



NORES NEWS

FEBRUARY 2015 – The Month dedicated to the HOLY FAMILY

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 begin February with the great feast of **The Presentation of the Lord in the Temple**, where he is acclaimed as the light of the nations by Simeon and Anna.

The feast marks the end of Christmas time. It is when all candles are blessed for the coming year. We often use it to ask people to bring/buy a candle that will be their prayer candle for the coming year – something that you might do around this time for each class. The image of light is constantly used in the scriptures for the mission of the Church. We need to bring the light that is Christ to all people, to the work that we do, to the lives that we lead. At the induction of a head teacher in our diocese NORES offers them a lighted candle as a sign of their leadership and mission. Elsewhere we offer a renewal of commitment for all staff to the mission of our schools. It may be something you might use now or at the beginning of a school year, to include all staff in this work we undertake together.

The month will end with us in Lent. We move into a period when we are waiting and preparing for the great light of Easter. We have 40 days to reflect, to pray, to do good works. For most of us Ash Wednesday will fall in half term. That does not mean we cannot keep some form of Ash Wednesday liturgy before or after the day itself. It would be great to think that all would be at church on the day, and you can help that by letting families know when the parishes will celebrate their Ash Wednesday liturgy. Then we need to think how we will make the Lenten journey this year. What will be its focus? How we will ensure that it is journey we make together with Christ and one another as he makes his way to the Cross and to the glory of the Resurrection at Easter 2015.



LENT

Following on from the last NORES NEWS I thought these comments from Pope Francis give us significant food for thought about our work from his Apostolic Exhortation – Evangelii Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel)

Culture, thought and education

132. Proclaiming the Gospel message to different cultures also involves proclaiming it to professional, scientific and academic circles. This means an encounter between faith, reason and the sciences with a view to developing new approaches and arguments on the issue of credibility, a creative apologetic which would encourage greater openness to the Gospel on the part of all. When certain categories of reason and the sciences are taken up into the proclamation of the message, these categories then become tools of evangelization; water is changed into wine. Whatever is taken up is not just redeemed, but becomes an instrument of the Spirit for enlightening and renewing the world.

133. It is not enough that evangelizers be concerned to reach each person, or that the Gospel be proclaimed to the cultures as a whole. A theology – and not simply a pastoral theology – which is in dialogue with other sciences and human experiences is most important for our discernment on how best to bring the Gospel message to different cultural contexts and groups. The Church, in her commitment to evangelization, appreciates and encourages the charism of theologians and their scholarly efforts to advance dialogue with the world of cultures and sciences. I call on theologians to carry out this service as part of the Church's saving mission. In doing so, however, they must always remember that the Church and theology exist to evangelize, and not be content with a desk-bound theology.

134. Universities are outstanding environments for articulating and developing this evangelizing commitment in an interdisciplinary and integrated way. Catholic schools, which always strive to join their work of education with the explicit proclamation of the Gospel, are a most valuable resource for the evangelization of culture, even in those countries and cities where hostile situations challenge us to greater creativity in our search for suitable method

Renewal of Commitment for Teachers

At a head teacher's induction recently, one member of staff asked if there was something that could reflect the same for teachers and all staff. This comes from an unknown source. It could be used in any school with the appropriate adaptations to make it inclusive of all involved and where they are on their journey of faith. Please send us any comments on how it can be used/adapted etc and also if you can trace its source

Leader (L)

In our ministry we represent the Church, the visible sign of Christ's enduring presence among us. In our ministry, then, we represent Christ, and make present his message, his love and his healing. This is a great and powerful ministry in the Church and in the world, Today I invite you to accept once more the mission entrusted to us and accept it with all your heart

The Lord is the prophet who offers a way of life which leads to abundant fulfilment. So I ask you:

Do you promise to offer those you serve a vision of life inspired by the gospel of Jesus? **All - I do**

(L) The Lord is our teacher who reveals the beauty of our God in it's fullness. So I ask you:

Do you promise to strive through all your teaching to reflect the awe and wonder of creation? **All - I do**

(L) The Lord is the healer of our brokenness. So I ask you: Do you promise to forgive and heal the hurts which occur within your schools? **All - I do**

(L) The Lord is our High Priest who leads us to our Father. So I ask you: Do you promise that in your leadership in our schools and parishes you will point the way to our God? **All - I do**

(L) In the name of the Lord I accept your promises

We say together

This is our mission and ministry. This is the ministry of the Church.

We accept it with joy. In the name of Jesus the Lord.

(L) - Let us pray. God of wonder, you created all that is, the seen and the unseen, and in this you reveal to us the depth of your love. Open us more and more to see beyond the surface. Give us humility, that we might know you in and through an ever deepening appreciation of the meaning of the world which, in love, you made. Empower us with your spirit, that we might share with those you have put into our care, a knowledge and understanding that all things speak of your wisdom and love. Through our ministry may they live ever more abundantly, rejoicing in the divine presence which fills the whole creation.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. AMEN

POPE FRANCIS in February 2015 asks you to pray for **The world** : That prisoners, especially the young, may be able to rebuild lives of dignity.

In mission: That married people who are separated may find welcome and support in the Christian community

LITURGY IN SCHOOL

- 25 March 2015

This is a special training day where we will develop a diocesan reflection on the basic principles for celebrating liturgy in schools, with a special focus on mass in school.

Every school needs to be represented.

Booking forms will be sent out very soon. Being able to celebrate the eucharist in school is a unique privilege and also a unique responsibility. Schools need to be able to prepare the liturgy well, but also to be fully equipped for these celebrations, practically and spiritually.

APPOINTMENT PROTOCOL

- please note that when anyone in a reserved post resigns you must inform NORES immediately before anyone else
- reserved posts are Head teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, Head of RE/RE Coordinator, Chaplain,
- there is a guidance pack for major posts, and also material to be included In the recruitment pack
- NORES needs to be represented or consulted at every stage, and dates fixed with us before being confirmed so as to ensure the interviews can proceed
- some schools have asked to send the advertisement directly to other schools. This is acceptable only if it is addressed to the head and chair of governors with the request that if they are happy they will make it available to staff.
- All RE staff, and chaplaincy personnel interviews should be discussed with NORES
- Advertisements must always be headed "Diocese of Northampton" and where applicable "in partnership with XXX Local Authority"

SENIOR LEADERS CONFERENCE 2015/16

We have been very fortunate to arrange this conference for next academic year at Sarum College, which is in the Close of Salisbury Cathedral, an idyllic setting. The College was once the seminary for the Anglican diocese and now is a theological institute. As at Canterbury it means direct access to the famous Cathedral. Book the dates 9-11 November 2015. The theme of the Conference is TRUE HAPPINESS – and not just for our senior leaders. We will explore many issues that relate to how staff and young people can find fulfilment and contentment in education today.

NEWS FROM THE PRIMARY CORNER

Sister Aidan

Firstly two dates to remember: Friday 13 February "Theology for Teachers" on Scripture with Steve O'Brien. Then Wednesday 18 March is RE Co-ordinators' Day. The day will be given by an outside speaker and will centre on a new book just out called "Do You Love Me". It is a follow-up from the Year of Faith and has been written by the Spirituality Committee of our Bishops' Conference. Each of you will receive a copy on the day. It is in colour, not thick and no heavy reading! I will be touch later with more details, be sure to keep the date free.

Our next topic is a sacramental theme - the Eucharist. The Eucharist, Holy Communion and Blessed Sacrament are all different names for what we usually call holy communion. The word eucharist comes from the Greek meaning *thanksgiving* and is often used as an alternative for the celebration of Mass. The small white particle we call the "host" and we refer to it as an "unconsecrated host" or a "consecrated host" depending on whether it has been consecrated at a Mass or not. I would like to take this opportunity to refresh a few suggestions to ensure that when Mass is celebrated in school and at the Diocesan Mass, the children receive holy communion correctly. It would be good to have a few practices in school through all classes. Some people receive on the hand and others in the mouth. Most of the children receive on the hand. They should be reminded to answer "Amen" before receiving the host, and be told to put the host into their mouths immediately. For the Diocesan Masses we intend to have adults on either side of the Bishop in case a child forgets to consume the host and just walks away. This might be good practice for schools as well. In some places the children are instructed to make the sign of the cross as they walk away This is another help to remind the children about what they are doing. Praying after communion also need to be developed as the children get older.

CAFOD NEWS

Deborah Purfield

Matched Funding is back for our Lent 2015 appeal! All donations made as a result of your Lenten activities from Ash Wednesday 18 Feb to 17 May 2015 will be doubled.

We are asking children and young people to 'Cut it out' to help change the lives of some of the poorest people in the world. Resources such as 'How to guides' for teachers, Ash Wednesday Liturgy, School Assemblies and 'Stations of the Cross' are now online.

For more information please get in touch 01844 274 723 or northampton@cafod.org.uk

SECONDARY RE AND INSPECTION

Stephen O'Brien

A Level/GCSE Consultation The CES [Catholic Education Service] has written to schools with regard to the recent consultation on the future of Religious Education at KS4 and KS5 in our schools. Along with the CES, the diocese would like to thank those of you who were able to complete the response and return it to the DfE. The responses from the RE community far exceed those of any other subject consultation, demonstrating the huge interest in and passion for the future of religious education. Catholic schools and diocese across England and Wales made a substantial contribution to the whole picture. Our firmly expressed views will, I hope, influence the development of the DfE subject criteria and subsequent specifications produced by the boards. We await the outcome.

People of God – Called to Serve The new KS3 Framework for RE is on schedule for publication of Year 7 in the middle of 2015, with Years 8+9 to follow in 2016. *People of God – Called to Serve*, published as a website by Mathew James, will provide departments with a carefully designed, modern framework for religious education at KS3 that is both challenging and aspirational and supported by a growing range of on-line resources. The very good news is that *People of God – Called to Serve* will be very affordable, initially costing £100.00 per school for a single year or £300.00 for three years. After 2015 the initial cost will rise to £200.00 and £100 for each subsequent year. I would encourage every school to budget for this very modest expenditure from April.

FEAST DAYS and PRAYER INTENTIONS

Do try to remember these intentions and ask the school to pray with the Pope' intentions (qv), and for those intentions set by our bishops, and for the schools who celebrate their feast days

1 February	Children, Students & Teachers
2 February	The Presentation of the Lord - Candlemas Women and men religious
3 February	Convent of Jesus and Mary, Thornton (St. Claudine Thevenet)
8 February	Victims of Trafficking
11 February	Our Lady of Lourdes – World day of prayer for the sick
15 February	The Unemployed
18 February	ASH WEDNESDAY – first day of Lent Day of Fasting and Abstinence
22 February	First Sunday of Lent – Rite of Election for those joining the church at Easter
27 February	Family Fast Day

SCHOOLS' COMMISSION

Frances Image

LCVAP

We are still waiting for official news of the 2015-16 allocation from DfE. We shall be contacting headteachers within the next few days to arrange dates to meet and agree on local priorities. Please ensure that projects for your own school have been prioritised and costed. This will help us determine together those projects that are most in need of funding.

For Chairs and Aspiring Chairs of Governors

NCTL is currently offering scholarship for their Chairs' Leadership Development Programme, as follows. *1200 scholarships of up to 80% of the cost are available until the end of March 2015 for the Chairs of Governors' Leadership Development Programme*

The Chairs of Governors' Leadership Development Programme is for aspiring chairs of governors, new chairs or existing chairs who would like to develop their skills further.

The programme is delivered through workshops, school-based activities and includes the support of a mentor. It focuses on the role of the chair, leading the governing body and leading change and continuous improvement. The programme is delivered through NCTL approved licensees. We offer scholarship of £320 for small schools and £200 for all other maintained schools towards the cost of the programme.

Snap up a place now at: <https://www.gov.uk/school-governors-professional-development>

Reconstitution of Governing Bodies

May we remind you that **it is now urgent for NORES to receive from your school completed skills audits for all foundation governors** so that the Diocese can comply with the requirements under the Amendment Regulations 2014: *to ensure that all foundation governors have, in the opinion of the person/body appointing them, the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.*

Please note that we need to receive individual audit skills completed and signed by individual governors.

Please do contact NORES if you have any further queries.

GOVERNORS' FORUM

We are offering these sessions, 7-9pm in different locations around the diocese this year. They are for all governors, especially Foundation Governors and Directors. 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 have informed you!

ADULT FAITH FORMATION, CATECHESIS and CHAPLAINCY

Alex Heath

Retreat for Catechists - 10am – 3pm on Saturday 25 April 2015 at the Monastery of Christ Our Saviour, Turvey, Beds MK43 8DH The retreat will include:

- Times of guided reflection led by Alex Heath and other members of the Bishop's Council for Catechesis.
- Eucharist
- Opportunity to meet other catechists and enjoy the beautiful and prayerful setting at Turvey
- Opportunity for personal prayer.

The cost is £10 per person (places are limited to 35) Please bring a packed lunch. Tea and Coffee will be provided. Cars are expected to park on the monks' side of the Turvey site. Entry is via the first drive on the left in Jack's Lane (speed camera on the corner). Parking space limited to a maximum of 15 cars.

Pre-booking is essential. To book your place please send a non-refundable cheque payment of £10 made payable to 'R.E. Service' along with your name, phone number and e mail address to: **CATECHIST RETREAT 2015, NORES Office, NORES, Holy Ghost parish Centre, 33 Westbourne Road, Luton, LU4 8JD** For general enquiries- Tel: 01582 723312 (extension 6), Email: admin@nores.org.uk

Where are we going with the Sacraments?

The Sacraments of Initiation Review working party (SOIR) is offering an opportunity for conversation and reflection on the question 'Where are we going with the Sacraments?' 10am -1pm Saturday 28 February 2015 at the RE Centre, 33 Westbourne Road, Luton LU4 8JD. It is being run for Clergy, Religious, Catechists and anyone involved in or interested in sacramental preparation. This meeting continues the ongoing reflections on Sacramental practice and preparation undertaken in the Diocese over the last 2 years and builds on our day with the team from Liverpool archdiocese last year, focussing on preparing parents for the baptism of their child. The Diocesan Team would like to give opportunities for parishes to share their experience and practice in Sacramental preparation to contribute to the ongoing reflection and discernment going on in the Diocese. Booking forms have been sent to every parish, to those on the catechists mailing list and are also available via the NORES office.

Bishop's Council for Catechesis

Finally a reminder that our next Bishop's Council for Catechesis Meeting is at the RE Centre, Luton at 7.30pm on Monday 9th February 2015 we look forward to seeing you there.