



3 April 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Families,

At this time I would normally be writing to you as we break up for the Easter holiday, celebrating the events and achievements of the Spring Term; however, these are not normal times. The Academy remains closed to the majority of students, but its doors stay open for our vulnerable students and the children of key workers and the staff who are fully supporting and occupied with the online learning being provided for your children.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each one of you for all that you are doing to support the home learning of your child, by using the Academy's At Home Learning Plan as well as the support you are giving the NHS by remaining in your homes and keeping safe. I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank staff for the way they have supported your children and me in the transformation of the physical St. Paul's into a virtual school for all learners, the speed at which we have done this has amazed even me!

The words of Jesus keep coming back to me, 'Let not your hearts be troubled' John 14:1. Our faith will be a great comfort and source of strength in these uncertain times. In normal circumstances we would have been preparing to celebrate the events of Holy Week and the Easter Triduum in our churches, unfortunately this will now not be possible as our places of worship have been directed to close their doors. However, I know many of you will be worshipping in your own home, and there are plenty of prayer resources on our website, which will be very useful in helping you to celebrate the greatest feast in the Church's year.

The greatest gift of Easter is hope – hope which makes us have that confidence in God, in this ultimate triumph and its good news and love which nothing can shake. No one can escape suffering, it is part of the human condition. By dying on the cross, Jesus fully embraces the eventuality all humans must face, but he also showed us that love and goodness surpass even death. By his death and resurrection, Jesus vanquished the power of sin, and so we can rejoice. There should be no room for darkness and despair in our lives because the power of Jesus' resurrection has conquered all evil. We have only to open ourselves to the mystery of God's love in Jesus to know the hope of salvation that is truly ours, now and forevermore.

Further to these thoughts on Easter, I would like to end with the prayer we have adapted from CAFOD we say every day at school:

***God of hope and mercy, united in prayer with our global family, we ask for the ability to slow and prevent the spread of C19 in our world.***

***We pray for our sisters and brothers who are affected everywhere, especially those in poor communities without healthcare.***

***Heal the sick, give eternal life to those who have died and bring consolation to families who have lost loved ones.***

***Help all who lead to make wise decisions for the good of everyone.***



*We pray that vaccines to protect and medicines to heal will be found quickly.*

*Hold us all in your merciful love. Amen.*

I wish you and your family every Easter blessing, may the risen Christ ever remind us that love is stronger than death.

With my very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shalome". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S' and a small 'e' at the end.

**Siobhan Malone**  
**Principal**

A solid horizontal blue line that spans the width of the signature above it.