



Dolen Mynyw Menevia News

Official Newspaper of the Menevia Diocese

Now in our 17th Year of Serving the Diocese and
published on the last Sunday of every month for following month

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Issue Number 153

January 2010

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM ST JOSEPH'S CATHEDRAL INFANT SCHOOL

**Christmas 2009 -
What does it mean to you and
to us? What do we hope for?
How will we celebrate?**

Many readers of Menevia News will be aware that in school we start to prepare so far in advance for this feast that when we finish school it can be difficult to develop a new enthusiasm for the actual day. However, if we think carefully of the true meaning of Christmas we will overcome fatigue and consider the ordeal of Mary giving birth to her Son in undesirable conditions. We will consider the responsibility of Joseph who, as protector, must have anguished over the location and danger under which he placed Mary. Finally, consider the future and welfare of any baby born into the world in surroundings only suitable for animals, let alone a baby who would be the saviour of the world.

In a world of technology and materialism how do we provide our children with the true Christmas message? You may think that this is easy - its not! How do we instil into young children the wonder and awe of the Christmas Story? Can the story of 2000 years ago still touch the hearts of children who can text and use computers with skill and dexterity? Yes, it does still enthral them and allows them to empathise with the baby who was born in the stable amongst the animals.

We have to 'delete' the present with all its materialism and false values and create pictures in the mind portraying the scene as it evolved 2000 yrs ago. The children, in their innocence and world of imagination, can smell the stable, they can hear the animal noises, they can picture the shepherds huddled in the cold and see the glorious light of the angels in the sky, reflected on the faces of those shepherds. The arrival of the Kings in grandeur arouses the interest of majesty and oriental perfumes. Oh yes we can re-create the Christmas Story and allow the children those few precious moments when they can become part of the Christmas Story. They can become absorbed and live the story as it unfolds. In moments such as these we must ensure that the children are aware that this is not a fairy story - it is fact and we are the living proof of 'The Incarnation' - 'when the word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us.'

This Christmas let us re-live this story within our homes. Let us remember when we shop for food of the poverty into which Jesus was born. As we decorate our homes let us reflect on the honour and respect that we give to 'The Kings'. Let us adorn our homes for the arrival of 'The King of Kings'. As Christmas approaches and we become harassed by



the pressures of today let us reflect on the patience that the shepherds exercised as they watched and waited on that cold hillside and yet they were to witness the glory of the angels. Hopefully we will be able to witness with awe the joy of Christmas.

Christmas is a time of giving. Let us not measure giving with material goods. Let us give time. Let us pray for others that they may enjoy Christmas. Let us remember the sick, those who are without employment, those who feel that life is not worth living, and those whose families cannot be with them. Let Christmas be a time that everyone may feel the closeness of 'The Nativity' and see themselves as some part of the

Christmas Story. To enjoy any event properly we need to prepare ourselves. If we have observed Advent and acknowledged its importance in preparing for this special feast we will be able to celebrate appropriately.

**All the staff and children in St Joseph's
Cathedral Infant School wish all the
readers of Menevia News God's Blessing
at Christmas and good health in 2010**

**Nadolig Llawn a
Blwyddyn Newydd Dda**

Peter Richards receives his M.B.E. from Her Majesty the Queen

In our September edition we reported on the award of an M.B.E to Mr Peter Richards, former Head of St Joseph's Cathedral School. He has now attended Buckingham Palace to receive his MBE from the Queen. He received his award for services to education at the Cathedral School. Her Majesty commented on the fact that over the years he must have seen many generations of children pass through his hands - and added "And you must have made a difference."

In accepting the award he said that it reflects the support he received throughout his 30 plus years at St Joseph's from children, staff, governors and parents. His MBE has been celebrated by the whole community, and with gratitude from Mr Richards.



Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth invests Peter
with his richly deserved MBE



Peter Richards with his wife and daughter at the Palace

Mr Richards attended the ceremony in the company of his wife and two of his daughters. Unfortunately his third daughter, who lives in Australia, was unable to attend.