



14th May 2021



Dear Parents

We celebrated the Feast of The Ascension this week with a Mass in Church led by our Year 6 children. This was as you know, livestreamed and I hope that you were able to join us for this celebration. The rest of the children in school joined in via the livestream link which enabled us all to take part but remain safe. Thank you to all involved.

May Procession

This will take place on Monday 24th May and will be led by Year 6. Unfortunately we are unable to have parents join us for this annual celebration however we will record the event which you will be able to access - more details later. In the meantime, advance notice that we ask all children to bring in flowers on the day to decorate Our Lady's altar and the spiritual garden.

Covid Roadmap

We are all aware of the easing of restrictions however we have been advised that our Covid precautions should remain in place and as such we will be continuing with all of the routines for the time being. This does include wearing masks when on school premises. As with all procedures during this time, they will be regularly reviewed in light of the advice that we are given.

Year 2 Mass

Our children celebrated Mass this week in church which was again livestreamed. Thank you to all involved.

Environmental Health Inspection

Congratulations to the kitchen staff who have, once again, gained a 5 star hygiene rating from their Environmental Health inspection. The report complements the kitchen on their "extremely high standard of cleanliness". Congratulations Denise Alger, Louise Corbett and Claire Forest.

Sports Fornight

Over the next two weeks each class will be completing in athletics events in the race for medals! The children will also be studying the sporting achievements of the country their class will be studying in International Week as well as completing reading and writing tasks all about sport.

We are unable to offer our usual events for Sports Day but our children will take part in a sporting competition. On Wednesday 26th May there will be a whole school football tournament, playing for a super trophy, within their year groups. Please remember to send your child in wearing a t shirt in their house colour along with the rest of their PE kit.

The house colours are: St George - red, St Andrews - blue, St Patrick - green and St David - yellow.

The Words of Pope Francis

The Solemnity of the Ascension lifts our gaze upwards, beyond earthly things. At the same time, it reminds us of the mission the Lord has entrusted to us here on earth. May the Holy Spirit guide us in the good battle we must wage.



Gospel Values Awards

The Gospel Value this week is...

Simplicity

- non-attachment to wealth, live simply

"You cannot serve God and wealth." (16:13)

"Do not worry about your life." (12:22)

Next week the Gospel Value we will be focusing on is Humility - Trust in God.



Congratulations to the following children who received the Gospel values certificate this week.

Butterflies: Medeina Kucinskaite

Ladybirds: Eddie Cox

1D: Axel Brooks

1S: Barry Tanu

2F: Teodora Fedeles

2HD: Violet Aldous

3N: Helith Alkegamage

3PT: Natalie Harmas

4A: Lehna Ajong

4C: Caitlin Masambique

5G: Isabella Bethell

5S: Kailani Loughran Ricketts

6CN: Zachary Kaczmarek

6E: Medhaj Bachoo

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

The winner of the KS1 Attendance Award are Butterflies attaining 99% attendance. Well done! The winners of the KS2 Attendance Award are 5G, achieving 100%. Well done!

Please ensure you are sending your child into school everyday, unless they are not well enough to attend. Familiarise yourself with the symptoms of Corona Virus. There is no need to keep your child off with a common cold, if they are well enough to come in. Attending school is so important and makes a huge difference to your child's learning.

It is essential you notify us of your child's absence by 9am either by telephone or using the Parentmail report absence option. We need full details of why your child is unable to attend school. We are frequently having to contact parents, to find out why their child is absent from school.

Parents of children below attendance targets will be invited in for a meeting with the Educational Welfare Officer.

R B	99%
R L	98%
1D	98%
1S	97%
2F	97%
2HD	95%
3N	98%
3PT	98%
4A	99%
4C	99%
5G	100%
5S	98%
6CN	96%
6E	98%

Spotlight on Year 3

This week, 3PT had an observational drawing lesson in which they sketched the school

Year 3 are enjoying learning about plants. In this lesson they enjoyed learning about the different parts of the flower. They dissected flowers, looking for the various parts we had been learning about, they then placed them back together. 3PT they made to make a large flower incorporating all the pieces they had dissected and they named the parts together as a class.



The children competed in several athletic events including shotput, javelin and long jump.

Congratulations to Thomas Hyde and Jermaine Ondiege for achieving gold overall



avakin life

What Parents & Carers Need to Know About

AVAKIN LIFE

12+

App Store Rating

Described as a place where teens and adults can make new friends, Avakin Life is a mobile game that has more than 1.4 million daily users. The game lets players create a virtual avatar (an 'Avakin'), style it in fashionable outfits, buy and decorate properties, and interact with others in communal spaces. It's this social aspect which has caused safety concerns, with many parents and carers unsure if the game is suitable for teenagers at all.

Age Rating

Listed as 12+ on the iOS store (and 'Teen' on Google Play), Avakin Life asks for a player's age at the start – but doesn't ask them to verify it. The game states that players found to be a different age to the one entered will be banned, but all that's needed to create an account is an email address, which anyone can set up. This has led to cases of adults entering the game under a false identity to groom children.

Adult Themes

Avakin Life is full of suggestive and adult themes. While the game itself leans into ideas of gambling (users are encouraged to spin a prize wheel for free coins each day) and customising avatars with revealing outfits and seductive dance moves, the primary risks stem from other users. The in-game chat can often move onto sexual topics, while depression and suicide are discussed openly.

Chat Function

'Social spots', where 'Avakins' gather, feature a live chat which displays messages publicly. Anything users in that vicinity say appears on everyone's screen. Profanity is starred out – but users can still post hurtful or sexual messages, or harass other players. When two players become 'friends' in the game, they can then chat privately. If personal details are shared and conversation moves away from the game, that represents a clear risk.

In-Game Spending

Although free to download and play, Avakin Life has two in-game currencies: Avacoins and Gems. Users are gifted small amounts of these as they play – but are also encouraged to buy larger quantities of these fictional currencies with real money (with the incentive that it allows access to more clothes, furniture, etc.). Buying these bundles can cost up to £39.99 with the simple press of a couple of buttons.

Potential Addiction

MMO (massively multiplayer online) games like this have often raised worries over their addictive gameplay. Avakin Life employs lots of techniques to prolong its appeal. Glamorous in-game rewards for playing, unlocking exotic new items and levelling up can all give a feeling of accomplishment that can quickly become consuming – especially for those who aren't aware of the signs.

Advice for Parents & Carers

Block and Report

Other players can be blocked by clicking on their in-game avatar, selecting their name and going to their profile. Blocking the player means they can't contact your child or be put in the same social space again. Players can be reported by repeating these steps but selecting 'Report' instead of 'Block'. Follow the on-screen prompts and your report will be assessed by a human member of the development team.

Download It Yourself

Avakin Life is a free download, so if your children use it or are talking about it, you could try it yourself: see how it works and if you feel it's safe. If you're not convinced, explain that to your child. Listen to what they think about the game; discuss alternatives that might be safer. If a device has parental controls that prevent age-restricted apps being downloaded, it's best to set them up as soon as possible.

Warn about Strangers

Young people should not be communicating with strangers: that's as vital a lesson online as it is in real life. This game has a less-than-stellar reputation for attracting predators and scammers who prey on the innocence of younger players. Talk to teens about how not everyone online is who they claim, and make sure they know how to deal with such situations if they occur. Report, report, report!

Be Alert to Addiction

If you're worried your child might be addicted to an online game, it's vitally important to intervene before it's too late. A child may become irritable when not playing, lose interest in other hobbies and personal hygiene, and stop seeing friends or communicating with them outside the game. If you spot any of the symptoms of gaming addiction, it might be wise to limit (or stop) time on the game.

Disable Payment Methods

It's easy to make an accidental purchase on mobile games like Avakin Life; children might not even realise they're spending actual money on in-game items. Ensure that whatever device your child is using to play doesn't have any credit cards or other payment options linked to it. If you do notice that money has been spent without your permission, the game's website states you can apply for a refund.

Meet Our Expert

Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for five years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world, UNILAD Gaming and GAMINGBIBLE. Starting gaming from a young age with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work, but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.



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#WakeUpWednesday

<https://www.common.sense.media.org/app-reviews/avakin-life/reviews/adult/>, <https://www.elferidoom.com/app-reviews-for-parents/avakin-life/>, https://www.fatherandsafety.org/game-reviews/-/asset_publisher/9A2ASACR/content/avakin-life?inheritRedirect=false&https://avakin.com/player-safety/, <https://nampshire.com/news/issue/gaming-addiction/>



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A Weekly Gift to you and your family from your Catholic School

THE Wednesday
WORD



SHARING SUNDAY'S GOSPEL WITH PARENTS & FAMILIES

Dear Parents and Carers,

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus is praying with his disciples after the last supper. Very soon, Jesus will be arrested. So before leaving them he is preparing his disciples for the difficult time to come. Jesus has cared for his followers and now he is asking God to care for them.

Jesus wants us to be united with one another and with God. We show that we are united and part of God's family when we care for each other – living and working in unity.

Wednesday 12th May 2021

Pope Francis reminds us, "It is Jesus himself who continues to care for his Church. Small gestures of tenderness and care, make people feel that the Lord is with us."

Enjoy a special time together this evening hearing your child's thoughts about this Sunday's Gospel and this Wednesday's word, which is **CARE**.

Dom Henry Wansbrough



To see this week's Parish Version of The Wednesday Word: wednesdayword.org – Parents' Pages – Lectio Divina with Fr Henry.

THE GOSPEL IN CHURCH Sunday 16th May 2021



Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said: 'Holy Father, Keep those you have given me true to your name, so that they may be one like us. While I was with them, I kept those you have given me true to your name. I have watched over them and not one is lost except the one who chose to be lost, and this was to fulfil the scriptures. But now I am coming to you and while still in the world I say these things to share my joy with them to the full. I passed your word on to them, and the world hated them, because they belong to the world no more than I belong to the world. Consecrate them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world, and for their sake I consecrate myself so that they too may be consecrated in truth.'

Adapted from John 17:11-19
The 7th Sunday of Easter, Year B

You are warmly invited to learn more about
the Gospel through your local parish church.

"Above all, take care of
people in need. Let us
care for one another."

Pope Francis



THE Wednesday
WORD

CONNECTING HOME, SCHOOL AND PARISH THROUGH SUNDAY'S GOSPEL

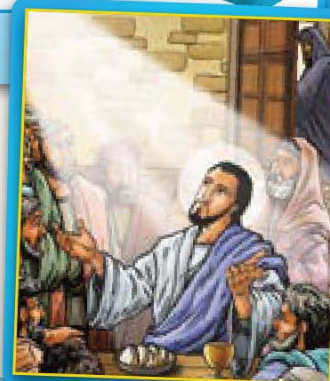
In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus' prayer is a reminder of the tremendous care that God has for each person - the care we often experience through the actions of the people around us. We are God's most loved creation and we can be certain that God will always care for us.



1 Our Special Time Together

Enjoy reading the Gospel overleaf (or below for younger children)

Jesus looked up to heaven and prayed: 'Holy Father, protect the people you have given to me. Keep them true to your name, so that they may be one with each other, just as you and I are one. Since I have been with them, I have taken care of them, and I have kept them true to you. Now I am coming to you. But before I do, I am saying these things to share my joy with them to the full.'



Jesus had always cared for his followers. What did Jesus want to share with them before he went to his Father? Which word or words stood out for you in this Sunday's Gospel, and why? See the picture opposite. What does it make you think about?

2 Wednesday's Word is ...

CARE



3

Loving God & Each Other

"Cast your cares upon God, for you are his and he will not forget you." *St John of the Cross*

Ask your child what the word 'care' means to them. Who do you know to be a caring person? Each of you give an example of where or when you feel God's care. Perhaps it is through: the love of your family and your friends; spending time alone with God in prayer at home; worshipping God with others; receiving help from others. Saying the 'Our Father', and really thinking about the words, is a great way to speak to God and to ask for God's care.

"Let us walk together taking care of each other and of Creation, our common home."

Pope Francis

Throughout the world, our Catholic schools and parishes educate and care for millions of children. Jesus cares for us and he wants us to care for others too. Each of you talk about a time when you recently showed your care for someone. Is there anyone who needs your care right now? As a family, choose a way in which you will especially start to show your care for others and for the earth, our common home.

Dear Lord Jesus, please help us to see the needs of others, to **care** for creation, and to continue your work in the world with a loving and **caring** heart. Amen.

Gospel Gallery

A S N E V A E H S K Z
Z J G T C A R E F O P
U E U Y S O L J A M R
N S A N J P S S T W O
I U R G I Y J U H H T
T S L C A T I S E E E
Y V S R Y P Y E R A C
O I P R A Y S J U V T
D I S C I P L E S E K
A R E H T A F G J N H
P E S D T C E T O R P

WEDNESDAY WORDSEARCH

SMARTSEARCHERS FIND THESE EIGHT WORDS EITHER **ACROSS** OR **DOWN**



FATHER HEAVEN



JESUS PRAYS



DISCIPLES UNITY



PROTECT CARE



SUPERSEARCHERS FIND THE WORDS **BACKWARDS** OR **DIAGONALLY**



Search for at least three differences between this picture and the colour one. Then draw them in before colouring.

Cross out the letters **o k b** in the jumbled words below to find 4 real words.

otkrube caborek tokhemb habveko

"Since I have been with _____, I have taken _____ of them, and I _____ kept them _____ to you."

CARE

To see CAFOD's great video about caring for the earth, see Pope Francis' 'Laudato Si' link in the children's section at: wednesdayword.org

Write a promise and then draw a big smile on Smiley

This week I will try my best to...





Encountering Christ
*Prayerfully preparing for the
Sunday Mass and praying in
particular for our school families*



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 23rd May 2021 - Pentecost Sunday

1

Relax & Remember

Set aside 10 -15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross † and remain still for a minute of settling silence. **Call to mind the love that God has for you. Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present.** Then read the Gospel, preferably aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.



2

Read

Taken from the Gospel for 23rd May 2021 (John 20:19-23): The Gift of Peace

(One of the options for the Pentecost Gospel)

In the evening of the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, "Peace be with you," and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so am I sending you." After saying this he breathed on them and said: "Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained."



3

Reflect

After spending a few minutes considering this Gospel, continue by reading Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection.

None of the gospels gives an account of the Day of Pentecost, but St John tells us of another incident where the Risen Christ gave the Spirit to his disciples. There are two emphases in the account. The first is peace. Christ brings peace to his disciples with the double greeting of peace, and peace is a Christian watchword. Peace was the song of the angels at Jesus' birth; each of Paul's letters opens with a greeting of peace; the letter to the Ephesians proclaims that Christ is our peace - the reversal of all worry, strife, envy, jealousy, self-seeking ambition. 'Go in peace' is Jesus' dismissal of those he cures, and also the dismissal at the end of Mass. Peace was Jesus' bequest to his disciples after the Last Supper. The second watchword is forgiveness, for God was always known as a God of mercy and forgiveness; Jesus came to show this by his constant meeting with and welcoming of sinners. Moreover, the Lord's Prayer shows that if we do not ourselves forgive, we block God's forgiveness of ourselves too.

How can you bring peace more effectively to those you meet?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

4

Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Then thank God for any insight you may have received. Conclude by asking God to bless you with one of the following spiritual gifts to help you act on any resolution you have made: love, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, self control, patience, or joy. Please remember to pray for the Church and particularly our school families. **Then conclude by requesting the prayers of Our Lady & St Joseph.**



The Wednesday Word is under the patronage of St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church
Within the tradition of the Catholic Church, each Wednesday is dedicated to St Joseph

WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS +

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of Sunday 23rd May 2021



First Reading: *The Birth of the Church*

Acts 2:1-11

When Pentecost day came round, the apostles had all met in one room, when suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting; and something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech. Now there were devout men living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven, and at this sound they all assembled, each one bewildered to hear these men speaking his own language. They were amazed and astonished. "Surely," they said, "all these men speaking are Galileans? How does it happen that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; people from Mesopotamia, Judaea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya round Cyrene; as well as visitors from Rome - Jews and proselytes alike - Cretans and Arabs; we hear them preaching in our own language about the marvels of God."

The ministry of Jesus starts with the coming of the Spirit at his Baptism, and in a similar way the ministry of the Church begins with the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost. There can be no witness to Jesus or to his message, no spreading of the Kingship of God, without the Spirit of Jesus. Another lesson from this parallelism between Jesus' Baptism and Pentecost is that the task of the Church and the life of the Church are the same as those of Jesus himself: to bring God's kingship to its fulfilment by bringing healing, love and joy through the message of the Risen Christ. The rushing wind and the tongues of fire are an allusion to the account in the Old Testament of the coming of God's Spirit upon Moses and the Elders. So the message of the New Testament is the fulfilment of the Old Testament, breaking out beyond the borders of Judaism to include all peoples of the world. The union of all these peoples, all understanding one language in their own way, is a deliberate contrast to the Old Testament scene at the Tower of Babel, when all the peoples of the world defied God and so were split up and could no longer understand one another's languages. The list of unpronounceable peoples is itself a witness to the universality of the Church!

How does the Church reveal the Spirit at work in the world today?

Second Reading: *The Body of Christ*

1 Corinthians 12:3-7, 12-13

(one of the options for the second reading of Pentecost)

No one can say, 'Jesus is Lord' unless he is under the influence of the Holy Spirit. There is a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit; there are all sorts of service to be done, but always to the same Lord; working in all sorts of different ways in different people, it is the same God who is working in all of them. The particular way in which the Spirit is given to each person is for a good purpose. Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make one body, so it is with Christ. In the one Spirit we were all baptised, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as citizens, and one Spirit was given to us all to drink.

“We show forth to the world the presence of Jesus.”

The slightest glance round a church full of people is enough to show the variety within the Christian community. But it needs the words of St Paul to remind us that every member of that community has his or her own special gift to contribute. Mercifully, these gifts are all different. It is good to reflect on the natural gifts that we find all around us. It is also valuable to reflect how dull, or even intolerable, life would be if I lived with a lot of clones of myself, all with the same gifts and the same faults as myself! Every one of us contributes something different and valuable, whether it is the baby squeaking as a sign of new, developing life or the older person contributing wisdom, experience and even the suffering of Christ. Another inspiring thought is that all we varied and diverse people go to make up the Body which is Christ. We all have experience of various corporate bodies, organisations and companies, but none of these 'bodies' manifest the presence of a person as do our own individual bodies. But as the Body of Christ, the Church, we show forth to the world the presence of Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, through the indwelling of the Spirit.

What gifts do you bring to help build up the Body of Christ?

The Wednesday Word: Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God
w: www.wednesdayword.org e: info@wednesdayword.org

Happy Birthday this week to...

Indie Bennett, Luke Canavan, Oliver Martino, Joseph McCoy,
Phoebe McNamara, Parvataa Muraleedharan, Luka Yamgoue, Amber
Williams, Lily Vetori, Mason Russell, Zach Gauci, Amanda Girciute,
Freya Hyde



Merit Certificates:

Butterflies: Evan Smith, for a huge effort with his beautiful cursive writing

Nick Rzecholka, for fantastic work telling the time to the o'clock

Ladybirds: Thea Dixon, for becoming more confident with her writing

1D: Paris Goddard, for her great effort in maths

1S: Sid Cundins, for coming in and ready to learn straight away

2F: Frankie Cripps, for speaking in full sentences and asking a question in a sentence

2HD: Mahayla Hackett, for fantastic knowledge and hard work when using contractions

3N: Indie Usedon-Duff, for always making a great effort

3PT: Amelia Randle, for being a supportive friend

4A: Mischa Hyde, for always trying her best and helping others

4C: Korneliusz Adamczak, for his terrific handwriting

5G: Ryan Kwey, for his fantastic attitude to learning and for being an excellent role model for his peers

5S: Lilly Dundridge, for her perseverance and excellent attitude in numeracy

6CN: Lola Andrews-Clark, for her fantastic attitude to learning and for being a wonderful role model for others

6E: Filip Szymanski, for great work in numeracy

Midday Award: Cosmas Eze, listening and being helpful at lunchtimes

Diary Dates

Menu Week 2

<u>Monday 17th May</u>		<u>Tuesday 18th May</u>		<u>Wednesday 19th May</u>		<u>Thursday 20th May</u>		<u>Friday 21st May</u>	
Reception	08:30 - 14:45	Reception	08:30 - 14:45	Reception	08:30 - 14:45	Reception	08:30 - 14:45	Reception	08:30 - 14:45
Years 1 & 2	08:45 - 15:00	Years 1 & 2	08:45 - 15:00	Years 1 & 2	08:45 - 15:00	Years 1 & 2	08:45 - 15:00	Years 1 & 2	08:45 - 15:00
Years 3 & 4	09:00 - 15:15	Years 3 & 4	09:00 - 15:15	Years 3 & 4	09:00 - 15:15	Years 3 & 4	09:00 - 15:15	Years 3 & 4	09:00 - 15:15
Years 5 & 6	09:15 - 15:30	Years 5 & 6	09:15 - 15:30	Years 5 & 6	09:15 - 15:30	Years 5 & 6	09:15 - 15:30	Years 5 & 6	09:15 - 15:30

House Points

**Congratulations to the
winning house St David**

S. McGuigan

Miss S McGuigan

Headteacher

Please download our News & Events
App for dates for the year. Details
are available on the schools website
under News & Events at
www.holycross-pri.essex.sch.uk

Seew Kelliher

Mr S Kelliher

Deputy Headteacher