

## Week 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> September: Communication

Welcome to our new school year. Each week, there are scriptural texts and daily quotes for reflection based on a different theme. Communication is the first of our C.H.R.I.S.T. values at Slough & Eton and it forms the focus for the beginning of the year.

### *Learning from Spiritual Traditions*

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry. (James 1.19)

God created the human being and taught him communication. (Rahman, Q 55.3-4)

Burn worldly love. Rub the ashes and make ink of it. Make the heart the pen, the intellect the writer. Write that which has no end or limit. (Guru Nanak)

*Life in all its fullness – John 10:1-10*

### *Reflection*

God of all,  
as we start the year together  
we thank you for new beginnings:  
may we, by what we say  
and in how we listen  
be ready to learn from one another  
as we seek to discern the truth  
so that together we may share  
life in all its fullness. Amen.

| Communication: 2 <sup>nd</sup> –6 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 |                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monday                                                         | " If there is one general law of communication it is that we never communicate as effectively as we think we do."<br>-- Charles Handy                            |
| Tuesday                                                        | " I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. "<br>-- Maya Angelou |
| Wednesday                                                      | " Don't tell me the moon is shining; show me the glint of light on broken glass. "<br>-- Anton Chekhov                                                           |
| Thursday                                                       | "The best way to solve problems and to fight against war is through dialogue. "<br>-- Malala Yousafzai                                                           |
| Friday                                                         | " Whatever words we utter should be chosen with care for people will hear them and be influenced by them for good or ill. "<br>-- Gautama Buddha                 |

## Week 9<sup>th</sup> –13<sup>th</sup> September: Listening to Others

Communication requires that we listen well which goes beyond the words said by another person to the emotions conveyed, often unintentionally. Listening well is a challenge for most of us yet it is crucial if we are to learn from others.

### *Learning from Spiritual Traditions*

Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant is listening.' (1 Samuel 3.10)

When Utbah bin Rabbiah came to the Prophet (sa) to negotiate with him on behalf of the Quraish, the Prophet (sa) patiently listened to him, even though he did not agree to what was being said. Once Utbah had stopped speaking, the Prophet (sa) asked him: "Is this all that you intended to say?" Utbah replied in the affirmative, and this is when the Prophet (sa) gave his response. (Hadith Ibn Hisham)

Sing, and listen, and let your mind be filled with love. (Guru Granth Sahib)

*Life in all its fullness – John 10:1-10*

### *Reflection*

Ever present God,  
you are always ready to hear us  
yet we often find it difficult  
to listen to others:  
help us to grow and to learn  
by attending to the voices of others.  
May we be open to new ideas  
and discerning of what is good and wholesome  
as we seek together life in its fullness. Amen.

| Listening to Others: 9 <sup>th</sup> –13 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 |                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monday                                                                | The most important thing in communication is hearing what isn't said.<br>-- Peter Drucker                     |
| Tuesday                                                               | Since in order to speak, one must first listen, learn to speak by listening.<br>-- Rumi                       |
| Wednesday                                                             | The right word may be effective, but no word was ever as effective as a rightly timed pause.<br>-- Mark Twain |
| Thursday                                                              | With the gift of listening comes the gift of healing.<br>-- Catherine Doherty                                 |
| Friday                                                                | We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.<br>-- Epictetus               |

## Week 16<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> September: Giving Thanks

Harvest time is traditionally associated with thanksgiving. This week we reflect on gratitude and what we have to be thankful for.

### *Learning from Spiritual Traditions*

God has poured down for you abundant rain, the early and the later rain, as before.

The threshing-floors shall be full of grain, the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. (Joel 2:23-24)

Be grateful to God, for whoever is grateful, it is only for their own good. (Al-Luqman Q 31:12)

If the people use the wealth bestowed on them by God for themselves alone or for treasuring it, it is like a corpse. But if they decide to share it with others, it becomes sacred food. (Guru Nanak)

*Life in all its fullness – John 10:1-10*

### *Reflection*

Generous God

all good things come from you:

we thank you for the food we eat,

for the farmers who grow it

and for all who bring it to our table.

As we celebrate harvest time

show us how to share Earth's gifts

that the whole human family

may enjoy Earth's bounty

and know life in its fullness. Amen.

| Giving Thanks: 16 <sup>th</sup> –20 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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| Monday                                                           | The thankful receiver bears a plentiful harvest.<br>-- William Blake                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Tuesday                                                          | 'Thank you' is the best prayer that anyone could say. I say that one a lot. Thank you expresses extreme gratitude, humility, understanding.<br>-- Alice Walker                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Wednesday                                                        | There's just so many good things coming my way and I have to thank God for the blessings.<br>-- Bukayo Saka                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Thursday                                                         | I always have this image of a woman running across a desert carrying children, trying to find water and food, not knowing when they'll get that. And her feet are slashed up from the dry, hard earth... Even when I'm uncomfortable, sometimes in pain, or just cold... I think, 'Thank God for what I've got.'<br>-- Sue Townsend |
| Friday                                                           | I'd like to say to all my fans out there, thanks for the support. And to all my doubters, thank you very much because you guys have also pushed me.<br>-- Usain Bolt                                                                                                                                                                |

## Week 23<sup>rd</sup> –27<sup>th</sup> September: Languages for Peace

### *Learning from Spiritual Traditions*

Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,  
for he will speak peace to his people,  
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts. (Psalm 85:8)

And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace. (Al-Furqan Q 25:63)

No one is my enemy, No one is a foreigner, With all I am at peace, God within us renders us, incapable of hate and prejudice. (Guru Nanak)

*Life in all its fullness – John 10:1-10*

### *Reflection*

God of all,  
you have made us one as the human race,  
drawn from many peoples and languages;  
give us confidence to find joy in our diversity  
that as we speak in different tongues  
we may be enriched by the insights  
and ways of being in the world  
that others bring;  
may we reach out to one another  
with words of peace so that together  
we may all enjoy life in its fullness. Amen.

| Languages for Peace: 23 <sup>rd</sup> –27 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 |                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monday                                                                 | Knowledge of languages is the doorway to wisdom.<br>-- Roger Bacon                                                                                             |
| Tuesday                                                                | If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart.<br>-- Nelson Mandela |
| Wednesday                                                              | Learning another language is not only learning different words for the same things, but learning another way to think about things.<br>-- Flora Lewis          |
| Thursday                                                               | Better than a thousand hollow words is one word that brings peace.<br>-- Buddha                                                                                |
| Friday                                                                 | Learn a new language and get a new soul.<br>-- Czech Proverb                                                                                                   |

## Week 30<sup>th</sup> September – 4<sup>th</sup> October: The Power of Stories

This week sees the beginning of Black History Month which takes as its theme this year *Reclaiming Narratives*. We reflect upon the power of stories in shaping our self of self, in making sense of the world and in empowering us to live well in the future.

### *Learning from Spiritual Traditions*

Then Joseph said to his brothers ‘I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.’ (Genesis 45:4-5)

We relate to you O Prophet the best of stories through Our revelation of this Quran, though before this you were totally unaware of them. (Yusuf Q 12:3)

You came here empty-handed, and so will you leave. What is yours today belonged to someone else yesterday, and tomorrow someone else will call it his. (Bhagavad Gita)

*Life in all its fullness – John 10:1-10*

### *Reflection*

O God,  
the beginning and the end of all things,  
our lives take shape through the stories we tell;  
help us to see how we can contribute  
to a story that is bigger than ourselves  
that with hope in the future  
we can find power to transform our world together  
that all may know life in its fullness. Amen.

| The Power of Stories: 30 <sup>th</sup> September – 4 <sup>th</sup> October 2024 |                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monday                                                                          | Storytelling is the most powerful way to put ideas into the world.<br>-- Robert McKee                                                       |
| Tuesday                                                                         | There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.<br>-- Maya Angelou                                                       |
| Wednesday                                                                       | There is nothing like returning to a place that remains unchanged to find the ways in which you yourself have altered.<br>-- Nelson Mandela |
| Thursday                                                                        | Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.<br>-- James Baldwin                              |
| Friday                                                                          | He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life.<br>-- Muhammad Ali                                           |

## **Week 7<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> October: The Wonder of Words (Communication)**

This is Libraries Week at Slough & Eton and last week marked National Poetry Day. It's a mystery how words communicate at all (just try explaining it). Finding pleasure in reading, writing, listening and speaking is a path to knowing life in its fullness. All our spiritual traditions revere the written word by which we come to a sense of the sacred.

### ***Wisdom from Spiritual Traditions***

How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!' (Psalm 119:103)

The Most Merciful taught the Qur'an, created man, [and] taught him eloquence.  
(ar-Rahman Q 55:1-4)

One who practises truth, righteous living and good deeds has the supplies for God's path. (Guru Arjan Dev Ji)

*Life in all its fullness – John 10:1-10*

### ***Reflection***

God of truth,  
by the word of your mouth  
were all things made;  
we thank you that with words  
we can name and make sense of our world.  
Teach us to delight in the wonder of language  
and to craft words that are truthful, wise and life-giving  
that together we may know life in its fullness. Amen.

| <b>The Wonder of Words: 7<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> October 2024</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Monday</b>                                                             | To experience sublime natural beauty is to confront the total inadequacy of language to describe what you see. Words cannot convey the scale of a view that is so stunning it is felt.<br>-- Eleanor Catton |
| <b>Tuesday</b>                                                            | The fewer the words, the better the prayer.<br>-- Martin Luther                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Wednesday</b>                                                          | Poetry and lyrics are very similar. Making words bounce off a page.<br>-- Taylor Swift                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Thursday</b>                                                           | Literature is the art of discovering something extraordinary about ordinary people, and saying with ordinary words something extraordinary.<br>-- Boris Pasternak                                           |
| <b>Friday</b>                                                             | Poetry is thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.<br>-- Thomas Gray                                                                                                                                     |

## **Week 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> October: Noise/Distracton (Communication)**

We can all find it difficult to concentrate at times. Perhaps we're living in a world today where there are more distractions than ever. Spiritual traditions have developed wisdom over centuries to practise stillness and contemplation.

### ***Wisdom from Spiritual Traditions***

Be still, and know that I am God!' (Psalm 46:10)

Anas ibn Malik reported: The Messenger of God, peace and blessings be upon him, said to me, "O my son, beware of being distracted in prayer, for distraction in prayer is a cause of ruin."  
(Sunan al-Tirmidhī 589)

To unite with the divine, meditate on divine wisdom. (Guru Nanak)

*Life in all its fullness – John 10:1-10*

### ***Reflection***

O God,  
you speak not in the noise of powerful wind, or earthquake, or fire  
but in the sound of silence;  
in the face of life's distractions  
help us to focus on what truly matters for us  
that we may each know life in its fullness. Amen.

| <b>Noise/Distracton: 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Monday</b>                                                           | We live in such an age of chatter and distraction. Everything is a challenge for the ears and eyes.<br><br>-- Rebecca Pidgeon                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Tuesday</b>                                                          | I have wandered all my life, and I have also travelled; the difference between the two being this, that we wander for distraction, but we travel for fulfilment.<br><br>-- Hilaire Belloc                                                                                                          |
| <b>Wednesday</b>                                                        | Out of silence is born concentration, and from that comes learning.<br><br>-- Stephen Hough                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Thursday</b>                                                         | The world is noisy and messy. You need to deal with the noise and uncertainty.<br><br>-- Daphne Koller                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Friday</b>                                                           | We need to find God, and he cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence. See how nature - trees, flowers, grass- grows in silence; see the stars, the moon and the sun, how they move in silence... We need silence to be able to touch souls.<br><br>-- Mother Teresa |

## **Week 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> October: Communication: Life in its fulness (Communication)**

The words we use have the capacity to be life giving. We conclude our reflections on communication by considering the impact on us.

### ***Wisdom from Spiritual Traditions***

Jesus said “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” (John 10:10)

When the Quran is recited, listen to it attentively and be silent, so you may be shown mercy. (Al-A'raf Q 7:204)

Realization of Truth is higher than all else. Higher still is truthful living. (Guru Nanak)

*Life in all its fullness – John 10:1-10*

### ***Reflection***

O God  
amidst the many voices that claim our attention,  
teach us to listen for words that are life-giving  
as we look to follow on the right path for us.  
Give us wisdom to find words that bring  
blessing and life to others  
that together we may know life in its fulness. Amen.

| <b>Communication: Life in its fulness: 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Monday</b>                                                                             | Two prisoners whose cells adjoin communicate with each other by knocking on the wall. The wall is the thing which separates them but is also their means of communication. It is the same with us and God. Every separation is a link.<br><br>-- Simone Weil |
| <b>Tuesday</b>                                                                            | We are buried beneath the weight of information, which is being confused with knowledge; quantity is being confused with abundance and wealth with happiness.<br><br>-- Tom Waits                                                                            |
| <b>Wednesday</b>                                                                          | Bad human communication leaves us less room to grow.<br><br>-- Rowan Williams                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Thursday</b>                                                                           | Good words are worth much, and cost little.<br><br>-- George Herbert                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Friday</b>                                                                             | Communication is at the very core of our society. That's what makes us human.<br><br>-- Jan Koum                                                                                                                                                             |

## **Week 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> November: Honesty**

This week we mark the start our reflections on the second of our C.H.R.I.S.T. values at Slough & Eton – Honesty.

### ***Wisdom from Spiritual Traditions***

So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbours, for we are members of one another. (Ephesians 4:25)

O believers! Be mindful of Allah and be with the truthful. (At-Tawbah Q 9:119)

Austerity of speech consists in speaking words that are truthful, pleasing, beneficial and not agitating to others. (Bhagavad Gita 17.15)

*Life in all its fullness – John 10:1-10*

### ***Reflection***

God of truth,  
by our words and our actions  
our lives and our intentions are laid open to others:  
give us courage to measure up  
to nothing less than the truth that you are,  
that in honesty of living  
we may enjoy life in its fulness. Amen.

| <b>Honesty: 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b> |                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Monday</b>                                                 | Although rap is about boasting, it's also about honesty and expressing your emotions.<br><br>-- Lakeith Stanfield               |
| <b>Tuesday</b>                                                | Real integrity is doing the right thing, knowing that nobody's going to know whether you did it or not.<br><br>-- Oprah Winfrey |
| <b>Wednesday</b>                                              | A half truth is a whole lie.<br><br>-- Yiddish Proverb                                                                          |
| <b>Thursday</b>                                               | Achievements on the golf course are not what matters, decency and honesty are what matter.<br><br>-- Tiger Woods                |
| <b>Friday</b>                                                 | Whoever is careless with the truth in small matters cannot be trusted with important matters.<br><br>-- Albert Einstein         |

## Week 11<sup>th</sup>– 15<sup>th</sup> November: Confidence

As we reflect on honesty this term, so we reflect on the need not just to be honest in our dealings with other people but also to be honest with ourselves and to have a proper sense of self-confidence where we are realistic about our own abilities.

### ***Wisdom from Spiritual Traditions***

The Lord will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught. (Proverbs 3:26)

The Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali bin Abi Talib says, "If you seek God's grace, determine the aspects of your capabilities and the limits of your inabilities. Otherwise you would exceed your scope thereby undermining the possibility of progress and Divine grace."

He who has no faith in himself can never have faith in God. (Guru Nanak)

*Life in all its fullness – John 10:1-10*

### ***Reflection***

Gracious God,  
you know us better than we know ourselves.  
When we feel unsure of our own abilities  
give us assurance and confidence  
that we can accomplish far more than we can imagine  
when we align our purpose to yours,  
you whose purpose for us is  
that we may find life in its fullness. Amen.

| Honesty: 11 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2024 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monday                                                     | If you have no confidence in self, you are twice defeated in the race of life.<br><br>-- Marcus Garvey                                                                                                                                                    |
| Tuesday                                                    | Life is not easy for any of us. But what of that? We must have perseverance and above all confidence in ourselves. We must believe that we are gifted for something and that this thing must be attained.<br><br>-- Marie Curie                           |
| Wednesday                                                  | I've always believed that success for anyone is all about drive, dedication, and desire, but for me, it's also been about confidence and faith.<br><br>-- Stephen Curry                                                                                   |
| Thursday                                                   | I was always looking outside myself for strength and confidence but it comes from within. It is there all the time.<br><br>-- Anna Freud                                                                                                                  |
| Friday                                                     | You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, 'I lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along.'<br><br>-- Eleanor Roosevelt |

