



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 Programme * Servant Leaders * Liturgical Representatives * Young Vinnies * Gospel Choir * Liturgical Dance * Adoration * Rosary Group * Yr12 Quest Retreat * Mission Representatives * Halo Club

Religious Education Teaching

The 2021 Religious Education Programme includes the following topics:

Years 7 & 8

- Mercy Value: Manaakitanga - Care for the poor and vulnerable.
- Curriculum Strands: God, Jesus, Karakia, 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 (Yr 7), Body Image and Net Safety (Yr 8)

Year 9

- Mercy Value: Manaakitanga - Care for the poor and vulnerable.
- Curriculum Topics: Creation & Co-Creation, The Life and Times of Jesus, Karakia, The Early Church, The Beginnings of the Church in Aotearoa, The Church's Year
- Personal Care: Relating to Others, Peer Pressure, Net Safety
- Sacred Days and Seasons: Ash Wednesday and Lent, Holy Week and Easter, Transfiguration, Ascension, Pentecost, Annunciation, Assumption, Advent and Christmas

Year 10

- Mercy Value: Manaakitanga - Care for the poor and vulnerable.
- Curriculum Topics: The Teachings of Jesus, Journey Stories, Karakia, The Eucharist, The Middle Ages, Sin & Reconciliation
- Personal Care: Marriage, Love, Sex, Life, Conception, Contraception.
- Sacred Days and Seasons: Ash Wednesday and Lent, Holy Week and Easter, Transfiguration, Ascension, Pentecost, Annunciation, Assumption, Advent and Christmas

Senior Religious Education

At Yr12 and Yr13 students complete 3 x NZQA 6 Credit Internal Achievement Standards. Students can achieve Religious Education with Merit or Excellence Endorsement. Some Level 3 RE Assessments are also worth 6 Reading Literacy credits. Religious Education is an approved subject and can be used for University Entrance. Each senior level begins with a Mercy Value focus.

In 2021 St Mary's College will be part of a mini pilot working with the Ministry of Education and NZQA, implementing the proposed new Level 1 Religious Studies Achievement Standards. This will comprise two 5 credit Internal Assessments and two 5 credit External Assessments.

Year 11

- Mercy Value: Manaakitanga - Care for the poor and vulnerable.
- Curriculum Topics
 - Theology - Explore a characteristic found in two different religious traditions.
 - History - Explore the development of a religious community within Aotearoa New Zealand
 - Scripture - Explore a significant religious narrative within a religious tradition.
 - Ethics - Explore an ethical principle found in a religious tradition.
- Personal Care: Safety and Consent, student selected topics that can included i.e. Contraception, STIs, LGBTQ & the Catholic Church.
- Sacred Days and Seasons: Ash Wednesday and Lent, Holy Week and Easter, Transfiguration, Ascension, Pentecost, Annunciation, Assumption, Advent and Christmas

Year 12

- Mercy Value: Manaakitanga - Care for the poor and vulnerable.
- Curriculum Topics
 - Theology - World Religions
 - Ethics – Social Justice
 - Scripture - Mary
- Personal Care: Safety and Consent, student selected topics that can included i.e. Contraception, STIs, LQBT & the Catholic Church.
- Sacred Days and Seasons: Ash Wednesday and Lent, Holy Week and Easter, Transfiguration, Ascension, Pentecost, Annunciation, Assumption, Advent and Christmas

Year 13

- Mercy Value: Manaakitanga - Care for the poor and vulnerable.
- Curriculum Topics
 - Ethics – Bio Ethics
 - History – Church in Aotearoa since Vatican II
 - Philosophy - Making Meaning
- Personal Care: Safety and Consent, student selected topics that can included i.e. Contraception, STIs, Drug and Alcohol Awareness
- Sacred Days and Seasons: Ash Wednesday and Lent, Holy Week and Easter, Transfiguration, Ascension, Pentecost, Annunciation, Assumption, Advent and Christmas

Frequently Asked Questions about Religious Education at SMC...

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

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

Q: How often do the students have Religious Education?

A: All Year 7 and Year 8 classes have 5 lessons of Religious Education in a 10-day cycle. All Year 9 and Year 10 classes have 6 lessons of Religious Education in a 10-day cycle. All Year 11 and Year 12 classes have 7 lessons of Religious Education a 10-day cycle. Year 13 classes have 8 lessons of Religious Education a 10-day cycle

Q: Who teaches Religious Education?

A: RE teaching positions are Tagged (\$65) 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. Faith Alive site for Y7/8 <http://www.faithalive.org.nz/> Faith Central site for Y9- 13 <http://www.faithcentral.co.nz/>

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. 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 Yr12 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 Yr10 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. In Yr9 and Yr11 students will learn about Māori spirituality using creation stories.

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

A: The Understanding Faith Curriculum is a Yr1 to Yr13 course. Learning objectives at Yr7 assume the student has already completed 6 years of this curriculum. Because of this, students who are new to Religious Education at Yr7 will be introduced to a lot of new concepts. The Yr7 programme has been adapted to support all Yr7 students. Teachers of Yr7 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.

