



Thought for the Week

This Sunday was Mothering Sunday – and how wonderful to celebrate by losing an hour of sleep as we move to British Summer Time (and the weather slinks backwards towards winter...)! In the Christian church, Mothering Sunday is about people visiting their ‘mother’ church – the church at which they received their baptism. It is, in other words, about coming home.

There is no single model of motherhood, nor is motherhood the only valuable form of identity for any person, but what it signifies for many is a sense of comfort, of safety, of love – of feeling at home. Julian of Norwich, the fourteenth-century Christian mystic, drew from this feeling when she described God as Mother:

I then saw with complete certainty that God, before creating us, loved us, and His love never lessened and never will...

It is thus logical that God, being our Father, is also our Mother.

Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love*

Motherhood can be a heavy weight to bear. As the poet Hollie McNish puts it,

...Someone said that mums are the rocks that never crumble.

I don't think that's true, 'cause I do.

I cry hidden in loos.

I scream alone in my car...

We are rocks crumbling sometimes in love that's so heavy...

Hollie McNish, *Nobody Told Me* (2020)

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But it is a burden born out of love and Julian of Norwich notes that God, our Mother, accomplishes all his works in love. As we look towards the holiest moments of the Christian year, when Christians around the world give thanks for the loving sacrifice made by Jesus on the cross, it can be helpful to reflect on the heaviness of love and the joy that it brings, whatever that might look like in our own lives.

We thank you all for the incredible love and commitment you have shown to everyone in your school communities this term and we wish you every blessing this Easter.

Gillian Georgiou – RE & SIAMS Advisor



Important Updates and Messages

Thy Kingdom Come – Platinum Jubilee

To celebrate the Platinum Jubilee and as part of Thy Kingdom Come 2022, we have 500,000 free storybooks for primary school children. This small colourful book has a royal theme and is based on the Fruit of the Spirit - faithfulness. Faithfulness is like loyalty, trustworthiness and commitment rolled into one, and the Queen has set an excellent example of this. Schools can order here for free (including free P&P) <https://cheekypandas.com/free-book/>

We are also providing assembly plans, activity packs, and take-home sheets for those that want them. The book is linked to one of the 5 animated TV episodes that we are providing to resource children and families this Thy Kingdom Come. These programmes have been produced by BBC animators to help children and families grow in their faith and learn about the bible in a format that will engage them most at a critical age for faith formation. The TV series and accompanying resources will be released on www.thykingdomcome.global/cheekypandas in time for Easter. We hope that you find these a helpful resource for your school.

Ukrainian Refugees

We have received the following from the Church of England Education Office -

The DfE have confirmed their advice to local authorities and schools on the rights of refugee and asylum seeker children to access a school which is contained within this guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-admissions-applications-from-overseas-children>.

The DfE are looking to update the site to be more user friendly by addressing specific queries they see from schools and LAs and to update EUSS content, but content is correct – e.g.

‘In most cases, foreign national children in the UK have the right to attend schools in England. School admission authorities must not refuse to admit a child on the basis of their nationality or immigration status nor remove them from roll on this basis.’

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities is shortly to publish a Welcome Pack for refugees from Ukraine – in Ukrainian and Russian - and this will include an annex advising them on how to apply for a school. The annex will be similar to the one in the Afghan Welcome Pack.

The DfE also have a mailbox which can be used for specific queries about Ukrainian refugees. It's SSPO.DfE@education.gov.uk.

St Lawrence Academies Trust - Chair

The St Lawrence Academies Trust is looking for a Chair of its Board of Directors – please see below for more information –

<https://www.lincolndioceseeducation.com/vacancies>

iSingPOP – Classroom Worship

Classroom Worship is iSingPOP's fun and interactive Collective Worship resource! It's a weekly, values-based, digital resource designed to engage the whole school in exciting and thought-provoking Collective Worship. Needing almost no preparation in advance, teachers can just click and play the 20-minute session which includes:



- An animated story
- A song and dance
- A reflection on the theme or value
- Peer-led prayers

There is also a follow up activity provided each week to offer children the opportunity to further explore what the value might mean for their own lives.

We're really excited to announce our values for Summer Term – British Values and Generosity!

In the first half of the Summer term we're going to look at the fundamental British Values (Democracy, Rule of Law, Respect, Tolerance and Individual Liberty) from a Christian perspective and explore how and why these values are important to Christians.

After May/June half-term we'll be focusing on the value of Generosity for the rest of Summer. The first few sessions will be knowledge builders which will lead up to finishing the year looking at some inspirational individuals and Courageous Advocacy. Hopefully we can send the children into their summer break feeling inspired to be generous!

These 12 sessions cost just £90 and if you're interested in finding out more or signing up, please visit our website (www.isingpop.com) or email Clare (<mailto:clare.morgan@isingpop.com>)