



# NORES NEWS

**NOVEMBER 2016 – The month dedicated to Holy Souls**

Diocese of Northampton, Office for RE, Evangelisation, Catechesis & Schools  
*SUPPORTING CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND FORMATION*

33 Westbourne Road, Luton, LU4 8JD Telephone: 01582 723312  
admin@nores.org.uk [www.nores.org.uk](http://www.nores.org.uk) [www.northamptondiocese.org](http://www.northamptondiocese.org)

**From the Episcopal Vicar** *Mgr Kevin*



## **The JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY continues until 20 November in Rome.**

Bishop Peter closes our Holy Doors on  
November 13 – so some time still to

reflect on what it means. As Pope Francis says –  
Jesus Christ is the face of the Father's mercy.  
Do people see it in the face of Christians like us?

It was a very good to welcome **MARTIN POST, the  
Regional Schools Commissioner to our Governance  
Conference** on October 22. Despite it being half term  
there was a good representation across the diocese,  
from schools and MATs. Firstly it is good that all our  
schools belong to his area, so that when we meet him  
we can share across the whole diocese. The slides of  
his presentation are available if you email the Schools  
Office and he is ready to engage in conversations and  
discussions with all involved.

Fr Kevin shared the diocesan vision for the future of  
our schools from a theological standpoint. While the  
government have relented on their insistence for all  
schools of be academies by 2022, the Trustees of the  
diocese are committed to the development of MATs  
for all our schools as soon as it is right. Given that the  
Voluntary Aided system depends so heavily on strong  
Local Authorities, many of our schools are not in that  
context at the present.

Collette Curtis, in her role as Director of School  
Development, outlined a developing structure for all  
our schools, to strengthen their future through  
collaboration and mutual support.

In the Lent and Pentecost terms there will be local  
governance fora and details of these will be  
circulated soon.

We will also be holding twilight sessions for staff on  
how we see Catholic education at the present time  
which will be appropriate for foundation governors,  
representatives and directors too.

**Relationships and Sex Education** is a constant  
challenge for all schools. At long last the CES is able  
to make available work produced through the  
National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers.  
It will be on their website and we have already  
circulated some of this. The CES material will include  
a model policy, guidance, and the quality mark  
documentation. It is hoped that the Bishops'  
Conference will produce a theological paper before  
the end of the year.

There is **CES guidance on the issue of transgender** as  
a pastoral concern, and we hope that you will feel  
able to call on NOREs for any situation which needs  
this support.

### **HEAD TEACHERS' CONFERENCE 2017 – 2,3 March**

Book the date now! to be lead by Fr Jonathan Veasy,  
Director of Schools and RE in Birmingham diocese.  
He wants to explore the way your leadership  
contributes to the New Evangelisation – and invites  
your comments. Email Fr Kevin with your thoughts

### **We need to promote teaching Religious Education.**

**UCAS PGCE Religious Education** figures for  
September 2016 for those planning to take up places

- Total RE PGCE applications are up 14.1% year-on-year and also slightly up (1.6%) on 2014 levels (in order: 1830, 1630 and today 1860).
- This is within a context of All PGCE applications being down -5.4%, although at secondary level numbers are steady (up 0.6% only).
- In real terms, as predicted and in line with previous years trends, there has been a slight fall-off in successful numbers for September versus August. We start the new academic year with 480 successfully placed students – 26% of total applicants. This is still a 14.3% rise in actual numbers from last year (420 to 480) – and against wider market trends - and the same 26% success rate.
- there were more early RE applications this year (pre-Xmas) than the two previous years, and the key growth months were February and March. This is much stronger than 2014 and 2015 which suggests legacy from the 2015 campaign.

## ADULT FAITH FORMATION, CATECHESIS and CHAPLAINCY

Alex Heath

**School Chaplaincy** On Wednesday 5 October Sarah de Nordwall led the first of our Chaplaincy Days on the theme of Developing our Creativity. Sarah is a poet and storyteller and a *Catholic Voice* who has spoken regularly on the Big Questions and Radio 4 and has presented her CD 'Lipstick is a Spiritual Experience' to Pope Francis at a Conference on the Dignity of Woman at the Vatican.

During the day we experienced her gifts and saw some of the resources she has developed. We also had a go at our own creative writing and participants shared their creativity. If anyone who was on the day would like to type up and send Sarah their poems she would love to hear from you. They can be sent to her via [sarah@sarahdenordwall.com](mailto:sarah@sarahdenordwall.com)

Sarah also wondered about starting a group sharing forum. If you would like to take part in this contact Sarah. She is available to come and perform and lead workshops at your school on a variety of themes. Her blog and website are: [sarahdenordwall.blogspot.com](http://sarahdenordwall.blogspot.com) and [www.sarahdenordwall.com](http://www.sarahdenordwall.com)

**Our next Chaplaincy Day in February 2017 focusses on Developing our Leadership Skills with Charles Whitehead**, again its highly recommended and we hope to see Chaplains and Chaplaincy Co-ordinators for what promises to be an excellent day. Copies of the booking form are available via the NORES website (Events and Courses) or the NORES office.

**Catechesis** The Bishop's Council for Catechesis met again on Monday 10 October 2016 at the RE Centre. As always we welcomed catechists from various parts of the diocese who are doing great work in their local parishes. As well as reviewing the recent Jubilee for Catechists we spent some time planning future events including a day on Morning and Evening Prayer with Fr John Hemer which will be on Saturday 13 May 2017 (please mark the date in your diaries), more details and publicity will be available soon. If you would like a Being a Catechist course (5 x 2 hour sessions on the basics of catechesis) in your area please talk to your parish priest and contact me - I would be happy to come and run one in your area at a time to suit your group.

**Scripture** Some advanced notice also that the RCIA Network of England & Wales are running a conference on Scripture from 6-8 June 2017. More details and booking information will be available soon. Please keep an eye on the RCIA Network website [www.rcia.org.uk](http://www.rcia.org.uk) and I will also publicise it through NORES news and our NORES mailing lists when the information becomes available.

**Evangelisation Initiatives** The Diocesan Evangelisation Team (D.E.T.) is seeking to support parishes that have or are interested in starting parish evangelisation (mission) teams as well as parishes that have recently had a parish mission and are looking to build upon the experience, please get in touch if we can help. Simply follow the links for FAITH and EVANGELISATION on the Diocesan website and background information as well as contact details are there. In addition to this the Bible Timeline courses continue to grow with Bedford being the latest place where courses are being run. The Faith, Coffee and Cake evangelisation project continues at Hunsbury/Towcester, it's a simple but effective model for local outreach. Details are available at: <http://www.northamptondiocese.org/FAITH/Evangelisation/LocalandPracticalInitiatives/ForthcomingEvents/tabid/477/Default.aspx>

If you are interested in running this in your own parish the D.E.T. can help get you started. For more information about how we can support you with this or other evangelising please contact me at the NORES office: [heath@nores.org.uk](mailto:heath@nores.org.uk)

## CAFOD NEWS

Deborah Purfield



**Year of Mercy** As the Year of Mercy comes to a close why not mark the closing with

- a **Year of Mercy assembly** for schools
- **Pray using the Lampedusa Cross Pilgrimage** resource focusing on refugees for both parishes and schools.
- **Write messages of hope** to refugees which CAFOD will send to the refugees this is also for both parishes and schools.
- **Our Year of Mercy Retreat** will be on Saturday 5 Nov16, 10am-4pm at St Mary's Parish, Aspley Hill, Woburn Sands, MK17 8NN. We will explore how each of us can continue to live out Pope Francis' call to be "witnesses of mercy" in our families, communities and in our world. Please see [cafod.org.uk/Events/CAFOD-autumn-retreats](http://cafod.org.uk/Events/CAFOD-autumn-retreats) to sign up or contact Deborah Purfield (see details below).

**Advent** Our 2016 Advent service is now available and great for schools and parishes! We reflect on Christ's coming into the world at Advent, and pray for our sisters and brothers around the world who are forced to flee their homes.

Schools can still book our volunteers to give an assembly based around the story of the Nativity, using readings and stories from our partners to tell the story and make links with Jesus' birth. **Please get in touch - [dpurfield@cafod.org.uk](mailto:dpurfield@cafod.org.uk), 01844 274 723**

## SCHOOLS' COMMISSION

*Collette Curtis*

**Update on developing a model for Catholic education across the Diocese.** As you know I have been consulting on a proposed model for the development of Catholic Education since September and am particularly keen to look at how we use the expertise and strengths in schools across the Diocese. I have met with the Heads' and Deputies' associations, a number of area head teacher groups, governors, directors, local authorities, the regional school commissioner and have shared the lessons learned by other Dioceses across the country. I will release the final document and plans soon after the October break and put the plans into action. If you have not had an opportunity to discuss these with me and would like me to visit your school, please contact me.

**Exciting partnership work with St Thomas More Teaching School Bedford.** In response to the need to identify and develop aspiring Catholic Leaders of Education Susanne Combe at the Teaching School was successful in gaining a bid from the National College to provide leadership training for 5 Secondary and 10 primary senior leaders for leadership in Catholic schools. This funding means the course is heavily subsidised and will cost schools only £100 to cover expenses plus any cover implications. The time commitment will be 4 sessions afternoon/twilight depending on location and 1 full day. Details of the course will be provided shortly for a December start. If you have identified anyone in your senior team as an aspiring leader or are one yourself, please contact either Susanne or I via email.

There is also an opportunity to widen the base of specialist senior leaders accredited through the National College to develop the capacity within local areas in the Diocese as the teaching school have made places available for colleagues to be recommended from schools across the Diocese. Again, if you would like more information or would like to show an interest as a senior leader working in a good or outstanding school please contact Susanne or I.

**Make ourselves heard - White paper consultation:** Currently any new school which opens under the free school program has a cap of 50% of admissions on religious criteria. As a consequence all Dioceses across the country refused to discuss this matter. After lobbying by the Catholic Education Service (CES) nationally level the White paper proposes that this cap be removed. Teresa May's announcement has generated a lot of media interest. The CES have asked that as many of us as possible take part in the consultation ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) to recognise how happy we are that the cap has been

removed. This is to counteract a small group with opposing views who have a significant voice in the media. If you have a few minutes please find the time to make our voice heard.

## SECONDARY RE AND INSPECTION

*Stephen O'Brien*

**Levels of Attainment** By now I hope that colleagues will have received a copy of the executive summary which outlines findings from the national Levels of Attainment questionnaire issued during the Pentecost term. The summary makes interesting reading, showing clearly - particularly at secondary phase - that some modification of the existing system is deemed useful and highly desirable. A good number of Secondary RE departments find applying the levels difficult, often having to mix and match their application with other whole school systems often based on bringing GCSE criteria down into KS3. The NBRIA group issuing the questionnaire will continue to meet over the coming months to consider the findings and chart a way forward for developments in this area. The summary, (on the CES website) offers a number of options. I will keep you abreast of developments.

**RE subject leaders meeting - 8 November** - open to all secondary RE teachers, will focus on teaching the new GCSE RE. Christine Paul from Edexcel will work in the morning on marking and assessment of the new GCSE. In the afternoon, Susan Kambalu, CAFOD National Secondary Adviser, will work specifically on resourcing the teaching of GCSE. This will be a very good day, useful to all colleagues. At a later meeting we will ask AQA to join us to work on a theme that departments would value. Please book via the office: [admin@nores.org.uk](mailto:admin@nores.org.uk) There is no charge.

## PRAYING WITH OUR SCHOOLS

**PRAYER INTENTIONS** – *ask the school to pray with the Pope for his intentions for November*

**Universal: Countries Receiving Refugees**

That the countries which take in a great number of displaced persons and refugees may find support for their efforts which show solidarity.

**Evangelization: Collaboration of Priests and Laity**

That within parishes, priests and lay people may collaborate in service to the community without giving in to the temptation of discouragement.

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

3 November St Martin de Porres Primary Luton

16 November St Margaret of Scotland Primary, Luton

**THEOLOGY FOR CATHOLIC ADULTS** is a very useful modular course. It offers the chance to spend a day doing theology for yourself, which then becomes invaluable for your teaching. Look for the leaflet!

**CATHOLIC CERTIFICATE IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

The new course in Aylesbury will now start from January 2017. Please contact the administrator Warren Edwards for details: [edwards@nores.org.uk](mailto:edwards@nores.org.uk)

## NEWS FROM THE PRIMARY CORNER

Anne-Marie McIntosh

**Schools' Mass** What a marvellous celebration of Catholic Education in the Diocese. The children were amazing – all 800 of them! The readers, altar servers candle and banner carriers, all did extremely well. Thank you to Our Lady's Amersham for providing the choir who led the singing very well. Everyone sang beautifully. Thank you to everyone who took part and made it such a remarkable celebration.

**School Visits** for the next term are all confirmed. If there is anything in particular you would like to cover on the day please e-mail me.

**RE Subject Leader Meetings** Please let me know the dates of these meeting as I really want to attend to work alongside you and support you in your role.

**RE Subject Leaders Day** Calling all RE Subject Leaders - you should have received your invitation and programme for our day together on **11<sup>th</sup>**

**November, 2016**. Please send back the booking form as soon as possible. Also just to give you advanced notice of our day together in the Lent Term on **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March** and in the Pentecost Term **Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2017**. This will be a joint day with our Secondary Heads of RE colleagues.

**Levels of Attainment** Thank you to everyone who completed the national questionnaire on the levels of attainment. The responses have now been collated and a full report plus a summary is on the NORES website. 56.2% of Catholic schools nationally completed the questionnaire. Most primary and secondary schools agreed that the levels were a broadly positive development which have improved the quality of learning in RE.

**Inservice** Twilight inservice on **'The Changing Shape of Education'** will take place around the Diocese starting with Slough in January. Watch out for the flier soon to arrive in school with further details. Also **'Theology for Adults'** is being run centrally at NORES starting in November.

If you need any other inservice training please don't hesitate to ask.

**Live Simply** I hope you have been able to take part in the 'Live Simply' Challenge so far. During the month of November we are encouraged to recycle more. Recycling is something we all manage to do but could we do more? You might like to do a class / key stage / whole school waste audit and analyse how much rubbish you throw away. You could even visit a local recycling centre they are well geared up for school visits. If that isn't possible how about inviting someone from the local council to come into school. Have a look at our website to see what's coming next in the December challenge.

**Sex and Relationship Education** - This has finally been approved by the Bishops' Conference and will be available on the CES website very soon.

**Come and See** The content of the programme continues to be reviewed. I am attending the writers meeting w/b 14<sup>th</sup> November to work on Year 3. If you teach Year 3 and have any views about the activities or any suggestions on how they could be improved please let me know, via email, so that I can put these forward at the meeting. The Y 4, 5 and 6 updated texts, questions and activities are now available on the Come and See website.

God's Story 3 has been updated and is available on CD Rom.

**Advent Calendar** Look out for the CAFOD Advent Calendar on their website. It looks great!

**A Heart that Sees** This is a Year of Mercy Legacy Resource. It will hopefully be published either by the CES or a Catholic publisher such as Redemptorist. However the document does not yet exist! It will be produced from schools across the country, including our Diocesan schools, with initiatives you have already implemented over the Year of Mercy. To this end we are looking for five schools who would be willing to share something of what they have done over the year. We are looking for practical activities - acts of visible compassion – gestures of love in action. It may be reaching out to parents / the local community and you may not have even seen them as an act of mercy. It is a gesture, which your school has offered, which addresses a genuine need. It may be quite a small or simple thing. But it is a gesture of a deeper virtue, a value in action. Jo Perrett, from St Bernard's Prep School in Slough, is representing our Diocese at a national level and she will email the five schools a proforma so that you could easily feedback on what has been achieved, in terms of practical help during the Year of Mercy, in your school. It's an exciting prospect to have your gestures included in a national project. If you are interested in taking part please email me by October half term.

**Just a thought.....**If the only prayer you said in your whole life was 'thank you', that would suffice. (Meister Eckhart)

**And finally** Don't forget if there is anything I can do to support you please do get in touch:

[mcintosh@nores.org.uk](mailto:mcintosh@nores.org.uk)

## DEPUTY HEADS/SENIOR LEADERS' CONFERENCE

Dates - 16-18 November 2016 Booking via [admin@nores.org.uk](mailto:admin@nores.org.uk) There are one or two places left. Venue - Hothorpe Hall, Leicestershire Theme - *"Justice and mercy have met"* (Psalm 85)