



NORES NEWS

March 2021 – The month dedicated to St Joseph

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

SUPPORTING CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND FORMATION

33 Westbourne Road, Luton, LU4 8JD Telephone: 01582 723312

From the Episcopal Vicar

Mgr Kevin

As I write we are waiting news of how schools may reopen in these unusual times. Before anything **we want to thank everyone in and around our schools** for all that you have done and continue to do for Catholic education during the pandemic. The support given to our young people and their families, at home and in school has been tremendous in so many ways. We will look back on 2020 and 2021 as evidence of the great strength our schools and their mission of service in the Church. There are signs of emerging from the CoVid crisis with improved results and the vaccination programme, but the future will not be easy, and many effects such as Long CoVid will persist. That is why I hope we will **look to a new future** rather than speak of returning to normal. Everyone has been affected by the pandemic in major ways. There has been so much fear and uncertainty and confusion. We have all been changed. All of that should make us appreciate more deeply one another as individuals created by God with our unique identities and potential. Lent is a time for us to realise the challenge to live up to these words of Paul: ***“We are God’s work of art, created in Christ Jesus, to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it.”*** [Ephesians 2:10]

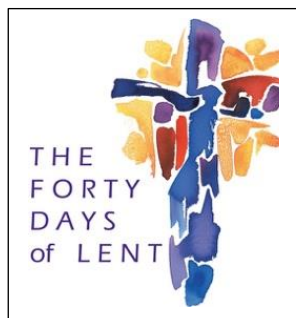
Rather than concentrating on what to give up, let us use this Lent to see what we need to take up, what we need to undertake so that we can indeed become the people we should be and so serve the mission of the Church more fully.

March 19 is the Solemnity of SAINT JOSEPH, patron of the universal Church, a special day this year as Pope Francis has dedicated a Year to him as time to pray for the whole Church. The same day marks **eight years since Pope Francis was installed as Bishop of Rome**, our heads

being there for their conference by great chance! As we pray for his ministry to strengthen his brothers [as Jesus told Peter] we also pray for **Bishop David on the first anniversary of his ordination as our bishop**.

As we move into what I hope can be new and exciting times let us commit ourselves to work with the vision of Pope Francis and Bishop David for the mission of the Church within which our schools have a very significant and valuable rôle.

With every prayer and blessing, Fr Kevin



VATICAN and COMMUNICATIONS

I wonder how many of us know much about or better still use the vast Vatican Communications system. Vatican Radio is 90 years old this year – and the TV station and website are fantastic resource as well as a daily paper in Italian, with a weekly English edition. Read on and check them all out! What languages are spoken in your school that has Vatican broadcasts? There’s even a Latin service!

Pope Pius XI inaugurated Vatican Radio on 12 February 1931 with the clear mission of carrying the voice of the Pope and the hope of the Gospel to every corner of the globe. It was designed and set up by Guglielmo Marconi, who invented the first commercially-successful radio transmission system, and was entrusted to the Jesuit Order until 2017. Now, 90 years later, Vatican Radio has expanded its operations to include radio transmissions in 41 languages. To mark this major milestone, the broadcaster is also launching a reworked website and a web radio which will broadcast programming 24 hours a day. The staff of Vatican Radio hail from 69 nations. It is part of the Dicastery for Communication which also celebrates 25 years of the website *Vatican.va*, and 160 years of the daily paper, *Osservatore Romano*, as we look toward to building the future together.” The Web Radio of Vatican Radio began on 12 February in English, Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, and Armenian, at : www.vaticannews.va/en/epg.html.

Throughout the year, about 30 live program schedules will be created. Vatican Radio currently transmits in 41 languages: Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Belarusian, Brazilian, Bulgarian, Czech, Chinese, Croatian, English, Esperanto, Ewondo, French, German, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Kikongo, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Latin, Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Slovak, Slovenian, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tamil, Tigrinya, Tshiluba, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese.

RECRUITMENT TIME begins in earnest soon – so just a gentle reminder about protocols:

- for senior leadership posts please contact Collette, Fr Kevin, as part of the process asap
- for all RE posts, especially lead posts contact Anne Marie or Paul when planning recruitment
- advertisements should be headed Diocese of Northampton, followed the name of your LA or MAT, and then the school.

All of this helps applicants see immediately how our schools work within the diocesan framework.

PRIMARY RE

Anne Marie McIntosh

Prayer Bags

I am delighted to have sent out a virtual prayer bag for family prayer for the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes and Ash Wednesday. The next virtual prayer bag will be for Holy Week and the Easter Triduum. Many thanks to Bishop David who has included a message in each one.

Come and See Inset

Fr Kevin and I continue to run **Come and See** sessions this term as follows:

25 February on Easter, 22 April on Pentecost and 17 June on Universal Church. These will run from 4-5pm on Zoom – open from 3.45pm. Booking for these is through our administrator Ann admin@nores.org.uk

RE Subject Leaders Day

Our next session will take place on **Thursday 11 March from 1.30 – 2.45pm**. We will then have a joint session with the Secondary Heads of RE and Chaplains in the Pentecost Term on **Friday 7 June, 2019**. As the eternal optimist this maybe even face to face!

Lent

Having marked the first Sunday of Lent, when Jesus is driven into the wilderness, he is tested right at the beginning of his ministry. I think this offers us another reflection: – that life is testing. It is not always easy. We have experience of this in so many ways with the pandemic. But whatever wilderness you are in right now you are not alone. God is with you and he will send his angels to care for you. When Jesus leaves the wilderness, he goes into Galilee to preach the good news that God's love for us will never diminish or change. No matter what we do or say. God's love for us is constant and never ending. What happens is that we fall out with God and that's why we need to repent. God invites us 'Come back to me with all your heart.' It's up to us. We have a choice in these testing times. Will I come back to God, will I return God's love and will I proclaim the good news to everyone I meet? This Lent is a great opportunity to turn back to God, to restore our relationship with God and others.

And finally

Please let me know if there is anything I can do to support you.

SECONDARY RE AND THEOLOGY

Paul McHugh

Dear Colleagues,

Please note the dates of extra **Teaching Tricky Theology** [TTT] sessions. These are in addition to the termly dates in the NORES diary and designed to supplement the work of our schools in these trying days. In brief, they will be publicized with approximately one month's notice. The next TTT session will be on Thursday March 18, 3:30-5pm, and it will be entitled **Three Approaches to Teaching about the Magisterium**.

On the 23 March 2020, you may remember, the extraordinary step was taken to close our churches and places of worship to communal worship, as one of the measures of the first lockdown. An extraordinary step, but not without precedent. For on the 23 March 1208, Pope Innocent III laid England and Wales under interdict. The churches were closed, the dead unburied, the ministry of the liturgy and the sacraments all but withdrawn. Only the baptism of infants and confession of the dying were permitted for the six long years the papal interdict lay on the Kingdom. Then, the issue was with a stubborn king, King John, who refused to accept the Pope's candidate, Stephen Langton, as Archbishop of Canterbury. Of such times,

a contemporary wrote: 'O what a horrible and miserable spectacle it was to see in every city the sealed doors of the churches... the withholding of the sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord'. In our day, the issue is with a stubborn, dangerous and highly infectious pathogen which fights our efforts to bring it under control. And though for a time it closed our churches and places of worship, perhaps it opened a yearning for the transcendent in some who had not previously dwelt on this. As we hopefully look towards the end of the third lockdown, we give thanks at least for the allowance of public worship as a deep consolation in times which have felt penitential, like a long Lent. The word for Lent in different languages gives a sense of some its emphases. In Mediterranean countries, it is often a derivative of *Quadragesima*, reminding us of the Forty Days of Lent and its deep biblical resonance, especially with Our Lord's time in the desert. In other nations, Lent is sometimes referred to as the *Great Fast*, with its obvious association with bodily penance. Our own word *Lent* is derived from Old English *lencten*, to evoke the lengthening days, that is, Springtime. Perhaps we can bring all these associations together in our living out of this Lent. That is, to let *Quadragesima* take us to Jesus in his forty days in the desert; to let the *Great Fast* help us set aside the bodily and earthly to make room for the spiritual; to let *Springtime* remind us that Lent is a time of new growth. As any gardener knows, pruning helps a plant survive, grow and bear fruit. So our liturgical Lent set amidst the long penitential experience of this Pandemic remains an invitation to growth, to bear fruit that lasts (cf. Jn 15:16). In a recent interview, Pope Francis called on us not to waste these difficult days of the crisis, and instead remember those 'familiar gestures of attention ... that make life meaningful and create communion and communication amongst us'.

'We must understand that in small things lies our treasure.

These gestures of tenderness, affection, compassion, are minimal and tend to be lost in the anonymity of everyday life'

Pope Francis

From the DIRECTOR of SCHOOL

DEVELOPMENT

Collette Curtis

Fraternity and Mission

Bishop David has a clear vision for the diocese and that is of **fraternity**, working together in solidarity and **Mission**. Bishop David see our schools as central to this mission of the Church and our schools working in close collaboration within the two Regional MATs, strengthening our mission by working in communion fits closely with this. The homily given by Bishop David at a mass to celebrate the first anniversary of the opening of the 2 Trusts can be seen on youtube using the link <https://youtu.be/GJcniPkpF4>

We are very aware and grateful for the work the schools are doing to support the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in their school and local communities. This has been formally recognised in St Paul's Milton Keynes with a mention in parliament as a result of the number of positive comments from constituents to the local MP. Thomas Becket School, Northampton were awarded a Rose award in Northamptonshire by the Lieutenant General, the Queens representative, for work done for the community in the first lock down.

Events

We warmly welcome all **deputy heads and senior leaders** to a virtual training session On **March 4th 9- 12:30**. The session will focus on Mission and your personal and professional response to your vocation as a leader in a Catholic school. This will

replace the Deputy Head conference, originally planned to take place at Hothorpe Hall on the 3 and 4 March. There will be no charge for this event. To register and gain access information to the session please contact Debbie Main, main@nores.org.uk

Our Headteachers' Conference was booked in Hothorpe for April 20 and 21. It will not be possible or practical for this conference to take place and therefore we will offer an opportunity for spiritual reflection on Wednesday 21 3:30 – 4:45pm via ZOOM. I will confirm the details as soon as possible. On **March 19:30. 12** a session on Finance and Property will take place for the head teachers, Chairs of Governors and business managers of voluntary aided schools. The session will provide guidance on revised procedures in applying for School Condition Allowance funding and issues relating to occupancy and condition surveys. We will have input from 2 departments of the DfE, one for financial reporting and one for Good Estate Management. These sessions are available to all VA schools and representatives from the 2 Trusts and provide guidance on the free online tools available to schools and Trusts to support estate management, compliance and financial benchmarking. To register and gain access information to the session please contact Debbie Main, main@nores.org.uk

The Education (Coronavirus, Remote Education Information) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 (S.I 2021/122)

New regulations were published on 5 February 2021 which require schools with state-funded pupils to publish information on how they are complying with the requirement to provide remote education imposed by the Coronavirus Act 2020. The regulations come into force on the 12 February 2021 and will expire on the 31 August 2021. Within the regulations governing bodies of maintained schools must arrange for the information to be published on the school website.

CES Model Policies Update – Sickness and Absence Policy

In order to protect the Catholic identity of our schools and the rights we have within equalities legislation to recruit Catholic staff and leaders to our schools, all voluntary aided schools and schools within the 2 Trusts are required to use CES employment policies. The CES regularly reviews and updates the model employment policies and contracts. A review process started some time ago and the Sickness Absence Policy is the final document to be updated. The revised documents were provided to national trade union representatives for consultation and feedback was provided on behalf of our schools by Our Lady Immaculate Trust. When this process is complete the final policy will join all other amended employment policies on the CES website.

Global Catholic Education Report 2021

The *International Office of Catholic Education* (OIEC), the Presidency of which is currently held by England and Wales, has this year produced its **Global Catholic Education Report** in partnership with the *International Federation of Catholic Universities* (FIUC). This year the theme is *Education Pluralism, Learning Poverty, and the Right to Education*. It can be found on the new website www.globalcatholiceducation.com which has been launched by OIEC, FIUC, the *World Union of Catholic Teachers* (WUCT) and the *World Organisation of Alumni of Catholic Education* (OMAEC).

GOVERNANCE APPOINTMENTS

At the recent Governors' Court the following appointments were made in the name of Bishop David :

Foundation Governors:

St Monica's Catholic Primary School, MK : Joanne Nolan
St Louis Catholic Primary School, Aylesbury: Michael Bennett
Cardinal Newman Catholic School, Luton: Noelette Hanley

ADULT FAITH FORMATION, CATECHESIS & CHAPLAINCY *Alex Heath*

Catechist Training & Support

On Saturday 13 March 2021, 7.45-9.15pm on Zoom we will be exploring the **Growing Up Catholic family-based Catechesis resources** (focussing on the First Reconciliation & the First Holy Communion Programmes) with Paul Canavese of the Pastoral Center in the USA (please see their websites PastoralCenter.com and GrowingUpCatholic.com).

To book a place please register with Ann Collon at the NORES Office at admin@nores.org.uk. Cost: Individual catechists £5, parish bookings are £20 for any number of parish catechists (NB If catechists are participating as part of a parish group they must send in their name and e mail address in order to gain entry to the meeting for security reasons.)

The **Catechist Brochure** has details of all our catechetical gatherings and courses, please get in touch to find out more.

To view details online about training and support opportunities please see the Catechist Brochure at www.nores.org.uk

(Catechesis). Among these courses are a gentle Retreat for Catechists, a session exploring the YouCat for Kids book and also the 4 levels of the Diocesan Certificate in Catechesis- the Bishop's Certificate in Catechesis.

Courses are offered flexibly and on a modular basis. One group from Bletchley has been meeting once a week for an hour on Wednesday evenings and has made their way through all the courses up to and including the Bishop's Certificate in Catechesis Level 1. Another group of catechists from Kettering will also be starting this month. To enquire about any of the courses and to book please contact me and I would be happy to explain the various options. As well as being for those involved in sacramental catechesis they are good opportunities for those involved in any kind of faith formation e.g. with adults as many of the same core principles apply.

We are also providing regular catechetical news with a **Catechist Newsletter**. If you would like to receive this by e mail please send your request to Ann Collon at the NORES office (see below for e mail address).

Please also see www.godwhospeaks.uk for latest news and resources for the God Who Speaks campaign which continues.

School Chaplaincy Training Days

Our next online School Chaplaincy meeting takes place on Friday 19 March 2021 (10.30-11.45am) via Zoom featuring the Mark 10 Mission who will address our Primary Chaplaincy Breakout Room and Will Desmond who will address our secondary breakout room. We hope to be able to have an in person meeting for School Chaplains/ Chaplaincy Co-Ordinators in the Pentecost Term but will have to see how the situation with Covid and lockdown develops. In the meantime we will continue to have our half-termly online gatherings and will keep you posted about developments and possibilities when we know more about what is possible in the summer.

CATHOLIC CERTIFICATE IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES *Steve O'Brien*

CCRS ONLINE in the diocese will begin in March 2021, starting with the Old Testament Module taught by Anne-Marie McIntosh on Saturday 13 & 20 March. If you would like information on the course, including dates, costs and an application form email Ann Collon at admin@nores.org.uk and return completed application forms to her. If you have any questions please contact Steve O'Brien on obrien@nores.org.uk or Ann Collon.

Further information will be sent to schools and parishes.

We continue to live in a world where all our lives are limited and closed in. This is no different for so many of our brothers and sisters around the world. CAFOD's Lent campaign, focusing on providing clean water, aims to support many by removing the vital, but life-limiting chore of seeking out clean water. We have a wide variety of resources which you can use to help your classes learn about this and to support the campaign

Did you get a chance to join in our [Big Assembly?](#) Many schools have used it in their classrooms which has been a big hit. Our friends and partners in Ethiopia have made an immensely moving film so do have a look in the relevant [resource page](#) for your age group. Something which might be useful for [home learning](#), as well as tutor time at school, is the **Interactive Lent Calendar** which comes in a version for both primary and secondary age groups. Finally, we are all being urged to take our daily exercise so why not join the [water droplet trail](#) either individually or as a team or a class. All resources can be found : <https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Education-resources>

And don't forget that your lovely, local school volunteer is still able to do a virtual session for your school. Those who have had this have been delighted with it so do take advantage of this offer. *"We pray for all our sisters and brothers around the world: particularly those without access to the water they need in order to flourish. Through our Lenten prayer, fasting and almsgiving, may God renew our resolve to work with them to end poverty and injustice. Amen"*

For more information: northampton@cafod.org.uk

MISSIO NEWS – Fr Wayne



Over recent months this article has been written by **Sheila Isaac** from the children's arm of Missio: Mission Together. At the end of January we said goodbye to Sheila as she took up her new role as Mission Director for the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood. Please pray for Sheila and also for the team at **Mission Together HQ** at this time of transition.

So very often we place our hopes onto a particular event, celebration or even a meal to raise our spirits. I have over several years of priestly ministry preached about the need for us to do otherwise. However - given the **unprecedented events of the last year** - as we approached Christmas I found myself doing the same: I wanted a perfect Christmas Day lunch! With a fellow Priest (who is part of my support bubble and with whom I was to spend the day) we pondered over what starter, meat, vegetables, sauces, cheeses and dessert we would have. Not feeling safe in visiting any of the supermarkets or smaller shops we scoured the internet for food deliveries. Finally, as Christmas Day was drawing near a plan of action was formulated over where, when and what we would eat. However, all the food remained in the fridge as after the final Mass on Christmas Day I had to attend to a family emergency in South Wales.

Now whilst I wouldn't have wanted it, the above reminded me that putting my hopes on a meal to raise my spirits was always going lead to disappointment. I should have known that Christmastide is not about what, where and when we eat. No, it is about acknowledging that **God came amongst us as a vulnerable child** in order to reveal His love for us.

But why this mention of Christmas? Well the whole purpose of the Incarnation (of God dwelling in human form amongst us) is so that He might die for us. As we continue our Lenten journey

toward the joy of Easter it is worth looking back to how we observed the season of Christmas and prayerfully ponder how we might build upon that as we prepare to celebrate Jesus' victory over sin and death. **Mission Together is here to help our Catholic schools** do that!

Do remember that you can **download our free resources** from the Mission Together website. All of our materials include Sacred Scripture, prayer and a call to action; this makes them an ideal way to explore the Catholic Faith and engage children. The resources also cover areas of the **RE Curriculum Directory on 'Mission' and 'Vocation to Mission'** (2.5.1 & 2.5.2). There are also **home-schooling resources** which includes downloadable activity sheets that consist of simple tasks, quizzes, prayers and adapted Sacred Scriptures texts. Referencing curriculum topics, they can help children learn, reflect and stand in solidarity with young people around the world living in hardship. The staff at Mission Together HQ keep creating new resources so it is worth regularly checking the website for updates; you can also receive news of such updates if you **follow Mission Together on Twitter**.

PRAYING WITH OUR SCHOOLS

PRAYER INTENTIONS – ask the school to pray with the Pope.
Let us pray that we may experience the sacrament of reconciliation with renewed depth, to taste the infinite mercy of God.

FEAST DAYS

1 March - **St David**, pray for Wales

17 March - **St Patrick**, pray for Ireland

19 March – **St Joseph, patron of the universal Church.**

** pray for Pope Francis on the eighth anniversary of his installation as Bishop of Rome*

** pray for Bishop David, on the first anniversary of his ordination as our bishop*

14 March – **Mothering Sunday**

25 March – **The Annunciation of the Lord**

REAL EASTER EGGS - no longer available in supermarkets

Orders :www.meaningfulchocolate.co.uk

For questions about delivery or placing orders email info@meaningfulchocolate.co.uk. Tel: 01948 831 043

The Meaningful Chocolate Company Ltd.

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SPREADING OUR NEWS -Please send all news items to communications@northamptondiocese.com

PLEASE LET US KNOW WHEN PEOPLE PRAISE YOU! *It was good to come across this mention of one of our schools in Parliament. It's important to showcase Catholic education.*

Leader of the House of Commons @CommonsLeader

A Commons Mentions from @Ben Everitt [MP]

for Ousedale School and St Paul's Catholic School in Milton Keynes which have received glowing praise for their recent hard work.



KEEP UP WITH THE DIOCESAN NEWS

You can also sign up to our fortnightly e-newsletter using this link: www.northamptondiocese.org/signup This will be the best way to keep up to date with all the latest news from across our diocese and/or follow the diocese at Instagram: [diocesefnorthampton](https://www.instagram.com/diocesefnorthampton)

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