



Friday 8th May 2026

### Head Teacher's Weekly Update

Dear Families,

It has been another positive and purposeful week across the school, and it has been a pleasure to see pupils continuing to demonstrate enthusiasm and a commitment to all aspects of school life.

This week, we were delighted to come together as a school community for our Year 13 Leavers Mass, marking an important milestone as our students approach the end of their seven-year journey at St Thomas More. The Mass provided a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the many experiences, achievements and memories that have shaped their time with us, while also celebrating the contribution they have made to the life of the school. It was a fitting occasion to recognise the resilience, character and dedication they have shown throughout their years at St Thomas More, and we thank them for the positive example they continue to set for younger pupils.

As our Year 11 and Year 13 pupils now begin their GCSE and A Level examinations, we keep them very much in our thoughts and prayers. Examination season can be both demanding and significant, and we hope that all pupils approach the coming weeks with confidence, determination and calmness. We are proud of the hard work and perseverance they have shown in preparing for this important stage, and we wish every pupil the very best as they begin their examinations.

### Prayer Theme

Anybody who receives my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I shall love him and manifest myself to him.

**John 14:21**

### We have prayed together as a community:

Dear Lord,

Help us to listen to Your word and to follow Your commandments with faithful hearts. Teach us to show our love for You through kindness, honesty and compassion each day. May we know the love of the Father in our lives, and recognise Your presence guiding and strengthening us. Lead us to care for one another, to live in peace and respect, and to reflect Your love in all we do.

Amen.



### Year 13 Character Shields

- During our Year 13 Leavers Mass, we were proud to present this year's Character Shields to a group of thoroughly deserving recipients. As is always the case, selecting one pupil for each award proved exceptionally difficult due to the remarkable standard of nominations received. The five Character Shields celebrate pupils who consistently demonstrate the values, qualities and personal characteristics that lie at the heart of our school community, and this year's award winners represented those ideals with distinction.



- The **Father Donnelly Shield** for community recognises young people who do their best to bring a community together in love and goodness. Recipients may befriend the lonely, be inclusive in nature or invest in others beyond their friendship group.
- The **Irena Sandler Shield** for courage & integrity recognises the everyday bravery of our students. Recipients will have overcome personal barriers and hardships or shown acts of courage or integrity even when it is not popular.
- The **Oscar Romero Shield** for peace & dignity recognises students who bring a calm and gentle presence to the school. Recipients are known for speaking the best of others & carrying themselves with a quiet dignity.
- The **Wilma Rudolph Shield** for patience & faithfulness recognises students that practice perseverance and show resilience in school. Recipients may have overcome educational barriers, succeeded after setbacks or not given up regardless of circumstances.
- The **Barnardo Shield** for kindness & compassion recognises students who show kindness & compassion to others around them. Recipients have a character of helpfulness and care. They support others around them & try to put others first.

### Pop Up: Mental Health Awareness

- This week, our Pop Up focus has centred on mental health awareness ahead of Mental Health Awareness Week, which takes place between 11th–17th May 2026. Throughout the week, pupils have been provided with valuable opportunities to reflect on the importance of positive mental wellbeing and the support available to





them. Pupils have been encouraged to consider the importance of resilience, openness and kindness towards themselves and others. At St Thomas More, we remain committed to fostering an environment where every pupil feels supported, valued and confident to speak openly about their wellbeing, and we thank both staff and pupils for the thoughtful and mature manner in which they have engaged with this important focus.

**Virtual Parental Session: Supporting Your Child’s Mental Health & Wellbeing**

- On Wednesday 14th May at 5.00pm, our Wellbeing Lead, Mrs Olsen, will be delivering a virtual session for families focused on supporting young people’s mental health and wellbeing.
- With increasing numbers of children and young people experiencing challenges with their mental health, this session aims to provide families with practical guidance and reassurance on how best to support your child’s positive wellbeing. The session will explore a range of helpful strategies, including mindfulness techniques, promoting healthy routines and recognising when additional support may be needed. Families will also be signposted to sources of advice and professional support should you have concerns about your child’s mental health.
- We encourage all families to take advantage of this valuable opportunity to learn more about supporting the wellbeing and emotional health of young people.



A reminder to use our house email addresses if you have any queries.

St Bernadette	St Catherine Laboure	St John Fisher	St Therese	Sixth Form
<a href="mailto:STM-StBQueries@stm.bwcet.com">STM-StBQueries@stm.bwcet.com</a>	<a href="mailto:STM-StCLQueries@stm.bwcet.com">STM-StCLQueries@stm.bwcet.com</a>	<a href="mailto:STM-stjfqueries@stm.bwcet.com">STM-stjfqueries@stm.bwcet.com</a>	<a href="mailto:STM-sttqueries@stm.bwcet.com">STM-sttqueries@stm.bwcet.com</a>	<a href="mailto:STM-SixthFormQueries@stm.bwcet.com">STM-SixthFormQueries@stm.bwcet.com</a>

Please follow us on social media (**Facebook, Instagram and Twitter STM\_CS\_Blaydon**) where we share regular updates from our school community.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs J Turner  
**Head Teacher**

