

St. Attracta's Senior School, Meadowbrook, Dublin 16

Scoil Shinsireach Naomh Athracht, Cluain Ghlaise Áth Cliath 16

Nuachtlitir na Nollag 2013

December Newsletter 2013



CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE ~ MONDAY 16th DECEMBER 2013

Capture the true meaning of Christmas at our Christmas Carol Service, which will take place in the Oratory on **Monday 16th December**. As the whole school will be involved, places will be limited on the night. As usual, we'll have an afternoon performance at **1.15p.m.** to facilitate younger members of the family, children in the junior school and the extended family of grannies, granddads, relations and friends. For health & safety reasons, we can only accommodate 300 or so adults at each performance. So come along to one of our performances on



Monday 16th at 1.15p.m. in the Oratory

(mainly for younger family members, junior school children and other family members, grandparents, relations and friends)

or on Monday 16th at 8.00 p.m. in the Oratory

(limited number of places – please keep the aisles of the oratory free to allow pupils to go up and down to their places)

As the Carol Service will take place in the Oratory, there will be **no food or drink**. We look forward to a full attendance of pupils in school uniform as we all share the true meaning of Christmas at the Carol Service. **Please be in the oratory early if you want to be sure of a seat.**

Over the past few years we have had problems when children didn't turn up on the night, leaving a depleted choir to sing their class carol. If your child can't come on the evening, please let the class teacher know in advance. However, our Carol Service is a whole school preparation for Christmas and we would love to see all the children gathering together on this one night of the year.



CHRISTMAS SPIRIT



SPIORAD NA NOLLAG

Our Advent wreath is lit in school every morning. The **circle of evergreen leaves** stands for God's everlasting love which is without beginning and without end. The **four candles** - one for each week of Advent - symbolise our waiting to welcome Jesus Christ. The three purple candles stand for penance and sorrow for sin. The **rose coloured candle** stands for the joy of living in God's way of love. The white candle stands for Jesus' birthday on December 25th. The **red ribbon** stands for Jesus' blood shed on the cross for love of us.

And to further celebrate the birth of Jesus, we will send home next week the Christmas schedule of Masses and Services for 2013 in St. Attracta's Oratory.

- We also look forward to this year's Christmas Eve Children's Liturgy at 6.30p.m. in the Oratory on Tuesday 24th December.



The Sunday choir will help make our Christmas Eve Mass a memorable one and we look forward to seeing you there. At this time of year, we thank all the boys and girls who read, sing or serve Mass for their commitment to the Sunday Masses.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CHRISTMAS APPEAL

This year is a tough year for everybody, but we are still better off than many others. The St. Vincent de Paul Society has once again appealed to us to help families less well off than ourselves. They look after the needs of people at Christmas time. What we'd like to do in the Senior School is to help make Christmas special by showing a little kindness to others. Each class is invited to put together a hamper of items that would make Christmas really feel like Christmas for everybody. Examples of these would be long-lasting food items (pasta, rice, tea/coffee, tinned fruit, soup, sugar, etc.) selection boxes, minerals, packets of nice biscuits, mince pies, cheese & crackers, bars of chocolate, hygiene products, etc. Some of these items could be added to your shopping trolley over the next week or so and the hampers will be collected on Wednesday 18th December. We'll also have a **fundraiser** on Tuesday 17th. We'll have a Christmas-themed No Uniform day for St. Vincent de Paul! Children will pay €2 to wear their own clothes! Just have a bit of fun, but don't forget, as much red and green and tinsel as you can manage!

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION

The Boards of Management of the Junior & Senior Schools wish to thank all those who have contributed to the Voluntary Contribution. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. If you still wish to contribute, your donation will be very welcome at any time in whatever way and with whatever amount is possible for you and your family.

QUESTIONNAIRES

Go raibh mile maith agaibh – all who responded to our recent questionnaire. We are now analysing them and taking on board your views and concerns. The responses highlighted some issues for us to address and even if something is an issue for one parent, we would like to be aware of it. Overall we were delighted with the feedback which was mainly positive and we will give a full report in our January newsletter.



ANTI-BULLYING WEEK

Last week was anti-bullying week in our school and many issues were brought to our attention and dealt with. We must emphasise that we can't deal with bullying if we don't know about it, so please let us know if you have concerns about anything which involves children getting a hard time on a **regular** and **consistent** basis. The main issues which came up in classes involved exclusion, name-calling, pressure being put on children do things they weren't happy with (Truth and Dare) and Facebook comments which were hurtful and in a small number of cases quite nasty. School is only a part of the solution so we would be very grateful if you would talk to your children about the standards expected of them in school. We don't expect all children to be 'best friends' – that would be unrealistic, but a little tolerance wouldn't go astray in a small number of cases. However, we made good progress last week and we ask you to reinforce the fact that



1. We are a Telling School (and nobody should call another child a 'rat').
2. Exclusion from games and groups is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
3. If you can't say something nice, then don't say anything at all.
4. We can help if we know what's happening but if we don't know we can't support your child.

PARENT-TEACHER MEETINGS

We had a great response to our Parent-Teacher meetings last month with almost 100% attendance. If you haven't already met your child's teacher, please contact the school immediately to make an appointment ... 01-2951627

GIVE A GOOD BOOK!

Parents, don't forget to give a book in the Christmas presents this year to keep the children reading. Think of the peace it will bring !!!



WE COLLECT USED STAMPS



As Christmas approaches, don't forget to collect the stamps on Christmas cards and send them in to us. They're always welcome and are passed on to a worthy charity. When removing stamps from envelopes be sure to leave a good edge around each stamp. Thank you!

CHARITY CHAIN

As part of our Kindness Counts programme, we will support a number of charities this year.



While there are so many worthy charities we have tried to concentrate on charities which help children and we will make every effort to ensure that the money we collect goes directly towards helping the children for whom the collection is intended. On Christmas Day, why not give baby Jesus a little gift – the gift of your time. You and your family might like to drop into the oratory for a little while in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. St. Attracta's Oratory will be open from 3.00 – 6.00p.m. on Jesus' birthday.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS, SCHOOL CLOSURES

The school will close for the Christmas holidays at **12 noon** on **Friday 20th December** and will re-open on **Monday 6th January at 8.50a.m.** The 6th January is the Feast of the Epiphany (Little Christmas or Lá Nollaig na mBan) and therefore the whole school will go to Mass at 10.00a.m. with the parish community.



NOLLAIG SHONA AGUS ATHBHLIAIN FAOI MHAISE DAOIBH GO LÉIR!

HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND EVERY BLESSING FOR THE NEW YEAR

TO ALL PUPILS, PARENTS & FRIENDS OF ST. ATTRACTA'S SENIOR SCHOOL.