Dear Families and Friends of St. Mary’s,

We are excited to share with you some wonderful events and initiatives that will be taking place at St. Mary’s School over the next few months as we embark on our Jubilee Year celebrations, with the theme "Pilgrims of Hope.” Our journey this year will focus on serving others, deepening our faith, and building a stronger community.

**Visit from Bishop Stephen**

On the 29th of January, we are honoured to welcome Bishop Stephen, Bishop of Newcastle and Hexham, who will be visiting St. Mary’s School. He will celebrate a whole school Mass at 10am, and we invite all of our school families and community members to join us for this special occasion. It will be a wonderful opportunity for us to come together in prayer and reflection.



**Jubilee Year: Pilgrims of Hope**

On the 24th of January, we will begin celebrating our Jubilee Year with the theme “Pilgrims of Hope.” This is a special time for us to reflect on our journey of faith and the many ways we can be of service to others. The children will be \*pilgrims\* in a variety of ways throughout the year, raising funds for both local and global charities, as well as contributing to our local and school community. Through acts of kindness, fundraising, and service, we will walk together in hope and faith.

**Lenten Initiatives: Walking with Faith and Charity**

As we prepare for the season of Lent, we are excited to participate in our annual CAFOD Big Lent Walk 2025. This event invites us to walk in solidarity with those around the world who are suffering, raising funds for those in need. More details about how you can participate will be shared soon, but we encourage all families to take part in this meaningful journey of faith, hope, and charity.

**Class Lenten Lunches**

As part of our Lenten observances, each class will be hosting a special ‘Lenten Lunch’ where we will invite members of our school and local community to join us for a simple meal of soup and bread. These lunches are a chance to reflect on the sacrifices we make during Lent, and to remember those who are less fortunate. The proceeds from these lunches will be donated to charity, continuing our tradition of helping those in need. Details to follow as we approach closer to Lent.



**Live Simply**

St. Mary's is excited to announce that we will be applying for the Live Simply Award this spring term. This award recognises schools that demonstrate a commitment to living simply by caring for the environment, supporting social justice, and promoting sustainable living. At St. Mary's, we believe in fostering a community that actively reflects these values, and we are proud of the steps we've already taken, such as reducing waste, supporting local charities, and encouraging sustainable practices among our students. By applying for the Live Simply Award, we hope to deepen our efforts and inspire everyone at St. Mary’s to continue making choices that benefit both people and the planet. We are looking forward to working together as a school to embrace simplicity and sustainability in our daily lives.



**Mass times 10am at St Mary's Catholic Church**

Whole school mass Thursday 23rd January , all are welcome.

Class masses:

Tuesday 28th January - Year 6 and Reception class

Tuesday 4th February - Year 5 and Year 1

Tuesday 11th February - Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4

**Celebration of The Word in the school at 915 am**

Wednesday 22nd January - Year 6

Wednesday 29th January - Year 5

Wednesday 5th February - Year 4

Wednesday 12th February - Year 3

Wednesday 19th February - Year 2

Wednesday 5th March - Year 1

Wednesday 12th March - Reception Class

We look forward to walking with you all through this year of hope and service. Thank you for your ongoing support and for being part of our St. Mary’s family.

With blessings,

The St. Mary’s School Team