

Centred on Christ

AUGUST 2023



Our Lady of Paisley;
pray for us

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Dear Colleague,

Welcome back to the new session. We hope that the summer holidays enabled you to recharge your batteries in readiness for the opportunities and challenges of the year ahead. Fr Dan Fitzpatrick has provided a **reflection for staff** as we begin this term.

We circulated the **Diocesan Education Strategic Plan** last term. It is also on TEAMS. This is the first year of a new three-year cycle. We fully appreciate the significant demands on schools from National Priorities and local authority improvement objectives. Our Plan, based upon the views of Head Teachers, R.E. Co-ordinators, Principal Teachers of R.E., Chaplains and our Parent Forum, is also a very ambitious document. However, we would ask schools to identify **some** key targets which they could include in their School Improvement Plans.

We are grateful for your **Developing in Faith** returns which were hugely encouraging, demonstrating the commitment of schools to provide quality experiences for children and young people and to put Christ at the centre of their schools. We will share the good practice in the reports across the diocese and will fine-tune our Strategic Plan on the basis of your requests for support.

The three Local Authorities have agreed to avoid clashes with two important events for Diocesan Head Teachers. On Wednesday 4 October, the **Afternoon of Reflection on the Beatitudes** will be given by Mgr Patrick Burke, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh, and will conclude with Mass celebrated by Bishop John in St Columba's, Renfrew. There will be a joint **Head Teacher and Clergy meeting** in the Cathedral Halls on Thursday 9 November on 'Strengthening Home-School-Parish Partnerships'.

Our **CLPL programmes** for this session have been circulated to schools. We would also draw your attention to Glasgow University's courses on the **ATQRE** and **Setting Out on the Road**. The Diocesan **Leadership in Catholic Schools Course** will be offered again this year provided we receive a viable number of applications by 6 September.

The **Diocesan Parent Forum** will meet on Monday 30 October at 7pm in the Diocesan Offices. The main item will be a presentation by Tommy Hughes, our Curriculum Development Officer, on the new Diocesan S1 R.E. course.

The **Themes for Prayers and Reflection** are available on TEAMS/Education Resources for Schools/Prayers and Assemblies and the Vocations Week and Mission channels. The main themes for this term are Vocations Week, Season of Creation, the Rosary and the Missions. We would ask that October First Friday Masses and the daily decade of the Rosary be offered for the Missions.

Raymond Friel in *'How to survive in leadership in a Catholic School'* gives the example of the "Primary Head Teacher whose assembly every Monday was the Gospel of the day before. He knew that most of his children had not been to Mass and saw it as his duty to bring the Gospel to them." You will already be bringing the Gospel to pupils in many ways, but this year we will send you each week a YouTube link to Fr Matthew's **short reflections on the Sunday Gospel** which will be appropriate for Primary pupils.

Best wishes for session 2023-24.

Neil Roarty

Neil Roarty
Director of Schools



An Encounter on the Desert Road

Prayer Service for Staff

Father Dan Fitzpatrick

Introduction

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Opening Prayer

Let us praise the God of wisdom, knowledge and understanding. Almighty God, we gather today to ask your blessing on us as we come together to assist our young people and their families on the great journey of life and learning. Let your wisdom and love enter our thoughts and our actions to guide us as we encourage all in our learning community to search for truth and understanding just as your servant Philip touched the life of the Ethiopian on the desert road. Give us the courage to assist those searching for discover your plan for them and the path forward in their lives. Help us overcome all that hinders us, pressing on for the sake of knowledge and growth. May God enlighten our hearts and minds as we listen now to his Holy Word.

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 8:26-40)

Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked.

"How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So, he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

He was reading this passage of Scripture:

"He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and as a lamb before the shearer is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.
In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.
Who can speak of his descendants?
For his life was taken from the earth."

He asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?" Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

An Encounter on the Desert Road—Prayer Service for Staff

(Continued from page 2)

As they travelled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptised?" And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptised him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.

The Word of the Lord

Reflection

This life-changing meeting on the desert road to Gaza is not accidental. Philip is sent, he is given a task but it is vague, simply to be on that desert road. He is given no other information, only to travel along that road. In a sense he travels blind, unsure where it will take him. Yet he goes to be where he is asked to be.

Only because he responds to that open invitation does he meet the Ethiopian official, a eunuch in the Queen's service who is returning from his journey to Jerusalem. A journey that has set him thinking about his life as he reads the Hebrew Scriptures and the Prophet Isaiah, but struggles to understand. Philip is invited to draw close to the chariot where he waits. He is present and observes, only then does he take the initiative. 'Do you understand what you are reading?' he says. A simple question that makes no judgment, but rather leaves space for the other to respond.

The Ethiopian, an official of high-standing, is humble enough to say, 'How can I unless someone explains it to me?' Despite his obvious ability and education, he admits that he needs others to help him, he cannot do it on his own. He then responds to Philip's initiative with an invitation for Philip to come and sit with him. He invites Philip into his chariot and into his life. Thus begins the dialogue that becomes about more than the passage from Isaiah. Philip shows the Ethiopian how the prophet is talking about another, that other is Jesus.

From their encounter, shared reading and dialogue comes a life-changing moment of decision as the Ethiopian asks to be baptised and they go down together to the water. Immediately, he comes out of the water Philip is taken away by the Spirit and the Ethiopian goes on his way rejoicing.

This little incident can be so easily over-looked, but it is a parable about every educational encounter. It is repeated every day in every school and educational community. Presence, initiation, invitation, dialogue and change lie at the heart of our understanding of who we are and what we do as Catholics in education. The encounter can often be brief and there is always a parting of the ways and those whose lives have been touched and transformed carry on the journey, but the moment is never wasted. It begins with an encounter that leads to dialogue and ends in a parting that marks independence. Like Philip, as educators we are asked to be present, to observe need, to initiate but wait for the invitation and from there to dialogue and accompany to the moment of understanding and independence.

Prayers of Intercession

Lord look after us and guide us as we help those you have given us to assist on their journey; help us to live as a Christian community in bearing witness to your love and guiding them in the path of truth.

Lord, hear us.

An Encounter on the Desert Road—Prayer Service for Staff

(Continued from page 3)

We pray for all who work in our school; that we may work together building a genuine community of learning where all are helped to find you and supported in their search for knowledge and understanding.

Lord, hear us.

We pray for all those who are new in our school, pupils, teachers, support staff; may they be happy here and find a place they can flourish and grow.

Lord hear us.

We pray for all those who left last year; may they find contentment and happiness using their talents for the good of your world.

Lord, hear us.

We pray for all those who are sick in our school family; may they know our support and your care.

Lord, hear us.

Taught by our Saviour's command and formed by the Word of God, we pray together:

Our Father...

Concluding Prayer

Let us pray,

Lord our God, in your wisdom and love you surround us with the mysteries of the universe. You sent us your Son to teach us by word and example that true wisdom comes from you alone. Send your Spirit upon us and fill us with your knowledge and understanding. Let us share our knowledge with patience and gentleness and always strive to share your truth with the eager minds you give to our care.

Through Christ our true teacher. Amen



Leadership Styles – Servant Leadership

Adapted from 'Leading Life to the Full - Scriptural Reflections on Leadership in Catholic Schools', David Tuohy SJ¹

There are a variety of leadership styles ranging from 'autocratic leadership' or 'strong leadership' (the latter often associated with Head Teachers who are given the task of 'turning a school around'). In this reflection, we will consider alternative styles to the culture of leaders as 'boss' and examines how leaders can be 'servants' and can develop a sense of shared or distributed leadership within the community. We might also wish to reflect on how pupils, parents and the wider community might share in that leadership.

Servant Leadership (Matt 20: 20-28)

- How did Jesus respond to the disciples and their mother?
- Can you think of leaders who enjoy(ed) the status and trappings associated with their leadership/office? How far was their exercise of leadership limited?

Jesus takes the opportunity to teach his disciples about 'servant leadership'.

- What is the focus of the leader's service?
- What vision inspires that service?
- Is this kind of leadership possible or desirable in schools?
- Have you any images of someone who acted in this way towards you?
- How does the servant leadership spoken of by Jesus differ from a leadership style which allows others to take advantage of you?
- What type of 'service' do you appreciate from leaders?
- Are there times when you have given this type of leadership to others?
- How have 'followers' responded to that type of leadership?
- What effect has the experience of being this type of leader had on you?

How far do we engage other members of the community in the leadership of the school?

- How effectively do we listen to young children and young people? Does Pupil Voice have a tangible impact on the school?
- How far do we enable parents and Parent Councils to collaborate with the school improvement agenda from the very beginning?
- To what extent do parishes and the local community influence the life of the school?



¹Veritas Publications, Dublin, 2005. ISBN 1-85390-872-X

Eucharistic Adoration in Primary Schools

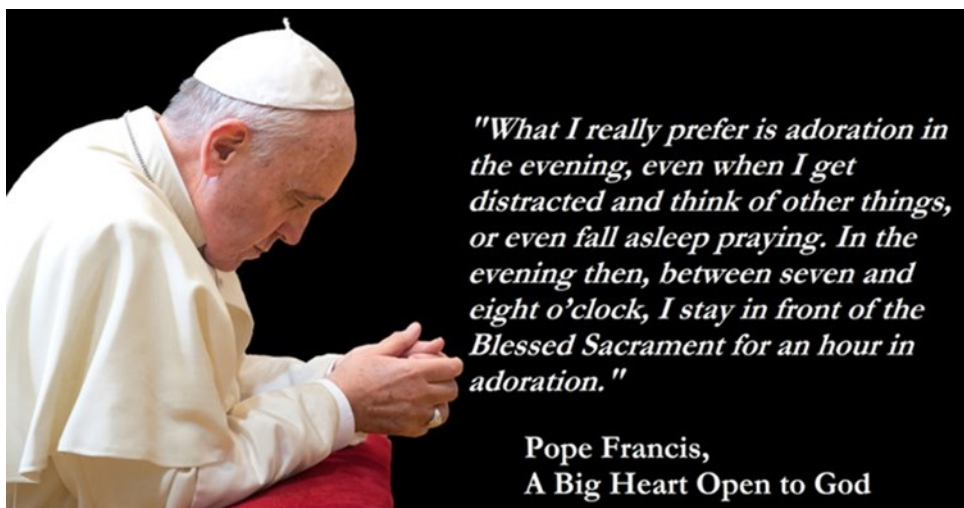
Father Joe Balmer

The Eucharist is “the source and summit of Christian life” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1324-1327). Many High Schools enable young people to experience Eucharistic Adoration in their oratories where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the tabernacle. Teachers – and sometimes senior pupils – have been trained on how to expose and depose the Blessed Sacrament in the monstrance. How can we offer this rich experience to Primary children where there is no dedicated oratory?



Father Joe Balmer has kindly shared the format which he has used.

- Get the children to settle and sit comfortably on the floor.
- Explain about the monstrance before exposing the Blessed Sacrament.
- Use a piece of music to help create an atmosphere of quiet and stillness.
- Explain that Jesus is truly present in front of them and is so glad to be with them. Encourage the children to speak to Him in their own words and let Him share with them His love and peace and carry any of their anxieties or worries.
- A short period of silence is followed by the Divine Praises as the children repeat each Divine Praise after the priest. This concludes with a blessing with the monstrance.
- Finish with a hymn.



School Mission Group



St Patrick's Primary

As Catholic teachers, we are called to teach children “to know, to love and to serve God” and this is integral our mission as Catholic Schools.

One way that we can guide our children in ‘knowing and loving’ God is through prayer. We all have prayers that we say together every day whether it be at home, in school or on our way in between in the car! Prayers that are dear to us, we can say without much thought, more often than not. Like many schools, our pupils pray at four points throughout the day; at the start of the day, at the end of the day and before and after lunch. They pray traditional prayers that build the cornerstone of their prayer life.

For a number of years, we have considered the idea of writing our own school prayer but the time just never seemed right, or perhaps ‘the call’ wasn’t there. During Session 2022-23 whilst considering our whole school pupil voice groups, we decided to create a Mission Group who would help to support and develop the faith life of our school. Encouraged by our chaplain, Mgr Gerry Gallagher, the group quickly gained momentum and decided their first task – to write a school prayer.

The Mission Group quickly got to work and at their first meeting discussed what they felt makes St. Patrick’s special and what things are important to us in our school. After gathering these ideas together, the group met with Fr Gerry who spoke to them about the important things to consider when writing a prayer. He then supported the group in thinking about how the ideas that had come up with so far could be developed into a prayer.

After these meetings, the group then got to work writing the prayer. It was challenging to include all of the things that they wanted to be in our prayer without making it too long or difficult to learn. The group got together and read through our first version. The prayer was re-drafted and re-drafted until everyone was happy with our prayer.

It was clear that the members of the Mission Group were excited by what they were part of. They understood the importance of the task they were undertaking and were so proud of what they achieved. There was a buzz about the school when the group were working together and it was clear that the pupils felt a real sense of ownership of the task in hand.

When the group were happy with the prayer, they decided to share the prayer with members of school staff and asked for their feedback. Again, pupils responded well to this, appreciating the support and advice they received to make adaptations.

Then it was on to the final design stage. The group picked colours, fonts and images to go along with the prayer. They carefully thought through each step of the design process, making thoughtful choices throughout. For example, when looking for an image of St Patrick to use on the prayer card, they decided to use a photograph of a statue of St. Patrick which can be found in Lough Derg, Ireland. They liked this image because it shows St. Patrick not in the traditional way we might see him dressed, like a Bishop with grand robes, but instead as a young, vibrant Patrick. They felt this image made St. Patrick seem more relatable to them.

One month after the Mission Group’s first meeting, our new prayer was launched on our school feast day, 17th March 2023. The members of the Mission Group led a short presentation at the end of Mass to introduce the prayer to the school community and we were delighted to be joined by many members of the parish community.



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Copies of the prayer were presented to each class and can now be found proudly displayed in all rooms in our school. Prayer cards were sent home to all families and are given to all new families who join our school community. They were also given to the members of the congregation at the end of Mass. We hope that our school prayer becomes a central part of the faith journey of the St. Patrick's Family and that we will all grow to know, to love and to serve God a little better through our prayer.

St. Patrick's School Prayer

Father in heaven, please bless us today.

We thank you for St. Patrick's school and those who help us
learn and grow.

We thank you for the friendship, smiles and fun we share.

Help us to make our school a safe and happy place to be:
a place where all are welcome, a place where all belong.

Help us to respect each other, to do your will and always try
our best.

May we always remember those most in need of your love
not just in school but in our wider community.

May we continue to grow together with
Christ as our guide
and, like St. Patrick our patron,
may we spread your message every day:
keeping kindness at the heart of all we
think and do and say.

We offer our prayers through
Christ our Lord,

Amen.



Prayer Cards for First Holy Communion and Confirmation St Joseph's Parish, Clarkston

Peter McMillan, Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council

As our Parish Priest at St Joseph's Clarkston, Canon Stephen has a very close spiritual relationship with the local Catholic Schools. Canon Stephen devotes a significant amount of his time to working with the staff and pupils in the school and parish environment, thus helping to nourish pupils in the development of their Faith.

Building on this, the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) has formed excellent working groups with the school staff. PPC members frequently liaise with teachers from both our primary schools, Our Lady of the Missions and St Joseph's, to explore ways of providing pupils and their families with opportunities to actively participate in the life of St Joseph's Parish. To date this has involved creating a monthly Young People & Family Mass. In addition, the P6/P7 pupils participate in the Masses by welcoming, reading, taking forward the gifts in the offertory procession and at the end of Mass by distributing materials and assisting with the SVDP box collections. Families are encouraged to attend the monthly Mass and coffee morning and schools communicate the date and time in advance through social media. This has resulted in many families becoming regularly involved.

Every year the teachers devote their time and energy at school in preparing our young people for receiving the Sacraments. This year the parish and the schools wanted to unite in prayerful reflection and celebration for it is important that our young people and their families feel the spiritual support of both the parish and school at these milestones in the development of their faith. Many ideas were considered, firstly through the working group of PPC and school staff members and then also by seeking the advice of our Parish Safeguarding Officers. The final result of these discussions was the proposal for Parish Prayer Cards to be provided by the Parish.

The Diocesan Education Department was approached and kindly agreed to create an appropriate prayer and design image for both the First Holy Communion and Confirmation prayer cards. An anonymous donor also kindly offered to cover the printing cost. Well in advance of the actual dates for the Sacramental services both prayer cards were distributed, via classroom teachers to the young pupils at school and when attending Mass at St Joseph's our parishioners were offered the prayer cards too. The prayer cards were very well received by pupils, parents, and parishioners. This prayer could then be used at parish Masses by parishioners, at school by pupils and at home by families uniting us all in prayerful thanksgiving.

Our grateful thanks go to all those involved in preparing, supporting, and praying for our young people whether at home, in the schools or the parish. We look forward to continuing this initiative for future Sacramental preparations.

Prayer Cards for First Holy Communion and Confirmation St Joseph's Parish, Clarkston



*First Holy
Communion*

*Dear God, our Father
We pray for the children of St. Joseph's
Parish who are preparing to receive
the Sacrament of First Eucharist.*

*As they receive Jesus for the first time,
we pray that they will be filled with
the love of Jesus. May this spiritual
nourishment help them to grow
closer to you.*

*We pray that this day will be the start
of a life-long love of receiving the
precious gift of the Holy Eucharist.*

*We ask you to bless them and to keep
them in your loving care.*

Amen



*Sacrament of
Confirmation*

*Dear God, our Father
We join together in praying for the
young people of St. Joseph's Parish,
who are preparing to receive the
Sacrament of Confirmation.*

*We ask you to grant them the gifts of
wisdom, knowledge, understanding,
counsel, fortitude, piety and fear of the
Lord. We pray, filled with your Spirit,
they will share your message of love,
justice and mercy to all that they meet.*

*May your Spirit guide and strengthen
them, as they increase their
relationship with You.*

Amen

The prayer cards were printed by BURNS PUBLICATIONS, CALEDONIA HOUSE,
THORNIEBANK IND. ESTATE, GLASGOW G46 8JT - TEL 07984641794 (MICHAEL BURNS)

Generation Hope Outdoor Retreat

Notre Dame High and St Columba's High

On Friday 2nd June, a group of 36 S1-S3 pupils and seven staff set out on the road towards Cairn Brae Camp to participate in the inaugural Generation Hope Outdoor Retreat organised by Mary's Meals in conjunction with the Craig Lodge Community.

On arrival in the Perthshire countryside we were filled with awe by the picturesque setting for our Camp. At the centre of the site was Loch Monzievaird which was surrounded by log cabins that would become home to our group for the next four nights, open grass spaces for sport and recreation as well as outdoor table games. The inside venue was used for meals as well as Holy Mass, testimonies and Praise and Worship.

With another three school groups and also two youth groups arriving during the day the camp started to get busy and opportunities for new friendships discovered. After lunch the timetable of outdoor activities began and each group was given a scheduled timeslot across the four days. Groups had the opportunity to participate in zip-lining across the loch, swimming and water activities, tree climbing, archery as well as canoeing and kayaking. The first day of the camp concluded with an inspiring testimony from Magnus

MacFarlane-Barrow about how God has worked through his life and he finished by telling us that we are all *Generation Hope*.

On Saturday the various outdoor activities continued with time also being given to a testimony with some



Generation Hope Outdoor Retreat - Notre Dame High and St Columba's High

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Praise and Worship in the morning, lunch, more outdoor activities and then we came together for the first celebration of Holy Mass of the weekend.

Sunday began with the group going for a walk around the loch and enjoying the peaceful atmosphere. This was then followed by Sunday Mass offered by our very own Bishop John and then groups again participated in various outdoor activities. Sunday evening finished with a testimony and then a Service of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament with Confession available with the seven priests participating in the Camp. It was such a blessing to see so many of those present immediately jump up and join the line for confession, this was a powerful witness to the Spirit working.

Monday was the last full day of the retreat and again the outdoor activities were on offer throughout the day as well as time for prayer, Holy Mass and again the day came to a conclusion inside with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, opportunities again for Confession and also Prayer Ministry. For many this last night became the main highlight of the camp, the atmosphere was so profound, so powerful and the energy of the Holy Spirit moving amongst us was tangible. Following this we gathered around the camp fire to finish off the last night.

The last day seemed to come around very quickly, bags were packed and we were ready to depart. Before departure we had time for one last session that began with the singing of the new 'unofficial' camp anthem 'Waymaker' which was sung with such power again we could sense the work of the Holy Spirit and after this school groups were asked to consider different ways in which we could build upon the legacy of this camp and embed *Generation Hope* within our schools. Following lunch it was time to get back on the bus and head home changed by our experiences, deepening our relationship with the Lord and encouraged to be *Generation Hope*.



"I can't forget the testimonies, they were all so lovely, Lauren's made me feel better and more confident in myself"

"Having witnessed all the joy and love you have for yourself and God I have realised that I am just the way I'm meant to be and even in moments of weakness God is always there for me"

Professional Development Opportunities

In addition to the Diocesan Primary and Secondary CLPL Calendars, we would encourage staff to consider the following professional development opportunities where appropriate.

ATQRE

The Additional Teaching Qualification in Religious Education for Catholic Schools is for qualified Primary and Secondary teachers who wish to become specialist Secondary RE teachers. It consists of 2 x 40 Credits (Level 10) courses that are recognised by the GTCS and which can be used to apply for Professional Recognition in the subject. The courses are taught by the St Andrew's Foundation for Catholic Teacher Education at the University of Glasgow.

The course is a blend of face-to-face and online teaching beginning in January 2024.

- Saturday 20th January, 10-5pm (**On Campus**)
- Tuesday 13th Feb, 5-7pm (**Online**)
- Tuesday 5th March, 5-7pm (**Online**)
- Tuesday 26th March, 5-7pm (**Online**)
- Tuesday 16th April, 5-7pm (**Online**)
- Tuesday 7th May, 5-7pm (**Online**)
- Saturday 18th May, 10-5pm (**On Campus**)

[https://www.gla.ac.uk/study/cpd/atqreforcatholicschools/#tab=structure,re\(catholic\)specialism%20part1,re\(catholic\)specialism%20part2](https://www.gla.ac.uk/study/cpd/atqreforcatholicschools/#tab=structure,re(catholic)specialism%20part1,re(catholic)specialism%20part2)

The Diocese supports the **ATQRE** and will pay **one third of the fees** for any applicants who live in the diocese, this is payable **on completion** of the course and having attended Bishop John's monthly support sessions.

Setting Out on the Road

This is a course for qualified Primary and Secondary teachers which leads to the award of the Catholic Teacher's Certificate (CTC), enabling the recipient to teach Religious Education in the Catholic school, if eligible to do so. It is taught by the St Andrew's Foundation for Catholic Teacher Education, University of Glasgow.

Applicants will require to provide a Priest's Reference from their parish priest or a priest who knows them.

Further information, application form and reference form are available at:

[University of Glasgow - Study - Continuing professional development - CPD for Teachers](#)

The course will cost £310.00 payable on registration but which is **fully refunded** by the diocese **on completion** of the course and attending Bishop John's monthly support sessions.

Dates at the University of Glasgow Campus:

- Thursday 31 August
- Friday 1 September and
- Friday 6 October 2023.

Leadership in Catholic Schools Course

The Diocese has developed a leadership course which is aimed at Principal Teachers who are hoping to progress to senior leadership positions. We are aware that some Primary Schools do not have Principal Teachers and, therefore, the course will be open to those members of staff who have fulfilled informal leadership roles within their schools. In addition, staff who, through consultation with their Head Teacher or other Senior Leader, have indicated a desire and willingness to move to the next step in their career may wish to apply to participate in the course.

As part of the course, participants are required to lead an aspect of work within their schools to enhance its Catholic mission. This work could relate to areas such as the Curriculum, Chaplaincy, Partnership with Parents, Home-School-Parish links, Values, Faith in Action, or any aspect of the School Improvement Plan related to its Catholic Mission.

The course consists of five twilight sessions (4pm-5.30pm) in the Diocesan Offices. Each session explores key messages on aspects of leadership and engages participants in individual reflection followed by group discussion on practical scenarios.

Session One – What is Leadership? (20 September 2023)

This session examines a range of studies on the nature of leadership:

- the distinction and relationship between leadership and management;
- the leadership styles required to effect change;
- the qualities and attributes necessary for leadership.

Session Two - What is Distinctive about Leadership in Catholic Schools? (25 October 2023)

In this session we will explore the distinctive nature of leadership in Catholic schools:

- the distinctive role of the Catholic school leader;
- the concept of servant leadership;
- the spirituality of Catholic leaders.

Session Three – Mission, Vision and Values in Catholic Schools (22 November 2023)

In this session we will examine the mission, vision and values of Catholic schools:

- What do Vatican documents say about the mission of Catholic schools?
- What is distinctive about the vision of Catholic schools?
- What are Gospel values and how should they permeate the life of Catholic schools?

Session Four – Self-Evaluation of Leadership in Catholic Schools (24 November 2024)

This session focusses on self-evaluation in the context of Catholic leadership by:

- considering examples of Catholic leadership frameworks
- encouraging participants individually and with fellow participants to reflect on the key messages, features of effective practice and how they would gather evidence to base judgements.

Session Five – Sharing Practice (19 June 2024)

In this session, we will celebrate the achievements of the participants and enable them to share:

- the work they have undertaken and how they went about their project;
- the impact of their work on young people and the school community;
- what they have learned and what they would do differently in future.

An application form is available from Director.Schools@rcdop.org.uk and should be returned by Wednesday 6 September. There is no course fee.

Themes for Prayer and Assemblies



Diocese of Paisley
Education Department

August

Welcome to the New School Year

We commend our school communities – staff, pupils and parents – to the Lord as we embark on a new school year. Father John Morrison, Vicar Episcopal for Youth and Vocations, has produced an assembly which has been uploaded to *TEAMS/Education Resources/Prayers and Assemblies/August-October*. In addition, you may find the following prayer from the Diocese of Ossory appropriate.

God our Father, we know that you love and care for us with an everlasting love. Today we pray for your blessing on each one of us as we begin this new school year. Open our minds to the possibilities that this year holds. Open our eyes to the wonder of each new day. Open our hearts to the love of your Spirit. Lord, hold us in the palm of your hand and help us grow in mind and body. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

September

Vocations

Priests for Scotland materials will be uploaded onto *TEAMS/Education Resources for Schools/Prayers and Assemblies/Vocations* but we would ask all schools to include in morning prayers or assemblies the intention of more Vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Alternatively, at the end of the school day, classes could say 'The 4 O'Clock Prayer', recalling the time that Jesus called Andrew to follow Him.

Lord Jesus, at this time of day, you called Andrew, to be your disciple. We pray that the men and women of our country may hear your call to discipleship. May they respond to your call with generosity. Inspired by the example of Mary may they say 'yes' to service in the priesthood, the consecrated life and the diaconate.

- *Mary, Star of the New Evangelisation, pray for us*
- *Andrew, Patron Saint of Scotland, pray for us.*
- *Mirin, Patron Saint of our Diocese, pray for us.*
- *All Saints of our land, pray for us.*

The Season of Creation

The season begins on 1 September, the World Day of Prayer for Creation, and continues until 4 October, the Feast of St Francis. It involves all Christian Churches in praying for our common home.

Its theme this year is '**Let Justice and Peace Flow**': <https://seasonofcreation.org/> It is based upon the Prophet Amos' cry: "*But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!*" (Amos 5: 24). We are called to join the river of justice and peace, to take up climate and ecological justice, and to speak out with and for communities most impacted by climate injustice and the loss of biodiversity.

We would remind schools of the materials in the August 2020 *Centred on Christ* (*TEAMS/Education Resources for Schools/Centred on Christ* and the associated PowerPoint (*TEAMS/Education Resources for Schools/Themes for Prayers and Assemblies/Caring for God's Creation*). There is also an article by Mark Booker of SCIAF in the August 2021 edition of *Centred on Christ* which has links to resources.

October

The Rosary

October is the month dedicated to the Holy Rosary. Please try to give the young people the experience of meditating on the Rosary, perhaps even a decade each day. There is also the possibility of linking it to the **Mission Rosary**.

The Diocesan P1-P7 planners provide the following guidance on sharing the Mysteries of the Rosary:

- P2 – The Joyful Mysteries
- P3 – The Sorrowful Mysteries
- P4 – The Glorious Mysteries
- P5 – The Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries
- P6 – The Luminous Mysteries
- P7 – All

S1 RERC 3-14a deepens the pupils' knowledge of Mary, Mother of God and can explain the importance of statues and prayers associated with Our Lady.

S2 RERC 3-15a encourages us to share with young people that Mary is honoured particularly in the months of May and October.

S3 RERC 4-15a includes a focus on the Rosary, with pupils growing in understanding that Christians meditate on the mysteries of Jesus' life, death and resurrection by praying the Mysteries of the Rosary.

Many resources provide support for praying the Rosary e.g. www.catholicity.com/prayers

It is also encouraging to see a growing number of schools setting up **Rosary Groups** or having Min-Vinnies lead the Rosary at times during the year. An example of the Rosary Group in All Saints Primary was contained in the August 2022 edition of *Centred on Christ* (p4) which can be found on TEAMS.

The Missions

October **World Mission Sunday** will be celebrated on **22 October**, although it may be a theme you could address throughout the month of October in Religious Education, morning prayers or assemblies.

The Pope's message for **World Mission Day 2023** can be found here:

[Pope Francis World Mission Sunday Message 2023](#)

The theme ***Hearts on fire, feet on the move (Luke 24:13-35)*** is inspired by the story of Jesus and the disciples on the road to Emmaus after the resurrection. Summaries can be found at:

<https://www.usccb.org/news/2023/mission-begins-meeting-jesus-scriptures-and-eucharist-pope-says>

<https://www.asianews.it/news-en/World-Mission-Day-2023:-A-wounded-humanity-%E2%80%98is-in-need-of-the-Good-News%E2%80%99-57605.html>

In his message, Pope Francis said that coming to know Jesus through the Scriptures and the Eucharist should fill Catholics with enthusiasm to joyfully share the Gospel with others.

- How can we nurture a love of the scriptures? Father Matthew will be sharing throughout this academic session a short reflection on each Sunday's Gospel. Links to YouTube will be shared each week. How could we use these?
- How can we nurture a love of the Eucharist? In light of last session's Carlo Acutis Eucharistic Miracles Encounter, can we enable children and young people to experience Eucharistic Adoration?

We would encourage Primary Schools to join schools across Scotland in celebrating **First Friday Masses for the Missions on Friday 6 October**. Failing that, the school could hold a Missionary Children's Prayer Service on that day, again making it colourful and reflective of the universality of our Faith. We have uploaded Missio Missionary Children's Mass resources and Missionary Children Prayer Services onto the Diocesan TEAM/Education Resources for Schools/Mission Month.

October

The Missions

(Continued from page 16)

We would encourage you to recite a decade of the Rosary with pupils during October for the intentions of our missionary priests and religious. Resources are available via: <https://www.missioscotland.com/mission-rosary>

Missio's projects for Mission Month focus on **Sri Lanka** and will be supporting two projects (among others) that have a specific children's focus.

- A nutritional programme for the pupils attending St Patrick's College in Talawakelle, many of whom are children of tea plantation workers
- An after-school education programme to give some of the poorest children who attend St Patrick's a good environment in which to maximise their education.

Gerard Gough of Missio travelled in June to garner video and photo footage and information with regards to these projects. More information will be on the Missio website, but they suggest that pupils could do some fact finding on the country too.

Missio will also print a **Mission Month Prayer Calendar** which pupils can follow during Mission Month.

Missio YouTube videos which will be of interest:

- An explanation of Missionary Children (formerly Holy Childhood) and why it's important to support it - [Children Helping Children](#)
- A day in the life of Daphne, a Ugandan schoolgirl - [A day in the life of Daphne](#)

The new link for the primary schools' resources is: <https://www.missioscotland.com/primary-schools>

Secondary School materials that deal with the **Mission of the Church, Missio and Social Justice** and the **Church at Work in our World** can be accessed via a new link: <https://www.missioscotland.com/high-schools>

Five Star Missio Scotland Schools

Missio has launched its Five Star Schools campaign, inviting Primary Schools to engage with it in five very special ways.

- Praying the Rosary during Mission Month (or during May)
- Fundraising for Missio Scotland
- Commission Missio Champions
- Putting on a Missionary Saints play
- Entering our Christmas Art Competition.

More information is available on the Missio Scotland website.

When you have completed the task and provided Missio Scotland with evidence (photo, video, social media post), we will send out the appropriate star. When you have a star for each of the five tasks on your chart, you will have become a 5 Star Missio Scotland School and will receive your own Missy Moo! If schools do this, three years in a row, they will be presented with a special Missio Scotland Schools flag.



Posters were sent to every school in Scotland. If you have not received them, please let us know.

Missio Visits

If you would like Missio to visit your school for an assembly, to collect a cheque or maybe just to chat about the work we do here at Missio Scotland - please use the contact form to request a visit:

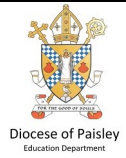
<https://www.missioscotland.com/primary-schools>.

Diocese of Paisley - Education and Youth Calendar: 2023-24



Month	Date	Day	Time	Event	Location	Target Group
AUG	15	Tue		The Assumption		
AUG	16	Wed	9am	Welcome to New Session	St Andrew's, G'nock	All staff – particularly NQTs
AUG	23	Wed	4pm	Welcome to New Session	St Mirin's Cathedral	All staff – particularly NQTs
SEP	10-17			Vocations Awareness Week	School-based	S1-S6
SEP	13	Wed	10am	P7 Mass for Confirmandi	St Mary's, Greenock	P7 (Inverclyde)
SEP	14	Thu	10.15am	P7 Mass for Confirmandi	St Mirin's Cathedral	P7 (Renfrew & E Renfrew)
SEP	14	Thu	7pm	Diocesan Mass for Vocations	St Mirin's Cathedral	S1-S6 pupils (Primary pupils welcome)
SEP	15	Fri	10-2pm	Vocations Conference	Cathedral Halls	S6
SEP	17	Sun	2-5pm	Primary School Day (Youth)	St Mary's, Paisley	P4-P7
SEP	26	Tue	10.00am 2.30pm	Aid to the Church – Youth Rally (Registration from 9.30am)	Motherwell Concert Hall	S1-S6
OCT				Mission Month	School-based	P1-S6
OCT	4	Wed	12:30 for 1.15pm	Afternoon of Reflection for HTs - <i>The Beatitudes</i>	St Columba's, Renfrew	Primary and Secondary HTs
OCT	6	Fri		First Friday Masses for the Missions	School/parish	Primary Schools
NOV	1	Wed		All Saints Day	School-based	P1-S6
NOV	9	Thu	1.30- 3.30pm	Strengthening Home-School- Parish Partnerships	Cathedral Halls	HTs and Clergy
NOV	16-30			Catholic Education 'Week' <i>'Pilgrims of Faith'</i>	Schools and parishes	All schools
NOV	23	Thu	10am- 2.30pm	World Youth Day 2023 Conference	St Mirin's Cathedral	S3
NOV	22	Wed		Red Wednesday (ACN)	School-based events	All schools
NOV	26	Sun	2-5pm	Primary Advent Day	St Mary's, Paisley	P4-P7
DEC				Advent Reflection Service	Link to YouTube	All teachers
JAN	7	Sun	2-5pm	Primary School Day	St Mary's, Paisley	P4-P7
FEB	14	Wed		Ash Wednesday	School-based	All schools
FEB	18	Sun	2-15pm	Primary Lent Day	St Mary's, Paisley	P4-P7

Diocese of Paisley - Education and Youth Calendar: 2023-24



Month	Date	Day	Time	Event	Location	Target Group
APR	17	Wed	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	Confirmandi - St Thomas', St Mark's & St John's
APR	18	Thu	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	Confirmandi - St Charles', St Peter's & St Paul's
APR	24	Wed	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	Confirmandi - St Cadoc's & St Clare's
APR	25	Thu	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	Confirmandi - St Catherine's, St Fergus, St James', St John Ogilvie & St Mary's
APR	29	Mon		33 Day Diocesan Consecration to Jesus through Mary begins (ends on 1 June)	School-based	P7 pupils
MAY	1	Wed	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	St Anne's, St James' & St John Bosco
MAY	2	Thu	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	OLM & St Joseph's
MAY	9	Thu		Ascension Day	School-based	P1-S6
MAY	13-17			ACN Rosary for Peace	School-based	P1-P7
MAY	15	Wed	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	OLOP, St Anthony's, St David's, St Fillan's & St Margaret's
MAY	16	Thu	6.00pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	Craigmarloch, St Francis', St John's, St Michael's & St Colm's
MAY	19	Sun	2-5pm	Primary Day - Pentecost	St Mary's, Paisley	P4-P7
MAY	22	Wed	6.00pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	All Saints, St Mary's & St Patrick's
MAY	23	Thu	6.00pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	St Andrew's, St Joseph's, St Ninian's and St Joseph's & St Patrick's Parish
MAY	26	Sun	2-5pm	Day for Altar Servers	Diocesan Offices	Altar Servers
JUN	3	Mon	TBC	National Caritas Awards Ceremony	Clyde Auditorium	Caritas Students
JUN	11	Tue	9.45-3pm	Teaching in Catholic Schools	Cathedral Halls	S6
JUN	12	Wed	4.30pm	Thanksgiving Mass	St Mirin's Cathedral	All staff – particularly NQTs



**Diocesan
Education Department
Twitter**

Thank you to all those schools who follow our Twitter account and 'like' our posts, enabling us to share the many good things you are doing in terms of the life of faith. It is so heartening to see Christ at the centre of your schools.

If you haven't already done so, please follow us:
@DoPEducation1.

Please also hashtag
**#@DoPEducation1Diocesan
Education Department
Twitter**

**Sharing our
Catholic
Mission on
Social Media**

In the April edition of Centred on Christ, we asked schools to reflect upon their use of social media in sharing their Catholic Mission.

- How well do we use social media to communicate our Catholic Mission with the school and local communities?
- How regularly do we post about the faith life of the school and pupils' learning in Religious Education; and how does that compare to other curricular areas?
- Would it be worthwhile having a look at other schools' posts? Is there anything we can learn from them to enhance our use of social media in sharing our Catholic Mission?
- If we have identified areas for improvement, how can we ensure that in future we do regularly share the devotional and liturgical life of the school, Faith in Action projects and learning in Religious Education?
- Are there ways in which the Diocesan Education Department could enhance its Twitter account? How can we increase re-Tweets and 'likes'? We are happy to take your views and suggestions.

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