

November 2021

In secular society, November is announced with a fanfare of pumpkins, skeletons, ghouls and ghosts. But did you know the word 'Halloween' actually comes from the word '*hallowed*' meaning 'blessed' or 'holy'? Read on for why this is relevant to you and what your children have been learning about! This newsletter shares some of the content children have experienced in school and suggests ways for you to engage with them about it. We hope and pray that through reading and sharing, you will be inspired to have a 'holy' November!

All Saints and All Souls

'Hallowe'en' is actually a shortening of 'All Hallows' Eve.' Just like Christmas Eve is the day before Christmas, 'All Hallows' Eve' is the day before 'All Saints' Day' on the 1st November. And like how in Advent we prepare ourselves for Jesus' coming at Christmas, on All Hallows' Eve Christians often prepare by praying or fasting, and worshipping God.

This week, children will celebrate the Feasts of **All Saints** and **All Souls**. These two special days remind us that God has a special plan for everyone: **to live with Him forever** and be part of His special family called **the Communion of Saints**.

As part of their learning about these special days, children watched a film – a bit like a movie trailer – which introduced a different kind of superhero: the Saints!

Watch All Saints film here: www.tentenresources.co.uk/parent-newsletter

Children learned that the Saints are real people who said 'yes' to God's plan for them and are now in heaven. Some were children and young people, some were mothers and fathers, some were monks, priests or nuns, and some were single people.

On All Saints' Day, we praise and thank God for what He has done for us through these holy people and the example they set for us. We can also ask them to pray for us, that we might love God and our neighbour the way Jesus taught us.

- *Why not explore some more stories of Saints with your child? There are some great resources online here and here.*

Children learned that the day after **All Saints' Day** is **All Souls' Day**, a day of prayer and remembrance for all people who have died: we ask God to bring them safely to heaven to be with God and the Saints forever.

- *You might like to take some time with your child to remember and pray for your own loved ones who have died.*

Children said a special prayer for these special Feast days, which you might like to say with your child at home:

Dear Jesus,

Thank you that God has a plan for us to live with Him forever and be part of His special family.

Thank you for the example of the Saints who show us how to love others and do the work of Jesus.

Fill us with your light and your love so that we too can say 'yes' to God's plan for us.

Amen

All or Nothing

In the Sunday Gospel for the 7th November, Jesus uses the example of the widow who gave her last two coins to teach the disciples about true generosity:

Mark 12: 41 – 44

Jesus sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the treasury; and many of the rich put in a great deal. A poor widow came and put in two small coins, the equivalent of a penny. Then He called His disciples and said to them, "I tell you solemnly, this poor widow has put more in than all who have contributed to the treasury; for they have all put in money they had over, but she from the little she had has put in everything she possessed, all she had to live on."

Through the course of the assembly, children learned that Jesus isn't interested in outward shows of generosity, but in the generosity of our hearts: we don't need to have much to be generous with what we have. Even if it looks like nothing to others; we can give our all!

Children learned that Jesus demonstrates the ultimate act of generosity and trust in God by giving His life for us on the cross. We asked them to consider how they can learn from Jesus and the widow in the Gospel: will we trust God to provide so we can be generous without limitation?

Why not read the story below with your child and then ask some of the questions that follow, to help you consider together the nature of true generosity.

Anisah and the Jumper

Year 4 were collecting clothes to donate to the Afghan refugees that had recently arrived in their town. Because they had left in a hurry and arrived with only their thin summer clothes, there were lots of children that needed warm clothes for the winter! Mr Armstrong asked them all to have a look at home for any clothes they no longer wore or were too big for, so they could be generous and welcome the refugees.

On Monday, the day Mr Armstrong had asked them to bring in their old clothes, Chelsea arrived with a bulging bag from the most expensive shop in town. Chelsea's family was very rich, so she was very excited to show just how generous she had been. She said loudly, "I think that the refugee children deserve the best, and that's what I'm giving them. Not second-hand clothes, but expensive, brand-new things. Everything me and Mum chose for the refugees, we bought for me too! So I've got a whole new wardrobe out of this!"

A few minutes later, William turned up with a towering pile of clothes. Everyone was very impressed with how much of his own things William was giving up! But he said, "Oh no, these aren't mine! I didn't want to get rid of any of my clothes! Even if I've

grown out of them - they're mine! But my uncle volunteers at a charity shop, so I just asked him to bring some from their stock room. I've got loads of clothes here for the Afghan refugees and it didn't even cost me anything!"

Year 4's pile of donations was getting bigger and bigger as people brought along their offerings. Anisah kept quiet though.

Anisah's favourite thing in the whole world was her Mickey Mouse jumper. When she had arrived from Syria with her family just a few years ago, they didn't have very much. Anisah had been given the jumper by a charity. It had been hard, being in a new country, but this jumper had kept her warm and Mickey Mouse's smile had always made her smile too. Even when she grew too big to wear it, she used to go to sleep, hugging it like a teddy bear. It always reminded her of the kindness of strangers.

At break time, when everyone else was outside playing, Anisah crept up to the pile of donations, and carefully placed down her Mickey Mouse jumper. She worried that it wouldn't be enough next to the expensive donations from Chelsea and William, but it was all she had. Anisah said quietly, "Thank you. You kept me warm and made me smile. But now it's time for you to do the same for someone else."

Then she tucked a homemade welcome card into the pocket of her favourite Mickey Mouse jumper. She smiled, and walked away.

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- *Why was Anisah's jumper so special to her?*
 - *Which gift do you think was most generous, Chelsea's, William's or Anisah's?*
 - *What does it mean to be a refugee? **
 - *How do you imagine Anisah might have felt, arriving in a new country, without any/many of her own things?*
 - *What do you think Anisah might have written in her welcome card?*
 - *Why do you think Chelsea wanted to give really expensive clothes to the collection? Was it really because she believed that 'refugee children deserve the best'?*
 - *Why do you think William found it difficult to give his own old clothes? Why did he proudly say that his donation 'didn't cost [him] anything'?*
 - *How can you be generous today?*

**You might like to discuss the recent arrival of thousands of refugees from Afghanistan, and might also like to check out this [activity pack](#) from Good Chance Theatre, which helps children and young people access The Walk, the 8,000km journey from Syria to Manchester of a 3.5 metre-tall puppet of a young refugee girl called Little Amal. Having spent 5 months travelling, her journey culminated last week.*

(This project is not partnered with Ten Ten, but we think what they've done is incredible.)

Prayer

Children will likely have seen this prayer video in school. It is about COP26 – the annual UN organised climate change summit, which is happening from 31st October – 12th November.

Although they happen annually, this year's conference is a particularly important one: many climate scientists agree that this is the world's last chance* to act to bring climate change under control. Over the 12 days of the conference, which is taking place in Glasgow, many countries will be rethinking what they can do and committing to making changes for the benefit of everyone. This prayer video:

- Informs children about what the conference is
- Helps them understand what it means for Christians to be called stewards of the Earth
- Invites them to pray that the world leaders attending will use their decision-making power wisely and compassionately

Why not watch it with your child now, and talk about any changes you could make to steward the Earth better?

Watch COP26 Prayer here: www.tentenresources.co.uk/parent-newsletter

*If you want to know more about this, and why we absolutely agree with the phrase 'last chance', but have chosen not to use it in our video, see here:

<https://www.tentenresources.co.uk/the-hub/and-he-saw-that-it-was-good/>

Date for your Diary!

You might not know, but Ten Ten, in addition to providing **Collective Worship** resources in schools, is also the leading provider of RSHE resources to Catholic schools in England and Wales.

“What is RSHE?” you may well ask! Well, on Thursday 3rd February at 7pm you can attend our webinar to find out all about Relationships, Sex and Health Education, the changes to the curriculum regarding this, and what it means for Catholic schools and parents of children in these schools.

This instructive and inspiring webinar puts the dignity of the human person at the heart of the discussion and is open to parents of children in all Catholic schools, not just those subscribing to our RSHE programme **Life to the Full**.

Find out more and book your place [here](#).