



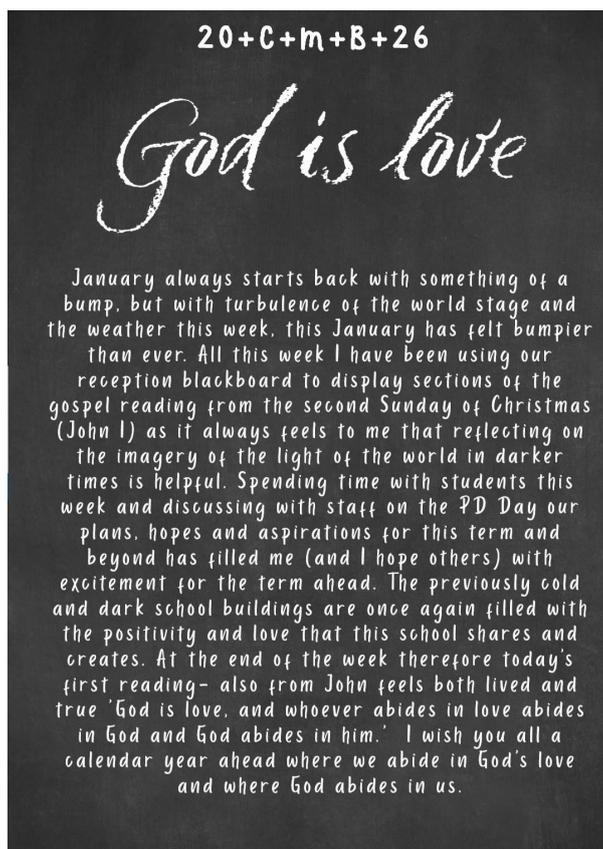
St Benedict's Newsletter 314

9 January 2026



1 - Year 7 summer camp clay models

Chalking the Door



Catholic Social Teaching

As we begin a new year, many people think about New Year's resolutions, promises we make to ourselves about what we might do differently or better as individuals. This week, our focus within Catholic Social Teaching has been **Creation and the Environment**, and our reflections have encouraged us to think more deeply, reminding us that care for our common home is not just an individual responsibility, but something we are called to live out together as a community.

Rather than asking, "What can I change on my own?", we have been invited to reflect more deeply and ask, "What can we do together as a school?" This shared approach reflects the heart of CST, which reminds us that we are strongest when we act in unity, supporting one another and working for the good of all.

The Church teaches that creation is a gift from God, entrusted to our care. How we treat the Earth reflects how we treat one another, especially the poorest and most vulnerable, who are often most affected by environmental damage. Caring for creation is therefore not just about nature, it is about justice, responsibility, and love.

Our assembly this week have been guided by the ideas behind **CAFOD's LiveSimply Award**, which challenges schools and communities to grow in three key areas:

- **Living Simply** – valuing people over possessions and reducing excess
- **Living Sustainably** – caring for the Earth now and for future generations
- **Living in Solidarity** – standing alongside the world’s poorest communities

These principles remind us that meaningful change happens not through quick promises, but through shared commitment and thoughtful action.

As a school community, we know that caring for creation is something we do together, through small, everyday choices.

- **Wisdom:** Understanding that the Earth is God’s gift and that our choices matter. Thinking before we use or throw things away, turning off lights and screens, recycling carefully, and only taking what we need.
- **Compassion:** Recognising that harm to the Earth affects people too, especially the poorest communities. Reducing waste, reusing resources where possible, and taking care of shared spaces so everyone can enjoy them.
- **Resilience:** Sticking with positive changes, even when they take effort. Encouraging one another to keep going with sustainable habits and supporting shared environmental goals as a school.

“The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.”

— Genesis 2:15

From the very beginning, humanity was given a role not of ownership, but of care, to look after creation with responsibility and love.

This week, students have been asked to reflect on how we might move forward together as a school towards the **CAFOD LiveSimply Award**. This means listening to ideas, noticing what we already do well, and identifying small changes that could make a real difference. As we reflect, we can ask: What could we do as a school to live more simply and value people and relationships over possessions? How might we reduce waste and care better for our environment? In what ways could our actions show solidarity with people around the world?

Loving God,

You have entrusted the world to our care

and called us to protect all that you have made.

Help us to live simply,

to act sustainably,

and to stand in solidarity with those most in need.

Guide us as a school community

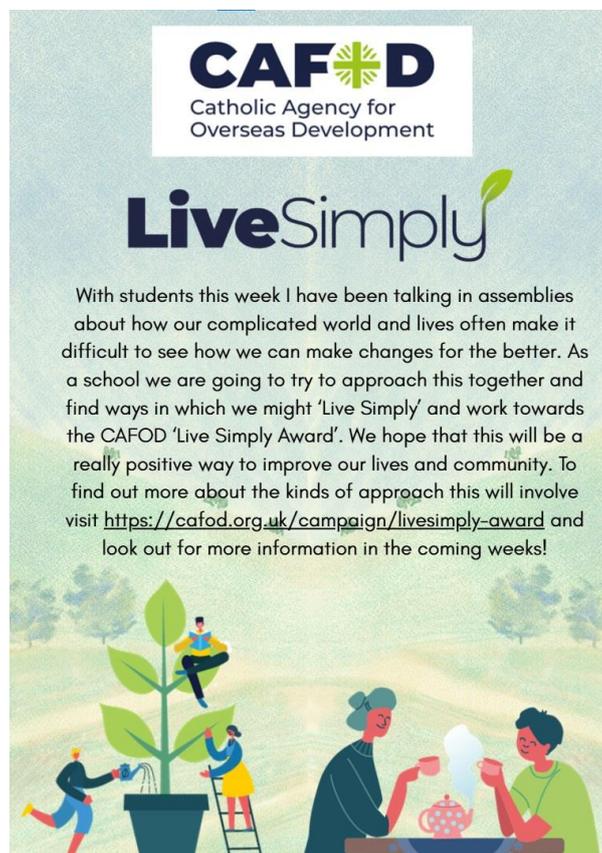
as we seek to care for our common home together.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

If you would like, you can watch the video seen by all students by following the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ky6SCsKyTMw&t=33s> and use it as a starting point to talk about ideas for caring for creation and living simply at home with your family.

Any suggestions students have about how we can move towards the CAFOD LiveSimply Award as they reflect on these questions are warmly encouraged and can be shared with their tutor, SPL, or Mrs Senior. By working together and committing to shared actions, we can begin to grow as a community that truly lives out care for creation and concern for others.



Articulation Prize – St Benedict’s Students on fire at our first Internal Heat event!

Six of our capable year 12 and 13 speakers impressed a panel of judges the week before Christmas at our first internal heat for the National Oracy competition, The Articulation Prize, sponsored by the National Gallery. The students had prepared 10-minute speeches about an

artwork, artefact or piece of architecture of their choice, which they performed for a panel of judges to compete for a place in the regional final.

An audience of friends, family and judges enjoyed an excellent evening of talks and questions, on a wide range of themes varying from the work of Henri Matisse to the Nissan GT-R car , aka “ Godzilla”.

Congratulations go to Amy John in year 13 who was selected as the winning speaker for her outstanding presentation on the sculpture of ‘Augusta of Prima Porta’. Amy will go on as our representative from St Benedict's to compete in the Regional Heat for the prize at the Sainsbury Centre, Norwich in February 2026. Runner up was Toby Flood in Year 12 with an excellent presentation on the painting that captures a moment in time during the French revolution, ‘The Death of Marat’ by Jacques Louis David and Will Digings in Year 12 who received third prize for an engaging and topical speech on the thought provoking installation at the Tate Turbine Hall, ‘Open Wound’ by Mire Lee.

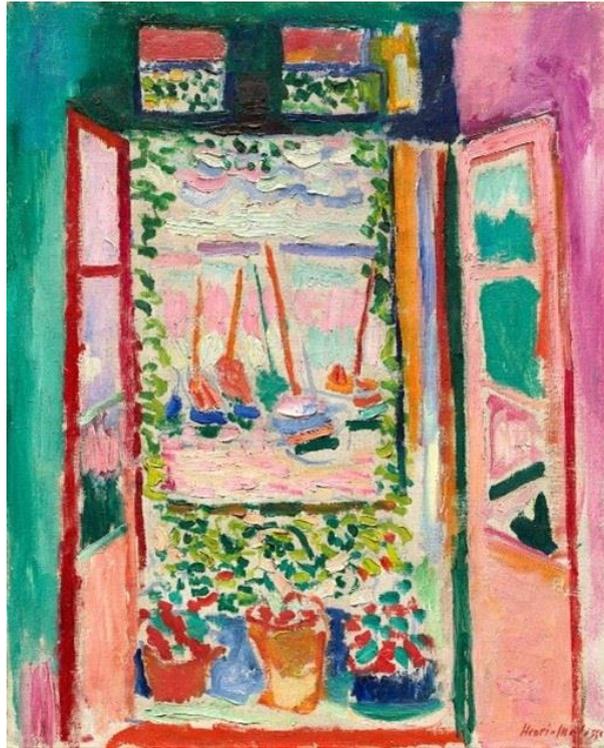
Well done for excellent speeches also from Zuzanna Zabojszcz, Ano Bhauti and Mohamad Ismail in year 13. The judges were highly impressed with your research skills and confident delivery during the evening.

Thank you to our panel of judges and to all the teachers who helped support our speakers in preparation for the event.

Ms Chacksfield



2 - The Death of Marat, Jacques Louis David, 1793



3 - Open Window, Collioure, 1905



4 - Augusta , Prima Porta , 1st century AD



5 - Open Wound, Mire Lee, 2025 Tate Modern Turbine Hall

Year 12 Alumni Meeting

On Wednesday 6 January the year 12s had the opportunity to meet and talk to some Bennies Sixth Form Alumni. There were students who left last year and are just starting out on their university/GAP year journeys all the way through to students who have left university and are in their first jobs. The year 12s had the chance to speak to all the different alumni and get advice on a wide range of topics, such as:

- How to manage their free periods
- Juggling a job and school work
- Managing their finances at university
- Choosing a university
- Revision techniques
- Personal statements
- GAP years
- How to prepare for starting at university

It was great to see the year 12s using the session to find out more about their next steps.

Mrs Slater



New Sixth Form Building

The new sixth form building is now complete and the students have moved in!

The building contains a study room with space for 40 students to work, and a common room with kitchen facilities. The students have enjoyed having more space and a dedicated silent study room to work in.

Mrs Slater



Data Collection Sheet Updates

It is important that the information we hold about your child is kept up-to-date.

Please remember that as a parent/guardian/carer, you can check, amend and update most of your child's information on Arbor, including changing your mobile number and address or adding information such as religion, family contacts, medical information and transport method.

If you are struggling to do this please email Arbor@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk where we will be able to help you.

Thanks

Mrs Defew

Reporting Absences

Reporting your child's absence

If your child is unwell or has an appointment e.g. dentist/doctor could you please leave a message by 9.00am including the reason for the absence via:

Phone: 01284 753512 and Choose option 1:

And then choose option 1 for students in year 7-11 and option 2 for students in the sixth form

OR

Email: attendance@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk

For information on what to do if your child has COVID-like symptoms please see the following link for NHS guidance:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Just a reminder that if you do not inform us by 9.00am or use the above phone/email address, you will receive an email requesting the reason for your child's absence. All unexplained absences will be marked as unauthorised and there will be a follow-up phone call from the Attendance Officer. Please note the school operates a first-day response to absences.

If, in exceptional circumstances, you need to request permission for your child to be absent from school during term time, you should complete a **leave of absence application form (please see link below)**, at least three weeks in advance, stating the reason why the absence must be taken in term time. Please note that the Fixed Penalty Fine is now £80 per legal guardian for unauthorised absences of 10 sessions (5 days) or more.

<https://www.st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=74&type=pdf>

Thank you very much.

Mrs Wesley - Attendance Officer

Dates for your Diary



13 January - Year 11 Parents' Evening

14 January - Year 11 Art and Textiles trip to London

14 January - UCAS Deadline

19 January - Careers Assembly: **Year 10 Next Steps** Hosted by West Suffolk College

19 January - Year 13 Mocks

21 January - Year 11 RE Trip to Norwich

22 January - Year 12 Art Pot Throwing trip

28 January - Year 7 Parents' Evening

5 February - Year 9 Options Evening

12 February - Year 9 Parents' Evening

[Term Dates](#)

Contact Us



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