



24<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

**Re: Celebration of the Word – Half Term Four, Week One**

This week, our **Gospel reading for the Celebration of the Word comes from Luke 6:27-38**. In this passage, Jesus calls us to love our enemies, do good to those who hate us, and bless those who wish us harm. He challenges our ideas about justice and revenge, encouraging us instead to show God's unconditional love in all areas of our lives. Jesus reminds us that the way we treat others reflects our relationship with Him, and He calls us to practise forgiveness, generosity, and compassion. As we continue to reflect on the Jubilee Year of Hope, this passage invites us to think about how we can live out these teachings in our own lives, sharing a love that breaks down barriers and changes the world.

Pope Francis is currently in critical condition at Rome's Gemelli Hospital, battling double pneumonia and experiencing mild kidney failure. Despite these challenges, he remains alert and continues to receive high-flow oxygen therapy. Pope Francis expressed his gratitude for the support he has received from Catholics around the world, stating, *"I ask you to pray for me, so that I may be able to serve the Church with the strength the Lord gives me."* As a school family, **let us unite in prayer** this week for the Pope's health and strength during this challenging time.

During our recent skiing trip in Austria, our children were invited by the mayor of the town to visit the stunning **Church of St Bartholomew in Bartholomäberg**. This parish and pilgrimage church, dating back to the early 18th century, provided our children with a truly memorable experience. As we explored its beautiful interior, we had the opportunity to light candles for our loved ones, a touching moment that brought us all closer together. We also learned about the rich history of the church. The artwork throughout the church was filled with deep symbolism, and we admired the oldest treasure: a Roman processional cross from 1150. It was a powerful reminder of the deep faith that unites us all across the world.

This week, our focus is on the **Catholic Social Teaching principle of Dignity**, which reminds us that every person is made in the image and likeness of God and deserves respect and honour. In school, we reflect on this through prayer, discussion, and action, thinking about how we can treat others with kindness and recognise their inherent worth. Our ongoing efforts to support local charities provide a tangible way to live out this teaching, as we work together to show love and respect to those who may be struggling. **This Wednesday, 7J are holding a Charity Cake Sale**, which is a wonderful opportunity for our children to put their faith into action- helping to provide dignity to those who are less fortunate.

Our **Staff Charity 10k race is fast approaching**. This will take place in Nantwich on 16<sup>th</sup> March. We will be running in support of our colleague Mr Walker, and supporting a charity close to his heart called MENTORS. If you would like to show your support for this wonderful cause- please visit [www.wearementors.net](http://www.wearementors.net) to donate.

We are very excited to be working with the Shrewsbury Youth Mission Team to offer a small group of St James' children in Years 8, 9, or 10 the opportunity to travel to Lourdes this summer. Families of children in these year groups will receive a letter from Mrs. Pardoe this week asking for expressions of interest. This opportunity is usually only available to older children, and we are thrilled that, in this Jubilee Year, the diocese is supporting a **Junior Pilgrimage**.



# ST JAMES'

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

As part of our commitment to deepening our school's prayer life, we have introduced a new approach to our end-of-day prayer. Instead of a single shared prayer across all year groups, each year group now recites a prayer that is most relevant to their age and stage in their journey of faith. This change allows our children to engage more meaningfully with prayer, helping them to reflect on themes that resonate with their experiences and spiritual development. For example, Year Ten are learning the St Richard of Chichester prayer:

*Thanks be to you, our Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits which you have given us, for all the pains and insults which you have borne for us. Most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother, may we know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day.*

*Amen*

By tailoring prayers to each year group, we hope to foster a deeper understanding of faith and a stronger personal connection to God, helping our children to develop a prayer life that they can carry with them throughout their lives.

We also continue with our **lunchtime prayer** each day:

### **Lunchtime Prayer**

*Bless us, Oh Lord,  
and these thy gifts which we are about to receive from thy bounty  
through Christ, Our Lord.  
Amen.*

This week, we are inspired by the example of **St Veronica, the Form Saint for 9C**, who showed great courage and compassion by offering her veil to Jesus on His way to Calvary. Her act of kindness reminds us that even small gestures of love can bring comfort to those who are suffering. St Veronica's actions reflect the words of Jesus: *"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me"* (Matthew 25:40). In the spirit of St Veronica, let us strive to show empathy and selflessness in our daily lives, reflecting the CST principle of Human Dignity by recognising the face of Christ in everyone we meet.

As always, I welcome any feedback you may have. Please feel free to reach out to me at [h.purkiss@stjamesheadle.uk](mailto:h.purkiss@stjamesheadle.uk).

Yours faithfully

**Miss H Purkiss**  
Associate Assistant Headteacher

