

## St Joseph's Catholic High School Newsletter

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2025



## Head Teacher Message

Dear Parents/Carers and Students,

I hope you are all safe and well. Please click on the image below to be directed to this week's Head Teacher Message.



Please like and subscribe to be made aware of all new and exciting St Joseph's content.

St Joseph, pray for us.



"The glory of God is a human being fully alive!"

#### Year 7/8 3vs3 Basketball

A massive **Well Done** to the Year 7 and 8s who were involved in the 3vs3 Tournament at Langley Grammar. We came away with the Win!

Mr Stapleton

### The Prodigal Son

Weekly Reflections 30<sup>th</sup> March 2025 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent



#### From the Gospel of Luke (15: 1-3, 11-32)

At that time: The tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear Jesus. And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them.'

So he told them this parable: 'There was a man who had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me." And he divided his property between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

'But when he came to himself, he said, "How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.' "

'And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son." But the father said to his servants, "Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." And they began to celebrate.

'Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound." But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, "Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!" And he said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found." '

Prayer for the Week Loving God, We too are sometimes like the Prodigal Son in being more interested in our self-interests. Teach us to serve seeking no reward, to love without expecting it in return, to give without counting the cost. Allow us to offer ourselves in glad and joyful service Through Christ our Lord Amen			
Day 1 Why was the son insulting his father by asking for his inheritance? Why is this story so important to explaining what God not only gives us but wants from us?	Day 2 What son do you see yourself most in? When have you felt forgiveness and how can you demonstrate love and compassion this Easter break?	Day 3 Each day three of each week in Lent will be given to pray the Stations of the Cross. This week please pray: Station 13: Jesus dies on the Cross Station 14: Jesus is laid in his tomb	
for the common good. When we u "I prefer a Church which is bruised, hu unhealthy from being confined and from a of saying to us: 'Give the	<b>Catholic Social Teaching – Solidarity</b> , families, communities, organisations and nation unite and make a stand for what we believe in, urting and dirty because it has been out on the clinging to its own securitywhile at our door p m something to eat' (Mark 6:37)." Pope France you promote Solidarity in all that you do in	we can achieve remarkable things e streets, rather than a Church which is people are starving and Jesus does not tire <b>is, Evangelii Gaudium</b> , 49	

#### "Unlockina Belief in All"

## Theme of the Week – The Prodigal Son

Is this one of the most recognisable Gospel readings? Obviously we hear and witness the Passion and Resurrection of Christ every time we go to Mass. For certain celebrations like Christmas, Easter and Feast Days like St Peter and Paul, we hear from a certain passage of the Gospel. But if we were to ask people what story does Jesus tell us that we most remember, would it be this? Maybe not, but it is for me! And what is Jesus trying to teach us with this story? He wants us to know and understand that whatever we do wrong, we can always come back to God and ask for forgiveness. God is love and God is forgiveness and God will welcome us back with open arms like the father did.

In the Gospel, by asking for his inheritance, the younger son was offering a huge insult to his father; it was akin to wishing his father dead. And then for the son to be working with pigs, not only was he eating their meat which was prohibited at the time, but touching them would have rendered a person unclean as well. Jesus shows just how low the son had sunk and set the scene for the astonishingly lavish of forgiveness of the father. And why was this story so significant to the listeners at the time? The religious understanding was that there was no place in God's kingdom for sinners!

The Prodigal Son story gives us a graphic illustration of the radical new image of a God who is so forgiving, so good, so faithful and generous to his children. God so longs to be reconciled with us, that no limit is set on the celebration for the one who has been 'found'. The story reveals what is required of us if we are to 'be glad and celebrate' – we must realise that the source of rejoicing is in the goodness of God, 'Our Father'. We must take responsibility and acknowledge our failings and return to God. We must learn not to resent the good fortune of others who don't deserve it. The father's response to both sons is consistent – God never tires of seeking the lost and welcoming home for those who repent and return. The resentment of the older son to his father's generosity gives us a challenge; his refusal to participate in the family celebration shows a lack of compassion and a meanness of spirit which is quite at odds with his father's response.

Try putting yourself into each of the characters of this story in turn. Which one most resembles you and your responses at this time? How can you show **love** to others before Easter to help those that may be lost? How can you show **Compassion** to others who may be in personal need? Easter is a time where God shows us His **Love** and **Compassion**: **Love** by the sending of His son but **compassion** by the forgiveness of our sins through His death and resurrection. This week can you reach out to someone who is lost with **Love** and also try and show **compassion** to someone through your forgiveness.

#### St Joseph's the Worker Feast Day – Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025

On Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May, all of St Joseph's Catholic High School will come together in the morning to celebrate our Feast Day. Fr Kevin O Driscoll will be coming in to celebrate Mass and then we will go onto the field for a whole school photo.

All students will then go out into the community from 12pm to illustrate our School Mission Statement of **"Unlocking Belief in All"** and demonstrate our school virtues of being: Learned and Wise, Loving and Compassionate, Truthful and Eloquent, Intentional and Prophetic, Attentive and Discerning, Faith-filled and Hopeful, Curious and Active, Grateful and Generous.

We will also be living out to others the Catholic Social Teaching Principles of the Church. A letter for this is attached with the newsletter. Please can all parents/carers sign up to this on ParentPay by Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April. There is no cost. Before Easter, Mr Gibbons will endeavour to let all Houses and year groups know where they will be going and what they will be doing. All students will be back to school by 3pm and for those that wish to attend, there will be a free barbeque and Staff vs Student football match.

#### **TVLP Student Helpers: Supporting Those in Need This Lent**

Our TVLP student helpers have been reaching out to students in other schools this Lent, working together to maximise charitable opportunities in the spirit of community and compassion. Their first project this term is the **Baby Bank Collection**, supporting families in need. If you can, please donate essential baby items to help make a difference and hand it in to your Form Tutors.

Please see the attached PowerPoint slides for further details.

Rooted in Catholic values of charity and service, this initiative reflects our commitment to helping the most vulnerable. Looking ahead, we will continue our fundraising efforts over the next year in support of Save the Children. If you'd like to get involved, we'd love to hear from you!



#### **St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust News**

#### **Parent/Carer Survey**

Dear Parents and Carers,

Subject: St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust: Your Feedback Matters: Parent/Carer Survey Invitation

As part of our ongoing efforts to enhance the educational experience for your child, STCAT are seeking your valuable input through our Parent/Carer Survey.

Your feedback is essential in helping us understand your perspectives on various aspects of our school community, from communication and school policies to your child's learning environment. The survey will take only a few minutes to complete, and your responses will directly influence the decisions the STCAT make to support our students and their families.

#### **Survey Details:**

- Deadline: 4<sup>th</sup> April 2025
- Access the survey here: <u>https://forms.office.com/e/2dE41drG3H</u>

Your responses will be kept confidential, and we highly encourage all parents and carers to participate. The insights you provide will help us create a positive, supportive learning environment for everyone.

If you have any questions or need assistance with completing the survey, please feel free to contact Maxine Gilmartin at <u>admin@STCAT.co.uk</u>. Thank you for your time and support. We greatly appreciate your involvement in making our school community the best it can be.

Best regards, Joe Richardson CEO





"Unlockina Belief in All"



#### **Pupil Nominations of the Week**

	Year 7
	Emilia Cinense-Soloducha and Marcus Slimakowski for excellent weeks!
	Year 8
	Millie Woodward and Allan Lutecki
	Year 9
	Ben Bull and Wiki Wrobel, voted for by the Year 9 Form Tutors.
	Year 10
	Rosie McGrory and Jeff Sibanda for receiving the most positive points.
	Year 11
Oliver Bath	<b>the</b> and <b>Anna Larionova</b> for achieving the highest amount of positive points this week.
	Year 12
Natalia And	Irew for excellent participation in her Elective and Styne Carvalho for excellent work in
	Geography.
	Year 13
Rodnie Coroz	<b>a</b> for all the help and support he has given to his peers and <b>Wisdom Ogbeide-Jackson</b> fo
	earning the most positive points this week.

#### Year 7 News

A reminder that we break up for half-term on **Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April at 12:30pm**, and will not return until Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April for the Summer Term. Students should have brought home their reports, please do let your child's Form Tutor know if they haven't.

Have a lovely weekend!

Mr Cooper-Santos – Head of Year 7

#### Year 8 News

Another fantastic week for Year 8! It's great to see so many Year 8 students taking part in and watching the House Competitions today.

This week, Year 8 achieved over **1,300 positives**, with the majority coming from being *Active and Curious*.

As we head into the final week before Easter, let's finish the term as strongly as we have throughout. Keep up the positive work, and make sure you're organised with your equipment ready the night before.

Mr Hunt – Head of Year 8

#### **HPV Vaccinations Year 8**

The Berkshire Immunisation Service will be visiting St Joseph's on **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025** for the Year 8 HPV Immunisations.

Parent/carers are required to complete the attached consent form as soon as possible if you would like your child to receive their vaccination at school. If parents/carers <u>do not</u> wish for their child to be vaccinated, please advise them to complete the form as a non-consent. Please read the attached letter for further details.

#### Year 9 News

Year 9 have had a brilliant week in terms of sporting success. **David G**, **Jenson**, and **James M** played for the Year 10 team on Tuesday and won on penalties. The NFL girls had their first exhibition game at home, with NY Jets referees and an excitable crowd watching as they cruised to a 32-6 victory over Wexham.

Next week is the Rewards Assembly, where students will receive certificates for subject-specific outstanding performance and also receive badges for those that have demonstrated pupil profile qualities.

Have a great weekend.

Miss McCormack – Head of Year 9

#### Year 10 News

What a lovely week it has been! Year 10 had another jam-packed week with House Assemblies, football and NFL matches and the Musical Statue House Competition! Well done to all of the Year 10s who have taken part in the mentioned activities. For our final week of school, we have a Whole School Mass, Celebration Assembly and PE Inter-house Competitions. Please can I remind all students to bring in their House tops for their PE lessons.

A letter has been sent via ClassCharts about **Year 10 Parents' Evening on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May**. I implore students to begin making appointments with their class teachers as soon as possible, as well as for parents/carers to confirm attendance via ParentPay!

Have a lovely weekend (only 1 more week to go!)

Miss Joseph – Head of Year 10

#### Year 11 News

As we approach the final stretch of Year 11, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the continued hard work of many students. This week, we recorded **397 positives**, reflecting great effort and commitment. However, 119 negatives were also recorded, with homework (41), lateness (18), and equipment (12) being the main concerns. With the **GCSE exams beginning in the second week of May**, every decision made now will impact final results. Students must stay disciplined, meet deadlines, and make the most of the support available.

Easter Intervention Sessions – Extra Support

We are committed to giving our students every opportunity to succeed, which is why intervention sessions will run during the Easter break. These sessions will provide focused revision in key subjects and will be crucial for those needing extra support. The full Easter intervention timetable will be shared next week.

#### • Leavers' Assembly – Monday, 2nd June

As we prepare for the next chapter, our Leavers' Assembly will take place on Monday, 2nd June. This is a special occasion to reflect on the journey so far and celebrate achievements. We would love to include photos and videos in the leavers' video—students are encouraged to send in their favourite moments from their time at St. Joseph's.

Additionally, two students will deliver a speech during the assembly. If no volunteers come forward, we will select students to take on this important role.

#### • Leavers' Hoodies – Order Deadline: 30th April

Leavers' hoodies will be available for students to commemorate their time at St. Joseph's. The online shop is now open, and orders must be placed by 30th April. Hoodies will arrive in school by the end of May.

• Final Push Towards Exams

With the GCSE exams fast approaching, now is the time to focus, revise effectively, and take responsibility for learning. I strongly encourage all students to make full use of interventions, stay organised, and ask for help when needed. Every effort counts.

Parents, your support in ensuring students complete their homework, arrive on time, and are fully prepared for lessons is greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your continued commitment—I look forward to seeing a strong finish to the term. *Mr Romero* – *Head of Year 11* 

#### Year 12 & 13 News

Year 12 students have had a fantastic week, earning lots of positive points for their hard work. I would like to send a **special thank you to the Year 12 Mentoring Team** who are giving up their time to support some of our more vulnerable students in the lower years. Your dedication to these students is making a huge difference in their lives. On Thursday, the Criminology students took a trip to the Old Bailey and had the opportunity to sit in on some real-life court cases. This experience will be invaluable in terms of their studies, and the students represented the school well.

Year 13 students have also had a great week. It is such a joy to see so many of them working hard towards their exams. The official start date of the A Level exams is Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May, so it is really important that students continue to work hard over the Easter break to ensure they are well prepared. There will be some interventions taking place over the holidays and teachers will be in direct contact with students to provide the dates and times of these. As a parent, to help support your child in preparing for their exams, it is important that you keep talking to them about their revision and how it is progressing. Asking them to explain their areas of weakness and what they are doing to address these will help to keep them focused. If you have any concerns at all, please feel free to get in touch.

Have a great weekend. Mrs Finn – Head of Year 13

#### **House Competition – Arm Wrestling**

Last Friday, students gathered in the hall for an all-time great, a showdown known by many; the arm wrestling competition. Every Year Group battled it out into a final, surrounded by their peers, until the last two were standing and the winner prevailed. A great time and great effort from all competitors! **Congratulations to Veronica House** for their overall win!

Next Half-term's House Compet	itions
-------------------------------	--------

25th April	Chess Competition SSE	
2nd May	The Great St Josephs Bake off	CCR
9th May	Polyglot MFL Competition	SSH
16th May	Sweet Tower of Mine	Science
23rd May	Dance off Part 2	HST



#### **Cecilia House Awards**

Congratulations to those who won the *Exceptional House Competition Involvement Awards* and Easter Eggs this week in Cecilia House. Keep up the energy!

#### **Exciting News from the Geography Department**

We are thrilled to share that the Geography Department has won a fantastic set of books from *Little Green Change*! These books explore fascinating topics about our planet, from sustainability to global landscapes, and will be a valuable resource for students eager to learn more about the world around them.

Students can borrow these books from the department to deepen their knowledge and curiosity about geography. A huge thank you to *Little Green Change* for this wonderful opportunity!



"Unlockina Belief in All"

#### NFL

On Wednesday, Year 9 and 10 girls played in their second NFL match against Wexham School. They kept their winning record against Wexham, **winning a convincing 27-6**.





## Nature at its Best Geography Club Photography Competition

On **Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April**, in commemoration of Earth Day, a photography competition will be held to celebrate nature at its best.

Photograph: This should capture the beauty and diversity of natural landscapes/wildlife/ecosystems, highlighting the wonders of the natural world.
 Entries: All entries should be emailed or sent on MS Teams to Mrs Rodrigues in digital form. The last date to receive entries is 18<sup>th</sup> April.

Prizes: 2 prizes in each category (natural landscapes/ wildlife/ecosystems).

#### St Joseph's Model United Nations – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025

We are excited to announce that our school will be hosting the *St. Joseph's Model United Nations (MUN) conference* on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025, welcoming around 120 students from schools within the Thames Valley Learning Partnership (TVLP). This is a fantastic opportunity for students to develop oracy skills, critical thinking, and global awareness while debating real-world issues in a formal setting.

#### Why Join MUN?

- Boost your CV MUN is a great experience for university applications and career prospects.
- Enhance your debating skills Learn how to construct arguments, defend your position, and think on your feet.
- Meet new people Engage with like-minded students from other schools.
- Expand your knowledge MUN requires an understanding of politics, history, and geography, providing a well-rounded academic challenge.

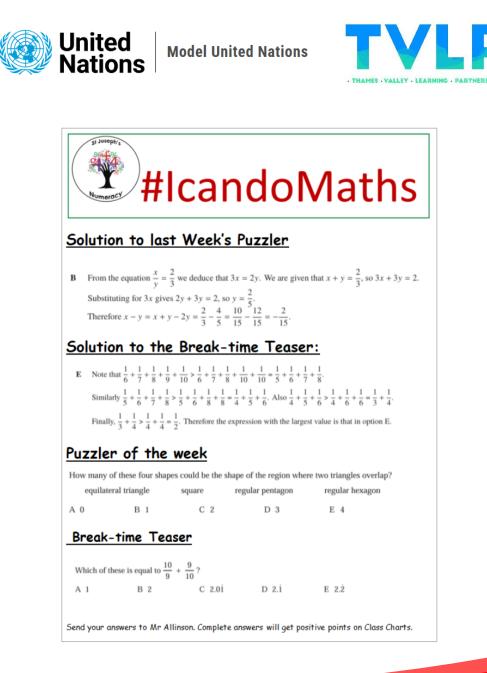
#### How to Get Involved?

We have **20 spaces available** for St Joseph's students to participate in this prestigious event. If you are interested, sign up using the following link: **St Jo MUN 2025.xlsx** 

#### **Preparation & Next Steps**

The countries and committee allocations will be shared in the next newsletter, allowing students to research and begin drafting their position papers over Easter.

This is a unique opportunity to step into the shoes of world leaders, tackle global challenges, and develop essential skills for the future. Don't miss out – sign up today!



#### Absences

Dear Parents/Carers,

Please be aware that all medical absences from the last week of term and the first week of the Summer Term will be unauthorised without medical evidence. This is per our attendance policy. Please be aware that if your child is unwell in school, we will make a decision whether to send them home and this will be authorised.

If you have planned a holiday during term-time, please email <u>office@st-josephs.slough.sch.uk</u> with an explanation, including the dates of absence and proof of the travel documentation (both outbound and inbound). This must be the original documentation and not the e-ticket.

Please note that having unauthorised absences will affect future Rewards trips and college/university applications.

Thank you as always for your support in the education of your child/ren.

#### School Lunch Price Change & Menu

**From next Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025**, there will be a small price increase (10p) of school lunches. Please see the attached letter for more information.

MENU	St Josephs Catholic High School - Week Two			
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Beef Keema with Peas & Rice	Chicken Tagine served with Couscous & Tzatziki	Student Choice	Minced Beef Enchilada	Oven Baked Fish served with Chips, Tartare Sauce & a Lemon Wedge
Cheese, Leek & Potato Pie with a Puff Pastry Lid	Spinach & Ricotta Lasagne	Quorn Tacos with Sour Cream & Cheese	Indonesian Style Vegetable Curry served with Rice	Curried Vegetable Pasty
/egetables or Freshly Prepared House Salad	Vegetables or Freshly Prepared House Salad	Vegetables or Freshly Prepared House Salad	Vegetables or Freshly Prepared House Salad	Vegetables or Freshly Prepared House Salad
Pasta with a Cheese & Ham Sauce	Pasta with a Cheese Sauce	Chinese Style Noodles with Beansprouts	Pasta with a Tomato Sauce	- 46
ced Vanilla Sponge	Sticky Toffee Pudding served with Custard	Chocolate Brownie	White Chocolate Chip Flapjack	Carrot Cake

<u>Available daily:</u> Sandwiches, Wraps & Baguettes, Panini, Jacket Potatoes, Cold Desserts & Fruit

"Unlockina Belief in All"

## EAL NEWS (English as an Additional Language)

## The Importance of Home Learning

Home learning plays a crucial role in reinforcing what your child learns at school. It helps improve their confidence, strengthens **language development**, and ensures they keep up with their studies. Here are some simple yet effective ways you can support your child's learning at home:

#### 1. Encourage Reading Every Day

Reading in both English and your home language helps develop vocabulary and comprehension skills. Encourage your child to read books, newspapers, or online articles that interest them.

#### 2. **Practice Speaking and Listening** Engaging in conversations in English at home, such as discussing daily activities or watching educational programs together, helps improve fluency and understanding.

# Support Homework and Assignments Help your child set a routine for completing homework. Encourage them to ask questions and discuss their schoolwork with you. If needed, reach out to teachers for support.

- 4. Use Educational Apps and Resources There are many free online resources and apps, such as BBC Bitesize, Duolingo, and Oxford Owl, that can help your child practice their English skills in a fun and engaging way.
- 5. Maintain a Positive Learning Environment Create a quiet and comfortable space where your child can focus on studying without distractions.

 Stay Connected with the School Regularly check school communications, attend parent meetings, and speak with teachers to stay updated on your child's progress and needs.

#### SCHOOL CLUBS



#### Languages Department

Our KS3 students are thriving in our MFL club, which meets after school every alternate Tuesday (each Week A) from 3:30pm to 4:30pm in T5 with Ms Shaw. Our aim is to explore languages, cultural ideas and activities, have fun with friends, and forge new friendships - full of (jelly) beans of course!



Love music? Want to learn how to play in a string ensemble? Join Mr Orval on Tuesdays at 3:15pm in the XA room. Several instruments (violin, viola, cello) are available for new/aspiring members. Contact your music teacher for further details.

#### D+T Club- KS3 DESIGNeers



If you love a challenge, enjoy solving problems and Designing and Making, consider joining our D&T team of DESIGNeers (designers and engineers). We would LOVE you to join us! Please see, or message Mrs Stacey on Teams and join us at DESIGNeers Club on a Monday afterschool in A3.

#### Welcome to Geography Club

Aims



1) To appreciate nature and its resources. 2) To create awareness of the environmental problems and adopt various measures to protect the earth.

Geography club meeting will be held every week after school on Friday, 3.30-4.00pm in T-15. Open to year 7 to year 11.

In these sessions we will have geography quizzes, competitions(wealth out of waste, poster competition), paper bag making, creating, landform models (volcano, coastal landforms, riverine landforms and glacial landforms) and planting herbs.





## PE After School Clubs

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lunch 1	Badminton and Basketball	Badminton and Basketball (GCSE students only)	Badminton and Basketball	Badminton and Basketball (GCSE students only)	Badminton and Basketball
Lunch 2	Badminton and Basketball	Badminton and Basketball	Badminton and Basketball	Badminton and Basketball	Badminton and Basketball
Afterschool	Year 7-9 Basketball JCO Rugby Girls and Boys HMC/THU Girls Football MJO Year 7+8 boys Football	Netball- all year groups AAN MJO KBR Dance HST Basketball year 10, 11, 12 and 13 JCO	Year 9–11 boys Football THU Trampolining KBR		Fitness – all year groups

#### "Unlocking Belief in All"