



NORES NEWS

FEBRUARY 2016 – 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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(Luke 6:36)

From the Episcopal Vicar

Mgr Kevin

The **YEAR of MERCY** has captured hearts and minds more than many other special years. It has been very impressive to hear about how schools and parishes have developed creatively the notion of the **HOLY DOOR**.

Please do keep sending in your pictures of what you have done

as we want to create a small exhibition and perhaps even print up the doors across the diocese.

February 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, is the **World Day of Prayer for the Sick**. As one of the works of mercy, our caring for the sick could be a focus for our prayers, reflection and action. In some places the sick and housebound are linked as prayer partners to those making First Communion or being confirmed. Perhaps a class might make a link with a local care home, and while practical things may not be easy, just cards and greeting for Easter could be possible. Becoming involved in a local hospital may be difficult practically, but why not invite a member of staff to talk about their vocation to care for those who are sick?



LENT begins on February 10. It makes for a very early Easter. Later we suggest how to make sure you encourage the RealEasterEgg Company! Until Easter, however, we have forty days and nights to think about how we respond to the gift of our baptism. The corporal and spiritual works of mercy will be a good

guide this year for our reflection. They could make a calendar or stations on a Lenten journey map. Linking with the people who are being baptised or received into the church at Easter would be a good support for them, and also refresh our own faith. Praying for them by name would be a very good idea. Ask them to come to talk about what it was like to be at the Rite of Election on the First Sunday of Lent with the Bishop in the Cathedral – or what did they feel when they were baptised and confirmed at the Easter Vigil.

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

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

POPE FRANCIS at the first special Mercy Audience on 30 January

Dear Brothers and Sisters: Today I wish to speak to you about the close relationship between mercy and mission . Saint John Paul II reminded us that the Church lives an authentic life when she professes and proclaims mercy, and leads people to the source of mercy. As Christians, we are called to be missionaries of the Gospel. Just as we naturally seek to share with others the beautiful moments of our lives, we are called also and especially to share the joy of encountering Jesus Christ. This was the experience of the disciples from the very beginning. After meeting the Lord, Andrew went directly to his brother Peter, and Philip sought out Nathanael, to tell them whom they had met. To encounter Jesus is to experience his love, which transforms us and compels us, in turn, to share this love. We are called to be "bearers of Christ"! For the mercy we receive from the Father is not given solely for our benefit, but for the good of all, by transforming us into instruments, missionaries of mercy. By being such missionaries, we come to experience more deeply the gift of mercy in our own lives. May we take seriously our call to be Christians, to live as believers, so that the Gospel may touch the hearts of all people and open them to the gift of God's love.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION, CATECHESIS and CHAPLAINCY

Alex Heath

Lent Course for the Year of Mercy

The Year of Mercy is 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) on 6 consecutive Friday evenings in Lent: 12 February to 18 March 2016 at NORES. Cost: £10 per person for whole course (includes course materials). Please contact the NORES Office for further details and to book a place.

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. **BOOKING DETAILS:** Please send a non-refundable cheque payment of £12 made payable to RE Service with your name, phone number and e mail address to: CATECHIST RETREAT 2016, at NORES,

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

On Thursday 11 February 2016 (9.30am- 3pm) at the RE Centre we will be delighted to welcome Fr Stephen Wang to lead a Chaplaincy Training Day exploring the Year of Mercy.

As well as exploring Pope Francis's aims for the Year of Mercy we will also explore some ideas for how we can make the most of this opportunity in our schools. Please come with your own ideas to share too. Fr Stephen Wang is a priest in the Diocese of Westminster. He is currently Senior University Chaplain in the Diocese, which involves chaplaincy ministry at Newman House Catholic Centre, and coordinating the student outreach for the Diocese. He has been an assistant priest in a north London parish, and Dean of Studies and Lecturer at Allen Hall Seminary. He is also an author of several publications. The booking form is available from the NORES office, we look forward to welcoming Chaplaincy Co-ordinators and members of Chaplaincy teams.

Bishop's Council for Catechesis

A reminder too that our next meeting for the Bishop's Council for Catechesis takes place at 7.30pm on Monday 8 February 2016 at the RE Centre. The Year of Mercy presents a great opportunity for us as catechists to share the Good News of God's mercy to us in Christ and it will be great to gather and share our news.

Bible Timeline

Some will be aware that a number of courses from the Bible Timeline series have been run over the last

couple of years in various parts of the Diocese. These are easy to run and make use of self-study, group work and DVD presentations. We now have a number of experienced leaders and resources to share from the Bible Timeline Library we have set up. If anyone would be interested in running their own course we can offer support and advice to help get you started, just contact me at the NORES office. For more information about the Bible Timeline and other courses available please see: <http://ascensionpress.com/t/category/study-programs>

CAFOD NEWS

Deborah Purfield



Fast Day

In this special Year of Mercy, Pope Francis reminds us that to 'give drink to the thirsty' is one of the corporal acts of mercy that we're all called to carry out. **650 million people** (about 10 times the population of the UK) do not have clean water to drink. Our focus this Lent will be to help our partners '**turn on the taps**' so that more of our brothers and sisters can access what are essential to the realisation of all human rights; safe drinking water and sanitation.

All donations made as a result of your Lenten activities from Ash Wednesday **10 Feb** to **9 May** 2016 will qualify for UK Aid match funding, up to a total of £3.5 million.

We are asking children and young people to '*Make a Splash*' to help change the lives of some of the poorest people in the world. There are also lots of fundraising ideas for parishes. Resources such as 'How to guides' for teachers, School Assemblies, 'Stations of the Cross' and children's Liturgy are now online.

If you would like a visit from our schools' team or are interested in speaking at mass, please get in touch.

(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?

NEWS FROM THE PRIMARY

CORNER

Anne-Marie McIntosh

Welcome back to the new term and the New Year! I hope you had a good break and have returned to school refreshed.

School Visits

These are now up and running and continue to go well. I have taken the direction from the RE Subject Leaders as to the content of our time together. If you haven't got a date in the diary for my next visit please email me and we can arrange a mutually convenient time.

mcintosh@nores.org.uk

RE Subject Leaders' Day

I am really looking forward to our first in-service day together on Wednesday 3 February. You should, by now, have received the timetable for the day. If not, then please email me and I'll send you an electronic version. If you haven't already done so, please complete the form and return it as soon as possible to let us know that you are coming.

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. Check out the excellent photos on the Vatican website of the Pope opening the holy door in St Peter's Basilica. There is also a fantastic video clip of Bishop Peter opening the holy door of the Cathedral in Northampton on our NORES website.

If you haven't already requested the in-service on the Year of Mercy, it's not too late! Just email me some suggested dates.

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

SECONDARY RE AND INSPECTION

Stephen O'Brien

People of God – Called to Serve. The *People of God – Called to Serve* Framework has reached two important landmarks. Firstly, the Year 8 content and associated materials have been completed and will soon be fully uploaded onto the Mathew James website for subscribers. This includes a six-week unit on Hinduism that follows on from the similarly styled Year 7 unit on Jewish identity. In both cases – and with the forthcoming Year 9 unit on Islam – the writing team have worked with educational experts from faith communities to produce authentic content and resources. Secondly, Mathew James now has more than 25% of Catholic Secondary schools subscribed to the *People of God* website nationally, indicating that a rapidly growing number of departments who wish to use the framework for future planning and delivery of KS3 Religious Education. Whilst the whole of *People of God - Called to Serve* is geared to giving GCSE-ready knowledge and skills, the Year 9 Framework is designed specifically to be an introduction for the new

GCSE. Once the Framework is complete, the writing group will be fully focused on developing a growing body of resources for units across the whole Framework.

GCSE textbooks. Dr Anthony Towey and Philip Robinson are soon to publish a new GCSE RE textbook designed to serve the educational needs of pupils studying for GCSE Religious Studies under the DfE specification applicable from 2016. I would expect that a number of other new texts will become available once the boards have issued approved specifications. We await with interest! It is also worth noting that whilst AQA and Edexcel will shortly [hopefully!] be issuing their DfE approved specifications, Eduqas, the Welsh Joint Board, has also produced a draft specification that seeks to meet the requirements of the Bishops' Conference for England and Wales. Although also seeking DfE approval, this will be available to schools in England and may well have some merit. Worth a look before final decisions are made.

POPE FRANCIS in February 2016 asks you to pray with him for these intentions :

Universal: Care for Creation - That we may take good care of creation—a gift freely given—cultivating and protecting it for future generations.

Evangelization: Asia - That opportunities may increase for dialogue and encounter between the Christian faith and the peoples of Asia.

FEAST DAYS and PRAYER INTENTIONS - Do try to remember these intentions and ask the school to pray with the Pope's intentions (above), the intentions set by our bishops, and for the schools who celebrate their feast days:

28 January - St Thomas Aquinas, Milton Keynes

3 February - Thornton College (St Claudine Thevenet)

HEADS' CONFERENCE – Note date change

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!

EDUCATION WEEK 2016 – October 10-16

Think about what you can do – now!

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

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.

Head Teacher Induction Mass

Robert O'Malley at St Monica, Milton Keynes
9 February, 7pm at the school

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 area, 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

February sees Debbie Main joining us in the new role of Schools Officer from 8 February 2016. Working with the soon to be appointed Director of Education she will be advising schools on admissions, premises and governance as well as undertaking the administration associated with academy conversions. Debbie has worked in charity administration for the past ten years and is looking forward to bringing her skills to the NORES team. She has been a primary phase governor in Luton for the last 5 years and has been Chair of Governors for 4. She has experience of Interim Executive Boards, school amalgamation and all the associated stresses as well as large school building projects. Debbie can be contacted at main@nores.org.uk or on: 01582 723312 Her work will be to support the Schools' Commissioner in all areas of the work – especially Governors, Academy Directors and representatives, School and Academy Project Request forms, and other buildings and finance issues.

DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

The advertising and interview process continues which means that the post will not be filled until Easter 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:

8 February - St Thomas Aquinas, Milton Keynes

14 March - St Michael's High Wycombe, Bucks

16 March - St Ethelbert's Slough

18 March - St Edward's Kettering, Northants

TBA – Bedford

8 February 2016 - Day of Prayer for Victims of Trafficking - Feast of St Josephine Bakhita, a Sudanese girl who was enslaved and eventually freed and who became a religious sister. For some materials that can be used in schools to help young people learn about modern slavery and, where appropriate, recognise the signs of those who have been trafficked. see [www.catholicnews.org.uk/Home/Featured/Day-of-Prayer-for-Victims-of-Human-Trafficking/\(language\)/eng-GB](http://www.catholicnews.org.uk/Home/Featured/Day-of-Prayer-for-Victims-of-Human-Trafficking/(language)/eng-GB) The Church in England and Wales is responding to that call and has created a human trafficking project, which can be viewed at www.santamartagroup.com