



St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Buckfast

Monday 3rd March 2025

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**Dear Parents, Carers, and St. Mary's Community,**

As we step into March, we are uplifted by the glorious sunshine and the abundance of spring flowers blooming around us. Living in South Devon, with Dartmoor right on our doorstep, is truly a privilege.

Recently, our Year 4 and half of our Year 5 children embarked on an unforgettable three-day residential at **East Shallowford Farm** on Dartmoor. Expertly led by David, Anthony, and Fiona, the children embraced the challenges of life on a working farm, learning the importance of teamwork and responsibility—starting with an early rise each morning to tend to the animals before breakfast! Many experienced their first time away from home overnight, demonstrating remarkable resilience and independence throughout.

The children were treated to fantastic accommodation and hearty home-cooked meals, lovingly prepared by Michelle and Sarah. The weather, on the whole, was kind to us, with two days of glorious sunshine and the bluest of Dartmoor skies. As night fell, we were lucky enough to witness a stunning celestial event—the alignment of seven planets, a rare sight that added to the magic of our adventure.

A highlight of the trip was our **challenging night walk**. Navigating deep mud, uneven granite, and complete darkness with only teamwork to guide us, the children rose to the occasion, showing both courage and camaraderie.

This extraordinary experience was made possible thanks to the **generous support of East Shallowford Farm and the Ernest Cook Trust**, who kindly funded the accommodation, food, and activities for our children. A huge **thank you** also goes to our dedicated staff, who went above and beyond—leaving their own homes and families for three days—to ensure that our St. Mary's children could create lifelong memories.

We now **look forward to our next residential in just two weeks**, when our other Year 5 and Year 6 children will experience three days on **Exmoor**—another fantastic adventure awaits!

Thank you for your continued support

Warm wishes,

**Mrs Sophie Kerswell**



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

**First Mass of Sunday:**

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

**Sunday:**

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

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

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

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

**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 **'ACTION'**.

Jesus told a parable to his disciples. "Why do you observe the splinter in your friend's eye and never notice the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your friend, 'Friend, let me take out the splinter that is in your eye,' when you cannot see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite! Take the plank out of your own eye first, and then you will see clearly enough to take out the splinter that is in your friend's eye. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot produce good fruit. You can tell what a tree is like by the fruit it produces. You cannot pick figs or grapes from brambles. A good person does good things out of the good stored up in their heart; a bad person does bad things out of the badness in their heart. Your words show what is in your heart.



From the Gospel of Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2025 Cf. Luke 6:39-45 (the 8<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ord Time, Year C)

**"We must live the faith, not only with our words, but with our actions."** Pope Francis

## Catholic Life and Mission: Stepping into Lent Reflections

Dear Parents, Carers, and Friends,

As we prepare to enter the season of **Lent**, a time of reflection, prayer, and renewal, we are reminded of the importance of putting our faith into action. This week's **Gospel reading** calls us to do just that—echoing the words of **Pope Francis**, who says:

*"We must live the faith not only with our words, but with our actions."*

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our families and children for coming together before the end of term for our **Bake Off**. We have never seen such an incredible selection of beautifully made cakes, and the children were absolutely delighted to share in the joy of tasting them! We truly appreciate the time, effort, and love that went into the baking. Your **actions** created a wonderful time of sharing between children, parents, and staff.

Additionally, thanks to your generosity with baking and buying—along with the contributions from our **Pyjama Day**—we have raised **£365** towards our **KS2 individual reading resources**. Your kindness and support continue to make a real difference in our school community.

As we begin our **Lenten journey**, we take time to reflect on Jesus' **40 days in the desert**, a period of preparation leading up to **Easter**. Lent invites us to focus on **prayer, fasting, and almsgiving**—choosing to **give, grow, and act with kindness** as we prepare our hearts for the celebration of Christ's resurrection.

We also warmly invite you to join us for our **forthcoming school Masses**. These are wonderful opportunities to come together in faith, and we would love to see as many families as possible joining us. **After each Mass, we will be offering refreshments in the school hall**, so please do stay and share this time with us.

Thank you for your continued support and for being part of our St. Mary's family.

With blessings,  
Sophie Kerswell- Headteacher

### 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.

## 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!**

- **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!

**Breakfast and After School Club Tel: 01752 753967**

## Let's Talk Programme

South Devon and Dartmoor Community Safety Partnership are offering bespoke sessions specifically aimed at Dads and male carers. Please find dates and booking links below:

- **11<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm - Let's Talk Dads – Anger and Challenging Behaviour**
- <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/lets-talk-dads-anger-and-challenging-behaviour-tickets-1194725810059?aff=oddtcreator>
- **13<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm - Let's Talk Dads – Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing**  
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/lets-talk-dads-mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing-tickets-1195053098989?aff=oddtcreator>
- **18<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm - Let's Talk Dads – Healthy Relationships**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/lets-talk-dads-healthy-relationships-tickets-1195255243609?aff=oddtcreator>

- 20<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm - **Let's Talk Dads – Drugs and Exploitation**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/lets-talk-dads-drugs-and-exploitation-tickets-1195423396559?aff=oddtcreator>

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:mashsecure@devon.gov.uk)



### **Congratulations to Ned on His Artwork Installation!**

We are thrilled to share that Ned recently had his beautiful painting of Haytor showcased in a special presentation ceremony. The plaque, which features his artwork, has now been installed in the community garden, where it will be enjoyed by all.

Ned also has been invited to create another plaque for the garden.

**Well done, Ned!**

**Thank you to Peter and Mary Boston for bringing in their beautiful Guide Dog Ridley into our school on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February.**

**Peter and Mary explained how these special dogs undergo years of training so they can help their owners.**

**Ridley showed the children how he helps with everyday tasks, and demonstrated locating doors, stopping at pavements and avoiding obstacles. The children were very impressed about how Ridley was able to respond to specific commands as part of his role in helping guide his owners navigate safely through the world.**

**Peter was particularly pleased to visit us at St. Marys, as he himself was a pupil here in the 1960's. He couldn't believe how much our school had changed and how much bigger it had become!**

**Thank you to Peter, Mary and lovely Ridley. 😊**



## 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	Wilbur, Harry B	Lavender, Arlo
Venford	Frankie, Tabitha	Ivy-May, Layla
Avon	Eleanor, Lacey	Jasmine, Evie
Roadford	Oliver, Daisy, Maisie	Aisha, Lupin
Fernworthy	Archie V	Adsie
Burrator	Maria, Ava Y	Robun, Finn



**Times Tables Stars:** Lucas, Rory, Matilda, Oscar

**Achievements Outside of School:**  
**Swimming Certificate:** Erin I and Harry I