

Children's Ministry Coordinator My First Year

One year ago I was appointed as children's ministry coordinator for our parish of St John XXIII. My role involves working with the children of our parish. In school during term time and in the parish during their holidays. During term time we have had a few opportunities to invite the parish into schools, for example during lent the parish was invited to pray the stations of the cross, led by the children. It was a wonderful experience. during Holy week the parish were also invited to experience meditation with the children. I hope in the future we will be able to do this again. We've started to display some of the children's work at the back of church, we plan to regularly change it so you can keep up to date with what the children are doing. Last term we explored the Armour of God from St Paul's letter to the Ephesians. During the holidays I have started running Messy Church mornings, in which the children get to come into church and experience Christ in new and creative ways.

Mini Vinnies

The Mini Vinnies is a programme designed to get children involved with the SVP. It is all about encouraging them to think more broadly about helping people both in their local community and the wider world. have been very much involved in the Mini Vinnies, who have been very active this year. It has been a real privilege to see the enthusiasm, commitment and most importantly the compassion each member has shown throughout the various projects. The children have raised money and donated to Mary's Meals, Cash 4 Kids and Cancer Research to name just a few. We hope to continue being very active this coming academic year. Before our first partnership mass to celebrate the work of the SVP and Mini Vinnies, I organised a morning session for all the Mini Vinnies from the 10 primary schools in our partnership. They had an opportunity to meet other children, find out about their projects and tell people about what they had done too!

Parish Mission

Since January we have been planning for a parish and school mission to take place in November. This will involve our whole community, with a week of events in St Roberts and then a week of parish and primary school events. The mission is a wonderful opportunity for us to come together and glorify God as one big parish family. In the lead up to the mission each child in school will be designing and decorating in the style of a Romero of El Salvador cross. This is to celebrate the year of Oscar Romero. Throughout the schools the children have been learning about Oscar Romero and what he did. Traditionally in El Salvador, people decorate crosses in bright colours that have both Jesus and their local community represented on them. The children will receive a blank cross and decorate them with symbols of their own community and how Jesus is a part of their lives.

They will also be decorating lanterns to represent each of the Primary schools. These will be displayed in church, in St Roberts and in each of the primary schools throughout the mission and afterwards as a reminder of the week

As the week of the Parish mission will be the same as the week of the Primary mission, it would be wonderful if we could support one another in this. For example, on each week day of the Parish/Primary school mission, the Year Five class will host a liturgy in school, based on the theme, Unbroken. Everyone from the parish is invited to come and celebrate in this time of worship with our young people! The children will have worked exceptionally hard to put together this liturgy so it will be wonderful to see as many of you there as possible!

Overall, the first year in this new role of Children's Ministry Coordinator has been a wonderful journey. I would like to thank all who have supported it! I pray that we will have more opportunities throughout the year to come together as one parish family.

Hannah Mitchell