

Newsletter



10th September 2025

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Reflection

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Welcome back to school, and I trust you have had some form of rest during the summer months. September is such a special and beautiful month. It brings with it numerous liturgical feasts and celebrations for us to reflect and continue to grow in our Faith. Soon, the leaves on the trees will start to change their colours, and the days will begin to get even darker. In the Church's liturgical calendar, we remain in ordinary time. In many ways, September is always a month of profound change.

In our Catholic world, this September, we thanked God for two new Saints, as our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, declared on 7th September that Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati and Blessed Carlo Acutis are Saints, officially recognising that God has already glorified them in Heaven. Saint Frassati said: "If you have God at the centre of all your actions, then you will reach the goal and Saint Acutis said: "To always be close to Jesus, that's my life plan". Both are young men who continue to inspire our world.

As we continue in September, let us take some time to reflect on the major celebrations we have. Firstly, we have three Marian Celebrations: 8th, the Feast of the Birth of the Virgin Mary; 12th, the Feast of the Most Holy Name of Mary; and 15th September, the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows. May our Mother Mary continue to pray for us all. Next, on Sunday 14th, we celebrate the Exaltation of the Cross, a special day for us in Education, because we celebrate Education Sunday. It is very fitting that the theme for Education Sunday 2025 is "The Son of Man must be lifted up", taken from St John's Gospel (John 3:13-17). The Bishop's Conference for England and Wales remind us that: "Education Sunday is one of the oldest Days of Special Prayer in England and Wales, established 175 years ago in 1848. It provides an opportunity to celebrate and give thanks to all involved in making Catholic schools places of enlightenment, as well as to look forward in anticipation of the year ahead. ... [It is always worth remembering that] the Catholic Church was arguably the first provider of schools and universities in England and Wales..."

PG 1



At the end of the month, on the 29th, we will celebrate the feast of our three Archangels, Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. On that day, we thank them for their constant intercession for us before the throne of God. Finally, on the 30th, we celebrate Saint Jerome, a doctor of the Church who translated the Bible into Latin. St. Jerome is such an inspiration for this Jubilee Year, as we continue to encourage everyone to reflect on Scripture.

There is a date I would like you to keep in mind. It is not a feast, but it happens each year, often unnoticed. On Tuesday, 16th September, it will be 100 days until Christmas Day.

Whatever September brings, let us ask the Lord to give us the graces we need. Amen.

Canon Victor Darlington
Episcopal Vicar for the Southeast Area,
Commissions for Promoting Racial and Cultural Inclusion,
Education and Caritas, Archdiocese of Southwark

School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB)

The DfE have produced the below documents to provide further information for those who wish to know more about the SSSNB and/or engage in the consultation.

[Briefing](#)
[FAQ](#)

Use of AI Notetaking

We have recently had an instance of AI notetaking facilities being used by a delegate at an online meeting, with the result that the AI generated notes of that meeting were taken without consent.

Any devices that are a duplicate of an attendee or not someone who has registered, will be removed. Please make sure your name matches the name used for your booking or send a chat message to the admin on the call.

Please be aware that slides from all sessions, where used, will be sent out after the meeting to all delegates that have attended.

Oscar Romero Award Trust - Important Dates

To be able to receive your award for participator, developer and innovator level of the Oscar Romero Award at the Mass in March 2026 please note the dates below for submission of evidence deadlines.. These allow enough time for the assessment to take place.

Participator level 13 February 2026
Developer level 9 January 2026
Innovator level 9 January 2026



HR 101 for Small Employers

As a small business, people are your biggest asset – but also your biggest challenge. Without a dedicated HR team, many owners manage instinctively, often without clear processes in place. While this can work for a while, it can also lead to inconsistencies, conflict, and missed opportunities to get the best from your staff.

In this practical 60-minute session from WorkNest on the 25th September at 2pm, they will explain how to get the HR basics right so you can build stronger teams, avoid common pitfalls, and save valuable time.

Register here: <https://worknest.com/training/hr-101-for-small-employers-partners/?v=ADOSW>

TUPE Essentials | tackling transfers and transitions in education

Do you know what these regulations require, and the potential consequences of mismanaging the transfer process?

Join WorkNest on the 25th September at 9.30am to gain the practical knowledge and confidence you need to navigate TUPE effectively while avoiding common pitfalls.

Register here: <https://worknest.com/training/tupe-essentials-tackling-transfers-and-transitions-in-education-partners/?v=ADOSW>

Pupil Premium and Recovery Premium Evaluation

This evaluation report explores how schools and academy trusts:

- plan and use pupil premium
- used recovery premium

It also presents the reported impacts of each of these.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67dd5b7f0114b0b86e59f42b/Pupil_premium_and_recovery_premium_evaluation.pdf

This report examines the relationship between attendance and academic achievement for pupils in state-funded mainstream schools during the 2022 to 2023 academic year at the end of:

- key stage 2
- key stage 4

The study, which builds on previous research from 2016, uses a regression model to account for various factors that could influence attainment, such as prior performance and pupil characteristics.



It uses recent data to look at how similar pupils with different attendance rates perform, isolating the impact of attendance on the likelihood of achieving successful outcomes at each key stage.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67c96d7dd0fba2f1334cf2ed/The_link_between_attendance_and_attainment_in_an_assessment_year_-_March_2025.pdf

Nursery Capital Works

The DfE has announced the launch of phase 2 of the School-based Nurseries programme which will prioritise bids from schools serving some of the most disadvantaged communities. This is a link to the guidance which explains

- the purpose of this grant
- who is eligible to apply
- how to submit an application
- how applications will be assessed and funding awarded

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-based-nursery-capital-grant-2025-to-2026>

Should any school (VA or SAT) wish to create or make changes to the buildings of their school, there must be a business case put forward to the Diocesan Education Service prior to application to the DfE. Please send the proposal to; ecbuildings@rcaos.org.uk and a member of the Property Team will work with you. If you are a school in a Catholic Academy Trust, the school leaders and the CAT property team will work alongside the Diocesan property team on these plans.

Headteachers' Conference Artwork Competition



Last year we were fortunate to have an original piece of artwork from Jemima Filbee Y11, St Ursula's, as our focal point for our Headteachers' Conference.

This year the conference is influenced by the following quote from Hans Urs von Balthasar "What you are is God's gift to you, what you become is your gift to God."

We are opening up a competition for all artists from Y7- Y13 to provide us with an original work of art, painted, graphic design or alternative media. The piece should be A3 or larger so that it can be displayed on the HTC focal point.

An Amazon voucher will be presented to the winner and the original artwork will be turned into a prayer card for the conference delegates.



Original artwork should be delivered or posted to the Education Service's office by Friday 24th October computer-generated images should be sent as either a JPEG or PDF to clairewilliams@rcaos.org.uk

Christmas Card Competition

Our Christmas card competition for Nursery - Y6 pupils is now open!

This year's entries will be used to produce next year's cards.

Please email designs as either a JPEG or PDF to clairewilliams@rcaos.org.uk by Friday 21st November 2025 Midday.

Themes for the entries can be chosen from:

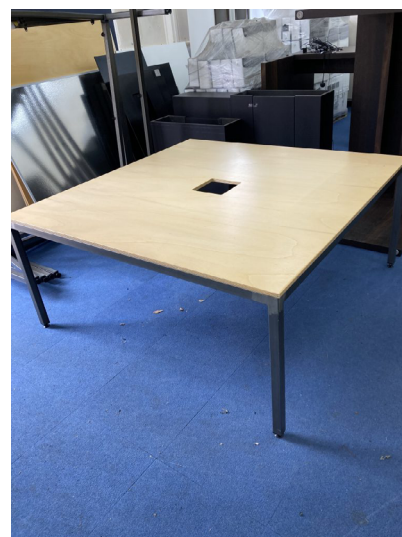
- While Shepherds Watched
- We three Kings
- Go tell it on the mountains

Free Furniture for Your School

Collaborating with the charity, [Business 2 Schools](#), we are able to offer our schools free furniture donated from businesses.

You need to register with Business 2 Schools to be able to either collect from our hub or receive a delivery. [Register here.](#)

To view what we have available for collection please [click here](#). This page is updated regularly with our current items.



Wintershall

Wintershall have opened up their bookings for their Advent Travelling Crib at Lambeth Palace. Please complete the form and they will confirm your booking via email as soon as possible. Limited availability. Please use this link to book: <https://forms.gle/81dzMrSeDhcZiP926>



The Travelling Crib at Lambeth
10-14 November 2025

Join the characters of the Nativity on the journey to Bethlehem, at this very special workshop experience in the gardens of Lambeth Palace. Outdoor Advent themed education workshops suitable for KS1 & KS2

Workshop 1 10:00 - 12:00
Workshop 2 12:30-14:30

To find out more and book your place schools@wintershall.org.uk

www.wintershall.org.uk Call: 01483 892167

RISE Theatre - Passion Play - Lent 2026



RISE theatre
www.risetheatre.co.uk

RISE THEATRE'S PASSION PLAY
Bookings now open for Lent 2026

Suitable for the whole school, our 1 hour original Passion Play depicts the key parts of Christ's Passion & other inspirational Gospel moments.
A fast-paced, emotionally impacting & "spine tingling" performance

Prices from £800 + travel
Up to 2 performances available per day.
Discounts available for bookings over multiple days
Get in touch to discuss your school's requirements

GET IN TOUCH WITH US TODAY
admin@risetheatre.co.uk
www.risetheatre.co.uk

Rise's 1-hour one-act Passion Play is now available to book for secondary school performances during Lent 2026.

A short highlights video can be viewed and shared here - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9HVM8UgXgb0>

Booking Information and Cost:

- 1 performance in a day: £800 + travel (from our Reading base)
- 2 performances in a day: £950 + travel
- 10% discount (excluding travel) available for multi-day bookings

Recruitment

Vacancies can be viewed in full here: <https://www.rcaoseducation.org.uk/recruitment/>

Director of Education, Education Service

London & Orpington

Closing date: 15th September 2025

Teacher of Religious Education, St Ursula's Convent School

Greenwich

Closing date: 31st August 2025

Personal Assistant to Headteacher, St Ursula's Convent School

Greenwich

Closing date: 22nd September 2025

Headteacher, St Andrew's Catholic Primary School

London

Closing date: 26th September 2025

Headteacher, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

London

Closing date: 30th September 2025

Headteacher, Notre Dame Girls School

London

Closing date: 30th September 2025

Director of Standards (Secondary), St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Closing date: 6th October 2025

To advertise any school vacancy with us for free, please email clairewilliams@rcaos.org.uk

Events & Training

All sessions are available to book on our website: www.rcaoseducation.org.uk/et

Autumn 2025

Induction for New Foundation SAT Directors, Governors and Clerks

or Friday 19th September 2025 5.30-7pm. Zoom

Distinctive Nature of a Catholic School

Thursday 11th September 2025. 4-5.30pm.
Zoom

Directors of CAT/SATs: Understanding Primary Standards

Monday 15th September 2025 2-4pm.
Education Service, Orpington.

Academisation for Governors

Thursday 18th September 2025 5.30-7pm.
Zoom

CSED Writing

Monday 22nd September 2025. 10am-12pm.
Education Service, Orpington.

Beginning of Year Mass 2025

Wednesday 24th September 2025. 11am.
St George's Cathedral, Lambeth Road, SE1 6HR

Exploration of Mission and Ethos in a Catholic Trust

Thursday 25th September 2025. 5.30-7pm.
Teams

Effective Support and Challenge for Governors

Wednesday 1st October 2025 4-5.30pm.
Zoom

Diocesan Chaplaincy Day

Tuesday 7th October 2025, 930am-3.30pm.
Amigo Hall



Lighting the Path, the new Primary Religious Education Resource – Early Years

Tuesday 7th October 2025. 9-11am.
Multiple venues

Lighting the Path, the new Primary Religious Education Resource – Year One

Tuesday 7th October 2025. 11.30am – 1.30pm.
Multiple venues

Lighting the Path, the new Primary Religious Education Resource – Year Two

Tuesday 7th October 2025. 2-4pm.
Multiple venues

New to Catholic Schools

Thursday 9th October 2025 9.30am-4pm.
Education Service, Orpington.

Safeguarding for Governors

Thursday 9th October 2025 5.30-7pm.
Zoom

Induction for new DHT and AHT

Monday 13th October 2025. 2-4pm
Education Service, Orpington

New to Leading Religious Education in Primary Schools

Tuesday 14th October 2025 9.30am-4pm.
Cowderoy Room, Amigo Hall

Admissions for Governors

Wednesday 15th October 2025 5.30-7pm.
Zoom.

CPD: Music for Liturgy in RC Schools

Thursday 16th October 2025 , 4-5pm (Online)

Jubilee Pilgrimage to York for Headteachers, Trust Leaders and Diocesan Education Staff

Thursday 6th at Malmaison Hotel & Friday 7th November 2025 at Bar Convent
£220 per person

Racial Justice and Inclusion in Education

Tuesday 21st October 2025. 3-5pm.
Zoom

Headteachers Conference 2025

Wednesday 19th at 9am to Thursday 20th November 2025 at 1.30pm
Ashford International, Simone Weil Avenue,
Ashford, TN24 8UX

Save the Date!

Advent Service - Primary Schools - Tuesday 9th December 2025

Oscar Romero Award Trust Session- Thursday 15th January 2026

Oscar Romero Award Trust Mass - Thursday 26th March 2026

News

Bishop Thomas Grant School: Year 7 students answer the call to be Pilgrims of Hope!



On Wednesday 2nd July, Year 7 students at Bishop Thomas Grant School took part in a special day with a difference. We were Pilgrims of Hope, answering the call from Pope Francis to walk and pray with our feet in this Jubilee year! The day started with a 'Bishop Thomas Grant Prayer for Pilgrims' and then we set off on foot with our Head of Year, RE teachers, Form Tutors, 6th Form students and made our way to English Martyrs church in Streatham. We were full of excitement, looking forward to spending the day together as pilgrims. [Continue reading.](#)



Ursuline High School Celebrates Amazing A-level & T Level Results!

Congratulations to all students who have received their A-level and T Level results today.

We are celebrating an excellent set of results across the school, with a special mention to A-level Mathematics students and teachers with 45% of all A-level Maths results at A* and A grade.

[Continue reading.](#)

