



# St. Thomas of Canterbury

## CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dear Parents,

I cannot believe how quickly the weeks have whizzed by and half term is already upon us!

The month began with our Trust St Francis of Assisi Feast Day . Our Year 1 and 2 delivered a commemorative Liturgy, thank you parents for joining us. In addition, each Chaplaincy Team across the Trust delivered a whole school Act of Worship highlighting this special day and relaunching our Franciscan Values Award (see page 3). Our chosen Trust Charity this year is “Across” (see below for details).

It was wonderful to see so many parents attending our Early Years Harvest Assembly. Many of the children had only been in school for a few weeks and it was heart-warming to see the enthusiasm with which they presented their Assembly. Thank you for all the kind food donations, which have been gratefully received by the Bishop's Stortford Food Bank. A special thank you to Father Charles who attended the Liturgy and blessed the food donations and Early Years children.

During the month of October, we have recognised Black History Month through focused discussions and prayer. At St Thomas', Black History and other cultures are embedded in our learning throughout the school and across the year (R.E; History; English and PSHE), celebrating key historical figures who have influenced reading, religion, the arts and the sciences.

Last week we celebrated our Prayer and Spirituality Week (see pages 4, 5 and 6) led and organised by Mrs Clark.

Our Thomas Tigers Team are enjoying representing the school in local football matches this term. A huge well done for their commitment and team effort! Also well done to our Year 2 children who participated in the Football Festival at St Edmund's College last week (see page 8 for photos).

You may recall our planned replacement for the hall windows that should have taken place over the summer holidays was delayed, leaving us with scaffolding in place for the whole of this half term. I am pleased to advise that this work should be completed within the first two weeks after half term (additional safety measures will be in place). During half term week, many of our fire doors around the school will also be replaced.

Have a safe and relaxing half term. I look forward to welcoming the children back (in winter uniform please) on Monday 30th October 2023.

Best Wishes,

Mrs Keating, Executive Head



Our Trust Charity this year is “Across”. We look forward to raising funds for this worthwhile cause.

Across organises pilgrimages of a lifetime to the Catholic Marian Shrine of Lourdes in South West France for those needing special care. People who are sick and disabled are taken to Lourdes, accompanied by a doctor, nurses, a priest and helpers by “Jumbulance” a unique vehicle with ambulance status.

## House Points:

**St David**

**156**



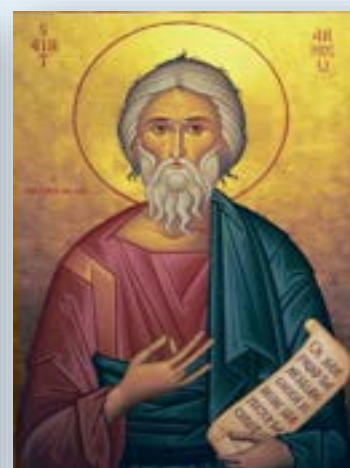
**St George**

**242**



**St Andrew**

**234**



**St Patrick**

**220**





# Catholic Life of the School

Early Years shared a wonderful Assembly with us, thank you to all the parents who came along and thank you for your generous donations to the food bank.

**Dear God,**

**Thank you for all the food we have this Harvest.**

**Thank you for providing us with the food we have to eat. Help us to be grateful each day for what we have and think of others who may not have as much. Help us to be kind and giving this Harvest.**

**Amen**





# Franciscan Values

Across the St Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy Trust we work towards a shared set of values, our 'Franciscan Values'. The children are all taught to live out these values in their daily lives and those who demonstrate them well can be nominated for our special Franciscan Values awards. On the feast day of St Francis, the Chaplaincy Team led the whole school in a special liturgy that helped us revisit the values and how we can live them out.



St Francis of Assisi  
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

**Franciscan Values Award**

**EYFS & KS1 – Infant Award - KINDNESS**

Creating a caring community  
To be a kind and loving friend to all.

Sharing compassion for others  
To support those in need in my school  
and in the world.

Reverence for creation  
To take care of God's creations

Peace making  
To help and care for others.

St Francis of Assisi  
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

**Franciscan Values Award**

**KS2 – Junior Award – GRATITUDE**

Creating a caring community  
To create opportunities for all to respect, love  
and show kindness to all. To pray.

Sharing compassion for others  
To pray and to take responsible action to  
support those in need within my school,  
home, Parish and my understanding of  
charity.

Reverence for creation  
To understand with compassion and share  
concern while protecting God's creation.

Peace making  
To support reconciliation and forgiveness in  
my own life and others.

**Autumn 1 Winner**

**Sadie**

**Kindness and Help-  
ing the Nursery Chil-  
dren**



**Autumn 1 Winner**

**George**

**Showing Kindness and Sup-  
port to Younger Children**

*Congratulations!*



# Prayer and Liturgy Week

Prayer is always at the heart of our school and our lives. During the week of 9<sup>th</sup> October, the whole school had a special focus on Prayer and Liturgy. Throughout the week, the children experienced prayer and liturgy in a variety of ways, including creating mandalas using natural materials, guided meditations, prayer stations, learning Pope Francis' five fingered prayer, enjoying the Early Years Harvest festival and learning about Catholic Virtues.





# Prayer and Liturgy Week



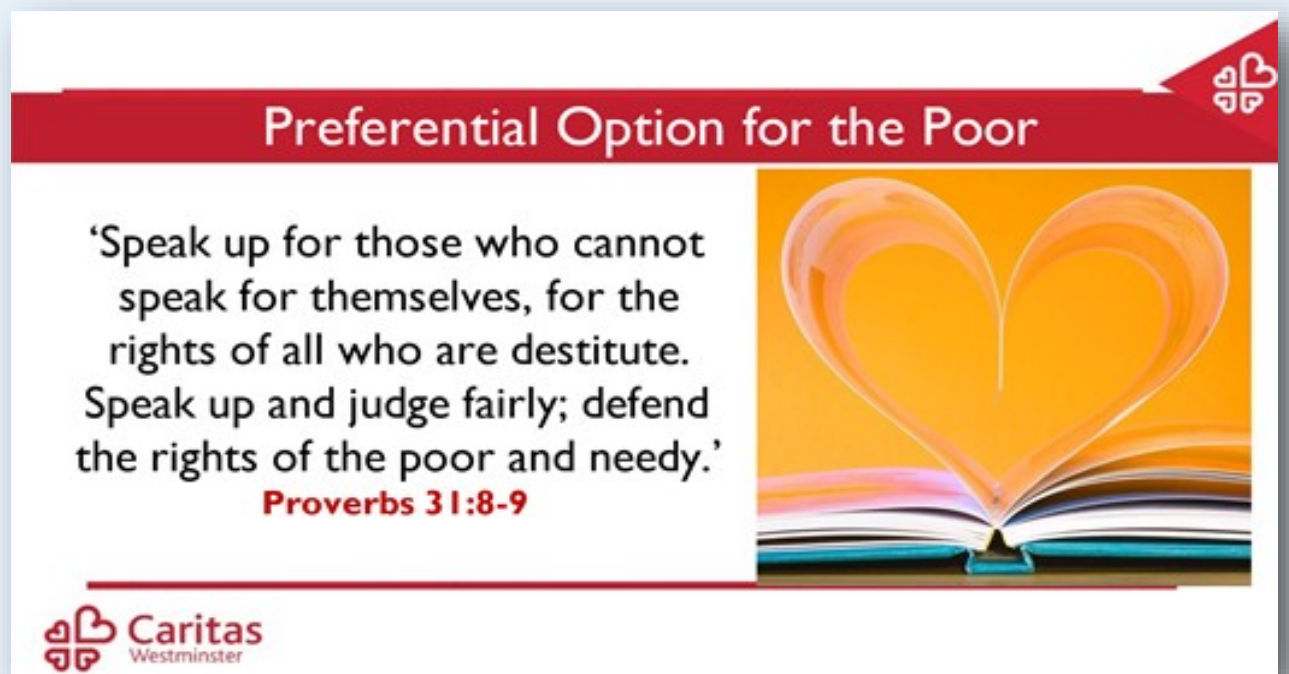


# Catholic Social Teaching

This half term, our Catholic Social Teaching focus has been "Caring for Creation". In Forest School Club, the children have been demonstrating how they have been good stewards of creation by planting trees, kindly donated by the Purser family.



Next half term, our Catholic Social Teaching focus will be 'Preferential Option for the Poor'. The Church holds that we should all have a special focus on supporting, walking alongside, and sharing with people who are living in poverty. Pope Francis' much quoted phrase about wanting 'a poor church for the poor' holds the Catholic Social Teaching principle of the preferential option for the poor at its heart. Although it includes the charitable support of the Church, both the institution and individual members, for those living in poverty locally and globally, it is also wider than this. The option for the poor includes talking with, and listening to, those who are living in poverty.



Praise God for giving us trees and flowers so we live

Praise God for giving flowers their beautiful colours

Praise God for running water

Praise God for the good things He has done

Praise God for the things He helps us with

Praise God for the sun, the moon and all the light

Dear Lord, Thank you for the beautiful world and everything in it. Amen (Pupil from Key Stage 1)

Dear Lord, Thank you for my family and friends, please help them. Thank you for our leaders, please keep them well. Thank you for food and water. Amen (Pupil from Key Stage 2)





# Egyptian Workshop



Year 3/4 enjoyed their Egyptian Workshop which was delivered through "Portals to the Past". They became Egyptians for the day, immersing themselves in dressing up and learning all about life in Ancient Egypt.





# SPORT

## Congratulations to our Thomas Tigers Football Team

Our Thomas Tigers Football Team have had a fantastic start to the season, with three matches so far:

St Thomas' V Bayford (Away) - WIN!!!	3-2
St Thomas' V Hunsdon (Home)	4-5
St Thomas' V Thundridge (Away) - WIN!!!	5-1



All children are benefitting from free resources and football equipment from "Monster Kickabout" which is a nationwide Primary School football initiative from Sports Direct and Nike, created to encourage more children to take up football.



## St Edmunds Year 2 Football Festival

Year 2 had a wonderful (if slightly wet!) experience of football at a festival hosted by St Edmunds College. One of our Year 2 Teams (Lions) came second!



# NOTICES

## Admissions for September 2024

- Our Nursery Applications opened on 2nd October 2023 (deadline for receipt of application is 15th December 2023).
- Reception Applications open on 1st November 2023 (deadline for receipt of online and paper application is 15th 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 (Monday 13th November and Tuesday 21st November). 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.

## Individual and Sibling Photos:

- Please note change of date. Photos will now be taken on 16th November.

## Forest School Club:

- We have ten places available on the Forest School Club on a Monday after school. If you would like your child to join after half term, please let the Office know and you will be billed £5 per session (£35).

## School Uniform:

- A reminder that all children need to be in winter uniform after half term. See our website for further information. Children are also reminded that they need to bring in a waterproof coat to school, every day.

## Lost Property:

- We have a huge collection of lost property in school (a useful reminder to please name your children's clothes!). Please ensure these are collected as soon as possible as they will be recycled at the end of term.

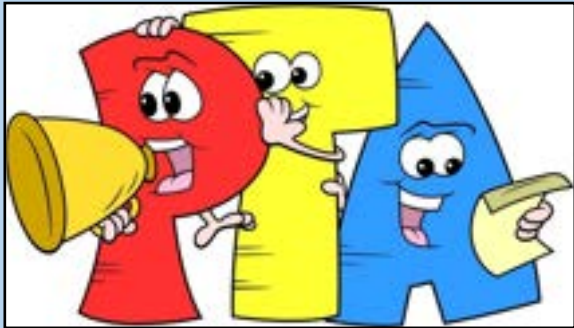


**At St Thomas' our core priority is the safety and welfare of our children. Creating a happy, safe and secure learning environment is key to ensure all of our pupils have a school setting where they can reach their potential and enjoy their learning.**

**We have many associated policies in place to safeguard our children and these are available [on the school website](#). A reminder that our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for any Child Protection / Safeguarding concerns is Mr Booth; additional Safeguarding Leads are Mrs Keating; Mrs W Clark and Mrs Overett. Our Safeguarding Link Governor is Mr Tim Mills.**

**Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; if your concerns are out of hours and you believe that a child is at risk of significant harm, please call Children's Services Social Care on: 0300 123 4043**





Position	Name
Chair	Miss Sarah Froggatt
Vice Chair & Secretary	Mrs Siobhan Hart
Treasurer	Mrs Katherine Warden

**Please consider joining our PTA! 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 them via their email address:**

**[pta@stcanterbury.herts.sch.uk](mailto:pta@stcanterbury.herts.sch.uk)**

**Click on the link for the [PTA page on our website](#)**

Cardinal Vincent Nichols continues to urge the faithful to pray for peace as conflict escalates and the death toll rises in both Israel and Gaza.

In a statement released on 13<sup>th</sup> October, the Cardinal said: 'A week into the terrible conflict in Israel and Gaza, I urge Catholics to sustain their prayers for peace. The horrific atrocities committed by Hamas in Israel warrant every condemnation. We continue to hold in our prayers those who were killed, the injured, those held hostage, their families and communities.'

'The situation facing the millions of civilians in Gaza also calls for effective humanitarian relief. We pray too for those killed, injured and displaced there. At home I appeal for restraint and the total avoidance of hateful language and action, as the impact of this conflict is felt in communities here.'



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

<b>23rd to 27th October</b>	<b>Half Term</b>
<b>23rd October</b>	<b>Forest Fun and Craft Camp</b>
<b>31st October 15:00—17:30</b>	<b>Parent Consultations (Nursery to Year 5)</b>
<b>1st November 15:30 - 19:00</b>	<b>Parent Consultations (Nursery to Year 5)</b>
<b>2nd November 15:30 - 18:00</b>	<b>Parent Consultations (Year 6)</b>
<b>10th November 09:15</b>	<b>Year 5/6 Act of Worship Remembrance (this will be streamed and on this occasion, parents are not able to attend due to building works in the hall)</b>
<b>13th November 09:15</b>	<b>Open Morning for Prospective Early Years parents</b>
<b>13th November</b>	<b>Anti-Bullying Week</b>
<b>16th November</b>	<b>Pret a Portrait photos - individual and siblings</b>
<b>21st November 19:00</b>	<b>Local Governing Body Meeting</b>