



NEWSLETTER

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Buckfast
Monday 25th November 2024

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WELCOME!

Dear St. Mary's Family,

As we step into another busy week at St. Mary's, there is so much to share and celebrate. Today marks the exciting launch of our **Breakfast and After School Clubs**—the 'Early Bird' and 'Superstars' Clubs—providing valuable support to our families and enriching experiences for our children. For more information, please see our poster and logins on **ParentPay**.

Next week, we look forward to our **Key Stage Two Crib Blessings** on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. These special moments of reflection are at the heart of our Advent preparations, and we warmly invite families to join us. Additionally, we are thrilled to welcome professional photographer **Josh Iskander** for our first-ever **Festive Photo Shoot** on **Thursday, 28th November, from 3:00 to 6:30 pm**—a wonderful opportunity for families to capture some holiday cheer. Don't forget to book your slot!

As winter firmly takes hold, we'd like to remind families to ensure children are dressed in **full school uniform**, including **weather-appropriate outerwear**, as we've experienced everything from snow and ice to storm winds and floods over the past few days! Please ensure **shoulder-length hair is tied back** and avoid sending children with jewellery or smartwatches. With the colder weather here, **shorts should now be tucked away until spring**, so children are prepared for all conditions.

You can also explore the amazing learning happening in our classrooms by visiting the **'Class Blogs' section** on our new website, found under the **'Our School' tab**. Staff are getting into the swing of sharing updates, so thank you for your patience as more blogs continue to be added.

Finally, we are racing towards Christmas with just four weeks left in the term, and the excitement is building! From our **Buckfast Abbey Christmas Activity Days** to our **Christmas Nativities**, every child—from our 3-year-olds to Year 6—is part of this joyous celebration of learning and faith.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support in making St. Mary's the vibrant and welcoming community that it is!

Wishing you a blessed and peaceful week ahead,
Mrs. Sophie Kerswell
Interim Headteacher

Prayer Focus

A Word from
Pope Francis

"Jesus leads us to go out from ourselves more and more, to give ourselves and to serve others, leading us on our journey towards eternal life."

<https://www.paperturn-view.com/wednesday-word/leader?pid=MTA101634&v=155.3>

For parents / carers new to St Mary's this term, each week we invite families to look at a publication called 'The Wednesday Word' which can be accessed from the link.

Each week it considers the Gospel reading for Sunday and picks out a key word for that week, based on the message of the Gospel. This week, the word that has been chosen is '**LEADER**'.

"When Jesus dwells in us as our friend and leader, we can bear all things." *St Teresa of Avila*

THE GOSPEL IN CHURCH Sunday 24th November 2024



At Jesus' trial, Pilate called Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus replied, "Do you ask this of your own accord, or have others spoken to you about me?" Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? It is your own people and the chief priests who have handed you over to me: what have you done?" Jesus replied, "Mine is not a kingdom of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, my followers would have fought to prevent my being handed over. But my kingdom is not of this kind." "So you are a king then?" said Pilate. "It is you who say it," answered Jesus. "Yes, I am a king. I was born for this; I came into the world for this: to bear witness to the truth; and all who are on the side of truth listen to my voice."

Adapted from John 18:33-37
Christ the King, Year B

Getting to know Jesus makes life joyful.
Learn more about this Sunday's Gospel in your local Parish Church: all are very warmly invited.

Mass Times

Saturday:

12:05pm [St. Mary's Abbey Church, Buckfastleigh](#)

5:00pm [St. Benedict's Church, Buckfastleigh](#)

Sunday:

9:00am [St Dunstan Church, South Brent, Devon](#)

9:00am [Blessed Sacrament Chapel, Buckfastleigh](#)

9:30am [St. Benedict's Church, Buckfastleigh](#)

10:30am [Our Lady of Lourdes & St. Petroc, Ashburton](#)

11:00am [St. Mary's Abbey Church, Buckfastleigh](#)



St. Mary's Teaching Team

At St Mary's we have a large team of adults working throughout the school and each week we will explain who is who, and their roles at St. Mary's.

This week, we introduce our WONDERFUL Teaching Assistants.

They are, in alphabetical first name order...



Miss Andrea Whitefoot

Teaching Assistant



Mrs Louise Perrins

Teaching Assistant



Mrs Bernice Perryman

Teaching Assistant



Miss Molly Palk

Early Years Teaching Assistant and BASC Assistant



Mrs Danielle Binmore

Teaching Assistant



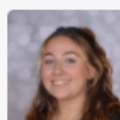
Mrs Rebecca Bowen

Teaching Assistant



Miss Hannah Kerswell

Higher Level Teaching Assistant and BASC Lead



Miss Rubie D'Olley

Teaching Assistant and BASC Assistant



Mrs Jo Allen

Teaching Assistant

Mrs Sam Ewart

Teaching Assistant



Miss Kelly Haines

Early Years Teaching Assistant and BASC Assistant



Miss Shireesha Fullee

Teaching Assistant

Mrs Kirsty Key

Early Years Teaching Assistant



Mrs Tracy Owen

Teaching Assistant

Our Teaching Assistants play numerous essential roles, from supporting learning in the classroom to providing individual care and fostering a nurturing environment for all our children. Their dedication and skills are a cornerstone of our school's success.

If you, or someone you know, would be interested in joining our talented and hardworking team, we currently have vacancies available- closing date Friday 29th November. For more details, please contact the school office—we'd love to hear from you!



Catholic

Youth Work

School News!

Catholic Life and Mission.



We are delighted to share the success of our recent **Harvest Mass Coffee Morning**. Thanks to your generous cake baking and donations, we raised over **£103 for the Plymouth Catholic Children's Society**. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined us for Mass, baked, or enjoyed tea and cakes afterward—it was a truly joyful community gathering.

For **Children in Need**, it was wonderful to see the children dressed so brightly, bringing such vibrant energy to the day! Our **Children in Need Café** in the school hall was a great success, and we deeply appreciate all the amazing cake donations and the helping hands that made setting up and packing away so much easier.

On **Friday, 22nd November**, the children were treated to a **special assembly** led by **Paul Cotter from CAFOD**, who spoke about the incredible work of **CAFOD World Gifts**. This inspiring session introduced the children to the powerful impact these gifts can have on communities in need around the world. You can learn more about this initiative at [CAFOD World Gifts](https://www.cafod.org.uk). Perhaps you too might consider asking for a World Gift this Christmas in place of something else?

The day continued with an exciting **live virtual assembly** to celebrate **Catholic World Youth Fun Day 2024**, where children from all over the world joined together in a Global Day of Prayer and celebration. This interactive event included prayer, special guests, engaging activities, and reflections on faith in action for all ages. It was a truly meaningful experience for our school community.

Looking ahead, we are excited to invite you to our next **St. Mary's Café** on **Friday, 6th December, from 8:45 to 10:00 am** in the school hall, celebrating the **Feast of St. Nicholas**. This is a wonderful opportunity to catch up with friends or meet new ones over a warm drink and a slice of cake. Donations of cakes and offers to help with set-up and tidy-up are always welcome.

Finally, we'll host one more café before Christmas on **Friday, 20th December, from 8:45 to 10:00 am**. Let's gather as a community to celebrate the joy and anticipation of the season together.

As we journey through Advent, let us continue to reflect on the message of hope, peace, and generosity that is central to our Catholic faith. Our Advent preparations will include **Crib Blessings, Christmas activities at Buckfast Abbey**, and the joyful retelling of the **Nativity story** by all our children—from the youngest to the oldest. We warmly invite all families to join us in these important moments of prayer and celebration.



What is Advent?

Advent is a significant and meaningful part of the Christian calendar. The word '**Advent**' means '**coming**', and this special season marks the period of anticipation and preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus at Christmas.

Advent begins on the **Sunday nearest to 30th November**, lasting for the four weekends leading up to Christmas. This year, the **First Sunday of Advent** is on **Sunday, 1st December**, marking the start of our journey as a school and parish community toward the celebration of Jesus' birth.

Advent is a time of reflection, prayer, and preparation—a chance to focus on the **hope, peace, joy, and love** that the coming of Christ brings into the world. As we light each candle on the **Advent wreath**, we are reminded of these promises and the importance of sharing them in our own lives.

We invite our families to embrace this season with us by joining in our school Advent activities, including our **Crib Blessings**, reflections with our Wednesday Word, and preparations for the **Nativity performances**.

Together, let us reflect on the true meaning of Christmas and prepare our hearts for this joyous season.



Remembrance Sunday.

Remembrance Sunday is a national opportunity to remember the service and sacrifice of all those that have defended our freedoms and protected our way of life.

We remember the Armed Forces, and their families, from Britain and the Commonwealth, the vital role played by the emergency services and those who have lost their lives as a result of conflict or terrorism.

Thank you to Freya Dobbs and Evie Sansom for their part in the day, and for contributing these photographs.



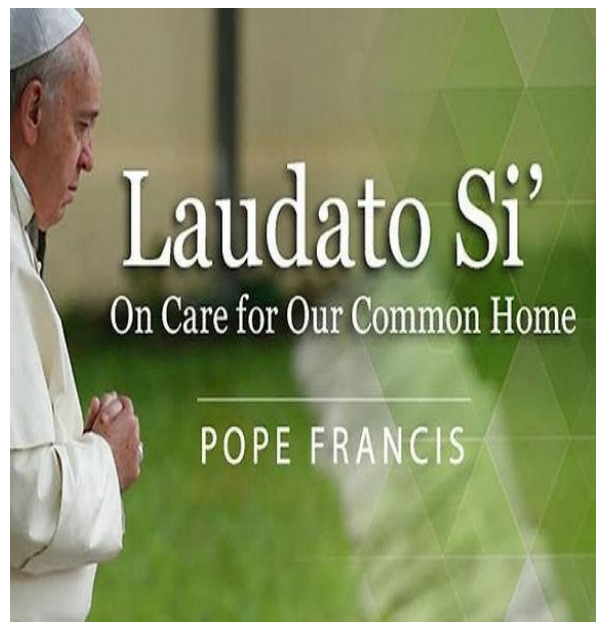
Congratulations to our very own caretaker, Logan Berry, who has received the prestigious 'Laudato Si' award!

Logan was surprised to receive this special award in the post from Caritas, the Catholic charity run by Deborah Fisher – a former parent, governor, and friend of St. Mary's.

The award recognises Logan's tireless efforts in gathering apples from our beautiful orchard every day for over two months, allowing the St. Mary's Family to enjoy them in delicious crumbles and pies.

We're sure you'll all agree this recognition is well deserved.

Well done, Logan, and thank you from us all. ☐



Reminders and information:

Please can you ensure that your child or children in your care **WALK** down and up our hill and **stick to the path**. We have had lots of nasty falls over the years, and running contributes to this. Thank you.



Wrap around Childcare.



Exciting News: Breakfast and After School Club Opening!

We are delighted to announce that our Breakfast and After School Club—**Early Birds and Superstars**—will officially open on **Monday, November 25th, 2024!**

Our offerings:

Breakfast Club: 7:30 am – 8:30 am

Pre-booked price: £4 (book by 3:30 pm the previous day)

Ad hoc bookings (on the day): £5

After School Club: 3:30 pm – 6:00 pm

Pre-booked prices: £6 (3:30 pm – 5:00 pm) and £4 (5:00 pm – 6:00 pm)

Ad hoc bookings (on the day): £7 (3:30 pm – 5:00 pm) and £5 (5:00 pm – 6:00 pm)

How to book:

All bookings must be made through **ParentPay**. If your child is new to the club, please ensure you complete the preliminary registration forms before their first session.

We look forward to welcoming your children to Early Birds and Superstars!

Hair and Jewellery:

Please could all children, with hair touching their shoulders or longer, have their hair tied back. Please could jewellery be left at home. A pair/one single stud may be worn in the ears.

Uniform:

Our children are looking smart, and we just want to remind all that full uniform needs to be worn each non-PE day.

On a child's PE days, they may wear their school PE kit which is a school PE t-shirt, their school jumper and navy or black plain shorts. Plain navy or black leggings or tracksuit bottoms may be worn if cooler. Socks should be school socks – navy, grey, white or black and not football or rugby style socks. Trainers should be worn- not studded or astro boots at all.

We have relocated our second hand uniform to our Ark which is located just along the corridor past our Y1 Venford classroom.

Thank you for your help with this.

See Mrs Walker for details.

<https://www.brigade.uk.com/parents/>



Primary School Applications NOW OPEN

for September 2025!



If your child has a birth date between 1st September 2020 and 31st August 2021, then you will need to apply for a place for their primary school place by Wednesday January 15th 2025.

Here is the link to do this;

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/school-information/apply-for-a-school-place/apply-for-a-primary-school-place/>

If you wish to discuss options for primary schooling, including places in our nursery or in year applications, then please email Mrs Ania Walker at admin@st-marysrc.devon.sch.uk to arrange a more in depth chat or visit.



Children's festive photoshoot
SCHOOL AND FESTIVE PHOTO SHOOT
JOSH ISKANDER
10% OF SALES TO ST MARY'S SCHOOL

THURSDAY **28** NOVEMBER 3-6:30PM BOOKING ESSENTIAL*

Pop-up Studio, St Mary's School Hall, Buckfast
£20/CHILD: FULL ACCESS TO ONLINE GALLERY WITH ALL PROFESSIONALLY EDITED HIGH DEFINITION IMAGES AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD OR PRINT
BRING YOUR FAVOURITE FESTIVE JUMPERS/HEADGEAR
*Book and pay via: www.joshiskanderphotography.com

Thursday 28th
November 3:00-
6:30pm.
Don't forget to
secure your
booking so as not
to miss out on
this wonderful
opportunity!

Christmas Events so far- Dates for your diary.

- **Key Stage Two** -Christmas Crib Blessings all 2pm –
Monday 2nd December -Roadford Ashburton Catholic Church, Tuesday 3rd December -Fernworthy- South Brent Catholic Church, Wednesday 4th December -Burrator Buckfastleigh Catholic Church.
- **Choir Buckfastleigh Fayre**: Wednesday 4th December- families to take their children from school and meet in St. Luke's Church for 4:15pm. Singing begins at 4:30pm.
- **Year 5 and 6 (Burrator & Fernworthy)** –
St. Nicholas' Day 9:15 – all day. Thursday 5th December. £4.90. Children only event – details to follow. Children to bring donations for the Trussell Trust.
- **Venford** Abbey Christmas Angel Morning- Thursday 19th December 9:15 am. Children only event- £3.
- **Roadford** Abbey Christmas Nativity Morning- Wednesday 11th December 9:15am. Children only event - £3.
- **Avon-** Abbey Christmas Angel Afternoon. Wednesday 11th December 1pm. Children only event - £3.
- **Fernworthy** Year 4-Abbey Wise Men Morning- Friday 20th December 9:15am. Children only event - £3
- **KS1 Christmas Nativity**: Wed 11th December 9:30am - & Thurs 12th December 2pm - St Mary's School Hall (2 performances of the same nativity).
- **Disco**: Friday 13th December Meldon, Venford & Avon 4-4:45pm, then Roadford, Fernworthy and Burrator 5-6pm - St Mary's School Hall - tickets sold in advance.
- **KS2 Christmas Concert** -Buckfast Abbey Main Church. Roadford, Fernworthy and Burrator: Wednesday 18th December 2pm
- **Meldon Christmas Nativity**: Monday 16th December 2p.m., Tuesday 17th December 9:30 a.m- St Mary's School Hall (2 performances of the same nativity).
- **St. Nicholas Café**: Friday 6th December 8:45-10:00
- **Christmas Jumper Day Café**- Friday 20th December 8:45-10:00am

Safeguarding

Within schools, staff work in accordance with the government document called "Keeping Children Safe in Education". This document is updated each year and staff take part in refresher training to ensure they are aware of the most current legislation.



If a staff member has concerns about a child, they must report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). At St Mary's, the DSL is Mrs Kerswell and the Deputy Designated Leads who are responsible in Mrs Kerswell's absence are Mrs Jessica Hutchinson and Mrs Kayleigh Teeder. We also have a governor, Mr Mark Norman, who takes the lead on safeguarding.



The contact details for all the above personnel are displayed prominently throughout the school. Buckfastleigh Food Bank offer help to local families who may need extra support at this time. Their website is: <https://buckfastleigh.foodbank.org.uk> As well as offering food parcels, the Food Bank can also signpost people for help and support with their finances.

Congratulations!

Each Friday, our school comes together to celebrate the achievements of our children over the past week. "Building Learning Power" (BLP) Certificates are awarded to children who have demonstrated excellent learning behaviours and "Witness of the Week" (WOW) certificates for demonstrating Gospel values in daily life. We also celebrate achievements outside school that our children want to share in assembly.

Well done to the following children who were awarded certificates in today's and last week's Achievement Assembly.

	BLP	WOW
Meldon	Isabelle,	Zach,
Venford	Harry M	Kiri
Avon	Casey,	Oakley,
Roadford	Gracie,	Masie,
Fernworthy	Isabella,	Archie V,
Burrator	Berite	Clara



Times Tables Stars this week: Aisha,