



St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

Religious Education Newsletter

Autumn 2 2025



Love God, love others, love ourselves.

Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope you all had a restful half term. As the evenings draw in and the first twinkling Christmas lights begin to brighten our streets, we find ourselves entering a season of reflection and anticipation. The darker days invite us to slow down and look inward, preparing our hearts for the joy and hope that Christmas brings.

In Religious Education this half term, our focus is on Advent—a time of waiting, watching, and preparing for the coming of Christ. Through our lessons and reflections, we'll be exploring the meaning of this special season and how we can bring light, kindness, and faith into our daily lives as we journey towards Christmas together. **Branch Two: Prophecy and Promise.** This branch invites children to explore the Christian understanding of the teaching of the prophets as they point to the fulfilment of God's promise in a messiah, Jesus Christ.

Wishing you all a wonderful half term,
Mrs. Sharkey

St. Therese of Lisieux Class

Reception class will immerse themselves in scripture linked to the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ through Luke's Gospel. They will hear the story of the Annunciation, the Nativity and the arrival of the Shepherds. They will include the Nativity story as part of their Talk 4 Writing sessions to really embed the story. They will participate in the Infants Nativity and learn a variety of Christmas Hymns.

St. Francis of Assisi's Class

Year 1 will revisit the stories of The Annunciation, The Visitation and the Nativity. They will gain an understanding of the importance of Mary and they will explore the role of Angels delivering messages from God. They will learn that as Catholics we ask Mary to pray with us and for us and to comfort us in times of need. We will also look at how Mary is represented around the world in art and music. The children will end the half term with the Infants Nativity.

St. Anne's Class

The children in year 2 will revisit the Christmas stories as well as the involvement of John the Baptist. They will look at the Annunciation of both John the Baptist and Jesus and discuss the similarities and differences in Luke's Gospel. They will immerse themselves in Advent through extracts from the Book of Immanuel and look at The Magnificat, or Song of Mary which was spoken by Mary upon her visit to her cousin Elizabeth. They will narrate the Infants Nativity.

St. Joseph's Class

Year 3 will look at Catholic Traditions, like why Catholics go to Mass on Sundays and its connections to the resurrection of Jesus. They will learn about parts of the Mass - The Liturgy and the Eucharist which will link to their learning outside of school when they start their learning for the Sacrament of Communion. They will look at the start of the life of Jesus through Matthew's Gospel. They will reflect on extracts from Isaiah and the Prophecy of The Messiah. They will look at the Annunciation to Joseph and the role Joseph played in the Nativity.

St. Thomas More

Year 4 will look at The Book of Kings from the Old Testament and will read and reflect on scripture such as The Miracle of the Flour and the Oil and Elijah's Encounter with God. They will continue their study of Matthew's Gospel when learning about John the Baptist and the ancestry of Jesus. They will look at Advent Liturgies and reflect on the way that Catholics pray for the second coming of Jesus. Advent is a preparation for Jesus' incarnation at Christmas. They will also look at the working of the Nicene Creed and learn this prayer off by heart.

St Bernadette's Class

Year 5 will read passages that speak of David's life and importance in the book of Samuel and the book of Kings. They will read passages that speak of Jesus as the fulfilment of the promise of David. They will look at the Kings anointed and chosen in the Old Testament and they will read Psalm 23 and learn the hymn, O come O come Emmanuel, which expresses our belief of who Jesus is.

St. Maximillian Kolbe's Class

Year 6 are reflecting on the Old Testament that shows the role and the importance of women in Salvation history. They will learn about Sarah from the Book of Genesis, Miriam from the Book of Exodus, Hannah from the book of Judges and they will read passages from the book of Esther. They will move onto the role of Mary in the New Testament and reflect on her life as the fulfilment of Old Testament promises.



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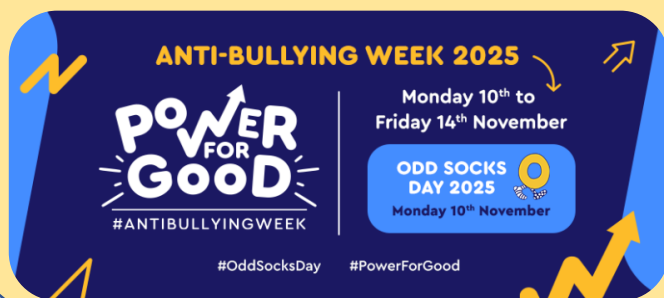


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Our Faith in Action

Anti-Bullying Week

November brings with it Anti-Bullying week which will kick off with Odd Socks Day on the 10th of November which reminds children that we are all created by God to be different and unique. As part of Anti-Bullying Week, we are taking time to reflect on the importance of kindness, respect, and compassion through a variety of tasks and workshops designed to help children understand what bullying is and how we can stand together against it. Rooted in our Catholic values, these activities encourage pupils to put their faith into action by following the example of Jesus—showing love, forgiveness, and care for one another. Through discussion, prayer, and creative projects, we are helping our children recognise that everyone is made in the image of God and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. Together, we are building a community where everyone feels valued, safe, and supported.



Advent

This Advent, our school community is coming together in faith and generosity through our St. Mary's Advent Calendar linked to the Missio Red Box appeal. Each family will receive the calendar as well as a red box. Each day of Advent, our calendar will invite pupils to take part in an act of kindness, prayer, or giving, helping us to prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus. Inspired by the mission of Missio, we are reminded that we are part of a global Church family and that our small acts of love can make a big difference to children and families around the world. By supporting the Red Box appeal, we are putting our faith into action, sharing hope and compassion with those most in need, and living out the true spirit of Advent—waiting in joyful hope and responding with love.



This half term's prayers...

EYFS: Our youngest children will learn their lunch time prayer.

Year 1 and year 2 will be learning the Our Father and The Glory Be.

Year 3 and 4 will be learning the Nicene Creed.

Year 5 and 6 will be learning The Magnificat - The Prayer of Mary



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Remembrance Sunday

Remembrance Sunday, observed this year on the 9th of November, holds profound meaning when viewed through a Catholic lens. Rooted in the Christian duty to pray for the dead, it aligns deeply with the Church's teaching on the Communion of Saints — the spiritual bond uniting the living and the departed in Christ. Originally established after World War I to honour those who sacrificed their lives in conflict, the day resonates with the Catholic tradition of offering Masses and prayers for souls in purgatory, especially during November, the month dedicated to the Holy Souls. While the poppy and public silence are national symbols of remembrance, Catholics are also called to see beyond civic commemoration to a spiritual act of mercy: praying for eternal rest and peace for all who have died in war, friend and foe alike. In this way, Remembrance Sunday becomes not just a patriotic observance, but a moment of intercession, reconciliation, and hope in the Resurrection. Our Year 6 children will visit Chingford Cemetery to lay flowers and to participate in a service dedicated to those who gave their lives so we could be free. Poppies are available to purchase at school this Thursday and Friday with a suggested minimum donation of £1. All donations received will go to The Royal British Legion to support veterans and their families.





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Thank you to all of the children who submitted application forms for the Mini Vinnies. It was very hard to choose as the quality of the applications was so high. If you were unsuccessful this time, don't worry, there will be a new group chosen every year! Mini Vinnies follow in the footsteps of Christ and St Vincent de Paul.

The Mini Vinnies are the youngest members of the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP), an international Christian voluntary organisation dedicated to tackling poverty in all its forms by providing practical assistance to people in need.

At St. Mary's The Mini Vinnies get together regularly to live out their mission of see, think, do, supporting our school community and beyond alongside the SVP. These children will lead on the organisation and distribution of upcoming fundraising events like the Advent Calendar Missio drive and Red Wednesday. They will also be visiting one of our local care homes to discuss ways in which we can support others in our community.

To celebrate, we had a tea party which the Mini Vinnies were all invited to. It is such an exciting time to be working with this dedicated group of children!



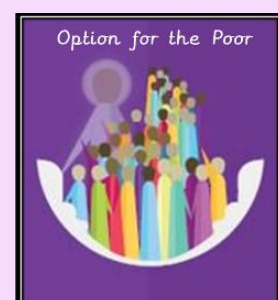
This Half Term's Catholic Social Teaching Principle is...

Option for the Poor

The Catholic Social Teaching principles underpin life at St. Mary's. They help us to make our school the best place it can be. This half term, we will hold the principle of Option for the Poor reminds us to help those who are struggling. As Catholics, we put the needs of others above our own needs. We remember how Jesus cared for the vulnerable and we promise to do the same. We care for those who have the least because that is what Jesus did.

This half term we will be intentional disciples in the following ways:

- We will do our best to raise money to support this half term's charitable causes - The Royal British Legion and Missio.
- We will raise awareness and money for Red Wednesday to support Christians around the world who are persecuted.
- We will reach out to the lonely in our community through choir performances and visits to local care homes.
- We will reflect on the spirit of Christmas and give what we can to those who have less than we do.





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Dates for your diary

7th November

Year 6 Parent Assembly and
shared lunch

7th November

Year 6 Laying of the Flowers

10th - 14th November

Anti-bullying week

10th November

Odd Socks Day

11th November

Remembrance Day

19th November

Red Wednesday - wear something
Red and make a donation.

21st November

Year 5 Parent Assembly and
shared lunch

5th December

Year 3 Parent Assembly and
shared lunch

16th December

Infants Nativity (9.30am and 6pm)

17th December

Junior Carol Concert (2pm and
6pm)

18th December

Christmas Jumper Day

19th December

End of Term (2pm finish)



It has been a delight to see the children of St. Mary's taking ownership of the planning and delivery of Celebration of the Word in their classrooms. In the infants, I have seen Reception children choosing their own rituals like lighting candles (battery operated, don't worry!) I have seen the infant children carefully choosing hymns and prayers and even writing prayers of their own.

In the Juniors, children are choosing passages from scripture which mean something to them - sometimes they choose the Sunday Scripture to gain a better understanding of Mass but others have chosen Psalms and parables which are significant in their lives.

It really is a privilege to witness the children develop in this way, taking responsibility for this important element of their faith and being intentional disciples every day at school.



Dear God,
Thank you for the food you
gave us which we shared
during harvest. We pray for
the farmers in the fields.
Amen

