



NEWSLETTER

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Buckfast

Monday 20th January 2025

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WELCOME!

Dear St. Mary's Family,

Firstly, I'd like to wish you all a wonderful New Year! It has been so lovely to welcome our children and families back after the Christmas break. The children have returned eager and ready to learn, and there's been a real buzz in the classrooms, particularly with the introduction of our new English curriculum. I've already seen some fantastic writing from our pupils across the school, and it's heartwarming to see so many children engrossed in their reading.

This enthusiasm is being supported by our newly relocated library, now situated in our school's entrance foyer. It's the first thing you see as you walk into St. Mary's—a vibrant showcase of books that highlights the importance of reading in our school. A huge thank you to Jade Kirton from Devon Library for dedicating her time to plan, measure, and organise the move, as well as Logan our caretaker, and Chris, and Andy from the Abbey for fitting the new shelving. It's been a wonderful team effort!

We're also adding finishing touches to make this space even more inviting, with plans for plants, rugs, LED lights, and decorations. Reading and books hold a special place at St. Mary's, and we want our children to feel that every time they visit the library.

Thanks to the generosity of FOSM, as well as the contributions from our Christmas nativities in December, we now have enough funds to purchase new Key Stage Two Guided Reading books and fluency books. These specific books bridge the gap for children transitioning from Little Wandle Phase 5 to Key Stage Two material.

Our next project is to revamp the Key Stage Two independent reading collection. We aim to provide current and engaging texts that are closely matched to each child's reading level, helping teachers monitor progress and comprehension. We are currently trialling different schemes and will soon roll out some fundraising ideas to support this exciting initiative. With the significant investment we've made in new books, we kindly ask for your support in keeping them protected. Please ensure your child's book is transported in a protective wallet, whether it's a St. Mary's book bag or a separate plastic folder. If you need assistance in obtaining one, do let us know.

To close, I'll leave you with one of my favourite reading quotes from Dr. Seuss:

"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."

Let's continue working together to nurture a genuine love of reading in our children and watch the wonderful places they'll go!

Best wishes,
Mrs. Sophie Kerswell- Interim Headteacher

Prayer Focus

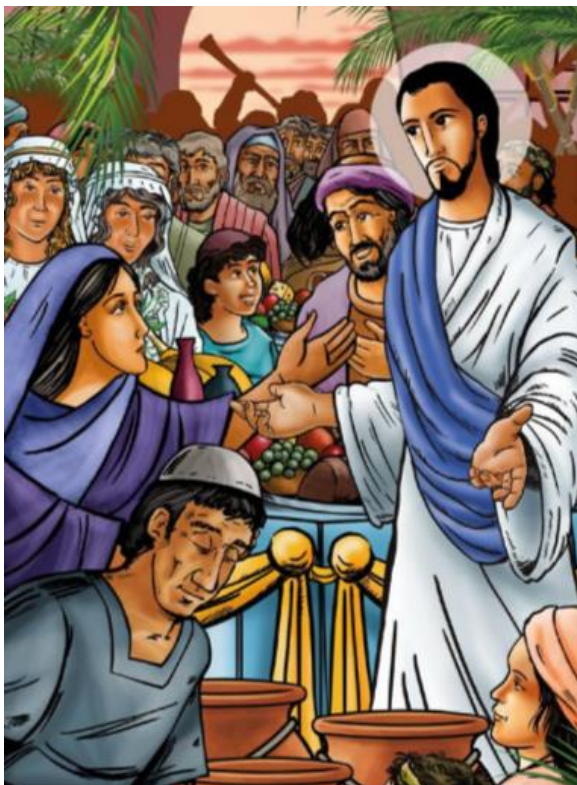
A **Word** from
Pope Francis

*"If we are close to Jesus, we will have joy
in our hearts and a smile on our face."*

<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 **'Joy'**.



THE GOSPEL IN CHURCH Sunday 19th January 2025



There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there with Jesus and his disciples. When they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." Jesus said, "Woman why turn to me? My hour has not come yet." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." There were six stone water jars standing there; each could hold twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water," and they filled them to the brim. "Draw some out now," he told them, "and take it to the steward." They did this; the steward tasted the water, and it had turned into the best wine. This was the first of the signs given by Jesus: it was given at Cana in Galilee. He let his glory be seen, and his disciples believed in him.

Adapted from John 2:1-11

The 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

Getting to know Jesus makes life joyful.
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

God wants us to be filled with joy - Jesus came to make our joy complete. In the first of his many miracles, Jesus changed the water into wine and brought great joy to the wedding celebration. For us too, Jesus changes our lives when he enters into our hearts and homes; he makes the ordinary special and life more joyful.

Buckfast Abbey Parish 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](#)



Catholic Life and Mission: January Reflections

As we begin the new year, January offers a perfect opportunity to reflect on our shared mission and renew our commitment to living out Gospel values in our school community.

This month, we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany, which reminds us of the Magi's journey to encounter Jesus. Their faith, perseverance, and generosity inspire us to seek Christ in our daily lives and share His light with others. At St. Mary's, we are called to reflect this light in our relationships, actions, and service to those around us.

We were especially blessed as a staff and governing team to share a day together on Epiphany in the beautiful setting of Buckfast Abbey. Our day began with the celebration of Mass, followed by Trauma Informed Schools Training led by Suzie Franklin, our Plymouth CAST Trust SEN Lead and Trauma Informed Schools Trainer. Sharing a meal together added to the sense of community and renewal, and staff returned feeling ready and prepared to support our children once again.

This Friday, 24th January, marks the launch of our Jubilee Year of Hope for the Catholic Church, led by Pope Francis. We look forward to journeying together as *pilgrims of hope*, drawing strength from God's promises and one another.

Key Highlights for Catholic Life in January:

- **Epiphany Liturgy:** A special liturgy brought our school community together to celebrate the journey of the Magi and reflect on our personal journeys of faith.
- **Charitable Outreach:** Inspired by Christ's call to serve, we will launch a collection for local food banks to support families in need during the winter months.
- **Prayer Focus:** Morning prayers this month will centre on hope and renewal, encouraging children and staff to offer their aspirations and challenges to God.
- **RE Lessons:** Children will explore the themes of faith and trust in God's plan through stories of the Magi and the Baptism of Jesus.

Upcoming Masses

We warmly invite all parents and carers to join us for our school Masses this term:

- **Wednesday, 3rd March, 9:30-10:30** - Mass- Blessed Sacrament Chapel at Buckfast Abbey.
- **Monday, 31st March, 9:30-10:30** - Reconciliation Mass, Blessed Sacrament Chapel at Buckfast Abbey, followed by confessions for Catholic participants.

As we step into this new year, 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 start to 2025.

Mrs Sophie Kerswell - RE and Catholic Life Lead.

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 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!

Collection Arrangements for Key Stage Two

We kindly request that all families and friends collecting children in **Key Stage Two (ages 7-11)** wait either outside in the **playground** or in the **enclosed porch area** until 3:30 pm, which is when the KS2 school day finishes.

This arrangement helps to:

- Reduce the significant number of people gathering in the foyer and narrow corridors, which poses a fire and congestion hazard.
- Minimise distractions for teachers and children still in class.
- Maintain a quieter environment for our admin team, who are busy taking calls and supporting the KS1 collection process.

If you are collecting a **KS1 child at 3:15 pm** and then waiting for your KS2 child to finish at 3:30 pm, we kindly ask that you wait in the **playground or porch area**. Alternatively, you may choose to collect both your KS1 and KS2 children at **3:30 pm**, which would save waiting time and streamline the process—just a brief wait for your KS2 child.

We greatly appreciate your cooperation and support in ensuring a safe, calm, and organised collection for all. 😊

Reading Books

Given the **£1000's** of pounds we have spent and still need to spend to update our reading books, we would like all reading books that go home, to be stored in a separate, dedicated book bag, or protective folder – no drinks or other items with the book. If you can provide this, that would be very helpful.

Parents/Carer's Evenings:

Tuesday 1st and Thursday 3rd April 3:45-6pm. Bookings to follow in March.

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

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	Mylo	Logan
Venford	Harry V	Toby
Avon	Zach	Noah
Roadford	Harry R-O	Oliver
Fernworthy	Eric	Harrison G
Burrator	Bridie	Lucas



Achievements Outside of School:

Katie – Netball Trophy
Evie I – Netball Trophy