

# The Becket School's GOOD NEWS



Jesus said to them, "Go throughout the whole world and preach the Good News to all people."

Mark 16:15

## Welcome to The Becket School's Good News Newsletter!

Here, we celebrate the many ways our school community has been putting faith into action – serving God, our global neighbours, and our common home.

### From Pilgrims of Hope to Ambassadors of Hope

At the end of 2025, on the Feast of the Holy Family, the Diocese of Nottingham gathered at St Barnabas Cathedral with Bishop Patrick McKinney to mark the closing of the Jubilee Year of Hope. The holy year theme, "Pilgrims of Hope," was first announced by Pope Francis and continued under Pope Leo XIV following Pope Francis' death. Jubilee Years (celebrated every twenty-five years in the Catholic Church), are rooted in Scripture, where God calls His people to renewal, mercy and restoration. They invite us to pause, rediscover God's faithfulness and recommit ourselves to justice and the care for those on the margins.

Throughout this Jubilee Year, we at The Becket School have been on our own journeys as pilgrims, seeking to deepen our relationship with God and to share hope with others.

As the Jubilee Year drew to a close, Bishop Patrick encouraged us not only to think of ourselves as Pilgrims of Hope, but also as Ambassadors of Hope. A pilgrim is someone who seeks God; an ambassador is someone who carries God's hope outward into the world. The Jubilee Year may have ended, but our mission continues.

Here are some highlights from our Jubilee Year at The Becket...



We launched the jubilee year with Mass, Celebrations of the Word and with the sound of a rams horn!



We welcomed the official Jubilee icon (painted by Mulugeta Araya from Ethiopia) as it went on tour around the Our Lady of Lourdes family of schools!



We went on pilgrimage to some of our local parishes for Mass



We worked on lots of fundraising appeals and projects to share hope



Our 6<sup>th</sup> Formers served as volunteers on the Nottingham Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes

We celebrated the Jubilee of Youth and our wonderful Chaplaincy Team



Listening, discerning and sharing Hope with our wider communities

Jubilee Retreat Days and Workshops



We celebrated the 175th Jubilee Anniversary of the Diocese of Nottingham at St Barnabas Cathedral

Some of our students went on Pilgrimage to Rome with the parish of the Annunciation for the Canonisation of Blessed Carlo Acutis & Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati

## Our 2025 journey through Advent...

### Advent Community Evening

Our Advent journey began together as we welcomed families, friends, clergy and members of our wider community into our chapel for an evening of worship and preparation, led by our wonderful Chaplaincy Team. Guests were invited to take on the role of pilgrims, receiving an Advent passport to guide them around the chapel and hall prayer stations. Each station encouraged reflection on the four themes of Advent and on the journey Mary and Joseph took as refugees.

The worship band, led by Mrs Paterson, lifted our hearts in song, and our Lourdes volunteers added festive cheer with refreshments at the end of the evening.

It was a beautiful way to begin the Advent season together. Thank you to everyone who joined us and helped make the evening so special.

*"On the night of the celebration, the chaplaincy team and the worship band worked together to create a magical evening. Parents, pupils, staff and even people from the trust came to celebrate this special time with us.*

*The worship band played great music throughout the night, and the chaplaincy team started and ended the Mass. The team also split into four groups so they could focus on different candles and celebrations: shepherd, Mary, Joseph and angel.*

*This year we focused on refugees. We had pilgrimage passports, and at each station we completed different activities and collected stamps. Each group led their station and helped us understand more about the meaning of Advent."*

**By Amelia M, Year 7**



## Advent Reconciliation Morning

At the beginning of Advent, we were blessed to welcome our visiting priests, Fr Jonathan Cotton and Fr John McCay, who joined us for our voluntary Sacrament of Reconciliation morning. These mornings are always very popular with students, and we already have many on the waiting list for next time. So many students were grateful to receive the Sacrament during this season of preparation, leaving the chapel feeling refreshed and with smiles on their faces.



## Year 9 Retreat Day

Peace Week concluded with our "Advent"urous Year 9 retreat day. It was a day filled with joy and reflection as students took part in workshops exploring the four themes of Advent. We began the day all together in the hall with scripture and team challenges linked to the figures in the Nativity, before splitting into forms to embark on further reflections and activities in our groups.

It was a busy and productive day for Year 9. Students wrote and decorated Christmas cards for prisons and care homes as an act of love, tackled Advent escape-room challenges that reminded them of waiting in hope, created angel decorations while reflecting on guardian angels and how we can share peace with others, and enjoyed a very popular joy workshop, where they learned about the religious significance of the Twelve Days of Christmas and brought the song to life with music, singing and props.



## Our Advent Appeal for Emmanuel House

In the build up to our final week in school before Christmas, students, staff and families of The Becket had been busy collecting donations for our Advent Appeal in support of Emmanuel House. Emmanuel House is an independent charity that supports people who are homeless, rough sleeping, in crisis, or at risk of homelessness in Nottingham. On the morning of our drop-off, the chapel was joyfully filled with students bringing down the donations they had been gathering.

Some of our Sixth Form students, who will also be helping on our pilgrimage to Lourdes in July 2026, worked incredibly hard to load and unload the minibus with all the donations for Emmanuel House. The staff and service workers were really moved by the generosity shown, and shared that the contributions will make a huge difference.

We are thrilled to share that our chaplaincy team counted more than 1,000 donated items!

Congratulations to 7N, who brought in the highest number of donations (over 100!), and to 7B and 7T who followed closely behind them.

*"For our fundraiser for Emmanuel House, we all brought in items we could donate. Emmanuel House is a shelter that looks after people who are going through difficult times. Each form brought in things such as tins of food, toiletries, Christmas gifts and basic essentials that we sometimes take for granted but that people really need to live.*

*There is a bit of healthy competition between the forms because the form that brings in the most donations will win a festive prize. We are all very thankful to everyone who brought something in for Emmanuel House."*

**By Seth D, Year 7**

## Final week Advent Celebrations

Throughout Joy Week, our year groups gathered each morning for their achievement assemblies, celebrating the many students who have been at the top of the pyramid and who have gone above and beyond in living out the Becket Way. It was wonderful to recognise one another's achievements and to reflect on the term we have shared together.



On our final day before the Christmas break, the atmosphere was, as always, full of joy and excitement! To add to the festive cheer, everyone came in their finest Christmas-themed non-uniform.

Forms spent the morning taking part in seasonal activities and reflections before each year group made their way to the chapel for their end of term Advent Celebration of the Word, which was planned by members of our Chaplaincy Team from across the school.

Our Year 11 team know how much we love a quiz at The Becket and led us in a brilliant game show to help us reflect on the significance of the Nativity figures who play a key part in God's plan. A huge thank you to our Chaplaincy Team and Worship Band for leading the celebrations!

After our Celebrations of the Word, it was time for our form group parties. Each form brought down their beautifully crafted nativity scenes made from loo rolls and they did not disappoint! Every entry took to the floor for our nativity catwalk to help us celebrate creativity and community spirit! It was a true joy and we were so impressed by the effort our students and staff put into their creations!

## Celebrating the Solemnity of the Epiphany

This year we returned to school during Epiphany week, which concluded the joyful season of Christmastide. Our *wise women* in Year 13 led our daily Celebrations of the Word with Mr Bradley, helping us reflect on the gifts we hope to offer to God and to our community in the year ahead.



On the Solemnity of the Epiphany we were blessed to welcome Fr John McCay, who celebrated a joyful Epiphany Mass with us.

He shared a wonderful homily and spoke about how much he enjoyed returning to our school, as it had been a while since he had last celebrated Mass for us! We were all blown away by how reverent and engaged our student leaders and congregation were. A special thank you goes to the students in Years 7 and 8 who led the Mass parts and sang so beautifully – our readers, altar servers, choir and offertory bringers.

Our celebration of Mass concluded with Fr John blessing chalk for us as we prepared to take part in an Epiphany tradition. The following day, with blessed chalk in hand, Year 7 took part in their Epiphany workshops, learning more about the feast and creating a new set of Epiphany blessings for our school community.

We pray that God may bless our school and your homes too!

### **Edmund House Mass**

*"On the 1<sup>st</sup> December, Edmund House celebrated the feast day of their patron - St Edmund Campion. Edmund House invited Fr Everist to lead the Mass, and Year 9 began by welcoming him and sharing more about the life and achievements of St Edmund Campion.*

*Year 11 then led us in the next part of the liturgy, helping us reflect on the courage and faith of our house saint. Our Sixth Form students read the Scripture reading, which linked beautifully to St Edmund Campion's witness and mission.*

*Year 10 led us in the Prayers of Intercession, praying for our school community and for all who continue to live out their faith with bravery and hope.*

*Finally, a big thank you to Year 7 for the creative posters they made for the Edmund House prayer boards, and to Year 8 for their beautiful chapel decorations that helped make our Mass feel even more special."*

**By Davian, Year 9**



*"In our final week of the Liturgical Year in 2025, we celebrated Kingdom Week following the Solemnity of Christ the King. There was so much to enjoy and celebrate! We had our House Celebrations of the Word, lunchtime house competitions, and on Friday we rounded things off with a grand finale – the Talent Show, a Liturgical New Year's Eve Party, and our "Rolling with the Saints" catwalk as we celebrated the month of All Souls. The atmosphere throughout the week was filled with joy and community spirit – thank you so much to everyone who got involved!"*

*Our forms voted for their favourite saint creation, and here are the results for each year group:*

- 7R for their incredible Saint Mary – Mother of Jesus at the Nativity scene
- 8E for their amazing Saint Nicholas
- 9T for their thrilling Saint Bernadette and the disciples with Jesus walking on water
- 10P for their phenomenal Saint Patrick
- 11T for their wonderful Saint Thérèse

*And now for the Sixth Form winners:*

- 12E with their astonishing Saint Valentine
- 13P with their stunning Saint Oscar Romero"

**By Remy, Year 7**



## Chaplaincy Team Retreat Day

"We concluded Youth Week in November with our Chaplaincy Retreat Day. We began by gathering in the chapel for a Celebration of the Word and a commissioning with Father Evarist. It was really special to be together as a chaplaincy community, and Fr Evarist blessed both us and our new chaplaincy badges with holy water.

Afterwards, we moved into the hall where Ruth and our Year 11s led us in some "prayer-robics" – it was great fun and a brilliant way to get active and warmed up for the day.

We then split into teams for a test of our knowledge of the Liturgical Calendar with a game called "How Faithful Are You?", inspired by *The Traitors*.

It was really enjoyable being mixed into different groups because we got to meet chaplaincy members from across the school. We were just about to start our final round when we were suddenly interrupted with the news that the school had no water and we all had to go home!

The following week, we picked up where we left off and began working on our upcoming chaplaincy projects – especially the Advent Community Evening, which was planned and led by the chaplaincy team."

By Hanna, Year 7

## Red Wednesday for Aid to the Church in Need

November 26th marked Aid to the Church in Need's "Red Wednesday," when we stand in solidarity with Christians around the world who are persecuted for their faith. On this day, students and staff wore a splash of red, while our Chaplaincy Team hosted a cake sale that raised an amazing £190 for ACN.

A huge thank you to everyone who baked, donated and bought sweet treats to support this cause – your generosity will make a real difference to families around the world!



## Nicholas House Mass

In November, Nicholas House gathered for a beautiful House Mass, celebrated by Fr Evarist.

It was wonderful to come together as a community with our House Captains, Heads of House and SLT link, and we kept Year 11 in our prayers as they continued their mock exams. The chapel looked wonderful (thanks to 8N!) and each student received a prayer card decorated by us in 7N. Every form also received a fantastic cardboard cut-out of Blessed Nicholas Garlick from 8N to display proudly in their form rooms – it was like playing “where’s Wally?” with all the cardboard cut outs! We reflected on the life of Blessed Nicholas and prayed that we too might stand firm in our faith when faced with challenges.”

**By Mary and Roisin, year 7**



## Celebrating the Month of the Holy Rosary

On the Memorial of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, we celebrated our Year 7 Welcome Mass. We were blessed to have Fr Jonathan Cotton celebrate Mass for us, and it was wonderful to be joined by friends and family. Year 7 did a fantastic job leading the Mass parts, and the Year 7 worship band did a grand job providing the music — their very first Mass as a band.

Throughout the week, 9T were incredibly busy, helping Mr Kemple lead our Celebrations of the Word, supported by beautiful live music from our Worship Band. They also created this week's Be Inspirational prayer resources, guiding us in prayer each morning.

The week concluded with each form writing prayer intentions, which were brought in procession and laid at Mary's feet as we asked for her intercession. Year 8 then took part in their Rosary Liturgical Workshops, learning more about the Rosary, and we prayed a decade together as we offered the school's intentions to the Lord.

## St Francis of Assisi Hub Mass

*"On the feast of St Francis of Assisi, the St Francis of Assisi Hub gathered to celebrate their patron Hub Mass at Our Lady & St Edward's Church. Fr John Martin led us in a joyful and prayerful Mass, with staff and students from The Becket School, Our Lady & St Edward's, St Patrick's, Blessed Robert Widmerpool and St Edmund Campion.*

*Each school helped lead a part of the liturgy, and the singing truly lifted the roof. It was wonderful to see some of our Year 10s from the worship band leading the music with Tom — there were some real goosebump moments, especially during Communion and the hymn Taste and See.*

*Thank you to everyone who made this celebration so special, reminding us of the life of Saint Francis, our call to care for creation, and the beautiful community we belong to."*

**By Seth, Harry and Jeremiah, Year 7**



## Teresa House Mass

*"At the beginning of October, we celebrated the memorial of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, the Little Flower. We marked this special day with our first House Mass of the academic year, celebrated by Fr John Martin and we were joined by Teresa House, our Year 12 House Captains, Heads of House and some of our parishioners.*

*Every form led a part to the Mass – from the welcome and entrance procession to the readings and bidding prayers. It felt really special to come together as a house community to honour Saint Thérèse.*

*A special shout-out went to 8T for their stunning chapel decorations, and to 7T and 10T for crafting the bouquets that each form received, reflecting the beauty and kindness Saint Thérèse shared throughout her life."*

By Mia G, Year 7

## Celebrating the 175th Anniversary of the Diocese of Nottingham

*"On Monday 29th September, a group of Year 11 students went with Ruth and Mrs Conlon to Nottingham Cathedral to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the establishment of the Diocese of Nottingham. We took the tram into Nottingham carrying the Becket banner, which we were proud to display inside the cathedral. Bishop Patrick welcomed us, along with students from other schools, priests, and leaders of different faiths. He gave a beautiful homily where he thanked everyone who has "greatly enriched our diocese" and said that we are "a visible sign of the universality of the Church."*

*Bishop Patrick also celebrated this year's Jubilarian priests. Six priests received a Papal Blessing, and together they have served the diocese for an incredible 320 years.*

*After the Mass, we were lucky enough to interview Fr Simon and chaplain Joe Hopkins who helped us with our word of the week video and talked about the importance of the Rosary and how we can pray it more often in our everyday lives."*

By Phoebe, Year 11



## Raising Our Voices: The Launch of the Year 7 Worship Band!

**"The one who sings prays twice" - Saint Augustine**

*"At the beginning of Year 7, Mrs Paterson was looking for singers and musicians to help lead music at our welcoming celebrations. To the delight of staff, the chapel quickly filled with enthusiastic students, all ready to share their faith through song. You may already have heard of The Becket's KS4 Worship Band, and now we have our very own Year 7 Worship Band too!"*

*Every Tuesday, the Year 7 Worship Band meets in B28 to practise songs for upcoming school events, including Masses and liturgies. Some of the songs the band has already played include The Magnificat, 10,000 reasons, Taste and See, Christmas carols and, of course, Go Out into the World. Since then, the Worship Band has gone from strength to strength, growing in confidence and working together to support our school's prayer life.*

*The Worship Band is not just about music – it's about sharing our faith and worshiping God through song. We interviewed Darcy, who is part of the band, and she shared how meaningful the experience has been: "It's really good and I feel as though I can express my love for God through song."*

*We also spoke to Mary, who is not a part of the Worship Band but has watched them perform during Mass. She described the experience as very special: "It is a lovely band and when they sing and play together it's very professional. It's a nice and relaxing experience to listen to, and it made me feel closer to God."*

*One word that describes the Worship Band perfectly is inclusive. Anyone can join, no matter their experience. Whether you enjoy singing or playing an instrument, there is a place for you. The band currently includes guitars, violins, recorders, singers, and a piano, played by Mrs Paterson.*

*Our next goal is to fundraise for musical instruments and equipment, as well as to look for donations that could help us create a permanent worship music corner in our chapel. This space would be used for all of our celebrations and liturgies.*

*If you think you could support us in any way, we would love to hear from you. Please contact our chaplains, Ruth and Joe, or our band leader, Mrs Paterson."*

**By Roisin and Remy, Year 7**

