



Children's Pilgrimage to Walsingham 2016

I am pleased to say that this is the third consecutive year St Martin's has been able to take a group of children on the National Children's Pilgrimage to Walsingham. Father David, Father Jack, myself (Kay Craigie), with the help of Ellie Brown were able to run a very successful children's pilgrimage on Friday 26th - Sunday 28th February. On the Pilgrimage we were able to take a group of 13 children – 6 girls and 7 boys – away for a fun, enjoyable and spiritual weekend. Whilst there, all the children took part in everything that the annual children's pilgrimage to Walsingham has to offer.

The weekend started as it has in the past, leaving from BWI School on the Friday at 1.30, Mrs Westbrook, most of parents and Father Simon came to wave us off. After a blessing and prayer from Father Simon we were on our way. On arrival at Walsingham all the children were able to settle into their rooms and unpack before going to dinner. After dinner we all meet in the green room so all the children took part in writing prayer and making a prayer sheet. The children then worked together to design and make their own St Martin's collaborative banner which was used in all the church services. That evening we took part in the first church before having hot chocolate and biscuits together in the refectory, before going back to our rooms to settle down for the night.

On the Saturday after breakfast we all walked with our banner through the village and into the beautiful country side to the Catholic Shrine Church where all the children on the pilgrimage gathered for activities and a church services. After the service the children enthusiastically embraced the barefoot pilgrim's mile which began as the pilgrims had in the past at the 'Slipper chapel'. Most of the children chose to take their shoes and socks off and as we walked we all took turns holding our banner. After lunch there was some free time; which the children decided to use by going shopping in the village. In the afternoon there was a bouncy assault course, a bouncy castle and a large inflatable slide outside as well as two craft areas inside. The children spent most of the afternoon running around and using the

inflatables. They also enjoyed the craft making and the fun tattoos. As the afternoon drew to a close the children had just enough time to freshen up before dinner. After dinner we all went back to change before it was time for the disco in the refectory. The children loved the disco and enjoyed dancing. The DJ was great and got all the children involved in games. He was very interactive and put the girls and boys into teams to play fun games with balloons. After the games had finished the children spent the rest of the evening dancing and having fun till the disco finished and it was time for bed.

On the Sunday after breakfast we all went to the park with footballs and the children were able to run around and use the playground equipment before it was time for the Sunday mass. Once again this service was very interactive and visual for the children. After the service it was lunch time and all the children loved the roast dinner that had been provided. Once the service had finished it was time to say our goodbyes and thanks to everyone who had made our weekend at Walsingham such a special experience. As the coach arrived to pick us up many of the children said they would love to come again next year.

Kay Craigie Childrens Pilgrimage Leader.



