COMPASSION



‘Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.’

Colossians 3.12



Compassion

At SSSJ, we understand that compassion is about standing in someone else's shoes. As a community, we try to share one another's burdens, encouraging an attitude of empathy and understanding of others. We celebrate the rich diversity in our school and offer a welcome to all those joining our community, especially those in any kind of need.

What makes 'compassion' a distinctively Christian value?

'Compassion' and 'sympathy' have much in common and both are stronger in meaning than simply 'feeling sorry' for someone.

The words have their roots in the idea of 'suffering with' someone, putting yourself in someone else's shoes and experiencing what they experience. This leads to a desire to act, to do something. It is not patronizing. It is about 'doing good' from a position of strength or 'remembering those less fortunate than ourselves'. Compassion requires an act of imagination and humility to share lives with others. Paul links the following qualities together. He says 'clothe yourself with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.' (Colossians 3:12)

Jesus showed compassion towards the harassed and helpless crowds (Matthew 9.36) and his works of healing were always prompted by compassion for people's suffering. Christians have always had to wrestle with the problem of how a loving God could allow there to be evil and suffering in the world. There is no simple answer to this, but we make the first step towards understanding when we grasp the idea that God the Father is not passively observing the suffering of the world from the outside. God fully identified with human suffering in the life and death of Jesus and continues to work to transform the sufferings of the world through the works of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture

The parable of the Good Samaritan is a profound narrative that emphasises the moral imperative of compassion and kindness towards others, regardless of their background or circumstances. It tells the story of a traveller who is beaten and left for dead, only to be ignored by his own countrymen, but aided by a Samaritan, a member of a group traditionally viewed with hostility. This act of mercy, performed by an unlikely helper, serves as a powerful lesson that compassion should not be limited by societal boundaries. The Samaritan's actions exemplify the essence of altruistic behaviour, demonstrating that true neighbourliness knows no bounds and that everyone is deserving of help and empathy. The enduring message of the Good Samaritan challenges individuals to transcend prejudices and to act with unconditional kindness, thereby fostering a more compassionate society. This narrative has SSSJ to strive towards a more empathetic and inclusive world.