CIS Herald Section



Dear parents and students,

Let us appreciate the extra time we have been gifted with our families and loved ones. We are seeing how nature is finally able to breathe again, with less pollution, less activity and less strain on the environment. We understand these are not the biggest of wins but we believe in small steps to big victories.

Let us take this time to introspect on our lives, nurture new interests and mature into the best versions of ourselves.

Through this special edition of the Herald, we wish to highlight the valuable work being done by our students and teachers as they spend their time effectively at home.

CEO's address...



Dear Parents,

One single virus has brought in a revolution quite unheard of. The world we knew has changed so drastically that it is hard to comprehend. Our lives, our behavior, our ways of life – everything has changed. The society, the economy, the politics, the culture and the psyche have taken a turn we never could perceive and worst, we do not know how to deal and come to terms with it.

One thing has to remain constant though; the human spirit has to go on. It has to develop, invent, create and no matter what the dialectics is going to lead us – we need to build our future generation to prepare the model where all these dimensions of 'Social Distancing', 'Individualism' and others can be factored. Our little ones now have to deal with the jelly-like superman of Nietzsche.

In our endeavour, we have got a whole cohort of dedicated teachers at CIS, who have taken up a challenge – not only to deal with the impending disaster but also to educate your child. They have adopted a 'Virtual Learning Environment' about which they had no clue, but the way they have adapted to it and the colossal pressure it entails, is something we must salute. We are lucky to have this group of people who are not 'Stars' with million-dollar contract amounts – but the real guiding light for our children's future.

Believe me, how are they coping up is beyond my understanding.

It is my earnest request please do not put anything before the mental well-being of your child. It is an emotional roller-coaster ride for them right now. Everything is uncertain for them at this moment. They are trapped in a lift and they can very well do without the bugbear of the parental expectations.

Let them sleep, eat, have fun with you and their siblings, do what they wanted to do but never could because of paucity of time. Let them hear how much you love them.

I wish I could be with my daughter now. Do some physical exercise with her as she is always after my life because of my healthy waistline. Bake some doughnuts with her – of course when her mother is not around. Read out Tagore to her. Try to do some ballet moves with her and no matter how much I hate it – hear some of the songs they hear nowadays with a façade of happiness!

Stay safe!

Mr. Ayan Pal



To my Young Learners and Fellow Parents

Life, as we know, is supremely unpredictable and throws difficult challenges at us at the most unexpected hours. Today, we are all faced with one such challenge of a worldwide pandemic -COVID-19. The past few weeks have not been easy and we have been faced with concerns leaving us powerless and helpless.

However, every cloud has a silver lining! Although none of us have experienced a pandemic before, the CIS family of students, parents, educators, leaders and staff members have quickly risen to the occasion, as always.

Calcutta International School, as we know, is a second home to us, and being away from school for over a fortnight has not been easy. I would like to begin by saying how much I miss seeing all our wonderful students, staff and faculty members. Although we cannot replicate our traditional school experience, with the help of technical advancement and our dedicated faculty, we have been able to take learning to a new virtual level. As an institution, we are working to ensure continuous learning to keep our students' minds moving forward. Our teachers have ensured that learning doesn't stop even at the face of a crisis- they have tried to keep teaching and learning fun by sending innovative and engaging projects and activities.

Let us see the positive impact of Covid 19 on our lives as of now. This ongoing pandemic has in fact grounded us all and taken us back to our roots. Traditional family values are being rekindled and explored. Connecting with loved ones, sharing household work, pursuing hobbies and skills, taking care of our own and each other's emotional and spiritual well being by communicating and being compassionate has taken priority.

I am very proud of our young learners for working diligently and for adapting to these changing teaching and learning scenarios. My dear students, you have shown resilience, flexibility and positivity during these uncertain times. Please be assured that you will have the academic and wellness supports you need to thrive in and beyond the current situation. I would like to extend my gratitude to all our parents for their continuous support. The next few weeks will not be easy and we seek your cooperation as we travel this new territory together. There will be mistakes, problems and concerns along the way. However, there will be more successes, happiness, hope, laughter, fun and purpose! We understand many of you are still working from home and have to balance your home, work and support your children during this time of distance learning. We are here to patiently support our students and you through these challenging times. Together, we will successfully manage this crisis and do all we can to keep our children safe and continuing to learn.

Our teachers have been an anchor to students and parents during these times. I would like to thank each faculty member of the school for the commendable work being done by them. In spite of teachers having to take care of their daily household chores and family members, they have been working hard to plan and send innovative and engaging work for their learners. Learning has not stopped for them too. Wonderful explorations of new teaching strategies are being shared and implemented - most for the first time. Many are attending online teacher training courses and webinars too! I applaud each teacher's initiative, drive and open mindedness to learn, unlearn and relearn even in times such as these.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Board of Governors for their unwavering support and guidance extended to all members of the school community at all times. Their proactive decision making has ensured that all systems and processes of the school continue to function during the unforeseen school closure.

It is an honour for me to be a part of this resilient community, the strength of which has always been the school's greatest resource. Although we are now separated by space and circumstance, I hope you all will continue to draw comfort from the bonds that connect each of us to the school and each other.

We salute our doctors, nurses, health workers and all community helpers who are working around the clock to ensure that we are safe. Such big sacrifices and selfless gestures keep us humble and grounded. We pray each day for their welfare and the welfare of their families.

When we emerge out of this pandemic, we hope to be a stronger family, a more caring society, a more united country, a greener planet and a healthier world. Let us continue to count our blessings and keep the flame of hope alive. God bless!

Mrs Pratima Nayar Principal – Junior School

An Awareness Talk

Dr Souren Panja, a Senior consultant and reputed Critical Care specialist at the Rabindranath Tagore International Institute of Cardiac Sciences at EM Bypass, visited the school on the 4th of March to address the young learners and teachers on the global outbreak of Novel COVID-19. Dr Panja, accompanied by Mr. Devraj Mukerji and by camp in charge, Mr Mohanty.





In a very child friendly and simple way, Dr Panja spoke of the simple precautions that pupils ought to take do not cough openly, always wash your hands, avoid large gatherings, friend's birthday parties and not visit crowded places.



In an interactive session with the students of Grades 1-5, Mrs Nayar and Mrs Dastur Mukerji, explained to the children the importance of acceptance and solidarity especially at a time when the world is facing a challenge like never before. They further emphasized that it is the values of tolerance, patience, respect and understanding towards each other irrespective of varied ethnicity and communities, which pave the way for a brighter tomorrow.

Build it with the Best!



Mrs Sharmila Majumdar Section Head – Primary

Covid 19 has cut us all off from the outside world and brought us all in confined quarters.

The school is the second home for all children. It is important for them to continue to learn in an environment that is welcoming and enjoyable. For the little ones, half the battle was won supplementing to home school learning and trying to bring some resemblance of routine and order to the day through variable workable strategies

Teachers reached out to their students via social media to connect with them

and reassure them that all was fine. We tried to make their days creative and joyful. Parents have been immensely supportive and given feedback that the children were happy and engaged. We extend our fellow feeling towards one and all. We wish everyone feels safe and secure during such turbulent times.

Working together to ensure learning continues...

Who would have thought this would happen! Within five days after the Spring break, the school went from full operations to a complete closure on March, 16th 2020 to protect the CIS family from the COVID-19 disease. Thus, arose the need to create a remote learning programme to operate from home.

E-Learning became the mantra for the teachers of the Junior Section. Video conferencing on Zoom and Webinars to connect with educators around the world and learn from each other became the order of the day. Extensive interactions with Subject Coordinators and Heads resulted in planning the way forward. Thus,



Mrs Neelam Choudhary Section Head - Junior

windbarked on a new journey of teaching learning. Focus has not just been on academics but co-curricular areas and emotional well-being of our children as well. We have tried to keep our students constructively engaged and tried making learning fun thanks to our teachers.

I must give credit to our adaptable, young learners who have really embraced the online learning environment sportingly. Our parents have been incredibly supportive as what we have tried to achieve would not have been possible without their partnership.

In the past few weeks, we have learned a lot. No doubt we will continue to improve further. As a final thought – and most importantly - we have come together as one, as a result of this global challenge and will surely overcome it as a family.



Amidst social distancing, our new way of life, the fountain of creativity being expressed and explored by our children is truly heartening.





Music, Art, Yoga - Expressions of the heart and soul!





Hear it from the Math, Science and Language Coordinators...



The various departments of Junior School have been trying, in their own small way, to help students, parents and teachers. We are proud to note that everyone has responded to this situation with great zeal and courage and definitely deserve a lot of appreciation for all the effort put in.

During the first two weeks, while the teachers explored ways of interaction and planned how to take the curriculum forward, they also set reinforcement work for them. This helped the facilitators set up a rhythm and create stability.

On the work front, the key points have been to ensure that there is schedule and structure.
Learners are being given various anchoring and extended activities on the topics covered.
Links are being mailed on Edmodo for the students to explore and widen their horizon.

Teachers have made the revision work innovative, interesting and also fun-filled, by incorporating puzzles, number mysteries, mazes and quizzes. Feedbacks of the assignments are being provided in a timely manner through mails and Edmodo. The young minds have been exposed to audio and video links to enhance their language skills and vocabulary development. It has also been ensured that they hear the language as much as they write.

The onset of third week made us risk-takers to work on those units of which the learners have prior knowledge and can be explored further by research, through video links, engaging activities in which they can involve their family members, follow up worksheets and pulling feedback from students.

Classes which were preparing to take the Progressions and Checkpoint are continuing with their reinforcement through Practice Papers on mixed concepts and revision sheets on specific topics covered so far. This initiative was taken to ensure structured engagement for the students and ensuring no learning gap.

We applaud our students for their open-mindedness. We hope the spirit of innovation continues unabated while we carry on with our efforts to adapt to new challenges and the new ways of teaching.

*'The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you' -*B.B.King



Our little wonders keep the learning process going. These highly motivated learners are the pinnacle of strength and determination.







The Teachers of Class 4

Our Principal is the head of school And she is its fuel The best part of the junior school is our section head Whenever we are in trouble, her hand spreads Our class teacher handles us all. She comes running whenever we fall She teaches us history and geography And the class is so interesting that I want to write her biography Next, I come to the English teachers who make our language richer Our maths teacher makes hard to easy mathematics By teaching us many tricks Our science teacher makes science challenging But in the end, it is as clear as a diamond ring The hardest part comes in Bengali But our teacher is very friendly Then I come to the teacher of Mandarin Who teaches those characters with a grin The ICT teacher makes the class interesting To help us in understanding P.E is fun Especially when the teachers make you run The library teacher helps us to choose books which tells us stories Of mystery, fame and glory Our art sir brings out creativity By making us do lots of activity Our value education teacher teaches us values Of hope, peace and truth Our drama sir teaches us acting by enacting Music sir teaches us music And he selects you in choir only when you get triple ticks I must not forget to include the teachers of Hindi, French and German Because they are equally important The teachers of class 4 are the best Because they do their duty without any rest.

Attack of the Corona Virus

Corona virus, full of danger, Is attacking the world without any anger! It was created in Wuhan, one fine day, By an evil scientist who made it with happiness and gay! A week later, the virus came to the local Chinese market, And the people there got infected faster than a circuit! Cough!, wheeze!, sneeze!, achoooo!!, But how it happened, nobody knew. Then later it spread to the world! Across the cities the virus twirled! Lockdowns! Isolations!, they all began! Faster than when you turn on a fan! Hospitals more, houses less This whole world is becoming a big bad mess! Doctors trying never sleeping, Patients crying, families weeping The only cure now, a doctor once said, Is to keep fit and not stay in bed! To wash hands and to drink hot water, Is also the only cure now To not leave our lives in a slaughter! Everyone listening, please stay well, Don't get a cold and don't get any swells!



Dibyesh Sanyal (4B)



Class teachers connected with students over Zoom. It was a cheerful interaction of students with their teachers and classmates.







We have been equally concerned about our faculty members as well as the sub staff. Telephonic conversations with them has kept us updated about their health and well-being. WhatsApp conversations and conference calls have made everyone feel less isolated. We have recently also had a virtual birthday celebration together on ZOOM!

Messages from our Dadas and Didis

They responded to telephonic calls and WhatsApp messages sent by Mrs Neelam Choudhary.

> Arun dada says he was missing school. He is alone at home as his family is in the village. He talks to them many times a day.

Mrs Sharmila Majumdar says, "I have been in touch generally with the didis of the Primary Section every week. They are all safe and sound at home, being very cautious not to step out. They are anxious to get back to work and keep asking when they can start working. They have rested enough they say. They feel happy to get a call from school, to think that they are being cared for in a very personal way."



"Good morning ma'am, thank you for thinking of us, yes we are fine in Kolkata." -Kishore dada

Geeta didi says she is not liking being at home. Can't go to church during Lent. Sangeeta didi is fine though her leg is troubling her. She is unable to visit the doctor. Her sister Sonali, a didi at CIS, is also well.













Bonding of the hearts - Being isolated from the rest of society and our mundane routine, this time has brought with itself an opportunity to bond, to understand and love our loved ones in a whole new light, making us stronger, generous and more kind.







Together is our favourite place to be...









Hope is seeing light in spite of being surrounded by darkness...

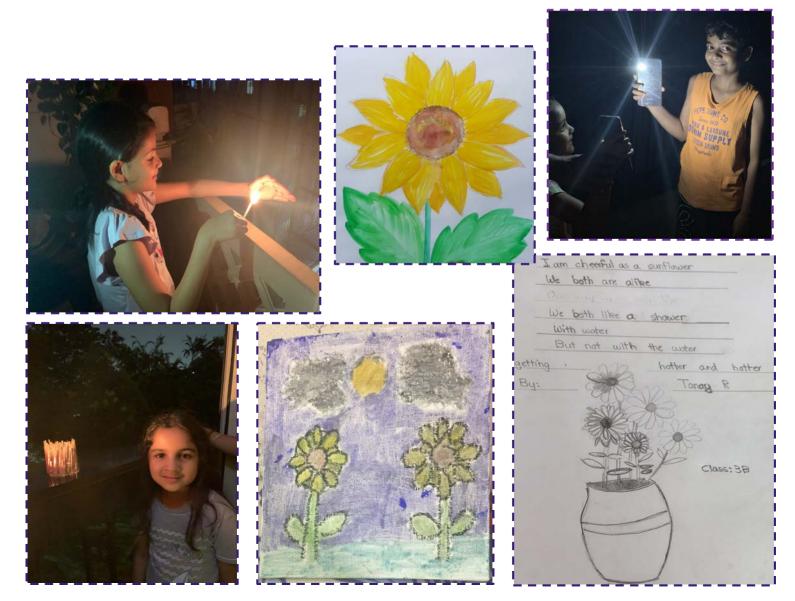
Just like a lotus flower thrives in a bed of dirt/mud and yet shines through, in the same way an individual with a good foundation of values can sail through tough situations that life offers.

At this time of global crisis, values of courage, hope, patience, compassion, unity, responsibility and discipline are being put to test. If we remain connected to our value system, we can build a circle of protection around ourselves and our families.

The students of CIS have made us proud by simply being aware of these values and living up to them. It takes a lot of motivation and inspiration to work and study from home without a teacher. PPTs, drawings, paintings and hands on activities have been approached with so much interest and enthusiasm. "Thought of the Day" and "Mood of the Day" have been posted on Edmodo.

Very soon this situation will be behind us and life will come back to normal. We will be able to proudly say "We conquered the toughest evil with the sword of knowledge and the eye of wisdom. We did the impossible. We stayed at home for endless days and yet didn't crumble or grumble!"

Ms. Lakshmi Khanna Teacher of Value Education in Grades 3,4 and 5



Choose to be optimistic, it feels better - Dalai Lama

The Positive Side - our students say it through slides

<image>

The most enjoyable part 🙂

 Cooking was a whole new experience because I learned so much from it!



THE GOOD EFFECTS OF CORONAVIRUS

- POLLUTION LESSENED, BLUE SKY APPEARED IN CITIES LIKE LONDON, DELHI AND SO ON.
- THE AIR AND THE WATER IS CLEANER.
- BIRDS ARE CHIRPING IN CITIES IN THE MORNING.
- GLOBALIZATION REDUCED. COUNTRIES WILL BE SELF-SUFFICIENT IN AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIAL FRONT.







A Letter from the Counsellor

'You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them' – Maya Angelou

Dear Parents and my dear students,

Human beings are programmed to perceive any crisis / unprecedented emergency such as the Coronavirus, as a threat to their perception of normalcy. Psychologically and physiologically, humans react to these experiences in various ways. When the unprecedented 'lock-down' was announced, many thoughts and feelings surfaced in all our minds. As is true of all human beings, we have the power to evolve and adapt to any circumstance. So with the Coronavirus pandemic ! Let us take some time to think of how resilient we all have been through the last 3 weeks. We have found the power within ourselves to become self sufficient as much as possible. I know many of our students are helping with household chores and in the process have learnt essential life skills such as cleaning, cooking and tidying up!

Most of you wished for time with family members, and this wish has been answered now ! You are all spending time with each other, if you are blessed to be together as a family. Cherish these times, as this is a space where you can share your feelings, thoughts and wishes, and maybe see each other in a new light! In hindsight, we often view things from another perspective. What may have begun as fear of the unknown, has emerged as resilience, strength and self reliance. Similarly, let us be hopeful for more learnings in the coming days.

Let us count our blessings for having a roof over our head, and food at our table. It is important to think of those who are needy, at a time like this. I urge parents to talk about the people who have been impacted by the virus, the less fortunate, health care professionals, the Police forces, the Army, our house-helps, the security guards, the dadas and didis in school. This is a time for insights, and I am sure we have many stories of hope that can help our children empathise with those who are not as privileged as we all are. Remember, we are all in this together, and when we meet, we will emerge stronger, more resilient as one big family!

Until then, I am available via email at schoolcounsellor@calcuttais.edu.in for anyone who wants to share their concerns, or have a video session!

Stay Safe and Stay Healthy!

Love always,

Mrs Farishta Dastur Mukerji

What parents have to say...

At a time when our family is separated across two different countries, we deeply appreciate the support of the CIS family. The inspiring messages on edmodo and regular assignments is something Amarissa looks forward to. We are unable to connect on the whatsapp group at the designated time as it is our core working hour. However, it is amazing to see how Mrs Das and Mrs Dhanuka continue to interact and inspire. We are touched by Mrs. Das's gesture of reaching out to Amarissa who is missing her father. These are indeed challenging times and you have stepped up to create a loving circle of warmth and super fun activities. Thank you teachers! As the saying goes not all superheros wear capes!

Parents of Amarissa Hartmann - PNA

CIS is one of the very first and few which started distance learning in Kolkata and it's going very smoothly for my son and me. There is no pressure of being online at a particular hour and we are free to make the child to do the worksheet as per our convenience. Work is not hampered and nor do we feel the pressure of homeschooling. **Parent of Devyansh Shah - N A**

I feel the school has been absolutely brilliant in its communication, learning aids, worksheets for the younger ones and detailed assignments for the older kids. The kids are being very well engaged at home completing their work and keeping them connected with their regular school assignments. A big thank you to all the school teachers for the extra effort they are putting in and seamlessly continuing the teaching process. **Parent of Ansh Sharma - UN A**

At the outset we would like to appreciate the efforts of CIS in these difficult times in progressing our child's knowledge and skill levels. The worksheets provided regularly have helped keep the learning mindset going and also brings a sense of discipline and takes forward the education process.

While not a replacement for classroom education, these activities have tried to make the best of the testing times we find ourselves in.

We thank our teachers for their continuous support. Parent of Ayaan Kasera - PN B

The distance learning program has helped our child academically to perform well. The teacher's guidance and support towards this is a driving force for us.

Our child looks forward to these worksheets and he enjoys doing it independently.

Parent of Burhanuddin Rampurawala - NB



As a parent, one always tries to keep up with what is happening in the classroom, however we never knew that our kid's classroom was so exciting! The assignments that we received through Edmodo were very engaging, Yaachne enjoyed doing many of them along with learning the concepts. In fact, she wants to redo her science assignments because the activities associated with them were quite fun for her. In addition to the core subjects, we were pleasantly surprised to receive art assignments, physical activities and crafting ideas along with audio-visuals to demonstrate. Knowing that her teachers had sent them for her, Yaachne has been keen to do the assignments. Most of all, as parents we have been overwhelmed with all the care and concern on the part of the teachers, they have been available to us on email, whatsapp, Edmodo and the phone, and they have been calling and talking to the kids. All the parents agree that CIS teachers and staff have done an exemplary job fulfilling this sudden demand of distance learning. Parents of Yaachne Bikky Agarwal - UN B





The online learning initiative that CIS has taken during this critical period truly is praiseworthy. I feel that the assignments are really well planned and give the young minds an opportunity to learn at their own pace in the comfort of their home. Learning could be extended beyond the textbooks encouraging kids to venture out from garden to kitchen and all the world around through Kiddle. Young ones have greatly enjoyed the Art, Drama and PE activities, which made it worth the effort. I sincerely thank CIS teachers and all members for their extended help and support. Parent of Demira Mukherjee -1 A

I appreciate the initiative taken by the school in such short notice. The worksheets provided the children keeps them to engaged for quite some time. Also the appreciation extends to all the subject teachers who come up with innovative ideas to keep them busy in a constructive manner. It also makes the kids independent and responsible to complete their work and submit in the time period provided. Learning is not restricted to the classroom and CIS has shown a good example of the same. I thank all the teachers for their cooperation and support. Parent of Vairaj Jhunjhunwalla - 1 B

I would like to thank all of you from the bottom of my heart for your efforts and initiative during this pandemic. It has been a confusing time for all our kids, and the work that is being sent on a daily basis has been extremely helpful. It gives them some structure during this chaos. Every single subject is being covered including PE, and all the work is so diverse and some are even a combination of subjects. The teachers have been amazing in coming up with such innovative ideas.

As we are all going through our own issues dealing with this lockdown, this has been the one normal thing for them. So just wanted to thank you all - especially all the teachers.

Parent of Rayan Karan Samtani - 2 B

Thank you so much for your video note - Agastya was smiling away while watching - it's a wonderful way to connect with the kids and and make them know you're thinking of them.

He very much enjoyed the voice note as well - "Drama Sir!!" and grinned :). Your efforts to keep the children busy and know that they are being remembered are very much appreciated. **Parent of Agasta Chanda - 3 A**

Distance Learning in CIS adds excitement with learning. Edmodo posts are comprehensive with notes for parents and students, video links, quizzes, worksheets, projects offering almost a 360 degree learning. Not only this, feedbacks are also very specific and personalised, which is helping both parents and students in the learning process. We are grateful to the Principal and all the teachers, for organising this learning mode so fast, in such a crisis situation.

Parent of Srijato Das - 3 B

Sanaiya has thoroughly enjoyed the distance learning which the school has provided because not only has the school covered academics but also in Art, activity and Drama - all subjects have been taken care off. What Sanaiya has enjoyed the most is the activities which involved the entire family as that is something which would not be possible to do at school. We are very grateful to the school for taking such steps in this tough time to ensure that the children are occupied and more so they enjoy what they are doing while staying indoors.

Parent of Sanaiya Punwani - 4 A

It was an unexpected pandemic and the school has taken tremendous efforts and care to keep the learning process on. The class teacher even held a zoom session to know how the children were doing, which was very touching.

A big 'Thank You' to all the teachers for their constant encouragement! Parent of Karan Jhunjhunwala - 4 B

I felt the UNITY of the CIS community more than ever. The teachers, the staff, the counsellors and the Board members have been working hard to ensure the academic, administrative and mental support in the continuously changing situation while the parents and the children have been trying their best to cope in a positive manner to help each other. My daughter Eimi who is in Grade 4 understands the situation and is studying at home, feeling the friendship and love from the whole CIS community. Thank you CIS and we shall overcome this together. **Parent of Eimi Yuasa - 4** A

I feel the initiative taken by the school and resourcefulness shown by the teachers is praiseworthy. Both my children were happy to connect with their friends and reassured that their teachers were available by email and through Zoom chats. Their learning continued through these new mediums... kudos to the team at CIS. *I feel that all the work that all of the* teachers were sending was excellent. children The had something constructive to work on. Parent of Viren and Viraj Chakrabarti - 2 A and 5 A

The distance learning program for the children of CIS during this period of lockdown has been extremely important in several ways. First and foremost it allowed a continuation of connection with both our children's teachers who, it is apparent from their interaction, are very close to.

Practice papers and worksheets are regular and consistent. They are thoughtful and cover a wide range of topics including tasks that are related to this new way of living. It adds daily discipline and structure to our children's lives and we feel only fortunate that they have such caring teachers.

Finally one of the most heartwarming aspect of the distance learning programme is the kindness and sensitivity with which each teacher has been communicating to their students.

We feel there is a genuine sense of togetherness in these unusual times and children recognize this kindness and it helps them psychologically too to understand what is happening around them.

Parents of Kayaan and Kaavin Raja - 2 B and 5 B



A big thank you to all the teachers enabling distance learning on Edmodo. Thanks to your timely updates there is structure and revision happening on a timely basis here at home!

Parent of Anoushka Shanti Ganguli - 5 B

'The great gift of Easter is Hope'

Basil Hume



"Mother Earth" is getting its space: She is HAPPY!

- Dolphins return to Italy and clear Venice canals as humans self-isolate.
- Whales spotted on the offshores of the Mumbai oil rigs.
- Turtles are nesting peacefully on the beaches of Odisha due to restricted human movement.
- Peacocks have been spotted in the Kharegaat Parsi Colony in Mumbai.
- Jalandhar wakes up to a view of the Dhauladhar mountain range that has happened for the first time in 30 years.
- The Yamuna river, which is the lifeline of Delhi, is looking cleaner than before due to lockdown of factories in Haryana and Delhi.
- Air and water pollution have been drastically reduced with 91 cities recording air quality in the 'good' and 'satisfactory' category, over the past few days.

Contributed by Mrs Sujata Ahuja, Science Coordinator - Junior School



of CIS Herald compiled by:

- Ms Amanda DuPratt
- Mrs Mousumi Guha
- Mrs Sushmita Ray
- Mrs Urmita Das

(In a collaborative environment

while working from home)

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