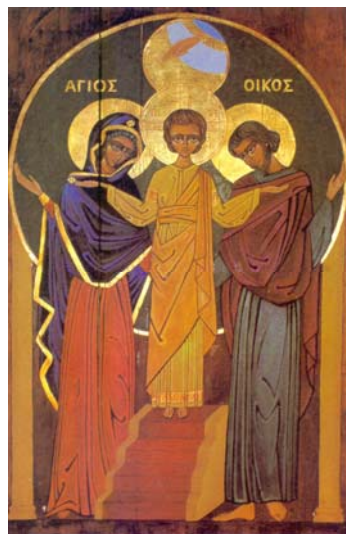


Things you can do as a parent or carer of children to support their understanding of 'This Is Our Faith':

- Be an example to your children
- Speak to your children about what your faith means to you
- Find a time to speak together as a family about the values that you hold to be important
- Use some of the ideas suggested in the Family Activities sheet provided during Catholic Education Week to learn together and to pray as a family
- Find ways to be more involved in your parish
- Encourage your children to be active in your parish – reading at mass, serving, taking part in groups, etc.
- Look at the Scottish Catholic Education Service website (www.sces.org.uk) for information on what is happening in Catholic schools
- Speak to your children about what they are learning in religious education – what do they like about it? what have they found interesting?
- Ask your school to provide more information on 'This Is Our Faith' or to discuss it at a Parent Council meeting so that parents can play their part in this important area of education
- Speak to teachers and find out how what your school is doing to use 'This Is Our Faith': what differences is it making to the teaching of religious education?
- Speak to your children about Catholic Education Week – find out what is happening in your parish and school.



THIS IS
— our faith —

Advice for Parents and Carers

Catholic Education Week in February 2012 is focusing on 'This Is Our Faith', the new syllabus for religious education in Catholic schools in Scotland. Parents have a key part to play in making sure that this new syllabus helps their children to grow in faith.

This leaflet briefly provides some initial information on 'This Is Our Faith' and advises parents and carers on some of the things they can do to support children as they grow in their faith.

More detailed information and advice is available from your local school and parish.



Parents and guardians who send their children to Catholic schools are making a choice, a choice for a school that gives their children the best start in life. Catholic schools provide the best start because they don't aim just to provide the learning children need for their future lives; they also aim to help children and young people to grow spiritually and to develop values that will enrich their lives and make them happy.



These three different things – learning, spiritual growth and values – all come together in the new syllabus for Catholic religious education in Scotland, called ‘This Is Our Faith’. The word “syllabus” means simply the learning content that

teachers will pass on to pupils. However, because Catholic schools also aim to help children and young people to grow spiritually and to develop lasting values, this new syllabus is not just about learning. It's a syllabus that will also provide children and young people with opportunities to grow in faith and to develop values that will guide them throughout their lives and enable them to find lasting happiness.

Parents and carers should be encouraged by the publication of ‘This Is Our Faith’ and by the fact that it has been approved by Catholic Church authorities in the Vatican. This means that parents can be confident that, across Scotland, our children and young people are

being taught the important things about their faith; they are being given the experiences to help them grow in that faith and develop the values which come from faith.

Parents and carers know that learning, growing in faith and developing values don't just come from school; children and young people grow spiritually and develop values at home and with their families. Parents as first educators have the most important role to play in making sure that what is taught in school is also lived out at home.



To quote one parent, *“Parents need to display the Christian values that the school teaches so that children can see the connection between what they are taught in school and how they should treat others when away from school.”* When parents

and families live out their faith then children and young people will have a more complete and coherent experience, where what is taught and experienced in school is also brought to life in their homes and in their parishes.

So, the arrival of ‘This Is Our Faith’ is something that parents and guardians should welcome. It is also a challenge to all of us to make sure that we put into practice what we believe so that we can provide a real example of faith for our children and young people. As Pope Benedict XVI reminds us, *“A witness is someone who first lives the life that he proposes to others.”*