



February 2023

Re: The RE Curriculum Resource Contribution 2023 - to Principals of Catholic Secondary Schools

Dear Principal,

I hope 2023 has begun well for you, your staff and the young people in your care, especially with all the weather and Covid related complexity. I wish you to know that NCRS continues to support you in your work of nurturing the young people who have just joined, or are returning to, your school. We remain fully committed to supporting Religious Education in Catholic schools on behalf of the New Zealand Catholic Bishops, and as part of Te Kupenga Catholic Leadership Institute, particularly as we focus on developing resources for the new RE curriculum *To Tātou Whakapono Our Faith*.

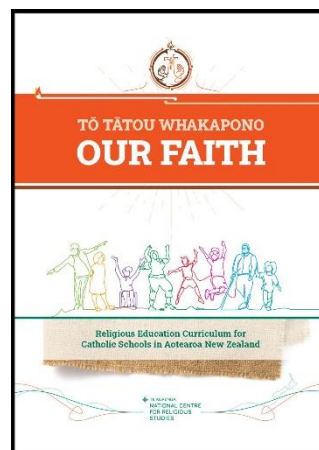
The RE **Curriculum Resource Contribution** (CRC), ensures NCRS retains the capacity to support you, DRs, teachers and young people with a quality RE curriculum and resources. Our team consists of 4 full-time RE professionals, all with recent classroom experience and holding current Teacher Registration, and 2 part-time ex-teachers with significant expertise in RE.

So, what does NCRS do? (Where does your Curriculum Resource Contribution money go?)

Championing Religious Education: NCRS is the major ‘champion’ of RE in Aotearoa NZ Catholic schools. We are the agency mandated with this task by the NZ Catholic Bishops Conference. We are 100% committed to RE, to RE teachers & DRs; to supporting the diocesan RE advisors; to developing and resourcing the RE Curriculum; to ‘being real’ about expectations on DRs and RE teachers; to understanding the complexities of this challenging work. We respond to requests for PLD input, we write, co-ordinate, lead meetings, read and research 48 weeks in the year.

Tō Tātou Whakapono Our Faith: For the past three years our major work has been on consulting and drafting a new RE curriculum and resources for Aotearoa Catholic schools. *Tō Tātou Whakapono Our Faith* is available in the NCRS area of Te Kupenga’s website, along with introductory videos, learning intentions and the projected timeline for roll-out (<https://www.tekupenga.ac.nz/ncrs/>). Principals, DRs, RE teachers and Boards are encouraged to read it and become familiar with the contents but implementation of the new curriculum is not expected until 2024. There is no rush to get on-board especially as schools need to be significantly supported with quality PLD and resources.

We have drafted materials for Years 9, 10 & 11, and this year we’ll be focussing on producing resources for Year 12. It’s an exciting phase of development and, we’ve greatly appreciated the very positive responses and continuing advice we’ve received from all the workshops we ran around the country in 2022. This year the RE advisors (REAs) in each diocese are ramping up their role of helping schools to prepare to implement *Tō Tātou Whakapono Our Faith*. NCRS is very grateful for the wonderful working relationship we have with all the REAs and assure you of our shared commitment to supporting staff and students in this new phase of Religious Education in Aotearoa.



Curriculum Website: FaithCentral (www.faithcentral.nz) contains resource material for the Understanding Faith Curriculum and associated Catholic Character material. It will remain in place for several years, and a new site is being developed for *To Tātou Whakapono Our Faith*. Those who attended the “Sharing the RE Journey” workshops in each diocese have ‘tinyurl’ links to the draft content, and these are also available from your local REA.

Sexuality Education support: As you will be aware, during 2021 we revised the Human Sexuality Framing document to pick up recent changes by the Ministry of Education. The revised document is called *He Mea Hanga Mīhara ki tō te Atua Āhua – Wonderfully Made in God’s Image*. NCRS has therefore also revised the *Sexuality Resource Grid Package (SRP)* in 2022 to provide specific support in the teaching of human sexuality from a Catholic perspective. (All available from www.tekupenga.ac.nz/ncrs)

Ethical Stance Research. I wish to thank all those schools who so generously responded to last year’s request to continue the research project into attitudes towards ethical issues, which NCRS, The Nathaniel Centre and The Centre for Science and Citizenship have been conducting over the past few years. During 2023 we will be carefully collating and writing up the data received thus far, and we aim to complete the next phase of data gathering in 2024. It is a fascinating area of research, and we look forward to sharing findings with you.

NZpray2day: This is an app designed for senior primary young people, teachers and whānau to help them enter into the richness of the ancient Christian cycle of seasons, saints and readings. It is available free of charge from Apple Store and Google Play. **Please encourage your community to download and use it.**

Achievement Standards Review: The Ministry of Education continues its review of Achievement Standards (AS) in Religious Studies. I have been part of the Subject Expert Group (SEG) since 2020 including helping draft the Level 2 (year 12) assessment rubrics and tasks. It’s a challenging task with the MoE leadership person changing 4 times, and a number of changes to the content being made along the journey which don’t seem to make sense and are beyond the SEGs influence. The dialogue continues and there is a lot of good will in the mix. I remain committed to the goal of ensuring the RS components within our Religious Education programme of learning can be credentialed through Achievement Standards. It’s complex work. (Please, keep this mahi in your prayers.)

Finally, being well on the way to supporting the new RE curriculum document, after over 50 face to face or virtual meetings in 2022, I do wish to thank all those principals, DRs and teachers who have given us feedback throughout the journey thus far. As the REAs are taking the lead in PLD, our focus this year is very much on hunkering down to the mahi and producing resources for you. However, please, be assured we will also continue to respond quickly to requests from schools – just drop us a line.

Through the Curriculum Resource Contribution NCRS is able to support effective curriculum development, and provision of resources for Religious Education and Catholic Character. We welcome any suggestions from you as principal as to how we can better serve the young people and staff at your school in effective teaching and learning of Religious Education.

I wish you all the very best for 2023.

Kind regards, and blessings in your work,



Colin MacLeod



Director NCRS

Additional Information

1. **Easy links** to two documents sent in 2019 regarding the Curriculum Resource Contribution are available on-line:
 - The NZ Catholic Bishops' letter sent to all schools: (www.tinyurl.com/NCRS-CRC20a)
 - NZCEO's advice on managing payment: (www.tinyurl.com/NCRS-CRC20)

