

**To: Chairpersons of Diocesan Primary School Boards of Trustees**

**To: Principals & Directors of Religious Studies Diocesan Primary Schools**

**cc: Principals, DRSs & Chairpersons Catholic Secondary School Boards of Trustees**

Hi All

Further to my email of 3 June 2014 and its attendant report/write-up (attached), this email provides you with an update on progress regarding the systemic religious education (RE) research/professional learning project.

Cushla O'Connor (Primary RE Adviser) has completed a round of DRSs' meetings throughout the Diocese where feedback was positive and enthusiasm was high for the proposal of two initial "kick start" question-writing workshop days, one in Christchurch and one in South Canterbury.

People were invited to register their interest in these initial "kick start" question-writing workshops. The importance of workshop participants having a thorough knowledge of the RE programme from Years 1-4 was emphasised and accepted as appropriate.

With this in mind we have confirmed the following initial "kick start" question-writing workshop days:

#### **Mid Canterbury/Christchurch**

- Wednesday 24 September 2014 (9.00am – 3.00pm) at the Catholic Education Office
- Thursday 25 September 2014 (9.00am – 3.00pm) at the Catholic Education Office

#### **South Canterbury**

- Wednesday 22 October 2014 (9.00am – 3.00pm) at the St Joseph's School, Timaru
- Thursday 23 October 2014 (9.00am – 3.00pm) at the St Joseph's School, Timaru

We thank the following people for their willingness to share their wealth of RE knowledge and curriculum expertise and leadership at the initial "kick start" question-writing workshop days:

#### **Mid Canterbury/Christchurch**

- Kath Clark (DRS, Sacred Heart School, Addington)
- Leigh Cunningham (DRS, St Joseph's School, Rangiora)
- Elizabeth McDowell (DRS, Our Lady of the Assumption School, Hoon Hay)
- Maria McDonald (DRS, St Mary's School, Christchurch)
- Jacque Culling (DRS, Christ the King School, Burnside)
- Catherine Quinn (DRS, St Albans Catholic School)
- Catherine Rush (DRS, St Joseph's School, Ashburton)

#### **South Canterbury**

- Angela Marshall (Principal, St Joseph's School, Fairlie)
- Bernadette Ewer (DRS, St Joseph's School, Pleasant Point)
- Suzy Duffield (DRS, St Joseph's School, Temuka)
- Debbie Plant (DRS, Sacred Heart School, Timaru)
- Trish McCambridge (DRS, St Joseph's School, Timaru)
- Carmel Brosnahan-Pye (Principal, St Joseph's School, Timaru)

Please also note that due to in-school commitments on the two days set aside for the Mid Canterbury/Christchurch workshop, Sandra Shamy (DRS, St Peter's School, Beckenham) cannot participate in the initial question-writing workshops. However, Sandra has kindly agreed to work with Cushla and Charles Shaw (Secondary RE Adviser) to critique the questions that result from the workshop. We are grateful for Sandra's dedication and commitment as a fresh pair of vastly experience professional eyes will be invaluable to the process.

With respect to the two **West Coast** schools, Cushla will work with the DRSs at their Term 4, 2014 meeting where they will be asked to critique the questions written by the initial writing working parties.

Please note that other schools may be included in subsequent writing groups and all schools will have the opportunity to view the questions and indeed develop further questions at some point.

Next year, as an on-going process, all Cluster gatherings in the first two terms will be used to look at the process so far, and indeed be a vehicle used to write more questions to add to the initial bank of questions developed at the above question-writing workshops; questions that will be critiqued by Patrick Nisbet (CEO, Creative Ministry Resources)

You may be wondering what process will be used at the initial “kick start” question-writing workshops?

At this point we anticipate a process along these lines:

- In the first instance we will look at prayer and ask the question what prayers do our students need to know by the end of Year 4 (using the Prayer Module)
- Then we may look at the Liturgical Year and ‘Church’ practices (gesture, sign, symbol etc., using overall teacher knowledge and the Liturgical Year module)
- The next step would be to divide into two groups, each working on a strand each.
  - (a) Using the page that has the achievement objectives on it, with the learning outcomes, and looking at these across Years 0-4 we can decide on the core questions (knowledge based) that we think need to be tested.

As part of our own formative assessment of progress the groups could swap the strands and repeat the process and then compare what questions had been written and discuss, arriving at some consensus.

- (b) The page that focuses on attitude/values and prayers we will also be used as this will help us craft ‘understanding/affective’ based questions.

Thanks a million for your support thus far 😊 😊

We trust this will continue to be an exciting systemic RE professional journey for us all.

May faith, hope and love be your treasures this year and always.

Cheers

Mike Nolan & Cushla O'Connor 😊 😊