



# ST. THOMAS MORE NEWSLETTER

**'Do all that you do with Love'**

**Friday 9th October 2026**

## A MESSAGE FROM MRS EXLEY

Dear Parents and Carers,

As another busy week draws to a close, I would like to share some lovely moments from our school community and take the opportunity to say a very heartfelt thank you.

This week, our Year 5 children had the wonderful opportunity to attend the 'Walking with Mary' pilgrimage at Our Lady's Church in Cowley. It was a beautiful and prayerful event, giving the children time to reflect, pray and deepen their understanding of their faith. The children thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and it was lovely for them to be part of such a special occasion.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to all the parents and carers who took the time to complete the parent survey as part of our Catholic School Inspection last week. Although the survey was anonymous, we were absolutely overwhelmed by the number of positive and thoughtful comments shared. It was particularly touching to read the lovely things that so many of you said about individual members of staff. These comments have been passed on to the colleagues mentioned, and I know how much your kind words have meant to them and me.

The inspectors themselves commented on the exceptionally high response to the survey, which was wonderful to hear. As a staff team, we were genuinely flattered and filled with gratitude by the warmth, kindness and support reflected in your responses.

It is a real privilege to lead a school with such a caring and supportive community. Your encouragement, trust and appreciation mean a great deal to all of us, and I hope you know just how much we value the partnership we have with our families. It is this sense of unity and shared commitment that makes St Thomas More such a special place.

Thank you once again for your continued support and for the many ways you contribute to the life of our wonderful school.

I hope you all have a lovely, restful weekend, and I look forward to seeing everyone on Monday morning.

Every Blessing,

Julieann



Prayer to St John Henry Newman

O God, our Heavenly Father,

Through the intercession of St John Henry Newman, help us to seek the truth, follow Your light and serve You with love.

May we be lights in the darkness and faithful witnesses to Christ.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



## October -the month of Our Lady of the Rosary

Throughout the month, every class has been praying the Rosary each day, and each child has been given Rosary beads to support them during prayer time. Our Year 6 pupils have taken a leading role by guiding Key Stage One children in praying the Rosary. It has been wonderful to witness the quiet reflection and reverence shown across the school as pupils focus on key moments in the lives of Jesus and Mary. Today, we were delighted to welcome our Year 6 parents to join us for Prayer and Liturgy. Harvey read the story of the Resurrection from Luke's Gospel, and together we reflected on how we can bring joy to the lives of others, just as the disciples experienced great joy when Jesus rose from the dead. Nathan, Blake and Marcos shared prayers they had written at home, reading them beautifully and with great confidence. We concluded our gathering by singing the joyful hymn Sing Hosanna, providing a wonderful start to the day.

At half term, children will bring their Rosary beads home as a gift from the school. We hope this will encourage families to continue praying together and deepen their faith at home.



How to pray the Rosary

- ⑥ On the bead before the next decade say the Glory Be and Our Father.
- ⑤ On each of the ten beads now say a Hail Mary.
- ④ On the fifth bead say the Glory Be. Keep hold of this bead and begin the first decade of the rosary with the Our Father.
- ③ On the next three beads say one Hail Mary.
- ② Hold the first bead and say the Our Father.
- ① Hold the Crucifix and make the Sign of the Cross.



## Fr Damien's Blessing

Fr Damien joined our Year 1 RE lesson and enjoyed listening to the children's thoughtful ideas about how they can help God care for His creation. He then led us in prayer and blessed all of the classrooms throughout the school.

**Thank you, Fr Damien, for sharing this special time with us and for your blessings.**



# ST THOMAS MORE IN ACTION!

**St. Carlos Acutis**



## Year 5 Science – Investigating Air Resistance



Year 5 have been investigating air resistance by designing and testing parachutes with different-sized canopies. The children made predictions, timed the descent of their parachutes and recorded their results to see how canopy size affected the rate of fall.

It was fantastic to see such great teamwork and scientific thinking throughout the investigation. Well done, Year 5 – and we're pleased to report that no Lego people were harmed in the process!



## The Ark



### The Ark are still on a Bear Hunt!

The children enjoyed painting swishy swashy grass as part of their learning this week. They also took part in a walk-through of our We're Going on a Bear Hunt story, moving through a snowstorm and sticky, oozy mud. Mrs Knight played the part of the bear, which made the story even more exciting!

The children had great fun bringing the story to life and using their imaginations throughout the adventure. 🐻🌿



**100**

**St Josephine Bakhita**

### Bridging 100 in Maths

In Year 3 this week, the children practised bridging 100 by counting forwards and backwards in 1s and 10s. They then enjoyed a fun counting game where they rolled a dice, counted on using the correct values, and raced to reach 100. The game was a great way to build confidence and fluency with numbers. 🎲 100



**St. Oscar Romero**

## Year 4 Complete Their Subtraction Unit

Year 4 completed their subtraction unit with a fun, hands-on lesson. The children created their own subtraction equations, used Dienes equipment to show their working, and explained their mathematical thinking in their books. It was wonderful to see them challenging themselves and confidently demonstrating their understanding of subtraction.

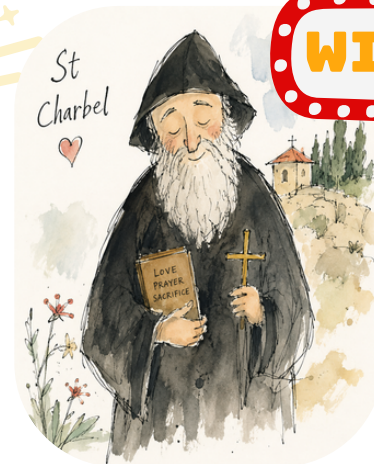
Well done, Year 4, for your fantastic mathematical reasoning and explanations! 🙌 — ✨

# TIME TO CELEBRATE....

WINNING HOUSE



ATTENDANCE AWARD



WINNER

## CERTIFICATES

ST. NICHOLAS- NAMAN & FRANCESCO

ST. JOSEPHINE BAKHITA-TOLEEN & ALIZAH

ST THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX- CATALEYA & OTTO

ST. OSCAR ROMERO- EVELYN & DAMIAAN

ST. CHARBEL- JONATHAN & SOPHIA S

ST. CARLO ACUTIS-ERIC & DANIEL



ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE-NICOLE & DAVID



## Harvest Festival Donations -Thank You

A huge thank you to everyone for your generous Harvest Festival donations. Your kindness and support are greatly appreciated.

All donations will be collected by North Oxfordshire Community Foodbank next week and will help support local families in need.

There is still time to donate food and household items if you have not already done so. Thank you for helping us make a difference in our community.

THANK YOU!



🌟 Well Done, Margo! 🏆

A huge well done to Margo, who took part in a ballet competition and received lots of awards for her wonderful talent! 🌟 What a beautiful way to share her God-given gifts! 💖👏

Proud of our Pupils

# **Wear your favourite colour for CAFOD**

## **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October**

**The Year 6 ambassadors have organised a 'wear your favourite colour day' to raise money for CAFOD.**

**We want to raise £35 to provide water for a family overseas.**

**Children can wear either their school uniform with a coloured accessory, or clothing of their favourite colour (no football kits please).**

**If your child usually has PE on Monday, please ensure they wear suitable clothing (shorts, tracksuit, t-shirt) for exercise but it does not have to be normal PE kit that day.**

**The suggested donation is 50p – £1.00 or whatever change you can give.**

**The year 6 children will collect the money in the day.**

**Thank you for your support in helping our school community live out our mission to serve others and care for God's creation.**

**CAFOD's  
WORLD  
GIFTS**



# First Holy Communion



## Preparation



The First Holy Communion Service  
will take place on

**Saturday 8th May  
at 12.00pm**

Children will need to be in  
the school hall at 11.00am.



All children are expected to attend the following  
Preparation Masses and Retreat:

|                        |                                               |            |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------|
| Thursday 15th October  | - First Confession                            | at 3.30pm  |
| Sunday 18th October    | - Preparation Mass                            | at 11.00am |
| Saturday 7th November  | - Preparation Mass                            | at 6.00pm  |
| Sunday 17th January    | - Preparation Mass                            | at 11.00am |
| Saturday 27th February | - Preparation Mass                            | at 6.00pm  |
| Sunday 21st March      | - Preparation Mass                            | at 11.00am |
| Saturday 24th April    | - Retreat Day followed by<br>Preparation Mass | at 6.00pm  |



The registration deadline for Holy Communion  
in May 2027 is

**Friday 9th of October.**

Please ensure you have submitted the form to the  
School reception by this time.



## Important Christmas Dates for Your Diary! 🎄

The festive season is fast approaching!  
Please make a note of our important Christmas dates and events.

🎄 Wednesday 2nd  
Nativity performance for Year 1 and Year 2 at 9:30am

🎄 Thursday 3rd  
Nursery and Reception Nativity at 2:30pm

🎄 Friday 4th  
Nativity performance for Year 1 and Year 2 at 2:00pm

🎄 Wednesday 9th  
Whole-school pantomime trip to the Oxford Playhouse

👤 Wednesday 16th  
Christmas Dinner Day and Christmas Hat Competition  
Wednesday 16th December – KS2 Carol Service, 3:30pm–4:30pm

🎄 Thursday 17th  
Advent Mass at 9:30am at St Thomas More Church

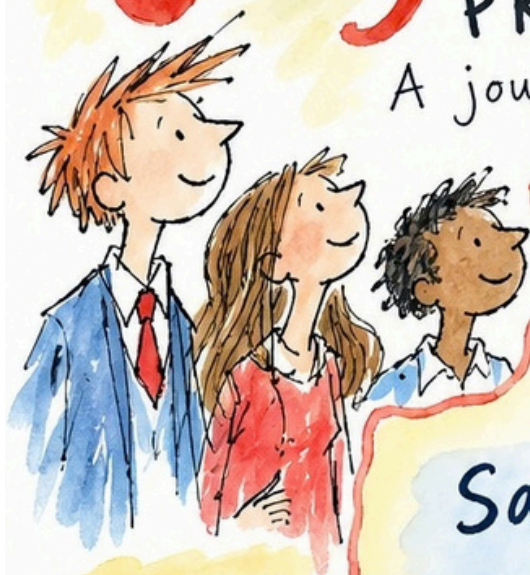
🎄 Friday 18th  
School finishes at 1:00pm for the Christmas holidays.

Thank you for your continued support throughout the term.  
We look forward to celebrating the magic of Christmas together as a school community! 🎄 ❤️ ✨

# Confirmation

## PREPARATION

A journey of faith, friendship  
and the Holy Spirit



### The Sacrament of Confirmation

has been confirmed by the Bishop as

**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> May**  
**at 12.00pm**

at St Thomas More Church

Children will need to be in the school hall  
for 11.00am.



Be sealed  
with the  
gifts of  
the Holy  
Spirit



### Preparation Masses and Retreat

All children are expected to attend the following:

|                                    |                                                       |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> October  | First Confession<br>at 3.30pm                         |
| Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> October    | Preparation Mass<br>at 11.00am                        |
| Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> November  | Preparation Mass<br>at 6.00pm                         |
| Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> January    | Preparation Mass<br>at 11.00am                        |
| Saturday 27 <sup>th</sup> February | Preparation Mass<br>at 6.00pm                         |
| Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> March      | Preparation Mass<br>at 11.00am                        |
| Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup> April    | Retreat Day followed by<br>Preparation Mass at 6.00pm |

Come  
Holy Spirit,  
fill the hearts  
of your  
faithful.



Grow in faith ♥ Be inspired ♥ Make a difference



# DATES FOR AUTUMN TERM



## October

|                                     |                                                               |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monday 12th                         | Wear your favourite colour day £1 donation                    |
| Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup>           | Year 4 & 6 Parish Mass                                        |
| Friday 16 <sup>th</sup>             | Road Safety Visit with ride on time for Nursery and Reception |
| Monday 19th–Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> | Year 6 Residential to The Beacon                              |
| Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup>            | PFMAC Concert (Year 5) Details to follow                      |

## Monday 26<sup>th</sup>– Friday 31st Half Term

## November

|                              |                                                              |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Monday 2<sup>nd</sup></b> | <b>Inset Day–School Closed to children</b>                   |
| Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup>      | EYFS Open Morning (For The Ark and Age 3 Nursery admissions) |
| Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup>     | Year 3&5 Parish Mass 09:30                                   |
| Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup>     | Parents Evening 3:30pm–6:00pm                                |
| Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup>    | Parents Evening 3:30pm–6:00pm                                |
| Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup>   | SEN Parents Evening 3:30pm–6.00pm                            |
| Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup>    | Year 4&6 Parish Mass                                         |



## December



|                            |                                                                         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup>  | Whole School Panto                                                      |
| Friday 11 <sup>th</sup>    | Christmas Fayre 3:15pm-17:00                                            |
| Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup>   | Marlborough Lodge Choir Carols                                          |
| Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> | Christmas Dinner in school<br>KeyStage 2 Carol Service in Church 3:30pm |
| Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup>  | Advent Mass 09:30 (Year 5 lead)                                         |
| Friday 18 <sup>th</sup>    | School finishes at 1:00pm (No afterschool club)                         |
| <b>January 2027</b>        |                                                                         |
| Monday 4 <sup>th</sup>     | School Closed-Inset Day                                                 |
| Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup>    | School Reopens at 08:45                                                 |