

Information about Religious Education

“The Catholic school is first and foremost a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth. Its primary goal is above all a question of communicating Christ, of helping to form Christ in the lives of others. That is the reason for their existence.”

From **The Catholic Education of School-Age Children**
(NZ Catholic Bishops Conference 2014)

Our Catholic character is the beating heart of St Mary’s College. The Faculty of Religious Education is a vibrant and engaging community of learners. Our mission is to ignite and fan the flames of whakapono/faith in Te Atua/God and to educate ākonga/students in a wide range of dimensions of the Catholic Church.

The Special Character of St Mary’s College is lived out each day in many different ways. As a community we attend regular Mass, we pray frequently, we are knowledgeable about our Mercy charism, and we consciously aim to reflect Jesus in our actions. Every student partakes in retreat every year, and attends regular Religious Education classes.

We have a range of Special Character service and co-curricular opportunities and groups in which we wholeheartedly encourage the students to participate. These include:

Sacramental Program * Servant Leaders * Liturgical Reps * Young Vinnies * Gospel Choir
Liturgical Dance * Adoration * Rosary Group * Year12 Quest Retreat

Religious Education Teaching

The 2017 Religious Education Programme includes the following topics:

Years 7 & 8

- Mercy Value: Excellence & Hauora
- Curriculum Strands: God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, Church, Sacrament
- Sacred Days and Seasons: Ash Wednesday and Lent, Holy Week and Easter, Transfiguration, Ascension, Pentecost, Annunciation, Assumption, Advent and Christmas
- Personal Care: Puberty and hygiene (Year 7), Body Image and Net Safety (Year 8)

Year 9

- Mercy Value: Excellence & Hauora
- Curriculum Topics: Creation & Co-Creation, The Life and Times of Jesus, The Early Church, The Beginnings of the Church in Aotearoa, Film Study
- Personal Care: Relating to Others, Peer Pressure, Net Safety

Year 10

- Mercy Value: Excellence & Hauora
- Curriculum Topics: The Teachings of Jesus, Journey Stories, The Eucharist, The Middle Ages, Sin & Reconciliation, Film Study
- Personal Care: Marriage, Love, Sex, Life, Consent, Conception, Contraception

Senior Religious Education

At each senior level students complete 3 x NZQA 6 Credit Internal Achievement Standards. Students can Achieve Religious Education with Merit or Excellence Endorsement. Each Level 1 RE Assessment is also worth 6 Literacy credits. Some Level 3 RE Assessments are also worth 6 Literacy credits. Religious Education is an approved subject and can be used for University Entrance. Each senior level begins with a Mercy Value focus.

Year 11

- Curriculum Topics
 - Theology - Trinity
 - History - The Reformation
 - Scripture - The Gospel of Matthew
- Personal Care: Safety and Consent, Contraception, STIs, LQBT & the Catholic Church

Year 12

- Curriculum Topics
 - Theology - World Religions
 - History - Commitment & Ministry
 - Scripture - Mary
- Personal Care: Safety and Consent, Contraception, STIs, LQBT & the Catholic Church

Year 13

- Curriculum Topics
 - Ethics - BioEthics
 - Scripture - Book of Revelation
 - Philosophy - Making Meaning
- Personal Care: Safety and Consent, Drug and Alcohol Awareness

Frequently Asked Questions about Religious Education at St Mary's College

Q: Do all students at St Mary's HAVE to take Religious Education?

A: Yes of course!! ALL students at St Mary's College take part in regular Religious Education classes.

Q: How often do the students have Religious Education?

A: Religious Education classes are three times a week for each year level except for Year 9, who attend Religious Education 5 times a fortnight.

Q: Who teaches Religious Education?

A: All the Religious Education teachers at St Mary's are practising Catholics. RE teaching positions are Tagged (S65) by the NZ Catholic Education Office. All teachers are trained in teaching Religious Education, mostly to a Post Graduate level. All senior classes are taught by specialist Theology teachers.

Q: What do the students learn in Religious Education?

A: We follow the Understanding Faith curriculum. This is a continuation of the same curriculum that NZ Catholic Primary Schools use. Students are educated in Catholic Church teaching, aspects of worship, Church history, and Christian ethics.

Q: Is it all *really Catholic*?

A: Yes! We are proudly and unapologetically *Catholic*. The Understanding Faith curriculum is designed to educate students about *Catholicism*, and its place in the world. This is not a Social Sciences subject about World Religions (like IGSCCE Religious Studies). Families who choose St Mary's College should have a desire for their daughter to receive an education in Catholic Church teaching.

Q: Will they learn about other religions?

A: In Year12 there is a term long World Religion unit, giving an overview of the five major world religions, then focusing on comparing and contrasting key beliefs with Catholic Church teaching. In Year10 students may learn a little about Islam in the Middle Ages history topic. Due to Christianity's shared history with Judaism, there are elements of Jewish practice and tradition woven through the curriculum at most year levels.

Q: What if the students have never done Religious Education before?

A: The Understanding Faith Curriculum is a Year 1 to Year 13 course. Learning objectives at Year 7 assume the student has already completed 6 years of this curriculum. Because of this, students who are new to Religious Education at Year 7 will be introduced to a lot of new concepts very rapidly. Teachers of Year 7 will support your daughter so she can access the curriculum, however your support and input is vital.

Q: What if we are not Catholic?

A: First and foremost - we love and appreciate all students in our classrooms and are very inclusive. Parents are the first teachers of their children in matters of faith, and it is our job to work in partnership with you. It is important to note that Catholic Church teaching will be presented to your daughters as Religious Truth, therefore it is vital that you discuss religious concepts with your daughters - particularly if your family are members of a different Faith Tradition, or don't prescribe to a particular Faith Tradition. Also please note: if a student is hearing something in RE class and then hearing at home that none of that is true it can be very confusing for them.

