

CATHOLIC LIFE UPDATE

FRIDAY 17TH JULY 2025
TERM 3

HOLY SOULS' CHURCH CENTENARY MASS

It was wonderful for some members of our school community to join with our local parish for their patronal feast of the Sacred Heart on the 27th June.

Almost 20 clergy were present in a packed church and sanctuary, including His Grace, Archbishop Bernard Longley, who preached an inspiring homily explaining that the contributions of the Church to the community of Acocks Green are themselves expressions of the love which pours forth from the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Also present was our wonderful Chaplain, Fr Marco Egawhary, and three of our recent former chaplains: Frs Tomas Zuna, Craig Davies and Alex Taylor.

Holy Mass was followed by a vibrant party in the garden; with parishioners from the wide variety of nationalities, languages and periods of the parish's history coming together to celebrate the Faith that unites them when they gather together. In modern, multi-cultural Britain we really get a sense of the universality of God's Church when communities come together as they did on that sunny Friday evening.

No doubt the parish will change much in the next hundred years; but, please God, the next generations of the parish, and pupils of Archbishop Ilsey Catholic School, will be there to celebrate. As the clergy sang in the garden: *Ad multos annos!*

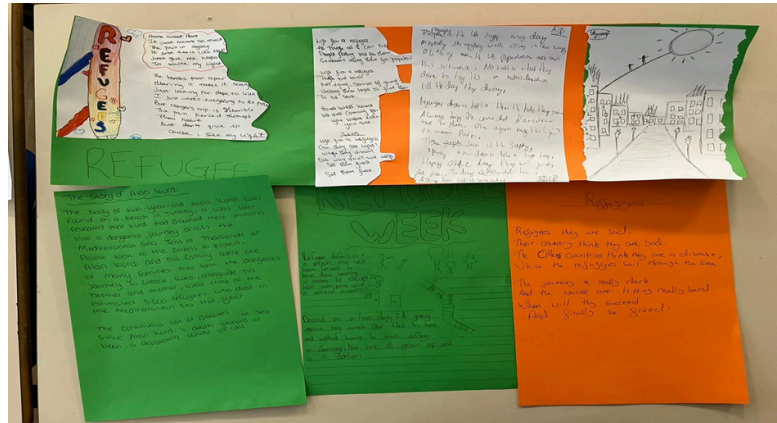
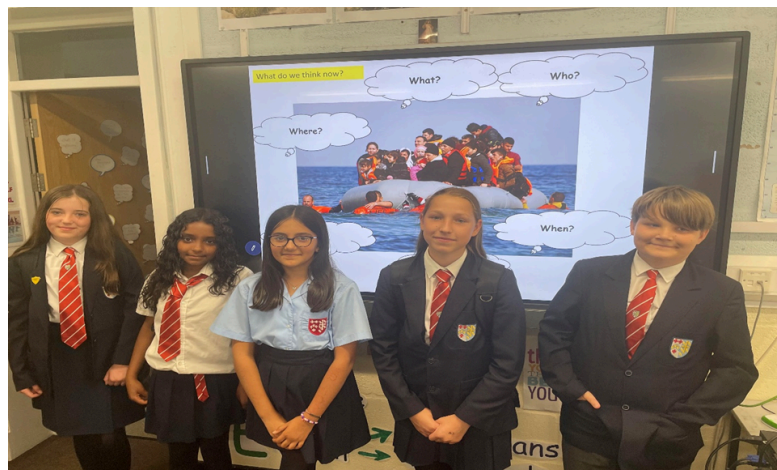


REFUGEE WEEK WB 16TH JUNE

Earlier in the academic year our extended family worked very hard to ensure our Christmas and Easter charity work was a great success. We collected clothes and made food donations to St Chad's Sanctuary in Birmingham. An integral part of the Jubilee Year is for all Catholic schools to do their best to help our refugee brothers and sisters as they endeavour to establish new lives for themselves in Birmingham.

For two weeks in June pupils learnt about the difficulties refugees face each day and how, as a Catholic school, we work collectively to help them start a new life in the United Kingdom. Deacon Martin led assemblies the week prior to Refugee Week. Pupils learnt that life for refugees is far from easy when they arrive in Britain and that it can take years for asylum status to be granted.

Throughout Refugee Work pupils learnt about the reasons why refugees leave their homeland; the dangers they face on their journeys to safer countries and how the Catholic Church helps our brothers and sisters in need. Every subject delivered lessons on the topic of refugees, examples of which can be found on the Archbishop Ilsley X account. It is clear from talking to pupils that they were moved when they learnt about the plight of the men, women and children risking their lives to reach safer and friendlier countries.



CULTURE DAY 19TH JUNE 2025

Archbishop Ilsley is immensely proud of the fact that we are Catholic school to which families from around the globe belong. Culture Day was a day of great celebration with pupils proudly wearing traditional costumes and clothing from all four corners of the world. From England football tops, to Irish tricolours, to abayas, thobes and kurtas, to banas, cholas and salwar kamees. It was a day of great happiness at Archbishop Ilsley and pupils enjoyed the opportunity to proudly wear their family's traditional clothing.

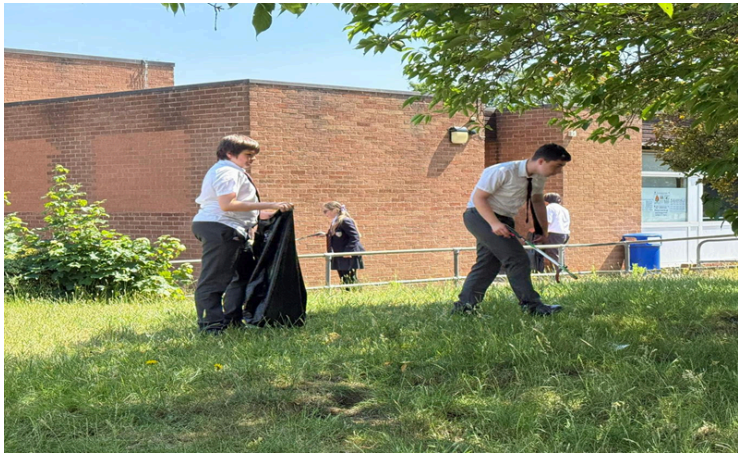
They also enjoyed telling others about their heritage and the meaning and significance of the clothes they were wearing on that day. Many pupils also brought traditional foods and snacks into school which they shared with friends.

Another wonderful moment during the day was when pupils gave generously to the charity collection which took place periods 1 and 2. Sixth formers visited classrooms asking for donations and over £100 was raised for CAFOD. Pupils are already looking forward to next years' culture day.



THE ARCHBISHOP ILSLEY LIVE SIMPLY PROJECT

Archbishop Ilsley is on the brink of achieving the prestigious Live Simply award, which is an award granted to a school for their efforts fund raising for charity and being pro-active in helping to protect the environment. Throughout June, groups of pupils have been making sure that the school is litter free through helping our site team collect any rubbish that has been dropped on the floor. As the days have gone on and after many tutor time lessons on the theme of caring for our planet, pupils are now making a greater effort to ensure any rubbish they have makes it way safely into a bin.



Additionally, we are immensely proud of our Chaplaincy team which went one step further through organising the school's litter picking initiative along Acocks Green High Street. Mr Foley, Mr Koryl and 15 volunteers carried out several litter picking walks and they were humbled by the number of members of the public that thanked them for their efforts. It is hoped that Chaplaincy Team's efforts will inspire others in the community to try harder to help the streets in and around the school stay litter free.



After returning to school and washing hands, the Chaplaincy Team finished each litter pick with prayer time in the chapel.

Prayers were written on the theme of asking God to inspire all people to take greater care of the world He created for us.



THE ARCHBISHOP ILSLEY LIVE SIMPLY PROJECT

CLIMATE CHANGE LOBBY TRIP TO PARLIAMENT - WEDNESDAY 9TH JULY

On Wednesday 9th July, Father Marco and three of our Sixth Formers supported our 'Live Simply' initiative when they visited London with representatives from other schools to talk to politicians and the press about the importance of caring for the environment. It was a long day but a fantastic experience for all those involved. We are very proud of our Sixth Formers for their efforts to make the world a better place for future generations. It was a great example of Catholic Social Teaching in action!



A SAD FAREWELL TO FATHER MARCO AND DEACON TIM

It's always a sad moment when members of our Archbishop Ilsley extended family move on to pastures new. Both Father Marco and Deacon Tim will be leaving us at the end of the academic year. Deacon Tim has been a mathematics teacher and a member of the Catholic Life team for many years and after years of loyal and humble service to the school, he has decided to retire. It is fair to say that Deacon Tim has always looked upon his role in school as a vocation and he has always worked hard to ensure that our pupils have every opportunity to put their faith into action.

Just this year, he organised the Year 10 retreat to Alton Castle, the annual Lourdes Pilgrimage and the Sixth Form visit to the Live Conference and concert in London, which saw 10,000 Catholics from across the country come together to celebrate our faith through prayer and music. He has also been instrumental in every charity event the school has run this year, often coming into work on his days off to ensure our gifts are safely transported to the charities we have supported. We will sincerely miss him in school and we wish him a restful retirement.

We are also saying goodbye to Father Marco in a few days time. Not only has he been a humble, hard-working and much-liked assistant priest at Holy Souls, he has always gone above and beyond to help both children and staff at Archbishop Ilsley Catholic School. From delivering lectures to our A Level Theology students, to celebrating many wonderful masses with each of our year groups, to giving advice and guidance and saying prayers for our pupils and staff, Father Marco has always given generously of his time to be an active, wise and enthusiastic member of our community. We will miss him greatly. We wish him every success and much joy at his new parish, namely St John Fisher in Coventry. It's also important to note that as of September our new school chaplain will be Father Toby Duckworth, who is joining us from St Dunstan's Parish in Kings Heath. He will be warmly welcomed and we know that he will continue to build upon the great work of both Father Marco and Deacon Tim.



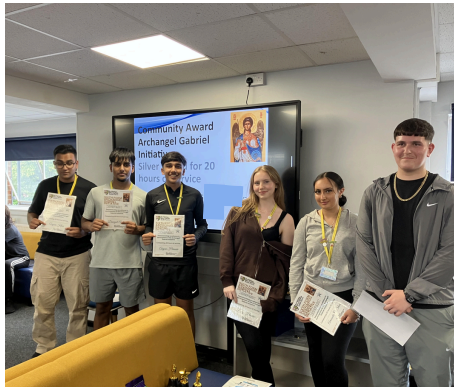
AN UPDATE ON THE SIXTH FORM ARCHANGEL INITIATIVE

Back in February the school proudly launched the Year 12 Archangel Initiative. The purpose of the initiative was for every Year 12 student to put their God given talents into action through helping Year 7 pupils develop their own gifts and skills. The initiative has been a great success and many of our oldest students will be receiving awards for their efforts in the very near future.

Some Year 12 students have completed over 20 hours of service since September through helping out at Open Evenings as well as helping Year 7 and 8 pupils with their literacy, numeracy and artistic skills in class.

They have also helped many Year 7 pupils gain confidence in themselves and helped them understand that with patience, perseverance and faith, every challenge in life is surmountable.

We are very proud of our Sixth Form. Mrs Grant, Mrs McMahon and Mrs O'Neill who collectively make up the Sixth Form Leadership Team, have worked hard to ensure that the Archangel project has gone from strength to strength and there are already plans in place to continue with this initiative next year. See below our students receiving their certificates and stars for 10, 20 and 30 hours of service.



PLANS FOR THE 2025-26 ACADEMIC YEAR

As is the case every year, the heart of our mission as a Catholic School is to encourage all the children in our care to be missionaries of Faith, Hope and Love throughout their life's journey. Therefore, the Senior Leadership, the Pastoral team and the Catholic Life team are already planning lots of initiatives for next academic year.

For example, pupils will be starting each day with different types of prayer; the new pupil Chaplaincy team will be even more pro-active in lots of different events and initiatives; all form groups will be leading an assembly at some point during the year and we hope to complete even more charity work and good deeds, not just in school, but also throughout the wider community. We are already looking forward to the Kenelm Youth Trust team visiting the school on 16th September to deliver an in-house retreat to Years 7 and 12 on the theme of the Jubilee Year.

We are also looking forward to launching our new Etiquette Curriculum which is linked to Gospel Values and the new SAINT morning pastoral programme. The latter will include lessons on Character Education, careers, and pupils maintaining the highest of standards at all times.

SIMPLE CATHOLIC PRAYERS

Next year we will be having periods in which we focus as a school community on various different prayers that all pupils should know and understand. We will be beginning with perhaps the first three prayers learnt by most Catholics: the Our Father; Hail Mary and Glory Be. The texts of each are included below.

The Our Father (Pater Noster)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Amen.

The Hail Mary (Ave Maria)

Hail Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee:
blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is
the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God;
Pray for us sinners; now and at the hour of our
death.

Amen.

The Glory Be (Gloria Patri)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
Holy Spirit.
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall
be, world without end.

Amen.

Finally, on behalf of the whole school we wish to thank you all for supporting the Catholic Life of our school. It is true to say that as parents/carers of the children in our school, you have been both supportive and very generous in giving your time and donating to our charity events throughout the year. God bless you all.



HOLY SOULS' SUNDAY MASS TIMES

SATURDAY (VIGIL): 5:00 PM

SUNDAY: 8:30 AM; 10:00 AM; 12 NOON