



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON
EDUCATION SERVICE

THE ST PHILIP HOWARD CENTRE, 4 SOUTHGATE DRIVE
CRAWLEY, WEST SUSSEX, RH10 6RP

3rd November 2025

Dear Colleagues

It was a very busy half term week as the Jubilee of the World of Education took place. The news that Pope Leo XIV has named St John Henry Newman a co-patron saint of Catholic education, along with St Thomas Aquinas, has been received with joy as he is declared the 38th Doctor of the Church. Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, the prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education said that Newman is an "extraordinary educator and great inspiration for the philosophy of education."

[Pope Leo to name St John Henry Newman a patron saint of Catholic education | News](#)

In addition, Pope Leo's Apostolic Letter "Drawing New Maps of Hope", was released on 28 October, marking the sixtieth anniversary of the conciliar declaration "*Gravissimum Educationis*". In it, he reaffirms and expands that document's vision, applying it to the challenges of the present time. There is much to draw out from this Letter, in which Pope Leo invites educators to use language that heals, to keep an open and discerning heart, and to face today's challenges with courage and generosity. He acknowledges the real difficulties of the present: fragmented attention caused by hyper-digitalisation, fragile relationships, social insecurity, and inequality.

Against these threats, he calls for a spirit of inclusivity and evangelical gratuity that expresses itself in concrete acts of justice and solidarity. When education loses sight of the poor, he warns, it loses its very soul.

[Pope Leo issues Apostolic Letter on Education: "Drawing New Maps of Hope" | News](#)



In light of the Pope asking how Christian education can respond today, it is timely that we are holding our School Leaders' conference on November 20th on the theme of 'The Legacy of Hope', with His Eminence,

Cardinal Timothy Radcliffe as our keynote speaker. We welcome representation from all schools in the diocese at our annual gathering.

Bishop Richard will explore the Pastoral Plan for the Diocese [*The Word Who is Life: The Call to Mission*](#). *The Call to Mission* focuses on the significant potential of diocesan parish communities to act as “beacons of light... not in an era of change, but in a change of era” consolidating the work already undertaken across the diocese to place prayer, formation, and mission at the heart of diocesan parish and school community life.

Sign up to the Conference is here: [School Leaders Conference \(20-Nov-2025\) · ChurchSuite Events](#)

I had the privilege of being in Rome at the start of the half term week, for the Jubilee of Synodal Teams and Participatory Groups, along with other colleagues from the diocesan Pastoral Plan Reference Group. We attended a meeting – dialogue with Pope Leo, whose opening remarks were: “The first word I would like to say ... for all of us... is ‘Mission’ and the synodal process is to help the Church fulfil its primary role in the world which is to be Missionary and give witness to the person of Jesus Christ.”



Osservatore Romano

Pope Leo called on all those present to dream of and dare to build a humbler Church, who "bends down to wash the feet of humanity; a Church that does not judge as the Pharisee does the tax collector but becomes a welcoming place for all".

Our time together ended with the celebration of Holy Mass, presided over by Pope Leo XIV and the fruits of our time in Rome, taking part in seminars and workshops, liturgical events and moments of formation and exchange, will be discerned in the coming months as we continue our journey as a Synodal Church.

The half term up to Christmas is always a busy one for schools and we in the Education Service continue to hold you all in our prayers. Please do contact us if we can assist you in any way.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julie".

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