



St. Thomas of Canterbury  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



## "Learn, Love and Respect Through Jesus"

Dear Parents,

A very warm welcome to the new school year! It's fantastic to see how well the children have settled into the new school routine.

Our recent belated Summer Sizzler was a fantastic success, a huge thank you to our very committed and dedicated PTA! We were blessed with the sunny weather and it was a wonderful way to start the new academic year!

Thank you for attending the Year 1/2, 3/4 and Year 5/6 Parent Information sessions earlier this month, we hope you found these useful.

Across the Trust all Chaplaincy Teams met at St Joseph's Primary School, Bishop's Stortford for a special Liturgy (see page 2). We discussed our Franciscan Values and how the Franciscan Award will be given to children who are able to demonstrate these (half termly). We were also able to celebrate and discuss our forthcoming Trust Feast Day on 4<sup>th</sup> October (our Year 1/2 class will be leading a Shared Act of Worship on 3rd October to commemorate this date).

Thank you to all parents who have completed the [Trust Annual Parent Survey](#). Your feedback is important and valued, please can all responses be completed by Friday 6th October..

I look forward to continuing to work in partnership with you over the coming year. If you have any questions or queries please contact me via the School Office or email: [head@stcanterbury.herts.sch.uk](mailto:head@stcanterbury.herts.sch.uk)

Best Wishes,

Mrs Keating  
Executive Head



## House Points:

St David

92



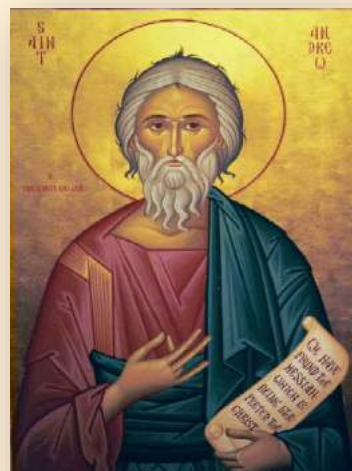
St George

116



St Andrew

92



St Patrick

108





# Catholic Life of the School

## Our Chaplaincy Team



This is our Chaplaincy Team 2023/2024. Their primary role is to build upon and embed the excellent work of last year's team in developing the prayer life of the school through planning, being involved with and leading Acts of Worship, Liturgy and Fundraising Opportunities.

Our Chaplaincy Team (and other pupil voice groups) are excellent role-models for all pupils throughout the school; these groups contribute significantly to our Catholic life and mission and are very proactive in their roles, for example through planning and leading weekly prayer groups and leading "Wednesday Word" Liturgy with the core purpose of explaining the Gospel reading to younger pupils.

We ask God to bless each member of the team: Pheobe, Amelia Jo, Aoife, Sonia, Jake, Dominic, Harrison, Ivy, George, Amelia Ja, Eliseo and Eva. May he fill them with the gift of the Holy Spirit so that they can be true ambassadors of Christ and reflect our Mission Statement every day.

**"Learn, Love and Respect Through Jesus"**



Each Chaplaincy Team in the Trust gathered for a Liturgy at St Joseph's Bishop's Stortford on 27th September. In addition to participating in Liturgy and meeting lots of new faces and friends, they discussed re-launching the "Franciscan Values" Award and were presented with their Chaplaincy Team badges by Mr Celano, CEO of the Trust.



# Catholic Life of the School

## Catholic Social Teaching



This half term, our whole school Catholic Social Teaching focus is 'Care for Creation'. The earth and all it contains has been created by God. It is a gift, given to all for the good of all. The resources of the earth are not infinite. They have been given to us and to future generations. How we have treated and continue to treat the earth has profound impacts on people now and in the future. How we care for the earth is another sign of how we are Christians, how we show God's love in the world and put our love into action.

Using a new resource from Caritas, 'Rooted in Love', we have introduced the children to the concept of caring for creation – what it means to be a 'good steward' and how they can look after our world. It is important that the children understand that the way we treat our common home affects everyone, in every country, now and in the future.



Loving God,  
We thank you for our wonderful world. You created the Earth for us to live and prosper in. You taught us how to care for the world you created but we have not followed those laws..  
Let us give thanks for the joy our world brings us and pray that we become good stewards of creation.

Amen





# Catholic Life of the School

## The Common Good



A huge thank you to all those who contributed to our Jeans for Genes Day fundraiser. We exceeded our target and at last count, had raised £196! Your donations will make a big difference to the lives of children and families living with genetic conditions.

## Harvest Festival

Early Years will lead our Harvest Thanksgiving celebration at 09:15 am on 12th October, to which Early Years Parents are invited. Once again we are supporting the Bishop's Stortford Food Bank and we kindly request donations of dried and tinned goods for this worthy cause. Please refer to the [Food Bank's website](#) for details of what is currently most needed.





# Catholic Life of the School

## Our Class Saints:

### EARLY YEARS: St Francis of Assisi



St Francis of Assisi is very close to our school as we are a member of the [St Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy Trust](#).

St Francis is known for his ministry to the poor and the sick, his care for nature and animals, and founding the Franciscan order.

"Lord, make me an instrument of your peace: where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy."

### YEAR ONE / TWO: Mother Teresa of Calcutta

**Mother Teresa** is mostly known for her charitable work. She spent her entire life dedicated to helping others. One of her many charitable efforts was setting up an open-air school and a home for the dying destitute. Mother Teresa founded the Order of the Missionaries of Charity, a Roman Catholic congregation of women dedicated to the poor, particularly to those in India, that opened numerous centres serving the blind, the aged, and the disabled.

"Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love."



### YEAR THREE / FOUR: St. Josephine Bakhita



Kidnapped by slave traders at the age of seven, **St Josephine** was given the name: Bakhita, which means "lucky". As a girl, Bakhita would look up at the moon and stars, resolving to serve their Master. Later in life, she devoted herself to promoting Catholic missions to Africa. She died in 1947 in Italy.

Josephine Bakhita's life is remarkable, and presents us with spiritual lessons, namely her profound trust in God, despite living in a hopeless situation.

### YEAR FIVE / SIX: St Thomas of Canterbury

St Thomas Becket, also known as St Thomas of Canterbury, served as Lord Chancellor from 1155 to 1162, and then notably as Archbishop of Canterbury from 1162 until his death in 1170. He engaged in conflict with Henry II, King of England, over the rights of the Church, and was murdered by followers of the King in Canterbury Cathedral. Soon after his death he was canonized by Pope Alexander III. He is venerated as a saint and a martyr by the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion.





# Pupil Voice



## SPORTS & WELLBEING COMMITTEE 2023 2024



This year, the members of our Sports Committee are: Jake, Aoife, Patrick, Olivia, Jude B, Sofia, Alex, Elliott, Penny and Hadleigh

The role of the Sports Committee is as follows:

- Promoting PE and extra curricular sports in school
- Assisting at sporting events
- Being an active role model for all children and helping to ensure fair play and sportsmanship both in organized games and during break times

Our School Council consists of a boy and girl representative from Years 1 to 6. This year, our members are: Dorothy, Dominic, Eva S, Mia, Roman, Alice, Isabelle, Leo, Jaxson, Louis, Leo and Grace.

This term the school council are focusing on the theme from St Francis of Assisi: "Care for Creation". We will work towards gaining our school an 'eco school' accreditation as we focus on keeping our school and grounds environmentally friendly. We will also have a focus on recycling for recycling week (16-22 October) by taking part in a nationwide big recycling hunt! We will also be gathering pupil voice about the new school lunches.



## SCHOOL COUNCIL 2023 2024



# Notices

## Parent Surveys:

A reminder to please complete the [Parent Survey](#) sent last week, the deadline is 6th October. Your feedback is highly valued.

## Staffing Congratulations!

Congratulations to Mrs Earl, who is expecting a baby in November! Mrs Earl will go on her maternity leave after half term, we wish her and her family all the best and we look forward to her return in April.

## No Nuts Reminder

- A reminder that we have a strict **"No Nuts"** policy at our school. Please ensure all snacks and lunch boxes are completely nut free, we have several children in the school with epipens and are at high risk of anaphylaxis.

## Admissions for September 2024:

- We welcome Nursery Applications from Monday 2nd October 2023 (deadline for receipt of application is Friday 15th December 2023; acknowledgement from Office by Friday 22nd December 2023).
- Reception Applications open on Wednesday 1st November 2023 (deadline for receipt of online and paper application is Monday 15th January 2024; acknowledgement from the Office by Monday 22nd January 2024).
- Follow [the link on our website](#) for full details of our Admissions process.
- We will be holding two Open Mornings for Early Years Applications, both start at 09:15 prompt (Tuesday 7th and 14th November 2023.) Visitors will be given a tour of our school and will meet our Early Years staff and Leadership Team.

## Secondary School Applications:

The deadline for Secondary School Applications is 31st October 2023. Dates and times of Open Days events have been sent to parents in Year 6.

## School Car Park and Parking in general:

We have a post and chain barrier to prevent people walking across the school car park. Please be reminded that:

- Access to the school for those on foot is via the steps by the road
- Access to the school for those with pushchairs, wheelchairs, scooters and bikes is via the ramp and the perimeter of the car park. **Do not under any circumstances cut through the middle of the car park. This is a serious risk and we have had several near miss incidents**
- The car park is for **staff and visitors only**. We have a disabled bay which can be used with our prior agreement
- Please refrain from bringing dogs onto the premises, this is a health and safety risk
- Please park sensibly and courteously along the road when dropping off and collecting

**THANK YOU**



# Governance



Mr David Lang (pictured below) is now serving his second year as our Chair of Governors; Mr Jerry Walsh continues to serve as our Vice Chair.



*On behalf of all of the school Governors, welcome back to the new academic year. We hope that you have had a peaceful and enjoyable summer break.*

*The Governors have had their first meeting of the academic term at which all of the key 'Governor' positions were confirmed.*

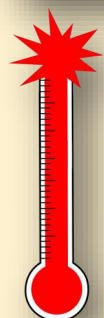
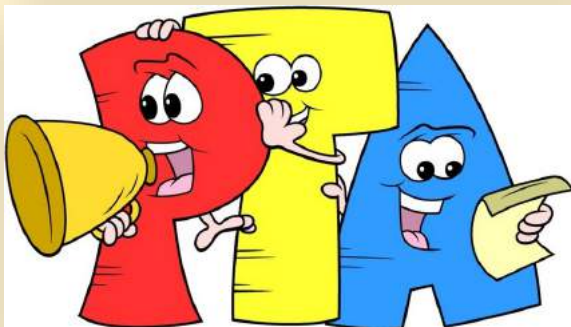
*At this meeting the Governors reviewed the formal plans for the academic year presented by the school. These plans were very complete, both academically and also from a child development perspective.*

*The school operates under the umbrella of the Trust, which has updated all of its guidance over the summer holidays. The Trust provides the school with an over-arching governance structure, together with ongoing assistance as required.*

*The Governors would like to thank the PTA for their ongoing support for the school and in particular for organising the Summer Sizzler which was a great success.*

*Please feel free to contact me through the school office should you wish to discuss any matter.*

*David Lang, Chair of Governors*



Please come along to our **PTA Annual General Meeting**, held at St Thomas' on **Friday 29th September at 09:00 am**.

There are a variety of small ways you can help and be involved - from helping at an event, gathering raffle prizes or coordinating a coffee morning. If you would like any further information about joining our PTA, please contact the School Office.

Last academic year, our amazing PTA smashed their fundraising target of £10,000. Together they raised an incredible £13,800 for our school. A huge thank you to Sarah Froggatt and the dedicated PTA team, and to all parents who support the school in so many different ways.

## FORTHCOMING DATES: (CLICK ON [LINK](#) FOR CALENDAR ON WEBSITE)

3rd October 09:15	Year 1/2 Act of Worship: St Francis of Assisi
5th October (after school)	Thomas Tigers Home Match
12th October 09:15	Early Years Act of Worship: Harvest
19th October	Year 3/4 Egyptian Workshop
23rd to 27th October	Half Term
23rd October	Fun in the Forest