



St. Swithun Wells Catholic Primary School

As **disciples of Jesus**, we grow in **friendship** and in our **love of learning**, and we seek to **care for others**.

"I have called you by your name. You are mine." Isaiah 43:1

October 2026

October arrives as the Autumn term is well underway and routines of school and family life are becoming more firmly established. In these weeks, our resources aim to bring opportunities to pause, notice what is important and make time for God and one another.

This newsletter shares some of the content children will experience in school throughout October, and suggests ways for you to engage with them about it. We hope it is a useful resource for your family prayer time.

HOLY ROSARY

The month of October traditionally focuses on prayer with the Holy Rosary, offering families a way to spend time together in prayer, and reflect on the life of Jesus with Mary. For families who would like to explore the Rosary at home and become more familiar with these prayers, our 'Praying the Rosary' resource on the Parent Portal offers guidance and support.

LOVE AND RESPECT

In the week beginning 5 October, children will reflect on the difference between showing respect and rejecting others. Through Jesus' parable of the tenants in the vineyard (Matthew 21:33-43), they will consider the choices people make and how their words and actions can show love and respect.

The assembly encourages children to listen to Jesus' message of love and think about how they can respond to Him each day. They will also hear about St Francis of Assisi, who listened to God's message of love and showed care for people who were poor, welcomed those who were forgotten and treated Creation with kindness.

With your child/ren, you may also like to...

- *Talk about what respect can look and sound like at home, at school and in your community.*

- *Try the assembly's one-minute challenge: spend one minute in silence when you wake up or before bedtime, remembering Jesus' message of love.*
- *Find out a little more about St Francis of Assisi and choose one way your family could follow his example by caring for other people or for Creation.*

COME TO THE PARTY!

In the week beginning 12 October, children will explore Jesus' parable of the wedding feast (Matthew 22:1-14). Children will take time to wonder how it might have felt to be invited to the king's party. This will help them think about what it means to receive an invitation that is both generous and unexpected.

Through the story, children will reflect on what it means to be ready to accept God's invitation, and how being part of His Kingdom involves choosing to follow Jesus and growing in love each day.

With your child/ren, you may also like to...

- *Plan a simple 'family party' and let each person choose one thing that would make everyone feel welcome.*
- *Think of one way your family could say 'yes' to getting more involved in the life of your school or parish.*

SING SING SING!

The daily prayers for the week beginning 19 October are inspired by Psalm 96 - a beautiful prayer of praise. St Augustine reminds us that 'The one who sings, prays twice!', and children are encouraged to bring their praise and thanks to God through song.

You may like to create your own prayer of praise, or use the lyrics below in your family prayer time:

**All the people in the world,
Sing to the Lord.
Tell of His wonders, sing His praise -
Sing a new song!**

**Sing, sing, sing a new song,
Sing to the Lord.
Sing out loud and sing out strong -
Sing a new song!**

This term, all classes have started learning RE through a new Diocesan approved scheme called *Source to Summit: Lighting the Path*.

Lighting the Path is a resource designed specifically for Catholic primary schools. It follows the Religious Education Directory (RED) and covers all the mandatory Religious Education outcomes set by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

The title *Lighting the Path* is inspired by Psalm 119:

"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."

The resource takes children on a journey through the story of God's revelation, helping them to explore Sacred Scripture, the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church, and the beliefs and practices of Catholics around the world today.

Through their RE learning, children are encouraged to develop both creative and critical thinking skills. They are given opportunities to ask questions, explore their own ideas, consider different beliefs and worldviews, and develop thoughtful personal responses.

Our teachers help to light the path for every child, guiding them on a journey through Sacred Scripture and the liturgical year of the Catholic Church. Children are encouraged to talk about what they believe, listen respectfully to the beliefs of others, and develop their ability to engage thoughtfully in conversations about faith and different worldviews.

The Six Branches of *Lighting the Path*

The *Lighting the Path* curriculum is organised into **six branches**. Each branch is taught across a half-term and follows the story of God's revelation through Scripture and the Church's liturgical year. As children move through the school, they revisit these branches, building on their previous learning and developing a deeper understanding of Scripture, Catholic belief and the lived experience of faith.

✚ Creation and Covenant

Children explore God's creation and his loving relationship with humanity. They learn about God's promises and covenants with his people and consider what it means to live in relationship with God and with others.

★ **Prophecy and Promise**

Children explore the prophets and their messages of hope and God's promise of a Saviour. This branch connects particularly with the season of **Advent**, helping children understand the anticipation of the coming of Jesus.

† **Galilee to Jerusalem**

Children follow the life and ministry of Jesus, exploring his teachings, miracles, relationships and the people he encountered. They consider what Jesus reveals about God and how his teachings guide the lives of Christians today.

✿ **Desert to Garden**

Children journey through **Lent, Holy Week and Easter**, exploring Jesus' suffering, death and Resurrection. They reflect on themes of sacrifice, forgiveness, hope and new life.

🌐 **To the Ends of the Earth**

Children discover how the Good News of Jesus was shared by his followers and how the Church grew. They explore the coming of the Holy Spirit, the mission of the Church and how Catholics around the world live and share their faith today.

🤝 **Dialogue and Encounter**

Children explore the diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews. They learn about other faith traditions and develop the skills to listen, ask questions and engage respectfully with people whose beliefs and experiences may be different from their own.

Together, these six branches create a **spiral journey through Scripture and the story of salvation**. As children progress from Reception to Year 6, they return to the key themes with increasing depth, building their knowledge, understanding and ability to reflect on what their learning means for their own lives.

Lighting the path Branch 1

Hedgehogs (Reception) This half term, children will learn about **God's wonderful creation**, exploring the world around them and learning that God made and loves everyone. They will begin to understand that prayer is a way of talking to God and learn the **Sign of the Cross**. Children will also discover that they belong to **God's family** and learn about **Baptism** as a special celebration that welcomes people into the Church.

Rabbits (Year 1) This half term, children will learn about the **Creation story**, discovering that God created the world and that all creation is good. They will explore prayer, including the **Our Father**, and learn that prayer helps us grow closer to God. Children will also learn about **Pope Francis' message in Laudato Si'** and how we can care for our world and show love for others through our actions.

Foxes (Year 2) This half term, children will learn about the **Bible** and its two parts, the Old and New Testaments. They will study the story of **Noah**, focusing on God's promise symbolised by the rainbow and what it teaches us about caring for creation. Children will also explore **stewardship**, our responsibility to look after God's world, and learn about the **Sacrament of Baptism** as a special welcome into God's family.

Deer (Year 3) This half term, children will deepen their understanding of the **Creation story**, learning that all people are made in the **image of God** and have equal dignity. They will explore **Catholic Social Teaching**, including human dignity and stewardship, and reflect on ways to care for others and the environment. Children will also learn about prayers and writings that praise God's creation, including **Psalms, Saint Francis' Canticle of Creation, and Pope Francis' Laudato Si'**.

Badgers (Year 4) This half term, children will learn about **Abraham**, exploring how God called him and made a special **covenant (promise)** with him. They will discover why Abraham is known as the **father of faith**, learn about his trust in God through key Bible stories, and reflect on the Christian virtues of **faith, hope and love**, considering how these virtues can guide their own lives.

Hares (Year 5) This half term, children will learn about **God's covenant with Moses**, including the story of the **Burning Bush**, the **Ten Commandments**, and how these teachings help people live good and happy lives. They will explore Jesus' teaching to **love God and love your neighbour**, learn about the **common good**, and reflect on how virtues and positive choices can strengthen relationships with God and others.

Otters (Year 6) This half term, children will explore the stories of **Creation and the Fall**, learning about Christian beliefs regarding sin, free will and God's relationship with humanity. They will study **Jesus as the New Covenant**, the **Sacrament of Baptism**, and the **Nicene Creed**, while also considering how Christians are called to care for the world through **stewardship**. Children will also examine how faith and science can work together in understanding creation.