2026-2027

ST MARY'S NEWSLETTER

Autumn 1

What a brilliant first half term we have had at St Mary's! It has been wonderful to see the children settle so happily into their new classes and to watch our teachers bring learning to life with such enthusiasm, creativity and care. There has already been so much to celebrate across the school.

I hope you enjoy reading this half term's newsletter and reflecting on just how much has been achieved over the past seven weeks. It is a lovely opportunity to celebrate the hard work of our children and staff and some of the many special moments we have shared as a school community.

As I prepare to begin my maternity leave, I would like to say a huge thank you to our whole St Mary's community for all the kindness, support and well wishes you have shown me. I am incredibly grateful.

I know the school will be in very safe hands with Mrs Imogen Lavelle as Executive Headteacher, alongside our fantastic staff and leadership team.

I will miss St Mary's enormously while I am away, but I am very much looking forward to this next chapter and to introducing you all to our newest little member of the St Mary's family!

Thank you for a wonderful Autumn 1, and I wish all our families a happy and restful half term.

Miss Black

Headteacher

There was a wonderful buzz around St Mary's as we welcomed everyone back for the start of a new school year! From Nursery right through to Year 6. The first day of a new school year is always special, and we were so proud to see how quickly everyone settled in. What a fantastic way to begin the year together!

RECEPTION



YEAR 1



YEAR 2



YEAR 3



YEAR 4



YEAR 5



YEAR 6



SNACK

Fruit is provided for our lower phase children but we encourage you to send in a piece of fruit or healthy snack for your child to eat at break time, particularly in the upper phase. Please ensure your child also has a water bottle each day which is named.

WHATSAPP GROUP

If you are new to the school and want to be added to your child's class WhatsApp group, please contact the school office to be added.

Click Here!

INSTAGRAM

Keep up to date with life at St Mary's by following us on Instagram! 📸

We regularly share snapshots of learning, celebrations, special events and all the wonderful things happening across our school. It's a great way to see what our children have been getting up to between newsletters! Follow us and stay connected with St Mary's!

Year 6 PGL Residential

Our Year 6 pupils had a fantastic time on their PGL residential! From exciting activities and new challenges to plenty of laughter and teamwork, it was wonderful to see the children encouraging one another, building their confidence and making special memories together. We were incredibly proud of the way they represented St Mary's throughout the trip – what a brilliant experience to begin their final year with us!










STRONGER










Venture










Well done

Year 1 Collective Worship – Growing in Prayer

Year 1 planned and participated reverently in their class Collective Worship, taking an active role in prayer and reflection together.

The children listened carefully to the Word of God from Matthew 18:15–20, reflecting particularly on Jesus' teaching:

"For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

Together, the children discussed **why prayer is important, who we pray to and how prayer helps us to grow closer to God**. They recognised that when we gather together in prayer, Jesus is present among us.

As part of their response, each child was invited to hold the Bible and offer their own prayer to God the Father, expressing their personal intentions in their own words. This provided a meaningful opportunity for the children to develop confidence in spontaneous prayer and to recognise that prayer is a personal relationship with God.



Time Givers — Community Volunteering

Pupils took part in a TimeGivers session, exploring the importance of volunteering and how giving our time can make a positive difference to others and to the wider community. Pupils discussed their own experiences of helping others and considered why people might choose to volunteer without being paid.

The session explored practical ways young people can contribute to their communities, including litter picking, supporting charities, helping through church and school, and baking for local organisations such as The Upper Room. Pupils made thoughtful links to caring for others and the environment, with Maria explaining that litter picking helps *"to make the world beautiful."*

Pupils were also introduced to TimeGivers' three key pillars: Environment, Social Inclusion and Crisis Relief. They contributed ideas such as planting more trees and taking action to "make people happy", supporting our wider work on Catholic Social Teaching, service, citizenship and personal development.

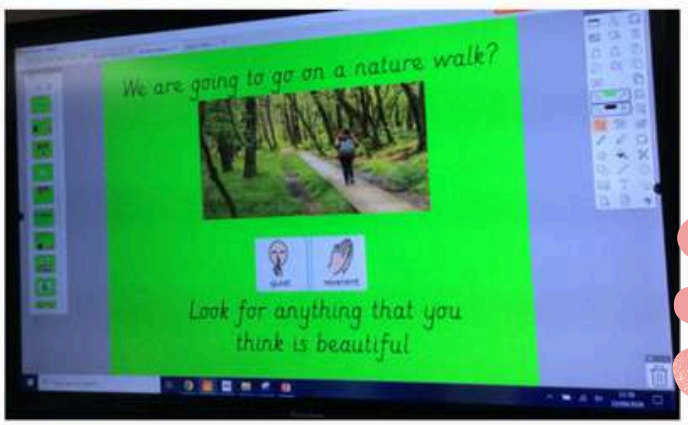


Experiencing God Through Creation

Year 1 explored how God's presence can be felt through His wonderful creation. The children went on a nature walk around the school, looking carefully for parts of creation that made them say "wow!" before coming together in prayer to thank God for all He has made. The children then made their own telescopes and used them to look more closely at God's creation, including the sea, mountains and the natural world, choosing words to describe its beauty and wonder. The lesson ended with a beautiful prayer from Anaya, who thanked God for creating the world and for her class.

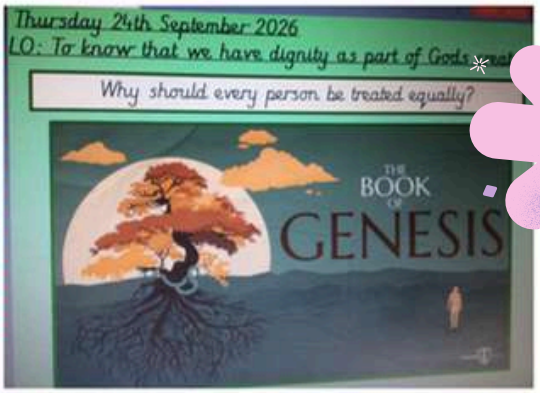


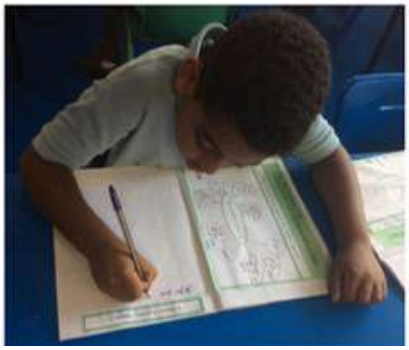


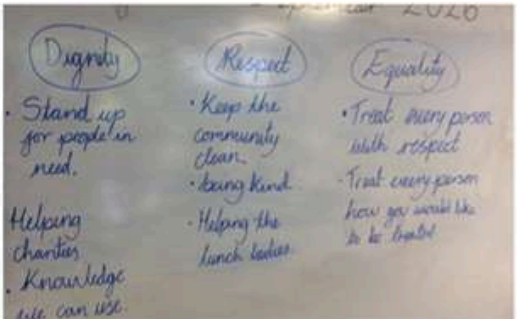


Why Should Every Person Be Treated Equally?

The children reflected on why every person should be treated equally, recognising that we are all created and loved by God. They discussed how every person has dignity and worth and deserves to be treated with kindness, respect and fairness. By treating others as Jesus taught us, we help to build a loving and welcoming community where everyone belongs. "We need to be treated equally because God treats us equally." – Marcon "God gave each of us dignity as part of His creation." – Lev

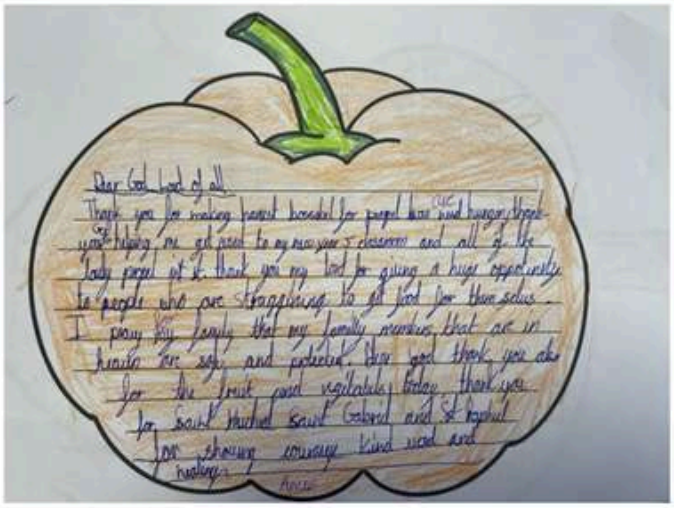






Prayer and Reflection for Harvest

Years 5 and 6 reflected on God's many gifts and gave thanks for the beauty and abundance of creation during this Harvest season. The children wrote their own prayers, asking for guidance, kindness, courage, healing and protection, while also praying for their school community and Church leaders. They reflected on the Archangels St Michael, St Gabriel and St Raphael and how their example can inspire us in our own lives. Their prayers and artwork will be displayed at our Harvest celebration on 22nd October. "I loved creating my own prayer for Michaelmas and Harvest. It made me think about what I'm grateful for." – Yusef



Caring for God's Wonderful Creation

Year 1 explored their Big Question: "How can we look after God's wonderful creation?" The children began by looking at a globe and reminding themselves that God created the world and everything in it. They then reflected on the responsibility we all have to be good stewards of creation and thought of practical ways they could care for our common home. "Helping animals." – Theodore "Picking up rubbish." – Jacob "Helping others." – Ayanna. Each child drew their own promise for caring for creation onto a leaf. The class then gathered together in a circle, with each child sharing how they would personally help to look after God's wonderful world. This was a lovely opportunity for the children to connect their RE learning with their own choices and recognise that even small actions can help us live out our faith and care for the gift of creation.



Exploring African Drumming

As part of their music learning, the children explored African drumming traditions, learning that drumming practices vary across the many cultures and communities of Africa.

The children developed their understanding of rhythm, pulse and ensemble playing, discovering how important it is to listen carefully to one another and work together to maintain a steady beat. They explored how drums can be played using hands or sticks and how drumming can accompany singing, dancing and community celebrations.

Through practical music making, pupils developed their coordination, listening skills and teamwork, while gaining an appreciation of the rich and diverse musical traditions found across Africa.

"You have to listen carefully to the beat as it's easy to make a mistake." – Joseph

"We clap, tap and have fun!" – Sofia





Year 6 Visit to All Saints Catholic Secondary School

Year 6 enjoyed an exciting taster day at All Saints Catholic Secondary School, giving them a wonderful opportunity to experience life and learning in a Catholic secondary school as they prepare for the next stage of their education. The children took part in an immersive Drama lesson, using Matilda and The Greatest Showman as inspiration to create freeze frames and physical interpretations of characters. In History, they explored how London has changed over the past 2,000 years, from Roman and Medieval London through to the Tudors and Industrial Revolution. After a delicious lunch of pizza and chips and some time playing on the AstroTurf, the children finished their day with an exciting Forensic Science investigation. They investigated the mysterious murder of a teddy bear at a Teddy Bears' Picnic and were introduced to scientific techniques including chromatography and filtration. It was a fantastic opportunity for Year 6 to experience secondary-school learning, develop their confidence and see how their educational journey can continue within the wider Catholic family of schools.





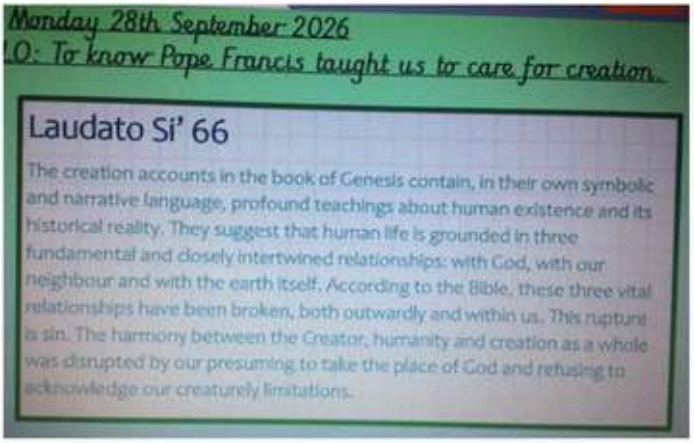
Gospel Assembly – Living Out Our School Values

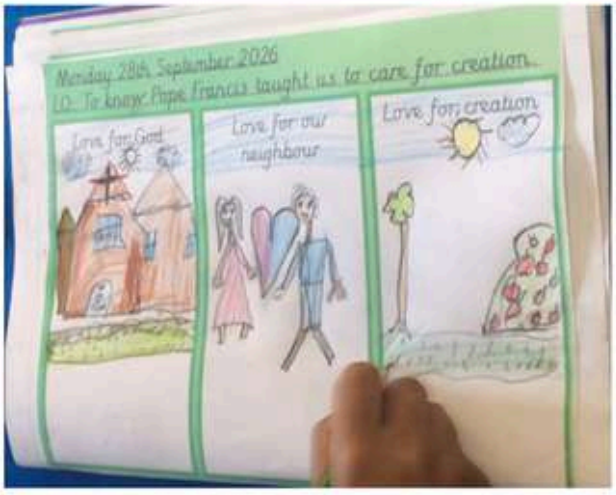
During our Gospel Assembly, the children reflected on the importance of our school values and how they guide us to follow Jesus' example in the way we treat others. We discussed how living out our values helps us to show kindness, respect and empathy, take responsibility for our actions, make good choices and contribute positively to our school and wider community. The children shared some thoughtful reflections: "We should not look at what others are getting; we should be grateful for what we are given and what we have." – Amaya "Our values help us to be kind and respectful to everyone." – Evie "We can make good choices even when nobody is watching." – Kaleb "Our values remind us that our faith is something we are called to live out each day through our words, choices and actions."



Pope Francis – Caring for Our Common Home

The children reflected on the teachings of Pope Francis and his important message about caring for creation. Pope Francis reminded us that our beautiful world is a gift from God and that we each have a responsibility to care for nature, animals, plants and one another. We considered how we can be stewards of God's creation through simple everyday actions, such as turning off lights, saving water, recycling, avoiding food waste and caring for plants and animals. The children recognised that even small actions can make a big difference when we work together to care for our common home. "I will save water and not waste food." – Joseph "Our Earth is our home, and we should look after it." – Marcon Through our choices and actions, we can put our faith into action and help make our world a better place for everyone.





Year 5 and 6 Latin Club

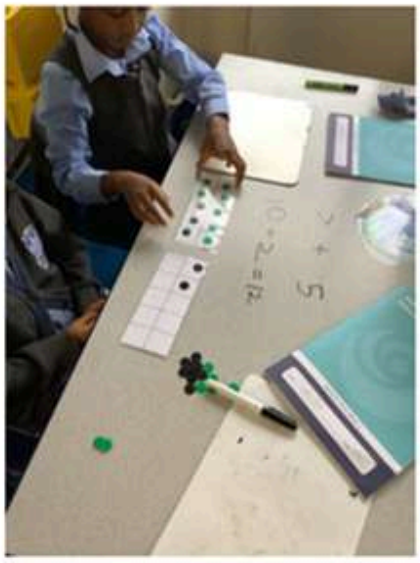
Our Year 5 and 6 pupils enjoyed another fantastic Latin Club session, led by a teacher and students from St Paul's Girls' School. This week, the children explored birthday celebrations in Ancient Rome, discovering how Roman children might have written invitations to their friends. Inspired by a traditional Roman birthday invitation, pupils had great fun creating their own invitations in Latin, decorating them with colourful illustrations and stickers. The children thoroughly enjoyed combining their language learning with creativity and fun activities. Maria (Year 5) shared, "I enjoy my Latin class because we do activities and play games while learning." Naod added, "I loved learning Latin as it's great fun!" A wonderful opportunity for our pupils to develop their language skills while exploring the fascinating history and culture of Ancient Rome. A big thank you to St Paul's Girls' School for continuing to provide such an enriching experience for our children!





Year 2 Maths – Bridging to Ten

Year 2 have been developing their addition skills by learning how to bridge through ten. The children used practical resources, including counters and ten frames, to help them visualise numbers, make ten and then add on the remaining amount. This hands-on approach helped to build their confidence and deepen their understanding of addition. Layla shared, "When I used the counters, it helped me to see and understand what I needed to add on." Well done, Year 2, for showing such fantastic mathematical thinking!



The Month of the Holy Rosary

Nursery enjoyed learning about October, the Month of the Holy Rosary. The children explored rosary beads and statues of Mary, learning about her special role in our Catholic faith and her connection to St Mary's School.

"She is Jesus' mummy," shared Yemariam, while Eyoab proudly said, "Our school is St Mary's!"

The children also reflected on how we can follow Mary's example by showing love, kindness and care towards others.



NSPCC Speak Out, Stay Safe Workshop

Year 5 and 6 took part in an important NSPCC workshop, learning how to recognise unsafe situations, understand appropriate and inappropriate touch, and seek help when feeling worried or uncomfortable. Following a KS2 assembly, pupils explored different forms of abuse and were reminded that abuse is never a child's fault. The children created their own 'Stay Safe' kits, identifying trusted adults, safe places and ways to support their wellbeing. They also learnt about Childline (0800 1111), a confidential service offering advice and support. Gio shared, "We can tell our worries to Childline," while Link reflected, "They were very inspiring and taught me that I have people to talk to." A valuable workshop empowering our pupils to speak out, stay safe and know that help is always available.





Eco Warriors Visit the Wetlands Centre!

Our Eco Warriors enjoyed a fantastic visit to the Wetlands Centre as part of the Generation Wild programme, encouraging children to connect with nature and care for our environment.

The children explored the mud kitchen and adventure playground, watched otters and pelicans being fed, and discovered fascinating facts about wildlife.

It was a wonderful day of outdoor learning and adventure! Our Eco Warriors look forward to continuing their Generation Wild journey back at school, putting their learning into action and caring for God's Creation.







Year 2 – Pizza Making in DT!

Year 2 had a fantastic time making their very own pizzas! After learning about the origins of pizza in Italy, the children practised kneading dough, shaping their bases and safely preparing toppings using the 'claw' and 'bridge' cutting techniques. Once cooked, the children enjoyed tasting and evaluating their delicious creations, reflecting on what went well and what they could improve next time. What brilliant little chefs!





TERM DATES

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Term Dates 2026 - 2027

Autumn Term			
INSET	Wednesday	2nd	September
INSET	Thursday	3rd	September
INSET	Friday	4th	September
Pupils return to school	Monday	7th	September
Last day of school	Friday	23rd	October
Half Term	**Monday 26th October**	**-**	**Friday 30th October**
INSET	Monday	2nd	November
Pupils return to school	Tuesday	3rd	November
Last day of school	Friday	18th	December
Christmas Holidays	**Monday 21st December**	**-**	**Friday 1st January**
Spring Term			
Pupils return to school	Monday	4th	January
Last day of school	Friday	12th	February
Half Term	**Monday 15th February**	**-**	**Friday 19th February**
Pupils return to school	Monday	22nd	February
Last day of school	Thursday	25th	March
Easter Holidays	**Monday 29th March**	**-**	**Friday 9th April**
Summer Term			
Pupils return to school	Monday	12th	April
INSET	Friday	30th	April
Last day of school	Friday	28th	May
Half Term	**Monday 31st May**	**-**	**Friday 4th June**
Pupils return to school	Monday	7th	June
Last day of school	Thursday	22nd	July

Staff Training Days:
Wednesday 2nd September 2026
Thursday 3rd September 2026
Friday 4th September 2026
Monday 2nd November 2026
Friday 30th April 2027

Bank Holidays	
Friday 25th December 2026	Christmas Day
Monday 28th December 2026	Boxing Day
Friday 1st January 2027	New Year's Day
Friday 26th March 2027	Good Friday
Monday 29th March 2027	Easter Monday
Monday 3rd May 2027	May Day bank holiday
Monday 31st May 2027	Spring bank holiday
Monday 30th August 2027	August bank holiday

KEY DATES FOR AUTUMN 2

