



THE ECHO



A newsletter for CATECHISTS and RE TEACHERS

Issue 27

Summer Term 2025

Pope Francis and Pope Leo ROLE MODELS for CATECHESIS

We have recently witnessed the passing away of the Holy Father **Pope Francis** followed by the election and inauguration of the new **Pope Leo XIV**.



Reflecting on the work and backgrounds of these two remarkable men, one can but notice their intense and unwavering work in the field of the Lord through spreading the word of God - something that makes them real role models and inspiring figures for others like us involved in catechesis.

In his ministry as Pope for twelve years, Pope Francis often spoke of catechesis. Besides doing this through his preaching, he gave the church key documents such as his very first letter as a pope, '*Evangelii Gaudium*'.



Although just starting his pontificate, we know how Pope Leo comes from a background of missionary work and proclamation of the word in so many different ways. His words in the message at his Inauguration mass on Sunday 18th May can be regarded as his manifesto - that all of us will have a 'missionary spirit that animate us' in order that every person will be invited to 'Come closer to Christ'.



Visit our SDC website

www.sdc.me.uk/prayerbook

to view our new version of the **Prayer book**. It includes both personal prayers as well as those we use at mass and more. Copies can be ordered online or downloaded from the same website.

Words to treasure...

Who are the Catechists? They are people who keep the memory of God alive; they keep it alive in themselves and they are able to revive it in others.

POPE FRANCIS

September 2013

Now, after the Resurrection, it is up to them to carry on this mission, to cast their nets again and again, to bring the hope of the Gospel into the 'waters' of the world, to sail the seas of life so that all may experience God's embrace.

POPE LEO XIV

*Inauguration Mass
May 2025*

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The word 'CATECHIST' comes from the Greek word meaning 'to echo'. As Catechists or teachers of RE we do not proclaim our own word. We echo the message of Jesus Christ our Lord.

This newsletter aims at providing parish catechists and teachers of RE in schools some support in terms of reflections, ideas, useful resources they can use and so on. Feel free to make more copies for other colleagues and friends. There is also an online version on our website www.sdc.me.uk



The JUBILEE LOGO

Each of the components of the Jubilee 2025 logo contributes to a very interesting set of truths or messages that represent what the Jubilee 2025 is all about.

The **four figures**

in the logo, (representing humanity coming from the four corners of the earth) are portrayed embracing each other in a spirit of unity and solidarity. The figure at the front in turn embraces or even clings to the **cross**.



The cross merges into an **anchor**, pointing to the theme of hope and security in a world full of challenges and obstacles.

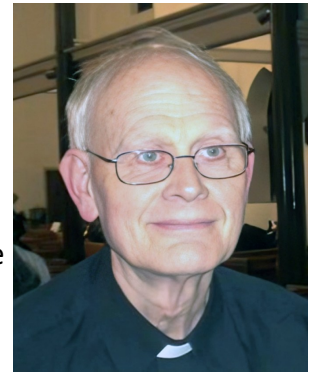
The logo points to the image of a **sail** while the waves towards the bottom indicate the challenges we all inevitably encounter in any turbulence during our life.

The motto **PILGRIMS OF HOPE** is then the key theme chosen by Pope Francis for this Year which is therefore intended to be a year when we all reflect on the virtue of **HOPE** which keeps us going in difficult times throughout our life journey.

SDC in LONDON

FATHER BERNARD HEAPHY

Fr Bernard Heaphy, former parish priest at Our Lady of the Rosary parish, Brixton, London passed away on Saturday 15th March 2025. SDC members worked with Fr Bernard for many years at his parish in South London running catechism groups and supporting the parish in other ways. Around two years after their arrival in London the first three members established contact with Fr Bernard and his parish which then led to them moving in with him in 1990 where they lived in the Parish House for many years until a new property was purchased in 2006 in Upper Norwood. Fr Bernard was a humble and unassuming man who served at the Rosary parish until 2014 when he had to retire for Health reasons. He continued to show inner strength during the years when his health was deteriorating by continuing to contribute and support communities as best as he could during such difficult time. We are indebted to him for his support and for his contribution in helping SDC become more established in London. May he rest in peace.



FEAST OF ST GEORGE PRECA

On the occasion of the feast day of Founder St George Preca, a mass was celebrated on Friday 9th May at the SDC House. Members of the SDC Friends group and other parishioners were invited. The celebrant was Fr Celestine Ekwueme, parish priest at St Matthew's parish, West Norwood. After the mass, there was time for refreshments.



Presentations on the life of St George Preca were also given to children in Holy Communion and Confirmation Catechism groups as well as at meetings for parents.

