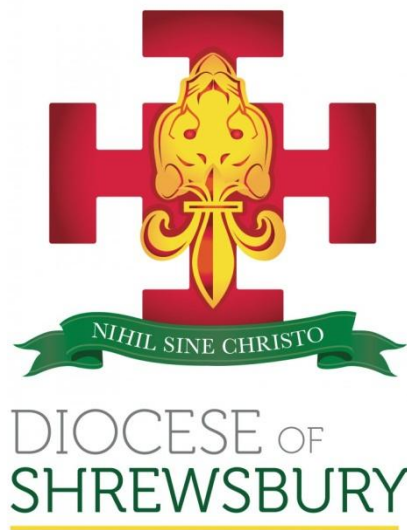


Diocese of Shrewsbury
Department of Education



RE and CATHOLIC LIFE
NEWSLETTER

Autumn Term 2025 No.2

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Jubilee for the World of Education	3
3. The Year of Jubilee – Pilgrimage of the Jubilee Icons	4
4. The Year of Jubilee – Close and Legacy	4
5. The Year of Jubilee – Creative Competition Winners	5
6. To love You more dearly – The prayer and liturgy directory	5
7. To know You more clearly – The religious education directory	7
8. Advent	7
9. Mustard Seeds	8
10. God who speaks	8
11. Farmington research opportunities	9
PRIMARY	
12. Advent with OneLife Music	10
13. Mary's Meals	10
14. Jewish Museum London - Chanukah virtual broadcast	11
15. Muslim Learner Services	11
SECONDARY	
16. Columban Missionaries: School Media Competition	11
17. CPDF	12

1. INTRODUCTION

Dear Colleagues

As the new term begins in earnest, I hope the Year of Jubilee continues to be a focus for your school communities as you walk together as pilgrims of hope.



Pope Leo XIV celebrated the Jubilee for the World of Education last week in the Vatican and invited schools to focus on nourishing our relationship with God in a spirit of unity, love and joy. He commended our Catholic schools for your extraordinary response to the Jubilee Year. Please do share this recognition with your school communities. You can read more on CAFOD's socials (Instagram and X).

CAFOD shared that over 1,000 Catholic schools have made a 'Jubilee Pledge' through CAFOD – a long term, whole school commitment to continue to live as Pilgrims of Hope and to live out Catholic Social Teaching. It is wonderful to know that some of our Shrewsbury schools are among that number.

If you haven't yet made your whole school pledge, there is still time. Don't forget to log it with CAFOD so your school can be added to the Schools Pledge map:

[Jubilee Pledge map for schools](#)

2. JUBILEE FOR THE WORLD OF EDUCATION

The Jubilee for the World of Education coincided with the 60th anniversary of Gravissimum Educationis, the Second Vatican Council's Declaration on Christian Education, promulgated by Pope Paul VI on 28 October 1965.

To celebrate this, **Pope Leo has published an Apostolic Letter, 'Drawing New Maps of Hope'**, in which he reflects on the challenges facing Catholic schools today, and names St John Henry Newman, co-patron of the educational mission of the Church, alongside St Thomas Aquinas. The latter was declared patron of Catholic schools, universities, and academies by Pope Leo XIII in 1880.

During the press conference to present the Jubilee for the World of Education, Cardinal Tolentino de Mendonça, prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, commented, *'... these are important, I would say historical days for Catholic education, and it is the desire of the Holy Father to inaugurate a new season that involves educational institutions with a new spirit and new plans, asking them to become true maps of hope in today's world. Education is the new name for peace and places hope on the map of the present and the future.'* (2)

Pope Leo's Apostolic Letter, 'Drawing New Maps of Hope' is a significant address to all educators in Catholic education, especially to leaders and governors and one that offers opportunity for pause, for reflection and for recommitment to the mission of Catholic

education in your own school communities to be ‘maps of hope’ for the children and young people in your care.

Further to Gravissimum Educationis, and the Global Compact on Education given to us by Pope Francis five years ago (<https://www.educationglobalcompact.org/en/>), Pope Leo adds three priorities: *“The first regards the inner life. Young people ask for depth; they need spaces for silence, discernment, and dialogue with their conscience and with God. The second regards the digital human: let us educate in a judicious use of technology and of AI, placing the person before the algorithm and harmonizing technical, emotional, social, spiritual and ecological intelligence. The third regards unarmed and disarming peace: let us educate in non-violent languages, reconciliation, bridges and not walls. “Blessed are the peacemakers” (Mt 5:9) becomes the method and content of learning.”* (10.3).

How might we focus on these three priorities in the coming months in our schools, our classrooms and with the children and young people in our care?

You can read the full text of Pope Leo’s Apostolic Letter by clicking the link below. In addition, Cardinal Vincent Nichols prepared a [reflection](#) and [summary of themes](#) from Pope Leo's Apostolic Letter, following the celebration of Mass at St Peter's for the Jubilee of the World of Education and the proclamation of St John Henry Newman as Doctor of the Church.

[Apostolic Letter ‘Drawing New Maps of Hope’ of Pope Leo XIV on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Conciliar Declaration "Gravissimum educationis" \(27 October 2025\)](#)

Press conference to present the Jubilee of the World of Education, 22.10.2-25 [Press Conference to present the Jubilee of the World of Education](#)

3. THE YEAR OF JUBILEE – PILGRIMAGE OF THE JUBILEE ICONS OF THE VISITATION



Our icons continue their pilgrimage around the Diocese this half term. A reminder 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](#).

The recording of the address from Bishop Mark presenting the icon to schools can be downloaded here. [Bishop Mark - Address](#)

Please note that the link will expire on the 19th of December.

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

4. THE YEAR OF JUBILEE – CLOSE AND LEGACY

CAFOD say: We are looking forward to the Jubilee celebration day for schools, which will take place on **Friday 21 November**. There will be an assembly film and other resources to support you on the [Jubilee schools website](#). See [Jubilee Celebration Day](#)

It's not too late to [take part in our debt campaign](#). Pope Francis asked us to call for urgent and decisive action on the international debt crisis during the Jubilee year, and it's a great way to live out your Jubilee Pledge. If you have taken part in the campaign already, please let us know by filling in our [Primary](#) or [Secondary](#) school reply forms.

What will be the legacy of the Year of Jubilee in your schools? How will you continue to journey with each other as pilgrims of hope?

As part of the response to **COP30**, there will be a global day of action for climate justice taking place in many cities throughout England and Wales on **Saturday 15 November**. We'd love you to join us in Manchester. You can [register your interest](#) to find out more.

5. THE YEAR OF JUBILEE – CREATIVE COMPETITION FOR SCHOOLS

Many thanks to those who sent in entries for our competition exploring creative ways to answer the question:

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

It was a great pleasure to see the different ways schools and individuals approached this question and the winners are as follows:



Primary

1 st	Shrewsbury Cathedral School	Collage
2 nd	Our Lady Star of the Sea	Dance
3 rd	Year 3, St Joseph's, Birkenhead	Banner

The following schools were highly commended by the judges for their entries: Sacred Heart, Baguley; Sacred Heart, Moreton; St Joseph's, Upton.

Secondary

1 st	Y10 Boys, St Ambrose College	Drama
2 nd	Sienna T, All Saints College	Dance
3 rd	Abigail P, All Saints College	Art

All schools named above will receive certificates and the winners will receive prizes. These will be distributed by schools' officers over the coming weeks.

Look out for the winning entries on our website.

6. TO LOVE YOU MORE DEARLY – THE PRAYER AND LITURGY DIRECTORY

As we enter our second year of CPDF for schools it is important to highlight some of the key messages from the formation and training:

- We are all on a journey to love God more dearly each day. Formation is offered to support schools on that journey

- Schools are Eucharistic communities. The great prayer that is the Eucharist is the beating heart of the Christian life, and of our Catholic schools. Here the Holy Spirit joins us to Christ in the offering of himself to the Father in love (See CPDF S1 2025-26)
- All prayer and liturgical life of the school is ultimately directed towards the Eucharist, even if the actual celebration of the Eucharist is something that the school is only rarely able to offer its pupils (See CPDF S1 2025-26)
- A balance has to be struck in all schools between fidelity and openness. Fidelity to the tradition that gives the school its mission, balanced with the openness to the presence of others who do not share that tradition. Pope Francis made clear in his guidance on dialogue, that openness is more authentic when it rises out of a community that is secure in its own identity, for those whose arms can extend the widest in welcome are those whose feet are most firmly planted on solid ground (See CPDF S1 2025-26)
- Prayer and liturgy in our schools should seek to engage all in the community on a personal, human level (see CPDF S6 2024-25)
- Prayer and liturgy should enable the baptised to participate in a full, conscious and active way (see CPDF S6 2024-25)
- Only those baptised who have been properly formed can undertake a specific ministry in celebrations of the word and liturgy (see CPDF S6 2024-25). *Undertaking a ministry* helps us better understand the roles children and young people can undertake in prayer and liturgy (rather than ‘child-led’)
- Children and young people may plan and evaluate times of prayer or celebrations of the word though only those who have been well formed can undertake specific ministries
- The school day should be marked by prayer at its beginning and end. Other opportunities for prayer could take place e.g. Grace before meals or the Angelus at Midday
- Provision for prayer should allow for encounter with the rich tradition of the Catholic Church *and* it should reflect the liturgical season
- Schools should refer to ‘*To love You more dearly*’ and the Diocesan ‘**Guidance for Prayer**’ when considering their provision
<https://educationshrewsbury.org/religious-education-catholic-life/resources-to-support-prayer-and-liturgy/>
- All schools should have a named prayer and liturgy coordinator
- All schools should have a policy for prayer and liturgy that speaks to their individual context (See CPDF S1 2025-26)
- All schools should have a comprehensive plan of provision outlining provision in the short, medium and long term, *and* beyond (See CPDF S1 2025-26)

- See *To love You more dearly* p16-17 which outlines the duty of governors and directors in the promotion, monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy
- See *To love You more dearly* p17-18 which outlines the responsibilities of leaders and all staff in the facilitating of prayer and liturgy

7. THE RED (*To know You more clearly* – The Religious Education Directory)

- Secondary schools should be fully compliant with the expectations of the RED this year
- Primary schools should be using *the Vine and the Branches* in all years from Y1 to Y6 as the primary resource in their RE lessons
- EYFS have the option to continue with *The Way, the Truth and the Life* or use the model curriculum in the RED along with the resources from Liverpool Archdiocese
- Lenses, *Hear, Believe, Celebrate* and *Live* should be shared with pupils as this reflects the language of the Church (see RED p20-35)
- The Ways of Knowing (Understand, Discern and Respond) describe the skills pupils develop as they progress through the RE curriculum. Care should be taken in planning, delivery and assessment that the skills are age and stage appropriate *and* allow pupils to achieve the end of phase Expected Outcomes (see RED p35-39)
- NB: Discern is more than simply analysis and evaluation
- The model curriculum in the RED is progressive and sequential. Planning, delivery and assessment should reflect this progressive and sequential nature

8. ADVENT

The season of Advent begins at the end of this month so I thought I would reshare some of the resources I have highlighted over the years in one document [Advent](#)

In Advent we are reminded of the call to ready our hearts to welcome Jesus into our lives each day. One way we can ‘ready the way’ is through our charitable efforts.



CAFOD have launched a world gift for schools this year – a Christmas stocking for £100 that can buy gifts to support refugee families affected by conflict and vulnerable families living in remote areas during the harsh winter.

<https://worldgifts.cafod.org.uk/pages/schools>

The Mini Vinnies have launched a ‘[Reverse Advent Calendar](#)’ that encourages children to donate items each day to make up a hamper for those in need. Note, this Advent calendar begins on 24th November.

9. MUSTARD SEEDS

Mustard Seeds have released a new resource for Prophecy and Promise.

This release will contain 2 separate resources: one specifically put together for Year 1 pupils, the other created for Year 4 pupils.



The Year 1 resource contains a video exploring the tradition of the Blessing of Bambinellis. **Bambinelli Sunday** in 2025 will be on the third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday), December 21, 2025. It is a tradition, started by Pope St. John Paul II, where children bring figurines of the Baby Jesus from their Nativity scenes to be blessed by the Pope in St.

Peter's Square. Many local parishes around the world also hold their own blessings on this day for families to participate. Perhaps this is a tradition you may wish to introduce into your school and/or parish.

Each resource contains 4 episodes, split so that 2 can be used in Advent and 2 can be used in the New Year during the Christmas Season. Each episode contains a newly created themed Mustard Seeds video file but, unlike previous MS resources, these will each be embedded within a comprehensive PowerPoint file. These PowerPoints will take a look at a number of elements contained within the curriculum/RED and guide the pupils through relevant learning for their year group.

These 2 resources are available to purchase together for one price of £60 (plus VAT) at www.mustard-seeds.co.uk/SHOP.

The plan is to produce similar, comprehensive resources for all Primary Year Groups in time for next Advent. Each one will have 4 original video files embedded within the PowerPoint.

Schools can add their own PowerPoint screens to this file, should they wish to cover any further aspects.

10. GOD WHO SPEAKS

Fleur Dorrell and the team at God Who Speaks have a number of resources for the month of November



A month of All Saints and All Souls

Why do we celebrate these feasts? - www.godwhospeaks.uk/all-saints-and-all-souls/

How are saints defined? How does the Church honour them?

www.godwhospeaks.uk/origins-of-all-saints-day/

The journey to the other side is filled with hope. – www.godwhospeaks.uk/the-feasts-of-all-saints-and-all-souls/

Why do we pray for souls? How does this help them? - www.godwhospeaks.uk/all-souls-feast-of-hope/

We believe that life is changed, not ended at death. - www.godwhospeaks.uk/liturgy-all-saints-and-all-souls-days/

Healing Tree Activity

Make a tree with prayer leaves for your loved ones now in heaven.

www.godwhospeaks.uk/healing-tree-activity/

Remembrance Sunday Poem: Anyone who Loses their Life by Fr Mark Skelton

We are invited to transform the world from hate to love

www.godwhospeaks.uk/remembrance-sunday-poem/

18th November - 60th anniversary of Dei Verbum: The Word of God.

[Vatican II: The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation.](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/vatican-ii-the-dogmatic-constitution-on-divine-revelation/)

The 'God who Speaks' is our response to Dei Verbum

www.godwhospeaks.uk/about-us/

King and Pope: Praying towards Unity by James Gordon Reid

Ecumenism is the song of reconciliation, the whisper of heaven

www.godwhospeaks.uk/king-and-pope-praying-towards-unity/

11. FARMINGTON RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

The Farmington Institute have broadened their range of research fellowships. There are now four pathways open to teachers and leaders in schools:



- a) Teacher scholarships: up to 30 days of cover paid to the school to backfill whilst you undertake your research on RE, SMSC, Vision and values, Cultural capital etc.
- b) Group scholarships: based around a theme but with opportunity for individuals to explore what will benefit their school directly around RE, SMSC, Vision and values, Cultural capital etc.
- c) For headteachers and aspiring headteachers: up to 30 days at a costed amount, again with a focus on RE, SMSC, Vision and values, Cultural capital etc.
- d) Temple Grove Scholarships: For headteachers, providing opportunity for heads to explore levelling up or an area of deprivation within any aspect of school life.

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

Joy White, Farmington tutor, is based on the Wirral, and is eager to offer support to individuals or groups seeking a Farmington scholarship. She is happy to help with the process from completion of application to interview, to presentation.

NB: applications for 2026-27 must be submitted by the second week in January 2026.

PRIMARY

12. ADVENT with ONELIFE MUSIC

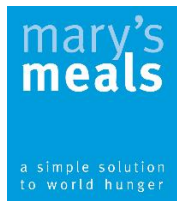
Join us for OPEN. for Advent each day in school for a short time prayer, music, scripture and sharing. **1st - 19th December 2025**



Join Dan, Emily and thousands of children across the country for the **Advent STREAM**. LIVE for an hour of Advent song, sharing and laughter. **5th December at 11am.**

Take time as a whole school to retreat, for an afternoon of Advent preparation. [Advent Whole School Retreat 2024](#)

13. MARY'S MEALS



Anna Houghton says: At Mary's Meals we have an exciting new initiative that we would love to share with schools which helps children **see the difference 10p can make**. Our resources mention collecting 10p's during October, but **schools can do this at any time**.

Pocket Money for Porridge

This month, kids across the UK are helping to feed children in the world's poorest countries; one 10 pence piece at a time.

With Mary's Meals, 10p is enough to feed a child one school meal. Join us by collecting 10p's and see how many meals your class can provide.

Children's poet laureate and author Frank Cottrell-Boyce is throwing his weight behind Pocket Money for Porridge and is encouraging schools across the UK to take part!

Frank says: *"I'm delighted to support Mary's Meals' Pocket Money for Porridge campaign. Mary's Meals' low-cost approach means that it's just 10p to feed a hungry child. By sharing their pocket money, children in the UK have a simple and joyful way to help hungry children around the world receive the daily school meals they need to learn and thrive."*

Download our fundraising pack which contains links to both KS1 and KS2 resources and a poem written by Denise Cottrell-Boyce at [Pocket Money for Porridge | Mary's Meals UK](#) Alternatively, get in touch to enquire about an assembly anna.houghton@marysmeals.org

At Mary's Meals we believe that School + Food = Hope. The meals you give provide a life-changing opportunity for children to attend school and have the energy they need to learn. anna.houghton@marysmeals.org

14. JEWISH MUSEUM LONDON - CHANUKAH VIRTUAL BROADCAST FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

This **free** live-streamed event is for Primary schools on **9th December 9.30-10am**.

Join the Jewish Museum Learning and Engagement Team for an exciting free live-streamed event in celebration of the Jewish festival of Chanukah! Tune in for storytelling, object exploration, and a live candle lighting to celebrate the festival of Chanukah.

The broadcast will be hosted on Zoom, with the link to be sent out just prior to the event.

Click [here](#) to register

15. MUSLIM LEARNER SERVICES

National Inter-Faith week FREE Islam training course **Tuesday 11th November** or our online shared Islam assembly for Reception-Y6 pupils - **registrations close at 5pm on Friday 7th November. Booking link below**

R/KS1 1.15-1.45 pm - How do Muslims worship?

KS2 2.00-2.30 pm - What does it mean to be a Muslim?

<https://zfrmz.com/kDiXr04Y9ZtMRiSp6lM4>

FREE Online Training course + Live Q&A. **Tuesday, 11th November, 4-5 pm**, 25 Prophets in the Qur'an' (Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad and many more...).

Book your place on the live session or request a recording using this link:

<https://zfrmz.com/AcMvwyLsxO0Qsn4mJV9G>

We are also taking bookings for school visits (assemblies, workshops, staff training etc for the Autumn 2, Spring 1&2 and summer 1&2)

<https://zfrmz.com/aJbKiqynJIHAK9stSRYO>

SECONDARY

16. COLUMBAN MISSIONARIES: SCHOOL MEDIA COMPETITION

The Columban Missionaries have launched their **Schools Media Competition 2026** with the theme: ***"Becoming a refugee is never a choice. But how we respond is."***

WHO? Students aged 13–18 in Britain

WHAT? Create an original piece of writing or an image to explore what it means to seek sanctuary, how we can show compassion, solidarity and respect.



WHEN? The deadline is Valentine's Day 14th February 2026

PRIZE: First prize is £300 + entries published in Columban media

Especially at this time, let's use our voices to raise awareness, empathy and hope.

Find out more by visiting the competition website:

<https://www.columbancompetition.com/>

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
06/11/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	ECT Induction Primary - 1st Year	St Columba's Parish Hall, CH2 1PL	Booking Form	30-Oct
12/11/2025	9.30am-12pm	Secondary Deputy & Assistant Headteacher Forum Catholic Life and Mission	Ellesmere Port Catholic High School, CH65 7AQ	Booking Form	05-Nov
13/11/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	ECT Induction Primary - 2nd Year	St Columba's Parish Hall, CH2 1PL	Booking Form	06-Nov
14/11/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	Primary RE with Margaret Carswell	St Hugh's Parish, WA14 5NB	Booking Form	07-Nov
17/11/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	Christ at the Centre- A Course for Primary Practitioners - Module 2	Our Lady and St Christopher Parish Hall, SK6 3BA	Booking Form	10-Nov
21/11/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	RE Lead Meeting - Primary- Maria Hall	St Columba's Parish Hall, CH2 1PL	Booking Form	14-Nov
26/11/2025	1.30pm-3pm	COAST HUB 2 (Cheshire, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin)	St Nicholas Catholic High School, CW8 1JW	Booking Form	17-Nov
27/11/2025	1.30pm-3pm	COAST HUB 1 (Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Manchester)	St Ambrose College, WA15 0HE	Booking Form	18-Nov
28/11/2025	1.30pm-3pm	COAST HUB 3 (Warrington, Halton, Wirral)	Cardinal Newman Catholic High School, WA4 1RX	Booking Form	21-Nov

28/11/2025	9.30am-3.30pm	Day of Renewal	The Park Royal Hotel, WA4 4NS	Booking Form	21-Nov
01/12/2025	3.30pm-5pm	Vine and Branches Y5 preparation for Galilee to Jerusalem	Virtual	Booking Form	01-Dec
02/12/2025	3.30pm-5pm	Vine and Branches Y6 preparation for Galilee to Jerusalem	Virtual	Booking Form	02-Dec

And finally...

We began this newsletter with Pope Leo XIV's new apostolic letter, '**Drawing New Maps of Hope**', and so it feels fitting to close with [Dilexi te](#), Pope Leo XIV's first papal document.

Our schools are places of education where formation of the whole person and fullness of life are the goal for every child and young person in our care. Pope Leo in *Dilexi te* reminds us that his predecessor, Pope Francis, noted education as '*one of the highest expressions of Christian charity: "Yours is a mission full of obstacles as well as joys... A mission of love, because you cannot teach without loving."*' (Dilexi te 68). To recognise the innate dignity of every individual in our school community and to earnestly desire fullness of life for them through the nurture and education they receive is truly an act of love.

Dilexi te goes on to say, '*For the Christian faith, the education of the poor is not a favour but a duty. Children have a right to knowledge as a fundamental requirement for the recognition of human dignity. Teaching them affirms their value, giving them the tools to transform their reality. Christian tradition considers knowledge a gift from God and a community responsibility. Christian education does not only form professionals, but also people open to goodness, beauty and truth. Catholic schools, therefore, when they are faithful to their name, are places of inclusion, integral formation and human development. By combining faith and culture, they sow the seeds of the future, honour the image of God and build a better society.*' (Dilexi te 72)

May we continue in our mission of love to nurture persons for community who can not only transform their own lives but also the lives of those around them.

God bless,

Julia