



St Benedict's Newsletter 324

27 March 2026



## Catholic Social Teaching

As we approach **Easter**, the most important celebration in the Christian calendar, we invite you to reflect deeply on the meaning of this season and what it reveals to us about the nature of love.

This week as we look forward to next week, Holy Week, we journey with Jesus Christ through His passion, death, and resurrection. Beginning with Palm Sunday, moving through the Last Supper on Holy Thursday, the sacrifice of Good Friday, and finally the joy of Easter Sunday, Holy Week reminds us of the depth of God's love for us. At the centre of this journey is a powerful truth: **Jesus willingly went to the cross for us**. This was not a moment of defeat, but an act of complete and self-giving love.

Jesus shows us that true love is not easy or comfortable. It is sacrificial, selfless, and freely given. On the cross, we see the fullness of God's love, a love so powerful and all-encompassing that it holds nothing back. Yet this love does not ignore pain or suffering. Instead, it meets us within it.

Love is not about forgetting the pain or hardships we experience, nor pretending that loss does not hurt. Rather, it is about placing our trust in God, knowing that He walks with us, stands beside us, and journeys with us through those difficult moments. The cross reminds us that even in suffering, we are never alone and that through pain, there is always hope.

Scripture reminds us: "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends." — John 15:13 This is the love that Jesus lived and revealed. He was not overcome by death; rather, through His sacrifice and resurrection, He transformed suffering into hope and showed us the way to live.

Each year, as we follow the Easter story, we are invited to ask: *Who are you, Jesus?*

And in turn, we hear His question to us: "But who do you say that I am?" — Matthew 16:15 These questions invite us into a deeper relationship with Him. They remind us that faith is not just about knowing facts, but about recognising Jesus as the one who loves us completely and calls us to live in that same love.

Pope Leo XIV reflects this call when he reminds us: "In the face of the cross, we do not see defeat, but the fullness of love that calls each of us to live for others." This message lies at the heart of Catholic Social Teaching. If love is at the centre of who Jesus is, then love must also be at the centre of how we live, in the way we treat others, support one another, and build our community.

As we reflect on the love shown through the cross and the hope of the Resurrection, we are called to live this out through:

- **Wisdom:** Recognising the deeper meaning of Easter and understanding that our faith calls us to live with hope and purpose, that true love is shown through actions, not just words, and understanding the example Jesus has given us.
- **Compassion:** Showing kindness, forgiveness, and care to others, especially when it is difficult, reflecting the love Jesus showed.
- **Resilience:** Trusting in the hope of the Resurrection, choosing what is right, even when it is challenging, trusting in the hope and strength that comes from God and continuing to act with courage and faith.

As we enter this holy time, we can reflect: What does Easter mean to me personally? Who is Jesus to me? How do I see His love in my life, especially in difficult times? In what ways can I show that same selfless love to others? And in what ways can I live out the message of new life in my actions?

Easter reminds us that no situation is beyond hope, that love is stronger than anything we face. Even in moments of struggle or loss, we are reminded that God walks with us, and that through the cross, there is always hope. Through small acts of kindness, forgiveness, and care, we can bring the light of the Resurrection into our school and community.

### **Loving God,**

We thank you for the gift of Easter  
and the hope we receive through the resurrection of your Son.

Help us to walk with Jesus through Holy Week  
and to understand the depth of His love for us.

Fill our hearts with hope and new life,  
so that we may share your love with others.

Be with us in times of joy and in times of difficulty,  
reminding us that we are never alone.

Teach us to trust in you  
and to find hope even in moments of pain.

Give us wisdom to see your presence in our lives,  
compassion to care for those around us,  
and resilience to trust in your promises.

May we live as people of the Resurrection,

bringing light, hope, and love into the world.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

## Careers Update

As another term comes to a close, fresh opportunities are springing up to expand the Careers horizons of our students and introduce them to a myriad of new pathways. I listened to a podcast recently about *Designing Your Life* (with Stanford professors Bill Burnett and Dave Evans) and one of the key points it mentioned was trying out new things. So, here are a few new things on offer over the Easter break and beyond for your child(ren) to try out!

### Student Opportunities

#### Years 10 & 11

Suffolk New College (SNC) in Ipswich are hosting the following series of 'In a Day' workshops.

You can apply via the links below:

#### **Game in a Day '3D Game': 31st March/ 10.30am to 4pm**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/snc-game-in-a-day-3d-game-tickets-1984871693667?aff=oddtcreator>

#### **Game in a Day '2D Platformer': 7th April/ 10.30am to 4pm**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/snc-game-in-a-day-2d-platformer-tickets-1984871427872?aff=oddtcreator>

#### **Character Design in a Day: 7th April/ 10.30am to 4pm**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/snc-character-design-in-a-day-tickets-1984871623457?aff=oddtcreator>

#### **Animation (2D/3D) in a Day: 8th April/ 10.30am to 4pm**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/snc-animation-2d3d-in-a-day-tickets-1984870874216?aff=oddtcreator>

**UCAT Support with "Get Into" Conferences** (students aged 14+ yrs)

#### **Get Into Medicine Conference: 28 March or 19th April/ 9am to 1.30pm**

Register at: [Get Into Medicine Conference Sign Up - Medic Mentor](#)

#### **Get Into Dentistry Conference: 12th April/ 9am to 1:30pm**

Register at: [Get Into Dentistry Conference Sign Up – Dental Mentor](#)

## Year 13

### PwC Flying Start Business Management - 31st March 5-6pm

For Y13 students interested in a Business Management Degree after Sixth Form. This event will provide information about this opportunity and time to ask questions about a career at PwC.

**Apply at:** [PwC: Flying Start Business Management Survey](#)

*Ms Hahn*

## Articulation Prize – Grand Final



We had an eventful trip to the National Gallery on Tuesday 24 March when we took a group of 11 Year 10 Art and Classics GCSE students to support Amy John from year 13, speaking at the Grand Final of the National Gallery's Articulation prize competition.

Amy represented the school with flair and confidence, presenting her speech on Augusta of Prima Porta with eloquence and authority in front of an audience of over 200 people in the Sainsbury Theatre auditorium at the National. She was competing against 9 other students from across the country, who spoke on topics such as Artemisia Gentileschi's painting 'Judith Slaying Holofernes', Hannah Hoch's photomontage "Mutter" and Giuseppe Penone's installation piece's exploring climate change and our relationship with nature. Although not a winner this time, she did an outstanding job and we congratulate her for her resilience and wisdom.

As a result of competing in the competition, Amy goes on to join the National Gallery's Alumni network which will give her the chance to participate in national events at Art Venues and Museums, a great opportunity for the future.

The year 10s we took on the trip were certainly inspired by the day and we all benefitted from the tours and talks which we were lucky to enjoy during the event, taking in Whistle Jacket by Stubbs and paintings by Elizabeth Vigee Le Brun.

Thank you, Ms James, Mrs Senior and Mrs Hamilton, for all your support of this project in school this year and congratulations again to Amy for putting our school on the map for History of Art at a National Level!

*Ms Chacksfield*

Head of Art and Design





## St Benedict's Reading Challenge

As part of our recent celebrations for Reading Week, we launched a new reading challenge for each year group. We have selected 8 books per year group and students have been challenged to read 4 out of the 8 by the end of the school year.

Even though the challenge was only set less than four weeks ago, the following students have already completed it! Congratulations go to:

- Clara Needham 8C
- Ishaan Jeby 7A
- Chloe Schorer-Nixon 7L

If students would like to take up the challenge, they should visit the library for more information and to collect their bookmark.

*Mrs Oakes*

## UCAS Discovery Event

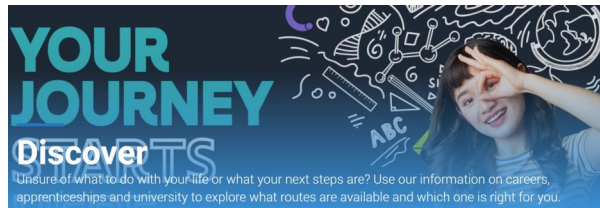
On Tuesday 24 March, our entire cohort of Year 12 students were taken to the ExCeL exhibition centre for UCAS Discovery London 2026. This is the largest of the annual UCAS Discovery events held across the UK and this year involved over 170 universities and training organisations in support of thousands of Year 12 students exploring their post-18 options.

It was great to see our students engaging with the providers, asking questions about course requirements, accommodation, student life and finance, as well as collecting a huge quantity of tote bags and sunglasses!

Amongst the facts discovered at the event was that Newcastle Medical School doesn't request any specific A Levels for medicine and many courses follow the same modules in year 1 with the chance to select specialist modules in years 2 and 3, this enables students to make a more informed decision about what they want to specialise in.

The next step for our students will be to identify their preferred options and book onto university Open Days to gain a first-hand experience of their potential future learning environments.


*The Sixth Form Team*



## Chapel of St Francis of Assisi

### Chapel of St Francis of Assisi

“All the darkness in the world cannot extinguish the light of a single candle.”




Feast 4th October

Following consultation with the school community we have decided to dedicate our chapel to Saint Francis of Assisi. St Francis lived in Assisi and grew up in a wealthy family. He rejected the life his parents had chosen for him and as a result his father imprisoned him in a cell. St Francis, on gaining his freedom renounced his father's money and expectations and decided his life to God.

In prayer before the crucifix God told St Francis to 'rebuild my Church'. After this St Francis earned a reputation for his hard work and preaching as he embraced a life of poverty. He started wearing a coarse wool tunic with a knotted rope as a belt. Others began to follow him and the order of Franciscan friars was established, wearing the same distinctive robes.

St Francis cared deeply about the natural world and believed nature was the mirror of God. He considered all creatures and creation to be his brothers and sisters. For this reason he is the patron of ecology, animals and peace as well as those experiencing poverty. 2026 is the Jubilee year of St Francis which marks 800 years since his death.



Despite this passage of time, St Francis' words, witness and example can and should serve as an inspiration for our students in our own time to turn towards God in all things.

## St Benedict's Runners Shine at National Cross Country Championships

On Saturday 14 March, three of our talented athletes headed to Sefton Park in Liverpool to represent Suffolk at the prestigious English Schools Cross Country Championships.

It was an unforgettable weekend for the trio, beginning with a team trip to Liverpool on Friday for an overnight stay with their Suffolk teammates. Reaching this level is a massive accomplishment in itself; all three girls earned their places after a gruelling qualification

process through the Suffolk Schools rounds at RHS and Woodbridge, followed by the Anglian Championships in Northamptonshire.

Molly and Lucy Murphy kicked off the day in the Intermediate Girls race. Both students delivered powerful performances in a highly competitive field, finishing in 240th and 307th place respectively. Their determination was key to helping the Suffolk team secure an impressive 29th place finish overall.

Shortly after, Sophie Bolton took to the course for the Junior Girls race. She executed a perfect tactical plan—starting conservatively before surging through the field. Her incredible drive saw her cross the line in 31st position, propelling the Suffolk Junior Girls to a fantastic 5th place overall.

It was a brilliant day for the county across the board, with the Suffolk Senior Boys taking the gold and the Junior Boys finishing second. Congratulations to our three runners for representing St Benedict's with such pride and athletic excellence on the national stage!

The following weekend, the trio of athletes won Gold medals in the U17 Girls Suffolk Road Relays Championships in Colchester for their club, St Edmund Pacers (although it was in effect a St Benedict's team – with Sophie Bolton running up an age group).

*Mr Murphy*



## Primary Liaison News – The Science Roadshow Goes To St Edmund's Catholic Primary School

On Wednesday (25th March), Ms Mak and Mr Gregory took the Science Department's roadshow to St Edmund's Primary and spent the morning with their Year 5s in the splendid setting of the Crypt of the Bury St Edmunds Catholic Church. The theme of the morning was "**Galileo, Newton and Gravity**" and was divided into two sessions either side of break.

The first session began with a biography of the great Italian scientist and polymath, Galileo Galilei, that focussed on his work understanding how falling objects were influenced by the Earth's gravity. Born in Pisa, Italy, Galileo is forever associated with the Leaning Tower there. To test Aristotle's assertion that objects of different masses will fall at different rates, Galileo is often described as having dropped cannon balls of different sizes and masses from the top of the Leaning Tower to prove that they actually fell at the same rate, no matter what their mass. Here's the spoiler, though: Galileo certainly carried out this experiment of dropping masses from height, but there is no hard evidence that he actually did it from the Leaning Tower. Sorry!

The students carried out two activities – the first where they dropped, at the same time, a ball and a feather. The ball hit the ground before the feather, which seemed to go against Galileo's findings. The students then dropped two identical plastic bottles, one empty and the other half-full of water, so clearly with different masses. Lo and behold, they fell at the same rate. The students were then tasked with discussing their results and coming up with an explanation for the apparent discrepancy between the two experiments. This they did with excellent understanding. To demonstrate exactly what was going on, the students were then shown a film clip of an Apollo astronaut on the Moon, in 1971, dropping a hammer and a feather which landed absolutely together. Also, a more recent piece of film featuring Professor Brian Cox in the world's largest vacuum chamber dropping a huge ball and a bunch of ostrich feathers. Yes, you've guessed it – it's all to do with air resistance!

The second session was dedicated to one of our own great scientists, Sir Isaac Newton. The students learned about his birthplace, Woolsthorpe Manor in Lincolnshire, and his interest in gravity. He went further than Galileo and formed an understanding of how gravity not only affects objects here on Earth, but also the entire Universe. His '*Universal Law of Gravitation*', a beautifully simple mathematical concept, is still used today in astronomy and astronomical science. But here's another spoiler: although there is a prominent apple tree in Newton's garden and, so the story goes, he was sitting underneath it one day when an apple fell on his head so giving him his idea of gravity. However, nowhere in any of Newton's notes and papers did he record this incident. Sorry!

For their final activity, the students combined the knowledge of gravity with Newton's 3 Laws of Motion to overcome gravity and launch a rocket. Well, not a real rocket, but a plastic film canister powered by an Alka-Seltzer tablet. A resounding end to a thoroughly

entertaining and educational morning made more so by the keen participation of the young scientists and their thoughtful and intelligent questions and comments.

The roadshow team look forward to their next visit in July, when we'll all be going to Mars!

*Mr Gregory*



## Important Science News - The Earth is about to experience a rare *gravitational flux* event

At exactly **19:43 ON THE EVENING OF APRIL 1**, the Earth will form an alignment in the Solar System with the Sun, Moon, Mars, Saturn and Neptune. Most importantly, though, will be the position of Jupiter almost perpendicular to this alignment.

The combined gravitational interaction will give rise to a phenomenon on Earth that only occurs every 1 million years or so – **A GRAVITATIONAL FLUX EVENT**.

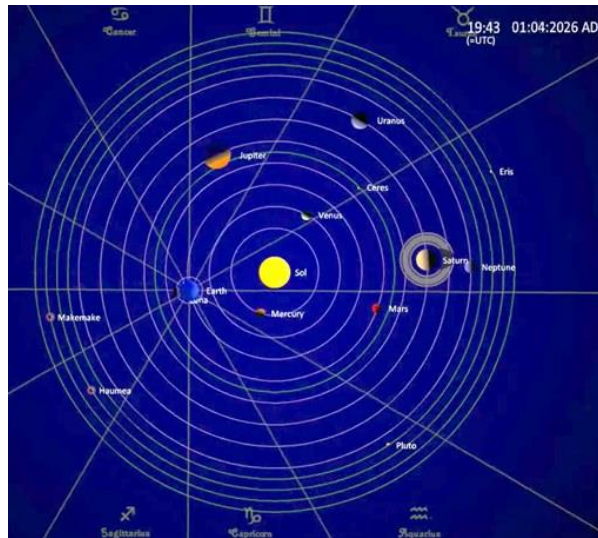
This will cause a **decrease of the Earth's gravitational pull by as much as 20%**, but only for an instant.

The best advice is to avoid all means of transportation, especially flight as the brief negative gravitational effect may result in the aircraft actually flying off into space. Even ground transportation is not advised: bicycles, cars and trains are not designed to momentarily take to the air. Even a gentle walk will not spare you, as when you take a step you may find yourself inexplicably floating about a foot off the ground!

Sit still in a comfy chair and at the allotted time you might just feel a fleeting sensation of lightness.

If you do experience this unique event, please report it to:

[jgregory@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk](mailto:jgregory@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk)



## Resurfacing the Klondyke

St Benedict's wishes to congratulate the residents of Klondyke cottages, and we encourage any of our parents who send their children to school via the Klondyke to consider supporting their appeal to cover the £17,000 bill to resurface the unadopted road that runs between our school and County Upper School.

The residents have committed to paying the final bill, but they have asked for support from the local community to help reduce the burden, Nick who is managing the appeal has created [a gofundme page](#) to make it easier to support the project, here's what he says about the challenge:

Do you walk, cycle, scoot, or drive along the Klondyke? Then you'll know... it's muddy. Very muddy. Boot-swallowing, bike-skidding, pushchair-wrestling muddy.

Why are we fundraising?

The Klondyke is an unadopted road, which means it isn't maintained by the council. The 17 households who live here are coming together to fund a full resurfacing over Easter — so it's safer, cleaner, and usable all year round.

Total cost: £17,000+This is a huge ask for residents alone — so we're reaching out to the wider community who use the road regularly:

Dog walkers

Cyclists School-run families

Runners & walkers

How you can help

If you use the Klondyke — even occasionally — any contribution, big or small, would make a real difference.

Think of it as:

Fewer muddy paws & trainers

Safer cycling and running

Easier school runs

A better shared space for everyone

❤️ Every pound helps

This is a community effort and we'd be incredibly grateful for your support.

Thank you for helping us turn mud into something much more usable — The residents of the Klondyke

If this road has ruined your trainers... this is your moment

Fewer muddy paws = happier walks

Even £2 helps make this road usable again: [Resurfacing the Klondyke](#)

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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



27 March - Break up for Easter

13 April - Start of summer term

11 May - Public Exams Start

[Term Dates](#)

## Contact Us



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