

THE Wednesday
WORD ADVENT & CHRISTMAS 2023



Wishing you a blessed Christmas from your School



"The Birth of Jesus brings us the good news that we are loved immensely and uniquely by God"

Pope Francis

Wednesday
13th December



Good News
for Families

Enjoy reading this Sunday's Gospel

A man came who was sent by God. His name was John, John the Baptist. He came as a witness – as a witness to Jesus Christ. Priests were sent from Jerusalem to ask John, "Who are you?" John replied, "I am not the Christ." "Are you the prophet Elijah then – or the Prophet?" they asked. He answered, "No." "So, who are you?" they asked. "What have you to say about yourself?" John replied, "I am the voice of the one who cries in the wilderness: 'Make the Lord's way straight.'" Finally they asked him, "Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" John said, "I baptise with water. But someone is coming soon who is more powerful than I am." This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the River Jordan, where John was baptising.



From the Gospel of Sunday 17th December 2023 John 1:6-8, 19-28 (the 3rd Sunday of Advent, Year B)

Which words stood out for you in this Gospel, and why? What does the picture make you think about? Now enjoy exploring this Wednesday's word, which is **JOY**.



2

Wednesday's Word is

JOY



"Dear young people, if we are close to Jesus, we will have joy in our hearts and a smile on our face." Pope Francis

Who did John the Baptist come to tell the people about? This weekend we celebrate the third Sunday of Advent which is known as 'Gaudete Sunday', and we light the pink candle on our advent wreath. The word 'Gaudete' in Latin means 'Rejoice!'. We joyfully celebrate that Christmas is near – we rejoice that Christ is coming. Ask your child what the word 'joy' means to them. Each of you say who or what makes you feel joyful. When do you feel joyful? When was the last time you brought joy to others and what did you do? God wants us to be filled with joy – Jesus came to make our joy complete. Happiness comes and goes, but the joy that comes from close friendship with Jesus stays forever.

"Joy is very infectious; therefore, always be full of joy." St Teresa of Calcutta

Joy is something we all desire. We don't have to search around for joy: it comes from within. When we follow Jesus by loving God and others, we are filled with joy! A joyful heart is a sign of God's Spirit within us. What can you do to help bring joy to others in this coming week? Perhaps you can: give lots of smiles; give someone a gift; remind someone that they are loved by God; cheerfully do what our parents or teachers ask us to do. In these ways we prepare our hearts to be filled with a joy that lasts long after the Christmas festivities have passed.



Dear Lord Jesus, please help our family to experience the joy that you bring, and to share your joy with all those that we meet. Amen.

WEDNESDAY
WORDSEARCH

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

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**PRIESTS
ASKED**
**JOHN
REPLIED**
**SOMEONE
SOON**
**JESUS
CHRIST**

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

N	H	O	J	S	D	J	R	H	C	J
D	E	I	L	P	E	R	E	L	H	T
E	S	O	M	E	O	N	E	S	R	K
D	E	K	S	A	J	N	A	P	I	T
L	P	J	S	O	O	N	P	H	S	A
J	R	T	E	E	H	J	E	I	T	S
E	I	E	M	O	N	S	R	E	P	H
S	E	O	L	O	U	H	D	L	J	K
U	S	M	O	S	C	A	S	K	E	D
S	T	S	E	I	R	P	T	M	O	S
J	S	J	L	R	E	P	L	I	E	D

Cross out the letters **c d a** in the 4 jumbled words to find 4 real words.

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 _____ the Baptist said, "Someone ___ coming
 _____ who is more _____ than I am."

In this Sunday's Gospel, the humble witness of John the Baptist gave people a sense that something exciting was about to happen. John delivered the joyful news of God's arrival into our world in the person of Jesus – he recognised Jesus as the Christ. We often don't recognise Jesus when he comes, when he is standing among us. But be assured: Jesus is always with us, waiting to fill us with joy.

1 Enjoy reading the Gospel

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man called Joseph. The virgin's name was Mary. "Rejoice, favoured one!" said Gabriel. "The Lord is with you." Mary was disturbed and asked herself what he could mean. "Do not be afraid, Mary," the angel continued. "You have found favour with God. Listen! You will conceive and bear a son and you will call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High and his kingdom will never end." "How can this be," questioned Mary, "since I am a virgin?" "The Holy Spirit will come down upon you," the angel said, "and you will have a child who will be called the Son of God." "I am the servant of the Lord," Mary replied. "Let it happen just as you have said." Then the angel left her.



From the Gospel of Sunday 24th December 2023 Luke 1: 26-38 (the 4th Sunday of Advent, Year B)

Which words stood out for you in this Gospel, and why? What does the picture make you think about? Enjoy exploring this Wednesday's word, which is **MARY**.

2 "Mary is the one who says "Yes". Mary's life shows that God accomplishes great deeds through those who are the most humble." *Pope Francis*

What did Mary say just before the Angel Gabriel left? Each year on the last Sunday of Advent, we look to Mary, our heavenly mother. In this Sunday's Gospel, the Angel Gabriel announced God's will, and Mary accepted it and put her trust in God. Ask your child if they know the 'Hail Mary', the prayer based on the Angel Gabriel's greeting in this Sunday's Gospel. Ask your child what else they know about Mary. It may help your child to tell them something you know about Mary, or the Rosary.

3 "Let the model of Mary be reflected in our lives." *Pope Francis*

Mary is a perfect example for all people - someone full of love and kindness. How can you show love and kindness in this final week of Advent? Perhaps you can: support a charity that helps to feed some of the poorest children in the world (e.g. marysmeals.org.uk, missiontogether.org.uk or cafod.org.uk); help someone who may be struggling in some way. What other ways can you think of? You may like to finish your time of prayer by saying together, on behalf of another person, a 'Hail Mary' (please see below) or find out more about the Rosary: cbcew.org.uk/category/prayer/rosary/

Hail, **Mary**, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy **Mary**, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Write a promise and then draw a big smile on Smiley

This week I will try my best to...

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1 Enjoy reading the Gospel

When Jesus was a baby, his parents, Mary and Joseph, took him up to the Temple to present him to God and make an offering of two young pigeons. Now in the Temple there was a good and holy man named Simeon. The Holy Spirit had promised Simeon that he would not die until he had seen Jesus, the Light of the World. Prompted by the Spirit, Simeon came to the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to make their offering, Simeon took Jesus into his arms and blessed God; and he said: "Now, I can die in peace because you have kept your promise. This child, Jesus, will be a light for all nations." Jesus' parents took him back to Nazareth where Jesus grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.



From the Gospel of Sunday 31st December 2023 Luke 2: 22-40 (the Feast of the Holy Family, Year B)

Which words stood out for you in this Gospel, and why? What does the picture make you think about? Enjoy exploring this Wednesday's word, which is **FAMILY**.

2 "All God's children, of every people and language, are invited and called to be part of this great family, as brothers and sisters and sons and daughters of the one Father in heaven." *Pope Francis*

Who took Jesus to the Temple? This Sunday we celebrate the feast of the Holy Family of Nazareth (Jesus, Mary and Joseph). In the Gospel we read about the Holy Family's openness and obedience to God. Ask your child what the word 'family' means to them. Ask them what they like best about their family. It may help your child to tell them something that you like best about the family.

3 "Dear families, always live in faith and simplicity, like the Holy Family of Nazareth!" *Pope Francis*

Christmas is a special time for families. In what ways can we bring more of God's love and joy into our family and other families this Christmas? Perhaps we can: make an extra effort to be thoughtful; contact someone you may not have seen for a while and make them feel especially valued - maybe a relative who lives on their own, or a friend. As a family (if possible), come and light a candle in Church this Sunday. You can learn more about this celebration of the Feast of the Holy Family at: cbcew.org.uk

Dear Lord Jesus, please protect + all our **families** with your loving care. Help us to be patient, kind, understanding, generous and welcoming to anyone in need - especially this Christmas. Amen



Write a promise and then draw a big smile on Smiley

This week I will try my best to...

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Wednesday
3rd January



Good News
for Families

Enjoy reading this Sunday's Gospel

Jesus was born in Bethlehem when Herod was king. Wise men came from the East to Jerusalem and said, "Where is the child born to be king of the Jews? We saw his star in the sky and have come to worship him." King Herod was very worried. He called together all the priests and teachers and asked them where the Christ was to be born. "In the town of Bethlehem, in Judaea," they said. So Herod sent the wise men to Bethlehem and said, "When you have found the child let me know, so that I too may go and worship him." So they set off. The star went before them and stopped over the place where the child Jesus was. The wise men knelt down and worshipped Jesus. They opened their treasure and offered him gifts - gold and frankincense and myrrh. Then God warned them in a dream not to go back to Herod, so they returned home another way.



Taken from the Gospel of Sunday 7th January 2024 - Matthew 2: 1-12 (the Feast of the Epiphany)

Which words stood out for you in this Gospel, and why? What does the picture make you think about? Enjoy exploring this Wednesday's word, which is **GUIDANCE**.



"Let us draw from the crib the joy and deep peace that Jesus brings to the world." Pope Francis

2

Wednesday's Word

GUIDANCE



"Jesus came so that our life might be guided by God." Pope Francis

What guided the wise men to Jesus? This Sunday the Church celebrates the Feast of the Epiphany. We remember how the wise men from the East were guided to Jesus. Ask your child what the word 'guidance' means to them. Who guides them through life, to make sensible and wise choices? Who or what guides you on your journey through life? The Church exists to help us and provides us with the timeless guidance of the Bible and the 'Catechism of the Catholic Church'. These are manuals for life which can guide us on our journey.

"May Christ's love guide our steps." Pope Francis

As we journey through life to God, we need good guidance to help us along the way. Ask your child if they know some of the ways in which Jesus guides us today. Perhaps it is through: listening to good and wise people; learning Church teaching; being open to correction; prayerfully considering what effect our words and actions might have on ourselves and others; reading the gospels together; going to church and listening carefully; praying to Jesus for guidance. Are you, or any members of your family, planning New Year's resolutions for 2024? If you haven't already started, why not resolve to head into 2024 on a spiritual journey as a family - to be guided by God? Wishing you and your family a happy and blessed New Year.



Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for your guidance - for being there to guide our family on our journey together through life. Amen.

WEDNESDAY
WORDSEARCH

SMARTSEARCHERS FIND THESE EIGHT WORDS EITHER ACROSS OR DOWN

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SKY
STAR
GUIDED
BETHLEHEM
WISE
MEN
WORSHIP
JESUS

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SUPERSEARCHERS FIND THE WORDS BACKWARDS OR DIAGONALLY

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



Cross out the letters **e u n** in the 4 jumbled words to find 4 real words.

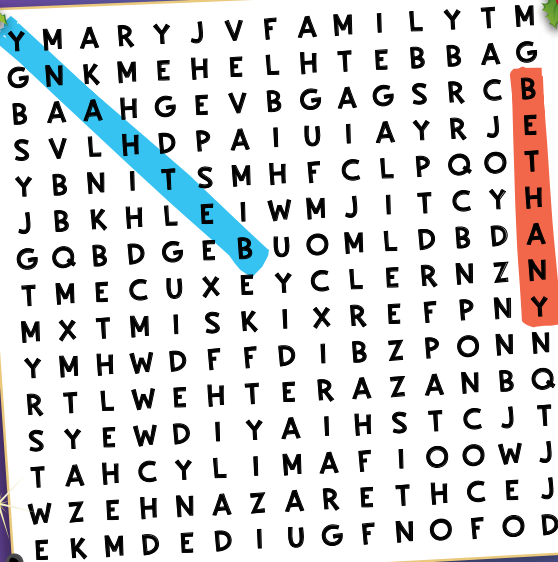
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"We _____ his _____ in the _____ and
have come to _____ him"

Write a promise and then draw a big smile on Smiley

My New Year resolution for 2024 will be to.....



WEDNESDAY WORDSEARCH



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

- BETHANY**
- JOY**
- GALILEE**
- MARY**
- NAZARETH**
- FAMILY**
- BETHLEHEM**
- GUIDED**

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

A CHRISTMAS CAROL FOR ALL THE FAMILY

Silent night, Holy night,
All is calm, all is bright.
'Round yon virgin mother and Child;
Holy Infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, Holy night,
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia".
Christ the Saviour is born,
Christ the Saviour is born.

Silent night, Holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light.
Radiant beams from Thy Holy Face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.

The lyrics for Silent Night were written by a young Austrian priest from Salzburg, Fr. Joseph Mohr (1792-1848).

It was first publicly sung at Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, 1818 at St. Nikolaus Church in Oberndorf, Austria.