



NORES NEWS

MARCH 2016 – The month dedicated to St Joseph

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

SUPPORTING CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND FORMATION

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(Luke 6:36)

From the Episcopal Vicar

Mgr Kevin

POPE FRANCIS during his visit to Mexico spoke to young people and said: *"Keep being creative, keep it up, looking for the beauty, the good things, the things that last forever and never be trampled by anyone. Is that clear?"*

In this Jubilee Year of Mercy we are celebrating how God restores all things through his pardon and forgiveness. That sets us free, if we seek his mercy, to be creative, to live a new life in Christ. One of the great possibilities of a Catholic school is to enable all our young people and staff to see the possibilities of new life. This clearly asks us to ensure that we are very aware of the Easter dimension of our lives. We cannot have the Cross without the Risen Christ, and then the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Pope Francis has asked for 24 Hours for the Lord, (confessions) on 4/5 March. The opportunity to celebrate God's forgiveness in the sacrament of Confession/Reconciliation sets us free from sin so as to begin a new life. It would be a real celebration of God's mercy if we then definitely decided on something life giving to flow from this. We go through the Holy Door of Mercy as a sign that we are moving into something new and alive. *Thanks to all who have sent in pictures of your Holy Door, and we look forward to the rest!*



SCHOOLS' MASS – for health and safety reasons a limit has been placed on the numbers coming to the Schools Mass in Dunstable. We will consult about this but hopefully can arrange a fixed number to come from each partnership. If this can be thought of in the Heads' meetings that will be very helpful.

RESERVED POSTS - Just a reminder that the diocese has established that reserved posts in all Catholic schools in the diocese include the following : Head Teacher / Principal or equivalent, (or Executive) Deputy Head Teacher, Head of RE/RE Coordinator (or whoever is designated responsible for RE), Lay Chaplain/Chaplaincy Coordinator or equivalent. (Other dioceses insist the same for Assistant Heads). On any resignation or creation of a post please inform NORES immediately. Guidance for the appointment process is on our website. A member of NORES will assist in the planning of the recruitment process. Advertisement, job description and person specification must be consulted with NORES prior to publication. A member of NORES needs to be present for shortlisting (or have sight of the papers) and must be present at all interviews.

EASTER HOLIDAYS 2017 – LGA suggest 3-18 April. This means having two weeks off before Easter and coming back to school on Easter Tuesday. This again is for a partnership to discuss as to the value of being in school during Holy Week. Coming back soon after Easter allows the more direct celebration of the Resurrection.

TERM TITLES – many years ago we agreed to name our terms respecting the liturgical year – ie Advent, Lent and Pentecost terms. It is to a degree "counter cultural" but also more accurate. *(How many people call Holy Saturday by the name Easter Saturday!)* I hope we can all return to this agreed nomenclature.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TRAINING – it was great to see over 50 people from across our 5 dioceses in the Westminster Province for the recent training day. We hope to build on this in the coming months, to encourage you all to develop those skills that will enable you to carry forward Catholic education into the future!

ADULT FAITH FORMATION, CATECHESIS and CHAPLAINCY

Alex Heath

Events for Catechists in the Year of Mercy

To coincide with the Jubilee celebrations for Catechists in Rome we are hoping to run an event for catechists on the afternoon of **SUNDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2016** in the south of the Diocese. Please save the date and we will send more details soon.

There is also a **Retreat for Catechists** taking place at 10am – 3pm, Saturday 9 April 2016 at the Monastery of Christ Our Saviour, Turvey Mews, Turvey, Beds MK43 8DH Cost: £12 per person (places are limited to 35).

Please bring a packed lunch. Tea and Coffee will be provided. Please book via the NORES Office.

The Year of Mercy is also an opportunity for us to explore and revisit the place and value of the Sacrament of Reconciliation in our lives. The course **Anchoring you in Happiness** is a 6 session course exploring the theme of mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession). This is already underway in Northampton and Luton. If you would like to explore having this course for your parish please contact me at the NORES office.

In addition **Catechists - Messengers of Mercy** is an evening, morning or afternoon of reflection which is available for the catechists of your parish or pastoral area. Please contact the NORES Office to book a session.

Resource: Scripture Course from CaFE

The team at CaFE have released a new programme called The Big Picture. Please do check out this resource via the website www.thebigpicturecourse.org

This includes an inspiring 12 session step by step journey through salvation history and an easy to use book and DVD as well as daily Bible study reflections. There are also weekly small group or one to one sharing sessions. Full information and a trailer can be seen on their website.

Celebrating the Year of Mercy in Schools- School Chaplaincy Training Day

On Thursday 11 February 2016 Fr Stephen Wang led an excellent Chaplaincy Training Day exploring the Year of Mercy. As well as exploring Pope Francis's aims for the Year of Mercy we explored some ideas for how we can make the most of this opportunity in our schools. A reminder that on our next Chaplaincy day we will welcome RISE Theatre, on Friday 1 July. We look forward to seeing Chaplaincy Co-ordinators and members of Chaplaincy teams for what promises to be another excellent session.

Pentecost Novena 2016

As Easter is quite early this year we have compiled the resources for the Pentecost Novena in good time and they are available via the Diocesan website (select Faith and the Evangelisation). This year we are inviting

parishes and prayer groups to link up in prayer with twin parishes or contacts through family and friends in other parts of the world to celebrate the global family of the Church. More details to follow.

CAFOD NEWS

Deborah Purfield



Fast Day

We have helpful prayer resources (eg stations of the cross, daily Lenten reflections and a short one - perfect for Lent frugal lunches!). See website.

We are still asking children and young people to 'Make a Splash' to help change the lives of some of the poorest people in the world. It is not too late to invite our schools' team into your schools to give assemblies and workshops. Please get in touch.

Year of Mercy

We have Q&As exploring why the Jubilee Year of Mercy is so important. Download prayers and visit our new blog on "mercy and care for creation".

Climate change

The Climate Coalition's all-star film "I wish for you", starring Jeremy Irons, is a powerful and poignant reminder of why we should go on loving and go on planting. See CAFOD website for film.

Please send us pictures and stories of ANY events you do for CAFOD we would love to put it on our blog!

(see website for further details or get in touch – dpurfield@cafod.org.uk, 01844 274 723)

MAKING OURSELVES KNOWN!

CHECK OUT page 2 of THE VINE this month – a good introduction as to how to get your news into the diocesan newspaper.

Please make sure you are constantly letting the world know the good things about your schools and parish.

Here are some of the links you need to use –

- editorial@catholicherald.co.uk
- joseph.kelly@thecatholicuniverse.com
- kevin.flaherty@thecatholicuniverse.com
- thetablet@thetablet.co.uk
- vine01@btopenworld.com
- your local paper – have you the details?

NEW MARRIAGE AND CONFIRMATION RITES

These come into effect from Easter Vigil 2016.

There are changes in the translation and also differences in the Rites themselves.

See the diocesan website for more details.

NEWS FROM THE PRIMARY

CORNER

Anne-Marie McIntosh

Welcome back to school. Hope you all had a relaxing half term break!

RE Subject Leaders' Day

We had a fantastic day together, at the beginning of February, with thirty four out of thirty eight schools being represented.

We gathered in prayer, got to know someone we didn't know before,

looked at the distinct roles of co-ordinator and subject leader and how we care called to the latter. We examined the monitoring role of the subject leader and started to develop a whole diocesan approach to monitoring.

We looked at resources, shared a lovely lunch, and had an update on Attainment Targets. Thank you for your kind words and emails to say how much you enjoyed the day but also how you felt invigorated and enthused to move forward together. We are truly 'pilgrims on the journey and travellers on the road.

We are here to help each other, walk the mile and bear the load.'

School Visits

These continue to go well. If you were on the list of suggested dates and haven't already done so, please email me to confirm the date and time. Thank you.

Year of Mercy

It's great to see what schools are doing for the Year of Mercy. The art work around the schools I have visited has been amazing. Thank you for sending in your photographs of you Doors of Mercy. It's not too late if you would like to have some in-service on the Year of Mercy. Just email me some suggested dates.

Heads' Conference

I am really looking forward to the Head Teacher Conference in Poole.

It will be a great opportunity to get together and share experiences.

There is something very special about joining together, from various schools across the Diocese, as one.

I am joining the gathering as Chaplain this year. If anyone plays an instrument please would you let me know? It would be great to have some music for the liturgies. Thank you.

With every good wish for the new half term. Don't forget if there is anything I can do to support you please don't hesitate to get in touch.

SCHOOLS IMPROVEMENT NET

schoolsimprove@gmail.com is a daily schools news media roundup. It is worthwhile subscribing to this free service

EDUCATION WEEK 2016 – October 10-16

SECONDARY RE AND INSPECTION

Stephen O'Brien

RE GCSE Progress At the time of writing this newsletter, we still do not have confirmation that the new specifications for GCSE from AQA, Edexcel or Eduqas have been finally approved. AQA seem to be close to approval, though the other boards seem further away at this time. AQA have produced a draft framework for teaching the course from start to finish and a text book is soon to arrive. No doubt, other boards will follow in a similar vein.

RE Subject Leaders' Meeting All colleagues are invited to our meeting on 11 March 2016. There is much to discuss on the new GCSE specifications and some planning to do as a group in preparation for teaching the new content, especially Judaism, for September 2016. I hope that we will be able to plan some training days for RE staff for later in the spring or early summer? Further meeting details will follow shortly.

Inspection Team meeting. Inspection colleagues are invited to our termly team meeting on 15 March. Lunch and refreshment will be provided as usual. After a number of interesting inspections and IMVs over recent months we will have opportunities to discuss progress and for members to contribute to the development of a new S48 framework, now under national consideration. Further details will follow soon.

PRAYER INTENTIONS – ask the school to pray with the Pope's intentions for the month :

for Families in Difficulty - That families in need may receive the necessary support and that children may grow up in healthy and peaceful environments.

for Persecuted Christians - That those Christians who, on account of their faith, are discriminated against or are being persecuted, may remain strong and faithful to the Gospel, thanks to the Church's incessant prayer

FEAST DAYS - pray for the schools who celebrate their feast days this month.

17 March St Patrick's Primary, Corby

19 March St Joseph's Infant, Aylesbury;
St Joseph's Lower, Bedford; St Joseph's Primary Luton;
St Joseph's Primary, Chalfont St Peter;
St Joseph's High, Slough.

HEADS' CONFERENCE –

This year's conference at Poole will be on **10 and 11 March 2016**, beginning on Thursday morning. It may be possible to arrive on Wednesday evening. The theme is "Behold a treasure". David Wells will speak on the treasure that is the educator, and Fr Adrian Porter SJ on the treasure that is the student.

RE CONFERENCE - for Primary and Secondary – 17 June 2016 led by David Wells, Plymouth Diocese

NORES LECTURE 2016 – Friday 8 July 7.30pm
Canon John Udris – The Mercy of God!

Academic Masses for 2015/16 have been celebrated in most of our partnerships and are great occasions for staff, governors, clergy and all connected to our schools to come together
Buckinghamshire – 7pm 22 June 2016 at St Edward's Aylesbury, their partnership patronal feast.

CES Documents on governance

should now be on the CES these model documents on to the governance page of our website. There is one for schools, one for academies. The CES will update schools about this through their schools newsletter. A very useful tool and we recommend it to you as it stands until we can consider it further.

RSE in Catholic Schools. As you know we have been waiting for approval from the Bishops for a proposed scheme of work and resources. They will be available in draft form on the CES website within the next few weeks, and final text will be approved when the Bishops' Teaching Document on Human Sexuality is complete – hopefully within the next year.

CES CENSUS is available in visual form in their website now and with PowerPoint. It is a very good tool to celebrate our schools and respond to some of the challenges made against church education,

COLLEGE OF TEACHING – this is an exciting new development for the profession to establish a body that parallels similar colleges in other areas, eg Royal College of Nursing etc. It is imperative that we are well represented as a sector there, so please do think about it, and encourage staff to consider joining.

CELEBRATING YOUNG PEOPLE AWARDS - all the details are on page 2 of THE VINE. It would be great to have candidates from our diocese! Over to you!

VACANCIES IN OUR SCHOOLS - In response to requests we are making a page available on the NORES website for vacancies in our schools. Staffing is a real challenge in all schools, and we hope this may be a small way of helping. We welcome comments on how it can be of service to you.

A THOUGHT FOR THE FUTURE

Just as we had to make sure the world knew Christmas was about the birth of Christ, so too the world needs to hear the Easter story. One way is through this website www.realeasteregg.co.uk - which sells Easter eggs with the story of Jesus' Resurrection included. What other things can we do to make sure Easter is what it should be?

SCHOOLS' COMMISSION

Debbie Main

Thank you for my warm welcome to the Diocese. I have already begun visiting schools and look forward to meeting more of you over the coming months. May I take this opportunity to remind you that Project Requests and Foundation Governor, Academy Director and Representative forms come to me for action at the usual NORES address. I am also on hand to advise on admissions and keep you up to date on any legislative changes. You can contact me at main@nores.org.uk or on 01582 723312.

I spent an interesting afternoon at the Catholic Education Service (CES) last week and thought I ought to remind you all of the importance of using their model employment documents, policies and contracts. I know many schools contract in HR and Legal services from their Local Authority or other outside providers, but are they skilled in representing the unique Catholic nature of your school? CES's professional legal team have drafted a whole suite of appointment and recruitment forms, contracts for teaching and support staff and a variety of model policies. Have a look at the latest versions here:

<http://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/employment-documents> or give them a call on 020 7901 1900 for help and advice.

DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

The advertising and interview process continues which means that the post will not be filled until June at the earliest. We will use consultants for particular projects as needed. Please refer all issues to Mgr Kevin or Debbie Main through the Office.

GOVERNORS' FORUM

We are offering these sessions, 7-9pm in different locations around the diocese in the next academic year. They are for all governors, especially Foundation Governors, Directors and Representatives. If you miss the one in your area come along elsewhere. It is the serious expectation of the Trustee that every school will be represented by at least one if not more governors. Clerks will inform you.

2016 7-9pm at local venues:

16 March - St Ethelbert's Slough

18 March - St Edward's Kettering, Northants

14 April - St Michael's High Wycombe, Bucks (note date changed)

TBA – Bedford

See excellent **LENT RESOURCES** from Hexham and Newcastle diocese for your use :

<http://www.rcdhn.org.uk/spirituality/spiritlent16.php>