

The English Martyrs Catholic
School and Sixth Form College

Catholic Life

Issue #4 | Autumn Term |

English Martyrs Living Out Our Faith this Term



This publication is a celebration of all the wonderful opportunities taken this term to put our faith into action at EMS

Exaltation of the Holy Cross



In a poignant and spiritual observance, a selection of our Faith Leaders came together today to mark the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The event centred around the Stations of the Cross, a sacred ritual that takes participants through the significant moments of Jesus Christ's journey to crucifixion.

As the leaders gathered, their hearts and minds were focused on the symbolic and profound act of veneration for the Holy Cross. The Stations of the Cross, a devotional

exercise deeply rooted in Christian tradition, guides participants through 14 stations, each representing a key event in the final hours of Jesus' life.

The atmosphere was filled with reverence and prayer as the Faith Leaders moved from station to station, reciting the timeless words, "We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You, because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world." This powerful mantra encapsulates the essence of the Christian faith, acknowledging the redemptive power believed to emanate from the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

Participants took turns reflecting on each station, contemplating the profound significance of the events leading to the crucifixion and their impact on the Christian belief in salvation. The solemnity of the occasion served as a moment of spiritual connection, fostering unity among the Faith Leaders, and reinforcing the shared commitment to their religious community.

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross holds a special place in the liturgical calendar, and the Stations of the Cross provided a meaningful way for the Faith Leaders to honour this sacred day. The ceremony not only deepened their individual faith but also served as a poignant reminder of the central tenets that bind their diverse congregations together.

In a world often characterised by fast-paced living, this solemn celebration offered a moment of respite and reflection, allowing the Faith Leaders to draw inspiration from the enduring message of hope, redemption, and love embodied by the Holy Cross.

EMS6

Student led Sixth Form Reflections

In a heart-warming initiative, students at EMS6 have embark on a journey of self-reflection and gratitude as they create personalised Sixth Form reflections for their form families. This thoughtful project aims to foster a sense of unity and camaraderie within the school community, providing an avenue for students to express their experiences, aspirations, and gratitude.

The Sixth Form reflections, involve students sharing personal insights and reflections on their journey through the Sixth Form with their assigned form families. The exercise not only encourages self-reflection but also promotes a sense of connection and understanding among peers.

Students take the opportunity to articulate their academic and personal growth, acknowledging the support and camaraderie within their form families. These reflections go beyond the academic realm, delving into the unique experiences and challenges that shape their time in EMS6's Sixth Form.

This initiative not only strengthens the bonds among students but also provides a platform for meaningful dialogue and empathy. As the reflections are exchanged, they create a sense of shared accomplishment and resilience among the students founded upon our Catholic identity.

Bernadette Morton's form share that the Sixth Form Reflections "Helps us to think about how to act during the day, we feel more positive – it brings positivity, and a good routine to start the day. It's a chance to think about things we don't always think about."

EMS6 continues to foster an environment where students not only excel academically but also grow personally, supported by initiatives like the Sixth Form reflections that emphasise the importance of community, gratitude, and self-awareness.

To view the reflections, please scan the QR Code:



European Day of Languages

Multilingual Prayer Unites School Community on European Day of Languages

In a celebration of linguistic diversity, Mr. McCartie, has taken a creative step to mark the European Day of Languages. Going beyond the conventional observance, Mr. McCartie crafted a heartfelt prayer that not only resonates with the spirit of the occasion but also reflects the diversity within our school.



In a collaborative effort with the Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) department, our talented students translated the prayer into six languages, embodying the rich tapestry of cultures present in the school community. The prayer, originally written in English, now extends its embrace to French, Spanish, German, Mandarin, Ukrainian, and Polish, symbolising the linguistic diversity within the school.

This initiative serves not only as a tribute to the European Day of Languages but also as a testament to the inclusive and harmonious environment fostered at The English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth form College. As students came together to recite the prayer in multiple languages, the school resonated with a sense of unity and appreciation for the varied linguistic backgrounds represented.

The Modern Foreign Languages department's dedication to promoting language diversity underscores the importance of recognising and celebrating the richness that different languages bring to the educational experience. This innovative approach not only enhances cultural awareness but also reinforces the ethos of inclusivity and respect within our school community. On this European Day of Languages, English Martyrs stands as a beacon of unity, echoing the sentiment that language is not just a tool for communication but a bridge that connects hearts and minds across borders.

Please scan the QR code to watch the created prayer:



Student Led Celebration of the Word

English Martyrs Students Illuminate Social Media with Weekly Gospel Readings and Reflections

In a fusion of faith and technology, students at English Martyrs have embarked on a mission to spread spiritual enlightenment through weekly Gospel readings and reflections on social media platforms. This innovative initiative is designed not only to engage their peers but also to foster a sense of community and reflection in the digital age.

Each week, dedicated students take turns presenting Gospel readings, offering insightful reflections, and sharing personal interpretations of the scriptures. The videos, carefully curated and produced, bring the teachings of the Gospel to life for their online audience.

The initiative not only showcases the students' commitment to their faith but also reflects a modern approach to spiritual outreach. By leveraging the power of social media, these young minds are creating a virtual space where fellow students, friends, and even a global audience can come together to contemplate and discuss the profound messages embedded in the Gospel.

English Martyrs is not just a school; it's a community that thrives on shared values and a commitment to spiritual growth. The weekly Gospel readings and reflections videos serve as a digital beacon, illuminating the online space with wisdom, compassion, and a collective journey toward understanding and connection. As the videos gain traction on social media, English Martyrs students are proving that faith can be shared and celebrated in the digital realm, bringing a timeless message to the contemporary world.

Please watch our Gospel reflections by scanning the following link:



The View of Catholic Life



English Martyrs School is a vibrant Catholic community.

The school's relentless pursuit of excellence in Catholic education is reflected in its dynamic approach to spiritual growth. Regular initiatives, events, and activities are carefully curated to enhance the Catholic formation for students, creating an environment where faith is not just taught but lived.

Crucially, the school recognises the significance of feedback from its dedicated staff. By actively seeking and valuing input from teachers, English Martyrs ensures that their Catholic life initiatives are not only effective but also resonate with the needs and aspirations of the school community.

This commitment to improvement based on feedback is pivotal in shaping a holistic Catholic experience for students. It reflects the school's understanding that the journey of spiritual growth is a collaborative one, where the insights and perspectives of staff contribute significantly to the overall development of the school's Catholic identity.

Victoria Edwards shares "I appreciate and value the Catholic life and mission at English Martyrs - I am a new member of staff since September but my classes and I enjoy the Catholic aspects each day - prayers each morning, thoughtful Thursday reflections and prayers at the end of each day. It helps to teach us about kindness and compassion. I would also like to start coming along to staff prayers on a Friday and look forward to my tutor group mass. "

Thoughtful Thursday

English Martyrs students at Key Stage 3 and 4 are embracing spiritual mindfulness with Thoughtful Thursday. Led by students, this weekly activity encourages reflections on how Christ's teachings have manifested in their form throughout the week.

Week Commencing: Monday 18th December 2023

Theme for the week: 'God comes to us'

Linked CST Principle: Human Dignity
BHCET Trust Virtue: Self Belief

This week we are praying for:



A word cloud containing various prayer requests such as 'grandparents this Christmas', 'people who are in need', 'people in the Congo', 'difficult time', 'homeless people', 'happy Christmas world', 'struggling emotionally', 'Christmas time', 'Christmas full of love', 'loving us unconditionally', 'people who are sick', 'families', 'time of year', 'families in our town', 'needs of their families', 'People of Gaza', and 'families who are not'.

Each form selects individuals or groups to pray for, fostering a sense of unity and compassion. Thoughtful Thursday incorporates the Trust theme of the week, highlighting

BHCET Trust virtues and Catholic Social Teaching, weaving a tapestry of faith and shared values. This student-led initiative at English Martyrs embodies the essence of community, empathy, and spiritual contemplation.

This week we are thankful for:



A word cloud containing various things to be thankful for, including 'thankful for the fact', 'advent with family', 'family and teacher', 'Christmas is not', 'Christmas fair', 'Friends and family', 'loving family and food', 'Christmas time', 'Christmas', 'thankful for family', 'preparation for Christmas', 'families and our friends', 'Thankful', 'Christmas events', 'Christmas celebrations', 'time together as families', 'Thankful for my nana', 'appreciation for family', and 'unwind with family'.

Year 7 Welcome Mass

St. Joseph's Church opened its doors to the newest members of our school family as Year 7 students gathered for a special Mass of welcome. Canon Paul led the uplifting celebration, guiding the young minds in unity and faith founded upon the example of Christ.



The Mass, held to mark the beginning of the academic year, resonated with a spirit of hope and camaraderie. Canon Paul's words inspired a sense of purpose and belonging among the Year 7 students, setting a positive tone for their journey ahead.

As the church echoed with prayers and hymns, the students, Form Tutors, and Feeder Primary Schools came together in a shared experience of community and spirituality.



The Year 7 welcome Mass at St. Joseph's Church not only marks a significant moment in the students' academic journey but also symbolises the strength and support found in the embrace of a caring school and church community echoing our school motto *Per Unitatem Virtus*.

Trust Visitation

English Martyrs Joins Trust Celebration: 'Christ Lives In Our Trust'



English Martyrs School recently participated in a joyous celebration, "Christ Lives in Our Trust," alongside 35 sister schools within the Trust. The event, graced by the presence of Bishop Stephen, unfolded as a spirited gathering of faith, unity, and shared purpose.

Bishop Stephen, in a moment of spiritual connection, unpacked the Gospel, guiding attendees through its profound teachings.

The occasion was not merely a celebration but an opportunity for reflection on individual faith journeys, enriched by the wisdom shared by Bishop Stephen.

The Liturgical Movement added a unique dimension to the event as all 35 schools united in prayer, offering the Hail Mary in a collective and synchronised manner. The harmonious gesture underscored the unity inherent in the family of schools within the Trust.



Under the baton of Mr. McCartie, students from across the Trust showcased their musical talents, presenting two mesmerising pieces. The collaborative performance was a testament to the strength and cohesion fostered among schools under the umbrella of the Trust.

On the Feast of St Luke, the Gospel message, "Peace to this house," resonated profoundly. The collective prayer of all the schools,

including English Martyrs, echoed a plea for the peace of Christ to envelop the world, with special intentions for tranquility in the Holy Land during these challenging times.

The celebration not only marked a momentous day in the school's calendar but also reinforced the interconnectedness and shared values binding the family of schools within the Trust. English Martyrs continues to thrive as a vibrant participant in this collective journey of faith and education.

Trust INSET Day

Trust PD Day Inspires Educators with Catholic Social Teaching Principles

In a dedicated pursuit of excellence and spiritual development, the recent Trust INSET Day centred around the foundational principles of Catholic Social Teaching. Dr Ann Marie Mealey, Director of Catholic Mission at Leeds Trinity University and a distinguished Catholic Moral Theologian, delivered an enlightening keynote address, setting the tone for a day of profound insights and shared values.

Educators from across the Trust engaged in vibrant discussions, exchanging ideas, and celebrating the embodiment of Catholic Social Teaching principles within their respective schools. Dr Mealey's address highlighted the significance of championing the common good, prioritising the needs of the most vulnerable, and standing in solidarity with all communities—a reflection of the Trust's commitment to holistic education.

The INSET Day not only served as a platform for professional development but also reinforced the Trust's dedication to nurturing both the intellect and the spirit. As staff members immersed themselves in the teachings of Catholic Social Teaching, they found

inspiration and affirmation in the collective efforts of the Trust schools as champions of values that extend beyond the classroom, resonating with the broader community. This impactful day of learning underscored the Trust's unwavering commitment to shaping compassionate and socially conscious educators, empowering them to instil these values in the hearts and minds of the students they guide.



Solemnity of All Saints



St. Anne's Hall at English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth Form College echoed with sacred hymns and prayers as Year 7 students gathered for a special Celebration of Mass on the Solemnity of All Saints. Canon Paul presided over the solemn ceremony, guiding students through a meaningful reflection on the lives of saints and the call to holiness.

The Mass, a spiritual cornerstone for the Year 7 students, marked not only a religious observance but also a moment of unity and connection within the school community. St. Anne's Hall, adorned with reverence, became a haven where students immersed themselves in the solemnity of the occasion, fostering a deeper understanding of their faith.

As the voices of the students harmonised in prayer, Canon Paul's guidance illuminated the significance of All Saints' Day, inspiring a collective commitment to a path of holiness. The Celebration of Mass in St. Anne's Hall encapsulated the school's dedication to nurturing the spiritual journey of its students, creating an enduring memory of unity and reverence.

St. Francis' Garden



On the feast Day of St Francis of Assisi, Canon Paul Douthwaite, Trust Leaders, Governors, Primary Heads, Staff and Students celebrated in prayer and song for the opening of St Francis' Garden.

The garden will be a wonderful space for students and staff to reflect in and spend time in the outdoors following the example of St Francis of Assisi



Remembrance Day

English Martyrs Students Commemorate Fallen Heroes in Remembrance Service

In a poignant tribute to the fallen, students of English Martyrs participated in a solemn Remembrance Service held in St. Francis' Garden. The moving ceremony, also live-streamed to every classroom, united the entire school in a shared moment of reflection.

Students, whether in person or virtually, stood together in silent remembrance, honouring the sacrifice of those who gave their lives. This inclusive service not only paid homage to the fallen heroes but also emphasised the school's commitment to fostering a collective spirit of gratitude and remembrance among its students.



Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.



Green Careers Week

English Martyrs' ECO Club Cultivates St. Francis' Garden for Community Stewardship



In a harmonious blend of environmental awareness and community care, Mr. McCartie and Mrs. Martindale collaborated with the ECO club at English Martyrs to sow wildflower seeds in St. Francis' Garden. This hands-on initiative not only adds a vibrant touch to the school's landscape but also aligns with the ethos of stewardship and community care rooted in Catholic Social Teaching.

The ECO club, guided by the dedicated efforts of Mrs Martindale, embodies the school's commitment to environmental responsibility and nurturing a sense of community.



Sowing wildflower seeds serves as a visual testament to the school's dedication to cultivating a sustainable, beautiful environment, reinforcing the values of stewardship and care for the community at the heart of the Catholic Social Teaching embraced by English Martyrs.



Anti-Bullying Week

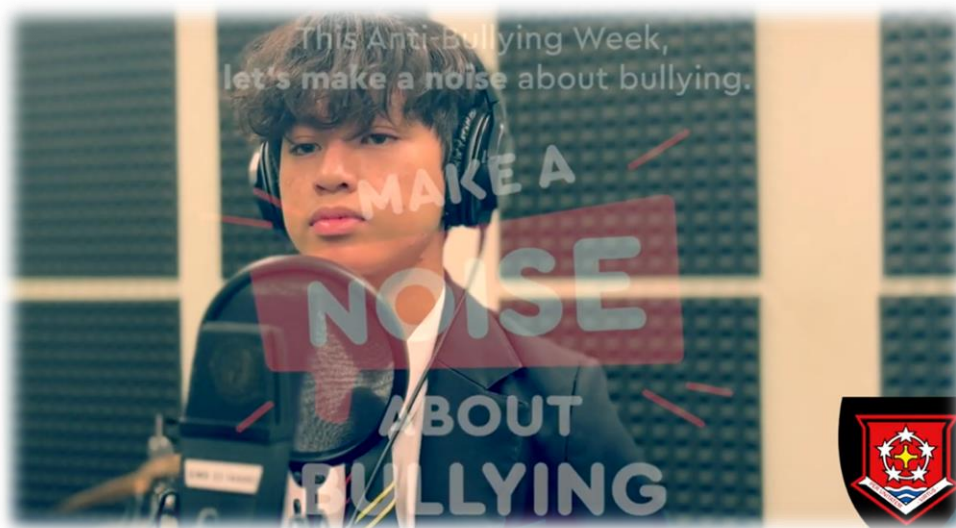
English Martyrs Champions Catholic Social Teaching during Anti-Bullying Week

English Martyrs School passionately embraced the tenets of Catholic Social Teaching during Anti-Bullying Week, fostering a culture of respect and empathy.

Engaging activities underscored the school's commitment to building a community that values the inherent dignity of every individual. From empowering discussions to creative initiatives, students actively lived out the principles of solidarity, justice, and compassion.

English Martyrs' Anti-Bullying Week not only raised awareness but instilled lasting values, embodying the school's dedication to nurturing a safe, inclusive environment where each student is encouraged to thrive and flourish.

The week concluded with James Razon Year 9 performing 'Read All About It' by Emeli Sandé



You can watch this performance by scanning the QR Code:



Sacrament of Confirmation

English Martyrs Celebrates Sacrament of Confirmation with Bishop Stephen



English Martyrs School witnessed a sacred and joyous occasion as staff and students received the Sacrament of Confirmation in a ceremony presided by Bishop Stephen.

The spiritual milestone was marked by a deep sense of reverence and celebration as Bishop Stephen blessed the conformandi, guiding them on their faith journey.

Integral to the significance of this event is English Martyrs' commitment to forging strong parish links. Mr McCartie, joined as a Catechist, strengthening the bond between English Martyrs and the Holy Family Parish.

This collaboration signifies the school's dedication to fostering spiritual growth within the broader community, embodying the values of unity, faith, and shared purpose.

The Sacrament of Confirmation, enriched by Bishop Stephen and the Holy Family Parish, becomes not just a personal milestone but a testament to the school's commitment to building a vibrant and interconnected faith community.

Blessing of the Christmas Tree

English Martyrs Ushers in Advent with Blessing of Christmas Tree



English Martyrs joyfully marked the beginning of Advent with the Blessing of the Christmas Tree, a cherished tradition that fills the school with festive spirit.

Canon Paul led the blessing, imparting a sense of hope and anticipation for the Christmas season.

The adorned tree now stands as a symbol of unity and joy, radiating warmth throughout the school.

English Martyrs extends gratitude to Canon Paul for presiding over this festive occasion, underscoring the school's commitment to celebrating the spirit of Christmas in the company of faith, unity, and shared joy.



Travelling Nativity

English Martyrs Staff Embark on Travelling Nativity to Welcome Christ

The English
Martyrs Staff
Travelling
Nativity 2023

The staff of English Martyrs are spreading joy and anticipation during Advent by partaking in a Travelling Nativity.

Each staff member, in turn, welcomes the Christ child into their homes, fostering a collective spirit of preparation and celebration.

This initiative embodies the school community's commitment to sharing the joy of the season and nurturing a sense of unity during this special time of Advent.



As the Nativity travels among staff, it symbolises the shared anticipation of the birth of Christ, creating a connection that transcends the school walls and touches the hearts of all.

Lord, God of all creation, we gather around our Nativity scene to meditate on the coming of Your Son, the dawn of hope and salvation. Grant that everyone who beholds You in this manger be blessed this Christmas. May it serve as a reminder of the lowly birth of Jesus and inspire us to elevate our hearts to Him, who is God with us and who lives and reigns forever.

Amen

Christmas Liturgy

English Martyrs and Feeder Primary Schools Unite for Joyous Christmas Liturgy

In a spirit of harmony and festive spirit, the community of English Martyrs joined hands with our six feeder primary schools to celebrate a heart-warming Christmas Liturgy at St Joseph's Church.

The liturgy, a tapestry of unity and shared joy, featured a magnificent 100-piece choir and poignant readings from each participating school reflecting on the coming of Jesus.

This collaborative effort not only showcased the musical talents of the combined choir but also highlighted the rich diversity within the school community.

This joint Christmas Liturgy was yet another testament to the wonderful partnership between English Martyrs and its feeder primary schools. It provided a joyous opportunity to come together, celebrate the spirit of Christmas, and strengthen the bonds of community.

As the voices of the choir echoed through St Joseph's Church, and readings resonated with the joy of the season, the event became a vibrant reflection of unity, gratitude, and shared faith within the Holy Family Parish.



A Prayer for Students

Dear Lord,

As our students embark on the Christmas holidays, we gather in prayer, grateful for the gift of this festive season. We seek Your blessings upon each student, may they find joy in the company of loved ones and the warmth of Your divine love.

Lord, during this Christmas break, let the transformative power of the season touch the hearts of our students. Like Mary, who embraced Your divine plan with a resounding "yes," may our students open their hearts to Your transformative power. Just as Mary's acceptance brought forth the greatest gift to humanity, may our students experience the profound changes Your grace can bring.

Grant them moments of reflection and gratitude, and may they carry the spirit of Christmas into their homes, radiating kindness, love, and joy. May they be a source of comfort and inspiration to those around them, echoing the transformative power of Your presence in their lives.

We entrust our students to Your loving care, Lord, and ask for Your guidance as they navigate this Christmas season. May the peace and wonder of Christmas fill their hearts and minds, bringing them closer to You.

Amen

English Martyrs, Pray for us.

