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My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Catholic Education Week 2026

I am always impressed when I visit our Catholic schools. It is great to see so many teachers, support and auxiliary staff, committed to the ethos of Catholic education and determined to use their skills and abilities for the good of the children entrusted to their care.

Increasingly our schools are valued not just by Catholic but also by non-Catholic parents, with many of our schools hosting large numbers particularly of Muslim children. While this is a great compliment to the quality of the teaching in our schools and the attractiveness of our Catholic ethos, it also brings challenges. A Catholic school is not just a school for Catholics.

It is wonderful to see that every child, whether of faith or of no faith, no matter their family background or social status, is treated as a valued child of God who deserves every help to reach their full potential.

We are of course aware of the many problems that schools face. We all know of situations that are far from perfect.

Nevertheless, we should be proud of our schools and what they seek to achieve. We should be supportive of our teachers and staff in the good they do for our children. Our Catholic faith continues to inspire our schools and to encourage those who work and study there to aim for the highest of standards.

We all want the best for our children and young people, and the best is what our Catholic schools aim to deliver.

I am delighted, therefore, that during this Catholic Education Week we will launch the new Pope Leo XIV Hope Award. Inspired by Pope Leo XIV's call to "Draw New Maps of Hope," the Award will encourage our young people to recognise that Christian hope is something to be lived and shared.

The Hope Award will invite young people to explore how faith can shape the way they see themselves, others and the world around them. Through prayer, reflection, discernment and action, they will be encouraged to discover their own gifts and vocation and to consider how they can make hope visible in their homes, schools, parishes and wider communities.

Our young people have so much to offer. I pray that the Hope Award will help them to grow in confidence as witnesses and beacons of hope, using their gifts to build communities of kindness, justice, peace and compassion.

May God's blessing be with you and with all involved in Catholic education. May we continually pray for each other.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

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+William Nolan

Archbishop of Glasgow