



7th March 2025



Newsletter

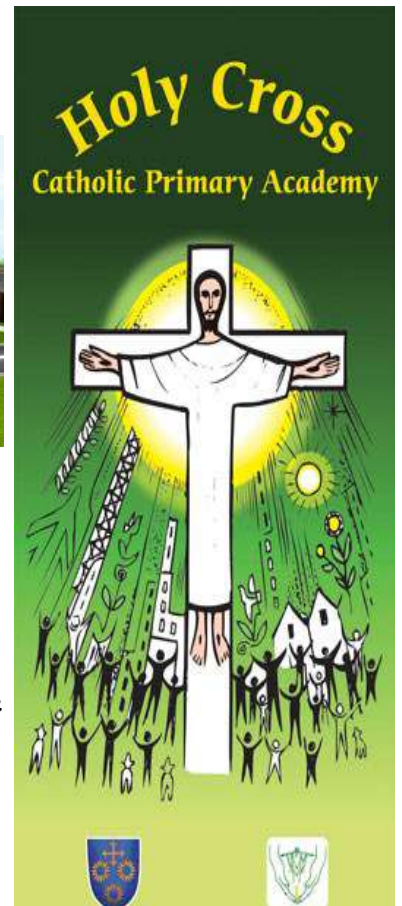
GOSPEL: VALUE: Our Gospel Value for next week is Hope. Please reflect on this at home with your child. .

Weekly Reflection

This week we have begun our journey through Lent. On Wednesday, we had a beautiful whole school Mass for Ash Wednesday and I was so proud of how beautifully the children sang. A very special well done to our Ladybird and Butterfly Reception children, who came to Mass for the first time with the whole school yesterday.

Each Lent, we are asked to fast-to give something up and not to do it with a gloomy face. We heard this in the words of the Gospel on Ash Wednesday. We are called this Lent to make a sacrifice and to challenge ourselves to give up something that we truly love and enjoy to show that we love Jesus.

Pope Francis offers these words and encourages us to think about how we can Fast from certain ways we may behave towards others, helping us to think about how we can be better people. We have shared these words with the children this week.



DO YOU WANT TO FAST THIS LENT?

In the words of Pope Francis

- Fast from **hurting words** and say **kind words**.
- Fast from **sadness** & be filled with **gratitude**.
- Fast from **anger** & be filled with **patience**.
- Fast from **pessimism** & be filled with **hope**.
- Fast from **worries** & have trust with **God**.
- Fast from **complaints**: contemplate **simplicity**.
- Fast from **pressures** & be **prayerful**
- Fast from **bitterness**: fill your heart with **joy**.
- Fast from **selfishness** and be **compassionate**.
- Fast from **grudges** and be **reconciled**.
- Fast from **words**: be **silent** and **listen**.

How about you, what are you willing to fast this Lent?

I would like to wish everyone a wonderful weekend.

Mrs Kerrell
Headteacher

Mid-Year Reports

We sent out your child's class report electronically on Monday this week. We would appreciate you sending any comments about your child's report to your child's class teacher on Tapestry or Seesaw.

World Book Day

We were delighted to invite Chris Vince MP to the school to celebrate World Book Day with the children. He met lots of the children, reading their books with them. He then read an excerpt from Grey Friars Bobby to Year 5 pupils.

Parent Consultations

Thank you for attending Parent Consultations this week; it was good to see you and talk about your child's progress so far at this half year point and also the targets that they are working on.

We have sent out a Mid-Year Parent Questionnaire and we would appreciate you taking a few minutes to complete it. Please follow this link: <https://forms.office.com/e/gXKcLgSntW>

Family Mass-Save the Date

We would like to invite extended family members (2 per family) to come along to a special daytime Family mass. We would like to offer grandparents, godparents, aunts, uncles the opportunity to come and celebrate Mass together with the children on Thursday 20th March at 2:00pm for Reception and Key Stage One and on Thursday 27th March for Key Stage 2 pupils. We have sent out an electronic Forms document for sign up, please only 2 people per family to begin with and we will let you know if we have more spaces.

Reception and Key Stage One link: <https://forms.office.com/e/gXKcLgSntW>

Key Stage Two Link: <https://forms.office.com/e/ibHSZzTWmC>

Stations of the Cross

We would like to invite parents and families to attend the Stations of the Cross on the last day of term, Friday 4th April at 9.30am. This will be led by Year 6 pupils and we will follow afterwards with light refreshments.

New Recycling Legislation

We are required to conform to new Recycling Legislation from the Government by the 31st March. This will mean that we have to follow very strict rules about our recycling as a school. Parents and Families can really help us by considering how you send in your child's snack and packed lunch items. Please can you use pots and containers that can be re-used each day.

Cross Country Competition

Last Friday, Key Stage 2 took part in Harlow's Cross-Country tournament. The children all tried their hardest and didn't give up, even though the course was very long and very muddy. We had some great scores with our Year 4 and Year 6 girls both coming 5th place out of 20 schools!

A massive well done to Blake who achieved another outstanding 1st place for Year 5 boys! Such a great achievement. We wish Blake good luck ahead of the Essex county finals soon!



Times Tables Rockstars

Congratulations to the following children for trying really hard with their times tables this week.

Hedgehogs:

Hares:

Kingfishers:

Indila

Hannah

Eryk

Squirrels:

Rabbits:

Robins:

Luca

Mayah

Harry



WORLD
BOOK DAY



WORLD BOOK DAY



ACL

FREE

**FAMILY SUPPORT
SESSIONS FOR PARENT
& CARERS**

ONLINE



**An opportunity for parents/carers, to come along and connect with a community dedicated to positive growth and development.
All sessions are online**

Sibling Rivalry

11/03/2025 1900 - 2100 Search 'Sibling' via our website

Sleep For Wellbeing

13/03/2025 0930 - 1130 Search 'Bitesize Sleep' via our website

Managing Big Emotions

25/03/2025 1900 - 2100 or 28/03/2025 1230 - 1430
Search 'Big Emotions' via our website

Family Wellbeing

27/03/2025 0930 - 1130 Search 'Family Wellbeing' via our website

Visit our website **aclessex.com** and type the key words above in to the 'Find a course...' box

**COMMUNITY & FAMILY
LEARNING**



Essex County Council

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Congratulations to this week's winners of the KS1 Attendance Award, Squirrels achieving a fantastic 100% attendance. Well done! The joint winners of the KS2 Attendance Award, are Badger 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.

Absences over 3 days require supporting medical evidence, for the additional absence to be authorised. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, antibiotics and medical appointments.

Parents of children below attendance targets will be invited in for a meeting with the Educational Welfare Officer.

Butterflies	96%
Ladybirds	96%
Dragonflies	95%
Grasshoppers	94%
Hedgehogs	99%
Squirrels	100%
Badgers	99%
Foxes	95%
Hares	95%
Rabbits	99%
Kingfishers	93%
Robins	93%
Eagles	95%
Owls	94%

Gospel Value Awards

Humility

trust and faith in our Lord God our Father

"Lord, make me know your ways. Lord, teach me your paths. Make me walk in your truth, and teach me: for you are God my saviour" Psalm 24:4



Congratulations to the following children who received the Gospel values certificate this week.

Butterflies:	Halle	Ladybirds:	Milin
Dragonflies:	Holly	Grasshoppers:	Tomas
Hedgehogs:	Chloe	Squirrels:	Alice
Badgers:	Stephanie	Foxes:	Jan
Hares:	Hayley	Rabbits:	James
Kingfishers:	Joshua	Robins:	Zofia
Eagles:	Catherine	Owls:	Aria



Based on the gospel for Sunday 9 March, First Sunday of Lent: Luke 4: 1-13

"He ate nothing during those days. And when they were over, he was hungry."

In this Sunday's gospel, we hear how Jesus goes out into the desert. He remains there for forty days, without food. Like Lokho and her community in northern Kenya, Jesus experiences what it means to live in the harshest conditions. We are not surprised to learn that at the end of this time, he is hungry.

During this difficult experience however, Jesus is never alone. He is filled with the Holy Spirit, who strengthens him throughout his time of preparation and prayer.

When we face challenges, we can feel isolated and lonely, but our faith teaches us that God is always with us. Knowing that we are never abandoned, that God is by our side, strengthens us as we strive to overcome our difficulties.

It can also lead us in turn to stand alongside those who are facing serious challenges in our world today. Working together with others can make a real difference, whether in our local community, or in our wider global family.

As Lokho says, when talking about the group of women who work on the vegetable garden with her: "We do appreciate the sense of solidarity because unity is a strength - that is what we believe. Everything in this place is done as a community."

God who walks with us, and knows what it is to be hungry, teach us to walk alongside one another and to work together to overcome the challenges in our world. Amen.



The Words of Pope Francis

The Ashes remind us of who we are, which does us good. It puts us in our place, smooths out the rough edges of our narcissism, brings us back to reality, and makes us more humble and open to one another. None of us is God; we are all on a journey. #Lent



Dear Parents and Carers,

Today is Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. This is the day when Catholics throughout the world come together to celebrate Mass and receive ashes on their foreheads to mark the beginning of the Lenten Season.

The season of Lent reminds us of Jesus' 40 days of fasting and prayer in the wilderness, where he grew stronger through resisting various temptations. In this Sunday's Gospel, the tempter makes three suggestions in an effort to divert Jesus from his true mission.

Wednesday 5th March 2025

Jesus rejects the temptations, one after another - each time with a word from Scripture, which is the Word of God.

It is part of the human condition to face temptations in life. But the more familiar we become with the Word of God, the more we too can be strengthened to resist temptations and be filled with new life. Enjoy your week and help spread God's love, through **LENT**.

Dom Henry Wansbrough



A **Word** from Pope Francis

"Lent is a 'powerful' season, a turning point that can foster change in each of us. Let us deny ourselves something every day to help others."

THE GOSPEL IN CHURCH Sunday 9th March 2025



Following his baptism, Jesus went out into the desert for forty days. He was all alone and he ate nothing because he was fasting. Knowing that Jesus would be hungry, the Tempter told him to turn a stone into bread. But Jesus refused and said, "Scripture says, 'No one lives on bread alone.'" Then the Tempter showed him all the kingdoms of the world, promising Jesus all their power and glory if Jesus would worship him rather than God. But Jesus said, "It is written, 'You must worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only!'" Finally, the Tempter took Jesus to the top of the temple and told him to prove he was the Son of God by jumping off, and have God's angels come to save him. But Jesus said, "You must not put the Lord your God to the test." After Jesus had resisted three times, the Tempter left him.

*Adapted from Luke 4:1-13
The 1st Sunday of Lent, 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!

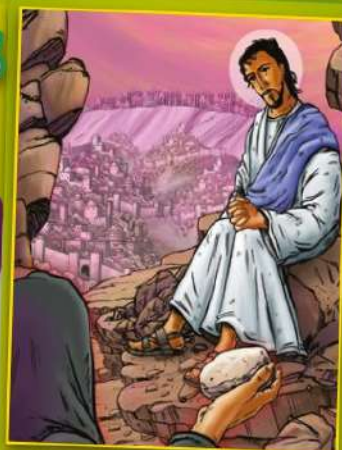
Having Hope
in our Families

In this Sunday's Gospel Jesus relied on God's word to resist temptation. Lent is a time for us to make an extra effort to listen carefully to God's word, to turn away from things which are wrong for ourselves or others, to grow in love, and to prepare for the celebration of Jesus' resurrection at Easter.



Good News for Families

TOGETHER TIME



1 READ & REFLECT! Listen & Learn with Jesus, the Word!

Following his baptism, Jesus went out into the desert for forty days. He was all alone and he ate nothing because he was fasting. Knowing that Jesus would be hungry, the Tempter told him to turn a stone into bread. But Jesus refused and said, "Scripture says, 'No one lives on bread alone.'" Jesus resisted two more temptations and then the Tempter left him.

How many days did Jesus spend in the desert?

Which word or words stood out for you in this Sunday's Gospel, and why? Spend a few relaxing moments pondering the picture together. Share any thoughts before moving on.

Sunday Gospel Gallery

Look at this Sunday's Gospel picture. What can you see? How do you feel? What does it make you think about?

2 SHARE & CARE! Growing in Goodness & Love: This Wednesday's Word...

"Lent is a time for drawing near to Christ by listening to the word of God and celebrating the sacraments." *Pope Francis*

LENT



Lent is a time when God calls us to make a special effort - perhaps to give something up or to do something loving and good. Ask your child what the word 'Lent' means to them. What has your child been learning at school about Lent and about Lenten promises? You may want to tell your child something that you know about Lent. Each of you say if there is anything you would like to start or stop doing this Lent - something which will help you to grow in love for God and each other - and then make a Lenten promise.

Lent is a great opportunity to be strengthened. In the same way that bread feeds our body, we also need prayer and God's word to feed and strengthen our mind. How can we strengthen ourselves to keep our Lenten promises? *Perhaps we can: set aside a few minutes each day to pray; read God's word in the Bible; read The Wednesday Word every week; go to Church together. As a family, can you think of any other ways?*



3 Dear Lord Jesus, please help me and my family to grow in love and strength during **Lent** through keeping our **Lenten** promises. Amen.

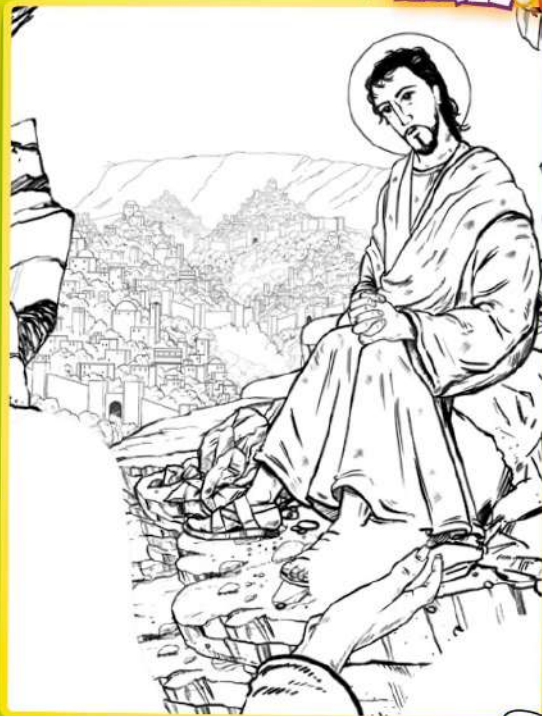
FINDING THREE

WEDNESDAY WORDSEARCH

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	FORTY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	DAYS	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	TEMPTER	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	APPEARED	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	JESUS	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	SPOKE	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	GOD'S	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	WORD	<input type="checkbox"/>

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



Find and draw 3 differences, then colour the picture

Cross out the letters **U C Z** in the jumbled words below to find 4 real words.

decsezrut fozructy Fozullowicng buapticmz

"_____ his _____, Jesus went
out into the _____ for _____ days."



Each year, the Church invites everyone to examine their lives, to make Lenten promises and make a fresh start with God. Families can find out more about how to make the best of this Season of Lent at: catholicchurch.org.uk



This week I will try my best to...



Write a promise & draw a big smile on Smiley

Wednesday 5th March 2025

THE Wednesday WORD



Encountering Christ The Wednesday Prayer Custom for Homes, Schools & Parishes

Prayerfully preparing for Sunday Mass with special prayers for our school families



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.



Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present. Read the Gospel, 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.

1

Read

The Gospel for Sunday 9th March 2025

JESUS IS TESTED IN THE DESERT

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit through the wilderness, being tempted there by the devil for forty days. During that time he ate nothing and at the end he was hungry. Then the devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to turn into a loaf." But Jesus replied, "Scripture says: Man does not live on bread alone." Then leading him to a height, the devil showed him in a moment of time all the kingdoms of the world and said to him, "I will give you all this power and the glory of these kingdoms, for it has been committed to me and I give it to anyone I choose. Worship me, then, and it shall all be yours." But Jesus answered him. "Scripture says: You must worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone." Then he led him to Jerusalem and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said to him, "throw yourself down from here, for scripture says: He will put his angels in charge of you to guard you, and again: They will hold you up on their hands in case you hurt your foot against a stone." But Jesus answered him, "It has been said: You must not put the Lord your God to the test." Having exhausted all these ways of tempting him, the devil left him, to return at the appointed time.

Taken from Luke 4:1-13 The First Sunday of Lent, Year C

2

Reflect

After reading the Gospel, did any words stand out? If they did, ponder or discuss them before proceeding with the reflection.

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

To remind us that Lent is a time of testing, the gospel reading of the First Sunday of Lent is always about the testing of Jesus. Through our fasting (or whatever that extra offering we make to the Lord during Lent may be) we enter into solidarity with the hardship undergone by Jesus in his Passion. Of course Lent is not a matter of testing out how far we can push ourselves (a sort of macho self-torture). Rather it is a period of preparation for the Passion and Resurrection - just like the forty years of Israel in the desert preparing for the Promised Land, or like the prophet Elijah's forty-day preparation before he encounters God on Mount Horeb, or like the forty days during which Christ prepared the apostles between Easter and the Ascension. The point of Jesus' forty-day fast is to give some force in response to the devil's first temptation. To each of the devil's taunts Jesus replies with a word of scripture: if you rely on God's word you are unshakably safe, for God has created and arranged everything. Matthew and Luke have a different order for the second and third temptations: Matthew climaxes with Jesus as the Second Moses, like Moses seeing all the territories from a high mountain. Luke ends the scene as he begins and ends his gospel, at Jerusalem, the turning-point of the gospel - the place where Jesus rises from the dead and ascends to the Father. **We do not live on bread alone. How has the Word of God fed you? In the solitude of the desert Jesus prayed to his Father. Can you find solitude for prayer? What can you do during Lent to come closer to the Lord?**

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

3

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. Thank God for any insight you may have received.

Then ask God to bless you with a spiritual gift to help you act on any resolution you have made. Perhaps: love, hope, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, patience, humility, joy, forgiveness, self-control, courage, generosity, faith or something else.

4

Pray for Families

This Wednesday's word for our school families is **LENT**!

After praying for your loved ones, please remember to pray for our present and future Church, particularly for the families connected to our schools. You may want to conclude this special weekly time with a simple prayer such as:

St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church, pray for us. Mary, Star of Evangelisation, pray for us. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of **Sunday 9th March 2025**



1st Reading: Deuteronomy 26:4-10

A Wandering Aramaean

Moses said to the people: "The priest shall take the panner from your hand and lay it before the altar of the Lord your God. Then, in the sight of the Lord your God, you must make this pronouncement: 'My father was a wandering Aramaean. He went down into Egypt to find refuge there, few in numbers; but there he became a nation, great, mighty and strong. The Egyptians ill-treated us; they gave us no peace and inflicted harsh slavery on us. But we called on the Lord, the God of our fathers. The Lord heard our voice and saw our misery, our toil and our oppression; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with mighty hand and outstretched arm, with great terror, and with signs and wonders. He brought us here and gave us this land, a land where milk and honey flow. Here then I bring the first-fruits of the produce of the soil that you, Lord, have given me.' You must then lay them before the Lord your God, and bow down in the sight of the Lord your God."



The first readings during Lent each year are wonderfully arranged, leading us from the beginnings of the history of God's People to a time of immediate preparation for the coming of Christ; each Sunday takes us further forward in the history of God's promises to his People. This year's readings commence with the profession of faith about God's care of his People; Israelite priests had to make this when presenting their offering. Surprisingly this profession starts not with the promises to Abraham but with the wanderings of the nomadic tribes down to Egypt. It was first in Egypt that God made them his people, rescuing them from slavery. In this version of the history of Israel the decisive moment was not the call of Abraham but the exodus from Egypt. But in the readings over the next few Sundays we will work forward through the call of Abraham, the call of Moses, the first Passover in Canaan and the promise of a New Covenant after the People return from the Babylonian Exile. These readings provide a record of God's constant presence as he prepares the People for the coming of his Son at the Incarnation, and the revelation of God in the Cross and through the Resurrection at Easter. **In what sense should Christians still be described as a 'Pilgrim People'?**



2nd Reading: Romans 10:8-13

Profession of Faith

Scripture says: The word, that is the faith we proclaim, is very near to you, it is on your lips and in your heart. If your lips confess that Jesus is Lord and if you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, then you will be saved. By believing from the heart you are made righteous; by confessing with your lips you are saved. When scripture says: those who believe in him will have no cause for shame, it makes no distinction between Jew and Greek: all belong to the same Lord who is rich enough, however many ask for his help, for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.



In these chapters of the Letter to the Romans Paul is struggling with the problem of the salvation of the Jews: how is it that the People so carefully nurtured for so long should refuse to acknowledge that Jesus is the fulfilment of God's plan of salvation? To Paul, himself a fervent Jew, it was agonizing that so many of his own people should refuse to acknowledge Jesus. But he saw that their refusal opened the door to the gentiles. The Christian community at Rome was composed of both Jews and gentiles. It was important for Paul to show that even scripture proclaims that the door is open to all who profess their faith in Christ, not one party to the exclusion of the other: so, no distinction between Jew and Greek. This is, however, a very different profession of faith from the profession in the first reading: that was a belief in a Lord God who rescued from Egypt. This is a belief that the Lord God raised Jesus from the dead, and raised him to the status of Lord. Paul never uses the word 'God' of Jesus, but he does call him 'LORD', the word which the Jewish people have used for God (then and now) instead of pronouncing His personal name. **What does it mean to confess that 'Jesus is Lord'?**

**❖ The Lord God raised Jesus from the dead, ❖
and raised him to the status of Lord.**

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

**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**

Happy Birthday this week to...

Emilie, Afi, Olivier, Grace, Erin,
Darius, Harry, Isabella & Diona



Golden Awards

Butterflies:	Freddie & Archie, for fantastic reading.
Ladybirds:	Griffin, for independently writing his name.
Dragonflies:	Marcel, for producing some amazing work.
Grasshoppers:	Jimmy, for some excellent descriptive writing.
Hedgehogs:	Reg & Arthur, for amazing team effort always helping each other.
Squirrels:	Alison, for always working hard in her learning.
Badgers:	Olivia, for her excellent and mature attitude to her learning.
Foxes:	Memphis, for her tremendous work on fractions!
Hares:	Eliora, for a fantastic non-chronological report on light and beautiful presentation.
Rabbits:	Aoife, for a fantastic oral retelling of Pandora's Box.
Kingfishers:	April, for her fantastic diary entry linked to Alice in Wonderland - Well done!
Robins:	Miruna, for her amazing positive attitude in all lessons.
Eagles:	Victoria, for an excellent diary entry linked to holes.
Owls:	Quan, for great writing in English.

House Points

Congratulations to the winning
house this week, St David's

Menu week 2

Diary Dates

All clubs and boosters are run from 15:15 - 16:15

<u>Monday 10th March</u>	<u>Tuesday 11th March</u>	<u>Wednesday 12th March</u>	<u>Thursday 13th March</u>	<u>Friday 14th March</u>
Robins swimming	Reading zone - Year 1	Reading zone - Year 1	Reading zone - Year 1	KS2 assembly 9:00
Boosters - All years	Boosters - Year 6	Booster - Year 6	Karate - Years 4, 5 & 6	Year 6 Crucial Crew
		Karate - Years 2 & 3	CAFOD - Years 4 to 6	KS1 assembly 14:30



Wishing everyone a lovely weekend.

Mrs A Kerrell

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mrs A Kerrell'.

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