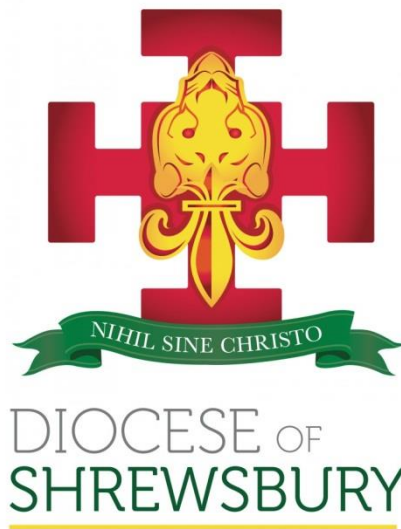


Diocese of Shrewsbury

Department of Education



RE and CATHOLIC LIFE

NEWSLETTER

Autumn Term 2023 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.

In Rome, the proceedings of the first session of the latest Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops drawn to a close. Though the 16th assembly, it has been an unprecedented gathering as for the first time, at Pope Francis' invitation, men and women have been invited, in virtue of their baptism, to sit at the same table to take part, not only in the discussions, but also in the voting process of this Assembly of the Synod of Bishops.

The Assembly of the Synod of Bishops wrote a letter to the People of God in the final days *“to thank God with all of you for the beautiful and enriching experience we have lived. We lived this blessed time in profound communion with all of you.”* They say, *“At the invitation of the Holy Father, we made significant room for silence to foster mutual listening and a desire for communion in the Spirit among us... Day by day, we felt the pressing call to pastoral and missionary conversion. For the Church’s vocation is to proclaim the Gospel not by focusing on itself, but by placing itself at the service of the infinite love with which God loved the world (cf. John 3:16).”*

It was confirmed by members of the assembly that although the first session of the Synod has closed, this experience has not come to an end. The experience of Synod shows a Church that seeks to include everyone and make space for the Holy Spirit.



This is the Church we are called to dream: a Church that is the servant of all, the servant of the least.

A Church that welcomes, serves, loves. A Church with open doors that is a haven of mercy.

Let us share this call to be a people of welcome, service, love and mercy with our children and young people this term, particularly as we draw near to Advent, a time of waiting and preparation. It is through welcome, service, love, and mercy that we prepare our hearts to welcome Jesus.

You can read the full text of the letter to the People of God here: [Letter of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops to the People of God](#). A synthesis report for the first session has also been published which I commend to you [A SYNODAL CHURCH IN MISSION](#)

2. ALL SAINTS AND ALL SOULS

This week we begin the Season of Remembrance with the Feast Day of All Saints and the Feast Day of All Souls.



www.hallow.com have a webpage with lots of information about All Saints Day including a list of FAQs <https://hallow.com/blog/all-saints-day-faq-origin-celebrations-and-prayers/>

Also, Mustard Seeds have created a free video for schools to explore the Feast of All Saints. <https://mustard-seeds.co.uk/shop/>. Follow the link to the SHOP page, then scroll down to the Halloween/All Saints' Day video and download for free. It's a 6-minute video giving a Catholic perspective on approaching Halloween, and the important feast day that follows.

3. ADVENT

Our annual time of expectant waiting and preparation begins this year on Sunday 3rd December. As the previous Sunday, the Feast of Christ, the Universal King, marks the end of the liturgical year we move into Year B readings and hear from the Gospel of St Mark.

I included a significant amount of information about the Season of Advent and Christmas in my newsletter last year, which I have added to for 2023. You can find the information here for sharing with staff as and where appropriate [Advent](#)

4. CARITAS AT CHRISTMAS: Appeal 2023

Bishop Mark has written to schools asking you to consider supporting *Caritas Diocese of Shrewsbury* this Advent and Christmas. Fundraising efforts last year have had a real impact on those who have benefited from the support of Caritas since then.

You can access the Caritas at Christmas poster, donation form and fundraising ideas here: [Poster](#) [Donation form](#) and [Ideas](#)

5. MUSTARD SEEDS

Mustard Seeds is a video resources website creating high quality video resources that complement the Catholic curriculum and Catholic formation. It is aimed at KS2 and KS3 pupils but could be used with other phases and even with staff.

Three new series have been created since I last mentioned Mustard Seeds to you.

[Mustard Seeds flyer](#)

See below to hear from Chris, the person behind Mustard Seeds, giving more information on each series plus links to preview the material:

The Big Questions Series 1 For a bit more background, the series asks the questions: "does praying achieve anything?" "Do I need to go to Confession?" and "Do miracles still happen?" Each episode is around 15 mins in length, but they're each broken down into 3 short segments, with pupils encouraged to discuss their own thoughts and ideas between viewing the 3 segments. It should be used as a platform to enable group discussions of some of the big ideas connected to our faith. I've also had schools tell me they'd use this content with staff on INSET days.

<https://vimeo.com/863572543?share=copy>

Big Questions is available from 31st October - it will be £80 plus VAT for the 3 episodes. But anyone can pre-order before the end of 30th October for £65. We're also offering a bundle of Big Questions and the 4-part ADVENT series for £150 plus VAT (£30 discount).

NB – once purchased and downloaded all videos can be used indefinitely by schools.

Advent: a 4-part series, 1 episode for each week of Advent. Suitable for KS2/KS3 - looks at themes of preparation, keeping Christ at the centre, Bible readings, finding/accepting our purpose (as Mary and Joseph did) and looking at the Nativity scene. The Advent series is filmed in a very similar style to my 8-part LENT series.

<https://vimeo.com/754274423?share=copy>

Confirmation preparation series: Confirmation has 6 episodes, each around 8-10mins, and looks at various aspects of the Sacrament and the preparation process.

<https://vimeo.com/695058416?share=copy>

The Confirmation series is £150 plus VAT, with the option of some printable supporting PDF files for £30.

6. PLD (Prayer and Liturgy Directory)

The CES are pleased to share with you the text of the Prayer and Liturgy Directory for schools, academies, and colleges 'To love You more dearly'. This has been emailed out to schools, however, if you haven't received a copy of the pdf you can access it [here](#)

Please do not implement aspects of the directory at this stage as further guidance and CPDF will be offered in due course. Schools have until 2025-26 to be fully compliant with the directory.

7. LAUDATO SI CENTRE

The Laudato Si Centre is an exciting new project at Wardley Hall in the Diocese of Salford. It has a packed-out programme of educational sessions and activities has arrived at our centre this term with the introduction of a new Environment and Learning Officer.

The centre can provide a variety of ways for schools to reconnect with the natural world and all it has to offer within the sphere of the school curriculum.

In addition to presenting a unique and engaging curriculum offer, they are eager to help schools experience the healing hands of nature through a dedicated wellbeing offer that seeks to provide support for those experiencing challenges with mental health, grief, the demands of young carers, and more.

To find out more about the centre and the opportunities on offer email laudatosi@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

8. ATCRE (Association for Teachers of Catholic RE)

This academic year's ATCRE Conference takes place at Maria Fidelis School, near Euston, on Saturday 2nd March. The Conference is entitled, '**Rethinking Catholic Social Teaching**' and the two keynote speakers are Susan Elderfield and Raymond Friel.

For more information including how to book, click [here](#)

PRIMARY

9. RE COORDINATOR SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE AUDIT

Thank you to those of you who completed the subject knowledge audit I sent out last half term. If you haven't yet completed it, I would be grateful if you would to help me ascertain any significant

subject gaps. I have amended the form to remove the final question asking for sign up to the pilot scheme. Apologies if this final question (included in error) stopped anyone completing the audit.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1K--OW8zW0muhjnz1LMDD1TBasoZzMY627s86z9yMDIs/edit>

10. CPDF

Please note: the dates for the CPDF for Y1 and Y3 teachers in the summer term have been swapped around to consider the Phonics testing Y1 teachers will be undertaking.

New dates:

10th June Y3 Teachers: Support for Implementing & Teaching The Vine and Branches

21st June Y1 Teachers: Support for Implementing & Teaching The Vine and Branches

11. ONELIFE MUSIC

OPENforAdvent and their New Online Advent Retreat for 2023 is all complete.

Join us LIVE - 1st December

Kick off the season of Advent, LIVE with Dan and Emily for a time of Advent Music, Prayer and Laughter!!

[For more information](#)

Short Bursts of Daily Prayer

Join us each day of Advent for a time of prayer, music, and reflection. Each lasting around 4 minutes and can be shared with your class to start the day, the afternoon or at the end of the day.

[For more information](#)

Whole School Online Retreat New for 2023:

Let His Glory Shine is a lovely whole school half day online retreat allowing time as whole School in this busy season to stop and prepare together for the coming of The Light of the World.

[For more information](#)

12. CAFOD

CAFOD's primary support officers continue to work hard to produce resources for use in RE and to support with prayer and liturgy.

Find out what CAFOD have to offer with this [presentation](#)

SECONDARY

13. CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP FORMATION

The Christian Heritage Centre are launching their Christian Leadership Formation programme for 2024, opening applications to students in Lower Sixth / Year 12 from now until the end of January. This is a unique programme in the UK, offering a Catholic and holistic preparation for any student hoping to take their faith into the public square through their future career.

Inspired by the Lord Alton of Liverpool and developed by the Christian Heritage Centre, the programme intends to provide future leaders with the tools to shape a society founded on Christian principles. Three successive residential modules over the course of nine months provide successful applicants with high-quality input, expert tuition, spiritual nourishment and team-building activities in a tightly-knit community experience.

For more information and applications visit www.christianleadershipformation.com

14. CAFOD

School-led introduction to CST pack and (coming soon) online introduction to CST course: <https://cafod.org.uk/education/for-teachers/cpd>

Resources to support the new RED: <https://cafod.org.uk/education/secondary-and-youth-resources/key-stage-3-re-resources>

Register for the Big Lent Walk: <https://walk.cafod.org.uk/>

“Young people demand change” resources: <https://cafod.org.uk/education/campaign-in-your-school/young-people-demand-change>

Get creative for climate justice (deadline: 10 November):

<https://cafod.org.uk/education/secondary-and-youth-resources/get-creative-for-climate-justice>

Laudato Deum: was published on 4 October. CAFOD have produced some accompanying resources <https://cafod.org.uk/education/secondary-and-youth-resources/laudato-si-for-young-people>

Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope: CAFOD will have resources and activities to support your schools.

15. PENNINE LEARNING VIDEOS FOR WORLD RELIGIONS

Pennine Learning have produced a series of videos on the synagogue and Sikhism that may be useful to staff and students alike when studying world religions. They are free to access and can be found here [Pennine Learning](#)

16. NATRE: A REVIEW OF THE PERFORMANCE OF RE

NATRE have produced an infographic on RE performance which you may find interesting. They say, ‘*Explore this informative infographic on Religious Education in the UK, providing insights into the importance and benefits of religious education.*’

[A Review of the performance of religious education - NATRE](#)

CPDF

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

Upcoming CPDF:

2nd Nov	Secondary ECTs Catholic life and Mission: Virtual
3rd Nov	Secondary DADAH Catholic Life and Mission at St James’s
7th Nov	Secondary RSE Leads at Loreto
10th Nov	Day for RE Coordinators with Dr Margaret Carswell at St Columba’s
15th Nov	Primary ECT Year 2: Ways of Knowing: Virtual
16th Nov	Primary DADAH at The Park Royal
24th Nov	Christ at the Centre: Session 2 at Our Lady, Star of the Sea
Wk beginning 27th Nov	COAST: Virtual hub meetings
29th Nov	Day of Renewal for Senior Leaders at The Park Royal
4th Dec	Primary Pilot meeting at Holy Angels

And finally,

May we continue to pray for peace in our world, remembering especially the people in Gaza and Israel, and the people of the Ukraine.

Prayer for Peace—St. John Paul II

Lord Jesus Christ, who are called the Prince of Peace, who are Yourself our peace and reconciliation, who so often said, “Peace to you” – please grant us peace.

Make all men and women witnesses of truth, justice, and brotherly love. Banish from their hearts whatever might endanger peace. Enlighten our rulers that they may guarantee and defend the great gift of peace.

May all peoples on the earth become as brothers and sisters.

May longed-for peace blossom forth and reign always over us all. Amen.

God bless, Julia