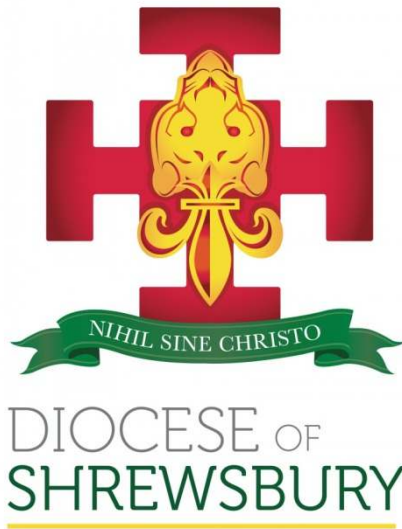




Diocese of Shrewsbury

Department of Education



RE and CATHOLIC LIFE

NEWSLETTER

Autumn Term 2022 No.2

Dear Colleague

1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome back after the half term holiday. Hopefully it was an opportunity for some well-earned rest before the busy run up to Christmas.

We return of course in the Season of Remembrance having celebrated the Feast of All Saints and the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed at the start of November. For all those in our families and our school communities whom we have loved and lost, it is beautiful opportunity to remember them, to celebrate their lives and to pray that they may enjoy the eternal heavenly banquet with Our Father in heaven. We can also ask the Church Triumphant, those who are already in heaven, to intercede for us giving more voice to our prayers. As St Dominic said to his brothers as he was dying, *“Do not weep, for I shall be more useful to you after my death and I shall help you then more effectively than during my life”*.



Remembrance Day on 13th November is a Day of Special Prayer for All Victims of War. As we remember those who died in the WWI and WWII, may we also remember those who have lost their lives in the continuing conflicts around the world, in Ukraine, Myanmar, Yemen, Eritrea to name but a few.

Our Lady, Queen of Peace, pray for us.

(Image by Diane Andraska)

2. THE CALL OF CREATION

The Season of Creation may have come to an end for another year but the need to hear the ‘cry of the earth and the cry of the poor’ is ever more pressing. The Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales (CBCEW) launched a new edition of the environment document, *The Call of Creation* on the Feast of St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals and ecologists.

Writing in the foreword, Bishop John Arnold, Lead Bishop for the Environment, and Bishop Richard Moth, Chair of the Social Justice department, say:

“We are a people of hope who believe in redemption. We must study the signs of the times and take the action that is needed to repair our relationship with God’s creation. As is made clear in The Call of Creation, the exercise of the virtue of solidarity and the promotion of the common good,

which are so needed at this time, are the responsibility of each and every individual and institution in society.”

You can read and download the 2022 edition here: [The Call of Creation - Catholic Bishops' Conference \(cbcew.org.uk\)](https://www.cbcew.org.uk)

3. THE LETTER

The Letter is a new film produced by the Laudato Si Movement and Off the Fence. Through the film it is hoped that the message of Laudato Si will reach a wider audience. The film can be watched free on YouTube Originals here: [The letter \(theletterfilm.org\)](https://www.theletterfilm.org)

4. ADVENT

Our annual time of expectant waiting and preparation begins this year on Sunday 27th November. Busted Halo redesigned their Advent in two minutes video last year. If you haven't seen it, you can find it here for use with staff and pupils alike: [bustedhalo.com - Advent in two minutes](https://www.bustedhalo.com).

Also, a reminder that there are various resources for schools on our website to support you in your marking of the Advent season (File path: *Resources/Prayer and Liturgy/Primary/Advent*. NB the password is *Education*)

There are many online Advent calendars for use in schools too, from CAFOD, Mission Together, and Busted Halo for example to help us in our prayerful waiting and preparation for Christ's coming. Loyola Press also has an online Advent calendar for adults ([Loyola Press - Advent-calendar-for-adults](https://www.loyolapress.com)).

Of course, there will be many different traditions in our schools to celebrate Advent. If you haven't explored it before, why not take the opportunity this Advent to focus on the Jesse Tree.

“There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit”
(Isaiah 1:11)

The Jesse tree helps us connect the custom of decorating Christmas trees to the events leading to Jesus' birth. Jesse was the father of King David. We adorn a Jesse tree with illustrated ornaments that represent the people, prophesies, and events leading up to the birth of Jesus. The ornaments of the Jesse tree tell the story of God in the Old Testament, connecting the Advent season with the faithfulness of God across four thousand years of history. It is a beautiful way to share the stories of the People of God. There are books suitable for primary children to support staff in sharing the scripture stories of the Jesse Tree such as *Meeting Jesus through the Jesse Tree: Stories and activities for Advent*, by Anne E Neuberger, and *Tales from the Jesse Tree* by Amy Robinson. Loyola Press also has a free online slideshow and a guide to the Scripture read and images used for each day of Advent for older children and adults: [loyolapress.com - The Jesse Tree](https://www.loyolapress.com)

Alternatively, if you are still in school for the last week of Advent before Christmas, you could explore the O Antiphons. The O Antiphons are the seven antiphons recited before the Magnificat, Mary's great song of praise, during Vespers (Evening Prayer) of the Divine Office (Liturgy of the Hours). They cover the Octave before Christmas from December 17th to December 23rd. Each antiphon highlights a title for the Messiah - those titles prophesied by Isaiah with the coming of the Messiah.



Interestingly, if you use the Latin for each title and, starting with the last title take the first letter of each one - Emmanuel, Rex, Oriens, Clavis, Radix, Adonai, Sapientia - the Latin words 'ero cras' are formed, meaning, *Tomorrow, I will come*. Therefore, Jesus, whose coming we have waited for and prepared for in Advent and whom we have addressed in these seven Messianic titles, now speaks to us, 'Tomorrow, I will come'. The O Antiphons can then bring an intensity to our Advent preparation and bring it to a joyful conclusion.

Many colleagues ask me where they might find images that are more representational of our universal Church. Click on the links to see a variety of nativities – paintings and sets – from different cultures:

[Nativity Paintings from around the World | The Jesus Question](#)

[WORLD NATIVITY - Nativities from Developing Countries](#)

[Nativity Art from Around the World - Cultivated Learning](#)

5. CARITAS AT CHRISTMAS: Appeal 2022

Caritas Shrewsbury is launching its 2022 **Caritas at Christmas** campaign throughout the Diocese this month. Christmas can be particularly difficult for many families, and Caritas seek to help wherever possible with food vouchers, gifts, and fuel and lighting. There are resources available on the website, but here is a letter from the DCEO, Trish Spencer [here](#) (who many of you met at this year's Head Teacher Conference), the Caritas at Christmas [poster](#) and [fundraising ideas](#) for those who are able to support them at this time. Don't forget to tag Caritas in on social media @CaritasDio (Twitter) so we can spread the good news of all you do! A donation form for schools can be found [here](#).

Thank you so much for your help in the past. Together we can all make a difference.

6. BETHLEHEM CARE AND HOSPICE TRUST

Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust write: *'You may know that in Palestine (Bethlehem) there is a desperate and urgent need for palliative care. Twenty-five per cent of all deaths are cancer related. Three out of every four persons first diagnosed with cancer are at stage four (4,terminal). Until now there has been no palliative care available in Bethlehem. The average age of death from cancer is 52 years.*

A Hospice at Home Service has been set up. We have room(s) from which to operate. A Jerusalem Hospice and Bethlehem University will work in collaboration with St Joseph's Hospice Home Care Service.'

If you are able to help support St Joseph's Hospice-at-Home Care Service contact Joe McNally
Telephone 07891072858 E-mail; Trustee@bcandht.org

Log on to the website for more information www.bethlehemcareandhospicetrust.org

7. LITURGICAL PRAYER FOR ADVENT

On 20th December, 4.00-5.00pm, we will hold our Diocesan Liturgical prayer for Advent at Our Lady and the Apostles in Shaw Heath. We are so blessed to have such gifted children and young people, and such supportive, committed staff in our Diocese happy to share their time and giftedness in the creation of this opportunity to gather in prayer and worship. As last year, the hour will be livestreamed from Our Lady and the Apostles, and we would love our schools and colleges to contribute, whether reading, in song, or with their artistic talents. Please do get in touch with julia.cunningham@dioceseofshrewsbury.org if you would like to be involved.

8. MUSTARD SEEDS

Mustard Seeds is video resources website creating high quality video resources that complement the Catholic curriculum and Catholic formation.

This is a small-scale project at the moment, but content is building and being added to regularly. Some content is free, and some content is downloadable for a fee, but once paid, the content can be used in school as long as you wish. A video series for Advent has just been uploaded, which includes 4 short educational videos and 4 prayer videos from Jo Boyce of CJM.

To find out more click on the link: [Mustard Seeds \(mustard-seeds.co.uk\)](http://mustard-seeds.co.uk)

PRIMARY

9. ONELIFE MUSIC

OPEN for Advent returns for the Season of Advent offering short bursts of prayer and the ONELIFE Stream takes place on 2nd December.

For full details of all that is on offer this Advent: [Welcome to OneLife Music](#)

10. MARY'S MEALS

Anna Houghton from Mary's Meals writes:

Mary's Meals "kneads" you!

Please accept the misuse of "needs" above but it is for a very good reason.

I am delighted to share two pieces of good news!

Firstly, we are excited to announce that this winter all donations to Mary's Meals will be doubled by a group of generous supporters, up to £1.5 million. This means that just £15.90 will feed, not one, but two children a life-changing daily school meal for a whole school year!

Our [Double The Love](#) campaign runs from 1 November 2021 to 31 January 2022. We'd be delighted if you'd like to get involved in this opportunity in the run up to Christmas. Please do let me know if you would like any resources such as posters and cardboard collection boxes.

Secondly, '**Raise some dough!**' Our exciting new fundraising initiative involves a mug-shaped cookie cutter, which can be used to make delicious Mary's Meals biscuits! "We knead you!" This will launch during November 2022.

Could you organise a little fundraising event such as a tea or coffee morning or a bake sale around these tasty biscuits during the Double The Love period? There are aprons and recipe books also available in the online shop, but the little cookie cutter is free of charge when used for a fundraising event. You could even use the cutter as a template to draw round for pupils to decorate and make Christmas decorations with.

As last year, Mary's Meals is able to offer this **beautiful free** [Nativity kit](#), gifted by bestselling author Frank Cottrell-Boyce and his wife Denise, complete with **two rhyming scripts suitable for infants and juniors**.

Finally, please do remember if you would like class talks or assemblies, about the work we do, you can contact me to arrange this. There is no charge for this!

Anna Houghton, Supporter Engagement Officer, Mary's Meals 07934296559
anna.houghton@marysmeals.org

SECONDARY

11. WORLD YOUTH DAY 2023

World Youth Day is the largest international gathering of young people. It is held every three years being first established by Pope Saint John Paul II in 1985. WYD 2023 will be held next year in Lisbon.

As a Diocese we have a limited number of tickets available for young people aged 18 – 35. The cost is £1,200 – inclusive of meals, travel, accommodation, and World Youth Day passes. For any questions, or an application form, contact: clare.williams@dioceseofshrewsbury.org For more information about WYD visit <https://www.lisboa2023.org/en/> For more information see the attached [flyer](#)

12. CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP FORMATION 2023/24

The Christian Heritage Centre are now opening applications for **2023's Christian Leadership Formation programme for Sixth Formers**. They have brought the application period forward this year, to allow more time for the process.

The programme (Catholic in content and liturgy although open to students of any Christian denomination) is a unique opportunity for students currently in Lower Sixth, who are committed to their faith and who wish to pursue public-facing careers. It provides philosophical and theological formation around fundamental themes that underpin the common good, as well as spiritual accompaniment and training in practical skills. It aims to prepare them to become passionate defenders of the faith in the vocation they choose.

Click [here](#) for an introduction to the course and [here](#) for the course flyer. Further information about the programme and application forms are on the programme's website: www.christianheritagecentre.com/cf

13. 'WORLDS APART': THEOS THINK TANK

Emily Downes, director and animator of the animation *Nobody Stands Nowhere* has produced another video with Theos Think Tank called *Worlds Apart*.

Theos Think Tank says of the animation that it "*travels through a whirlwind of questions surrounding the science and religion debate. The film invites the viewer into the details of the conversations, where there is less conflict than it seems from far off*". There are lots of engaging questions posed in the short film that could provide seeds for fruitful discussions in class. It's also certainly a good one to keep in the bag for showing during open evenings next year!

[Worlds Apart - YouTube](#)

CPDF

To attend any of our CPDF sessions, please follow this link: [Book a CPDF course](#)

Upcoming CPDF:

KS5 Core RE

It has been decided that with the pausing of the KS5 section of RED 2022 the Diocesan session calendared for 9th November has been postponed as has the NW Hub meeting calendared for 2nd November.

3rd Nov	Secondary DADAH Catholic Life and Mission at Aquinas College
8th Nov	Christ at the Centre: Session 2 at Our Lady, Star of the Sea
10th Nov	COAST: Virtual
16th Nov	Secondary ECTs Catholic life and Mission: Virtual
17th Nov	Day of Spiritual Reflection for Senior Leaders
22nd Nov	Primary ECT Year 2: Ways of Knowing: Virtual
30th Nov	Secondary RSE Leads at St Paul's
6th Dec	Primary RE Coordinators Briefing: Virtual



*Be gentle to the weak,
firm to the stubborn,
steadfast to the proud,
humble to the lowly.*

St Columban (543-615)

And finally,

I leave you with some words from St Columban whose feast is celebrated on 23rd November

God bless,

Julia