

Diocese of Shrewsbury

Department of Education



RE and CATHOLIC LIFE NEWSLETTER

Autumn Term 2023 No.1

Dear Colleague

1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome back to all who are returning to our schools, and a warm welcome to those of you who are new to Shrewsbury Diocese. I do hope the summer holidays provided an opportunity for some much-needed relaxation and rejuvenation ready for the new year ahead.

Once a new term gets underway it's easy for the holidays to become but a distant memory, however, a particular highlight of the summer for me, and one I hope to return to throughout the year, was the coverage of World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon. Although the event seemed to go by largely unnoticed by the mainstream press, the noise on social media platforms such as Twitter was joyously deafening! The celebrations in Portugal came to a climax with the celebration of Holy Mass presided over by Pope Francis where 1.5 million people were gathered.



In his homily for this concluding Mass, Pope Francis, inspired by the Gospel recounting the Transfiguration, called on all young people to **shine**, to **listen** and to **be unafraid**. He said,

"We become luminous, we shine, when, welcoming Jesus, we learn to love like Him. To love like Jesus: that makes us luminous, that leads us to do works of love."

"It's all here...all that is to be done in life: Listen to Him. Listen to Jesus, every secret is there."

"Dear young people...I would like to look into the eyes of each one of you and say to you: Do not be afraid. Do not be afraid."

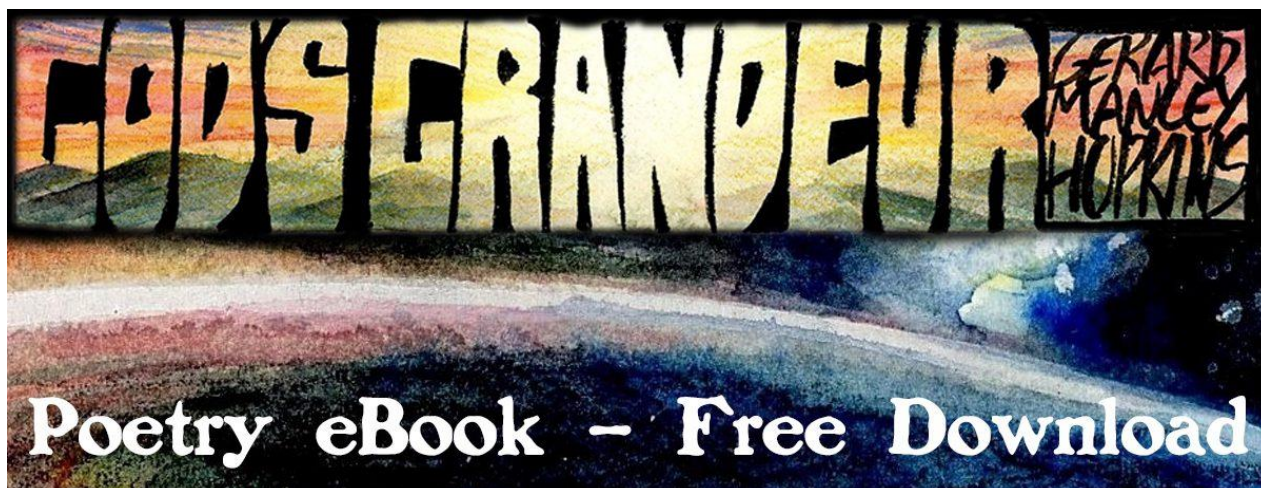
This academic year, may we in all our endeavours shine, listen to Jesus and be unafraid to do his will, and may we encourage the children and young people in our care to do the same.

You can read the full homily here: [Apostolic Journey to Portugal: Holy Mass for World Youth Day at "Parque Tejo" \(Lisbon, 6 August 2023\) | Francis \(vatican.va\)](#)

2. THE SEASON OF CREATION

We are currently in the Season of Creation, the global and ecumenical celebration of prayer and action to protect our common home, which spans from 1st September to 4th October. For more information on this important season, including the Pope's message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, click here: [Season of Creation - Catholic Bishops' Conference \(cbcew.org.uk\)](#). Also, **The God who Speaks**, in conjunction with Bible Society, have several resources for the season which can be found [here](#).

In addition, **Jesuits.org** have collaborated with cartoonist, Julian Peters, who has produced a free comic book-style adaption of Gerard Manley Hopkins's poem, *God's Grandeur*.



This could be an engaging way to hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor whilst offering the potential for cross-curricular collaboration. The little e-book ends with a short biography of the artist, Julian Peters, and a statement from him about the intention behind the project.

You can access the e-book [here](#)

3. MASS TO CELEBRATE THE START OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

Mass to celebrate the start of the school year will take place in two venues in the Diocese:

Tuesday 19th September **St Anthony's, Wythenshawe** **4.30pm**

Thursday 21st September **St John Henry Newman, Latchford** **4.30pm**

We very much look forward to seeing you there if you are able to join us.

Refreshments will be available after Mass so please join us to continue the celebration.

4. EDUCATION SUNDAY

Education Sunday is one of the oldest Days of Special Prayer in England and Wales and offers an opportunity for us to pray to Almighty God for all people involved in Catholic education, to celebrate the achievements of the past and to ask Our Lord to bless the work of the year ahead.

This year it is celebrated on Sunday 10th September and focuses on the promise given by Jesus in St Matthew's Gospel:

“Where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them.”

(Matthew 18:20)

Rt Rev Marcus Stock, Bishop of Leeds, and Chair of the **Catholic Education Service**, in his message to Catholic schools for Education Sunday states, *“As you gather today in your schools and universities, you can take these words to heart, for our Lord Jesus Christ always keeps His promise. You are gathered together in His name and He is with you as you work, learn, pray, grow and live out your mission.”*

For prayers and resources for Education Sunday from the CES and the full message from Rt Rev Marcus Stock, click [here](#).

Ten Ten have also produced resources for both primary and secondary schools that are available as free downloads. For each phase Ten Ten have provided an assembly, daily prayers and staffroom prayers. You can access them [here](#).

5. LITURGICAL THEMES

With grateful thanks to Mrs Mairie Gelling, Chaplain at St Nicholas’s CHS, Hartford, who has updated the liturgical calendar for use in schools. The document contains lots of helpful information in the introduction, for example, a summary of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) and notes about key Catholic charities in England and Wales. It also contains weekly themes aligned with the Sunday Gospel, key feast days and opportunities for CST during each week. You can download the calendar [here](#)

6. THE NOUN PROJECT

A reminder of this useful website providing free downloadable icons and photographs on a huge range of topics that may be beneficial for learning resources and supporting dual coding.

For the new academic year, they are offering *‘free templates to create engaging, highly visual educational materials with Noun Project icons’*. The education templates are available as Google Slides and can be accessed from this webpage [Free Resources for Teachers. Use these free templates to create... | by Jeremy Elliott | Noun Project \(thenounproject.com\)](#)

In addition, Noun Project offers a large array of free icons to support the teaching of religious education. A quick search using the keywords ‘Catholic’ or ‘Christian’, for example, provides many variations on a theme, but also simple depictions of Gospel stories or the Sacraments like these below:



Created by jonata hangga
from Noun Project



Created by jonata hangga
from Noun Project

7. GOD WHO SPEAKS – BIBLE SOCIETY

God Who Speaks in collaboration with Bible Society continues to produce resources for schools and parishes. In the light of the RED (RE Directory), there is a continued focus on understanding sacred scripture with a focus on the Letter of St James, and lovely posters free to download and print based on the miracles of Jesus in the Gospels. Fleur Dorrell says,

Stuart Ford takes us on an exciting journey around this jewel of a letter - [The God Who Speaks](#)

We have two new posters on the **Miracles of Jesus** (PDFs and jpegs) here - [The God Who Speaks](#)

Celebrate the **Feast of St Jerome on 30th September** with our great new poster here – [The God Who Speaks](#). And a range of articles and activities for schools and parishes – [The God Who Speaks](#)

PRIMARY

8. DIOCESAN SUPPORT FOR PRIMARY RE

We currently have a small number of schools who are piloting the new The Vine and the Branches RE scheme. This scheme is being written by TERE with Years 1 and 3 now available as online teacher and pupil books (£50 per year group).

To support schools with their preparation to deliver the scheme from **September 2024** several days have been organised throughout the year offering CPDF for RE Coordinators and for teachers of particular year groups:

RE Coordinator Conference 10th November

This day is an opportunity to further engage with the expectations of the RED (Religious Education Directory) with Dr Margaret Carswell. Margaret Carswell is a Senior Lecturer in Religious Education at Australian Catholic University. Margaret's academic interest and professional work are in curriculum design and development and how the Bible is presented in RE. The day will be an excellent opportunity to explore how to teach scripture in religious education for meaning.

In addition to this day event, there is a twilight each term to support RE Coordinators in their role and provide updates on diocesan and national developments.

As every year, we offer **support for new RE Coordinators** with an afternoon **induction** session offered in the Autumn term and again in the Spring term. It is advised that all new RE Coordinators take the opportunity to attend. The Autumn term session takes place on **21st September**.

Understanding Scripture with Lat Blaylock

In collaboration with Lat Blaylock from RE Today we are pleased to offer this opportunity for all teachers of RE from Y1 to Y6 to develop their understanding of how Catholics interpret the Bible, and to develop their confidence in how to teach a Catholic understanding of scripture.

Lat will lead one day per phase from KS1 to UKS2, using examples which bridge between The Way, The Truth and The Life and the implementation of the RED.

Lat will focus on creative and thoughtful teaching and learning.

KS1 26th February

LKS2 14th March

UKS2 15th March

Support for implementation of The Vine and the Branches

These days are an opportunity for teachers of Year 1, 2, 3 and 4 to gather with colleagues who teach the same year group, to explore the demands of the model curriculum and to understand

how that has been translated into the new directed religious education scheme, The Vine and The Branches.

There will be input on the overarching theme for each year, the foci for each branch and the opportunity to plan and collaborate in preparation for teaching in the new academic year.

Y1 10th June Y2 13th June Y3 21st June Y4 26th June

EYFS and the new model curriculum

We are delighted to have Julie Rourke from Liverpool Archdiocese, herself an EY specialist, and instrumental in the writing of this section of the RED, support our EYFS teachers with implementing the model curriculum in their own context.

Julie will share the rationale behind the model curriculum and share best practice for implementation.

There will be opportunity for collaboration with colleagues built into the programme.

25th January

22nd May

Finally, we continue to offer our **Christ at the Centre** course. This course supports teachers in their nurturing of “*religiously literate and engaged children who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to reflect spiritually, and think ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life*” (RED 2023)

The course is open to **all** primary practitioners and comprises of modules run over four days. Delegates are expected to **attend all four days** to complete the course.

For more details, please refer to the CPDF booklet and the website: [Book a CPDF course](#)

9. ENCOUNTER CONFERENCE

In advance of the launch of the new Prayer and Liturgy Directory later this term we are delighted to welcome The Mark 10 Mission to our diocese on **Thursday 12th October** for our **Encounter Conference**.

The Mark 10 Mission have a mission to bring children to Jesus. They say, *'We are passionate about every child coming to know Jesus and He has been so gracious in leading our ministry to this point. Now we invite you to come alongside us as we press forward with our mission. Together we can lead every child into deeper relationship with Christ and help our schools be places where every person can know His love and friendship in a personal way'*.

The Encounter Conference will be a day to refocus on what prayer is all about... a person who is alive, who knows us, loves us, and wants to grow in relationship with us. Prayer is about an encounter with Jesus.

The conference takes place at St Columba's, Plas Newton, and begins with Holy Mass celebrated by Canon David Roberts. [Book a CPDF course](#)

10. CAFOD RESOURCES FOR PRIMARY RE, PRAYER AND LITURGY

CAFOD have produced a handy list on their website with live links to their top resources for schools to support you with prayer, liturgy, RE and Catholic life.

You can access the list here: [Back to school: Explore our resources for the new school year \(cafod.org.uk\)](#)

SECONDARY

11. DIOCESAN SUPPORT FOR SECONDARY RE

A reminder that all Heads of RE should be able to access the Diocesan SharePoint which hosts folders for the uploading and downloading of resources for delivery of the RED model curriculum. If you are unable to access the folder, please contact Rahul.Ramanan@dioceseofshrewsbury.org for assistance. Rahul is also the point of contact if you wish to allow other members of your department to access the drive.

Please do continue to share and collaborate through the uploading of resources as this will benefit *all* schools as we transition from the RECD to the RED.

RE Conference 19th June

This year we are working with all the dioceses in the North to offer an RE Conference for Secondary RE Leads. This conference will provide opportunities to deepen subject knowledge, offer practical approaches in terms of pedagogy and allow for greater collaboration and networking.

A detailed outline of the day will be shared later in the term.

12. CAFOD RESOURCES FOR SECONDARY RE

CAFOD have produced a handy list on their website with live links to their top resources for schools to support you with prayer, liturgy, RE and Catholic life.

You can access the list here: [Back to school: Explore our resources for the new school year \(cafod.org.uk\)](https://www.cafod.org.uk/back-to-school-explore-our-resources-for-the-new-school-year)

SYMT (Shrewsbury Youth Mission Team)

13. FAITH IN ACTION

The Faith in Action Award for primary and secondary pupils is run by SYMT (Shrewsbury Youth Mission Team). The award seeks to help young people practice their faith and make a difference in their community.

The award is for both primary and secondary as Year 6 can achieve the 'Pin' level award, then gain the higher-level awards at their secondary school.

Please see the flyer for further information and about registration for this academic year.

<https://educationshrewsbury.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/FIA-poster-1.pdf>

RSHE

14. TEACHING ABOUT PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

On 31st August, Ofsted provided guidance on how they will now inspect the teaching of protected characteristics in schools – details can be found via the link below:

[Inspecting teaching of protected characteristics](#)

15. STUDENT ANXIETY GUIDE FROM LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY

Leeds Beckett University has produced a free guide for students on coping with anxiety that you may find useful.

You can download it here [Carnegie Centre of Excellence for mental health in schools - Student Anxiety Guide](#)

CPDF

In addition to the CPDF opportunities outlined above, you can find our full offer for this year in our pdf booklet. [CPDF 23-24 booklet](#)

We have a wealth of sessions on offer for your continuing professional development and formation. It is certainly worth having a look at the document and signing up in the usual way via the website or by using the **live link within the booklet** itself: [Book a CPDF course](#)

UPCOMING CPDF:

Welcome to the Diocese of Shrewsbury

14/09/2023: Primary Schools 3.45 – 4.45 Virtual session

25/09/2023: Secondary Schools: 3.45 – 4.45 Virtual session

New R.E. Co-ordinators

21/09/2023 New RE Coordinators' Induction– Primary 1.00 – 3.30 St John Henry Newman Parish Centre, Warrington

Christ At the Centre A Course for Primary Practitioners

27/09/2023: Christ at the Centre – A Course for Primary Practitioners – Module 1 9.30 – 3.30 Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish Centre, Ellesmere Port

COAST

27/09/2023: Autumn Term 10.00 – 3.00 All Hallows Catholic College, Macclesfield

Support for CSI

29/09/2023: Support Under the New CSI Framework – Autumn Term 9.30 – 12.00 Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish Centre, Ellesmere Port

R.E Coordinators

04/10/202: RE Coordinators - Twilight Briefing 3.30 – 4.45 Virtual session:

ECT Induction

11/10/2023: ECT Induction Primary, Year 1 – Prayer & Liturgy 3.45 – 5.00 Virtual session

Encounter Conference

12/10/2023: Encounter Conference: For Primary, with the Mark 10 Mission 9.30 – 3.30 St Columba's Parish Hall, Chester

SHORE

19/10/2023: SHORE Meeting – Autumn Term 9.30 – 3.30 The Catholic High School, Chester

CCRS

The Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) has for over a quarter of a century enabled those responsible for passing on our Catholic Christian Faith through education or catechesis to gain a deeper knowledge of that faith.

From Thursday the 14th of September we will be offering CCRS classes at St Anthony's Parish Centre, Wythenshawe, and online learning with seminars in person, either at The Presbytery of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Birkenhead or at St Anthony's Parish Centre, Wythenshawe.

Classes at St Anthony's will take place between 8.45am-12.30pm, on three consecutive Thursdays per module.

Seminars will take place from 9.45am – 11.15am at St Anthony's and from 4.45pm-6.15pm at Presbytery, Birkenhead.

There will be two modules this term: The Church and Old Testament. Old Testament online module will be available one week before the first seminar in person.

Practically, the course can be completed over two years, or a maximum of five years. It is divided into eight assessed modules. Doing CCRS does require time and application, but it will deepen your understanding. Why not give it a try?

For more details visit: <https://educationshrewsbury.org/formation-development/ccrs/>

or email: ccrs@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

And finally, I leave you with the beautiful prayer of thanksgiving for all of you who work in our Catholic schools, as found on the prayer card available on the Bishops' Conference website,



Dear Lord,

Thank you for the gift of Catholic schools.

Thank you for all those who have given their talents to educating our young people. Through the challenges they encounter each day, lead them to an ever deeper appreciation of the sacred duty to which you have called them.

Thank you for all those who contribute to the efficient running of our schools: support staff, kitchen staff, maintenance staff, governors and chaplains. We thank them for their hard work and dedication.

Thank you for all those who lead our Catholic schools. May they be people of integrity so that they can be witnesses as well as teachers. We pray that the schools they lead will become places where our young people can experience your love in their lives.

Thank you for our pupils. May your love strengthen and nurture them through the influence and example of those who care for them. We pray that through their time at school they will flourish and grow to discover who you have called them to be.

We make this prayer through your Son, Jesus Christ, our teacher and our Lord,
Amen.

God bless,

Julia