



FCJ Bicentenary Year

Women of hope & energy for a broken world

You may remember that last year the FCJ sisters held a General Chapter, a time to look at what they are doing individually and as a group, and to make plans for the future. Their plans were written in a Chapter document called 'Widening the circle of love', which is about the FCJs doing all they can to reach out to the world and all its needs. There are 6 parts to their plans, and one of them is to be "women of hope and energy for a broken world".

FCJ Schools are important partners in the work of the FCJ Sisters
and so this week, we will think about how we can be
people of "hope and energy" for our world.

We will also reflect on the FCJ Bicentenary Year as it begins to draw to a close.

**This week's prayers are prepared by
Laurel Hill Secondary School FCJ & Laurel Hill Coláiste FCJ**



Monday 16th November

Today, 16th November, the students & staff at Maria Fidelis FCJ School in Somerstown, London, are celebrating Founders Day. This is the day, 190 years ago in 1830, when Marie Madeleine took over the running of a school in Somerstown. That school is now called Maria Fidelis Catholic School FCJ. Marie Madeleine had travelled all the way to London from France with another FCJ Sister, Julie Guillemet. It was Julie who then stayed in London to lead the school, which had previously been run by a priest called Fr. Nerinckx, and his sister.

Today, let's think about the fact that Marie Madeleine recognised that one way she could bring **hope and energy** to the world, was through providing education for children and young people. We give thanks that she used the gifts and talents which God had given her to help so many people throughout her life.



Monday 16th November

And so we pray...

Loving God,

We come before you at the start of this new week,
with all of its possibilities and opportunities.

We thank you that Marie Madeleine, and the FCJs who came after her,
had the courage to open schools to provide education for children and
young people.

We ask your blessing on all the FCJ Schools around the world today.

As we go through our day today, help us to be aware of your presence with
us in our lessons, in our break times, and in our conversations with others.

May we appreciate the gift of education and may you inspire
the international community to work together to ensure that all children
throughout the world have access to education.

Amen.



*Happy
Founders Day
to the Staff &
Students of
Maria Fidelis
FCJ School
from all the
FCJ Schools in
England and
Ireland!*



Tuesday 17th November



Today, let's read part of the Gospel from last Sunday's Mass. It is called the 'Parable of the Talents'. A 'talent' was a coin used in the time of Jesus. (Mt 25:14-21)

Jesus said 'It is like a man about to go abroad who summoned his servants and entrusted his property to them.

To one he gave five talents, to another two, to a third one, each in proportion to his ability. Then he set out on his journey. The man who had received the five talents promptly went and traded with them and made five more. The man who had received two made two more in the same way. But the man who had received one went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. Now a long time afterwards, the master of those servants came back and went through his accounts with them.

The man who had received the five talents came forward bringing five more. "Sir," he said, "you entrusted me with five talents; here are five more that I have made." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy servant; you have shown you are trustworthy in small things; I will trust you with greater; come and join in your master's happiness."

What do you think this parable is about?



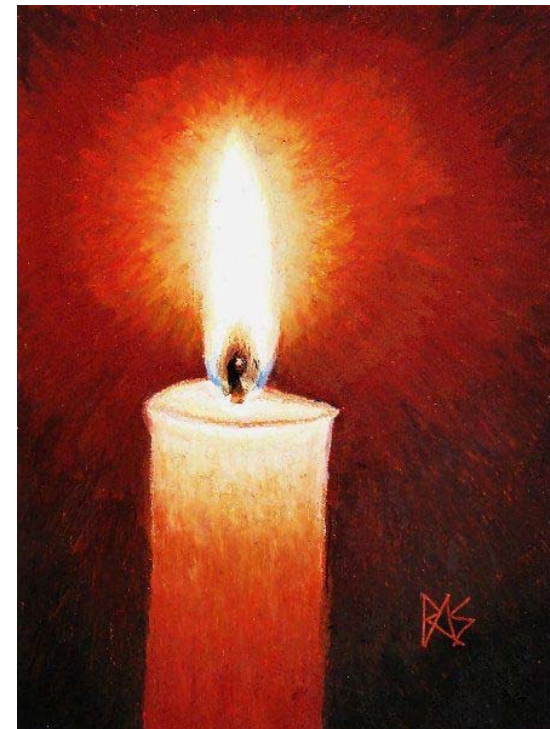
Today, one of the things this parable can say to us is that using the gifts and talents we have been given by God, is a really important thing to do. **What gifts or talents will you try to use today to help others?**

Maybe the gift of kindness, or the ability to listen carefully when our friends are talking to us.

As well as making sure we use our own gifts and talents well, it is also important that we encourage other people to use their own gifts and talents too.

Another way of talking about using our gifts and talents is to talk about “letting our light shine”.

The author Marianne Williamson wrote: **“As we let our light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.”**



We pray...

Loving God,
We thank you for the gifts and talents
you have given to each one of us.

Sometimes it is hard to recognise our own
giftedness, so please help us to see
the good in ourselves and to use our talents
to make the world a better place.

Help us to be attentive to the ways in which
we can encourage one another today,
so that everyone in our school community
knows that they are valued and
appreciated.

We make this prayer in Jesus' name.
Amen.



Wednesday 18th November



The FCJ Sisters want to be women of hope and energy for a broken world.

These are some of the ministries which FCJ Sisters are currently involved in, through which they try to bring hope and energy to the world...



Sr. Sisca is a teacher and works with young adults in Myanmar



Sr. Anouska is a University Chaplain in London



Sr. Ciony delivers healthcare programmes at the FCJ Centre in Manila, Philippines



Sr. Michelle is a teacher in Canada

Sr. Veronika works with an organisation in Germany which supports women who have been trafficked



Sr. Lois Anne works at the FCJ Refugee Centre in Toronto, Canada

Wednesday 18th November



How can you bring hope to people today?

Perhaps with a smile...

Perhaps by asking someone how they are...

Perhaps by telling someone you care...

Perhaps by pointing out the good things that are happening even in these difficult times...

Perhaps by supporting a charity...

We pray...

Heavenly Father,

We thank you for the gift of this new day.

We ask your blessing on all that we will do today,
and on the work of the FCJ Sisters around the world.

Help them and us to be people of hope today;
to see the signs of hope all around us and to offer hope to one another.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



Thursday 19th November



Yesterday we were thinking about the ways we can offer hope and encouragement to people.
Here is a reflection to help us to think more about that:

Don't withhold the word of praise, it may spur someone on –
Just at a moment when they think that everything has gone –
A word of praise for work well done may seem a trifling thing –
But from it something good and wonderful may spring.
We never know what's passing in the mind of those we meet –
A smile, a look of friendliness may seem so very sweet –
To someone burdened by a weight of sorrow or distress,
To whom the world is nothing but a lonely wilderness.
There's always something we can praise – something we can say –
To lift their eyes above the seeming darkness of the day –
And so renew their confidence to make another start,
And do the job before them with a brave and happy heart.



And so we pray...

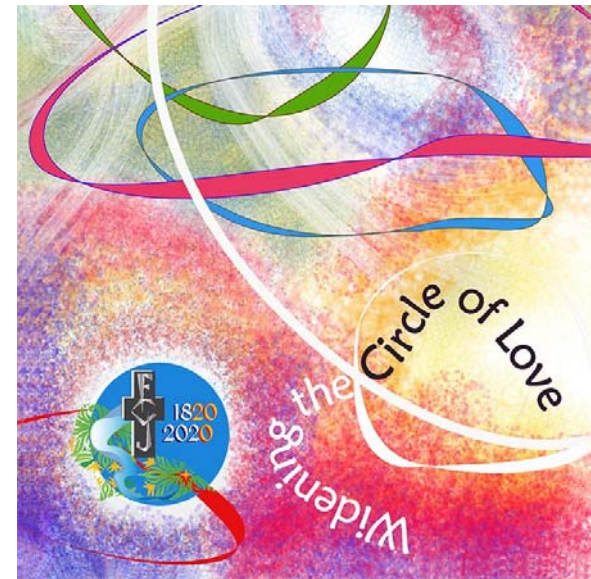
Loving God,

We know that the things we say and the way we say things can make a big difference to the people we speak to.

Help us to choose our words carefully so that our words today may always be beneficial to those who hear them.

In this way may we offer hope and energy to all we will meet.

We make this prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.



Friday 20th November

As you know, this year we are celebrating the FCJ Bicentenary
– 200 years since Marie Madeleine founded the FCJ Society.

As with all big occasions, the FCJ Bicentenary celebrations had an official beginning date & an official end date. The official end date is this coming Sunday, November

22nd,

but no doubt the celebrations will continue a little longer!

This Sunday is also the Feast of Christ the King and National Youth Sunday.

We will think more about these next week.



Friday 20th November



Let's take a few moments to think about the ways in which we have celebrated the FCJ Bicentenary in school...

We began with the FCJ Day of Kindness on 20th September 2019



What else have we done since then?

You might also want to think for a moment about what it means for you to be part of an FCJ School. What are you grateful for?

Today's quote in our FCJ Reflection Book, Faithfulness of God,
is from Marie Madeleine herself.

She said,

**"Ask God for what you need, and do not give way to
discouragement."**

And so we pray,

Loving God,

As we near the end of this special Bicentenary year,
and united in prayer with students and staff of FCJ Schools around the world,
we thank you for your faithfulness to, and through, the FCJ Society
over the last 200 years.

We give thanks to you for the life of Venerable Marie Madeleine d'Houët;
for her great faith, courage and confidence,
and for the family and friends who helped her to become the person she was.

Prayer continues on next slide...



We give thanks for all the FCJ Sisters who have served you over the last 200 years,
and especially those who have been, and still are,
involved in the life of our School community.

We ask your blessing on all FCJ Sisters and on their ministries around the world
as they seek to be women of hope and energy for our world.

We give thanks too for the blessings of this Bicentenary year;
for the opportunities we have had to share and to celebrate
even in the midst of these more challenging times.

May we continue to be inspired by Marie Madeleine's example of faithful companionship.

We bring before you the needs of our world at this time,
and pray for your healing, your hope and your peace.

We make these and all our prayers in the name of Jesus, Faithful Companion. **Amen.**



Friday 20th November



Examen

Can you remember something or someone who has brought you hope this week?

What or who are you grateful for this week? Take a moment to thank God.

What has been challenging? Ask God to help you with this.

As you look ahead to the weekend, what would you like to ask of God?