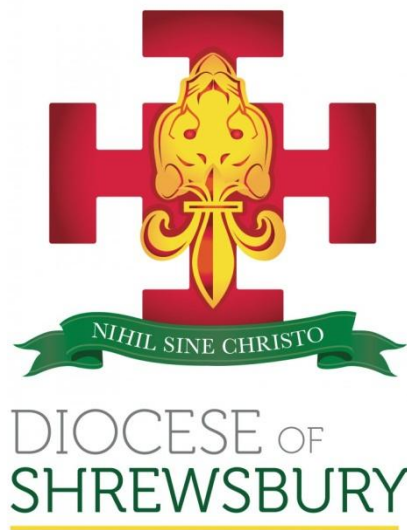


**Diocese of Shrewsbury**  
**Department of Education**



**RE and CATHOLIC LIFE**  
**NEWSLETTER**

**Autumn Term 2025 No.1**


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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Dear Colleagues

Welcome back to the new term after a summer of rest and recuperation. As we enter the final term of our jubilee year, let us pray that we continue to be pilgrims of hope, journeying together in faith, hope and love. Perhaps in this new term you might revisit and reshare the official Prayer for the Jubilee, for as we reflect on our Catholic mission in education and the various pledges we made in the summer term. How might we 'keep the flame of jubilee alive' once the year of jubilee has ended? May we be transformed by God's grace into 'tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel'.



# The Jubilee Prayer

***Father in heaven,  
may the faith you have given us in your son, Jesus Christ,  
our brother, and the flame of charity enkindled in our  
hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for  
the coming of your Kingdom.***


***May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the  
seeds of the Gospel. May those seeds transform from within  
both humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation  
of a new heaven and a new earth, when, with the powers of  
Evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally.***

***May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of  
Hope, a yearning for the treasures of heaven.***

***May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our  
Redeemer throughout the earth.***

***To you our God, eternally blessed,  
be glory and praise for ever.***

***Amen***



## 2. JUBILEE OF YOUTH

The start of the summer saw the Jubilee of Youth celebrated in the Vatican in Rome. On August 2<sup>nd</sup>, Pope Leo XIV addressed the largest crowd of his pontificate to date, telling an estimated 1 million young adults to ‘study, work, and love according to the example of Jesus’ and to pray: ‘Stay with us, Lord.’ During the prayer service, Pope Leo answered questions from young adults about friendship and loneliness, making good choices, and how to truly encounter Christ.



The first question came from a young person from Mexico. It was on the subject of friendship. She asked, ‘We live in a culture that shapes us without our realizing it; it is a culture marked by technology, especially by social media. We often get excited about having lots of friends and creating close relationships, but at the same time we increasingly experience different forms of loneliness....how can we find true friendship and genuine love that will lead us to true hope? How can faith help us build our future?’

Pope Leo’s response to the question is a beautiful message of hope for all our children



and young people, ‘... human relationships, our relationships with others are essential for each of us, starting with the fact that all men and women in the world are born as someone’s children. Our life begins with a bond, and it is through relationships that we grow. In this process, culture plays a fundamental role: it is like the lens through which we understand ourselves and interpret the world. Just like

a dictionary, every culture contains both words that are noble and words that are vulgar, values and also errors that we must learn to recognize. By passionately searching for the truth, we do not merely receive a culture, but also transform it through the choices we make. Truth, in fact, is a bond that connects words to things and names to faces. Lies, on the other hand, divide these elements and lead to confusion and misunderstanding.

Now, among the many cultural connections that characterize our lives, internet and social media have become “an extraordinary opportunity for dialogue, encounter and exchange between persons, as well as access to information and knowledge” (Francis, *Christus Vivit*, 87). However, these tools are misleading when they are controlled by commercialism and interests that fragment our relationships... Only genuine relationships and stable connections can build good lives.

Dear young people, every person naturally desires a good life, just as lungs long for air, but how difficult it is to find it! How difficult it is to find true friendship! Centuries ago, Saint Augustine understood the deepest desire of our hearts, the desire of every human heart,

*even without the technological developments of today... In his own words, friendship is nowhere faithful but in Christ. Saint Augustine tells us there is no friendship that is authentic if that is not in Christ. And the true friendship is always in Jesus Christ with truth, love and respect. Only in him can it be eternal and happy (cf. Against Two Letters of the Pelagians I, I, 1). The one who loves God in his friend, truly loves his friend (cf. Sermon 336), Saint Augustine tells us...*

*Dear young people, love one another! Love one another in Christ! Know how to see Jesus in others. Friendship can truly change the world. Friendship is a path to peace.'*

You can read the full text of the exchange here: [Prayer Vigil with the young people \(Tor Vergata, 2 August 2025\)](#)

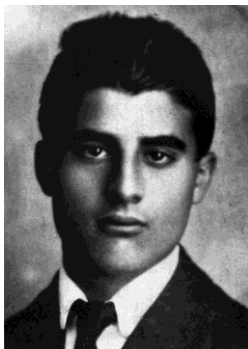
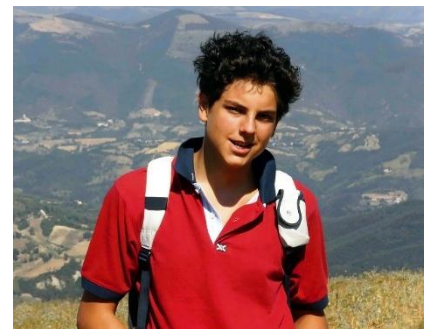
In the dialogue, Pope Leo quoted several times from *Christus vivit* (Christ Lives!), Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation written in response to the *Synod on Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment* he held in 2018. If you haven't encountered *Christus vivit* before, or perhaps haven't read it in a while, I commend it to you as it offers such words of hope and inspiration for our young people today. ["Christus vivit": Post-Synodal Exhortation to Young People and to the entire People of God \(25 March 2019\)](#)

### **3. CANONISATION OF BLESSED CARLO ACUTIS AND BLESSED PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI**

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati and Blessed Carlo Acutis will be the first saints proclaimed by Pope Leo on 7<sup>th</sup> September.

The canonization of Blessed Acutis, a teenager known for his devotion to the Eucharist and creating an online exhibition of Eucharistic miracles, had originally been scheduled for April 27 during the Jubilee of Teenagers but was postponed following the death of Pope Francis.

Born in 1991 and raised in Milan, Blessed Acutis used his tech skills to evangelize and was noted for his joyful faith



and compassion for others before dying of leukemia in 2006 at age 15.

Blessed Frassati, born in 1901 into a prominent family in Turin, Italy, was admired for his deep spirituality, love for the poor and enthusiasm for life. A member of the Dominican Third Order, he served the sick through the St. Vincent de Paul Society. He died at age 24 after contracting polio, possibly from one of the people he assisted.

Perhaps you might explore the life and legacy of these two remarkable young people in school. Mark 10 Mission have new videos for this Sunday (7<sup>th</sup>) with a focus on the saints: [The Mark 10 Mission - YouTube](#)

Find out more about Blessed Pier here [Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati](#)

Click [here](#) for helpful links to find out more about Blessed Carlo.

#### 4. THE SEASON OF CREATION

The *World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation*, celebrated on 1<sup>st</sup> September, is the official start of the Season of Creation, a time of sustained prayer and action which lasts a month and four days. During this season we are encouraged to pray and engage in community events in order to deepen our relationship with God, our neighbour and the earth we share, being ever more attentive to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.

The theme of Pope Leo XIV's message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation is '*Seeds of Peace and Hope*'. He says, '*In Christ, we ... are seeds, and indeed, "seeds of peace and hope". The prophet Isaiah tells us that the Spirit of*



**PEACE  
WITH CREATION**  
SEASON OF CREATION 2025

*God can make an arid and parched desert into a garden, a place of rest and serenity. In his words, "a spirit from on high will be poured out on us, and the wilderness will become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field a forest. Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness abide in the fruitful field. The work of righteousness will be peace, and the work of righteousness, quietness and trust forever. My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places"' (Is 32:15-18). Read Pope Leo's full message here [Care-of-Creation-2025-Papal-message/](#)*

This is the tenth World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation which also marks the tenth anniversary of Pope Francis's encyclical letter *Laudato Si'*. For this anniversary Pope Leo has approved a Mass for the Care of Creation which can be found here [Mass-Care-of-Creation](#).

The Catholic Bishops' Conference have published a prayer that can be used on this World Day of Prayer or at any time during or after the *Season of Creation* [Prayer-for-the-Care-of-Creation](#)

CAFOD naturally have many resources for schools that can be used in prayer and in the classroom. These resources may be of help to staff when unpacking the Creation and Covenant branch in RE.

<https://cafod.org.uk/news/uk-news/celebrate-world-day-of-prayer>

## 5. THE YEAR OF JUBILEE – PILGRIMAGE OF THE JUBILEE ICONS OF THE VISITATION

It has been wonderful to hear from schools of the many graces and blessings received whilst hosting the Icon of the Visitation. The icons will continue their pilgrimage from school to school from next week.

For schools yet to receive the icon, full instructions concerning the practicalities of this venture are given in the electronic [booklet](#) This is also available on our [website](#).

NB: any changes to the schedule must be shared with Maggie so she can update the master list.

## 6. THE YEAR OF JUBILEE – QUILTED BANNER OF HOPE

Many thanks to schools for sharing their patches with Jackie Walker. The quilted banner is coming along as you can see from the pictures below.

Schools' officers will look to collect any outstanding patches so all schools can be represented. No more ties needed!



## 7. THE YEAR OF JUBILEE – CREATIVE COMPETITION FOR SCHOOLS

A polite reminder about the Department of Education creative competition for schools:

### **What does it mean to me to be a Pilgrim of Hope?**

Individuals, groups, schools are invited to respond to the question above in a creative way, for example, through art, creative writing, music or song. As school communities are celebrating this Jubilee Year and engaging with the theme chosen by Pope Francis, we know there will be many opportunities for our children and young people to explore this question in depth.

Schools are invited to hold a competition internally and then share the top three entries with the Department of Education.



The deadline for entries is **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September**.

NB: All entries must be submitted digitally (e.g. if the entry is a piece of art, please take a picture of it/scan it and send the digital image).

Please send all entries to [education@dioceseofshrewsbury.org](mailto:education@dioceseofshrewsbury.org)

Winners of this competition will be announced at the close of the Year of Jubilee in November.

## **8. MASSES TO CELEBRATE THE START OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-26**

We have organised 3 Masses to mark the start of the 2025-26 academic year on the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of September at differing locations across the Diocese. All Masses will begin at 4.30pm.

**16<sup>th</sup> September: St Joseph's Catholic Church Upton**, Wirral CH49 6LJ

**17<sup>th</sup> September: St Hugh's Timperley Catholic Church**, Timperley WA14 5NB

**18<sup>th</sup> September: St Alban's Catholic Church**, Macclesfield SK11 8DJ

Detailed car parking and hospitality arrangements will be emailed to all schools, and we very much hope that you and your staff are able to join us to celebrate Mass on one of these dates.

## **9. LITURGICAL CALENDAR AND THEMES FOR 2025**

With grateful thanks to Mairie Gelling, Chaplain at St Nicholas's Catholic High School, for sharing their liturgical calendar with themes for this academic year shared here in case it is of help to schools. It is a Word document so it can be easily adapted for each context. [Liturgical Calendar and Themes 25-26](#)

## **10. GOD WHO SPEAKS**

Fleur Dorrell and the team at God Who Speaks have chosen St Paul as their theme for September. It is certainly worth having a look at their resources and perhaps holding on to them for Branches 5 & 6 later in the year. Fleur says...



Welcome to our new section on the life and letters of St Paul

[www.godwhospeaks.uk/paul-and-the-letters/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/paul-and-the-letters/)

Paul: The Man and the Mission - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/paul-man-and-mission/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/paul-man-and-mission/)

Paul: The Letters - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/paul-the-letters/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/paul-the-letters/)

Paul: The Posters - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/paul-the-posters/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/paul-the-posters/)

*This excellent new resource is written by Fr John Deehan and edited by Professor Susan Docherty.*

Further resources offered include support for Branch 1, Creation and Covenant, Education Sunday on 14<sup>th</sup> September and Evangelii Gaudium Sunday on 21<sup>st</sup> September.

Creationtide: 1st September – 4th October

Walking with Creation: Pilgrims of Hope by David McLoughlin

[www.godwhospeaks.uk/walking-with-creation/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/walking-with-creation/)

All our Creation Care resources - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/creation-care/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/creation-care/)

Ecumenical Creationtide resources - <https://seasonofcreation.org/resources/>

Education Sunday: 14th September - [www.catholiceducation.org.uk/news/education-sunday-2025](http://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/news/education-sunday-2025)

For the scripture reflection on this year's theme - *Lifted Up: Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross* – please click [here](#).

All our educational resources can be found here - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/education/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/education/)

Evangelii Gaudium Sunday: 21st September

What's in a Creed? The Biblical Basis of our Faith - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/nicene-creed-and-the-bible/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/nicene-creed-and-the-bible/)

Creed and Coffee Morning Activities: page 30 - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/lectionary-scripture-formation-resource/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/lectionary-scripture-formation-resource/)

Disability Awareness Sunday: 28th September

Wellbeing and Disability reflections - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/wellbeing-and-disability/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/wellbeing-and-disability/)

Through the Roof Resources Pack - <https://throughtheroof.org/forchurches/disability-awareness-sunday/>

Dyslexia Friendly Bible series - [www.biblesociety.org.uk/products/9780564038817/](http://www.biblesociety.org.uk/products/9780564038817/)

Feast of Archangels Michael, Gabriel & Raphael: 29th September

Watch our Archangels video: their roles and powers in Scripture and today - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/video-the-four-archangels/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/video-the-four-archangels/)

Feast of St Jerome: 30th September (Doctor of the Church)

Enjoy our resources on this great Bible Translator - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/saint-jerome/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/saint-jerome/)

## 11. RADIO MARIA ENGLAND SCHOOLS COMPETITION

Radio Maria England have launched two competitions for schools with a focus on broadcasting and creative writing:



**RADIO MARIA**  
ENGLAND

- Radio Maria England Young Presenter/Broadcaster Competition (successful schools will have the opportunity to present their own monthly show on Radio Maria England).

- Radio Maria England School Poetry/Songwriting/Spoken Word Competition (Finalists will have the opportunity to perform their poems/songs/spoken word at a special event to showcase Christian Talent, which will also be broadcast live on Radio Maria England).

Please see the [flyer](#) for more details.

The closing date for both competitions is **30th September**, the Feast of St Jerome.

## 12. FARMINGTON RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

Alongside the Farmington Fellowship's research opportunities based around RE, vision and values, a new branch of Farmington is awarding grants (and resources) for any primary schools looking at an area of deprivation within the school community. These scholarships and research grants are open to class teachers and headteachers.



Find out more about their scholarships [here](#). Alternatively for more information, do get in touch and we can look to further your application.

## 13. TEACHING ABOUT JUDAISM

'Teaching about Judaism' is the forthcoming September Q & A session led by Anna Silver, the education officer at the Board of Deputies.

Having attended a session in the summer term I can agree that this will be an engaging and hugely informative hour-long session. Its style is supportive and informal, and Anna is keen to respond to any number of queries about teaching Judaism to all ages, from Early Years to KS5. It may, for example, be helpful to teachers of KS4 students to take a list of questions from students to the Q & A to be responded to on the day. At the summer meeting, Anna shared a list of websites and resources she endorsed where the material was representative of the diversity within Judaism and not stereotypical. [Judaism Resources](#)

As you can see by the [flyer](#) this is a monthly initiative, so if you are unable to attend this month you could attend at a later date.

Anna also offers free online CPD for schools and charges expenses only for in-person INSET. For information, please contact Anna on: [anna.silva@bod.org.uk](mailto:anna.silva@bod.org.uk)

The Zoom link (not on flyer):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81931712721?pwd=fjurpbHS5c7leMd8wsQKiBIXL7M8sg.1>

Meeting ID: 819 3171 2721

Passcode: 288739

## PRIMARY

### 14. THE VINE & THE BRANCHES

A reminder that from this year **all pupils in Y1, Y2, Y3, Y4, Y5 & Y6** should be following *The Vine and the Branches* resource as it is based on the RED (RE Directory 2022).

Teachers of Y1, 2, 3 & 4 should refer to the presentations, recordings and Diocesan guidance in advance of teaching each new branch, which can be found on our website [Primary-RE-resources/](#) and accessed using the password *Education*.

Teachers of Y5 and Y6 are invited to attend online twilights throughout the year to support them in their delivery of the scheme. Resources from these sessions and those from the days held in the summer term can/will be found via the link above. Dates for these twilights are listed on our website [CPDF-opportunities/](#)

As with last year, teachers of EYFS may continue teaching *The Way, the Truth and the Life* in RE whilst introducing elements of RE at the centre of their continuous provision. Alternatively, they may wish to refer to the RED and the planning from Liverpool Archdiocese in their delivery of RE. It is hoped that the EYFS scheme for *the Vine and the Branches* will be with schools in the summer term.

### 15. MIXED-AGE CLASSES WORKING PARTY

Schools gathered for the inaugural meeting of the Mixed-Age Classes Working Party in July and shared their proposed models for September onwards. There were several different approaches based on context and need, amongst other factors. A [RED planning document](#) from the CES was shared and potential ways forward proposed e.g.:

- 2 years' worth of branch content per full term e.g. Y1 & 2 C&C, then P&P, then GtoJ – the following year – DtoG, EoE, D&E
- 2 years' worth of branch content spread over two years with Christ at the centre:
  - A: C&C, GtoJ, EoE
  - B: P&P, DtoG, D&E

Schools are welcome to join the working party with meetings planned for this year as follows:

- 13th October 12.30-3.30 St John Henry Newman Parish Centre, Warrington
- 29th January 12.30-3.30 St John Henry Newman Parish Centre, Warrington
- 6th May 12.30-3.30 St Columba's Parish Centre, Chester

Bring your lunch – refreshments will be provided.

## 16. THE MARK 10 MISSION



The Mark 10 Mission are this year launching membership options for schools. Greg says, *'The memberships are completely separate to our weekly videos. The celebrations of the word that the children watch each week will **remain completely free**, as will the mission files, posters and planning grids we publish.*

*However, to help schools form staff, adapt to the new Prayer and Liturgy Directory and to generally help their confidence and enjoyment leading prayer, we have created these membership options. We had wonderful feedback from the five webinars we did last year, and I want these to be even better. I'm hoping Philip Robinson will be joining me for one of the early sessions and we will discuss child-led worship.'*

All the details can be found here: [The Mark 10 Memberships](#)

The monthly online webinars will be recorded and then available all year.

For silver and gold members there will also be in-person visits and even 1:1 mentoring for a limited number of schools.

## 17. MISSION TOGETHER



The education team at Mission Together have been busy writing resources to support schools with their delivery of RE and leading of prayer and liturgy:

[Prayers for the new school year](#)

Our [Five Facts about](#) resources help pupils to learn more about the lives of some of the Church's great witnesses to faith and mission. This summer we adapted the format to create resources focusing on RED expected outcomes. *Five Facts about The Prophets* and *Five Facts about the Bible*, relay key learnings and include reflective questions and calls to action. [Click here to download.](#)

Our *Together in Cambodia* assembly illustrates how Fr Paul and the community of Sacred Heart kindergarten live out the principles of Catholic Social Teaching (CST). The assembly, and its optional short film, provide pupils with clear examples of CST principles in action. The film is followed by reflection questions, suggested activities, and CST principle prayers. [Click here to download.](#)

Little Way Week (29<sup>th</sup> Sept – 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct) focuses on St Thérèse of Lisieux, patron of mission and one-time supporter of Holy Childhood (the original name of Mission Together).

Thérèse's idea was simple: to share Christ's love through little acts of kindness. [Download prayers, assemblies, worksheets, and daily planner here.](#)

Mission Together's aim is two-fold; to support the mission of Catholic education and to support life giving children's projects in places of poverty and turmoil. Please continue to stand with us through your [prayers](#), and when you can through [fundraising](#) and [donations](#).

## SECONDARY

### 18. NATRE: HOW RE PREPARES PUPILS FOR LIFE BEYOND SCHOOL

NATRE have produced RE4Work, a free resource based on a national campaign demonstrating the value of Religious Education for careers and the workplace. It features real employer perspectives, videos from former students, and big names in business all saying the same thing: *RE helps young people communicate, understand others, and work across diverse communities.*

Click the link for guidance on how to use the resource to download it:

<https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/showcasing-re-4-work-how-re-prepares-pupils-for-life-beyond-school/>

### 19. RISE THEATRE PASSION PLAY FOR LENT 2026

Rise Theatre's 1-hour one-act *Passion Play* is now available to book for **secondary school performances during Lent 2026.**

The production begins with *John 1:1–18*, "The Word Became Flesh," and moves through key Gospel moments — including the Wedding at Cana, the calling of Simon Peter, and the Miraculous Catch of Fish — before entering into the Passion narrative. Performed by **four professional actors portraying 23 characters**, the play blends physical theatre with a contemporary soundtrack to create a fast-paced and emotionally resonant experience for students.

A short highlights video can be viewed here  
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9HVM8UgXgb0>

#### **Booking Information and Cost**

1 performance in a day: £800 + travel (from our Reading base)

2 performances in a day: £950 + travel

10% discount (excluding travel) available for multi-day bookings

This is a fantastic opportunity for students to engage with the Gospel in a powerful and creative way, suitable for RE enrichment and deepening Lent reflections.

See the [flyer](#) for more information. Please don't hesitate to get in touch for more information or to reserve a date.

## RSHE

### 20. RSHE STATUTORY GUIDANCE

On the 15<sup>th</sup> July, the DfE produced [updated statutory RSHE guidance](#) for implementation by schools in September 2026. The current guidelines remain in place for the academic year 2025-26.

Ten Ten Resources have confirmed that they will be reviewing and updating their programme in the light of the new guidance so that your school curriculum remains fit-for-purpose when the new statutory guidance comes into effect in September 2026.

### CPDF

We have published our CPDF offer for this year on the website, which can also be accessed [here](#)

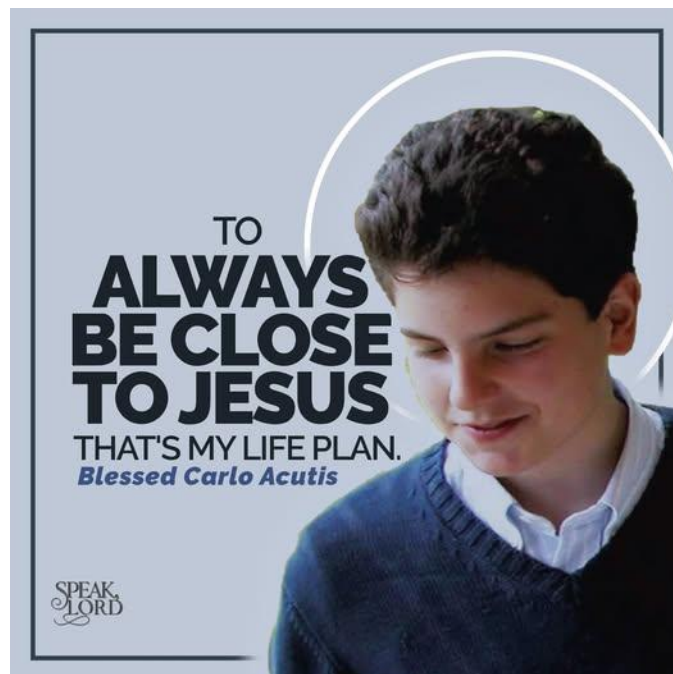
To attend any of our CPDF sessions, please follow this link or use the links in the table below: [BOOK A CPDF COURSE](#)

### Upcoming CPDF:

Date	Time	Course Title	Venue	Booking Form	Booking closes on
24/09/2025	10am-3pm	<b>COAST</b>	TBC	<a href="#">To follow</a>	17-Sep
26/09/2025	9.30am-12pm	<b>School support under the CSI Framework*</b>	Loreto Education Centre, WA14 4GZ	<a href="#">Booking Form</a>	19-Sep
29/09/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	<b>Christ at the Centre- A Course for Primary Practitioners - Module 1</b>	Our Lady and St Christopher's, SK6 3BA	<a href="#">Booking Form</a>	22-Sep
30/09/2025	1pm-3.30pm	<b>Induction for new RE Coordinators</b>	St John Henry Newman Parish Centre, WA4 1JE	<a href="#">Booking Form</a>	23-Sep
07/10/2025	3.30pm-5pm	<b>Vine and Branches Year 5 preparation for Prophecy &amp; Promise</b>	Virtual	<a href="#">Booking Form</a>	07-Oct

08/10/2025	3.30pm-5pm	<b>Vine and Branches Year 6 preparation for Prophecy &amp; Promise</b>	Virtual	<a href="#">Booking Form</a>	08-Oct
14/10/2025	1pm-3.30pm	<b>Secondary RSE Lead Meeting</b>	Ellesmere Port Catholic High School, CH65 7AQ	<a href="#">Booking Form</a>	07-Oct
20/10/2025	1pm-4pm	<b>Prayer and Liturgy CPDF support*</b>	Loreto Education Centre, WA14 4GZ	<a href="#">Booking Form</a>	
21/10/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	<b>Primary Curriculum Working Party</b>	St John Henry Newman Parish Centre, WA4 1JE	<a href="#">Booking Form</a>	14-Oct
22/10/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	<b>SHORE Meeting</b>	St Ambrose College, WA15 0HE	<a href="#">Booking Form</a>	15-Oct

And finally, a quote from the first millennial saint – simple words we might share within our school communities



God bless,

Julia