This year’s Catholic Education Week theme in the Diocese of Sale – ‘Faith in Action’ – is a reminder that it is not enough just to be familiar with the message of Christ.

“We must translate our faith into deeds,” says Maria Kirkwood, the new Director of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Sale. “Jesus’ ministry was an active one, grounded in Scripture and actively realised through his words and his relationships with all whom he encountered.”

Catholic schools encourage young people to put their faith into action through formal community service programs and their everyday interactions with others.

“Social justice activities are a core part of student learning in Catholic schools,” says Ms Kirkwood. “Students are encouraged to work towards a better world by coming to understand the nature of injustice and how it impacts on the lives of others. Supporting those whose needs are greater than our own frequently means becoming involved actively in community service rather than just fundraising efforts.”

“It needs to be stressed,” adds Ms Kirkwood, “that social justice activities do not replace formal religious education classes or liturgical celebrations, which are central to our faith. Rather, these activities show a movement from prayer and reflection to active involvement in the world around us.”

Each of the 41 Catholic schools in the Sale Diocese offers different opportunities for students to put their faith into action. For example, students from St Brendan’s Primary School in Lakes Entrance deliver meals to community members who are housebound. In Traralgon, students from St Gabriel’s Primary School regularly visit an aged care facility to provide company for the residents. One evening a week, students from St Peter’s College in Cranbourne give of their time to assist with the St Vincent de Paul soup van service in North Melbourne and Fitzroy.

“One of our goals is to nurture young people who are able to resist the ‘me’ culture promoted in the media,” says Ms Kirkwood, “and whose eyes are open to the needs of others, prepared to be active participants in making this a better world for all.”
The goal of Catholic Education Week is to communicate and celebrate the distinctive mission of Catholic education in the Diocese of Sale. It is an opportunity to celebrate and promote not only the great work being done in our schools but also our ethos.

**Theme**
Each year a theme is chosen to highlight an aspect of Catholic education. In 2013, the theme is ‘Faith in Action’. This ties in beautifully with the Year of Grace (Pentecost 2012 to Pentecost 2013) and the Year of Faith (11 October 2012 to 24 November 2013).

The Year of Faith is an opportunity for Catholics to experience a conversion – to turn back to Jesus and enter into a deeper relationship with him. The ‘door of faith’ is opened at one’s baptism and during this year Catholics are called to open it, again walk through it and rediscover and renew their relationship with Christ and his Church. The Year of Faith is a “summons to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the One Savior of the world” (*Porta Fidei* 6).

**Timing**
Our diocese will celebrate Catholic Education Week between Friday 26 April and Friday 3 May.

As there is already some confusion in the general community regarding the timing of Catholic Education Week, we ask that clusters or individual schools do not reschedule the week to suit their own preferences, to ensure consistency across the diocese.

Even if you hold Open Days at other times throughout the year, we would like parents right across the diocese to be able to visit Catholic schools during Catholic Education Week.

**Audiences**
The audience for Catholic Education Week encompasses all those who are part of Catholic school communities as well as those in broader community and political life. It includes:
- Staff
- Students
- Parents, grandparents and family friends
- Parishioners
- Clergy and bishops
- Local, State and Federal politicians
- Feeder school students
- Prospective students and families
- Media
- Catechists / Catholic students in State schools
- Wider community / general public

**Key activities**
- Leadership Eucharist and Dinner Wednesday 24 April in Traralgon
- Diocesan Students’ Mass Tuesday 30 April at St Mary’s Cathedral, Sale
- Spirit of Catholic Education Awards Nominations closed Wednesday 13 March
Celebration ideas

Here is a range of celebratory and promotional activities that could be used during Catholic Education Week to highlight the values of Catholic education and showcase the great things happening in Catholic schools.

**School / community liturgy**
This is a great opportunity to extend invitations to all members of the school, parish and local community.

**Shopping centre display / performance**
These may be static (student work, photos and uniforms attached to a pinboard) or active (featuring a dance, choir, instrumental or debating performance).

**Exchange visits between schools**
Secondary schools may invite Grade 6 students from feeder schools to participate in an afternoon of science or sport activities.

**Fundraising effort**
Even if you already contribute to various charities throughout the year, Catholic Education Week is an excellent week in which to focus your fundraising efforts or introduce a new fundraiser.

**Educational activities / workshops / courses**
Consider tapping into your staff or parent skill base and offering a free workshop or course to the public. If your budget permits, you may also employ a guest presenter on a topic of wide community interest (e.g. parenting teenagers or social networking).

**Open libraries**
Schools may invite parents and parishioners to tour the library and explore books and electronic resources with students.

**Guest lecturers / speakers**
Prominent or interesting past students or staff may be invited back to present a lecture for parents or speak to students.

**Slideshow or home page**
Place the theme of Catholic Education Week to appear for a few seconds on the school’s homepage and/or on the school computer system screen saver.

**Community service**
If your students’ main form of community service to date has been contributing to fundraisers, consider organising something a little more hands on. Could one of your classes visit an aged care facility to perform songs and interact with the residents? Could students read to children at the local kinder or childcare centre, or people with vision impairment? Could students assist with some garden maintenance at a local community facility? Could students make and deliver gifts for children in hospital?
Our school, along with the 40 other Catholic schools in the Diocese of Sale, will celebrate Catholic Education Week from Friday 26 April - Friday 3 May.

The theme for this year’s celebrations is ‘Faith in Action’.

As Catholic schools, we are called to do more than just pass on the faith: we are invited to translate our faith into deeds so we are truly living God’s Word.

Catholic Education Week is an opportunity for all Catholic schools to celebrate our distinctive mission and share things that are special about our schools and ethos with families, parish and the wider community.

Student representatives from our school will attend the Diocesan Students’ Mass at St Mary’s Cathedral, Sale, on Tuesday 30 April, while members of our staff will be part of the Leadership Mass and Dinner held in Traralgon on Wednesday 24 April.

Our school will also hold a number of activities including … [list activities].
Media releases are a professional, proactive way of getting your message across to journalists and increasing the likelihood they will choose to cover your story. They can be written and submitted before an event (inviting journalists to attend) or after an event (as a ready-to-publish article supplied with the best photo from the event).

### Possible topics
- Activities your school is participating in or undertaking to celebrate Catholic Education Week
- Activities that provide active and colourful photo opportunities
- Nomination of any of your staff members for a Spirit of Catholic Education Award

### The top of the page
- Type your media release on school letterhead and head the page ‘Media Release’
- Include a headline that is short, catchy and preferably mentions your school’s name

### First (lead) paragraph
- Must include the Who, What, When and Where

### Following (supporting) paragraphs
- Explain the How and the Why

### Sample text
(Open Day—before the event)

*Name of School in Suburb / Town* will hold three Open Mornings next week to celebrate Catholic Education Week in the Diocese of Sale.

Current and prospective families, as well as members of the wider community, are invited to visit *Name of School* between 9:00am and 11:00am on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

The Open Mornings will include a welcome address by Principal *Name of Principal*, school tours and a morning tea prepared by Senior students.

“Quote along the lines of how excited the school community is about the event,” said *Name of School Principal*, *Name of Principal*. 
(Diocesan Students’ Mass—before the event)

Students from Name of School in Suburb / Town will be among more than two hundred students gathering at St Mary’s Cathedral in Sale on Tuesday 30 April to celebrate the launch of Catholic Education Week.

The Mass will draw representatives from the 34 Catholic primary schools and 7 Catholic secondary colleges in the Diocese of Sale. Many students will travel between two and three hours to attend this special Mass, celebrated by the Catholic Bishop of Sale, Most Rev. Christopher Prowse.

“Quote along the lines of the wonderful opportunity it is for students,” said Name of School Principal Name of Principal.

The Mass will feature the Lavalla Catholic College choir, a procession of students carrying their school banners and extensive student involvement in the readings and offertory procession.

This theme of Catholic Education Week, which runs from Friday 26 April until Friday 3 May, is ‘Faith in Action’.

(Diocesan Students’ Mass—straight after the event)

Students from Name of School in Suburb / Town were among more than two hundred students who gathered at St Mary’s Cathedral in Sale today to celebrate the launch of Catholic Education Week.

The Mass drew representatives from the 34 Catholic primary schools and 7 Catholic secondary colleges in the Diocese of Sale. Many students travelled between two and three hours to attend this special Mass, celebrated by the Catholic Bishop of Sale, Most Rev. Christopher Prowse.

“Quote along the lines of how well the Mass went,” said Name of School Principal Name of Principal.

The Mass featured the Lavalla Catholic College Choir, a procession of students carrying their school banners and extensive student involvement in the readings and offertory procession.

The theme of Catholic Education Week, which officially commenced last Friday and concludes on Friday 3 May, is ‘Faith in Action’.
Environment: The table with an appropriate cloth is placed at the front or centre of the group. The Bible, open to the Scripture reading, and candle are placed on the table. The prepared words and quotes are placed on the table in a scattered (but neat) pattern.

Leader: As we begin, we would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respects to the Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Indigenous Australia.

Welcome Introduction (Principal or School Leader)
Welcome to all members of our school community who have come together to celebrate Catholic Education Week 2013. This year’s theme is ‘Faith in Action’. Today we reflect on the gift of grace and our response in faith which leads us to action in spreading the Good News of Jesus and making our world a better place. Faith is being sure of something even though we cannot see it. As St Paul writes to the Hebrews in Chapter 11, verse 1: “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” In another letter to Timothy, St Paul reminds the people to fan into flame the gift that God has given us. God’s gift is not a spirit of timidity, but the spirit of boldness and love and self-control. You have been trusted with something precious; guard it and use it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in all of us. Let us stand to sing our gathering song.

Gathering Song Suggestions
- Gather Together (John Burland, 1999 on Let’s Celebrate Too! and 2007 on Move! Pray! Celebrate!)
- One Faith, One Hope, One Love (Andrew Chinn, 2007 on Many Roads, One Journey)
- These Hands (Andrew Chinn, 2000 on These Hands)
- The Face of God (Andrew Chinn, 2000 on These Hands)
- Together as One (Andrew Chinn, 2002 on This Day)
- God of All Hearts (Andrew Chinn, 2002 on This Day)
- Mary a Woman of Faith (John Burland, 2005 on Lord Teach Me Your Ways)

Leader: The symbol we use for today’s prayer is the table. The table represents for us many grace-filled images – the altar table at Mass, tables of meals and celebrations, our family dining table. But tables also challenge us – around the world many families do not have a table or enough food to eat. People of power gather around tables to make life altering decisions, but many people are not represented at these tables and their voices aren’t heard. For our prayer this day, let us bring to this table the gifts we have received from God, the needs we carry in our heart, openness to hear God’s Word and the courage to live as disciples.

Opening Prayer:
Loving Father,
Pour out your blessing on each of us and help us always to know that what we enjoy is your gift to us.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let us now listen to the Word of God.

Readings

A reading from St Paul's letter to the Ephesians (2:8-10)
For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.
The Word of the Lord.
All: Thanks be to God.

OR

A Reading from the Letter of James (2:17)
So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.
The Word of the Lord.
All: Thanks be to God.

OR

A Reading from the Second Letter of Paul to Timothy (1: 6-7)
I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.
The Word of the Lord.
All: Thanks be to God.

OR

A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans (10:17)
So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.
The Word of the Lord.
All: Thanks be to God.

OR

A Reading from the Second Letter of St Paul to the Corinthians (4:13)
But just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture—"I believed, and so I spoke"—we also believe, and so we speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence.
The Word of the Lord.
All: Thanks be to God.

OR

A Reading from the Letter of Paul to Philemon (1:6)
I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective when you perceive all the good that we may do for Christ.
The Word of the Lord.
All: Thanks be to God.

Leader: Let us stand to welcome the Gospel.

Procession of the Word
(The Word can be carried ceremoniously to a place of proclamation. It could be accompanied by either instrumental music or an appropriate acclamation.)

Song Suggestions
- Halle, Halle, Halle ©1990 Caribbean Tradition (As One Voice for Kids)
- Celtic Alleluia ©1985 Fintan O’Carroll & Christopher Walker (As One Voice)
- Halleljahl! Praise Ye Lord © Traditional (As One Voice)
- God’s Word © 2011 Jane Mitchell (We Shine)

Readings
A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (28:19-20)
Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.
The Gospel of the Lord.
All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

OR

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (22:36-39)
“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”
The Gospel of the Lord.
All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

OR
A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (John 13)

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” Jesus answered, “You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.” Peter said to him, “You will never wash my feet.” Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.” Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!” After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Pause for a moment of silent reflection OR
After the reading the leader relates the meaning of the Scripture passage to the lives of the students and teachers today.

Reflection Song
Serving Each Other (John Burland, 2005 on Lord Teach Me Your Ways)
(Based on John 13:1-20)

OR

Help Me to know Your Ways (Michael Mangan, 2004 on Forever I Will Sing)
(Based on Psalm 25)

Prayer of Intercession
Leader: Loving God, we place before you our needs and concerns, trusting in your compassion and mercy and always grateful of your love and grace in our lives.
Reader 1: For Pope Francis, Bishop Prowse, all the priests and deacons of our diocese and all who lead and serve the Church in the world, in Australia and in our local community, we pray to the Lord.
All: Lord, hear our prayer.
Reader 2: For Catholic Education in Australia and across our diocese, both urban and remote. May we strive to provide education for all in the spirit of Mary MacKillop who constantly put her faith into action; we pray to the Lord.
All: Lord, hear our prayer.
Reader 3: For our own school communities. May we build a strong future in faith and learning, and witness to others in all we do; we pray to the Lord.
All: Lord, hear our prayer.
Reader 4: For ourselves, that we truly appreciate and share the love that God has for each of us; we pray to the Lord.
All: Lord, hear our prayer.
Reader 6: For those in need, may we be your voice and hands and help them by answering your call to put faith into action; we pray to the Lord.
All: Lord, hear our prayer.
Leader: Lord, we gather these prayers and the needs and concerns we have spoken along with those deep in our heart. We join our voices with students and peoples around the world as we pray in the words our Saviour Jesus taught us.
All: Our Father . . .

OR

Leader: Loving God, strengthen us with your spirit of boldness and love and self-control as we pray together in your name.
Reader 1: We pray that we will grow in the knowledge of our giftedness and grow in our readiness to share these gifts with our school community. Lord, hear us.
All: Lord, hear our prayer.
Reader 2: We pray for our families who first spoke your name to us and shared in our journey of faith, right from the beginning. Lord, hear us.
All: Lord, hear our prayer.
Reader 3: We pray for our friends, who spend time with us and continue to journey with us. Lord, hear us.
All: Lord, hear our prayer.
Reader 4: We pray for our teachers, priests and other members of our Church who guide us on our journey while inspiring us through their witness and participation in our life. Lord, hear us.
All: Lord, hear our prayer.
Leader: We thank you, God, for sending these people into our lives and for their gifts of faith, love and patience. May we honour them by sharing our faith and making a difference through word and action. We pray this in Jesus’ name.
All: Amen.
Prayer service

**Action / Engagement Ritual**

**Leader:** The First Letter of James calls out to us: If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,” but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it? So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead. I ask you now to reflect, what do you need to take from the table in order to live so that your faith is alive? [pause] I now invite each of you to step forward and take a card from our prayer table. On your card is a word of challenge or a quote that guides you to act on its message as a way for you to keep your faith in Christ alive. May your good work and the work of all of us in the Body of Christ, spread God’s justice and mercy and defend the dignity of all God’s people.

As students come forward to take a card, a reflection song such as Enflame Our Hearts (Monica Brown, 2003 on *Quiet My Soul*) or some quiet music is played.

**Concluding Prayer and Blessing**

**Leader:** Loving God, you are our source of wisdom and courage and your Holy Spirit gives us power to live as disciples of your Son. May our commitment to serve you through the “least of our brothers and sisters” bring justice and dignity to them and peace to our world. We ask this in Christ’s holy name.

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:** May the Lord bless us, protect us and bring us to everlasting life.

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:** As we conclude this prayer service, let us share with each other a sign of Christ’s peace.

**OR**

**Final Blessing**

May the blessing of God surround you, may angels and friends share your journey. May you be safeguarded, loved and cherished; may you walk on holy ground. May people of faith inspire you, may boldness and justice empower you. May you be wise and strong and creative; may you celebrate life and hope. May God’s image grow within you, may laughter and courage heal you. May the Gospel of life sustain you all the days of your journey onwards.

*(A Book of Blessings*, by Ruth Burgess, published by Wild Goose Publications, Iona Community, Unit 16, Six Harmony Row, Glasgow G51 3BA, Scotland)*

**Recessional Song Suggestions**

- Rise Up (Jane Mitchell, 2006 on *Ordinary People*)
- Tell the Good News (Andrew Chinn, 2004 on *Wherever I Go*).
- People of God (Andrew Chinn, 2002 on *This Day*)
- Raise Your Voice for Justice (John Burland, 2005 on *Lord Teach me Your Ways*)
- With Faith (John Burland, 2000 on *Celebrating the Sacraments*)
- We Shine (Jane Mitchell, 2011 on *We Shine*)
Here are some quotes you may like to use on cards for the prayer service or just display in the classroom to ponder.

Faith isn’t the ability to believe long and far into the misty future. It’s simply taking God at His Word and taking the next step. Joni Erickson Tada

Faith is like a seed; plant it in your heart. God gives the harvest at the appointed time. Mark 4: 26-27,28-29

Faith is believing that God is going to take you places before you even get there. Matthew Barnett

You can have hope without faith but you cannot have faith without hope! Randy Furco

The whole being of any Christian is faith and love. Faith brings the person to God, love brings the person to people. Martin Luther

The world says, “Seeing is believing”. Faith says, “Believing is seeing”. Tim Hall

To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary. To one without faith, no explanation is possible. Saint Thomas Aquinas

Faith is taking the first step even when you don’t see the whole staircase. Martin Luther King Jr

I believe in order that I may understand. Anselm

Faith comes alive when the Word read from the page becomes the Word heard in your heart. Rex Rouis

Faith is deliberate confidence in the character of God whose ways you may not understand at the time. Oswald Chambers

Seek not to understand that you may believe, but believe that you may understand. Saint Augustine

Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe. Saint Augustine

Frequently remind yourself that God is with you, that He will never fail you, that you can count upon Him. Say these words, “God is with me, helping me.” Norman Vincent Peale
Believing requires action. **James E. Faust**

If God brings you to it, He will bring you through it. **Unknown**

Faith is like electricity. You can’t see it, but you can see the light. **Unknown**

Faith is doing God’s will when you don’t feel like it. **Eddie Zepeda**

Be the change that you wish to see in the world. **Mahatma Gandhi**

Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing. **Mother Teresa**

The future depends on what you do today. **Mahatma Gandhi**

You are what you do, not what you say you'll do. **C.G. Jung**

Faith is about doing. You are how you act, not just how you believe. **Mitch Albom**

It's the action, not the fruit of the action, that's important. You have to do the right thing. It may not be in your power, may not be in your time, that there'll be any fruit. But that doesn't mean you stop doing the right thing. You may never know what results come from your action. But if you do nothing, there will be no result. **Mahatma Gandhi**

All things can be done for the one who believes. **Mark 9:23**

Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. **1 Corinthians 16:13**

It is not the magnitude of our actions but the amount of love that is put into them that matters. **Mother Teresa**

What does the LORD require of you? But to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God. **Micah 6:8**

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world. **Anne Frank**

OR you may wish to use single words or phrases such as **LOVE, INSPIRE, SMILE, SPEAK KINDLY, RESPECT, BE POLITE, SHARE, MAKE A DIFFERENCE** etc. Students can come up with suggestions themselves about actions which could be written on the cards.
The focus of your prayer service could also be Mary, the Mother of God. The Birth of Jesus Foretold, from Luke’s Gospel, in which Mary is asked to be the mother of God, is an ultimate faith in action story. Mary, herself a young girl, one imagines would be quite taken aback at the visit of the angel, not to mention the angel’s request to become the mother of God. But, despite her wonderings, she gave an immediate and resounding “Yes” to the angel: “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.”

As Bishop Prowse writes in his Pastoral Letter for a Year of Grace:

Both GRACE and FAITH are inseparable aspects of our “Life in Christ” (Rom 8:2). Grace leads to faith and faith responds to grace. They are not “things” or philosophical concepts. They form the foundation of our Christian life, which is “the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction” (Deus Caritas Est; Benedict XVI (2005), n.1).

One beautiful example of their distinct but united expression in the Gospels is surely found in the Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38).

God, the source of all grace, displays directly to Mary unmerited favour, loving kindness and mercy. God graciously asks Mary to be the Mother of God. It is a personal and totally unexpected encounter of grace.

The Blessed Virgin Mary is so receptive to God’s grace. In her lowly human condition Mary immediately responds with her whole-hearted “Yes” to God’s grace by becoming the Mother of Jesus. She is a woman of faith. For all the Church she becomes first amongst the faithful.

For this reason, the prayer service could take this focus with the Scripture read from Luke’s Gospel.

The Birth of Jesus Foretold (Luke 1:26-38)
In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.” But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.” Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.
Exploring our Catholic identity and this year’s theme of ‘Faith in Action’ are ideal topics for Religious Education classes over the next few weeks.

- Create a Y Chart (*Teaching Strategies Book* p.50): What does ‘faith in action’ look like, feel like, sound like?
- Think-Pair-Share (*Teaching Strategies Book* p.49) or EEKK (*Teaching Strategies Book* p.24): What are the implications of ‘faith in action’ for our lives today?
- Using Acts 14: 26-28 as a stimulus, focusing on the aspect of ‘door of faith,’ students decorate the doors in the school as ‘doors of faith’. Refer to Pope Benedict XVI quote “The ‘door of faith’ (Acts 14:27) is always open for us, ushering us into the life of communion with God and offering entry into his Church” (Pope Benedict XVI, Apostolic Letter Porta Fidei for the Year of Faith).
- Adapt the words of the song ‘Walking Out the Door’ by Tim Hart on the CD *This Day* by Andrew Chinn.
- Create a poem, acrostic poem, limerick, crossword puzzle or search-a-word (with a message) about faith in action.
- Design banners/posters promoting faith in action at your school.
- Create a blog to share and journal your learning about faith in action.
- Choose and investigate a saint who demonstrated faith in action and creatively present the information using, for example, ICT, dramatisations, comic strips, radio interviews etc.
- Use the Jigsaw strategy (*Teaching Strategies Book* p. 57) to investigate and share information about saints or people who have shown faith in action. Incorporate into this the Reach the Target activity (Dan White, Kate O'Brien and Steve Todd, *Into the Deep* pp.46-8).
- Students complete a Character Analysis (Dan White, Kate O'Brien and Steve Todd, *Into the Deep* pp.49-50) on a person they identify as faith-filled. In learning teams, students select the saint/person, read about them and discern the personal qualities of the nominated person. Students record the qualities and support their decision by way of an example from the information they have found. Reflective moment: each team is given a choice about how they would like to demonstrate their learning to the rest of the class. For example, a Mind Map, Curtains Up Curtains Down (*Teaching Strategies Book* p. 81) or Scripture Graffiti poster (Dan White, Kate O'Brien and Steve Todd, *Into the Deep* p.122-3).
Primary RE activities

- Students create Scripture Snaps (Dan White, Kate O’Brien and Steve Todd, *Into the Deep* pp.70-1).

- Using The Beatitudes, Mt 5:1-12, (as an example of how to live as a person of faith), students create scenes, either physically or using symbols or images to be photographed then put into a PowerPoint or made into a story board. Colour, music and layout can be used to enhance the presentation. This scripture passage could also be performed as a liquid picture or chorus play (Rina Wintour, *Just Imagine* Bk 1 pp.22-3 & *Just Imagine* Bk 2, pp.40-1).

- Write a newspaper report about someone showing faith in action, using a sports star or TV personality as an example.


- Using the Dramatised Bible, students create a Readers’ Theatre for *The Commissioning of the Disciples*, Mt 28:16-20 (keeping in mind the emphasis is on telling the story not the actions). Following this, ask the students the following questions: What surprised you? What moved or touched you? Did something from the story inspire you? If so what and how? What idea appealed to you the most?

- Complete a Scriptural Think Pad (*Teaching Strategies Book* p.93) for this text.


![Reflection Activity Triangle](image.png)

What is one thing you have learned that connects with something you knew before?

What are two questions you would still like answered?

What are three of the most important things you have learned about faith in action?
For classes already familiar with Edward deBono’s Six Thinking Hats, reflect on The Commissioning of the Disciples (Mt 28: 16 – 20).

**White Hat: Information**
What is the important information gained from the text about the Apostles and what they were asked to do?

**Red Hat: Feelings**
How would Jesus be feeling at this time? How would the Apostles be feeling? How would the families of the Apostles be feeling?

**Yellow Hat: Positive aspects**
In light of their commissioning, what did the Apostles achieve?

**Black Hats: Concerns**
What would have concerned the Apostles at this time? What barriers would they have had to face in achieving their goals?

**Green Hat: Creative**
What are some creative ways they could have achieved their aims?

**Blue Hat: The Big Picture**
How can we continue the work of the Apostles today?
# Secondary RE activities

## Activities for All Year Levels

Plan, prepare and lead a prayer service celebrating ‘Faith in Action’. This could have a social justice theme, celebrate the actions of missionaries or celebrate the saints / house patrons and how they lived their faith.

### Junior Middle and Senior Activities

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<th>Junior</th>
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<th>Middle</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Students read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. Invite them to list the different gifts from the Holy Spirit and find examples of people from the school, parish and local communities who are examples of these gifts. This information—explaining how these people live their faith—could be displayed as posters around the school.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Create banners which include ‘action’ slogans that encourage other people to put their faith into action. These could be displayed around the school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Students research the lives of missionaries or religious orders involved in missionary work and how they put their faith into action.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Students read Acts 2: 42-47 which describe the characteristics of the early Christian community. List these characteristics. How are these characteristics presented in Christian communities today? How are they presented in your school? Invite students to create a visual presentation listing these characteristics and give examples of how these characteristics are lived by Christian communities today. These could be presented at College/year level assemblies.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Students interview someone they know who puts his/her faith into action. Questions might include: What does his/her faith mean to the person? Why is he/she motivated to act in such a way?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Invite a panel of speakers (religious and lay) to speak about how they put their faith into action. This could include past students, members of the parish community etc. Students could prepare questions beforehand, to which the panel members would be invited to respond during their presentation.</td>
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## Secondary RE activities

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<td>1</td>
<td>Organise outreach events in which senior students could participate. This could include a range of activities from the local community and parish. The link between faith and action must be made explicit in the preparation for and follow up from the activity.</td>
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| 2 | Students create messages for the school community on how to live our faith. These messages could be audio messages transmitted through the school system or messages sent to students via the school intranet etc. These messages might include:  
   - Line of scripture encouraging people to put their faith into action  
   - Suggestions of what students can do to live out this line of scripture |
| 3 | Using the website “Together At One Altar” students complete “How does the Eucharist make a difference in my life?” from the “LIVE” section. Students can complete the reflection questions for each section. |
| 4 | Students research a saint or hero and write up his or her life story showing how the person’s faith made a difference to the world and to the student. This could be completed as an interview and the findings presented as a visual presentation (e.g. PowerPoint). In their findings, students need to highlight what the person did, how they did it and why. Students should also aim to link the actions in the person’s life to the person of Jesus. |
Raps or chants are a great learning tool to help students understand material that is difficult or impossible to experience firsthand. Secondary students may be able to write their own rap about ‘faith’ while primary students may find it challenging enough to perform the rap below, written by Alice Youlden.

Rapping Action

The words, or parts of words in bold may assist with rhythm

Now faith is something that we all know
But without the action it is just a no go.
To pray and bless is all very good
But it’s action that’s needed in every neighbourhood.

Yeh faith (clap, clap) needs action (clap clap)
You need more than a fraction to get some satisfaction.
(repeat every few verses)

As followers of Jesus to feel the glow
Then it’s actions in the world where the love will flow.
We are challenged from the time of our initiation
To respond to Grace, a divine invitation.

A body without the spirit is just so dead,
So faith without actions is something to dread.
We need Christ’s actions at work in the world
Through us God’s love round the world is unfurled.
We are called to put our faith into action. It is not an option it is not a distraction. When we feed the hungry and visit the sick. When we welcome the lonely we give hatred the flick.

Some great examples of Christians from the past, From disciples to the saints their actions were a blast. Mary Mac set up schools all across the nation. Her life in Christ is a cause for celebration.

There’s Teresa of Avila who could meditate so deep. They thought she wasn’t with it, they thought she was asleep. But when she finished praying she moved all over Spain. She set up heaps of convents, even in the rain.

At Eucharist we gather, we remember and we share. The life and death of Jesus, his presence everywhere. But at the very end, just as we turn to go. The words are clear, our work’s not done our actions have to show.

If today we want our faith to really find some traction. We have to show it to our world in every little action. We need to pray, gain strength within not merely for our self. But show the world the light of Christ, the centre of our wealth.
The celebration of Catholic Education Week provides a special opportunity for showcasing the gifts, achievements, programs and activities within our Catholic school communities that respond to the call to put our faith into action.

The following broad activities are offered as a guide for celebration. However, we encourage you to draw on the programs and initiatives relevant to your school when deciding on the type of celebration. For example, schools implementing a Performance and Development Culture may wish to showcase to the community what PDC entails. Schools implementing 1:1 technology programs may wish to use ICT as a vehicle for showcasing their work.

**Celebration of achievements** – within each class, each house or on a whole school basis, acknowledge specific academic, sporting, creative and cultural achievements through rewards, medals, citations, picture galleries and so on.

The categories of achievement need not be limited to students but may also cover staff, families and the broader school/parish community. This celebration could occur as part of a liturgy or Mass, and be followed by a sharing of food and drink.

**Guest speakers** – a wide range of speakers could be invited to reflect upon their Catholic education and the utilisation of their gifts in later life. These speakers could reflect upon the various opportunities they had through their schooling to learn and grow and how these experiences shaped their later lives.

Speakers could include past students and staff, local community and other leaders, and members of the wider parish community.

**Visual displays** – a wide range of collections of student work, reflections, activities and school/community involvements could be prominently displayed through posters, photo and other galleries, and even on web pages.

Themes for these displays could include: creativity, problem solving, growth, stewardship or specific gifts and opportunities. Again, these displays could include the work of staff and the wider school/parish community.
General learning activities

Put a spotlight on effective learning skills and make one or more a focus for a visual display. Examples include:

**Problem solving**
- Maths problem of the day
- Look at the Nrich project website for a range of problem ideas at varying levels

**Working in teams**
- Design a game
- Research a topic
- Work on a science design brief (e.g. constructing a newspaper tower to support itself)

**Contests and challenges**
A variety of challenges, contests and performances could be promoted around the broad theme or some specific themes, incorporating talent shows, the above displays, team and problem solving contests and so on. The tone would be of celebration and gratitude for the many gifts and opportunities we have in our schools.

With all of these, the performed activities could be captured on film and in writing for promotion on school websites and for reflection in other ways throughout the school year.
Useful Websites

- Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Sale: www.ceosale.catholic.edu.au
- Catholic Diocese of Sale: www.sale.catholic.org.au
- Catholic Mission: www.catholicmission.org.au
- Catholic Church in Australia: www.catholic.org.au
- Catholic Religious Australia: www.catholicreligiousaustralia.org
- The Church in Australia: The Catholic Tradition: http://yuri.netii.net/ecc/mod8.html
- Caroline Chisholm: http://adbonline.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010208b.htm
- Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop: www.marymackillop.org.au
- St Vincent de Paul Society: www.vinnies.org.au/home-vic
- Caritas www.caritas.org.au
With so many other things on the school calendar, it is easy for Catholic Education Week to become ‘lost in the crowd’. Here is a checklist to help you ensure the celebration gets the attention it deserves.

**Have you:**

- Planned at least one whole-school event to be celebrated during Catholic Education Week, preferably one that involves people beyond the school community?
- Promoted this event through the school newsletter, parish newsletter, school website or local media (as appropriate)?
- Encouraged your Religious Education Coordinator to organise a school prayer service (or Mass) based on the one provided in this booklet?
- Encouraged classroom teachers to select appropriate activities from the suggestions provided in this booklet?
- Organised for a staff member to take photos of your Catholic Education Week activities?
- Prepared and submitted a media release about your main event?
- Displayed the enclosed Catholic Education Week posters around your schools?

**Towards the end of Catholic Education Week**

**Have you:**

- Prepared and submitted (along with a photo) a media release about your main event?
- Sent a copy of this media release to Kirsty Pitman at kpitman@ceosale.catholic.edu.au so it can be included as a news story on the Catholic Education Office website as well?