

Faith • Belonging • Purpose

This year, our Parish invites all young people aged **10–18** to join our **Faith in Action Award Programme**. This award-based programme encourages young people to recognise, grow and celebrate their faith through **service and reflection**. It is an exciting opportunity to connect with others, explore your faith, and discover what it means to live out your Catholic faith in everyday life.

CYMFed (Catholic Youth Ministry Federation) seeks to shape and support youth ministry across England and Wales. The Faith in Action Award programme encourages young people to explore **Scripture and Church teaching** and, most importantly, to put their faith into action. Many young people are already following Jesus' example by serving others in their schools, homes and parishes. Faith in Action builds on this, encouraging young people to extend their service into the wider community and take greater responsibility for living out their faith.

Below, you will find an outline of the programme, including what you can expect, key dates and programme requirements.

We invite you to **join us on this journey**, where faith is celebrated, questions are welcomed, our community is served and friendships are formed.

We look forward to welcoming you to our **Kick-off Meeting on Saturday, 27 September at 4:30pm at Our Lady of Lourdes**.

Please register with Pamela Thompson, Parish youth worker @ youth.etsd@abdiocese.org.uk

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The **Faith in Action Award** is open to **all young people aged 10–18 who are interested in exploring and growing in their faith**. Whether they are already actively involved in serving others or are simply curious to discover more about what it means to live out their Catholic faith, everyone is welcome.

The Faith in Action Award is for young people aged 10–18 (Year 6 to Year 13). There are four award levels each with its own criteria and requirements:

- **Pin – Discovery | Year 6**
An introduction to how faith shapes our lives and how our relationship with God influences the world around us. **20 home credits** are required, through activities such as participating at Mass, helping with a fundraiser, or planning a school or church service.
- **Bronze – Service & Encounter | Year 7 and above**
Explores the connection between **faith and service**, encouraging young people to become more involved in their wider community. **30 credits** are required: **20 home credits and 10 away credits**. Examples include altar serving, helping with a liturgy or reflection, serving refreshments after Mass, or volunteering at Confirmation sessions.
- **Silver – Leadership & Mission | Year 8 and above**
Encourages young people to take greater **initiative and leadership**, recognising how their faith

influences the way they live and serve others. **35 credits** are required: **20 home credits and 15 away credits**. Examples include leading a Reflection Point or children's liturgy, helping to organise a parish event, regular charity volunteering, or coordinating an SVP project.

- **Gold – Innovation & Vocation | After completing Silver**

Builds on the Silver experience by encouraging **ongoing commitment, innovation and missionary service**. Young people are invited to develop new ways of serving and to explore how their faith, gifts and vocation can contribute to the life of the Church and wider community. **Please enquire for further details.**

Participants work towards their chosen award by completing a **set number of service credits**, according to the requirements of their award level. Their service can take many different forms, from helping in their parish or local community to supporting others in their school, home or wider community. Participants record their service credits and reflect on their experiences in their journal throughout the programme.

Throughout the year, there are also **four Reflection Sessions**, where participants come together as a group for activities, prayer and guided discussions about their faith and experiences of service. They also have opportunities for personal reflection at home through journaling.

At the end of the programme, each participant completes a final piece of work, which is submitted for moderation. Once this has been completed successfully, they receive their Faith in Action Award.

REQUIREMENTS

The **Faith in Action Award** is designed to be flexible, allowing young people to put their faith into action in ways that reflect their interests, gifts and circumstances. However, to ensure the integrity and consistency of the programme, there are a few **mandatory requirements** for all participants:

- **Attend the four Reflection Sessions** at Our Lady of Lourdes. Participants receive **3 credits for each session attended**. The first Reflection Session is scheduled for **7 November, 3:30–5:00pm**. Participants are encouraged to stay for Mass with the wider Faith in Action community and can choose to take part by doing the readings, greeting or serving. **Additional service credits** are available for these activities.
- **Keep a journal throughout the programme**. Participants are encouraged to use their journal to record their service credits, as well as their personal reflections, experiences and what they are discovering about their faith.
- **Complete a record of service** for their chosen award level, signed by their Award Leader.
- **Submit a final piece of work for moderation** at the end of the programme. Further details about the final submission will be provided during the year.

REFLECTION SESSIONS & DATES

Reflection — both personal and guided — is at the heart of the **Faith in Action Award**. While receiving an award depends on completing the required number of service credits, giving young people the time and space to reflect on their experiences is an essential part of the programme.

Each Reflection Session explores themes around **faith, love and service**, helping participants to connect their experiences of serving others with their faith and relationship with God.

The Reflection Sessions will take place at **Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Thames Ditton**.

Programme Dates

- **Kick-off Meeting**
Saturday, 27 September | 4:30–5:00pm
An opportunity to find out more about the programme, including registration and what to expect throughout the year. There will also be time for questions, and all participants will receive their journaling pack.
- **Reflection Session 1**
Saturday, 7 November | 3:30–5:00pm
- **Reflection Session 2**
Saturday, 16 January | 3:30–5:00pm
- **Reflection Session 3**
March – Date TBC
- **Reflection Session 4**
May – Date TBC
- **Final Project Submission**
1st week of June 2027
- **Awards Ceremony**
June – Date TBC

Additional Dates for Your Diary

Throughout the year, there will also be **additional opportunities to put faith into action and earn service credits**. These events are not compulsory, but participants are encouraged to get involved where they can. Further details about how credits can be earned at each event will be shared throughout the year.

- **World Youth Sunday – Sunday, 22 November**
An international celebration of the place of young people in the life and mission of the Church. Further details to follow.
- **Youth Advent Weekend – 5–6 December**
Taking place at Holy Name and Our Lady of Lourdes. Further details to follow.
- **FLAME 2027 – Saturday, 6 March 2027**
CYMFed's major Catholic youth gathering, bringing thousands of young people together for a day of inspiring talks, live music, prayer, worship, testimony and celebration — creating space to encounter Christ and deepen their faith.

FINAL PIECE OF WORK

Towards the end of their Faith in Action journey, each young person will create and submit a final piece of work that reflects their spiritual journey and experiences throughout the programme.

The Faith in Action Award is designed to be accessible and inclusive, so the final piece does not have to be an essay. We encourage young people to be as creative as they like and to choose a format that best expresses their experience.

Examples could include:

- Song
- Written piece (no more than two sides of A4)
- Artwork
- Video
- Presentation
- Poem

Whatever format they choose, the final piece should demonstrate their experience, learning, reflection and faith, showing how they have grown and what they have discovered through their Faith in Action journey. The final pieces are moderated, not marked. There is no pass or fail. If a young person has engaged fully with the programme, participated in the Reflection Sessions and kept a journal throughout their journey, the final piece is an opportunity to celebrate their growth and encourage them in their faith. Moderation also provides an opportunity for leaders to affirm and encourage each young person in their journey.

We look forward to another wonderful year of **Faith in Action**, and to welcoming all our young people as we journey together in faith, service and friendship. We are excited for all that the year will bring and hope you will join us!

***"Let your light shine before others,
that they may see your good deeds
and glorify your Father in heaven."
— Matthew 5:16***

Principles

The key principles of this programme are *Gratitude, Inclusivity, Integrity, Recognition and Aspiration*. The Faith in Action Award recognises young people's service to God, the Church and their community and gives us the opportunity to show our *gratitude* for this service.

The Faith in Action Award is accessible to and *inclusive* of all ages 10 – 18, Y6 – Y13, of any academic ability, and from any Christian denomination.

The Faith in Action Award is not designed to be a test. It is important that the scheme should be appropriately challenging to all participants, maintaining the *integrity* of our faith without ever failing to encourage young people to explore their faith.

The Faith in Action Award *recognises* that achievement is relative to each young person. An activity worth one credit of service for one young person might be two credits for someone else because of the personal challenges faced by everyone. For example, reading at Mass for a young person who struggles with shyness or self-image may be a much bigger achievement than the same exercise undertaken by a young person who does not struggle with those issues.

By acknowledging the good work young people are doing and through the process of reflection using the teachings of the Church, the Faith in Action Award allows young people to recognise the good work they are doing themselves, encouraging them to do more and thus raises *aspiration*.