



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools



OUR LADY'S SCHOOL NEWSLETTER 13 March 2026 olsunshine.catholic.edu.au

Parish Priest: Fr. Peter-Damien McKinley
Principal: Mrs Caroline Madigan
Parish Mass Times:
English: Saturday 9.00am, 5.30pm, Sunday 9:00am, 10.30am & 5:30pm
Vietnamese: Saturday 7.00pm, Sunday 12.30pm, Friday 7.30pm
Chin Hakha/Burmese: 2.30pm
Tongan: Every 1st Sunday 3.00pm
School Phone: 9312 2230
School website: www.olsunshine.catholic.edu.au

Our Lady's is a Child Safe School



Christ beside me: Walking in the footsteps of St Patrick

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Tues 17 Mar P&F AGM
Wed 18-Fri 20 Mar Yrs 5/6 Camp
Tues 24 Mar 6.30 Reconciliation Parent Night
Wed 25 Mar 5.00pm Foundation Family Picnic
Thurs 26 Mar Catholic Education & Harmony Weeks - *wear cultural dress, cultural colours and/or orange*
Thur 2 Apr End of Term 1 at 1.00pm
Mon 20 Apr *Closure Day - Professional Development for Staff (Literacy). No School for the children*
Tues 21 Apr Start of Term 2
Wed 22 Apr 7.00pm Student Well-being Parent Info Session

2026 Professional Development Days for staff

Term 2
Mon 20 April - Literacy Focus
Fri 5 June - Report Writing (Semester 1)
Term 4
Mon 2 November - Report Writing Semester 2
Friday 27 November - 2027 Planning

1:00pm finish days at the end of each term

Term 1 - Thur 2 April
Term 2 - Fri 26 June
Term 3 - Fri 18 September
Term 4 - Tues 15 December (last day of the 2026 school year for students).

Term 2 - Three Way Conversations (First Semester Reports)
Wed 24 and Thur 25 June

SACRAMENT DATES FOR 2026

Year 3 Reconciliation
Wednesday 29 April at 6.00pm
Year 4 Eucharist
Sunday 17 May at 10.30am
Year 6 Confirmation
Friday 31 July at 7.00pm

Dear Parents and Families,

It was lovely to have the long weekend with the Public Holiday. I truly hope you were all able to enjoy some relaxing family time.

With a four day school week, it certainly has been extremely busy, especially with the NAPLAN testing for our Year 3 and 5 students.

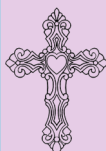
On Wednesday the students commenced with the Writing NAPLAN test. The Year 3 tests were successfully completed as they are written in a booklet. All the Year 5 tests are completed online and unfortunately, as you would have heard from your child and on the news, there was a system error with the online platform.

A huge thank-you to all our Year 5 teachers and students for their flexibility as we awaited for further instructions from VCAA (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority). Eventually the students were successfully able to complete the test on the same day once we received communication from VCAA that the system was up and running again. We were so impressed with the resilience and adaptability our Year 5 students demonstrated. On the next page, we have included the parent message shared from ACARA.

I am happy to say that on Thursday all our Year 3 and 5 students were able to complete their reading test online. Thankfully there were no major platform issues as we experienced on Wednesday. In addition, students were able to complete the Conventions of Language test today. Hooray!! There will one more to go, being the Numeracy test on Monday. We will endeavour to complete catchups tests during the NAPLAN timeline for any students that have been away.

In last week's newsletter Mrs Madigan shared the news regarding our Year 6 School Leaders, as they were presented with a badge and certificate at last week's assembly. Once again a huge congratulations to all our Year 6 students who have been given a position of leadership. Over the next few weeks, we will be sharing the student's speeches as we were extremely impressed with their efforts. In this week's newsletter, we have included the speeches from our four school captains, Bonnie, Olive, Andreas and Anthony.

Prayer of Thanks



We must thank God who created all things. We should give God praise and thanks. God, Father and Creator, we give you thanks for the world and everything you have given us.

We thank you for the warmth of the sun and the coolness of a gentle breeze. We thank you for the colours of the rainbow and the beauty of trees and flowers. We thank you for the love and kindness of the people in our lives. We thank you for the beauty of our world and the unending love that you have for us. Be with us in all that we do that our lives may give praise and glory to you. Amen

Message from ACARA

Dear Parents,

As you may have been made aware, NAPLAN testing was impacted on Wednesday morning by technical issues with the national assessment platform.

ACARA, the national body that oversees testing, has confirmed that testing resumed sometime after the initial incident.

ACARA recognises the significant impact to students disrupted during their NAPLAN writing assessments this morning, and for that we apologise unreservedly.

Schools have been informed to continue NAPLAN testing as per their planned test schedules. ACARA will continue to work closely with states and territories to support students to complete their NAPLAN tests.

Measures are in place to ensure students are not disadvantaged as a result of this technical issue.

Should parents and carers have any further queries about the NAPLAN disruptions on Wednesday morning, they should contact their child's school in the first instance.

Kind regards,

VCAA NAPLAN Helpdesk

Easter Raffle

Just a reminder about the Parents & Friends Easter Raffle .

Tickets are on sale for \$1.00 each on our QKR app. Raffle will be drawn on the last day of Term, Thursday April 2.

Donations are still needed for raffle prizes! Easter themed books, arts, crafts, toys & chocolate can be dropped off to the office by Monday 30 March.

Thank you to all the families who are already generously donated.

Wishing all our families a wonderful weekend.

Warm regards,

Christine Carabott

Mrs Christine Carabott

Deputy Principal

ccarabott@olsunshine.catholic.edu.au





Olive M - School Leader Speech



Good morning everyone, my name is Olive from 6A and I'm very grateful to apply for School Leader, if not the Faith Leader role. I want to make positive differences to our school like organising fun events to make it a happy and safe place for students.

This school is more than just a place to learn, it's a community. That's why I would like to take on the role of School Leader. I believe I would be a good leader because I show the School Gospel Values. For example; I show compassion by caring and having empathy for others. I'm courageous by being brave and going for things. I'm peaceful by not looking for conflict and being calm in stressful situations. I show respect by listening and speaking with appropriate words. I show service by taking on jobs eagerly and happily. Finally I show justice when speaking up when something seems wrong and by treating everyone equally.

On the faith side, I'm Catholic and I always donate to school charities like Project Compassion. I have demonstrated leadership and responsibility throughout my time at school as well as home. Examples include being selected to attend St Patrick's cathedral to represent our school with Ms Bertani last year in Year 5. I was also responsible for helping Ms Pina set up the Art Room every morning in Year 5. This year I was chosen to help out on our school photo day and at home I do weekly chores, take care of my cat and lend a hand to anyone that needs help. Another example of how I've been a good leader was when my friend and I saw a Foundation student who was looking for her friends. We spent a whole break looking for them, we made someone happy, now she smiles and waves everyday when we see her. Like St Mary MacKillop said, 'Never see a need without doing something about it.' I love to help people because when I see other people happy it gives me joy.

Thank you so much for listening, if I am chosen I will represent our School proudly and will do my best to help, care and make positive differences.

Please consider me for this role. Thanks again!

Anthony V - Leader Speech



Good morning teachers and students, my name is Anthony. Today I will tell you why I will make a good faith Leader.

Being a leader doesn't mean to rule over everybody, it is about making positive changes, inspiring others and defining a clear path forward helping the team understand 'why'. I want to help the school, grow my confidence, learn more of the School Gospel Values and get more knowledge about the Bible and God himself.

Strengths are a big part of being a leader. For example Nelson Mandela, a former President of South Africa showed the strength of determination for not giving up after protesting for equality, democracy and human rights. Even after being imprisoned for 27 years he ended up stopping apartheid and stopped a civil war. My strengths are showing respect to my fellow classmates, being peaceful to the people around me and being loyal to family members, friends and teachers.

In the past I have shown leadership by helping our Parish Priest as an altar server and standing up for friends, even if it was hard to. I also represented Our Lady's at St Patrick's Cathedral, winning Aussie of the Month in 2022 and I go to Church every weekend.

If I am chosen I would like to help teachers who need help with RE, deepen the faith of people who can't understand religious things and help the Priests more as an altar server.

I thank you all for listening to my speech as it allows me to build my confidence to do more things like this in the future.



Andreas A – School Captain Speech



Good afternoon fellow students, friends and teachers. As most of you already know, my name is Andreas. I am super thrilled to apply for the role of school captain.

I would love to fulfill this role because I want to make a positive impact in my last year at this school, for all the students and in particular the preps, who are experiencing their first year at this school.

I believe I would be a good leader as a School Captain for 2026 because I am always incredibly keen about new opportunities like this and I am a very responsible individual. For example, on certain days of the week I take 2 trains, each way, to get to school and back home.

I love to challenge myself with a very busy weekly schedule that includes activities such as language, music and multiple sports. Yet I still make a strong effort to assist with duties at home, to help my family.

On several occasions I have participated in Cross Country and Interschool Sports to proudly represent our school. In Cross Country I qualified for the second round, which I trained hard for in my personal time. In Interschool Sports the team I was part of qualified for the finals because we won all the games in our District. Additionally, I was nominated to attend St Patrick's Cathedral to represent our School, which I am very appreciative of.

I would also like to acknowledge all the students and staff that help make this the wonderful school that it is.

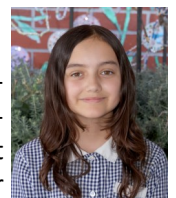
I am very passionate about our school and leadership values, which are: Justice, Courage, Compassion, Service, Peace, Respect, Empathy, Honesty, Humility, Flexibility and Resilience. I make a strong effort to reflect these values in my day-to-day conduct and interactions with everyone at the school, to further inspire these values.

If I am chosen for this role, I will contribute good ideas to the school, enhance our great environment, help the juniors learn positive attributes whilst also trying my best to be kind and an upstander. I am fully committed to do all I possibly can to positively contribute to the school, for all the students and the staff.

I would love to be School Captain as I truly believe that I would do a great job for our School. If that opportunity is not presented to me, I would equally like to volunteer as Sports Captain. If I do get chosen for Sports Captain, I will host awesome events and tournaments, represent my House Colour and show great Sportsmanship.

Thank you for listening to my speech. I would be honoured to represent our School as Sports captain or more desirably School Captain.

Bonnie M - Leadership speech



Hi my name is Bonnie M and I am trying out for the Role of school captain. I've been waiting since Foundation for this moment to become a leader! Originally I was going to try and get into a good and helpful Committee, but when my teacher announced that they aren't happening anymore I was a bit bummed. But not for long, as soon as the opportunity of becoming a school captain that represents all the children of our school came up, I simply couldn't resist. The traits of a leader all resonate with me; my attitude, my intentions and all that I want to participate in as a year six student!

Responsibility- if you were to ask my peers if I was responsible then I'd guess the votes would be great! I love setting examples, helping my buddies and overall being mature, proactive and helpful-ever since I could remember.

Every time an opportunity to help out came up I would simply put my hand up no matter the job or the reason. For example when the Year Sixes were away, I'd do their jobs, if anyone needed someone to run around the school to find something even if it wasn't there - I'd do it.

And finally confidence, even though I can be shy I've done many things that include being brave. Obviously this is one of them! I also did the play last year performing as two main characters. I helped out with applying for the mural, I've done cross country, interschool sports and much, much more. I focus on my work, just as I'd focus on our school, I want to be someone you can come up to, to talk about with all your challenges with the school, or other people, etc.

I hope I did well, even if I don't get this role because I know its hard to get, so I'm open to anything mostly the DDT committee. But remember if you vote for me, you also vote for you and your school so I hope I'll represent it well with some other amazing people.

Thank you for listening and good luck to everyone who tries out for any kind of leadership role!



Catholic Education Week - 15-22 March 2026

Catholic Education Week will be celebrated in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne from 15-22 March 2026.

This annual event is held to promote the special ethos of Catholic schools and to highlight the great things that take place in Catholic schools everyday.

The theme for this year's celebrations is,

"Christ beside me: Walking in the footsteps of Saint Patrick".

This year's theme celebrates the significance of Saint Patrick, the patron saint of our local Church in Melbourne. Saint Patrick's Cathedral, our mother Church, is named after the saint of Ireland.

Catholic Education Week is an opportunity for all Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne to celebrate their Catholic identity, the pivotal role they play within their local community and the strength of the sector.

Catholic education strives to make a difference in the lives of those in our schools and in the wider community by challenging young people to live out the message of Jesus and walk the way of the gospel to reach their full potential as compassionate, contributing, life-giving members of society.

There are 335 Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne that educate around 150,000 students and employ more than 20,000 teachers and staff, and most will celebrate Catholic Education Week in some way.

Our school is planning activities in order to celebrate Catholic Education and Harmony Week.

On Thursday 26th March children will be invited to dress in cultural dress, cultural colours and/or orange in order to celebrate the diversity in our community for Catholic Education and Harmony Week.

NForma Parent Portal — Absences

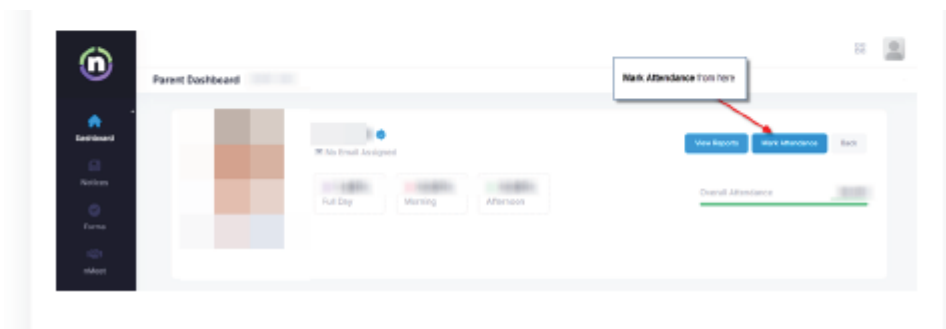


Did you know you can let the school know of your child's absence through the nForma Parent Portal in a couple of easy steps??

1. From the Dashboard, select your child who is absent that day:



2. In their profile click 'MARK ATTENDANCE'



3. Select a REASON, the DATE and ADD A COMMENT. Hit SUBMIT

A form for submitting an absence. It includes a "Reason Type" dropdown menu with a callout box "Select a reason for the absence". It includes "Start Date" and "End Date" fields, both with "February 7, 2025" entered, and a callout box "Select the date range". It includes a "Short Description" text area with a callout box "Add a comment". A "Submit" button is at the bottom left.

And that then syncs with your child's Classroom Roll.

For any holidays or extended leave, please come into the Office to fill out the Notification of Absence form.



Student Wellbeing Parent Information evening

Focus: Zones of Regulation; Self-regulation; Executive Functioning; Ways you can help at home.

Aimed mainly at new families to our school, especially parents of children in years F-1 and for families who did not attend a similar evening in 2024.

When: Wednesday 22nd April at 7:00pm



Third Week of Lent

(Week beginning Monday 9 March)

Every dollar raised by our school community in support of Caritas Australia's Project Compassion this Lent will help empower people across the world to build stronger, more resilient futures for themselves and their families. People just like **Monoranjon**.

Monoranjon lives in a coastal village in southwest Bangladesh, one of the regions most affected by climate change. He and his family face extreme heat, cyclones and water scarcities, which often destroy his crops and threaten his livelihood. Things began to change when Monoranjon joined the Community Managed Sustainable Livelihoods and Resilience Program run by Caritas Bangladesh, with the support of Caritas Australia. Through the program, he learnt climate-resilient farming techniques including organic vegetable cultivation and livestock vaccination, meaning he is now able to grow salt-tolerant vegetables and raise livestock.

Today, Monoranjon's income has improved, allowing him to send his children to school and protect their futures from poverty. He also now teaches others in his village, inspiring further change and opportunity across the community. Watch Monoranjon's story [HERE](#) to learn more about how our school is changing lives around the world - ensuring that people have the tools they need to face poverty, climate change and disaster.

Will you join us and walk alongside people like Monoranjon this Lent?



Please donate today.

You can support Project Compassion 2026 through the donation boxes or by scanning the QR code.

Or online at: projectcompassion.org.au

Or by calling: 1800 024 413

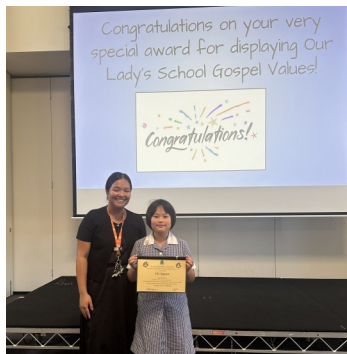
Thank you for standing with us as we *Unite Against Poverty this Lent*.

ST MARY MacKILLOP AWARD

Congratulations to the recipients of our St Mary MacKillop Award for March 2026.



Congratulations to:



Chi N 3E



Freddie L 2M

Justice Peace Respect Service Courage Compassion





Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools



OUR LADY'S SCHOOL SUNSHINE 2027 FOUNDATION ENROLMENT

OPEN NOW

Our Lady's is a Catholic Primary School
serving the Parish of Our Lady's
Sunshine



32 Station Place Sunshine 3020
www.olsunshine.catholic.edu.au

ENROLMENT FORMS AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE

Tours Available
Bookings essential
Tues 5 May 9.30am
Wed 13 May 9.30am
Mon 18 May 4.00pm
Tues 21 July 9.30am



PLEASE
BOOK A
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9312 2230



www.olsunshine.catholic.edu.au



enquiries@olsunshine.catholic.edu.au





OLS P+F

ANNUAL EASTER RAFFLE

RAFFLE DRAWN THU 2 APR
TICKETS \$1 EACH VIA QKR
Available to purchase now til 10am Wed 1 Apr

Donations needed for raffle prizes!
Easter themed books, arts, crafts, toys & chocolate
can be dropped off to the office by Mon 30 March.

1 Day Autism Workshop for Parents and Carers

Yarraville, VIC



Scan the
QR code or
[click here](#)
to register



This workshop is for parents, full time carers and grandparents.



Wednesday
13 May, 2026
9:15am to 3:00pm



Yarraville Club
135 Stephen Street
YARRAVILLE VIC 3013

Morning tea and a light lunch will be provided




Interpreters available upon request

During the workshop you will learn about:

- The diversity of autism
- Sensory processing
- Working together with your child's school.

Learn more about autism and neurodiversity-affirming ways to strengthen the partnership between home and school.

For more information or to register visit:

 www.positivepartnerships.com.au/PC

 jfeary@positivepartnerships.com.au



0477 574 746

Buy the Why

By Dr Justin Coulson

"But why?"

"I'll explain in a moment."

"But why?"

"Why" might be one of the most aggravating questions our children can ask. It would be so much easier if our kids would just accept that we are older, wiser, more experienced, and are only asking them to do *that thing* because it's worth doing. We just want them to trust us. And do the thing!

But no. They want to know "why". Sometimes our "why" isn't enough. They ask it again. "Why?" And again. "Oh... but why?"

Yet the question of "why" is an enormously important question. And it has powerful effects on our children's willingness and desire to act.

A negative example

"Dad, what is a surd?" My daughter was in Year 9. Seated at the table doing her homework, she looked at me inquisitively.

"Are you trying to tell me a bad toilet joke?" I stalled - because I had no idea what a surd was.

She explained, "today I've asked two teachers - both adults with university degrees - whether they knew what a surd was. And they didn't know!" She then pointed out I had a PhD, and I didn't know. Her blunt conclusion: "If no adult except my maths teacher knows what a surd is, why am I learning surds? It seems like you can function pretty well in life without it?"

A positive example

Some years ago I was in the office of the Alannah and Madeline Foundation, an organisation doing excellent work in bullying prevention and online safety. There was a sign on an internal door that read, "Please close the door as it helps with the air-conditioning."

I spoke to Annie, behind the reception desk; "I noticed the sign on the door. It has an explanation for your request. Why?"

Annie described how people consistently left the door open meaning the air-conditioning was inefficient. She tried a sign saying "Please shut the door", but no one did. Then she added the "why". Annie laughed as she told me "It's amazing! Everyone shuts the door now."

The Science

Studies have shown that when our children have a “why” that they can buy - they understand the rationale behind our requests and accept it as fair and reasonable - they are significantly more likely to do what we’re asking. But when they don’t “buy the why” - when there is no rationale behind our requests - they push back, offer minimal effort, or outright refuse.

A [2008 study](#) showed that when 136 students were given a rationale for an *uninteresting* learning task, they showed significantly greater motivation, deeper engagement, and better conceptual learning than those given no rationale. They personally valued the task because it “made sense” to them. The rationale (the “why”) transformed a task into something personally meaningful.

A major [analysis](#) of 74 studies showed that providing a rationale was the only strategy that produced increases in motivation to follow prescribed “health behaviours”. Not punishments. Not rewards. Not structure. Not pressure. The “why”.

So what does this mean for us as parents?

It means “because I said so” is one of the most expensive phrases in our vocabulary. It might win the moment, but it costs us our children’s buy-in - and over time, their trust.

When we give our kids a genuine rationale - one that connects the request to something that actually matters to them - we aren’t being soft. We aren’t negotiating our authority away. We are doing something far more powerful: we are helping them want to cooperate, rather than simply forcing them to comply.

This doesn’t mean every request needs a lengthy explanation. A simple, honest “why” is usually enough.

“We leave screens off in the morning because you’re sharper at school when your brain hasn’t been stimulated before 8am.” Or “We leave screens off in the morning because every time the screen goes on, we’re late. Work stops.”

That’s it. Real. Brief. Meaningful.

Whether it’s screens, music practice, visiting relatives on the weekend, cleaning the bedroom, picking up wet towels, putting food away, turning off lights, replacing toilet paper when the roll is empty, or any of the other things that drive us crazy at home, a rationale - a “why” - might just be the magic you’re looking for.

Children who understand the “why” don’t just follow rules. They internalise them. They carry them - because it now makes sense. When they “buy the why”, you no longer have to convince them. They understand, agree, and comply. And eventually, they don’t need us to remind them at all — because the rule has become their own.



Dr Justin Coulson is a dad to 6 daughters and grandfather to 1 granddaughter. Justin travels all around the country, speaking at schools to students, educators and parents about wellbeing and relationships. He is also the parenting expert and co-host of Channel Nine’s Parental Guidance, and he and his wife host Australia’s #1 podcast for parents and family: The Happy Families Podcast. Justin has written 10 books about families and parenting - with the latest about raising boys out this year! For further details visit happyfamilies.com.au.



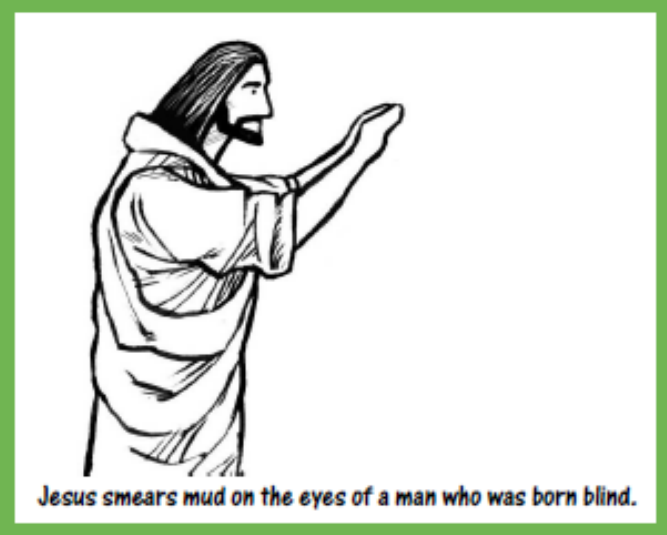
LENT Jesus heals the blind man



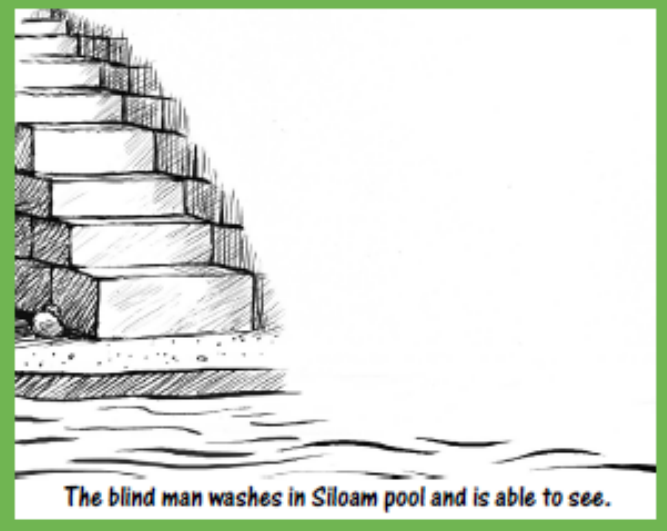
4th Sunday of Lent, Year A

Draw the story of Jesus healing the blind man

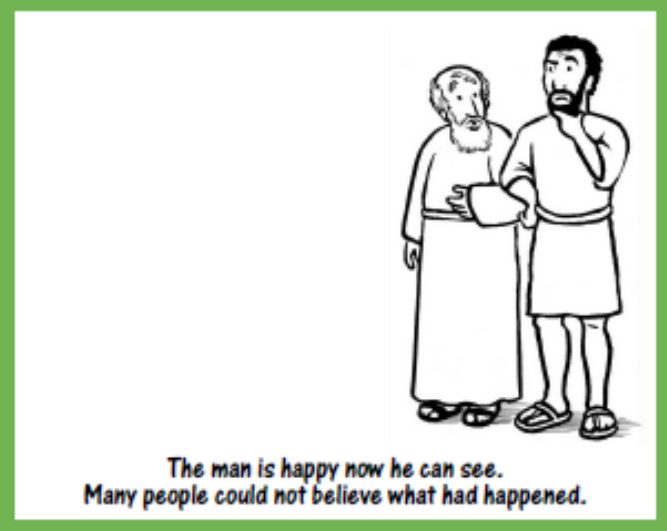
Help the blind man find Siloam Pool



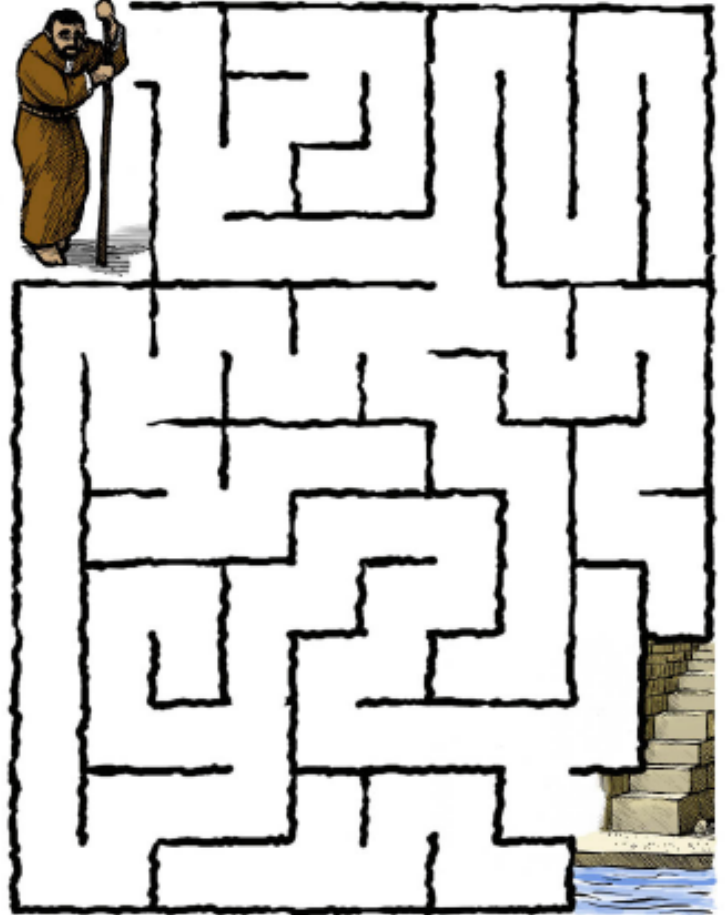
Jesus smears mud on the eyes of a man who was born blind.



The blind man washes in Siloam pool and is able to see.



The man is happy now he can see. Many people could not believe what had happened.



Gospel John 9:1. 6-12. 35-38

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. Jesus spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.' So they said to him, 'Then how do your eyes come to be open?' 'The man called Jesus' he answered 'made a paste, daubed my eyes with it and said to me, "Go and wash at Siloam"; so I went, and when I washed I could see.' They asked, 'Where is he?' 'I don't know' he answered.

Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.