **Drink plenty of water.** Dehydration can lead to an increase in stress, so make sure you are well hydrated at all times

- **Speak to a friend or a colleague.** If you have a work problem, a colleague may be able to help you by taking responsibility for a few of the tasks you are not getting to

- **Make a cup of tea.** Herbal tea is best. Try peppermint tea to calm any digestive symptoms or chamomile tea to help relax you. Even the few minutes spent making a cup (or pot) of tea can help you to relax by taking your mind off the stressful situation you find yourself in.

- **Herbal remedies.** Licensed herbal medicines containing valerian have been used for years to help with feelings associated with stress.

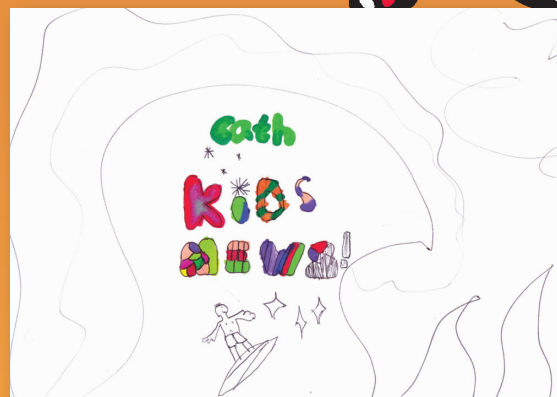


This is your very own newspaper. But it still has not got a name!
We would like you to think of a name for the paper and design a logo.

The closing date to name the Children's paper will be February 21st.

Below are some of the entries we've had so far – if you would like to enter the competition – send us ideas for the name of the paper and a logo if you can. You can enter on your own, as a group or as a class. We'll choose the winner for the next edition and there will be prizes for you and for the school.

Please send your entries to: CathCom Reach Competition, N2 Blois Meadow Business Centre, Steeple Bumpstead, Haverhill, Suffolk CB9 7BN. Please remember to include your name, age and contact details. GOOD LUCK!!!





Being an Angel

The Angel Gabriel came down from Heaven with a message from God asking Mary to become the mother of Jesus. Mary said "Yes". Mary and Joseph then travelled to Bethlehem where Jesus was born in a stable because there was no room for them elsewhere.

Angels are special messengers of God. And God wants us to be His messengers in the world today. He wants us to share the message that God loves everyone and that we are all part of one global family.

Can you think of any ways that you can share God's message? We don't just have to use words, we can spread the message of God's love and care for others through our actions too.

Here are some examples of how you can be one of God's angels this Advent:

- By helping someone
- By giving something to someone less fortunate
- By not wasting resources eg leaving a tap running, leaving electrical items switched on when not in use
- By being kinder to others in what we say and how we say it
- By remembering to say our prayers
- By saying sorry if we have done something wrong
- By saying thank you

















Let's pray:

God of love, help me to be your angel on earth. Help me to show your love for my family and for everyone no matter who they are or where they come from Amen.

Courtesy of Cafod children's liturgy (adapted)

Christmas Quiz

No prizes (answers below but no peeping)

1.  How many Sunday's are there in Advent?
2.  Where did the donkey take Mary and Joseph to?
3.  Who appeared to the shepherd's in the field?
4.  What was the name of the farmyard building where Jesus was born?
5.  What guided the Three Kings to the stable in Bethlehem
6.  What were the gifts of the Three Kings?
7.  Who was the King of Judea when Jesus was born?
8.  Which reindeer has a very shiny nose?
9.  Where does Father Christmas live?
10.  What is Father Christmas sometimes known as?
11.  Why does Father Christmas have a garden?
12.  On the fifth day of Christmas my true love sent to me?
13.  Buttons appears in which pantomime?
14.  What is Rudolph's favourite day of the year?
15.  What did Adam say on the day before Christmas?
16.  What is the difference between the normal alphabet and the Christmas alphabet?

Answers
1. 4; 2. Bethlehem; 3. Angel; 4. Stable; 5. Star in the East; 6. Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh; 7. Herod; 8. Rudolph; 9. North Pole; 10. Santa Claus; 11. Five Gold Rings; 12. Cinderella; 13. Buttons; 14. Red Nose Day; 15. It's Christmas Eve; 16. There's Noel

How colourful can you make this crib scene?





Christian Meditation with children

No room for silence?

“And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn” Luke Ch 2 v 7

We have a long history of telling Jesus that there's “no room for him”. It manifests itself in different ways. At that first Christmas, Jesus was born in a stable because there was nowhere else to lay his tiny head. Nowadays we exclude him in more subtle ways. Let us remember what Christmas was about over 2000 years ago, and rather than driving Christ out of our minds let us remember our families and embrace the real meaning and purpose of Christmas.

Even when it's not Christmas we are subjected to the noise and the bustle of everyday life. We do not give Jesus our full attention and we do not make room for him in our lives. This affects us as adults, and this is passed on to our children at school who have such a frenetic programme of activities that it excludes them from being with Jesus. We need to create the space for them so that they can receive and hear the Holy Spirit. To receive the Word they need space and time, to hear the Word they need silence. Rather than rushing around “doing” they need to be allowed time for “being”. Rather than being bombarded with sound bytes they need to be allowed time for silence.

Over the next four issues we will explore one particular way in which our children can give their full attention to “being” rather than “doing”; to “silence” rather than “noise” so that they can make “room for him” in their lives. This particular way is the prayer of the heart – the way of Christian Meditation.

We will explore how we can introduce children to Christian Meditation and what it is:

- Play and Pray – the simple way that children learn to meditate, build community and pray for sheer enjoyment.
- The story of Christian Meditation – how the tradition has been passed down from the Desert Fathers to the modern day.
- Born Contemplative – Children's natural ability to sit in silent prayer and respond with awe and wonder.
- Fruits and Benefits – Christian Meditation not only improves academic performance but also gives birth to the fruits of the spirit.

Over 100 Catholic Primary schools and other faith schools are already practising or are in the process of adopting Christian Meditation as part of their school curriculum. This pilot scheme is now being extended to all areas of the UK and is gaining rapid popularity for its ability to deliver a valuable life skill to the children – to be still and silent in an otherwise chaotic and noisy world. It is a Christmas gift for life.

For further information contact Charles Posnett, UK Coordinator Christian Meditation with Children, The World Community for Christian Meditation

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Ingredients to avoid in your Christmas dinner



For those lucky enough to be cooking the Christmas Dinner this year you'll, no doubt, be making sure you have all the right ingredients to make a wonderful

Christmas Dinner. Whether it's the turkey, potatoes or even the obligatory sprouts – whatever your family tradition, each part of the meal is important. However,

this is more than just a meal. This is a time when we come together as a family to share the meal. Whilst the food we use and the way we cook it is important, it is not as important as those we share it with. However adventurous your Christmas cooking will be – the ingredients are unlikely to be as complicated as the family members that will come together to enjoy it.

Christmas is a family time, where we try to do our best to get together with our families even though the relationships may be strained for one reason or another, be it a quarrel or disagreement of some sort, through to more serious issues. It can be for some of us a time which we are not looking forward to because of the pressures of the family gatherings. This may be the first Christmas after the loss of a loved one, and in situations like these, the healing process is time; a thing which is so hard to find, or time just subconsciously eludes us so we can avoid thinking about it. Starting new family traditions can help in a small way, buying a special decoration for the Christmas tree, or just tweak the old traditions to include a keepsake of the lost friend or relative nearby. If the reasons we are not looking forward to the season of "Peace and goodwill", or feel trepidation at the thought of the Christmas

family gathering is as a result of a harsh word or a thoughtless action on your part then maybe it is time to address it and pluck up the courage to say you are sorry. The burden you are carrying is causing you bitterness and resentment, and our human nature is such that harbouring a grudge or holding onto the pain not only damages our relationship with others but also has a negative effect on our own wellbeing. Therefore, forgiveness is twofold – resolving the problem with the person in question and restoring the peace within ourselves; we cannot allow someone else to make us hold onto the pain and guilt we are feeling if we are truly repentant. However, if they still want to hold a grudge then we must remember that we are not in control of their emotions.

Perhaps this year for you, Advent, the time leading up to Christmas, is the time to 'clean house'; pay a visit to the place in our heart where we keep these painful memories and experiences and look at what we can clear out. We've all had to clean a child's grazed knee to get the grit out, and we know that it is going to mentally hurt us for causing the pain and equally be a painful experience for the child – BUT in the long-run it is for the best. Perhaps now is the ideal time to confront these experiences and find the peace of Christmas within ourselves.



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Apologising and Forgiving



Accepting Responsibility

Some people are hard to apologise to, they may take the opportunity to drive home how wrong you were and how right they were. At these times your ability to hold your space and stay focused on the sincerity of your apology is determined only by the strength of your heartfelt need to say the words. However, just because **YOU** are ready to say "I'm sorry", doesn't mean the other person is ready to hear it. Therefore it is paramount to remember that a sincere apology does not need a response. It is about you apologising for your contribution to the situation – that's it!

If you are like most people, your perception of the situation is clouded by the hurt you are feeling when someone you love is upset with you. It also might be difficult for you to acknowledge, and accept your reaction to any situation, as being in your control.

By seeing instead with our minds, we lose our vulnerability and gain a capacity to receive.

Try using statements such as, "I'm sorry my reaction hurt you..... I was feeling unimportant to you..... I chose the wrong words, which made the situation worse..... I love you very much..... I value you and your opinions..... And, I'm deeply sorry my reaction pushed your buttons....." Respond to any negative comments by staying true to YOU.

As Christians, forgiveness is one of the most difficult problems to deal with. We are urged to forgive, and for many people this will cause a real conflict since they may not be ready to forgive. Forgiveness is sometimes understood to mean that a person should forgive and then be reconciled without condition! There is much confusion about the nature of forgiveness.....What is it and what it is not?

Forgive and forget or letting go

This does NOT necessarily mean forgive and forget, you must heal your hurt too. The command to forgive and forget is NOT found in the bible, it originates in Shakespeare's play 'King Lear'. It is not an easy task for anybody to forget a serious wrongdoing. No one can wipe out a part of their history and pretend it didn't happen. The best that can be achieved is to

leave it in the past, to find some relief from the pain and to gain some perspective that will help the person to move on. To block out the memory by repressing it is the only way some people can cope with it. However, it is NOT forgotten, its' effect may continue at a subconscious level and may manifest itself in sadness or depression or worse. The process of healing involves facing the wrongdoing and the emotions associated with it, rather than trying to block it out.

Forgiveness and trust

It is important to remember that forgiveness and trust are two separate issues; forgiveness is about the past, where trust is about the future. Forgiveness will not bring about a change in the wrongdoer **ONLY** the full acceptance of responsibility and heartfelt repentance.

It is possible to forgive someone and yet never trust them again. Indeed such is the compulsive nature of some people that even after open admission and accepting punishment the only responsible course is to avoid situations of temptation in the future. Repentance and forgiveness may help the wrongdoer in finding their peace with God. However, that is quite different from finding trust.

Forgiveness and repentance

Forgiveness is closely tied to repentance, Jesus teaches. "If your brother sins, rebuke him, if he repents, forgive him" (Luke 17:3).

When we are urged to forgive someone without insisting on the repentance of that person, there is a failure to make the connection between forgiveness and the wrongdoers responsibility to make amends.

Remorse in the form of self pity (embracement or shame of their discovery) may well be mistaken for repentance, but the sign of true repentance are in DEEDS and NOT in tears.

Reparation

An apology can be meaningless without reparation, as children we learn that when we damage our neighbours property that an

apology needs to be accompanied by an offer to repair with time or costs. Therefore, reparation which compensates the wronged in some way for what he or she has lost is a sign of true repentance. It is a repentance that acknowledges the extent of the harm caused. And is a sign by which the wrongdoer can demonstrate that the apology has meaning.

Apologies

Why is it so hard to say the words we so desperately want to hear?

Many times we turn the simple task of saying, "I'm sorry" into a chicken and egg game. Or worse, we use it to guilt others, or withhold it to hurt.

Do you find yourself actually taking the gift of an apology, whether given or received, as your opportunity to "win"? Remember, if the word "but" is anywhere near the words "I'm sorry", you aren't apologising, you're trying to appropriate the blame. Furthermore, some apologies, which may be sincerely meant, can also do harm if the wrongdoer shows little insight into what he or she had done wrong.

Why? Because you are missing two fundamental components of the foundation you need to build for a heartfelt apology that can be felt by the other person and by you!

Use a 2-step process and do something extraordinary to drive you sincere apology home. The beautiful thing about apologies – if they are sincere, you really only need two words "I'm sorry."

But it's always nice to do something extra. Take this as an opportunity to turn life's lemons, and your humanity, into something transformational for the other person.



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Illustration by Juliet Thomas

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 **Diocese of Westminster**
OFFICE FOR MARRIAGE & FAMILY LIFE

"Christian parents must strive to follow and repeat, within the setting of family life, the more methodical teaching received elsewhere."
Catechesis Tradendae 68

Passing on the Faith – Virtues and Values
Saturday 9 March 2013 10:30—4:30
Student Union Hall, St Mary's University College, Twickenham TW1 4SX
£10 per person, £20 per family (children welcome)


**Parents are the primary agents of evangelisation—
Marriage and the Family are the bedrock of evangelisation—
Come and explore how we can prepare and support the next generation of marriages**

Programme

10:30	Registration
10:50	Welcome and Introduction Edmund Adamus, Director for Marriage & Family Life, Diocese of Westminster
11:00	Keynote Speech His Excellency Bishop Jean Laffitte, Secretary to the Pontifical Council for the Family.
11:45	Discussion
12 noon	<i>Cor ad cor loquitur: passing on moral values in the family</i> Dr Peter Kahn, author/editor 'Family Matters' series, Catholic Truth Society
12:35	Discussion
12:45—1:35	Break for Lunch
1:40	Ten Ten Theatre—Formation in the Gospel of Life through Drama.
2:30	Break
3:00	Round-table—exploring pastoral initiatives with: Catherine Wiley, Founder, Catholic Grandparents Association Dannie Firth, Trustee, The Wednesday Word (other initiatives will be included)
4:30	Close

Organisations supporting Catholic family life will provide
a **Market Place of Resources** to buy or browse.

"Information and Registration: Catherine MacGillivray
020 7931 6064 cathmacgillivray@rcdow.org.uk "

 Diocese of Westminster
2012
YEAR OF FAITH
2013
'Let me see your face, O Lord'



Two little boys, ages 8 and 9, are very, very mischievous.

They were always getting into trouble and their mum and dad knew if there was any mischief in their neighbourhood, their two boys were probably involved.

The boys' mum heard that the local priest had been successful in disciplining children, so she asked if he would speak with her boys.

The priest agreed, but he asked to see them individually.

Mum sent the 8 year old in the morning, with the older boy to see the priest in the

afternoon.

The priest, a huge man with a deep booming voice, sat the younger boy down and asked him sternly,

"Do you know where God is, Philip?"

Philip's mouth dropped open, but he made no response, sitting there wide-eyed with his mouth hanging open.

So the priest repeated the question in an even sterner tone,

"Where is God?!"

Again, Philip made no attempt to answer.

The priest raised his voice even more and shook his finger at Philip's face and shouted all the louder, "WHERE IS GOD?!"

Philip screamed & bolted from the room, ran directly home & dived into his wardrobe, slamming the door behind him.

When his older brother, Gary, found him in the wardrobe, he asked,

"What happened?"

Philip, gasping for breath, replied,

"We are in BIG trouble this time!"

"GOD is missing, and they think WE did it!"

Where is God?



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STONE



Two friends were walking through the desert. During some point of the journey, they had an argument; and one friend slapped the other one across the face. The one who got slapped was hurt, but without saying anything, wrote in the sand, "Today my best friend slapped me in the face".

They kept on walking until they found an oasis where they decided to take a bath. The one who had been slapped got stuck in the mire and started drowning, but the friend saved him. After he recovered from the near drowning he wrote on a

stone, "Today my best friend saved my life".

The friend who had slapped and then saved his best friend asked him, "After I hurt you, you wrote in the sand and now you write on a stone, why?" The friend replied, "When someone hurts us we should write it down in sand, where winds of forgiveness can erase it away. But, when someone does something good for us, we must engrave it in stone where the wind can never erase it".

Learn to write your hurts in the sand and carve your benefits in stone. They say it takes a minute to find a special person, an hour to appreciate them, a day to love them but then an entire lifetime to forget them.

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