



St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Buckfast
Monday 10th February 2025
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Dear Parents, Carers, and St. Mary's Community,

I am delighted to begin this newsletter with a message from Father Abbot David and our Chair of Governors, Lesley Clark.

"Abbot David and the Governing body of St Mary's school are pleased to announce that Mrs Sophie Kerswell has been appointed by CAST as the Headteacher of the school after a rigorous interview process."

As your new substantive headteacher, I feel truly honoured to lead our wonderful school alongside our dedicated team. At St. Mary's, we are committed to serving our children, families, and the wider community, ensuring that every child flourishes in a nurturing and inspiring environment.

Over the past five months, your support has been invaluable, and I am grateful for the trust you have placed in me. As we continue this journey together, I remain committed to listening, learning, and growing with you all. I look forward to everything we will achieve as a school family in the months and years ahead.

Thank you for your continued support.



Mrs Sophie Kerswell



Headteacher – St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, Buckfast.

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](#)

Buckfast Abbey Parish Mass Times:



Prayer Focus




<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 this 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 **Follow'**.

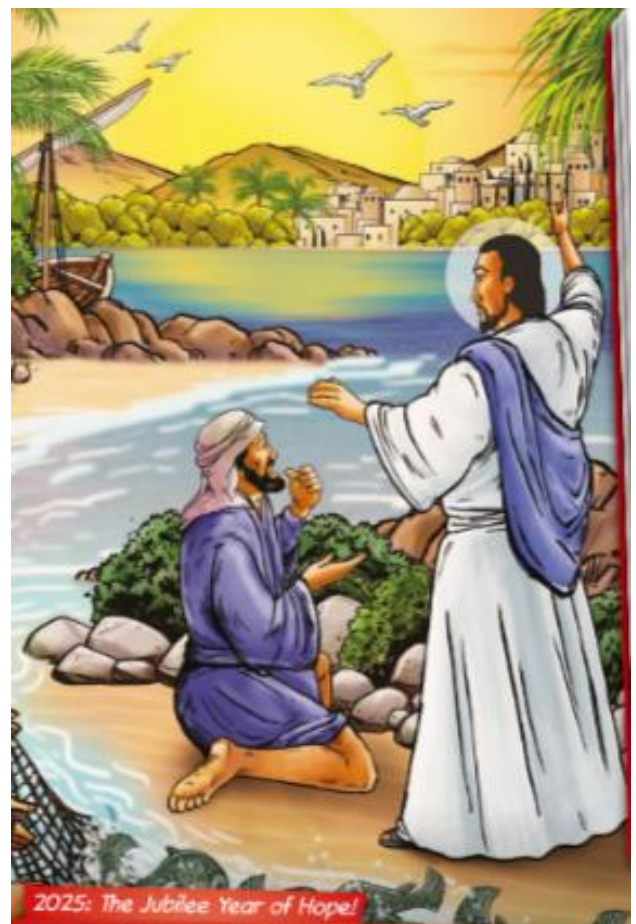
THE GOSPEL IN CHURCH
Sunday 9th February 2025



When Jesus had finished teaching by the lakeside he said to Simon Peter, "Sail out into deep water and let down your nets." "Master," Simon Peter replied, "we worked hard all night long and caught nothing, but if you say so, I will let down the nets." And when he and his companions had done this they netted such a huge number of fish that their nets began to tear and they filled their two boats to sinking point. When Simon Peter saw this he fell at the knees of Jesus saying, "Leave me, Lord; I am a sinful man." For he and all his companions were completely overcome by the catch they had made. But Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Do not be afraid; from now on it is people you will catch." Then, bringing their boats back to land, they left everything and followed him.

Adapted from Luke 5:1-11
The 5th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year C

Learn more about this Sunday's Gospel in your local Parish Church: all are very warmly invited.



2025: The Jubilee Year of Hope!

Having Hope in our Families

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus promised the fishermen that, if they followed him, they would bring home more than fish: they would bring people back to God. By following Jesus, we too can help others to know and love God - to find the happiness which comes from knowing and following Jesus.

Catholic Life and Mission: Stepping into Spring Reflections

Upcoming Masses

January has come to an end, and we welcome February with sunshine and glimpses of spring. Last week, we had the pleasure of hosting our RE Advisor, Dawn Potterton, for her first visit to St. Mary's. She was warmly welcomed into our school community and spoke highly of the children's engagement in Religious Education, praising their focus, enthusiasm, and excellent learning behaviours.

It is truly remarkable to see how well our children are embracing the new **Religious Education Directory (RED)**, which has been our RE curriculum since September 2024. Even our youngest learners, as young as seven, are confidently locating passages in scripture and discussing them with their peers. In just one hour, Dawn and I were able to take a snapshot of RE teaching across all six classes, and it was inspiring to witness the dedication of our staff in ensuring that RE remains at the heart of our school.

Dawn also met with ten children from across the school to discuss their experiences in the three key areas of Catholic education: **RE Teaching, Prayer and Worship, and Catholic Life and Mission**. The children spoke with confidence, honesty, and great insight, reflecting their deep connection to their faith and learning.

The day began with our **Celebration of the Word**, led by our Pupil Chaplains. As always, the music and singing created a beautiful atmosphere, setting the tone for a truly uplifting day.

We are incredibly proud of our school community and grateful for the opportunity to share our journey in faith and learning with visitors like Dawn.

Masses this term:

We warmly invite all parents, carers, families and friends to join us for our school Masses this term, celebrated by Father Francis.

- **Wednesday, 5th March, 9:30-10:30** - Ash Wednesday Mass-

Blessed Sacrament Chapel at Buckfast Abbey - ALL WELCOME.

- **Monday, 31st March, 9:30-10:30** - Reconciliation Mass, Blessed Sacrament Chapel at Buckfast Abbey- ALL WELCOME. Followed by confessions for Catholic participants.

As we step into this Spring, may we remain guided by the teachings of Christ, united in faith, and committed to making St. Mary's a place of love, learning, and light for all.

Let us continue to encourage one another, growing as a community of faith and service.

Wishing you all a blessed and hopeful Spring 2025.

Mrs Sophie Kerswell- RE and Catholic Life Lead.

Reminders and information:

Thank you for your continued effort to ensure that your child/children attend school each day and on time. Did you know, if your child is late, after registration is closed, then they are marked as absent for the entire morning.

Registration is 8:45am.

**Let's get our children in to class and ready to learn
BEFORE 8:45am.**

**Benedict Bear looks forward to welcoming your child to school
and champions great attendance! 😊**



Wrap around Childcare.

Exciting News: Breakfast and After School Club Open!

We are delighted to announce that our Breakfast and After School Club—**Early Birds and Superstars**—is officially open!

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!

Safeguarding

Operation Encompass. We are an Operation Encompass School.

For more information click on the link: <https://www.operationencompass.org/>

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 have a specific email address for any safeguarding concerns:

safeguarding.stmarys.buckfast@plymouthcast.com

Useful links and information for our families

If you are concerned that a child has experience, or is at risk of, harm, you can make a referral yourself to MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) through the link below, by calling 0345 155 1071 or by emailing mashsecure@devon.gov.uk

Fund raising for individual reading books:

Our School Council have organised a Bake Off this Thursday.

Prizes for best decorated, most tasty and most creative!

Children can buy cakes in the afternoon – cash in named envelopes please.

Then on Friday, we have our 'hygge' pyjama day- £1 contribution.

Get cosy this Valentine's Day and help to raise funds for some beautiful reading books.



We will be welcoming Guide Dogs for the Blind on Friday – and they will be visiting each class throughout the day and talking about their excellent work.

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.

	WOW	BLP
Meldon	Lavender and Caleb	Audrey and Harry M
Venford	Katie and Ivy- Rae	Larkspur and Ivy-May
Avon	Hettie and Alex	Anya and Ebba
Roadford	Nathaniel and Gracie	Rilan and Emily
Fernworthy	Jonathan and Ayrton	Fraser and Kaiyah
Burrator	Inigo and Maria	Ngaio and Robun



Times Tables Stars this week and last week!

Matilda, Frieda, Freya, Oliver and Lucas

Achievements Outside of School:

Oscar – Netball Trophy

Erin I – Netball Trophy

Harry I – Football Trophy

Evie I – Netball Trophy