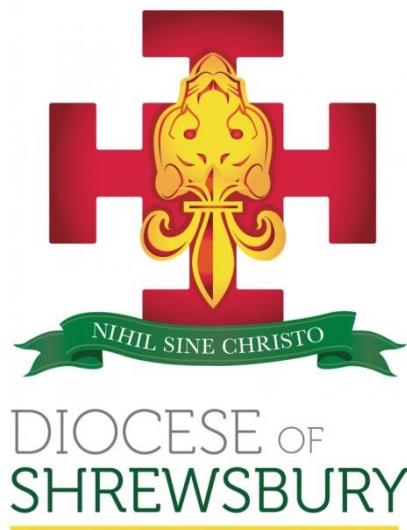


Diocese of Shrewsbury
Department of Education



RE and CATHOLIC LIFE
NEWSLETTER

Spring Term 2025 No.1

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Dear Colleague

1. INTRODUCTION

A very happy new year to you! As I write this term's newsletter, I reflect on the Gospel reading for today (Monday 6th January) that shares the beautiful words from Isaiah 9:2, *"the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned"*. With the Church celebrating the Feast of the Epiphany yesterday, today's Gospel focuses on Jesus' early ministry in Galilee after the arrest of John the Baptist. St Matthew tells us that in Jesus, the words of the prophet Isaiah are fulfilled - Jesus is Immanuel, *God with us*. He brings light in the darkness to all.

It is a beautiful Gospel for the beginning of this Year of Jubilee, and for the start of a new year. Called to be pilgrims of hope, as we journey we know that Jesus Christ is with us, he shines his light upon us, and he offers us the hope of new life in him. May we bring Christ's light to all who dwell in darkness and be a sign of hope to the children and young people in our schools. For as Pope Francis reminds us, *"Signs of hope are...needed by those who are the very embodiment of hope, namely, the young. Sadly, they often see their dreams and aspirations frustrated. We must not disappoint them, for the future depends on their enthusiasm. It is gratifying to see the energy they demonstrate, for example, by rolling up their sleeves and volunteering to help when disasters strike and people are in need. Yet it is sad to see young people who are without hope, who face an uncertain and unpromising future, who lack employment or job security, or realistic prospects after finishing school. Without the hope that their dreams can come true, they will inevitably grow discouraged and listless...With renewed passion, let us demonstrate care and concern for adolescents, students and young couples, the rising generation. Let us draw close to the young, for they are the joy and hope of the Church and of the world!"* (Spes Non Confundit 12)

2. PILGRIMS OF HOPE – THE YEAR OF JUBILEE

Pope Francis decreed the Year of Jubilee, Pilgrims of Hope, on the 9th of May last year. *Spes Non Confundit* ('Hope does not disappoint') is the title of this papal bull, which beautifully shares the context of the Jubilee's central message. Exploring our journey of hope, signs of hope and being anchored in hope and more, the decree is an excellent resource for schools to draw upon in this Jubilee year. Pope Francis says, *"Now the time has come for a new Jubilee, when once more the Holy Door will be flung open to invite everyone to an intense experience of the love of God that awakens in hearts the sure hope of salvation in Christ. The Holy Year will also guide our steps towards yet another fundamental celebration for all Christians: 2033 will mark the two thousandth anniversary of the redemption won by the passion, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. We are about to make a pilgrimage marked by great events, in which the grace of*

God precedes and accompanies his people as they press forward firm in faith, active in charity and steadfast in hope (cf. 1 Thess 1:3).

You can read the full text here: [Spes non confundit - Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025 \(9 May 2024\) | Francis](#)



Pope Francis opened the Holy Door of St Peter’s Basilica in Rome to mark the beginning of the Year of Jubilee on Christmas Eve. In his Midnight Mass homily, he called us *to “recover lost hope, to renew hope in our hearts and to sow seeds of hope”*. The symbolism of the logo for this jubilee year underscores this call.

‘The logo shows four stylized figures, representing all of humanity, coming from the four corners of the earth. They embrace each other to indicate the solidarity and fraternity which should unite all peoples. The figure at the front is holding onto the cross. It is not only the sign of the faith which this lead figure embraces, but also of hope, which can never be abandoned, because we are always in need of hope, especially in our moments of greatest need. There are the rough waves under the figures, symbolising the fact that life’s pilgrimage does not always go smoothly in calm waters. Often the circumstances of daily life and events in the wider world require a greater call to hope. That’s why we should pay special attention to the lower part of the cross which has been elongated and turned into the shape of an anchor which is let down into the waves. The anchor is well known as a symbol of hope. In maritime jargon the ‘anchor of hope’ refers to the reserve anchor used by vessels involved in emergency manoeuvres to stabilise the ship during storms. It is worth noting that the image illustrates the pilgrim’s journey not as an individual undertaking, but rather as something communal, marked by an increasing dynamism leading one ever closer to the cross. The cross in the logo is by no means static, but it is also dynamic. It bends down towards humanity, not leaving human beings alone, but stretching out to them to offer the certainty of its presence and the security of hope.’ You can find this explanation and more on the official Vatican Jubilee website <https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/giubileo-2025.html>. On this website you can also find links to The Jubilee Prayer and the official hymn for the 2025 Jubilee.

3. THE YEAR OF JUBILEE – LAUNCH DAY FOR SCHOOLS – 24TH JANUARY

Although the Year of Jubilee has officially begun, Bishop Marcus Stock, Chair of the CES, has called for schools to mark the launch of the Jubilee together on January 24th.

As promised, CAFOD, working alongside CARITAS and CYMFed, has produced a number of resources for launch day including celebrations of the word for children and for young people, a digital version of their Pilgrims of Hope map and the See, Judge, Act worksheet, which is a sheet to help pupils consider, in the light of scripture, the action they’d like to take during the Jubilee Year. <https://cafod.org.uk/jubilee-schools/jubilee-launch-day> .

There is a suggested plan for the Jubilee Launch Day for schools that can be found here: [Education Jubilee Launch day plan.pdf](#). The plan includes links to order prayer cards, the Pilgrims of Hope maps for classrooms and the Jubilee banner for the school gates. We hope all schools will watch the **Launch Day film** that will be shared by CAFOD soon.



Alongside the official Pilgrims of Hope logo, CAFOD have commissioned an ‘icon from artist Mulugeta Araya in Ethiopia, for the Catholic Church in England and Wales. Ethiopia was chosen because of the strong tradition of iconography within the country and to demonstrate that this is a global Jubilee - not just something that is happening in England and Wales.’ <https://cafod.org.uk/pray/jubilee-icon>

There are reflections for schools that accompany the icon, which can be found on the jubilee-schools website (see the ‘launch day’ link above).

4. FURTHER RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR OF JUBILEE

Mission Together have several resources for primary schools to help you celebrate the Year of Jubilee including prayers, a Jubilee Five Fact Assembly and scripture that focuses on hope. A ‘joyful Jubilee hymn’ is on its way too.

You can find the resources here: <https://missiontogether.org.uk/jubilee-2025-pilgrims-of-hope/>

SVP Mini Vinnies have resources to support Mini Vinnie’s groups in schools, though they could be used with the whole school community. For example, their ‘Monthly Prayer and Action’ may offer a further way to journey through the year as pilgrims of hope <https://act.svp.org.uk/page/153870/action/1>

SVP Youth ‘The Young Vincentian Team at the SVP has been hard at work developing a variety of resources for schools to use during the Jubilee Year. Every day, SVP members pilgrimage, walking through the doors of those in need—offering care, support, friendship, and hope. Entering someone’s space requires an invitation and an open door. During this Jubilee Year, as the Holy Door in Rome opens to invite all to become pilgrims of hope, we want to emphasise that behind every door we open, and every doorway we enter, we are invited to encounter God.’ Their resources include resources to support the **CYMFed Faith in Action Award** during the Jubilee Year, including a Pilgrim Passport with social action ideas for participants.

<https://act.svp.org.uk/page/153862/action/1>

CBCEW (Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales. Resources on the Bishops’ Conference website include ‘Unpacking the Jubilee’, which may be helpful for

staff and secondary students and a Reflection and Social Action Guide. The latter is aimed at parishes but could be adapted for use with staff or KS4/KS5 students.

EWTN Vatican have shared some suggestions for how we can make the Year of Jubilee a time of spiritual renewal in the Catholic Church. Any one of these suggestions would be helpful in deepening your own spirituality on your pilgrim journey this year.

<https://www.ewtnvatican.com/articles/jubilee-2025-new-years-resolutions-and-resources-4163>

If you have found other websites and/or resources helpful for celebrating this Year of Jubilee, then do please send me a link and I can include it in future newsletters.

julia.cunningham@dioceseofhsrebury.org

In addition, do please tag us into your Pilgrims of Hope celebrations @EducationShrew on X

5. THE NEW LECTIONARY: God Who Speaks, Bible Society

The First Sunday of Advent marked the move to the use of the new Lectionaries for the celebration of Mass. The readings for Mass in England and Wales are now taken from the English Standard Version, Catholic Edition. Fleur Dorrell for God Who Speaks is sharing resources from the Dicastery for Evangelisation for the Sunday of the Word of God (26th January), blessings for new lectionaries and Gospels and other ideas for scripture formation.



Sunday of the Word of God Feast Day Resources – celebrated on 26th January 2025.

Resources from the **Dicastery for Evangelisation** here - www.godwhospeaks.uk/sunday-of-the-word-of-god-resources/

Our Blessings of the Lectionaries and Gospels - www.godwhospeaks.uk/blessing-of-lectionaries-and-books-of-gospels/

Many more ideas in our Lectionary & Scripture Formation Resources - www.godwhospeaks.uk/lectionary-scripture-formation-resource/

6. TO LOVE YOU MORE DEARLY – The Prayer and Liturgy Directory

Thank you for the ongoing commitment to the implementation of this most important document across our diocesan schools. Following a series of productive Working Party meetings, members of the Education Department met with Bishop Mark and Canon Christopher Matthews in December to offer feedback and proposals which focused on prayer inside and outside of a classroom setting.

As a consequence of these discussions, we are currently finalising supplementary guidance notes to accompany the Prayer and Liturgy Directory, which focus on the

practical implementation and facilitation of prayer, along with exemplars of what that prayer might look like in different contexts. We hope that these notes will be a useful tool for schools to use and will be circulated this coming term.

It is envisaged that we will adopt a similar approach to both celebrations of the word and Holy Mass, with supplementary guidance notes being made available to schools over the coming terms.

A reminder that the following CPDF sessions are planned for this term and year ahead:

11/02/2025	1pm-4pm	Prayer and Liturgy Directory 3 - Mass-Liturgy and rubric	How do we celebrate the Mass as a school community?	Loreto Education Centre, WA14 4GZ
13/03/2025	3.30pm-5pm	Prayer and Liturgy Directory 4 - Mass - practicalities	How do we plan for the celebration of Holy Mass? What is required?	Virtual
21/05/2025	3.30pm-5pm	Prayer and Liturgy Directory 5 - Celebration of the Word	What is a celebration of the word? What does it look like in class? What does it look like with a larger group? Who can do what?	Virtual
01/07/2025	1pm-4pm	Prayer and Liturgy Directory 6 - Formation, progression and ministry	An opportunity to explore engagement and participation in prayer and liturgy in school, including a focus on ministry. How can we form our school communities in their participation of prayer and liturgy? What does progression look like?	Loreto Education Centre, WA14 4GZ

NB: For the in-person afternoons, lunch will be provided free of charge from 12.30pm. To book on to the sessions please follow this link [Book CPDF](#)

7. IMAGES FOR THE WEBSITE

Please do share with Malgorzata.kowalska@dioceseofshrewsbury.org any images you have of prayer and liturgy reflecting the liturgical seasons so we can use them on our website landing page. Many thanks in advance.

8. CSI (CATHOLIC SCHOLS INSPECTORATE)



A reminder that support sessions for the national framework for inspections are offered to all schools, particularly those preparing for inspection. These sessions will be held at Our Lady, Star of the Sea Parish Centre, Ellesmere Port on Friday January 31st, and Friday 27th April at 9.30am. Please book onto these sessions via the website [here](#). School leaders, including RE leads, chaplains and governors are welcome to attend.

The Inspection Handbook and CSED (Catholic Self-evaluation Document) template can be found on the [website](#). Also available are the parental and staff questionnaires. Feedback from pupils on the three areas of inspection can be given using the school's own pupil voice processes and procedures. **Please ensure you are using the most up to date version of the Inspection Handbook.** Reference to the *Change log* on the website will highlight the key updates and changes made.

Please note, use of the CSED template is not mandatory, however self-evaluation is. The framework expects leaders *and governors* to undertake regular (annual) monitoring and evaluation of Catholic life and mission, religious education, and prayer and liturgy.

Compliance is a limiting judgement in this new CSI framework. To check you are compliant with the expectations of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, and with the directives of Bishop Mark, please click on this [link](#).

9. CAFOD AND SCIAF BIG LENT WALK

CAFOD and SCIAF are the official relief and development agencies of the Catholic Church for England and Wales (CAFOD) and for Scotland (SCIAF), and we are both members of the global Caritas Internationalis family.



'We both believe that a green and just world, free from poverty, is possible. We are teaming up this year because we know that working together means that we can make an ever bigger difference.'

Our goal: to get thousands of teams or individual walkers to join together, walking and fundraising and raising awareness of inequality across the world. Together means big change can happen.

The money you raise by taking part in the Big Lent Walk will enable us to continue fighting global poverty and working through expert local partners to bring real life change to communities overseas. Your sponsorship can and will change lives. Every £1 raised

through the Big Lent Walk will help fight poverty globally in countries like Afghanistan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan.

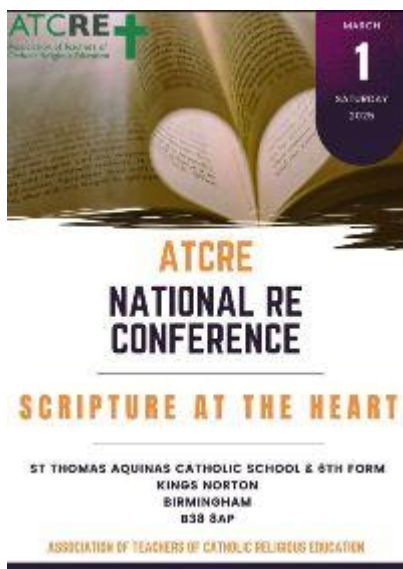
CAFOD and SCIAF have a shared project in Ethiopia, and we are working together to respond to the devastating food crisis there. Years of drought caused by the climate crisis means families are no longer able to cope, but your support means we are working with people right now, providing them with water, emergency food and healthcare.

With your hard work and sponsorship this Lent, we can change families' lives for good and tell poverty to take a hike.'

Schools can sign up for the Big Lent Walk via the following link:

schools.walk.cafod.org.uk/sign-up

10. ATCRE (Association for Teachers of Catholic RE) CONFERENCE



ATCRE's next annual conference is scheduled for Saturday 1st March at St Thomas Aquinas Catholic School and 6th Form. The theme of the conference is *Scripture at the Heart*, which this year hosts keynote speakers, Prof. Bob Bowie and Brenden Thompson. Bob Bowie is the Professor of Religion and Worldviews Education at Canterbury Christ Church university. Brenden Thompson is the UK Programme Director for Word on Fire.

There are also a range of workshops to suit primary and secondary practitioners and a host of exhibitors, all celebrating scripture at the heart of Catholic Education. Mass is at 9am with the Conference starting at 10am.

These conferences are always excellent CPDF opportunities for all teachers of Catholic RE.

Tickets can be purchased on the ATCRE website at [Events | ATCRE](#).

PRIMARY

11. RE LEAD HUB MEETINGS

A reminder that meetings for RE leads this Spring will be in hub groups. These smaller group meetings will enable focused conversations around assessment in RE but will also support existing networking and collaboration between schools. For this reason, it is hoped RE Leads will be able to join their own hub meeting, however, if this date isn't

feasible, do please sign up to another hub meeting date. It is hoped that all schools will be represented at these meetings so key messages can be shared.

In addition to exploring assessment in RE, the hub meetings will be an opportunity to review progress in implementing the new RE scheme, The Vine and the Branches. To this end, please could RE Leads come to the hub meeting with a couple of pupil books from Years 1, 2, 3 & 4, thank you.

All hub meeting days are 9.30-3.30. Refreshments will be provided but do please bring a packed lunch. For the list of dates and venues, please see below:

10/02/2025	RE Lead Hub Meeting for schools in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin	Shrewsbury Cathedral Meeting room, Chapter House, 12 Belmont, Shrewsbury, SY1 1TE	Booking Form
12/02/2025	RE Lead Hub Meeting for schools on the Wirral	Christ the King Catholic Primary School, Allport Road, Bromborough, CH62 6AE	Booking Form
13/02/2025	RE Lead Hub Meeting for schools in Stockport and Tameside	Cheadle Catholic Junior School, Conway Road Cheadle Hulme, SK8 6DB	Booking Form
14/02/2025	RE Lead Hub Meeting for schools in Cheshire East	St Anne's Catholic Primary School, Wellington Road Nantwich, CW5 7DA	Booking Form
26/02/2025	RE Lead Hub Meeting for schools in Warrington and Runcorn	St John Henry Newman Parish Centre, Knutsford Road Warrington, WA4 1JE	Booking Form
27/02/2025	RE Lead Hub Meeting for schools in Manchester and Trafford	Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Floatshall Road, Baguley, M23 1HP	Booking Form
28/02/2025	RE Lead Hub Meeting for schools in Cheshire West and Chester	St Winefride's Catholic Primary School, Mellock Lane, Neston, CH64 9RW	Booking Form

12. ONELIFE MUSIC

Dan and Emily from OneLife Music have two new songs for the Jubilee Year they are making freely available to schools. Give us hope, o Lord and Song of hope have been inspired by Pope Francis' message to be Pilgrims of Hope in our world. Click on the image to hear them.



OneLife Music are also offering full day retreats in person and online half day retreats for the Year of Jubilee. Visit their website to find out more [Jubilee Year - Pilgrims of Hope](#).

13. COMPASS CONNECTIONS – Imaginative prayer and wellbeing

Maria Caneda has a series of imaginative prayer sessions available that speak to the Expected Outcomes of the RED, facilitating a time of prayer around scripture explored in RE lessons.

A new year discount applies for any bookings made before Friday January 31st, 2025. The sessions can take place in any of the terms of the 2024-2025 academic year.

You can view the full offer [here](#)

For more information, please go to the website: www.compassconnections.co.uk

SECONDARY

14. SHORE HUB MEETINGS

To continue the discussions around assessment begun in the Autumn term, SHORE will meet this Spring in smaller hub groups. This will support the networking and collaboration already taking place within the Diocese. Each hub meeting will run from 9.30-3.30.

03/03/2025	SHORE hub meeting for schools in Cheshire, Chester, Ellesmere Port and Telford	St Thomas More Catholic High School, Dane Bank Avenue, Crewe, CW2 8AE	Booking Form
05/03/2025	SHORE hub meeting for schools in Stockport, Tameside, Manchester and Trafford	Harrytown Catholic High School, Harrytown Lane, Romiley, SK6 3BU	Booking Form
10/03/2025	SHORE hub meeting for schools in Warrington, Runcorn, and on the Wirral	St Anselm's College, Manor Hill, Birkenhead, CH43 1UQ	Booking Form

Please do try to attend your designated hub, though if you are unable to, please do sign up to one of the other two hub meetings.

15. TEN TEN JUBILEE YEAR RESOURCES



Ten Ten are offering Secondary Schools free resources for the Year of Jubilee to take students on a Jubilee Journey. Ten Ten say, *‘these assemblies take students on a journey through inspiring stories linked to UK charities and include simple but effective prayer resources.’*

Click on the image to sign up.

CPDF

To attend any of our CPDF sessions, please follow this link:

<https://educationshrewsbury.org/formation-development/ed-cpdf-opportunities/book-a-cpdf-course/>

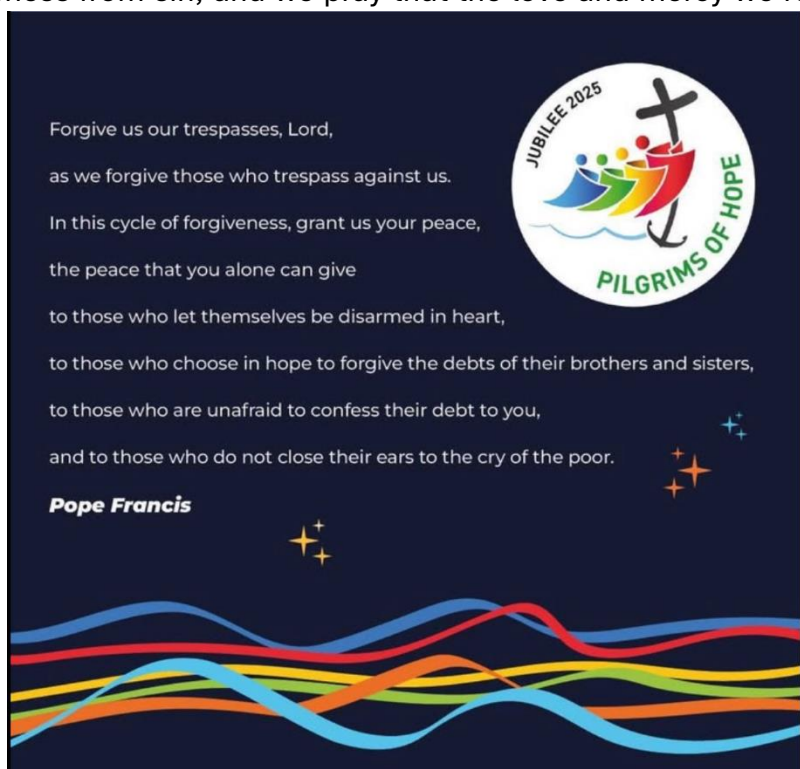
Upcoming CPDF:

22/01/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	Primary Curriculum Working Party
28/01/2025	10.30am-3pm	COAST
28/01/2025	1pm-3.30pm	New RE Coordinator Induction
29/01/2025	3.30pm-5pm	Vine and Branches Y4 preparation for Desert to Garden
30/01/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	Christ at the Centre – Course for Primary Practitioners Module 3
31/01/2025	9.30am-12pm	School support under the CSI Framework
03/02/2025	3.30pm-5pm	Vine and Branches Y1 preparation for Desert to Garden
04/02/2025	3.30pm-5pm	Vine and Branches Y2 preparation Desert to Garden
05/02/2025	3.30pm-5pm	Vine and Branches Y3 preparation for Desert to Garden
07/02/2025	9.30am-11am	Primary Deputy & Assistant Headteacher Forum
07/02/2025	1.30pm-3pm	Primary Deputy & Assistant Headteacher Forum
10/02/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	RE Lead Hub Meeting (Shrop, Tel, Wrek)
11/02/2025	1pm-4pm	Prayer and Liturgy Directory 3 - Mass- Liturgy and rubric
12/02/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	RE Lead Hub Meeting (Wirral)
13/02/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	RE Lead Hub Meeting (Stock & Tames)
14/02/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	RE Lead Hub Meeting (CE)
26/02/2025	9.30pm-3.30pm	RE Lead Hub Meeting (Warr and Run)
27/02/2025	9.30pm-3.30pm	RE Lead Hub Meeting (Manc and Traff)
28/02/2025	9.30pm-3.30pm	RE Lead Hub Meeting (CW and C)
03/03/2025	9.30pm-3.30pm	SHORE Hub Meeting (Chesh, Chest, EP, Telf)
05/03/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	SHORE Hub Meeting (Stock, Traff, Manc, Tames)
10/03/2025	1.30pm-3pm	COAST HUB 3 (Warrington, Halton, Wirral)
10/03/2025	9.30pm-3.30pm	SHORE Hub Meeting (Warr, Halt, Wirral)
12/03/2025	1pm-3.30pm	Secondary RSE Lead Meeting
13/03/2025	1.30pm-3pm	COAST HUB 2 (Cheshire, Shropshire, Telford Wrekin)
13/03/2025	3.30pm-5pm	Prayer and Liturgy Directory 4 - Mass - practicalities

14/03/2025	1.30pm-3pm	COAST HUB 1 (Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Manchester)
17/03/2025	3.30pm-5pm	Vine and Branches Y1 preparation for To the Ends of the Earth
17/03/2025	9.30am-12pm	Secondary Deputy & Assistant Headteacher Forum Catholic Life and Mission
18/03/2025	3.30pm-5pm	Vine and Branches Y2 prep for To the Ends of the Earth
19/03/2025	3.30pm-5pm	Vine and Branches Y3 prep for To the Ends of the Earth
20/03/2025	3.30pm-5pm	Vine and Branches Y4 prep for To the Ends of the Earth
21/03/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	Christ at the Centre- A Course for Primary Practitioners - Module 4
26/03/2025	9.30am-3pm	EYFS To the ends of the Earth and Dialogue & Encounter

And finally,

A reminder that the Jubilee Year is an opportunity for a new start, a reset, an invitation to reconciliation with God and others. In the Lord's Prayer, the prayer Jesus taught us, we ask for forgiveness from sin, and we pray that the love and mercy we receive from the



Father we then share with others. As Pope Francis says, through this cycle of forgiveness we pray that God will grant us peace, the peace that he alone can give. May this Year of Jubilee be filled with hope, peace, love and forgiveness.

God bless,

Julia