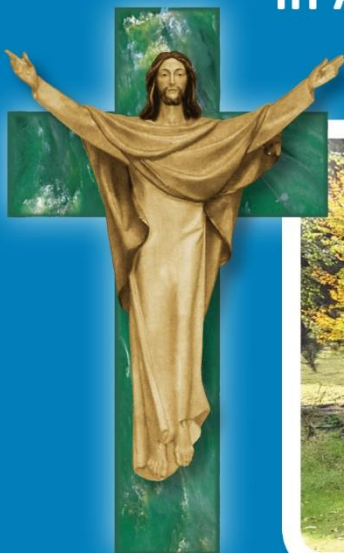


The Secondary Religious Education Bridging Document

A focus and discussion document
For Catholic Schools Teaching
Year 9–13 Young People
in Aotearoa New Zealand



*Poipoia te kakano kia puawai
– Nurture the seed and it will blossom*



Foreword – Kupu Whakamānawa



Poipoia te kakano kia puawai - Nurture the seed and it will blossom

The call of Jesus is as profound today as it was on the shores of Galilee when he first said to Simon and Andrew, “Follow me.” (Mt 4.19) The gospels show us that the journey of following him is challenging and often demanding but it is never a path taken alone. Jesus walks with us and nurtures us as we grow in his love, in the joy of his gospel.

Teachers in Aotearoa NZ Catholic secondary schools, you play a particular role in sharing the wonder of God’s love with the young people in your care. While it is privileged and rewarding work, we understand that it can be difficult too. It is important to remember that it is Good News that you share especially when teaching Religious Education in the classroom and beyond. The purpose of this Secondary Religious Education Bridging Document is to help you look anew at our national RE curriculum. It reminds us of the ‘why’ and the ‘who’ (Jesus) which give meaning to RE in our schools. It provides guidance and encouragement to teachers to be dynamic and authentic in your teaching and reminds all of us, again, of the vital necessity of “encounter with Jesus at the centre of Catholic education.”¹

The Catholic Bishops of Aotearoa New Zealand give thanks for all who teach Religious Education in our parishes and schools, we encourage you in your work, and assure you of our prayers as you participate in nurturing the seed of faith in our young people.

Yours sincerely in Christ

+ Patrick Dunn

✠Patrick Dunn

Bishop of Auckland

President – NZCBC

Te Huinga o ngā Pīhopa Katorika o Aotearoa

¹ The Catholic Education of School-Age Children (NZCBC) 2014. Page 2.

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Introduction – Kupu Whakataki



In a Catholic school teaching is much more a vocation than a profession. It is an opportunity to participate in the mission of Jesus by sharing his Good News with the children and young people in our care and their families in our community. This is particularly so for teachers of Religious Education who accept the responsibility and challenge of imparting particular knowledge and creating an environment and opportunities for young people to engage personally with learning which will develop in a life-long relationship with Jesus and the Church.

Teaching Religious Education is hard work, especially in the face of growing secularisation and increasing demands on teachers' time in terms of compliance and professional expectations. It is a constant challenge to hold on to the genuine joy of the gospel which forms the heart of our Catholic Schools. That joy is what Christians are called to, even in the face of a changing world, fluid values, inconsistent justice, increased individualism and a decreased awareness of God's presence. The teacher of Religious Education chooses to be the instrument of a different message, one of good news. She or he engages with young people and teaches them that Jesus is their Saviour, example, and friend, that the Holy Spirit is with them guiding and nourishing, that the Creator is 'gifting' and loving.

Pope Francis writes, "The Gospel tells us constantly to run the risk of a face-to-face encounter with others, with their physical presence which challenges us, with their pain and their pleas, with their joy which infects us in our close and continuous interaction. True faith in the incarnate Son of God is inseparable from self-giving, from membership in the community, from service, from reconciliation with others. The Son of God, by becoming flesh, summoned us to the revolution of tenderness" (EG 88). Such is the challenge and joy of being a teacher in a Catholic School.

How blessed we are to share in this privileged work.

Blessing – Karakia

*E te Atua, God our loving Father,
You gift us with this world and invite us to respond with love and wisdom
Hehu Karaiti, Jesus Christ, beloved Son,
You show us how to live and call us to participate in your mission of life
Wairua Tapu, Holy Spirit,
You empower us with your will and guide us on our shared journey.*

Bless the children, young-people and whānau in our parishes and their Catholic school communities
Bless all who work in Religious Education in Aotearoa New Zealand,
Remind us that you are always with us,
Fill us with enthusiasm, knowledge and joy
To teach and learn that which is at the heart of our schools,
You, who live and reign for ever and ever.
Āmene



Creating a Bridge – Te Waihanga Whakawhitinga



The Secondary REBD

This Secondary RE Bridging Document (The SREBD) is intended to provide some common ground for the journey towards a new, year 1 – 13, RE Curriculum. It is designed to encourage a new look at RE in Catholic Secondary Schools from within the framework of the current “Understanding Faith” (UF) curriculum. It is, therefore, immediately relevant to teachers in their current classroom practice.

While the cry for a new RE curriculum has not been quite as strong from the secondary sector as from the primary, NCRS is aware that many have been seeking a revitalised programme with re-arranged, or new, topics and themes which speak more clearly to, and better engage, the young people in Catholic secondary schools today. There is a growing desire and enthusiasm to do things better and to do more than just ‘rearrange topics’ for this important mahi.

Therefore, the SREBD is a focus and discussion document for Catholic secondary school communities to deeply consider what is happening at ‘your place’ in terms of RE. It does not presume that this is not already happening but provides a common reference point for all Aotearoa NZ Catholic schools to begin your engagement with the journey towards a new curriculum.

It does not start with the product or content of a curriculum but rather the purpose and context – the ‘why’ and ‘who’ of RE.

In particular the SREBD supports renewed consideration of:

- Opportunities for encounter with the person of Jesus
- The relationship between school and parish
- The spirituality of young people and the context of those in our schools
- The significance of cultural responsibility and identity
- What we understand Religious Education to be (structure, purpose & Religious Literacy)
- Effective assessment and evaluation
- Varying pedagogies
- The actual breadth of the current, mandated curriculum
(many topics in UF, especially in the senior school, are simply not taught at all)

In a very real way this document provides a bridge between current practice and an emerging, new understanding, of Religious Education to be reflected in a new curriculum. This new curriculum will develop, with significant input from a range of people including, bishops, principals, DRSs and RE teachers, over the next four years. The journey will include:

- Moving from two unrelated programmes to one, year 1-13, level 1-8, RE curriculum
- Creating a new model and set of strands, topics or themes, with new emphases
- Responding to young people’s and teacher voice
- Taking time to do this well through listening and authentic communication
- Recognising that this journey is on behalf of the Aotearoa NZ Catholic Bishops in support of the mission of the Church in Aotearoa NZ – it will ultimately be ‘their’ curriculum



Photo: Bridge to [Somewhere] – newzealand.com

Linked to the primary REBD

(N.B. Because, the Secondary Understanding Faith curriculum has had some major revision less than 10 years ago, and has recently introduced a framework for year 7-10 'realignment', it was decided to go further in the primary REBD, in terms of re-formatting achievement objectives and addressing issues such as Levels and Lesson Titles etc, than was deemed necessary in this SREBD. This small section is provided FYI.)

Early in 2018 the RE Bridging Document (The REBD) was made available to primary schools throughout Aotearoa NZ. The purpose of that document was to give encouragement and guidance for teaching the Primary RE Curriculum in today's classrooms. For many years primary principals, DRs and teachers had been asking for some significant revision of their curriculum and the REBD took some major steps in this regard.

For the REBD the image of a bridge is a metaphor for a subtle shift in teaching RE:

- Lessons to Resources
- Year-levels to Curriculum Levels
- Printed books to on-line resources
- Prescribed teaching methods to encouragement of creative learning experiences

The REBD also takes primary RE to some fresh places, giving some new emphases:

- A greater emphasis on encounter with the person of Jesus
- A renewed emphasis on the relationship between school and parish
- A new outline for tracking coverage of Achievement Objectives
- Some guidance for the use of new pedagogies with the mandated programme.
- New emphases included in the primary RE Achievement Aims:
 - Greater attention to Catholic Social Teaching
 - Reference to recent Papal encyclicals and Papal quotes
 - Promoting experiences to nurture children's spirituality
 - Highlighting children's role in the mission of the Church as disciples of Jesus
 - Calling for more intentional experiences to help children 'encounter' Christ
 - Encouraging experiences that facilitate children recognising and responding to their personal call to holiness and entering into relationship with Jesus.

Creating a shared place to begin

It is in this context that the two Bridging Documents, the REBD and the SREBD, create a cohesive step towards considering a shared curriculum. Much of the content in each document is identical because it was written from the start to serve both sectors. Principals, DRs, teachers, young-people and whānau in Catholic schools have much in common in terms of Religious Education. There are a range of differing challenges but children taught about the aroha of God and the call of Jesus, as new entrants in a Catholic primary school, will be taught about that love and participation in the mission of the Church as 18 year olds about to leave a Catholic Secondary school.

There needs to be an overt understanding that, even though the site and buildings may change in moving from primary to secondary school, in our Aotearoa NZ Catholic schools Religious Education provides a cohesive, coherent support for young-people as they grow in knowledge, understanding and, please God, faith.

Through the REBD and SREBD primary and secondary RE teachers can reflect on current practice and share a common step towards a curriculum which NCRS will develop for and with them to support the young people placed in their care. It is a worthy and profound task. And, hopefully, a joyful one.

Being Spiritual – Te Taha Wairua



The young people in our Catholic Schools have both material bodies and spiritual souls and they are both – they have feet on the ground and they long, however inarticulately, for their spiritual home in Heaven. In a broad understanding Fr Neil Darragh succinctly describes spirituality as, "the combination of beliefs and practices that animate and integrate people's lives."²

Being Catholic

Bishop Steve Lowe defines spirituality, within the Catholic context, as "the integration of *Theology* (knowledge) and *Experience* which becomes part of what the Church holds in her understanding of Christ." Knowledge on its own is sterile and personal experience can be distant or exclusive. Spirituality is the action of these relating to each other and this coming together encourages us to come together. For example, Francis of Assisi was captivated by his knowledge of the 'poor Christ' in the Gospels and by experiencing poverty himself. Drawing the two together, his spirituality grew to profound depths and a wonderful example for others.



Catholic schools aim to provide education of the whole child or young person in an environment of faith in the Catholic Tradition. Like all schools in Aotearoa NZ, they cater for the development of children and young people's hauora, that is, their physical well-being taha tinana, mental and emotional well-being taha hinengaro, social well-being taha whānau, and taha wairua spiritual well-being.³ However, the Catholic school, in particular and as a whole, nurtures and supports the development of young people's spirituality.

Through knowledge of Scripture, Church teachings and beliefs children and young people come to understand that Religious Education plays a significant role in developing their spiritual identity. It helps inform their life experiences and shapes their world view and spirituality around the person of Jesus, and their relationship with him develops as the model for all of their relationships.

The Catholic understanding of spirituality is that it is both personal and communal. Schools aim to provide for both of these as part of the spiritual life of the school and in relationship with the parish. Communal experiences of spirituality are often centred on celebrations of the Eucharist to highlight the feasts and liturgical seasons throughout the year. Particular moments on young people's personal faith journey, such as participating in sacraments, also provide opportunities for both personal and communal experiences that enrich their own and the communities' spiritual lives.

The Religious Education programme (Understanding Faith), developing a habit of prayer and liturgical life, the pastoral care practices and a sense of belonging in the Catholic community are the foundations of the Catholic Character that gives schools their particular identity and their right to exist. Another aspect of this, for many schools, is a particular emphasis on the spiritual traditions and expressions of the charism of the founding order evident especially in prayer, liturgy and outreach. All of these support and express Catholic spirituality.

Today

It is important to acknowledge that presently, with the growth in secular culture, there is a flawed tendency to disconnect religion from spirituality based on a general understanding that the former is restrictive and closed while the latter is creative and open. However, in the journey of integrating experience and knowledge, Catholic spirituality is authentically engaged in a search for meaning, relationships, connectedness, a sense of belonging, a journey to the transcendent, the outward

² Neil Darragh, *At Home in the Earth: Seeking an Earth-centred spirituality*, Accent Publications: Auckland, NZ, 2000, 1.

³ NZ Curriculum 2007

expression of beliefs and values, awareness of ‘other’, etc. These aspects are very much part of an open and shared spiritual journey as individuals and as a Catholic community.

Within the Catholic school creativity and openness to deepening personal spirituality is a key aspect of holistic education. Young people should have regular opportunities to benefit from Church teaching and wisdom in this area. There is, for example, great wealth in the Catholic traditions of silent prayer, meditation, lectio divina, formal prayer, movement & song.

Young People’s Spirituality is Diverse

The results of international research looking at young people’s spirituality shows that they, regardless of whether they belong to a religious tradition, have a spiritual dimension to their lives which is similar to adults but also has some particular characteristics that are unique to them.

A summary of the characteristics of young people’s spirituality include⁴:

- Individual unique spiritual qualities, capacities and experiences
- A deep sense of awe and wonder related to the ways they sense the world
- Asking and wondering about rich, deep questions
- Relating stories, writing and art work that describe personal experiences with spiritual themes
- Wondering about the meaning of life – exploring the big questions
- Describing experiences of dreams, visions, mystery, fun, inspiration, insights, joy and relationships
- Expressing compassion, gentleness, empathy, concern, wisdom, sensitivity, awareness in relationships and resilience in hard times.

These characteristics apply to young people’s spirituality in a wider framework of understanding but they apply equally to those in Catholic schools where they are influenced by Catholic knowledge and experience including the rituals, symbols, lived values and beliefs. This includes the role models and spiritual witnesses who embody a Catholic spirituality with whom they interact every day.

Modelled by Teachers

Teachers play a key role in young people’s spiritual lives and they draw on their own spirituality to help them to be more alert to their spiritual qualities and expressions. They are spiritual models for young people and they nurture, affirm and accompany them by ‘listening to and listening for’ their spiritual expressions. It is, therefore, vital that teachers have opportunities and support to develop their own personal spirituality, at school and within the wider Catholic community.

The Religious Education programme provides opportunities for young people to express and deepen their spiritual lives. In times of prayer, liturgy and reflection young people can draw closer to God through their relationships with the people in their lives and the Communion of Saints that surround them, and through such experiences their spiritual expressions become an identifying part of who they are. No one is saying this is easy with teenagers, but it is an important aspect of the purpose of Catholic education which needs to be acknowledged and affirmed.

Oriented towards Jesus

Young people’s spiritual characteristics are nurtured and shaped within the context of Catholic beliefs and values that focus on Jesus and the God he revealed that are at the centre of the Catholic Character and religious life of the school. They come to understand that Jesus embodied spiritual characteristics and modelled them in his life and they are challenged to do this. They are encouraged by their teachers to deepen their relationship with Jesus and become empowered by the Holy Spirit to express the fruit and gifts of the Spirit.

The journey towards spiritual maturity is a life-long process and the formation and support offered in Catholic Schools is a critical phase along the way.

⁴ Anne Kennedy, Masters Thesis – *The Spirituality of Children*. Otago University, Dunedin. (2007)

Considering our Learners – Ngā Ākonga



The children and young people who attend Catholic schools are wonderful individuals created in the image and likeness of God and called into relationship with God through Jesus. In this document they are not referred to as 'students' or 'pupils' because they are always much more than that.

Children and young people in Aotearoa New Zealand live in a bi-cultural society that is becoming increasing multi-cultural. Their lives and the lives of their families and whānau are influenced by the complexities described by Pope Francis as the "the rapidification of life" (Laudato Si' - 18) in the 21st century, evidenced in increasing globalisation, secularism, materialism and pluralism. All of these challenge the Catholic identity and worldview which is the foundation of our Catholic schools.

Widely varied

The young people who come into Catholic classrooms are from a wide range of family whānau living in towns and cities across the country from all demographics of society. They represent a significant range of cultures, socioeconomic status, faith engagement and academic ability – and often all within a single school.

Young people are part of their local parish to which they have varying degrees of connection. Some families have regular involvement in the life of the Church, others have occasional involvement and a number have no connection other than through the school.

The Aotearoa NZ educational legislation for Catholic (State Integrated) Schools requires that families have "a particular or general philosophical or religious connection" with the Catholic School. This is administered by the NZCBC through the application of a national policy which usually requires 95% of young people to have some meaningful level of Catholic affiliation in order to gain entrance to a Catholic School. In practice, and due to a range of complex factors around "perception of the school" and families' desire to gain entrance, the real level of commitment to Catholic faith is often minimal. This is particularly challenging for parishes, schools and teachers of RE in particular.

There is a small proportion of young people from other Christian communities whose families choose to be part of Catholic schools. These families recognise the benefits for their child of an educational environment that supports their Christian values and beliefs. These families are often actively involved in their own church communities.

Seeking to Belong

In the past many social and community family activities were part of parish life. Today, in contrast, we live in a transient world attributed in part to a rising sense of individualism. There is an increasing tendency for families not to commit to groups and clubs, etc. The ability to 'belong' from a distance, with diverse levels of connection, such as within social media, is another aspect of modern New Zealand life. Changes in participation in Sunday Eucharist, and other engagement with parish life, may be linked to these new sets of behaviours.

Today, for example, involvement in sport plays a large part in the lives of many young people and their families. Playing or watching team or individual sports for many young people and their family whānau is the focus of their social and community life. While there are benefits from this, the time commitment it involves can impact on opportunities to participate in other activities such as those associated with the Church and parish life. Sunday sport is also common and often directly cuts across Sunday Mass times. Catholic school leaders should challenge this.

Part-time work also plays a major part in the life of many young people. The desire to earn their own money and have a place in a working environment has a range of impacts on their education, social, personal and spiritual lives.

Despite its increasing secularism there is informal anecdotal evidence that Christian values underpin many relationships and how they respond to others in everyday life. In times of need people often demonstrate 'national traits' such as 'giving people a fair go', 'mucking in when help is needed', and 'using number eight wire' as creative ways to solve practical problems. These traits could be interpreted as 'national spiritual traits' and examples are often held up for people to replicate. These examples of 'living values' are a unique part of the national context that children and young people in Catholic schools bring to their classrooms.

Come as You Are

Therefore, regardless of their connection with the Church, children and young people in Catholic schools in Aotearoa New Zealand 'come as they are' to be welcomed as children of God, to be evangelised and respected as people who are made in God's image and likeness.

Appendix 2 provides a simple format for brainstorming about the learners at your place.



NZ Young People...

Have some religious knowledge, skills and experience	Come from Māori, Pākehā European and other cultures including Pasifika, Asian, Middle Eastern, African and are immigrants and/or refugees	Have a range of cognitive and affective skills, abilities and disabilities
Exhibit positive and negative behaviour towards others	Approach religious learning and experiences with varying degrees of enthusiasm, indifference, interest and participation.	Have a range of understandings around social justice and fairness in the light of Gospel values and virtues
Include prayer as part of their life and relationship with God at times	Are connected in varying degrees with their local parish or pastoral area	Come from wealthy, average income and poor families
Are part of schools large and small, new and long established, rural and urban all of which reflect the social context of their communities	Make increasing use of technology to communicate, entertain and learn	Come from homes where their knowledge and commitment to faith practice is not always supported and reinforced by adult family members
Come from a wide range of family and whānau in terms of different types of families and diverse experiences of love and care	Participate in some form of sporting and /or cultural activities	Are in need of quality Religious Education which supports their personal growth and the development of an authentic relationship with Jesus and the Church.

All of these factors, and many not listed above, influence the children's and young people's engagement with faith formation, Religious Education, prayer, encountering God in daily life and living as disciples of Jesus. All of them are aware to some degree of the relevance of these experiences to their lives.

AND ALL ARE WELCOME IN OUR SCHOOLS.

Being Bi-Cultural – Te Tikanga-rua



A gift within the New Zealand Catholic Bishops' mandated RE Curriculum is the awareness and inclusion of some Te Reo and Māori concepts throughout the programme. These understandings of great gift - Taonga, learning together - Ako and family - Whānau must always be present in the teaching of Religious Education.

Taonga

Aspects of Māori culture and language which embody Katorika Māori Spirituality are woven throughout the life of Catholic schools in Aotearoa New Zealand. Māori language is seen as the eye of the culture and should be used interchangeably with English in titles throughout the RE programme to support awareness and make Māori Spirituality more visible and audible in the school. Broader expressions of this can be seen in school gatherings, welcomes, liturgies, music, and ritual. Particular emphasis has been given to some content of Understanding Faith where key Māori concepts such as tapu, mana, aroha, tika, pono and hohou rongo are incultured into the programme. This ultimately seeks cohesion between a traditional Māori and a Māori/Pākehā Christian perspective, so that the wisdom and mana of these concepts enrich the understanding of the sacred.

Bishop Charles describes the implications of being bi-cultural this way: "our Catholic faith is one and universal. Every form of inculturation of the faith enriches everyone. We know that in the history of Aotearoa the participation and belonging of Māori within the Catholic Church predates the signing of the Treaty. Until the arrival of significant numbers of European settlers, the Church here was predominantly Māori. In more recent decades there has been growing recognition of the vital contribution of Māori insights⁵ into our universal faith in Hehu Karaiti and also into our liturgical practices. These are or should be embraced at the heart of the Church and parish life."

Ako

Many Catholic schools incorporate the concept of ako into their classrooms and regular whole school practices. Ako establishes a teaching and learning relationship, where the teacher is also learning from the child. It is grounded in the principle of reciprocity and highlights the importance of young people's relationship with their whānau. Ako principles and practices are fully compatible with and respectful of all aspects of Catholic Schools' Special Character.

Whānau

Māori are tangata whenua of Aotearoa New Zealand which is home to them in a way that no other land may be, and in a way that no other people may understand or feel. At the same time there is a spirit of welcome and family whānau that calls to be fostered and celebrated particularly in Catholic Schools and within the RE programme. It is a spirit deeply embedded in the call of Jesus to be people of faith pono, integrity tika and compassion aroha.⁶

In a wider appreciation of family the increasing number of young people from other cultures in Catholic schools challenges teachers to provide opportunities for all to share their faith and cultural experiences in their classrooms to enrich Religious Education classes and the whole life of the school. This practice honours the important relationship between faith and culture that young people have a right to expect.



⁵ This 'insight' is in the context of Dei Verbum, 8

⁶ Dr Pa Henare Tate

Understanding Religious Education – Te Mātauranga Whakapono



In our consideration of a new curriculum it is important to acknowledge that, at last survey, no secondary Catholic school was covering all of the Understanding Faith curriculum. For a range of reasons and pressures, including the sheer size of the task, there are areas in the mandated programme which are simply not being taught as written. This alone signals the need for review, but equally important is deep consideration of what Religious Education actually is.

Religious Education is education in religion. In Catholic schools Religious Education is teaching and learning what we, the Catholic Church, believe and teach – it aims to enable young people to understand and appreciate how people live, pray and celebrate and how they can respond freely to God according to their gift of faith. It is not ‘catechesis’⁷ although it intentionally forms a foundation from which personal faith and sacramental participation may grow – supported by the action and example of the whole school/parish community and the wider Church. As their knowledge, understanding and experience increases, young people become more aware of what it means to have a Catholic worldview and to live a life as part of the Catholic community.

Growing

The cognitive outcomes in RE may appear to have a greater focus in the learning process, however, young people’s affective awareness increases as virtues, gospel values and attitudes are absorbed through being embedded in the content and learning experiences of the RE programme. The affective and spiritual dimensions of RE are closely related and it is these that assist the development of their personal and spiritual growth. The Aotearoa NZ Secondary RE curriculum, Understanding Faith, reflects an understanding that from ‘learning about Jesus’ young people can grow to ‘love Jesus and want to follow him as a disciple’. Evidence of this growth may be seen as they share the outcomes of their learning through their participation in prayer, stories, drama, formal assessment, liturgies, retreats and parish life.

Together

A Catholic life is not lived in isolation but within a community and for secondary age young people their first ‘community’ is their family whānau, who may or may not practice their faith. This extends to their parish/pastoral community and to their school community. For many young people the school provides the regular experiences in faith related activities that enable them to live a Catholic life. For all young people the ideal is to grow together as family whānau, school and parish.

Through the school’s Catholic Character the knowledge and understanding they accumulate in their RE learning experience is ideally integrated into prayer, liturgical and reflective experiences and social justice programmes. Participating in an environment where they are immersed in these activities has an influence on the people they become, the choices they make, how they manage their relationships and make meaning of their lives.

In a climate of faith

Young people notice the cohesion between what they are learning about in their classroom and school and how people they know who are models of faith, such as their parents, grandparents, teachers, and parishioners, express their Catholic beliefs through the way they live. Young people recognise cohesion between what significant people in their lives say and do. They are very open to seeing, and emulating the coherence between ‘what you believe and who you are’. It is the combination of their RE learning and the witness of people living their faith as disciples of Jesus that enables young people to follow their own call to holiness and to use their gifts to participate in the mission of the Church. This is how Religious Education, in the context of Catholic Character, helps prepare the ground for young people to hear and respond to Jesus’ call to “Come follow me.”

⁷ Catechesis – A comprehensive and systematic **formation** in the **faith**. (*General directory for catechesis*. #67)

Becoming Religiously Literate – Te Reo Whakapono



All religions have their own specific language that is acquired gradually as people accumulate religious knowledge and participate in the life of the community.

A Language of Faith

An expected outcome of Religious Education in Catholic Secondary schools is that young people develop religious literacy that will enable them to articulate their increasing knowledge and understanding about faith. They will develop a language around such things as Church teaching, Scripture, Catholic beliefs, prayer and liturgy, Catholic Social Teaching, Catholic Spirituality, the meaning of life in parish, and the Church's mission in the world and relate these to their own life experience.

Supporting the Practice of Faith

The Understanding Faith curriculum highlights religious language as it occurs in new concepts as they are presented to young people. It provides strategies for it to be reinforced so that they can incorporate it into their vocabulary. As young people's religious literacy develops it will be evident in their written, oral and visual communication in the classroom and as they participate in the life of the community.

Through their increasing knowledge, about being Catholic and the development of their religious literacy, young people will become more able to articulate a Catholic worldview which will, over time, become integrated into their thinking and identity. It is mainly through these experiences in Religious Education that they gradually build up a working knowledge and use of religious language to express the faith they are personally learning to live. For example, in RE classes young people are regularly invited to articulate how others their age make connections with what they are learning and how this influences the way they live.



Assessing and Evaluating – Te Aromatawai me te Arotake



The effective use of assessment in the learning process for young people applies equally in Religious Education as in any other curriculum area. **Effective assessment** is a key component of quality teaching when it is used as part of the learning process (assessment of learning, for learning) to inform teaching and learning.

Effective evaluation is the information gathered by teachers from a range of assessment strategies to interpret the assessment data to enable teachers to make a judgement about the effectiveness of the teaching and learning programme and/or an individual young person's progress.

Assess Religious Education

Experienced teachers have skills and knowledge about assessment in the learning process which they apply across the whole curriculum including RE. Assessment looks back and it looks forward and it plays a key role in raising achievement and improving student learning outcomes. Care needs to be taken that assessment is targeted towards RE achievement objectives, as indicated in the Understanding Faith curriculum, rather than assessment itself becoming the driver of the RE programme. This is particularly a risk with senior NCEA RE classes, and DRSs work conscientiously and creatively to manage this challenge.

Teachers have access to a range of strategies to gather information about young people's learning and they use these to guide their next learning steps to achieve the learning intentions. Because this is the case it is not necessary to include specific examples and in-depth information about assessment strategies in this Secondary RE Bridging Document.

Seeing the Bigger Picture

On one level, the purpose of RE is to develop young people's religious knowledge and skills related to the learning intentions in RE which are mainly cognitive⁸. But the deeper and more important purpose of RE is the gradual effect it has on young people as they get to know Jesus and 'encounter' him and his family the Church. This happens as they listen and come to believe his message and let it transform the sort of persons they are becoming as his disciples. As young people's faith in Jesus increases and their relationship with him grows they grow in holiness and begin to accept their role in carrying on his mission on earth. This is a complex journey, for teenagers particularly, but when these wider effects are considered RE needs to be seen in the bigger picture of young people's affective⁹ or spiritual formation. While the cognitive outcomes of RE can, and should, be assessed using sound assessment strategies the affective outcomes require a different approach.

Evaluating Beyond the Cognitive

The affective or spiritual dimension of learning in RE cannot be 'assessed' in a cognitive way. Affective learning 'bridges' cognitive and spiritual learning. It can be observed as young people accept, and often challenge, their belief in Jesus and his values and as it becomes part of who they are and how they live. This is gradual 'inner' change that shapes the person they are growing into. It is not about 'knowing' so much as about 'becoming'.

Affective and spiritual learning can be evaluated using strategies that observe growth, change and development in young people's attitudes as they are inferred by their behaviour especially in their relationships. Evaluation of affective learning uses a wider frame to gather this information such as: informal observations, self-assessment strategies, anecdotes and use of written reflections to seek their responses to life situations (these are anonymous to increase validity). For example, the focus of the observations could be on young people's expressions of the Fruits of the Spirit or the reason for Social Justice or response to grief.

⁸ Relating to student's knowledge and perception of information.

⁹ Relating to student's attitudes, faith formation, interest and values. In this case, particularly with regard to spirituality.

Some examples of what to observe could be: noticing young people when they show they have integrated the values of Jesus into the way they live such as showing compassion and empathy, listening to how they describe people in different situations, recognising their spiritual questions that seek deeper meaning, noting the way they participate in parish life such as reading or playing music at Mass, or engagement with children's liturgy etc. Growth and greater awareness in the affective and spiritual dimension of learning can also be observed in young people's prayer especially when their words move beyond praying for their own needs to including praying for the needs of others.

The results of evaluation of the affective dimension of learning can be used to show 'trends' in young people's affective development that can be used by the teacher to encourage positive attitudes or behaviour or to address negative attitudes or behaviour in the class. Use of anonymous anecdotal examples to illustrate expected outcomes is a useful way of giving feedback. Written affective evaluation makes generalised statements about young people's developing attitudes inferred by their behaviour, including some anecdotal examples as evidence.

When the information about affective learning is gathered it can be summarised and fed back to a class. This is a very important step in the affective evaluation process. It provides opportunities for class conversations that can emphasise the importance of attitudes, virtues, gospel values, prayer and participation in parish life. Teachers can highlight what young people say about another person in the conversation as good examples that reinforce desired attitudes and behaviours.

Broadly Applying Strategies

In the wider context, while many strategies will be the same there is an important difference in assessing and evaluating young people's learning within the environment of a Catholic school. Teachers use assessment strategies that are effective from an educational point of view but in a Catholic school it is important that these strategies also reflect the inclusive attitudes and values that underpin the Catholic Character and these become embedded in all the classroom practices including assessment and evaluation beyond RE.

Reflective questions for teachers could be used to review how well assessment practices reflect the gospel values and virtues the school promotes for example:

- Are my assessment practices fair, inclusive, honest, valid and do they allow all young people to show in different ways what they have learned?
- Am I being mindful of the power of feedback and feedforward? Is mine respectful, clear, constructive, positive, useful, encouraging, focused on growth and improvement?
- Do I look at each young person as God's unique creation with his or her own abilities that together we can explore and develop?
- Do I treat each young person with gentleness, kindness, patience, acceptance and care and encourage them to do the same?

(N.B. It is also important that teachers evaluate their own learning experiences and personal growth. Personal reflection, prayer, conversations with colleagues and seeking advice are significant aspects of this shared faith journey in RE.)

Including Reporting

Written reports to parents need to be accurate and informative around achievement in Religious Education. It is not sufficient to solely relate the affective characteristics of a young people's behaviour or attitude in the class. Considering the care with which assessment and evaluation is planned and used, young people and their families, as well as the BOT, have a right to professional, meaningful reporting in this core curriculum area.

Applying Pedagogy for Religious Education – Ngā Ariā o te Mātauranga Whakapono



The word pedagogy comes from a Greek term meaning ‘the *art* of teaching the young’. In the 21st century educational world this term is used to describe practical and philosophical approaches to teaching and learning in schools. A range of effective pedagogies are being used in Catholic schools in Aotearoa New Zealand to deliver the New Zealand Curriculum and engage with our Understanding Faith Curriculum. This is happening in response to deeper understandings about teaching and learning and higher expectations around the effectiveness of education for young people in our schools.

Engage Deeply

This deeper understanding is entirely cohesive with Religious Education and the wider mission of the Church in which Catholic schools participate. The NZ Catholic Bishops wish young people, and their family whānau, to answer the call to live and share the gospel of Jesus and build God’s kingdom of justice, peace and love here on earth. Therefore, it is crucial that young people are taught to engage deeply with the Gospel message and to take ownership of this in their own lives. This is at the heart of all Catholic Schools.

Most teachers today have moved their thinking about teaching and learning beyond ‘transmission’ models to more ‘generative’ models. These models are student-centred and include constructivist, collaborative and cooperative learning strategies that encourage curiosity, exploration, inquiry, discovery, active learning and deeper student engagement. The hope is that generative models will lead young people to deeper learning and critical thinking which will empower them to use their knowledge and skills to transform society.

With Particular Knowledge

Modern learning practices utilise a reality that information is at the fingertips of learners. The associated understanding is that process and critical thinking are more important than ‘knowledge/facts’ because information can be acquired anywhere, anytime. However, a notable difference between Religious Education and other areas of the NZ curriculum is the awareness that there is a prescribed “body of knowledge” which needs to be learned. This powerful knowledge must be taught in New Zealand Catholic Schools.

For example, it is not enough, nor always appropriate, for young people to construct their understanding of God solely from their own ideas, experiences and what they find on the web. It is necessary for particular knowledge to be shared in a context which is powerful and engaging for all participants so that it can support growth in authentic Catholic knowledge and spirituality. Therefore, great care needs to be taken when planning Religious Education that teaching of content and specific knowledge is not lost in the wake of more flexible pedagogies which require no specific knowledge or understanding to be gained.

Encouraging a Relationship with Jesus

In this context, the pedagogical choices made by a school are clearly not to be undertaken lightly. The choice of an educational approach needs to reflect the purpose of the school, as it influences the desired outcomes the community has for the learners. Particular attention needs to be given to how it impacts on the ways young people are nurtured to grow and live in the spirit of Christ. Therefore, care needs to be taken when considering the specific effect of pedagogical decisions to ensure the highest quality Religious Education.

This does not mean that young people should not encounter freedom and opportunity for critical thinking in Religious Education. Personal choice or adherence is very much involved in the decision to develop a lifelong relationship with Jesus and the Church, and young people must be clearly

taught, particularly in the face of a growing secular world-view and associated media presence, that Jesus most definitely seeks such a relationship. For example, it is not up for debate that God loves us and moves in our world, and that there is great richness in the knowledge and life of our Church – grounded in the person of Jesus. However, there is wonderful opportunity to creatively investigate, integrate and grow in understanding of what this knowledge means.

Most secondary RE classes are timetabled as a subject, especially in the senior school. However, some schools are working hard to create innovative and dynamic ways to weave Religious Education across more than one curriculum area. This is often motivated by the sheer challenge of supporting teenagers to engage more deeply with RE. It is a worthy endeavour so long as RE remains the driver rather than the ‘poor cousin’ who ends up hidden in the corner.

Good practice of co-curricular planning includes:

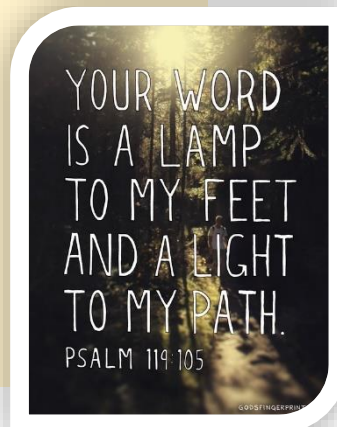
- A clear Catholic statement in the overarching theme title or heading
- RE learning forming the foundation of the theme rather than some sort of ‘add-on’
- Specific statements on where the RE Achievement Objectives are effectively addressed
 - Awareness, by the young people, of actual RE learning taking place in an engaging and inspiring way. (Co-curricular emphasising rather than diminishing RE.)
- Specific attention to assessment and reporting of RE AOs.

Creatively and Enthusiastically

The Understanding Faith Religious Education curriculum needs to be taught effectively in New Zealand Catholic schools. The power of Scripture and the rich teaching of the Church is calling out to be shared with real joy and expertise.

In the light of this, teachers of Religious Education are strongly encouraged to:

- Be creative and enthusiastic in planning and teaching of RE
- Utilise the best of modern pedagogies to engage young people in deep learning, linking RE to their life experiences
- Look to the wider community and parish for support and encouragement
- Ensure particular knowledge, which is not easily integrated with other learning areas or whole school approaches, is taught to meet all AOs.



N.B. Below is an extract from the NZ Catholic Bishops’ Statement regarding the time allocated each week for teaching RE – this does not include liturgy or liturgy preparation.

The NZCBC mandated minimum hours for Religious Education remain in effect because daily engagement with RE is still the back-bone of the programme in Catholic schools. If schools are creatively integrating RE Achievement Objectives throughout a range of curriculum areas they need to record the equivalent number of hours spent on RE - with evidence and justification.

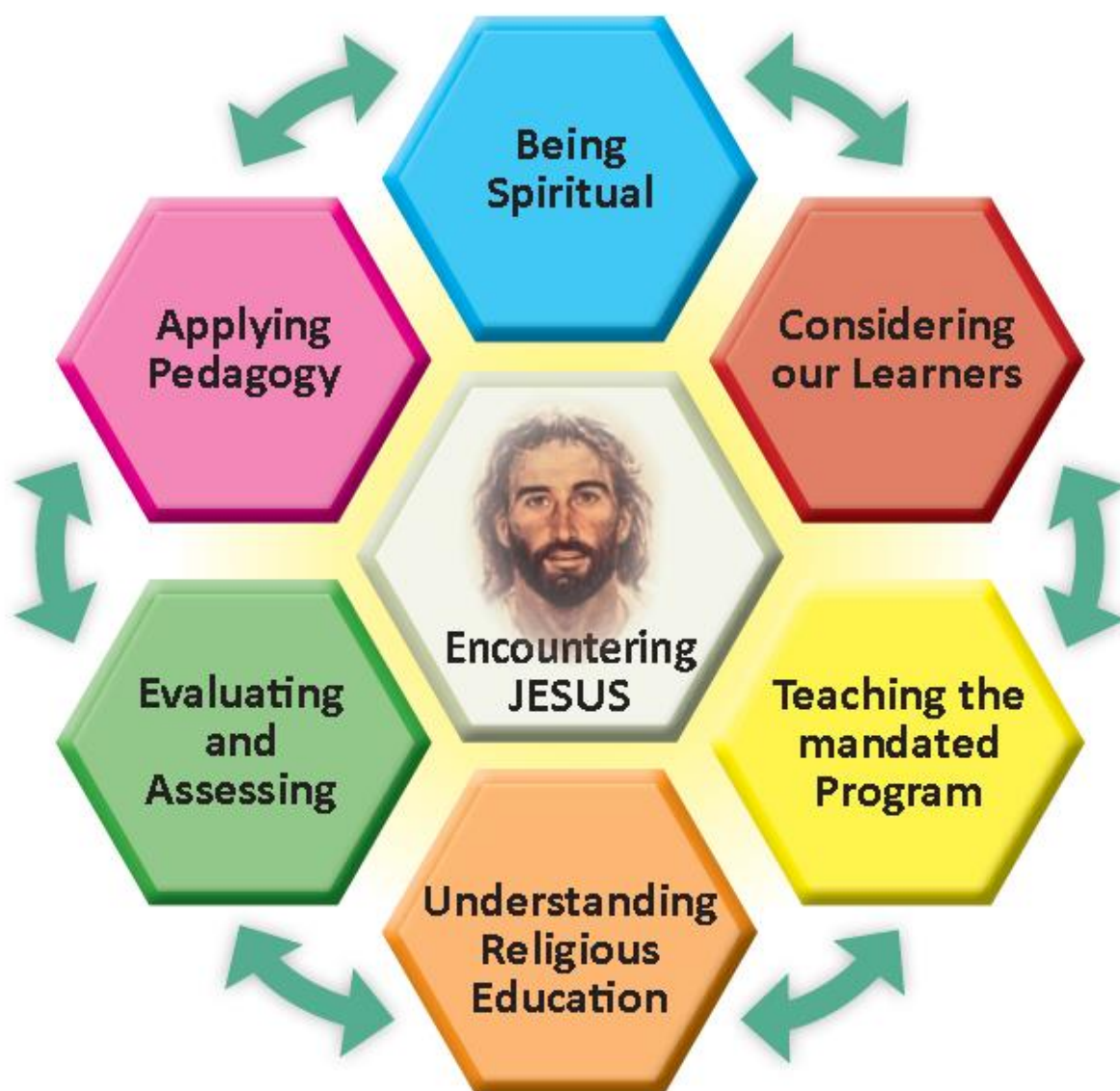
Weekly requirements are: Years 7 to 10: 150 minutes Years 11 to 13: 180 minutes

Understanding the Journey – Kia Mārama ki te Huarahi



This diagram is an attempt to represent graphically a relationship between the different aspects of Religious Education in our Catholic schools as outlined in this Secondary RE Bridging Document:

- Jesus, and the encounter with him, is at the centre of what we do.
- Young people's developing Catholic identity and their relationship with Jesus are bound together. This is at the core of what we are about in RE. It is more than knowledge and experience, but is informed and nourished by what happens in RE. There is always the understanding that Jesus is active in the relationship not an outside observer or an ephemeral goal.
- All aspects of Religious Education, as outlined in this SREBD, inform and are informed by each other. There is a flow and a sense of interconnectedness. All areas are important and necessary.



Using the Bridging Document – Te Whakamahinga o te Puka Whakawhiti



Rejuvenate Religious Education

The Secondary Religious Education Bridging Document (SREBD) is a focus for the current UF curriculum and a discussion document for a new curriculum. The present curriculum retains its original mandate and, as previously stated, this document brings clarification for teaching RE in the contemporary context. It encourages creativity and engagement in the light of the NZ Catholic Bishops' 'teal document', and refocuses teachers and leaders on the purpose of RE - to support young people in the development of a personal relationship with Jesus and to facilitate discipleship which includes participation in parish life and the wider Church community.

The image of a bridge is used in this document to provide a sense of movement from what has been, what is now and where 21st century learning is going in relation to Religious Education in Catholic schools in Aotearoa New Zealand.

For people in schools, reading and discussion around the explanatory statements in the SREBD, is intended to rejuvenate thinking and dialogue about the nature and potential of RE at your place. It is necessary for RE teachers and learners to benefit from new, engaging and vibrant approaches to teaching and learning used in the present day and beyond. The new pedagogies teachers are using across the curriculum can enable deeper learning of, and engagement with, Religious Education.

However, the content and profound purpose of RE is always the driving aspect of effective teaching of it in Catholic Schools and new ways of teaching and learning must honour this first.

With Creativity, Faith, Knowledge and Skill

Guidance in this area is provided in the SREBD by:

- Reminding us of the 'who' (Jesus) and the 'why' of Religious Education. To support the development of personal and community faith, in mind and heart, through quality teaching.
- Encouraging creativity in the 'how' RE is taught while retaining 'what' RE is taught. In terms of 'how' RE will be taught teachers are encouraged to be creative and engaging, making the most of their relationship with the young people in their care and using a variety of appropriate resources including Understanding Faith print materials and those on FaithCentral.
- Including an easily navigated (*clickable*) version of the Understanding Faith Achievement Objectives, the RS NCEA Matrix and some history, as a source for reflection for RE leaders and teachers around how the full, mandated curriculum is being taught at your place?



In Conclusion – Whakakapinga



It is the sincere hope of all involved in developing both the primary and secondary Bridging Documents that they provide some useful background information and practical guidance for teaching Religious Education in Catholic schools in Aotearoa New Zealand in the 21st century. We hope they will be another catalyst for deeply reflecting on what we currently do in RE and what a new RE curriculum might be.

May they also serve to remind us all of the call of Jesus to come follow him. To remind us of the Good News which forms the foundation of the Church and which we are tasked to share. To remind us that we participate with Jesus in the telling of wonderful stories, the sharing of profound knowledge, and the dialogue of deep conversations along the way as, together, we build the kingdom of God and reach out to those in our care.

Ours is blessed work.

**Jesus said, “Let the children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.”
(Matt. 19.14)**



“Understanding Faith” Curriculum Summary



Learning Strands – Most are encountered in each topic – but also lend themselves to particular topics

HUMAN EXPERIENCE Te Hikoianga o te Tangata	THEOLOGY Te Rangahau Whakapono	SCRIPTURE and TRADITION Te Karaipiture me nga Tikanga Tuku Iho	CHURCH HISTORY Nga Korero Onamata o te Hahi	SACRAMENTS and WORSHIP Nga Tohu Tapu me te Whakamoemiti	SOCIAL JUSTICE Te Mahi Tika mo te Katoa	UNIVERSAL RELIGIOUS DIMENSION Te Ahuatanga Whānui o te Tapu
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Topics – NB. Headings below are clickable ([Top](#) will return you here)

Year 9	9A My Story: Our Story	9B The Life and Times of Jesus	9C The Eucharist and the Church's Year	9D The Church's Story: The Beginnings	9E Creation and Co-creation	9F Beginnings of the Church in Aotearoa NZ	9G Recognising Signs of God	9H Sacraments of Initiation
Year 10	10A Discovering Our Identity	10B Journey Stories	10C The Meaning and Significance of Eucharist	10D The Church's Story: The Middle Ages	10E Inspiring Men and Women	10F Sinfulness and Reconciliation	10G The Teachings of Jesus	10H Expressions of Catholic Life
Year 11	11A The Trinity	11B Conscience, Morality, Values	11C Understanding the Gospel Story	11D The Church's Story: Reformation and Beyond	11E Ecumenism and Catholic Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topics in bold for years 11-13 indicate usually assessed by Achievement Standards Those in <i>Italics</i> – rarely taught (varies from school to school.) 		
Year 12	12A Religions of the World	12B Justice and Peace	12C The Church's Story: The Modern Age	12D Loss, Death, Grief and Dying	12E Biblical Studies I	<i>12F</i> Christian Morality and Moral Development	12G Christian Art, Architecture and Music	<i>12H</i> Commitment and Ministry
Year 13	13A Finding Meaning	13B Sects and Cults	13C Ethics and Ethical Issues	<i>13D</i> Jesus the Christ	<i>13E</i> Mary: Mother of God	<i>13F</i> Biblical Studies II	<i>13G</i> Images of the Church	<i>13H</i> Psychology of Religion
	<i>13I</i> The Church's Story: The Church since Vatican II	<i>13J</i> Current Religious Issues						

“Understanding Faith” – Topics & AOs by Year Group

(From the Understanding Faith Curriculum Statement – 2010)

	Achievement Aims Teachers will offer students the opportunities to gain and apply knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to understand:	Achievement Objectives Students will be able to:
Year 9 Theme: Beginnings	My Story: Our Story <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That change is essential to human growth and development. • That their own personal gifts mark them as unique persons made in God’s image and living in God’s grace. • That the gifts and traditions passed on to them by whānau and school have an important role in shaping their identity. • That each Catholic school finds its identity within the family of Catholic schools and the wider Church. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that year nine is a turning point which provides them with opportunities to develop their potential as well as presenting them with risks. • Appreciate that they are unique persons, created in God’s image, living in God’s grace and with the mana (spiritual power) to develop their goodness. • Understand that each person’s identity is formed within a unique network of relationships, including family and school, which expresses and communicates values and traditions. • Identify and reflect on the values and traditions of their particular whanau and school. • Develop an awareness of the place of their school within the family of Catholic schools. • Develop an appreciation of the place of their school within the wider Church.
	The Life and Times of Jesus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The different dimensions of Jesus’ identity. • The religious, cultural, historical, political, geographical, and social contexts within which Hehu lived his life. • The key events of Jesus’ life and their significance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an awareness of Hehu as a human person, the promised Messiah, the Son of God, and Saviour. • Explore aspects of Jesus’ background including the geography and aspects of daily life in Jesus’ Palestine, the history of the Jewish people and their special relationship with Te Atua, the significance of Jesus’ whakapapa, and Jewish religious practices as expressed in synagogue and Temple. • Identify and explain the place of the different religious, political and social groups within Jewish society at the time of Jesus. • Develop knowledge and understanding of key events in the life of Hehu and appreciate their significance.

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	<p>The Eucharist and the Church's Year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Church's annual cycle of feasts and seasons. • The historical basis of these feasts and seasons. • The origins and development of the Mass. • The central place of the Eucharist in the life of the Church. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciate that everything in nature, including human life, is part of a cycle. • Develop an understanding of the Church's annual cycle of Liturgy as the celebration of the most important mysteries and events in the life of Christ - his incarnation, birth, ministry, death, resurrection, ascension - and identify the different colours and symbols associated with the Church's various feasts and seasons. • Appreciate that the church building is a sacred place, identify the objects of liturgical significance found there, understand their role in the Eucharist, and recognise the importance of preparing well for the celebration of the Mass. • Recognise that the Eucharist, where Jesus becomes fully present to his followers, is the source and summit of the Church's life. • Describe the structure of the Eucharistic celebration. • Understand the origins of the Eucharist in Jewish worship and the Passover, its institution at the Last Supper, its place in early Christian worship and later developments in the Mass up to the present time.
	<p>The Church's Story: The Beginnings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of the Church as a community of faith from its small beginnings as a Jewish movement in Jerusalem to its emergence as a major spiritual, political and social force in Europe by the middle of the eighth century. • That God shows himself in history by acting through the Church and in the lives of Christian men and women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an understanding of the Church's origins at Pentecost, its transformation from a Jewish movement to a Church for all believers, and the on-going contribution of martyrdom to its vitality and growth. Recognise and appreciate important aspects of leadership, organisation and religious practice within the early Church. • Understand the change in Christianity's status from that of a persecuted minority within the Roman Empire to its official religion and appreciate the impact of this development on the lives and faith of Christians. • Recognise how the Church safeguarded its faith in Jesus Christ by discerning a canon of Christian Scriptures and formulating statements of belief (creeds). • Recognise that a search for Christian witness and holiness led to the emergence of monasticism and increased missionary activity within the Church. • Understand the impact on the Church of the Barbarian Invasions, the collapse of the Roman Empire, and the expansion of Islam.

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	<p>Creation and Co-Creation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Church's teaching about Creation. • The implications of this teaching for living in today's world. • Their own and others' creativity in relation to that of Te Atua. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciate how the creation stories of various cultures explain the beginnings of the universe and life. • Understand God's role in Creation as revealed in Genesis and recognise the different, but complementary, truths contained in the Genesis creation accounts and the findings of contemporary science. • Recognise that although De-creation is part of human experience, Hehu Karaiti renews Creation. • Explore how Scripture celebrates Te Atua as the Creator. • Understand the concept of Co-creation and recognise that Christians are called co-operate with God in building up Creation. • Acknowledge and value their own God-given creativity.
	<p>Beginnings of the Church in Aotearoa New Zealand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That we come to a knowledge of God by reflecting on the events of our history. • The Māori context into which Christianity was introduced. • The beginnings and development of the Catholic Church in New Zealand from 1835 to 1890. • Their spiritual heritage as Catholics in Aotearoa. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop some understanding of major aspects of Maori spirituality and religion before the coming of Christianity to Aotearoa, including Io, tapu and mana. • Understand how Christianity arrived and developed in Aotearoa before the beginning of the Catholic mission in 1838. • Recognise the contribution of significant personalities, groups and events associated with the establishment and development of the Catholic Church in Aotearoa up to 1890. • Develop an understanding of Catholic involvement in Te Tiriti o Waitangi and recognise the significance of this development.

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	Recognising Signs of God <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meaning of sacramentality through experiences of mystery and awe. • The significance of sign, symbol and ritual. • God's self-revelation and self-communication in Christ, in the Church, in Scripture, in the sacraments, and in ordinary things and people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the nature of sign, symbol and ritual and recognise how these provide meaning within different societies and cultures. • Recognise that Te Atua reveals himself to the world through signs and symbols. • Develop an understanding of Karaiti as the sacrament of God. • Develop an understanding of the Church as the Sacrament of Christ. • Understand the seven Sacraments as signs of Christ's presence in the Church. • Recognise a variety of Christian symbols.
	Sacraments of Initiation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist are a process of becoming Catholic, an initiation into the Church. • That Te Wairua Tapu gives life to the Church. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an understanding of initiation rituals, in society and different rituals, and recognise their significance. • Develop an understanding of the nature, origins and history of Christian initiation. • Develop an understanding of the processes and rite of Christian initiation, their meanings and signs. • Recognise that the sacraments of initiation empower Christians to share in the mission of the Church.

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	Achievement Aims Teachers will offer students the opportunities to gain and apply knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to understand:	Achievement Objectives Students will be able to:
Year 10 Theme: Journey	Discovering our Identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That a person's unique identity is discovered through relationship – with God, oneself, others, and the created world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an understanding of what is meant by personal identity and examine factors that influence its development and expression, including whanau, school, country and religion. Recognise that the source of a person's identity is found in their relationship with Te Atua. Understand that an individual's identity is developed through relationships based on acceptance of self and others. Understand that life is a journey during which Christians accept responsibility for one another.
	Journey Stories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The place of journeys and journey stories in human experience and their significance within the Christian tradition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the place of journeys and journey stories, past and present, in human experience. Recognise the significance of Old Testament journeys - the migration of Abraham and Sarah, and the exodus of Moses and the Chosen People - to the Christian story. Develop an understanding that Jesus' life on earth was a journey - through Death, Resurrection and Ascension - to Te Atua. Understand the significance of Paul's own life journey and his missionary travels.
	The Meaning and Significance of Eucharist <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Important aspects of the meaning and significance of the Eucharist and its central place in the life of the Church. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an understanding of key aspects and images of Eucharist - as thanksgiving, meal, bread of life, the presence of Christ, sacrifice, farewell gift, memorial, promise of eternal life, and sign of unity and love. Recognise the central place of the Eucharist in the life of the Church and its significance in the lives of individual Christians.

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	<p>The Church's Story: The Middle Ages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The story of the Church from the end of the eighth century (when the formation of the partnership between the pope and Charlemagne established the Holy Roman Empire) to the end of the fifteenth (and the eve of the Reformation). • That God is revealed in history through the actions of the Church and the lives of Christian men and women. • That we come to a knowledge of God by reflecting on the events of history. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the circumstances that led to the establishment of the Catholic Church as the universal Church of Western Europe. • Explore similarities and differences between the Church in the East and in the West and identify factors that contributed to an eventual schism between the two. • Recognise the contribution of monasticism to the Church and to society. • Understand the significance of journeys - pilgrimages and crusades - in the life of the Church during the Middle Ages. • Recognise the development of Marian devotion and the construction of the great Gothic cathedrals as expressions of genuine Christian spirituality. • Develop an understanding of the role of the pope and of reformers within the Church and society of the Middle Ages.
	<p>Inspiring Men and Women</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concept of leadership and role models. • The significance of inspiring men and women in Scripture and in Church history. • The reasons why the Church honours saints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise what it means to be an inspiring man or woman - both in our own society and in the Jewish and Christian traditions - and identify men and women in our own time who fulfil this role. • Recognise ways in which men and women in Scripture, such as the prophets, advanced God's plan and came to be seen as inspirational figures. • Develop an understanding of Mary, the mother of Jesus, as a woman of whakapono and the outstanding model of Christian discipleship. • Explore the development of the Church's practice of venerating and canonising saints and understand why particular saints, including patrons, are honoured. • Recognise the great diversity among the communion of saints and identify ways in which the saints are active in people's lives.
	<p>Sinfulness and Reconciliation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That brokenness and sin destroy our relationship with Te Atua and one another. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the impact of sin in our world and understand its origins in the misuse of human freedom and the failure to love Te Atua and one another. • Develop an understanding of the deep human desire for wholeness, unity and peace and recognise ways in which forgiveness from sins is expressed in different cultures, including the Jewish tradition. • Understand that through his life, death and Te Aranga, Jesus freed people from the

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That through the life, death and Resurrection of Hehu Karaiti, we are freed from the power of sin. • The importance given to healing and reconciliation in Scripture, in the life of the Church, and in our lives. 	<p>power of sin and offered them healing and reconciliation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that Jesus instructed and empowered the Church to be a sign of his healing presence in the world, especially through the forgiveness of sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. • Develop an understanding of the present forms of the Rite of Reconciliation and their structure. • Identify ways in which they can bring Christ's forgiveness to our world.
	<p>The Teachings of Jesus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The content and manner of Jesus' teachings. • The implications of Jesus' message for his own time and today. • That the foundation of Jesus' teaching is aroha. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that Hehu Karaiti, the Son of God, announced the Good News of the reign of God and taught people about it. • Recognise the power of stories and understand ways in which Jesus used parables to communicate his message about Te Ranatiratanga. • Identify and understand other ways in which Jesus communicated his teachings - including the Beatitudes, various of his sayings, the Lord's Prayer, and the Great Commandment. • Recognise that Jesus continues to invite people to follow him by challenging them to live lives of love and to keep his commandments.
	<p>Expressions of Catholic Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The identifying features of Catholicism. • How the nature and work of the Catholic Church shows itself in people's lives at both the local and universal levels. • What it means to be a Catholic in today's world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an understanding of what it means to be a member of the Catholic Church and recognise ways in which people express their Catholic identity in their daily lives. • Develop an understanding of the significance of the local Church and explore key features of parish and diocesan life, including missionary links with the Church in other parts of the world. • Develop an understanding of the universal Church, the leadership of the pope and the bishops, and the various bodies that assist them in governing and serving the Church. • Recognise the place of rites, other than the Roman Rite, within the Catholic Church. Recognise the contribution of religious orders and congregations to the life of the Church.

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	Achievement Aims Teachers will offer students the opportunities to gain and apply knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to understand:	Achievement Objectives Students will be able to:
Year 11 Theme: Challenges	The Trinity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The key aspects of the Trinity as a core Christian belief. That the Trinity is three persons in one God within a relationship of love. The various ways that humans observe and participate in the Trinity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the Creed as a summary of Catholic Faith. Understand the mystery of the Trinity as central to Christian faith and life. Recognise Te Atua as the creator who sustains all of life and that within creation all life forms are interconnected and interdependent. Understand that respect for the pono of creation is central to Church teaching. Recognise Jesus as the second person of the Trinity who teaches humanity about God and what it is to be fully human while proclaiming the reign of God. Develop an understanding of the Holy Spirit as the third person of the Trinity who is the giver of life and who has spoken through the prophets.
	Conscience, Morality, Values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The importance of a soundly based system of values as a basis for living. That Christian values are the values of Hehu. The nature and function of conscience and moral decision-making skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an understanding of what values are, reflect on important values in their lives, and recognise the importance of living according to a values system. Recognise that Christian values are based on the Ten Commandments and on the words and actions of Hehu, especially the Great Commandment and beatitudes. Understand the nature and function of conscience. Develop skills necessary for moral decision-making. Understand the nature of pono, freedom and moral responsibility.
	Understanding the Gospel story <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That Scripture is God's revelation. How various books of the New Testament came to be written. The significant features of the four gospel accounts. The importance of Te Rongopai to Christians. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand that the Scriptures present different types of truth that are expressed in various literary forms. Investigate the composition of the New Testament, especially of the gospels. Identify distinctive features of each of the four gospel portraits and understand reasons for their differing emphases. Develop an understanding of the significance of the miracle stories. Recognise that Te Aranga of Jesus Christ from the dead is the central event of the New Testament.

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	<p>Reformation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conditions of decline and movements of renewal within the Catholic Church from c.1500 – c.1750. • The divisions within Christianity that first emerged during the Reformation and continue into the present time. • The spread of Christianity beyond Europe through the expansion of missionary activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand conditions within society and the Church that formed the background of the Reformation. • Recognise the impact of the Protestant reformers - especially Luther, Zwingli and Calvin - and identify significant features of the Protestant denominations that came into being as a result of their actions. • Explore the nature and the establishment of the Church of England. • Investigate aspects of the reform within the Catholic Church, including the measures initiated by the Council of Trent. • Appreciate the contribution of key reformers, saints and missionaries to the life of the Catholic Church from the Reformation up to 1750.
	<p>Ecumenism and Catholic Identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The beliefs and practices of the major Christian traditions in Aotearoa New Zealand. • The historical background of the establishment of the major Christian traditions in this country. • The similarities and differences between the Catholic Church and other Christian traditions. • The importance of maintaining respect for the beliefs of others while acknowledging Catholic identity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an understanding of what ecumenism is and recognise its necessity in a divided Christianity. • Investigate important persons, events and movements in the history of the major Christian Churches in New Zealand. • Recognise that the Gospel and Catholic Tradition require a commitment to Christian unity. • Compare and contrast distinctive features of Catholic faith and tradition with those of other major Christian Churches and ecclesial communities in New Zealand. • Develop an understanding of the Catholic Church's involvement in the worldwide ecumenical movement, especially in Aotearoa New Zealand.

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	Achievement Aims Teachers will offer students the opportunities to gain and apply knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to understand:	Achievement Objectives Students will be able to:
Year 12 Theme: Widening Horizons	Religions of the World <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The nature and function of religion.• The Catholic Church’s attitude and response to non-Christian religions.• Significant features of major world religions and of indigenous religions of the Pacific region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore the nature and function of religion.• Develop an understanding of the Catholic Church’s attitude and response to non-Christian religions.• Develop an understanding of the indigenous religions of the Pacific region, including traditional Maori spirituality.• Identify and investigate significant features of the major world religions - Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.• Develop an understanding of the process by which Christianity and the indigenous religions of Aotearoa New Zealand interacted to form new religious movements.
	Justice and Peace <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The principles, grounded in Scripture and Tradition, which guide the Church’s teaching on issues of justice and peace.• The Church’s perspective on contemporary justice and peace issues.• Actions that people can take on behalf of justice and peace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop an understanding of the Christian vision of tika.• Recognise the sources of the Church’s teaching on justice in Scripture and the on-going Catholic Tradition.• Identify and explore key principles and concepts - including human dignity, freedom and responsibility - underlying the Church’s teaching on particular issues of social justice.• Develop an understanding of the Church’s teachings on peace and war.• Identify ways which people can build justice and peace.
	The Church’s Story: The Modern Age <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The story of the Church in the Modern Age (c.1750 to c.1965) in the context of its earlier history.• The Church’s response to philosophical, social, political and technological changes in the period between 1750–1965.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Locate the story of the Church in the Modern Age (1750 - 1965) within the context of the Church’s overall history.• Develop an understanding of the Enlightenment and its impact on the Church and society.• Identify and describe political, social, and economic forces at work in the Age of Revolutions and in the period that followed, and the Church’s response to them.• Investigate the spiritual revival of the nineteenth century and the contribution of religious congregations to the expansion of the Church’s mission during this period.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact of the events of the Second Vatican Council on the life of the Church and on its mission in the world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the response of the Church to challenges to papal power and authority in the nineteenth century. Explain the response of the Church and individual popes, to major events and movements of the twentieth century, including the first world war, the rise of communism, fascism and nazism, and the second world war. Recognise the impact of the Second Vatican Council and its teaching on the Church and the world.
	<p>Loss, Death, Grief and Dying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The centrality of Christ's death and resurrection in the Christian perspective of life and death. Loss, death, grief and dying as universal human experiences. Catholic attitudes and beliefs about death and the afterlife. Cultural and religious beliefs and practices associated with death and dying. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise that the mystery of Christ's dying and rising to new life gives meaning to the death of Christians. Develop an understanding of human loss and grief and explore ways of dealing with them. Identify what the Catholic Church believes and teaches about death and dying. Explore human attitudes and responses to dying, including Maori tangihanga. Develop an understanding of Catholic funeral rites. Explain what the Catholic Church believes and teaches about life after death.
	<p>Biblical Studies I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the Bible has a unique significance within the Jewish and Christian traditions. That the Bible is both the Word of God and the work of human authors. That the Bible was formed out of various contexts and is made up of different literary genre. That Scripture applies to society and life today. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise that the Bible is both the inspired Word of God and the work of human authors who used their own faculties and powers to compose the sacred books. Develop an understanding of the contexts and processes which over time lead to the formation and production of Scripture. Explore various literary forms found in Scripture. Investigate the background and context, and the distinctive characteristics and themes of the Gospel of Luke. Investigate the background and context, and the distinctive characteristics and themes of the Book of Revelation.

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	Christian Morality and Moral Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sources, nature and function of Christian morality. • The development of moral decision-making skills. • The Church's teaching on specific moral issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an understanding that morality involves the search for truth and goodness. • Recognise the sources of Christian morality in the person and gospel of Jesus Christ. • Develop skills necessary for moral decision-making through an understanding of conscience, the stages of moral development, and the Church's teaching on the nature of morality. • Investigate specific moral issues in the light of Catholic teachings. • Explore the nature of personal integrity and the role of moral virtues in its development.
	Christian Art, Architecture and Music <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expressions of Catholic faith and practice through art, architecture and music, through the centuries. • The relationship between changes in artistic expression and changes in theology and worship. • The contribution of the Catholic Church to the arts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the Christian understanding of the vocation of the artist. • Recognise the place of the arts in the Christian tradition, including key themes in Christian art, architecture and music. • Explore developments in Christian art, architecture and music from the time of the early Church through to the period following the Second Vatican Council. • Develop an understanding of Christian art, architecture and music in the context of Aotearoa New Zealand. • Investigate how developments in Christian theology and worship, especially those initiated by the Second Vatican Council, are reflected in the arts.
	Commitment and Ministry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature of Christian commitment and vocation. • The meaning and significance of Christian marriage and the ordained ministries of deacon, priest and bishop. • The call to consecrated religious life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an understanding of vocation and ministry as calls to holiness and service within the Church. • Recognize ways in which the single life can be a true Christian vocation. • Explore the Catholic understanding of the institution of marriage as a vocation, covenant and sacrament that needs to be prepare for well. • Develop an understanding of the nature and purpose of the ordained ministries - especially the priesthood - and the significance of the Sacrament of Holy Orders in the life of the Church. • Develop an understanding of the nature and purpose of the consecrated religious life.

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		Achievement Aims	Achievement Objectives
		Teachers will offer students the opportunities to gain and apply knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to understand:	Students will be able to:
Year 13 Theme: On the Threshold	Finding Meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What ultimate questions are. • Responses to ultimate questions made over time. • The basis of the response to ultimate questions within the Christian tradition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore how images of God influence the search for meaning. • Describe ways in which human beings make sense of suffering. • Explain the role of ritual in expressing the Catholic understanding of meaning. • Identify how followers of Jesus find answers to the questions of living and dying through the life and death of Christ. • Show understanding of Jesus as the final answer to the fundamental questions of life.
	Sects and Cults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is meant by religion? • How to evaluate various movements with their beliefs and behaviour. • How to evaluate the proliferation of religious movements in modern Western society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain an understanding of authority and freedom in the Catholic Church. • Understand the relationship between sects, cults and Church.
	Ethics and Ethical Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic concepts of ethics and different ethical theories. • The basis, teachings and general application of Catholic Ethics. • Selected moral issues from the Catholic perspective. • The role and formation of conscience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define ethics and outline its origins and purpose. • Describe a number of ethical theories. • Appreciate the foundations of catholic ethics. • Distinguish and describe the sources and principles of Catholic Ethics. • Describe and use a method of Catholic Ethics. • Justify in accordance with Catholic Ethics, a course of action in a particular situation.

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	Jesus the Christ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How Jesus the Christ is revealed and understood through his life, the Scriptures and the Church's Tradition. The teaching of the Catholic Church about Jesus the Christ. Ways in which people deepen and develop a personal relationship with Jesus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and interpret the evidence of Jesus as an historical figure. Explore what the Gospels reveal of the identity, role and personality of Jesus. Examine the crucial significance of Jesus' passion, death and resurrection in the context of the history of salvation. Outline the development of the Church's belief and teaching about Jesus. Reflect on the significance of Jesus' presence in the Church, especially the Sacraments. Consider how Jesus as Savior brings forgiveness, healing and hope to the whole of creation.
	Mary: Mother of God <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mary's role and significance in the Gospel story. The doctrine and devotion to do with Mary and her role in the history of salvation. To recognise Mary as a model for all people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe a woman's position in first century Palestine. Examine the way Mary is portrayed in the Gospels. Recognize and describe Mary's role in the life and mission of Jesus. Outline the development of Christian teaching about Mary's relationship to Jesus the Son of God and how over the centuries this has been presented in prayers, devotions and art. Show how Mary and her role in the history of salvation is a model for people today.
	Biblical Studies II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the Bible is the sacred Scriptures of the people of Israel and Christians. The application of modern methods to the reading, interpreting and understanding of the Bible. The significance of the Bible as Revelation and as the Christian's guide to prayer and life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use appropriate resources and methods for orthodox interpretation of Scripture passages. Identify and understand the significant themes found in biblical literature. Describe the role and importance of prophets in the history of the people of Israel and in the history of salvation. Gain an appreciation of the uses of Scripture including as a means to prayer.

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	<p>Images of Church</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Church is a mystery because of the divine and human elements of which it is composed. • That images can be helpful in leading people into a fuller appreciation of the mystery of the Church. • The images of the Church in Scripture. • A variety of images and ways to talk about the Church are needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline how and why Catholics use images to talk about the Church. • Identify Scriptural images of the Church. • Explain the meanings of 'mystery'. • Explain how the Church remains true to its apostolic Tradition while applying it to different times and circumstances. • Explain the Gospel call for Christian leadership to be exercised as service rather than power. • Explain the mission of the Church to all peoples as a requirement of its catholicity. • Explain how the Church is a sacrament of hope in the world. • Identify challenges faced by the Church in the contemporary world.
	<p>Psychology of Religion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the human person is understood in Catholic teaching. • The ways in which psychology and religion may work together. • Christian perspectives and responses to contemporary psychological theories. • Concepts of Christ spirituality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore questions about what it means to be a human person. • Identify key concepts in Jung's theory of the human psyche. • Explain Jung's understanding of how religion can contribute to the healthy development of human persons. • Outline and discuss Allport's concept of human maturity and the contribution religion can make to it. • Identify what spirituality is and outline what makes it holistic. • Explore ways in which Jesus is an example of human wholeness and holiness. • Identify core characteristics of Christian holiness.
	<p>The Church's Story: The Church since Vatican II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of the Second Vatican Council on the Catholic Church and its relationship with the world. • The process of renewal and reform that the Council initiated. • Opportunities and challenges facing the Catholic Church in the period since the Second Vatican Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the background, events and significance of the Second Vatican Council. • Identify and explore important teachings of the Council, especially those relating to the Church's understanding of itself and its relationship with the world. • Develop an understanding of the process of liturgical reform that followed the Second Vatican Council. • Recognise the distinctive contributions of the various popes to the life of the Church in the period since the Second Vatican Council. • Examine important developments, issues, movements and themes within the contemporary Church. • Reflect on opportunities and challenges facing the Church of the future.

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	<p>Current Religious Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Church's particular teachings on various social issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Changing Role of Women ○ Poverty and wealth ○ Work and Leisure ○ Bioethics ○ Influence of the Media ○ Creation: The Christian Response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore issues related to life and society from the perspective of church and scripture. • Critique norms of society and state from a Catholic perspective.
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NCEA - Achievement Standards - Religious Studies Matrix – 2018

(Including comparison notes to the first version standards, pre 2014)



Level 1 (Year 11)	Level 2 (Year 12)	Level 3 (Year 13)
<p>AS90816 v3 1.1 Describe the purpose of a sacred text within a religious tradition.</p> <p>6 credits Internal <i>Old: Describe key features of a sacred text</i></p>	<p>AS91724 v2 2.1 Explain a significant theme in a sacred text within a religious tradition.</p> <p>6 credits Internal <i>Old: Examine the meanings within a sacred text</i></p>	<p>AS91725 v2 3.1 Analyse the meanings in a sacred text within a religious tradition.</p> <p>6 credits Internal <i>Old: Analyse a significant theme in a sacred text</i></p>
<p>AS90817 v3 1.2 Describe a significant development within a religious tradition.</p> <p>6 credits Internal <i>Old: Describe a significant aspect within the development of a religious tradition</i></p>	<p>AS90821 v3 2.2 Explain the changes in an expression(s) of a religious tradition.</p> <p>6 credits Internal <i>Old: Explain the changes in an expression of a religious tradition</i></p>	<p>AS90825 v3 3.2 Analyse a religious tradition(s) in Aotearoa New Zealand.</p> <p>6 credits Internal <i>Old: Analyse religious expression in New Zealand</i></p>
<p>AS90818 v3 1.3 Describe the application of the key ethical principle(s) of a religious tradition to an issue.</p> <p>6 credits Internal <i>Old: Describe key ethical principles of a religious tradition and how they are applied to an issue</i></p>	<p>AS90822 v3 2.3 Explain how a contemporary social action derives from the ethical principles of a religious tradition.</p> <p>6 credits Internal <i>Old: Examine an example of contemporary social action related to a religious tradition</i></p>	<p>AS90826 v3 3.3 Analyse the response of a religious tradition to a contemporary ethical issue.</p> <p>6 credits Internal <i>Old: Examine the response of a religious tradition to a contemporary ethical issue</i></p>
<p>AS90819 v3 1.4 Describe key beliefs of a religious tradition.</p> <p>6 credits Internal <i>Old: Describe key beliefs of a religious tradition</i></p>	<p>AS90823 v3 2.4 Explain the key beliefs within two religious traditions in relation to a significant religious question.</p> <p>6 credits Internal <i>Old: Explain the significance of a key belief within two religious traditions</i></p>	<p>AS90827 v3 3.4 Analyse the key beliefs of a religious tradition and a secular world view in relation to ultimate questions</p> <p>6 credits Internal <i>Old: Compare and contrast a religious tradition with a secular world view</i></p>
<p>Describe: Describing, outlining, Identifying, making links</p>	<p>Explain: Explaining, outlining, reasons, impacts & implications, evaluating, drawing conclusions</p>	<p>Analyse: Considering in detail, breaking down, drawing conclusions, discussing, critically evaluating, similarities and differences</p>

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Appendix 1 – Some History ĀpitiHanga 1 – He Hītori



From where have we come?

Many changes have taken place since the Understanding Faith (UF) programme was introduced to schools in the early 90s. Not the least of these changes was the move to a Religious Education approach which was in contrast to the catechetical approach of the previous way of teaching RE. This move was made in response to the changing Church, social, cultural and educational contexts of the time.

The new programme was well received by teachers as many DRS and teachers were actively involved in the development process of writing the material and working with early drafts. In the initial roll-out NCRS and the dioceses throughout the country provided professional learning to assist teachers to recognise the change of approach and what this meant for them and the young people in their classrooms. This change preceded the reform of the Aotearoa New Zealand National Curriculum and the development of a new framework by the Ministry of Education. However, the similarities between a Religious Education approach and the new national curriculum allowed RE to be included as a ninth Learning Area for Catholic schools.

The proposed body of religious knowledge, skills and attitudes of UF was prepared by a National Working Party with diocesan representation and led by NCRS staff. This was refined and added to by the Bishops through their Theological Consultants. It has undergone several minor reviews with student texts being rewritten around 2009, e-pdfs of years 9 & 10 finished in 2018, a realignment process written which secondary schools with years 7 & 8 could opt into, and a support web-site created – www.faithcentral.nz. In 2014 all UF texts were scanned and made available on FaithCentral. (This removed the major NCRS income stream which was replaced by the school/student levy.)

Throughout all this time dedicated and skilled teachers have been part of this process by supporting positive, Christ-centred, student-aware change through their creativity and vision. NCRS has never worked alone.

Assessment has played a major role in the journey. When UF was introduced only year 12 could be formally assessed as part of the national education system, through 6th Form Certificate. This remained until 2004 when NCEA replaced it. Initially Religious Studies could only be assessed within NCEA by Unit Standards, which did not offer Merit or Excellence. However most schools took up this opportunity to now offer formal assessment at years 11-13. It wasn't until 2009 that Religious Studies Achievement Standards were registered. It took another few years before Level 3 standards were added to the University Entrance list. And in 2018 a formal request for scholarship was submitted to NZQA seeking full parity with other 'priority' subjects.

Many consider the arrival of Religious Study's NCEA 'same as every other subject' status to be something of a double edged sword. While it clearly created an immediate lift in engagement, with most students very keen to gain the credits, it encouraged a much more 'external' focus on learning in this subject area. RE teachers came under pressure to 'produce the goods' and, because the Achievement Standards were not based on the UF curriculum, there was, and has remained, complexity about prioritising other areas of learning in RE over those that are directly related to formal assessment.

Where are we now?

Over the last ten years pedagogical beliefs and practices have been influenced by educational research and the development of technology to enhance teaching and learning in the classroom. A plethora of well researched pedagogies and educational philosophies have arisen and been adopted in a range of ways by schools. Many have put a great deal of effort into making teaching and learning

in RE more relevant and engaging. Rightly, principals, DRSs and RE teachers continue to seek ways to make the most of such change.

Informal discussions with teachers, and responses to past NCRS surveys, show they recognise that the difference between RE and the other Essential Learning Areas is that the RE curriculum's body of knowledge needs to be taught. There remains a shared understanding that the mandated curriculum is required to be covered and that an over-crowded curriculum, current time and assessment pressure, along with changing attitudes of parents and young-people and a decline in qualified, practicing Catholic teachers, make it increasingly difficult to do so.

Anecdotal evidence is that, in this context, many secondary schools have stopped using, or use only small parts, of the Understanding Faith text books. Many have created their own learning resources based on these texts, the associated teacher resources, and their own research. This is an appropriate way to teach in the contemporary education environment and text-books should not necessarily be the only source of information. It is also important that the content, and especially the UF achievement aims and objectives, remain the focus for this development by individual schools. Again, anecdotal evidence suggests that this is not always the case.

This is certainly not to say that excellent Religious Education is not taking place in Aotearoa New Zealand secondary schools. It most certainly is. Teachers acknowledge they are encouraged to use current teaching strategies and resources which are cohesive with the pedagogical philosophies of their schools and their own teaching style to enable young people to achieve the learning intentions of the Understanding Faith curriculum. Many are undertaking TCI courses to ensure they have the relevant personal knowledge and understanding to continue doing this well.

Where do we want to go?

Moving on from the experiences outlined in the two previous sections of this document it is evident that responding to change is an essential on-going consideration for NCRS as the mandated provider of RE curriculum and associated support for Catholic schools in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Being aware that all curricula have a 'life' and in relation to RE, continuous change in Church, education, cultural, social, technological and 'papal' contexts necessitate a response to this so that young people in Catholic secondary schools are engaged in learning that enthuses and enables them to integrate what they learn in RE to make meaning of their lives and live the message of the gospel of Jesus.

For NCRS addressing change means responding to new needs and emphases that emerge as contexts change and diversity in teachers, young people, their families and whānau increases. To this end NCRS recognises that it is time to broaden the direction for Religious Education teaching and learning in Aotearoa New Zealand so that children and young people can better see its relevance to their lives as disciples of Jesus in the 21st century. This is a key reason why this document is seen as a 'bridge' to a new place for teaching and learning RE in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Exactly where that will be is still unfolding as we recognise that continuous change has become the norm, therefore it seems more appropriate to plan the direction of RE for the next five years. During this period NCRS intends to write, with the significant support of Principals, DRSs, RE teachers and other committed people a level 1-8 RE Curriculum. Watch this space.

Appendix 2: Considering our Learners – Āpitianga 2: Ngā Ākonga



Discuss and reflect on the learners at our place.

In our College/Year Level _____[Name]

We would describe our young people as...

Acknowledgements



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