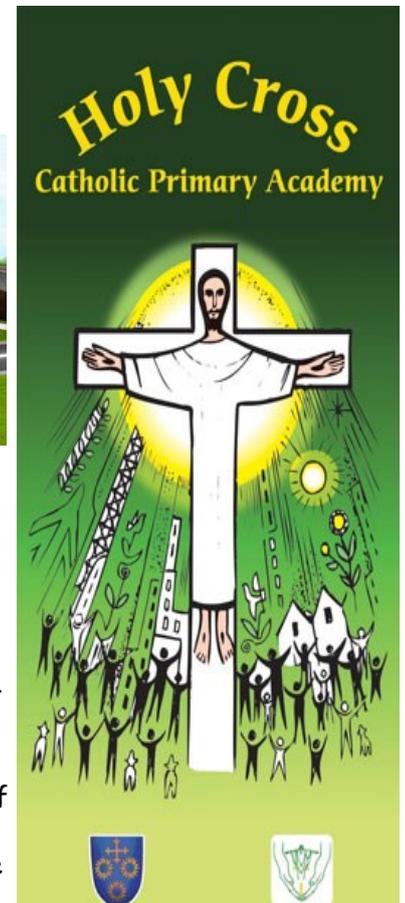


14th July 2023



Reflection on the week:

We have been reflecting on the words of the Gospel from last Sunday, '**Come to Me, all you who labour and are overburdened and I will give you rest.**' **Matthew 11:25-30.** The words of Matthew's Gospel fit well as we enter the final week of term. We are preparing to finish our school year and the children are getting ready to move to the next step, on their learning journey.

It is a time for celebration and for giving thanks to God for the good things that He has given us. It can be a sad time as we say farewell to much loved friends and colleagues but it is also a time for joy and jubilation and this is pouring out of our school this week! The Year 6 children sang their hearts out at their end of year production, I have seen so much happiness on the faces of all our school community through this International Week and I have been overwhelmed by the feeling of togetherness as we approach the end of term. I could not be prouder to be the Headteacher of our wonderful school.

This will be my final newsletter of the year but I will be writing to parents separately: an end of year letter, before we finish on Thursday.

Have a great weekend,

Mrs Kerrell

Headteacher

Holiday Homework

We will be setting optional Holiday Homework for the children to complete over the summer holidays. It is important that the children and you, our families have a well-deserved rest over the summer break. However, please keep reading with your child and practising things like times tables and spellings. If your child can complete the holiday homework this will really benefit them as they go to their next class in September. Teachers will explain the homework next week and we will be sending it out electronically on Seesaw and Tapestry.

International Week

What an amazing week we have had! Our Catholic Social Teaching Principle this week is Solidarity and this is certainly evident throughout our school community this week. How wonderful for our children to experience so many different cultures and traditions. My sincerest thanks to all of the parents who have cooked for us today for our Food Festival. We have all enjoyed some delicious food! My thanks also to all of the staff for the hard work that they have put in to planning the activities this week, with special thanks to Mrs Slater and Mrs Mills for co-ordinating everything and everyone. How lucky we all are to be able to share in this school tradition.

Leavers Mass and Exhibition Evening

There are two very important events happening on Monday. We will be having our Year 6 Leavers Mass and we look forward to welcoming our Year 6 families to this on Monday morning at 9.15am. We would like our Year 6 pupils to be in their school uniform for the Mass and then once this is finished the children can wear their Leavers Hoodies for the rest of the week.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the Exhibition Evening from 5pm -6pm on Monday evening. There will be a chance to go around the whole school and see the work in every classroom.

Year 6 SATS Results

I am delighted to share our Year 6 SATs results with you. The children worked incredibly hard in preparation for their tests and all of the determination and resilience paid off. They are an incredible set of results! Well done to all of the children-we are proud of every one of you.

At Expected Level of Attainment (63 Pupils)					
END OF KS2 SATs RESULTS	School 2023	National average 2023	+/-	School 2022	Attainment
Reading	87%	73%	+14%	89%	Well Above
SPAG	89%	71%	+18%	64%	Well Above
Maths	92%	73%	+19%	68%	Well Above
Reading, Writing & Maths combined	81%	59%	+ 22%	52%	Well Above

Greater Depth (63 Pupils)		
END OF KS2 SATs RESULTS	School 2023	School 2022
Reading	27%	25%
SPAG	46%	27%
Maths	29%	18%
Reading, Writing & Maths combined	16%	

*SPAG: Spelling Punctuation and Grammar

Parent Questionnaire

We have sent you a link to our end of year, online Parent Questionnaire. We would be very grateful if you could spend 10 minutes completing and returning it.

Phonics Books

We are appealing to our Reception and Key Stage One pupils to return any missing books to us that have not yet been returned. The Little Wandle Phonic reading books are very expensive to replace so unfortunately, we will need to make a charge of £5.00 per book for any that are not returned.

Pencil Cases in September

To support us with managing our budget for equipment, we will be asking each child to bring to school a basic pencil case and set of equipment. We want to stress that pencil cases must be named, small, **clear plastic** and only have the following items in: 2 school pencils (HB-not fancy), a small ruler for underlining, a small rubber, a glue stick, a red pen for responding to marking and some colouring pencils (not felt tips). All other equipment will be supplied.



The pencil case must fit in your child's tray. Please do not purchase expensive pencil cases (eg: Smiggle) as these will be sent home if they are too big.

Earrings

If you are planning to get your child's ears pierced please arrange to do this at the beginning of the 6 -week holiday so that they have time to heal. Please remember that children are not allowed to wear earrings or jewellery to school.

Last Day of term

A reminder that we will be finishing school at 1.30pm on Thursday. We will be bidding a special farewell to all of our Leavers.



On Thursday 14th July 2023, the Year 5 children at Holy Cross had the opportunity to visit St Marks School and also to take part in the Enterprise Soap Challenge. The children participated in an interactive product development workshop in which they had to work in teams to create a brand new, hand-crafted, natural soap company.

The day began with each team allocating jobs and responsibilities, deciding on corporate names and choosing a target audience for their product to be sold to. With the targeted audience in mind, the pupils then moved on selecting the essential oils and other ingredients for their unique hand-crafted natural soap. The day ended with an assembly rewarding each winning team with a certificate for their innovative ideas.

We would like to thank St Marks School for their hospitality and also all the Year 5 team at Holy Cross for their support during this visit.



ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Congratulations to the winners of the KS1 Attendance Award, Grasshoppers, achieving 99% attendance. Well done! The joint winners of the KS2 Attendance Award, are Badgers and Rabbits, attaining 99% attendance. Well done!

Please ensure you are sending your child into school everyday, unless they are not well enough to attend. Attending school is so important and makes a huge difference to your child's learning. The gates open at 8:30am until 8.50am.

It is essential you notify us of your child's absence by 9am either by telephone or using the Pupil Asset report absence option on every day of absence. We need full details of why your child is unable to attend school. We are frequently having to contact parents, to find out why their child is absent from school. If you do not notify us of the reason for your child's absence it may not be authorised.

Butterflies	92%
Ladybirds	97%
Dragonflies	98%
Grasshoppers	99%
Hedgehogs	98%
Squirrels	98%
Badgers	99%
Foxes	98%
Hares	97%
Rabbits	99%
Kingfishers	97%
Robins	96%
Eagles	97%
Owls	96%



SUMMER

holidays

Remember we close at 1.30pm
on Thursday 20th July



Summer Reading Challenge 2023

Ready, Set, Read!

Presented by The Reading Agency.
Delivered in partnership with libraries.



summerreadingchallenge.org.uk

Saturday 15 July to Saturday 2 September 2023

At your local Essex library and mobile library. Visit libraries.essex.gov.uk for library opening times



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

**SUMMER
READING
CHALLENGE**



**YOUTH
SPORT
TRUST**

**INSPIRING
ACTIVE
READERS**

**THE
READING
AGENCY**



THE FEAST OF HOLY CROSS FESTIVAL



FAMILY FUN DAY



SATURDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER
2023

MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT

Gates open 2.30pm

3pm to 9pm

Family mass at 5.30pm

On Holy Cross field, bring a picnic
and chairs/ gazebo

Festival Events

Live Band Triple X

African Dancing

Ballroom Dancing Demo and free sessions

Karate Demo

Irish Dancing

All the children from Holy Cross will be performing!

Choir

Festival Face Painting

Bouncy Castles

Panna Pitch

Prize Raffle

Licensed Bar

Barbeque

Refreshments

GET YOUR TICKETS FOR

ADVENTURE ISLAND
SOUTHEND ON SEA

£15 PER PERSON FOR A DAY
TICKET AVAILABLE FROM
HOLY CROSS SCHOOL
OFFICE





Based on the gospel for Sunday 16 July, Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time; Matthew 13:1-23

"Listen, anyone who has ears!"

In listening to the parable of the Sower, I can identify with each of the different types of soil. At times, I am "on the edge of the path". I sit in Mass and, come the end of the readings, I remember nothing. Other times I listen, something strikes me, and I enthusiastically respond, but it doesn't last. Sometimes, I really do intend to see it through, but life is so busy. And then occasionally, I really do take the Gospel message to heart, I make changes and I can see it bear fruit, often in unexpected ways.

What I need to do though is to nurture and improve the soil into which the "word of the kingdom" is falling. I must break up the hardened parts on the edge of the path and remove the rocks and the thorns through time spent with the Scriptures, in prayer and spiritual reading. Cultivated in this way, I hope to be more productive in building the kingdom in this world.

One way in which as a parish we have been trying to respond to the Sower is by becoming involved with Live Simply: making changes so that we live more simply and sustainably with creation and in solidarity with people in poverty. As part of this we have added our signatures to a letter to the World Bank asking them to protect the rights of small farmers to use their own seeds rather than being forced to use expensive hybrid seeds produced by large companies.

Lord of Creation,
open our ears to hear your Word,
our hearts to respond,
our eyes to see where we are called to act
and our hands to do your work.
Amen.



The Words of Pope Francis

Our life and our talents are the result of a gift woven between God and the many silent hands of persons whose names we will only know in Heaven.



Encountering Christ
Prayerfully preparing for the
Sunday Mass and praying in
particular for our school families



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 16th July 2023 - The Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Relax & Remember

Set aside 10 -15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross † and remain still for a minute of settling silence. **Call to mind the love that God has for you. Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present.** Then read the Gospel, preferably aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.



2 Read

Taken from the Gospel for Sunday 16th July 2023 - The Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-9)

Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeside, but such crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat there. The people all stood on the beach, and he told them many things in parables. He said, 'Imagine a sower going out to sow. As he sowed, some seeds fell on the edge of the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Others fell on patches of rock where they found little soil and sprang up straight away, because there was no depth of earth; but as soon as the sun came up they were scorched and, not having any roots, they withered away. Others fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Others fell on rich soil and produced their crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Listen, anyone who has ears!'



3 Reflect

After spending a few minutes considering this Gospel, continue by reading Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection.

Like any good teacher, Jesus uses pictures – or parables. Ever heard the one about the elephant and the wasp? Or electricity like a toy train going round a room? Anyway, for the next three weeks we have some of these pictures, to show us what Jesus is trying to do. This first one is rather sad. Whatever the sower does seems to fail: seed pecked up by birds, scorched by the sun, choked by thistles. What are my pecking birds, my scorching sun, my choking thistles which annihilate the seed Jesus sows in me? It's probably different for every one of us. But some, just a little, of the seed bears a fantastic harvest. There must be something I can show to the Lord with pride and gratitude: 'Look, this is the seed you gave me; it has grown, developed, and here is your harvest.' Jesus, too, reflected on his mission to establish his Father's sovereignty on earth. Jesus, too, may well have wondered if he was getting anywhere. It was only when he had failed utterly, alone, deserted and tortured, that his perseverance won the crown. Jesus doesn't want the successful. He wants the failures as his followers – and that is where the harvest lies.

In Jesus' story what is the seed? What prevents the seed reaching its full growth in me? In what way has the seed made me a better person?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

4 Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Then thank God for any insight you may have received. Conclude by asking God to bless you with one of the following spiritual gifts to help you act on any resolution you have made: love, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, self control, patience, or joy. Please remember to pray for the Church and particularly our school families. **Then conclude by requesting the prayers of Our Lady & St Joseph.**



**The Wednesday Word is under the patronage of St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church
Within the tradition of the Catholic Church, each Wednesday is dedicated to St Joseph**

WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of Sunday 16th July 2023



First Reading: *The Effective Word of God*

Isaiah 55:10-11

Thus says the Lord: 'As the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.'

This poetic passage from Isaiah about the word of God may be understood on two levels. On one level it prepares for Jesus' parable in the Gospel reading about the sower and the seed. But while Isaiah stresses the effectiveness of the word of God, Jesus reflects on the failure of his word with many sections of his hearers, as well as on the brilliant success of his word in those who bear fruit 'thirtyfold, sixtyfold, a hundredfold'. On another level this passage prepares us for the meditation on the Word of God in the prologue to the Gospel of John: 'In the beginning was the Word; the Word was with God and the Word was God.' This helps to explain just how God, the awesome and inexpressible, can be manifested and active in creation. In Genesis God created by his Word ('Let there be light!' 'Let there be a vault! etc.), so the Word is seen not as something separate from and independent of God, but as the concrete expression of God's will, the manifestation of divine power. The Word which comes forth from God's mouth and does not return unfulfilled is, on this level, the creative power of God, unstoppably fulfilling the will of God in the world.

How is God's Word at work in creation?

Second Reading: *Creation Freed from Corruption*

Romans 8:18-23

I think that what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory, as yet unrevealed, which is waiting for us. The whole creation is eagerly waiting for God to reveal his sons. It was not for any fault on the part of creation that it was made unable to attain its purpose, it was made so by God; but creation still retains the hope of being freed, like us, from its slavery to decadence, to enjoy the same freedom and glory as the children of God. From the beginning till now the entire creation, as we know, has been groaning in one great act of giving birth; and not only creation, but all of us who possess the first-fruits of the Spirit, we too groan inwardly as we wait for our bodies to be set free.

In our reading of Romans 8 on life in the Spirit of the Risen Christ we have missed out a few crucial verses (they are used on a separate occasion) on our adoption as sons, enabling us – both men and women – to call God 'Abba', 'Father'. This intimate Aramaic family name, used by Jesus to his Father in his agonized prayer in the Garden (Mark 14:36), can be used by all his followers who share his life. With Jesus we are heirs of God, sharing his inheritance. Not only ourselves, however, but the whole of creation is renewed and re-created by the Spirit. It all takes on a new dimension and a new life, groaning in the Spirit to be released from frustration. This is a new reason for human beings (now renewed in Christ) to care for God's creation. In the first place we were created in the image of God to further and to complete his creation. Now, re-created as adopted sons and heirs of God, our responsibility is increased and intensified. As yet, we have only the first-fruits of the Spirit, but first-fruits make sense and have their value only in view of the fullness and completion of the harvest.

What is our responsibility as heirs of God?

“With Jesus we are heirs of God, sharing his inheritance.”

The Wednesday Word: *Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God*

w: www.wednesdayword.org

e: info@wednesdayword.org

A Weekly Gift to you and your family from your Catholic School



SHARING SUNDAY'S GOSPEL WITH PARENTS & FAMILIES

Dear Parents and Carers,

Children love to be listened to and it helps them to grow in self-esteem. If, from a young age, they know that we truly listen to them, they are far more likely to keep listening to us as they mature.

Listening to the right people and the right messages is important for us and for our children. In this Sunday's Gospel, we hear Jesus inviting us to listen to him and act upon his words.

Wednesday 12th July 2023

Like any good teacher, Jesus uses pictures or parables to make his teaching clearer. Jesus is like a sower, scattering his words like seeds. Jesus' words have stood the test of time. They are rooted in love and can be trusted to guide us and our children.

Enjoy a very special time together this evening, listening to your child's thoughts about this Sunday's Gospel and this Wednesday's word, which is **LISTENING**.

Dom Henry Wansbrough



To see this week's Parish Version of The Wednesday Word: wednesdayword.org - Parents' Pages - Lectio Divina with Fr Henry.

THE GOSPEL IN CHURCH Sunday 16th July 2023



Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeside, but such crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat there. The people all stood on the beach, and he told them many things in parables. He said, "Imagine a sower going out to sow. As he sowed, some seeds fell on the edge of the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Others fell on patches of rock where they found little soil and sprang up straight away, because there was no depth of earth; but as soon as the sun came up they were scorched and, not having any roots, they withered away. Others fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on rich soil and produced a great crop. This is like those people who hear my words and understand them; they yield a great harvest and produce now a hundredfold, now sixty, now thirty. Listen, anyone who has ears!"

Adapted from Matthew 13:1-9

The 15th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year A

You are warmly invited to learn more about the Gospel through your local parish church.

"The family is where we first learn to listen and share."

Pope Francis



Jesus often used parables (little stories) to teach the crowds who came to listen to him. In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus reminds us how important it is to take time to listen to God and to be open to receive and act upon what we hear. This helps us to make wise and safe life choices.

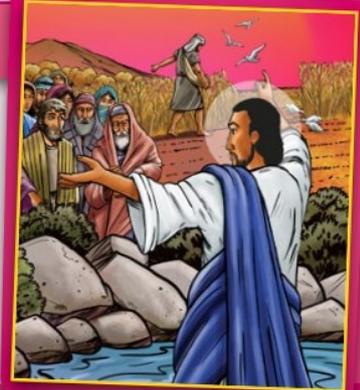


1 Our Special Time Together

Enjoy reading the Gospel overleaf (or below for younger children)

Jesus was teaching the people by the lakeside and he told them a story. He said, "A farmer went out to sow seed. As he sowed the seeds, some fell on the path, some among weeds and some upon rock where they could not grow properly. But some seeds fell on good soil and they produced a great crop. This is like those people who hear my words and understand them; those people grow strong and produce a great harvest. Now, anyone who has ears - listen to what I am really saying!"

What did Jesus tell the crowd that they should do? Which word or words stood out for you in this Gospel, and why? See the picture opposite. What does it make you think about?



2 Wednesday's Word is ...

LISTENING

3 Loving God & Each Other

"Good communication helps us to grow closer. It is so important to listen."

Pope Francis

Ask your child if they know someone who is a really good listener. Who does your child like to listen to? Do they know people who speak with kindness and love, and want good things for them and others? It may help your child if you give them an example of your own. **Listening to Jesus and acting on his words helps us to become the best people we can be.**

"Listen carefully, young people: Jesus never disappoints."

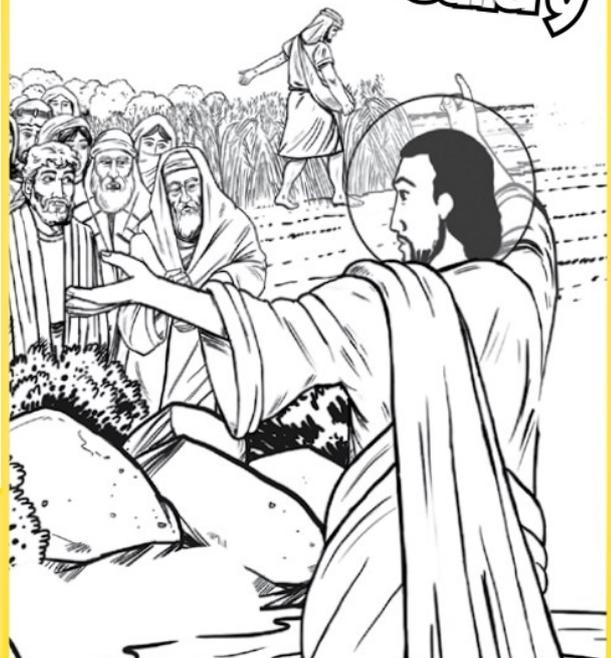
Pope Francis

Jesus does not force us to listen to him, but he knows what's best for us. Regularly listening to Jesus reminds us what's really important in life. As the summer holidays approach, explore ways that can help you to listen to Jesus in these coming weeks. Perhaps you can: remember to have quiet times in prayer when you wake up, at bedtime or some other time - just for listening to God as he speaks to your heart; worship together; regularly read the gospels together. What other ways can you think of?



Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for **listening** to us. Please help us to **listen** and understand your words and to be good **listeners** to each other too. Amen.

Gospel Gallery



Search for at least three differences between this picture and the colour one. Then draw them in before colouring.

S D D E E D O T H W A C
 V S M T S J V H A V F S
 M H S U S E J W R E A F
 W F H T D S E E K M R V
 O S A M O U L D S V M G
 R T R R W S L I S T E N
 D S V I M H V H S O R D
 S E E D S E D D I T T S
 W V S M D G R E A T E O
 O R T G R O W S M S S N
 R A D V O T V W O R G S
 B H S H W O R K W O R M

WEDNESDAY WORDSEARCH

SMARTSEARCHERS FIND THESE EIGHT WORDS EITHER **ACROSS** OR **DOWN**

- FARMER SEEDS
- JESUS WORDS
- LISTEN GROW
- GREAT HARVEST

SUPERSEARCHERS FIND THE WORDS **BACKWARDS** OR **DIAGONALLY**

Cross out the letters **b c d** in the jumbled words below to find 4 real words.

becards ancbybonde scadybing clibstden

Jesus said, "Now, _____ who has _____
 _____ to what I am really _____!"

Jesus wants us to listen closely to his words. He wants us to take the time to think and really understand what he is saying - to be like good soil in which the seed (his words) can take root. Then God can work through us to produce a great crop of goodness in our world.

Write a promise and then draw a big smile on Smiley

This week I will try my best to...

.....



Happy Birthday this week to...

Declan Bennett, Mara Ciotoi, Skyla Hand,
Luisa Marsham, Layla Santos-Ebejer, Jonny Shiel &
Aurora Boyce-Grace

Happy Birthday next week to...

Gabriella Ofori-Addo, Albert Edwards,
Karmella Marriott, Jeremiah Marriott,
Margaret Oregbhemhe, Isla Marsh-Gray,
Amanda Manea, Olivia O'Sullivan, Sofia Dubencu,
Athena Harrison & Amara Nwoye



Happy Birthday in the Summer holidays to...

Alexandra Magryta, Oliver Ruffell, Zara Brooks, Sid Cundins, Ruby La Ronde, Elisa Guna, Ella Thorpe,
Alexander Embley, Cali Smith, Samuel Baffour, Tawana Agyare, Ivy Bennett, Zekari Mascoll,
Emilia Mardyla, Layla Smith, Tinashe Agyare, Barry Tanu, Teodora Fedeles, Giuseppe Portaro,
Sean Badenhorst, Teddy White, Gracie Freeman, Arlo McGhee, Lottie Peters, Lottie Askew,
Sophie Philpot, Miruna Viliman, Poppy McIntyre, Amelia Randle, Ilinca Branisteanu, Nathaniel Obinna,
Grace Izuka & Axel Brooks

Headteacher Award:

Rochelle Obeng Darko, Mmasi Ihekaigbo-Iwuaba, Adjoa Kwakye, Gilda Bosompem, Athena Harrsion, for their amazingly tidy room on the Isle of Wight trip

Tinashe Agyare, for being so helpful while in the Isle of Wight

Aidan Cater, for putting 100% effort in at every choir event and his amazing enthusiasm

Lehna Ajong, for her beautiful reading at the Harlow schools concert

Taylor Leagas-Hyde, for being incredibly kind and looking after Father Bernard



Menu week 1

Diary Dates

Monday 17th July

Year 6 Leavers Mass 9:15

Reception Graduation 11:30

Exhibition Evening 5:00 - 7:00

Tuesday 18th July

Meet the Teacher

Year 6 Production 6:00

Wednesday 19th July

Year 6 Fun Day

Thursday 20th July

**Last Day of Term -
Finish 1.30**

Tuesday 5th September

First Day of Autumn Term

Wishing everyone a lovely weekend.

Mrs A Kerrell

Mr S Kelliher

Please download our News & Events App for dates for the year. Details are available on the schools website under News & Events at www.holycross-pri.essex.sch.uk