



# NORES NEWS

January 2020 – The month dedicated to The Holy Name and Childhood of Jesus

Diocese of Northampton, Office for RE, Evangelisation, Catechesis & Schools

SUPPORTING CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND FORMATION

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## From the Episcopal Vicar

Mgr Kevin

*We pray for you all to have a happy, fulfilled and blessed new year as we move into the third decade of the twenty first century. Think back to how we approached 2000 and where we are now! So much has happened and so much will happen as we move forward. That is why the **EPIPHANY BLESSING** of our homes, schools, classrooms is an important moment. Not to just let time pass by without asking God's blessing for each and every one of us and all we do. The blessing is included in this issue.*

*It marks the continuation of the **Year of the WORD, the GOD who SPEAKS**, our commitment to be open to and involved with the Scriptures for the coming year, and for always as part of our Christian life. Pope Francis has called for "Third Sunday in Ordinary Time is to be devoted to the celebration, study and dissemination of the word of God. This *Sunday of the Word of God* will thus be a fitting part of that time of the year when we are encouraged to strengthen our bonds with the Jewish people and to pray for Christian unity." [Aperuit illis n.3.] This year this Sunday falls on 26 January. Think how you will mark this moment in this special year.*

*The call to **REDEDICATE ENGLAND to MARY** reminds us of the ancient title of England as the Dowry of Mary. We belong to a community of faith with roots going back centuries, even millennia. Pope Benedict especially reminded the Church that Europe is built on Christian roots that we must never forget or ignore. This project allows us to reflect on this for our communities and for our personal histories.*

***Being prepared is a good thing** – so as we put the crib away [for some this is on January 6 or 13, or the older tradition is on February 2] we might take note of the words of Pope Francis in his document on the value of the crib, Admirabile Signum.*

*"I wish to encourage the beautiful family tradition of preparing the nativity scene in the days before Christmas, but also the custom of setting it up in the workplace, in schools, hospitals, prisons and town squares. Great imagination and creativity is always shown in employing the most diverse materials to create small masterpieces of beauty." [n.1]*

*Perhaps we can diary this for September to see what we might do to enliven our cribs next Christmas and think too about the tradition of blessing the bambinelli, little figures of the Christ Child for every home.*

## REDEDICATION of ENGLAND as the DOWRY of MARY

"In 1381 England was dedicated to Mary by King Richard II and was set apart for her from among the nations. This year the Christians of England are called upon to make a personal dedication to Mary, taking up her example as Christ's first disciples." Go to [behold2020.com](http://behold2020.com) for more details of how to take part as a school or any community. We are asked to pray the Angelus daily. See text on back page.

### Rededication timetable

**January 1 2020.** Formal public announcement by the Bishops of England and Wales

**February 21 2020.** All Catholics, and anybody else who wants to join in, will be invited to begin a personal 33 day consecration to Jesus through Mary following the method of St Louis de Montfort. Free books will be sent from the shrine, on request, written by Fr Michael Gaitley entitled, '33 days to morning glory'. We have been distributing these since the start of the tour.

**March 25, Wednesday, Feast of the Annunciation.**

All who are following the consecration will consecrate themselves to Jesus through Mary on this day.

**Thursday 26, Friday 27, Saturday 28,** a three-day triduum of prayer in which all will be invited to recite the litany of Saints and Martyrs of England and pray the rosary in preparation for the rededication.

**Sunday March 29,** a personal rededication as the dowry of Mary. This will be done in Westminster, Walsingham, every Cathedral, every cooperating parish, and as many homes as possible. It is a personal rededication following the guidelines in the book 'The Angelus Promise' which can be obtained from the Shrine.

*If you wish to have any of the resources mentioned above please contact the Dowry Tour office using the details at the bottom. The 33 days book can be offered free, but subject to p&p. The Litany and the Angelus Promise are £1 each. The proceeds all go to the Walsingham Trust.*

**THE VINE** - As Communications Manager, Neil Roseman asks you send all news items to him as soon as possible. at [communications@northamptondiocese.com](mailto:communications@northamptondiocese.com) Photographs should be in jpg format as separate attachments and not embedded in Word documents.

## SECONDARY RE AND THEOLOGY

Paul McHugh

Welcome back after what was hopefully a refreshing break.

**Date for diaries:** Catholic Basics Part I: God, Saturday 25 January, NORES, 10am-3pm.

In 1979, on the old road between Bethlehem and Jerusalem, there was found one of the most ancient fragments of Biblical text known to us. Folded in a tiny silver scroll (dating from before the Jewish exile in Babylon) was a fragment related to the priestly blessing in the Book of Numbers:

*May the Lord bless you and keep you.*

*May the Lord let his face shine on you and be gracious to you.*

*May the Lord uncover his face to you and bring you peace.* (Numbers 6:24-6)

The earthly 'road' of Jesus was from a Bethlehem birth to a Jerusalem death. As High Priest, he offers us the overwhelming blessing of sharing his divine life. A blessing won by his unique sacrifice on the cross. Jesus is the 'uncovered face' of God, the face that shines on us and is gracious to us. It is fitting that January begins with the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. Her 'be it done unto me' announced the dawn of salvation. The first reading of this day includes the priestly blessing above. And so as we enter a new calendar year, 'May the Lord bless you and keep you'.

## PRIMARY RE

Anne Marie McIntosh

Happy New Year! Welcome back to the new term. I hope you had a great Christmas and have returned to school feeling refreshed.

### COME AND SEE WITH EXPECTED STANDARDS IN RE

Your RE Subject Leader has (hopefully) received the *Come and See* topics for this term which include the Age-Related Standards for each learning focus. Please continue to use the *Come and See* website for all the other resources on offer there.

**COME AND SEE INSET** - The next Come and See day will take place on **Thursday 6 February**. We will focus on preparing for the Pentecost Term. If you haven't already booked a place and would like to come please email Ann admin@nores.org.uk

**SCHOOL VISITS** - School visits continue this term. Please let me know if there is anything specific you want to cover during this time.

**RE SUBJECT LEADERS DAY** - Our next day together is on **Thursday 19 March 2020**. Look out for the flyer and booking form coming soon. We will then have a joint day with our Secondary Heads of RE and Chaplains in the Pentecost Term on **Friday 5 June 2020**.

### LIVE SIMPLY

Following Joanne's inspiring input at the Deputy Heads' Conference, at Hothorpe Hall, many of you were interested in the Live Simply Award. The monthly reflections and assemblies for these are now on the NORES website.

### Just a thought.....

"What you are is God's gift to you, what you become is your gift to God." Hans Urs von Balthasar

### And finally

Don't forget if there is anything I can do to support you please do get in touch.

## ADULT FAITH FORMATION, CATECHESIS & CHAPLAINCY

Alex Heath

### YEAR OF THE WORD 2020- 'THE GOD WHO SPEAKS'

**INITIATIVE** On SATURDAY 6 JUNE 2020 there will be a DIOCESAN SCRIPTURE FESTIVAL called WORDFEST2020 as part of our celebrations for The Year of the Word. Save this date. More details for the exciting programme will be available soon. See <http://godwhospeaks.uk> and the Diocesan Website (FAITH/ YEAR OF THE WORD) for more details of what is on offer nationally and in the Diocese. I have also now created a power point for the hymn 'Praise to you Eternal Word' now freely available from [www.nores.org.uk/In the Classroom/Chaplaincy](http://www.nores.org.uk/In the Classroom/Chaplaincy).

**CATECHIST TRAINING & GATHERINGS** The current Bishop's Certificate in Catechesis Level 1 course in Luton drew to a close in early December. It has been a fantastic group of about 25 catechists. A new Catechists Brochure is now available from the NORES office or electronically via [www.nores.org.uk/Catechesis](http://www.nores.org.uk/Catechesis). It outlines the various Catechetical Gatherings and also the training available. The conversations that have taken place on the parish and Pastoral Areas over the last two terms will inform the AGM in the Lent Term with our Bishop when we will hear about catechetical issues from around the Diocese. For more details please see the brochure.

### SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY TRAINING DAYS

**Tuesday 4 February 2020** we welcome Martha Flavell who has been instrumental in helping to offer Open the Book (OtB) to Catholic schools, a project which offers primary school children an opportunity to hear key Bible stories, from a team of Christians from local churches, who present the stories during assemblies, acts of Collective Worship.

**Friday 5 June 2020** Our Joint RE & School Chaplaincy Conference for 2020 when we will welcome Fr Eamonn Mulcahy and Wintershall Education. Fr Eamonn will help us explore the theme 'The God Who Speaks'. He is a Spiritan [Holy Ghost Missionary] originally from Manchester. The fantastic Education team from Wintershall will bring the Word of God to life through overview of their work in Biblical drama and their resources and opportunities they offer to schools such as: Actor-led Assemblies, the Life of Christ production, Character Education material, Themed Workshops and Online Resources. For more information see:

[www.wintershall-education.com](http://www.wintershall-education.com). Book now for your members of staff. Full details from the NORES office.

**=May I take this opportunity to wish you and yours a truly peaceful and joyful Christmas and New Year, and we will see you again in 2020, during the Year of the Word.**

## From the DIRECTOR of SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

Collette Curtis

**The God who Speaks: Launch of the Year of the Word**  
Bishop Peter launched the Year of the Word at a special mass held in Northampton Cathedral on Saturday 7 December. It was great that our schools were represented at the mass by children and staff of all four schools of St Thomas of Canterbury Trust in Northampton; Thomas Becket, The Good Shepherd, St Mary's and St Gregory's. It was a big commitment for the children, their parents, school leaders and all the staff who were able to join the children on a Saturday in December at the end of a very busy term. Your support for Bishop Peter and the focus for all of us in the Diocese was much appreciated.

**Walking, learning and growing together** – update on the move to two Regional MATs within the Diocese Stage one of the process is nearly complete with the merger of the existing Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) within the Diocese by the establishment of two new MATs early this year. All approvals and legal documentation has been submitted to the Department for Education well in advance of the early December deadline. As a consequence of the election in the Advent term the date for the merger has been delayed from January 1 but we fully anticipate a new date of February 1.

While the legal processes have been carried out to establish the new MATs more importantly work has been underway to develop the school improvement systems and practices in each of the areas. In *Our Lady Immaculate Trust* covering schools in Northamptonshire and Bedford, primary school improvement leads have been working with head teachers to carry out peer reviews across each of the schools, identify common priorities and look to plan and benefit from joint training, shared best practice and closer collaboration. Secondary head teacher and leaders across St Paul's, Thomas Becket and St Thomas More have been meeting and preparing for peer reviews and the development of subject leadership.

Secondary heads from Cardinal Newman, St Michaels, St Bernard's and St Joseph's have met to discuss ways of developing practice and sharing expertise including the use of technology. Primary leads across Luton and Slough are developing curriculum planning in Science, History and Geography. These are the first steps of the start of a structure of long term development across schools.

The next stage of the process is to grow the existing MATs to ensure no school in the Diocese is isolated and all are part of the work to collaborate closely together. In December a meeting was held with the governors of all VA schools in Bucks to provide information on how the MAT will work in practice and answer any questions. A similar meeting is planned in Slough for early this term, details will be sent out. In his letter to all schools in February 2019 Bishop Peter noted that;

“we are at our best when we work together, for each other, in service of the common good, embracing both solidarity and subsidiarity. This is essential in all decisions undertaken by our Catholic schools.”

If you are a school leader or governor in a voluntary aided school in the Diocese, what steps have you taken since September towards making this a reality? If you need any advice or information please ask your head teacher, Chair of Governors or contact me [curtis@nores.org.uk](mailto:curtis@nores.org.uk)

### Recruitment to reserved posts

Just a reminder that the Diocese must be notified of any vacancies for reserved posts. These are Head teacher, Deputy Head teacher, Head of RE/RE Lead or Chaplain. A member of NORES will support you with the recruitment process from advert to appointment. All of these posts must be filled by “practising Catholics”. The definition used by the Diocese is taken from the document *Christ at the Centre*: pages 26 – 34. Supporting information for Governors can be found on the NORES website including examples of questions and interview day activities together with the full document *Christ at the Centre*. If you have any questions please contact Debbie Main, School Officer [main@nores.org.uk](mailto:main@nores.org.uk) or myself [curtis@nores.org.uk](mailto:curtis@nores.org.uk)

### SOME PRAYER THOUGHTS ....

As we write we await the election of a new bishop [who may be announced before you read this!] Pray for him and with thanksgiving for bishop Peter's ministry.

We begin a new calendar year, so let's pray for God's blessing on the next twelve months. A new parliament was elected just before we finished the Advent term. It will have much to do in the coming months, so pray for God's wisdom for all MPs.

#### PRAYING for A NEW BISHOP

Lord God,  
you are our eternal shepherd and guide.  
In your mercy grant your Church of Northampton a shepherd who will walk in your ways  
and whose watchful care will bring us your blessing.

#### PRAYING for 2020

O God, who are without beginning or end, the source of all creation, grant us to live this new year, whose beginning we dedicate to you, that we may abound in good things and be resplendent with works of holiness.  
[*The Roman Missal – at the beginning of the Civil Year*].

#### PRAYING for THE NEW PARLIAMENT

Almighty, ever living God, in whose hand lies every human heart and the rights of peoples, look with favour we pray, on those who govern with authority over us, that throughout the whole world the prosperity of peoples, the assurance of peace, and freedom of religion, may through your gift be made secure.  
[*from The Roman Missal – for those in public office*].



With the **General Election** impending, the **older** Happy new year and **thank you** for all the support you have given CAFOD in 2019. Without your prayers and practical help, we could not do the work that we do. As you are aware, **2020 is the Year of the Word**.

During this year we are called to explore and celebrate the Word of God through the Scriptures, share the Word with others and respond to the "God who speaks" in the way that we live. At CAFOD everything we do is based on reflecting God's way in our relationship with the poor and vulnerable and we have some splendid **resources online** which can help you focus on this year's celebration with your classes.

Although we are just at the start of a new term it's amazing how the landmark dates with creep up on us! **Lent begins on Wednesday 26 February and CAFOD's Fast Day follows fairly swiftly on Friday 6 March.**

Your **school volunteer** will be only too pleased to visit and help with any preparations or projects you may have for these events. Your volunteer can provide a "kick off" assembly for the season of Lent or a workshop based on our current themes. Do be in touch if you are interested as your volunteer will be booking up soon for these important dates.

*"The Kingdom of God that Jesus has brought is a realm of compassion and justice which, although it is imperfect now, will be perfected by God at the end of time. Still, every single gesture of compassion and every small contribution to a just society that we can make, may not only improve people's current lives, but also shape our future in a special way, since these gestures are being written in the book of eternity."* (Fr Augusto Zampini, an Argentinian priest, observing for CAFOD in Zimbabwe)  
For more information on any of the above look at our website or get in touch : 01494 863 777 northampton@cafod.org.uk

## MISSIO NEWS

*Fr Wayne Coughlin*

Sheila Isaac (Education Co-Ordinator for Missio) and Fr Wayne write:

"What a special year we have had! Thank you very much for all your hard work promoting Mission Together (Missio) in your school and especially for everything you did to support the **Extraordinary Month of Mission** in October (EMM). Pope Francis emphasised that the EMM was never intended to be an end in itself; rather, it was a means to revitalise and reawaken our ongoing commitment to evangelisation. We are incredibly proud to say that in England and Wales, the involvement of schools across the dioceses by far exceeded our expectations. It was our children and young people who led the way by embracing the call to bring God's love to the whole world. As Missio staff and volunteers visited schools we were truly humbled by what we saw and heard pupils are doing, both locally



and further afield, in their outreach and prayer life. We are very grateful to you for posting your stories and photographs on social media!

We were also very interested to hear from many of you how the story of Sandra and the Iraqi refugees had struck a chord with pupils, partly because some of them had welcomed refugees into their schools. This helped to achieve a wonderful response of prayers and donations and we are very pleased to announce that in the academic year 2018–2019 primary and secondary schools raised just over £114,600 for Mission Together (Missio). When donations from parishes and individuals are included, this figure rises to £124,985. We do want to make special mention of how grateful we remain for the **£12,000 that was raised as a result of the 'Year of Missio'** observed in the Diocese of Northampton. What an incredible achievement. Well done!

As ever, we are very grateful to you for the time, commitment and energy you put in to maintaining links with Mission Together (Missio). Please be assured that our prayers and thoughts go with you as you bring God's love to children both here and overseas. **Mass will be offered for your school** in thanksgiving for all that you do to encourage a missionary spirit among our young people.

Finally, do have a look at the primary and secondary school resources on our website; many of these have been updated to accompany the "**The God who Speaks: The Year of the Word**".

On behalf of all of us at Missio, I hope you are having a joyful and peaceful Christmastide and a blessed 2020."

## PRAYING WITH OUR SCHOOLS

**The Pope's PRAYER INTENTIONS for January** – *ask the school to pray with the Pope for the Promotion of World Peace*  
We pray that Christians, followers of other religions, and all people of goodwill may promote peace and justice in the world.

### FEAST DAYS

28 January St Thomas Aquinas Primary, Milton Keynes

## The ANGELUS

The angel of the Lord declared to Mary  
- And she conceived by the Holy Spirit. *Hail Mary ...*

Behold the handmaid of the Lord  
- Be it done to me according to your word *Hail Mary ...*

And the Word was made flesh  
- And dwelt amongst us *Hail Mary ...*

Pray for us Holy Mother of God  
- That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ

Let us pray  
Pour forth we beseech thee, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by message of the angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. AMEN