

JANUARY 2022

# ST COLUMBA'S FAMILIES NEWSLETTER

## HI FAMILIES OF ST COLUMBA'S,

Happy New Year to you, we hope the year is starting well for you.

Last Sunday we talked about the visit of the wise men to the baby Jesus in Bethlehem. One of our elders, Karen Cunningham, told us about some of the "Epiphany" customs in Switzerland, which she knows well. For example, an Epiphany cake is baked, which is round and in which a bean is hidden. Whoever finds the bean is "king for a day", receives a small decorative crown, and can look forward to luck and prosperity in the coming year. One and a half million cakes are sold every year in Switzerland (population 8.7mio), making it the country's most sold specialty cake!

In Germany and Austria, 'Three Kings' Day' is celebrated on 7th January.

In Austria, children dress up as carol singers and go from house to house and mark with chalk on the door the blessing C+M+B (Christus Mansionem Benedicat or 'Christ bless this house') and the year. It is said that the letters also represent the names of the Magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. Money is collected for a good cause.



The chalking of the doors is accompanied by a prayer: it makes a beautiful prayer for all our homes at the start of a new year.

God of doors and homes,  
bless this home,  
this year and every year.  
Bless all who come and go  
through this door,  
both those who live here,  
and those who visit.  
May all who enter through this door,  
come in peace and bring joy.  
May all who come to this door  
find welcome and love.  
May the love and joy in this home overflow  
and spread into the community  
and all the world.  
And may Jesus the Christ  
watch over us all. Amen.

### **Dates for the Diary**

Between January and March, we intend to offer Sunday School on the first and third Sundays of the month. Dates for Family diaries:

Sunday 15th January  
Sunday 5th February  
Sunday 19th February  
Sunday 5th March  
Sunday 19th March (Mothering Sunday)  
Arrangements and activities for Easter to be confirmed.

First and third Sundays are chosen to spread the Sunday School offering across the month. Both Sundays coincide with congregational lunch in the Lower Hall; first Sunday is usually a baptismal Sunday, when we often have visiting families and the third Sunday coincides with Sounds of St Columba's music recitals. Because Sunday School and recitals currently both take place in the Upper Hall, assistance with clear up at the end of Sunday School would be much appreciated. We very much look forward to seeing our families at church this Sunday.

Have a good week,

Angus & the Sunday School Team