



St. Thomas of Canterbury

CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Autumn Term 2023 Newsletter

Dear Parents,

We have had a very busy November; we have recognised Anti-Bullying Week in a Whole School Assembly with the theme "Make a Noise About Bullying." Each child wrote their own Anti-Bullying pledge to highlight this important event.

To commemorate Remembrance, each class had their own Act of Worship and engaged in reflective activities (see pages 3 and 4).

Thank you for attending our recent Parent Consultations, we had an excellent response of parental attendance and valuable feedback.

As part of our continued collaboration across the Trust and commitment to School Improvement, staff representatives from each school have been involved with a writing project. As part of this, a Trust Competition has been launched (see page 8).

We have a joint Trust Inset on 3rd January 2024 for all 150 teachers, this is focused on Trust Vision and the distinctive nature of catholic schools. This promises to be an excellent collaborative day and opportunity to share valuable expertise.

We are fast approaching the Liturgical Season of Advent and Father John Cunningham will be celebrating Mass at school, this coming Monday 4th December at 2:00 pm - all parents are very welcome. Each child has made a purple decoration for our whole Christmas tree. The children and staff have also been given a purple ribbon to remind them of their Advent promise, a huge thank you to Miss Newton for preparing these.

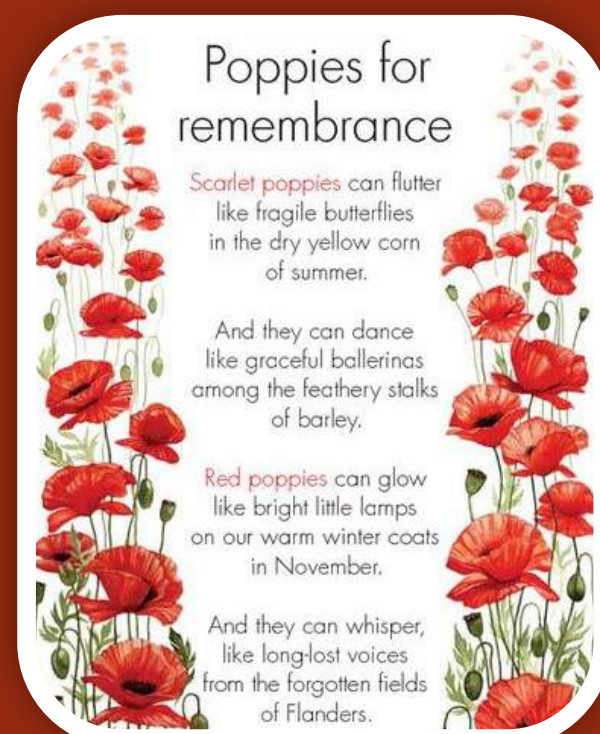
Best Wishes,

Mrs Keating

Executive Head

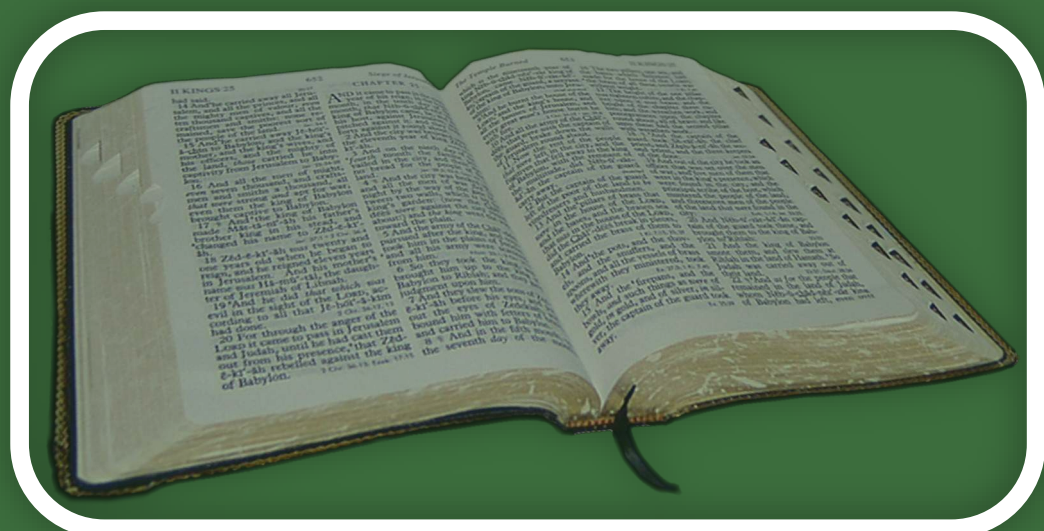


***"At the going down of the
sun, and in the morning
We will remember them."***





Catholic Life of the School: Ministry



As previously advised Father Peter has nominated Father John Cunningham to offer his ministry to our school.

We were delighted to welcome him to our school last week. Father John visited the children in Early Years and Year 5/6. He will be visiting Years 1/2 and 3/4 later in the week.





Catholic Life of the School: Remembrance



The month of November is traditionally dedicated in the Catholic Church to honouring the dead and relieving the sufferings of the souls in purgatory. At the beginning of the month, we celebrated the solemnity of All Saints with KS2 attending Mass virtually. Remembrance has been our classroom prayer focus throughout November. Each class also engaged in reflective activities for Remembrance Day.



God, thank you for the people in our lives whom we are remembering in a special way during the month of November. We thank you for being a compassionate God who walks with us in dark moments of grief and loneliness. We are thankful for all who continue to love and support us through our grief. Lord, continue to be a light for us, giving us hope, direction and courage. May we now live our lives treasuring the memories of those special people we have known and loved and help us to bring light and hope to others. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.





Catholic Life of the School: Remembrance



Amelia J (Yr 6)

The silent sorrows,
the sombre sky,
the history they left behind,

The rows of crosses,
help us remember,
the soldiers who never dared to surrender.



The puddles of crimson,
where they once fought,
we will never forget them.
Soldiers.



All of the people who died in war,
We will remember them more and
more.

United in memory, we pause and
reflect,

In a moment of silence we will
connect.

This is a sad event and we must
always remember the soldiers
that battled.

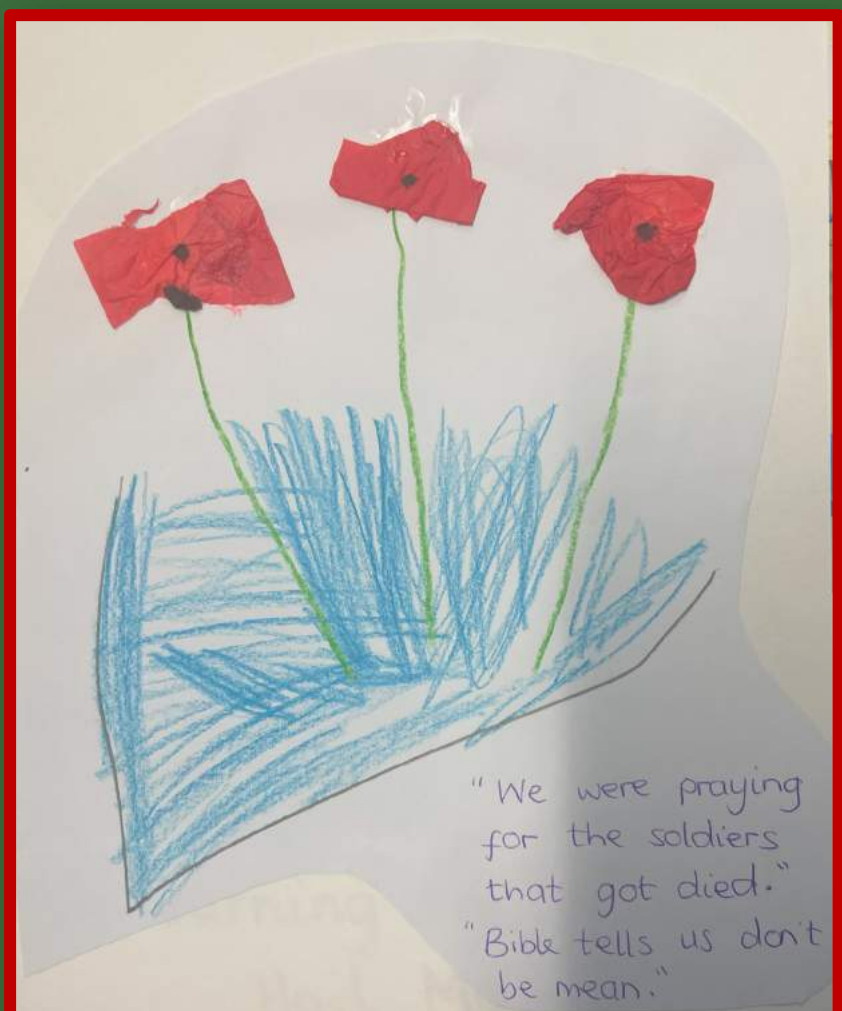
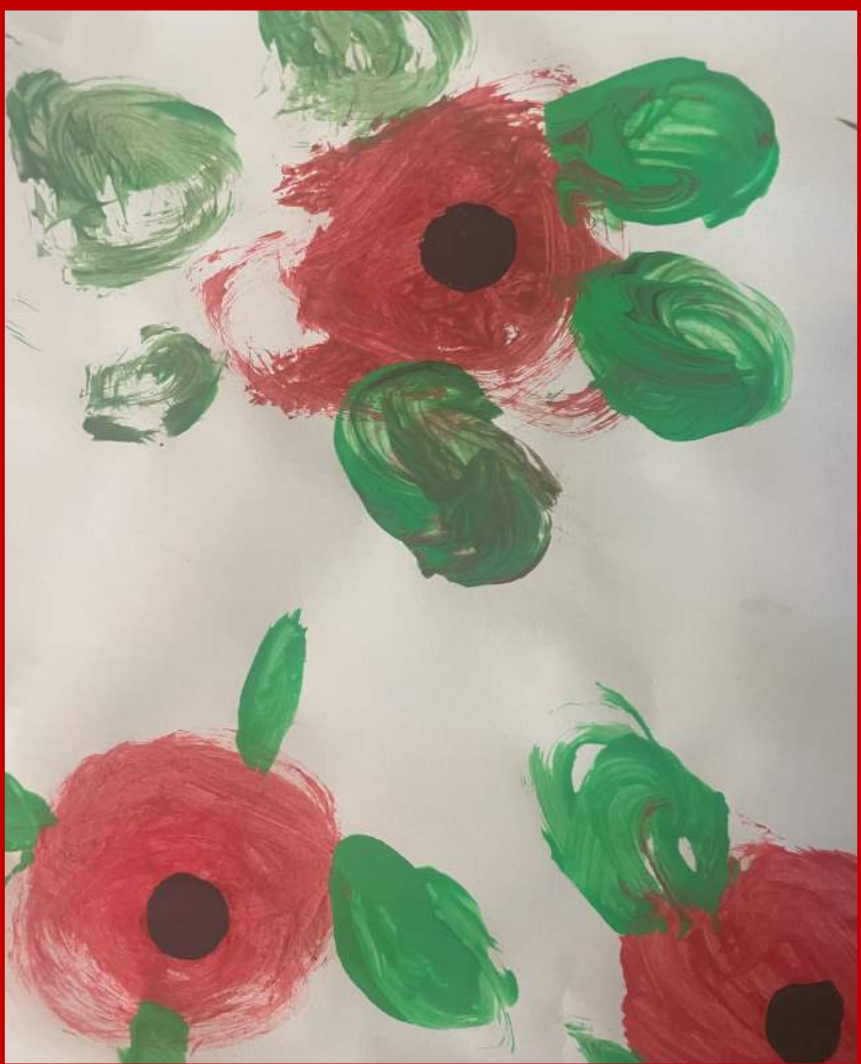
Ben (Year 4)

Gas masks,
barren and stark.

Shooting, drafting and death in
the dark.

Cold, dirt, deaths 93,
next me?

Leo K (Year 5)



Catholic Life of the School: Charity



On 22nd November, we wore red to support Aid to the Church in Need. This is a campaign aimed at breaking the silence about Christians who are suffering throughout the world. During the day we prayed together, asking God to strengthen and encourage those who suffer following Jesus.



Dear God,

Please help the people who are getting persecuted for being Christian because everyone should be treated equally. Amen

Ben, Year 4

Dear God. Help the people who are getting persecuted. Amen

#BreaktheSilence

Leah, Year 3

Dear God.

Please help the people who believe in you. Amen.

Thomas, Year 3



Catholic Life of the School: Charity

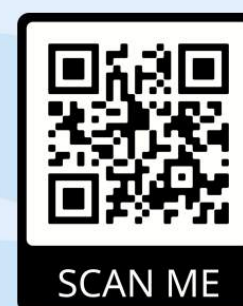
Advent Giving Calendar

Advent is a special season in the Church's year when we prepare to celebrate the coming of Christ. However, with the cost of living crisis, many in our communities are facing difficulties.

This Advent Giving Calendar is designed for you to use this season as a time to think about those who might need some extra support this Christmas. You can follow along each day and make up a food parcel that you generously donate to a food project in your church or school, or one local to you.



Please send your donations to the school and we will pass them to the The Holy Trinity Night Shelter in Bishop's Stortford and the local Food Bank who have confirmed that they are happy to receive our donations.



[Download the calendar here!](#)

- Each day in Advent, find the corresponding snowman on the calendar, which will tell you what you need to buy to add to your collection. You could team up with others too, and share the collecting between you.
- Take the collected items to your chosen food project. You might want to take them in early, to make sure they are there in time to help people this Christmas.
- Join the Advent Giving Calendar community online. Spread the word about the calendar and share photos of your collecting on social media.

Use the hashtag: #AdventGivingCalendar

[Download the calendar here →](#)



SCAN ME

Catholic Life of the School: Charity



SPORTS



KS 2 Tag Rugby Team at the Sele School Tag Rugby Festival



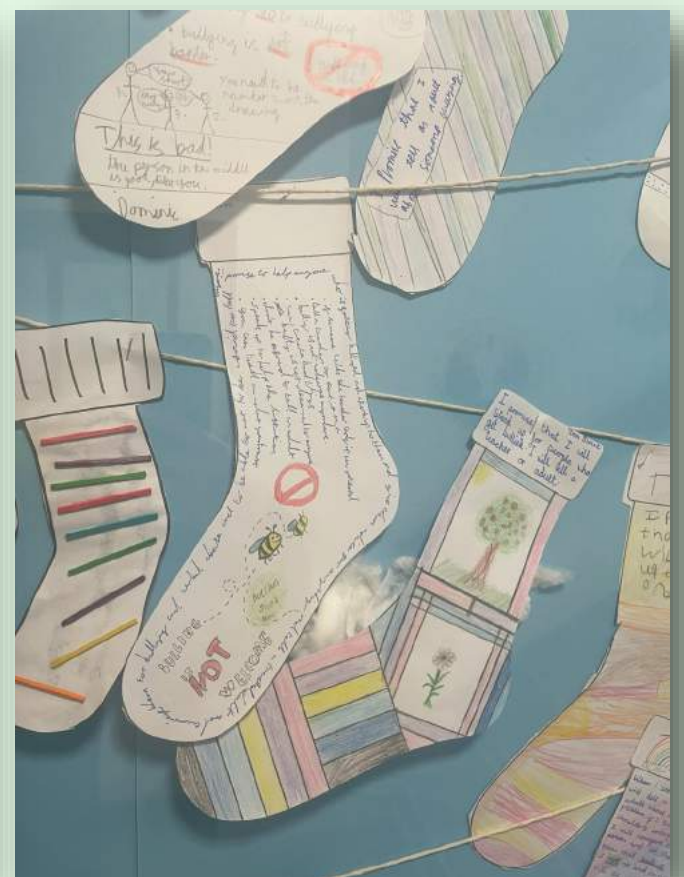
School Events & Activities

Congratulations to Dominic, Leo T and Lucy who won our **Termly Trust Writing Competition**, based on The Christmas Truce (World War II). All three winners go through to the next Trust round. We will announce the results before the end of term!



Anti-Bullying Week

This year's theme was: "Make a Noise About Bullying". The children wore odd socks to celebrate our uniqueness and made their Anti-Bullying pledges.



Mental Health Support



As a school we are seeing an increasing trend of children struggling with their mental health. If you have any worries, please feel free to contact Mrs W Clark who is our school's Mental Health Lead.

Another resource available to our families is 'The Sandbox'. The Sandbox is an NHS funded service to support children and young people in Hertfordshire with their mental health and well-being. The Sandbox provides access to internet enabled Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (iCBT), or one to one support from professional therapists by text, phone, online chat or video call, based on triage of the young person's needs. Please visit The Sandbox website for more information. <https://sandbox.mindler.co.uk/>



Reminders & Notices

- **Nursery and Reception Admissions - September 2024:**

The closing date for Nursery Applications is 15th December 2023 and for Reception Admissions it is 15th January 2024.

- **School Lunches / Allergies:**

Please remember to order your child's lunch through Select by 8:30 am latest. If you forget to order the meal in advance, you will need to bring in a packed lunch for your child. Please also remember to cancel any pre-ordered meals not required otherwise a charge will be incurred. A reminder that we **are a nut free school - some of our children are severely allergic to nuts**. Children should not be bringing in any snacks or food containing nuts.

- **Cold Weather Alert:**

We have been alerted to a spate of extremely cold weather, predicted to last to 5th December. Please ensure your child comes to school suitably dressed for the cold, ie wearing gloves, scarves, tights and hats.

Staffing News

- **Congratulations to Mrs Earl and her family!**

We are delighted to advise the safe arrival of Mrs Earl's baby, Jasper on 11th November. Jasper weighed 7 lbs 4 oz. We send our best wishes and congratulations to the Earl family.



- **Staff Vacancies**

We are currently recruiting for a [Learning Support Assistant \(LSA\)](#)

In April, we will say goodbye to Mr Weston who will be retiring so **we will shortly be advertising for a caretaker (20 to 25 hours per week)**. The role will be suitable for a reliable, local handyperson who is able to manage our site including locking and unlocking the school. The role will also involve carrying out premises checks and logging them online. Please contact the School Office if you would be interested in applying.

Christmas Entertainment!

- **Early Years - Mr Marvel**

Mr Marvel will be treating Early Years to some Christmas Magic on 6th December! There will be nothing to pay for this treat, which will be financed by the school.

- **KS 1 and 2 - Online Panto**

Years 1 - 6 will be treated to an online Pantomime performance of "Jack and the Beanstalk". This replaces the scheduled live panto performance that was due to take place at Hertford Theatre, which is currently closed. Again, there will be nothing to pay for this treat, which will be financed by the school.

- **Whole School Christmas Lunch**

Tuesday 5th December is our Whole School Christmas Lunch Day. Please place your child's Christmas Lunch order via Select as usual.



Diary Dates



Date	Event
Friday 1st December 09:15	Year 3/4 Advent Assembly - parents welcome
Monday 4th December 14:00	Advent Mass with Father John Cunningham - parents welcome
Tuesday 5th December	Whole School Christmas Lunch
Wednesday 6th December	Mr Marvel visits Early Years! Panto Treat for Key Stages 1 and 2!
Friday 8th December	Christmas Jumper Day - please make a donation to Save the Children
Monday 11th December	Christmas Production Dress Rehearsals (EY & KS 1 will be filmed)
Tuesday 12th December 10:00	Early Years Nativity Presentation - EY parents welcome
Tuesday 12th December 10:30	Key Stage 1 Nativity Presentation - Year 1 & 2 parents welcome
Tuesday 12th December 15:30	Key Stage 2 Carol Presentation - Year 3 to 6 parents welcome
Wednesday 13th December 09:30	SEND Coffee Morning for SEND parents
Friday 15th December	Deadline for Nursery (Sept 2024) Applications
Monday 18th December	Forest School Class Christmas Parties
Tuesday 19th December 1:30 pm	Break up for Christmas
Wednesday 3rd January	Inset Day - school closed
Thursday 4th January	Pupils back to school - start of spring term



On Friday 8th December, we are holding our PTA Christmas Fayre (3:15 - 5:30 pm). We are hoping for a festive atmosphere, with a visit from Santa and lots of exciting stalls (held both inside and outside). Please come along with family and friends for a fantastic, fun filled time!