

## Value of the month – Courage

### COVID-19 - Stay Home, Protect the NHS & Stay Safe!



Dear Parents and Carers

#### [Welcome to the Summer Term!](#)

What a strange time it is. The Staff and I hope you are all keeping well and hope you like the projects we are doing in school. We also investigated the pond! Can you spot what we found? Even I had a go on the bikes this week! Thank you to the staff for all they are doing and agreeing to be on the rota.

We have been planning something for us all to do at home and bring in when we are allowed to return. We will let you know more soon. Sorry, Headteachers do not yet know when that will be – I have commented on this below...do read on!

Please continue to use the Class Emails for queries around home learning and the Office email [office@stfrancis.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:office@stfrancis.surrey.sch.uk) for more general queries. We monitor the office email across the day.

#### [Foodbank and Crisis Support](#)

As the lockdown continues we know that some families may be experiencing difficulties. Do please contact me via the office email [office@stfrancis.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:office@stfrancis.surrey.sch.uk) if you experience difficulties during the coming weeks. Any matters discussed will be treated with confidentiality. I have access to those that can support families via the local Foodbank, the Church SVP and Diocese Crisis Fund. Do not hesitate to ask – there is no need for any of our families to be in need, especially for food.

### School Opening for Vulnerable Children and children of Key Workers

We hope you like the work that some of our children have been doing while in school. There are currently between one and four children in school, depending on need and parental rotas. It is a worrying time for the children and it can be a long day when they just want to be home and the school is empty and quiet, but we are making it as fun as we can.

**Thank you:** The Staff and I would all like to thank our critical worker families for all their kind words and messages. We especially thank you for accessing the opening system fairly and with such thoughtfulness for the safety, welfare and well-being of all. We know you are concerned, not just about the risks for your own children and other children in school and their families, but also to that of our Staff and their families too. We are happy to help as we know you are only using the school opening when you absolutely have to, and are keeping children safely home when and where you can. Thank you for this – it is much appreciated by us all and we thank you for your service in the response to virus.

### May is the Month of Mary

As we move in to the Month of May, please remember to pray the Rosary. The Pope is encouraging us all to “rediscover the beauty of praying the Rosary at home in the month of May.” It used to be a very well-established family tradition for the family to come together in May and say the Rosary together. The Pope has proposed two new prayers to say at the end of the Rosary, ones that he will be saying himself. The Pope’s letter and prayers can be found here: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-04/letter-on-the-month-of-may-full-text.html> We will be sending out a guide on how to pray the rosary next week, but in the meantime, as the Pope says “*The key to doing this is simplicity, and it is easy also on the internet to find good models of prayers to follow*”. We are rather liking our Pope who blends the Catholic teaching and tradition with the modern!

**Dean & Denny’s Facebook Page** – Robot Competition! There have been an amazing 30 entries in the competition – you have all been sending in your pictures – well done to everyone for all the creative designs! They have been whittled down to a final 9 and voting on the top 3 is underway! Watch the page on Monday for the results!

**Value of the Month:** Our Value for April is Courage – something we are all having to find in these difficult times. As we are not in school please do discuss all aspects of this important Value with your children.

### Masses

Father Seán and Father Stephen are saying Mass daily via the Sacred Heart Livestream each day <https://www.churchservices.tv/caterham> . Do keep looking at the Church websites for information on ‘online’ Services.

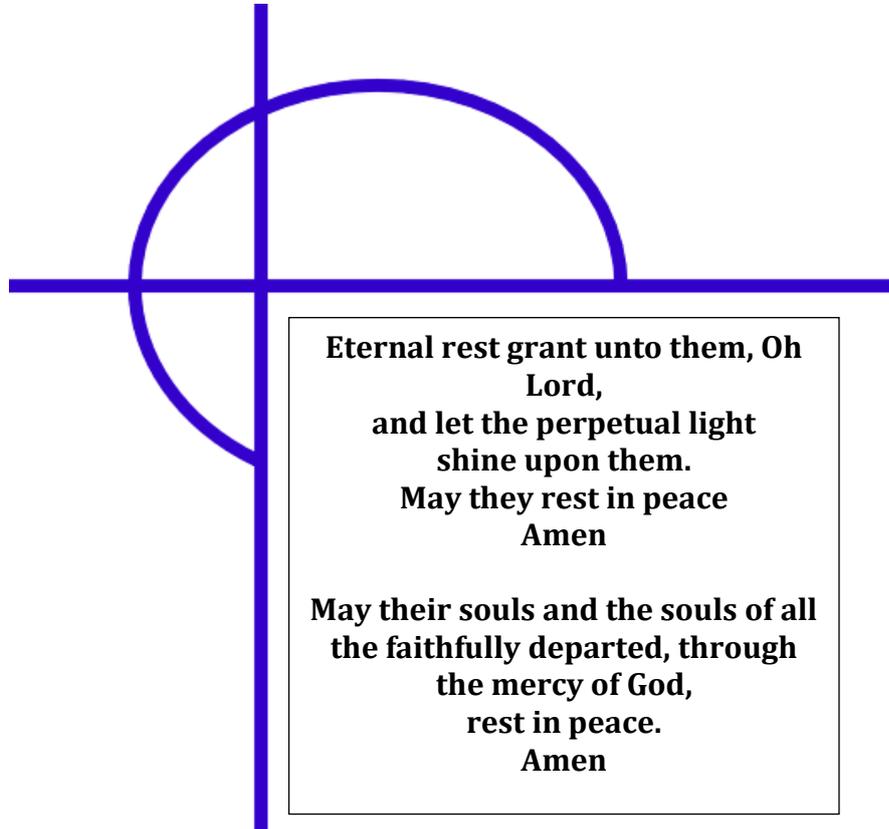
Father Seán has also been uploading, under ‘Featured Videos’, a History of the Church Course, which Parents may wish to view and listen to.



### Special Thoughts and Prayers for Our School Community

Please pray for our whole school community us all at this difficult time. For our Priests, our Parents and family members who are critical workers. For those who have been ill and thankfully recovered, and especially for all those currently in hospital and for those who have sadly lost their lives.

Please keep Sonny and his family in your prayers as they recently lost a much-loved Uncle and Mr Stevens who lost a friend this week.



**Eternal rest grant unto them, Oh  
Lord,  
and let the perpetual light  
shine upon them.  
May they rest in peace  
Amen**

**May their souls and the souls of all  
the faithfully departed, through  
the mercy of God,  
rest in peace.  
Amen**

**Sites that may help with explanations for children and adults on the issues of the virus and on dealing with bereavement in this time of crisis are listed below:**

<https://www.cruse.org.uk/get-help/coronavirus-dealing-bereavement-and-grief>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

<https://www.winstonswish.org/coronavirus/>

<https://www.childbereavementuk.org/>

<https://www.jigsawsoutheast.org.uk/charity-news/as-coronavirus-spreads-what-you-need-to-know/>

### Wellbeing, Mental Health and SEND Support

Please remember that we will not be aware of your worries unless you share them with us and we actively encourage you to contact us for any help – even if it is just to talk through worries. We monitor our emails and will ring you – we are always happy to talk things through and help or signpost if there are worries or concerns. If you require any specific well-being or SEND support for you and your family please do contact Mrs Dommett via the link on the SEND page of our website, or for other queries via the office email [admin@stfrancis.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stfrancis.surrey.sch.uk).

## Home Learning

Our class email system appears to be working and, in the background, we are checking if we have not heard from families. It would be helpful to Staff if Parents could just email now and again to confirm that you have received the weekly home learning and that you are all ok. Many of you are already doing this and sending teachers lovely messages and photos of things you are doing at home. The Teachers are really enjoying these – we miss you all as much as you are missing us.

We have taken a decision, based on this and on our rotas and staff circumstances that we will not make regular phone calls to parents or children. We do not want to disturb the routines of your days – we believe that would be unhelpful. Also, pulling children away to talk to a teacher when they are happily involved in something, is not always wanted, nor helpful to the child either. However, we are conscious that as the weeks move on children may be more upset and will be having the odd difficult day. The children's well-being is a concern to us and so if you feel a 'check-in' chat would be useful, then please let the teacher know and we can try and arrange a suitable day and time.

Please do not worry if you cannot manage the learning, the class emails are in place – just let the teachers know if you are having difficulties. We don't want any family stressing over home learning. A little bit at a time is all that is needed. Just try and maintain reading, spelling and timetables practice sessions. You have the access to our learning platforms too – Education City, Purple Mash, Timetables Rockstars.

If you find you need more there are lots of additional resources that can be accessed via:

**White Rose Maths Hub** - <https://whiterosemaths.com/homelearning/>

**Pie Corbett Radio Blogging:** RadioBlogging.Net is a daily radio programme that teaches literacy and is aimed at families and schools. It is interactive so that children write and their work is published during and after the show. Each day there are spelling, grammar and vocabulary games, followed by creative writing and responding to reading. The show features a poet of the day and author of the week. All posts are moderated and there is a team of teachers that respond to the children's writing. It is an innovative project combining education radio and blogging to enhance and support continuous learning provision at this critical time. <https://radioblogging.net/>

**BBC Bitesize:** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/dailylessons>

**Oxford Owl:** <https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/find-a-book/library-page>

**Pearson Bug Club for Reading and Maths Games:**

<https://www.pearson.com/uk/learners/primary-parents.html>

## **Live and Pre-Recorded Lessons, Google/Microsoft Classrooms**

We understand there have been a couple of parents querying on social media why our teachers are not engaging in these methods of educating while at home. It may appear from the press and social media that the all schools in the nation are now using these. Please be advised that this is not the case.

The recommendation by the Government, Surrey Local Authority and Unions are that schools continue to do what is reasonably manageable by teachers and TAs in what are difficult circumstances for all. In the background the staff are dealing with their own family's needs and balancing this with the St Francis school work they have to do. They all have husbands, wives and partners working from home, may be sharing technology and for those with primary and secondary age children, they are managing home learning for their children too. While doing this, teachers are also planning and organising our home learning as well as completing the other school work going on in the background such as training,

reviewing the curriculum plans, report writing etc. In addition, the staff are on rotas for school opening, which takes constant adjusting when take into account staff who are shielding themselves and family members, and some staff having to have time off due to being ill and self-isolating.

**Live Lessons:** On Thursday almost 200 Primary School Headteachers ‘met’ in an online meeting where we discussed many issues including home learning and what we were all doing. In terms of ‘live’ lessons 93% of those schools present were not doing ‘live’ lessons. The Government and teaching unions do not advise them due to concerns around safeguarding children and protecting staff. For this reason, we will not be engaging in producing ‘live’ lessons.

The vast majority of schools are using a mixture of emails, blogs, school websites, online platforms, just like us, and no one wants families to feel overwhelmed by home learning, especially with the wide range of families with differing access to technology.

**Google Classrooms and Microsoft Education:** We are already looking into Google Classrooms and Microsoft Education and pre-recorded lessons, but this will take time to set up and for staff to be trained on these platforms. It will not happen immediately.

### **Re-Opening of Schools**

Headteachers are getting daily updates from the Government, Department for Education (DfE), but we too have to ‘wait and see’ and watch the TV for the latest news as you do! We do not get information in advance. Our Unions are very much working with the Government to ensure that we only open when it has been planned and safe for both children and staff. The newspaper and press reports around UK schools re-opening are speculative and very unhelpful for everyone’s wellbeing. We will let you know as soon as we know!

Please be assured, the staff will pick up learning when we open again and manage the ‘catch-up’. We are used to dealing with children of all abilities, children returning (having forgotten learning) after a long summer holiday, children starting the school mid-way through years, missing learning through hospital stays, starting school with English as an additional language etc. We will manage the transition back as and when – we are already planning some of the things we know that we will need to do. It will all be dependent on advice from the Government, the DfE and Surrey Local Authority Education Department.

### **Online Safety & Reporting Problems**

In light of the new ways we are all finding to communicate and to access online learning it is timely to remind everyone of the following sites that may be supportive for reporting and learning about online safety. Please check that your Parental Controls are in place and that the sites the children are accessing are monitored closely. Also, continue to discuss online safety with the children regularly and keep reminding them to tell you if something worries them.

**ALERT – ZOOM APP:** Please be aware that if you are using Zoom there have been some very unfortunate incidents of ‘hacking’ reported on this site when security controls have not been set properly. Please check that the security settings are firmly in place if you or your children are using Zoom.

<https://reportharmfulcontent.com/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/>

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

<https://www.internetmatters.org/>

<https://www.lgfl.net/online-safety>

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/> (Also has a section for children to support their understanding of online safety)

<https://parentinfo.org/>

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers>

**Please remember to follow Government advice which is very clear that even for Vulnerable Children and those children of Critical Workers – where there is someone at home, the children are safest looked after at home** in order to reduce the spread of the disease. Please respect this, we do not want any child or adult exposed to the virus when there is a safe alternative at home.

Please try not to worry, focus on staying well and safe and just enjoy time with your family. We are hearing of many positives coming out of this difficult situation with regard to families enjoying time together, do keep telling us and sharing photos. We are enjoying them.

**Best wishes,**

**Mrs Wheeler, the Staff and Governors**