

# THE ABI UPDATE

ISSUE 16 FRIDAY 27TH JUNE 2025

## MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER - MR CLINTON

It is hard to believe this is our penultimate issue of the ABI Update for this academic year. It has just gone so fast! The mood at school is one of reflection and poignancy and we say goodbye to some much loved pupils and students. On Wednesday evening, I had the pleasure of attending the Year 11 Prom along with around 60 committed staff. The bond and commitment I see between pupils and staff at Archbishop Ilsley is like no other. It was a lovely evening. Pupils were of course impeccably behaved. It was a night of celebration and Riah and Wilkins were our Prom Queen and King. We look forward next week to similar poignancy at the Year 13 farewell meal.

As you know personal development and our expansive extra curricular programme is a hugely important aspect of our curriculum offer at Archbishop Ilsley. As well as exciting sports day today at Norman Green, we've had pupils out camping and orienteering on Duke of Edinburgh, Geography field trips to Dorset and Cardin Mill, the Year 12 'Step Up' Days, Culture Day, Refugee Week, the Big Bang Science Fair and the Global Links team will be spending the weekend in Kathmandu!

We look forward to telling Year 6 all about this vibrancy on Wednesday when we welcome them on their Induction Day. We can't wait to see you!

## KEY DATES

- Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July - Year 6 Transition Day
- Monday 7<sup>th</sup> - Friday 11<sup>th</sup> July - Normandy Residential Years 7-9
- Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July - HPV Vaccinations Year 8
- Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July - Year 9 DT Day 1
- Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July - Year 9 DT Day 2
- Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> - Friday 18<sup>th</sup> July - Berlin Residential; Silver DofE



# CATHOLIC LIFE

## GOSPEL REFLECTION: MATTHEW 16:13-19

You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church.

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi he put this question to his disciples, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say he is John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' 'But you,' he said 'who do you say I am?'

Then Simon Peter spoke up, 'You are the Christ,' he said 'the Son of the living God.' Jesus replied, 'Simon son of Jonah, you are a happy man!

Because it was not flesh and blood that revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. So I now say to you: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church.

And the gates of the underworld can never hold out against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.'

### How is this relevant today?

Matthew 16:13-19 is a pivotal passage in the Gospels, highlighting Peter's confession of Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God, and Jesus' declaration that he will build his church on this confession. This passage establishes the foundation of the Church and the authority given to its leaders.

The passage begins with Jesus asking his disciples who people say he is, and then he specifically asks them who they say he is. Peter declares that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This confession is not just Peter's personal belief, but a divinely revealed truth that becomes the foundation of the Church.

Jesus declares that on this rock (Peter's confession or the truth revealed to him) he will build his church. This is the first mention of the word "church" in the Bible, marking it as a foundational text for understanding the nature and purpose of the Church. The church is built on the understanding that Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God.

Jesus gives Peter "the keys of the kingdom of heaven," and the power to "bind and loose" on earth, actions that will be validated in heaven. This is often interpreted as authority given to the Church's leaders to make decisions about doctrine and practice, with those decisions having spiritual consequences.

The passage remains relevant because it speaks to the core of Christian faith: recognising Jesus as the Messiah and understanding the role of the Church as the body of believers built on that confession. It also raises questions about the nature of authority within the Church and the relationship between earthly and heavenly authority.

While Peter's name is connected to the "rock" on which the church is built, the passage is not about Peter's personal authority or superiority over other believers. It's about the truth of who Jesus is and the foundation of faith in Him. This passage marks a significant turning point in the Gospel of Matthew, as Jesus begins to reveal more explicitly his identity and the nature of his mission. The passage does highlight Peter's special role in leading and guiding others in faith; he was entrusted with great responsibility by God.

In tutor time this week, pupils have been encouraged to think about why Jesus chose Peter; what it means to be trusted with responsibility, like Peter was? Pupils have also explored how they too can show leadership today by caring for people and the planet.



# CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING FOCUS: REFUGEE WEEK AND STEWARDSHIP

This half term at Archbishop Ilsey, our Catholic Social Teaching (CST) focus has been Stewardship—the responsibility we all share to care for God’s creation and protect the dignity of all people, especially the most vulnerable.

Pupils have been actively living out this call to stewardship through a number of meaningful initiatives. As part of our commitment to the CAFOD LiveSimply Award, pupils have taken part in litter picking both within school grounds and in the local community, demonstrating a shared sense of responsibility for the environment and pride in the spaces we inhabit.

Across the curriculum, pupils have been exploring global issues that affect our common home. Lessons have focused on topics such as the water crisis, food waste, plastic pollution, and the devastating impact of climate change on the world’s poorest communities. These lessons have prompted deep reflection and thoughtful discussion, helping our young people to better understand the injustices many face and how they can be part of the solution.

In celebration of Refugee Week, every subject department contributed to raising awareness and promoting compassion for refugees and asylum seekers. Pupils wrote heartfelt poems and prayers, created beautiful artwork inspired by stories of displacement, explored the journeys of historical refugee role models, and analysed relevant data and statistics in mathematics. This cross-curricular approach brought the issues to life in a way that was both creative and thought-provoking.

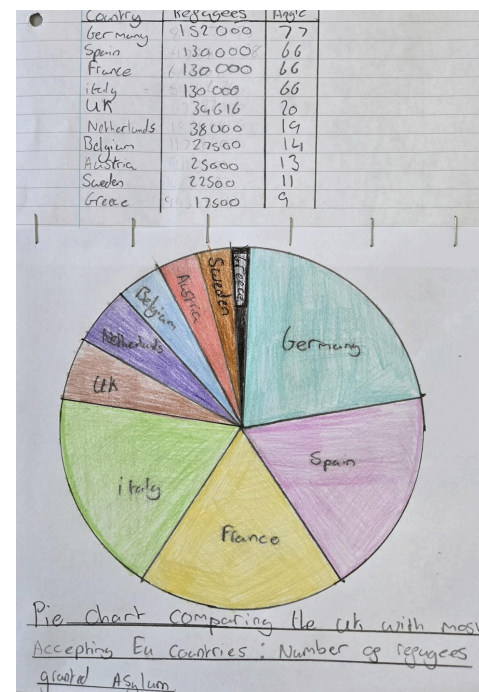
The week culminated in our vibrant Culture Day, a celebration of the rich diversity that makes Archbishop Ilsey such a special and inclusive community. Pupils wore traditional cultural clothing, flags, and colours that reflected their heritage with pride and joy. It was a powerful reminder of the unity that can be found in diversity and the strength of a community that welcomes and values all.

Through this term’s focus, our pupils have not only deepened their understanding of Catholic Social Teaching but have also shown that they are capable of leading with compassion, integrity, and hope.



leaving:

- leaving my home land feels like tearing my soul apart.
- like abandoning a piece of my beating heart.
- Every street whispers my name
- Every corner holds a memory and a flame
- The Scent of the earth clings to my skin.
- A reminder of where my story begins.
- But now I walked away, carrying pain
- A suitcase of dreams soaked in rain.
- How do you leave a place that made you whole?
- How do you silence the cries of your soul?
- I go with tears, with love that won't fade
- Leaving behind the life that home made.



## PASTORAL UPDATE - MRS BURNHAM



At Archbishop Ilsey we are committed to creating a calm, respectful, and focused learning environment where every child feels safe, valued and ready to learn. Over the past term, we have continued to reinforce the high standards of behaviour that allow all pupils to thrive both academically and personally.

We want to thank parents and carers for your ongoing support in upholding our school values. Working together is key to ensuring consistency, and we are proud of the many pupils who demonstrate outstanding behaviour and positive attitudes every day.

Our expectations are simple but essential:

- Be Ready – equipped for learning and on time to every lesson.
- Be Respectful and Kind– towards staff, peers and our school environment.
- Be Safe – making choices that keep everyone in our community safe.

We continue to recognise and celebrate positive behaviour through our rewards system, praise postcards, assemblies, and certificates. At the same time, we remain firm in addressing behaviours that fall below expectations, using restorative conversations, support strategies and where necessary, sanctions.

A key focus this half-term is punctuality—arriving to school and to lessons on time, every day. Being punctual sets the tone for learning and maximises every minute of classroom time.

If you have any questions or would like support with routines or expectations at home, please don't hesitate to get in touch with your child's Head of Year or a member of the pastoral team.

Thank you for helping us maintain high standards across our school community.

### YEAR 7 - MRS WAFI

## HEAD OF YEAR UPDATES

Welcome back to the final half term of this academic year. As we move into the warmer months, please remind your child to bring a water bottle to school every day to stay well hydrated. It's important for their health and concentration. Although the weather is getting warmer, blazers remain a compulsory part of the school uniform and must be brought to school daily. On particularly hot days, pupils are allowed to carry their blazers in their bags for comfort, but they should always have them with them.



As we begin this last half term, it's a great time to reflect on the importance of perseverance and kindness, values that guide us both in school and in life. The Bible reminds us in Galatians 6:9: "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." This verse encourages us all to keep going, stay positive and support one another as we finish the year strong.

Let's make the most of these weeks ahead with determination and compassion.

Welcome back, everyone!

I hope you all had a restful and enjoyable half-term break. Whether you spent time catching up with friends, enjoying quality moments with your family, traveling, or simply taking a well-deserved pause to relax, I trust the break gave you a chance to recharge and make some lasting memories.



As we return, let's carry that refreshed energy into the new term ahead. I'm looking forward to all the learning, growth, and achievements we'll share together in the coming weeks. Let's make it a great start! In our assemblies, we take time to celebrate and recognise the achievements of our pupils throughout the year. We acknowledge individual pupils who have demonstrated exceptional effort, progress, or excellence in their studies and personal development. Additionally, we highlight and applaud the forms with the best overall attendance, as well as those that have shown the most significant improvement in attendance. These celebrations are a way of reinforcing the importance of commitment, perseverance and teamwork and they help to create a positive, motivating atmosphere within our school community.

We hope everyone had a joyful and meaningful time celebrating Eid – a time filled with prayer, reflection, and togetherness. Eid is not only a time of celebration, but also a moment to remember important values: Gratitude for the blessings in our lives; Compassion for those in need; Unity with family, friends, and neighbours; Peace and forgiveness, both in our hearts and in our relationships.

As we find ourselves just a few weeks away from breaking up for the summer holidays, it's easy to start thinking ahead to rest, fun, and freedom – and rightly so! After a long and busy year, the break is something to look forward to. But these final weeks are just as important as the rest. They are a chance to finish strong, reflect on all we've achieved and show that we can stay focused and responsible right to the end. This is the time to; stay committed to our goals – whether it's exams, finishing projects, or simply showing kindness and respect to others; use time wisely, making room for both hard work and rest; make thoughtful choices, not just what feels easy in the moment, but what helps us grow into the best version of ourselves; support each other – helping our friends, classmates and teachers end the year on a positive note.

Remember, how we finish something is just as important as how we began it. These last few weeks are an opportunity to show maturity, gratitude, and perseverance.

## YEAR 9 - MR BRUTON

This term has been packed with exciting opportunities for our Year 9 pupils, both inside and outside the classroom! One highlight was a visit to the Black Country Living Museum, where pupils experienced what life was like during the Industrial Revolution. From old-fashioned sweet shops to coal mines, it was an engaging way to deepen their understanding of Britain's industrial past.



In addition, a group of pupils completed the Envision programme, which focuses on youth leadership and making a positive impact in the community. Their hard work, teamwork, and creative ideas made a real difference and we are incredibly proud of their commitment to social action.

Meanwhile, other pupils headed out to the Jurassic Coast in Dorset, where they explored this stunning World Heritage Site as part of a geography-focused field trip. They learned about coastal erosion, rock formations and the rich fossil history of the area, all while enjoying the beauty of the outdoors.

We also had a fantastic turnout for the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award, with almost 70 pupils taking part in expeditions across four days. They developed key life skills, including navigation, map reading, campcraft and teamwork. Their resilience and enthusiasm were inspiring! A huge thank you to all the staff who organised and supported these trips and activities. Your dedication has made it possible for so many pupils to enjoy valuable learning experiences beyond the classroom.

To top it all off, we celebrated our annual Sports Day today! It was a brilliant display of teamwork, determination, and house spirit. Well done to everyone who took part—you made the day a memorable one.

Well done to all of Year 9 for a brilliant start to the last half term of the year— we look forward to what next year brings and the start of GCSE courses!



As we approach the final few weeks of the academic year, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on what has been an incredibly busy and impressive half term for our Year 10 pupils.

Firstly, I would like to say how proud I am of the way our pupils approached their recent mock exams. Their maturity, focus and positive attitude were clear to see throughout the exam period. Sitting mock exams can be a daunting experience, but Year 10 rose to the challenge brilliantly, treating the process with the seriousness it deserves. These exams are an important stepping stone in preparing them for their final GCSEs next year, and I hope the experience has helped them understand what they are capable of when they put their minds to it.

Shortly after mocks, many pupils embarked on their work experience placements — another huge milestone in their Year 10 journey. I have had the pleasure of speaking with numerous companies and organisations who generously hosted our pupils and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Many employers commented on how polite, enthusiastic and hardworking our pupils were, and how well they represented the school. It has been heartening to hear stories of pupils stepping out of their comfort zones, learning new skills and gaining insight into the realities of working life. For many, this experience has opened their eyes to future career paths they might not have considered before.

A sincere and heartfelt thank you must go to Mr Meredith, who has worked tirelessly behind the scenes to organise and oversee the entire work experience programme. His commitment, organisation and ongoing support made it all possible, and we are incredibly grateful for the time and care he has dedicated to ensuring every pupil had a meaningful placement.

Another exciting opportunity coming up for some of our students is the Silver Duke of Edinburgh expedition. The group have been working hard to prepare for the physical and mental challenges of the upcoming trip, and there is a real sense of excitement building among them. Taking part in DofE is a brilliant way for students to develop resilience, teamwork and independence — qualities that will benefit them far beyond school life. We are incredibly proud of all those who are involved and wish them the best of luck as they take on this rewarding adventure.

With just three weeks to go until the summer holidays, we are encouraging all pupils to maintain their focus and continue giving their best in lessons. This is a valuable time to consolidate learning, complete key coursework, and reflect on the year so far. It's also a time to build momentum heading into Year 11 — a year that will bring challenge, growth and opportunity in equal measure.

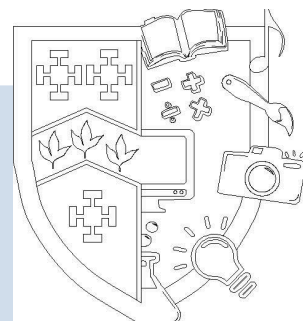
As always, thank you for your continued support from home. The partnership between school and families plays such a vital role in the success of our students, and it has been wonderful to see so many of our pupils flourish this term.

Let's make these final three weeks a positive and purposeful end to what has already been a fantastic year.

## Year 10 and Year 12 Work Experience Week Underway

This week, our Year 10 and Year 12 students are taking part in their work experience programme, running from Monday 23rd to Friday 27th June. Pupils and students have been placed with a wide range of employers across various industries, gaining valuable insight into the world of work and developing essential life skills. For those without a physical placement, virtual work experience is being undertaken from home, offering a flexible alternative that still provides meaningful engagement and certification.

We would like to extend our thanks to all the businesses, organisations, and community members who have generously offered placements or supported the virtual programme. Your involvement plays a vital role in helping our students prepare for their futures. We look forward to hearing all about their experiences when they return next week.





This will be the final edition for Year 11. Firstly, thank you to every single member of Year 11, for being so wonderful over the past two years. It has been an honour to be your head of Year. I know all of you will continue to be successful in whatever you choose to do. Thank you for being so exemplary throughout your exams and really showing other years how it is done! It has been a pleasure to see you develop, mature and grow into the young adults you are today. I am so sad to see you leave but so excited for you and can't wait to see what lies ahead in your bright futures!

I will see you on Results Day on Thursday 21st August; school will be open from 9am for you to collect your results from the main hall. This is also Sixth Form Enrolment day.

I hope you have an amazing summer, it will be the best (and longest) summer of your life. Enjoy!

On Wednesday night we had Prom, what a night it was! Everyone looked amazing and we danced the night away. Thank you to all of the wonderful Archbishop Ilsey staff who came along to wish everyone a farewell. It was a night to remember!

Finally, thank you to all Year 11 parents/guardians for your support. You have always ensured your child is prepared and encouraged them to seize all opportunities. Thank you for the support you have given me in my journey with them over the past two years. I wish you all good health and happiness in the future.

For the final time.....  
Thank you

**Class of 2025**



## A Fortnight of Growth, Adventure and Opportunity

The past two weeks have been nothing short of extraordinary for our Year 12 students, with an incredible range of experiences both at home and abroad. From international adventures to academic milestones and future planning, it's been a period of growth, discovery and achievement.

### Mock Exams – Rising to the Challenge

All of our Year 12 students have now taken their mock exams, a critical step in preparing for those final examinations in Year 13. We were thoroughly impressed by their focus, maturity and dedication. Teachers are now completing marking and entering data for the end of year reports which will be with parents and carers in the coming week. Feedback suggests that our students have taken this opportunity seriously to refine their knowledge and exam technique.

### Global Expeditions – Peru and Nepal

Over the last month 28 Year 12 students have experienced trips of a lifetime. Two separate groups of students journeyed overseas for a two-week expedition—one to Peru, the other to Nepal. In Peru, students taught in a school, trekked through the Andes, explored the Sacred Valley and visited Machu Picchu, gaining firsthand insight into South American culture, history and ecology. Meanwhile, the Nepal team experienced the beauty and resilience of Himalayan communities, contributed to service projects and took in the breathtaking landscapes of the Annapurna region. Both groups will now hold unforgettable memories and a deeper global perspective.



## Year 13

With the external examinations now firmly behind us, we can turn our attention to their final celebration with us. The Year 13 Celebration Dinner takes place on Thursday 3rd July at The Village Hotel, The Green Business Park, Dog Kennel Lane, Shirley, Solihull B90 4JG.

Students may arrive from 7:00pm. The evening ends at 11pm. It promises to be a lovely evening with staff and students enjoying a sit down buffet, speeches, dancing and a photo booth to celebrate their time with us. Tickets should now have been purchased from Mrs O'Neill.

A reminder that students will need to make their own travel arrangements to and from the venue. We are very much looking forward to seeing everyone there!

Finally, Results Day is on Thursday 14th August. A Level and Level 3 results are available from 9:00am. We look forward to some very positive results!

### Work Experience Week – A Taste of the Future

Back in the UK, Year 12 students have this week taken part in Work Experience Week, exploring future career paths in industries ranging from healthcare and education to media and engineering. Feedback from employers has been overwhelmingly positive, with many commenting on the professionalism and enthusiasm of our students. This hands-on learning has provided invaluable insight and helped many students begin to clarify their post-18 plans.

### UCAS Discovery Conference – Planning Ahead

To top it all off, students attended the UCAS Discovery Conference on Monday 23rd June. Here our students engaged with universities, apprenticeships, and employers from across the country. From attending seminars to asking questions at university stalls, students came away inspired and better informed as they begin shaping their futures beyond Year 13.

### Year 11 into 12 Step Up Days – A Taste of What's to Come

This Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> and Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> June, we were delighted to welcome our Year 11 pupils –and some new faces– to our Step Up to Sixth Form transition days. These days offered pupils a first-hand experience of what life in Year 12 will look like and the energy, curiosity and enthusiasm they brought was truly inspiring.

### Subject Masterclasses – Learning at a New Level

Pupils attended a series of subject masterclasses on Monday, designed to give a real taste of A Level and Level 3 learning. From exploring complex equations in Maths to engaging in thought-provoking debates in Politics and analysing literary texts with fresh eyes in English, the sessions gave pupils the opportunity to deepen their knowledge and discover new interests. Many left feeling both challenged and excited about the academic journey ahead.

In order to ensure that pupils are ready to learn in September, they have been given a series of 'Step Up' tasks which seek to 'bridge' the gap between KS4 and KS5 and give pupils a head start. Subject teachers have constructed a range of tasks for pupils to complete to introduce them to A level/Level 3 study. Tasks will include researching A level topics and engaging with subject content that they will cover in their Sixth Form studies. There is a Step Up Task sheet for each subject area. Pupils are expected to complete one line of three task boxes on each sheet; they must complete the middle box. Pupils should bring work in for their teachers to look at in the second week of Year 12. Deadlines will be given in September. Should you wish to see these task sheets or find out any other information concerning Sixth Form please use the following link to our school website:  
<https://www.ilsley.bham.sch.uk/sixth-form/>

### Beyond the Classroom – Enrichment and Opportunity

Throughout Tuesday, pupils also had the chance to explore the incredible breadth of enrichment opportunities available in Sixth Form. Whether it's joining the Student Leadership Team, taking part in Duke of Edinburgh, Global Links or participating in trips to Lourdes, Soli House or university open days –there truly is something for everyone.

Pupils really engaged in the two days and we thank them for their very positive feedback. We now look forward to Results Day and Sixth Form Enrolment on Thursday August 21st.