

Centred on Christ

OCTOBER 2023



Dear Colleague,

The Theme of this year's **Catholic Education Week** is '*Pilgrims of Faith*'. Monsignor Denis Carlin has provided a reflection and prayer service for teaching and support staff which may be used during this period. Please share your Catholic Education Week events on social media.

We are looking forward to visiting **Clusters** to help us to shape future support for schools from the diocese. Among other items, we want to share how we will be using your *Developing in Faith* submissions. This will include sharing good practice across the diocese. We are grateful to St Anthony's Primary, St Cadoc's Primary and St Joseph's Primary for sharing their work.

Another mechanism for sharing practice will be the Joint Clergy and Head Teacher meeting on **Strengthening Home-School-Parish Partnerships** on Thursday 9 November in the Cathedral Hall. We hope that you will take time out of your very demanding lives to take part in this event.

The Parent Forum will meet in the Diocesan Offices on Monday 30 October at 7pm. Chairs of Parent Councils and Church Representatives are warmly invited to attend. We will share information about initiatives, including the new Secondary Religious Education course.

We are very grateful to Father Matthew Carlin, Vicar Episcopal for Education, who shares a short weekly **Reflection on the Sunday Gospel** for Primary pupils on YouTube. We have received very positive feedback from a number of schools. Perhaps you could share these short reflections with parents on social media?

The **Themes for Prayers and Assemblies** contain links to resources for this term, particularly Advent. Last year, thanks to your support, the **Travelling Crib** initiative was a great success. Thanks also to our priests who inaugurated the programme with a blessing ceremony in school. For those schools wishing to extend it to other stages, we have a few cribs left which are available to buy at a discounted cost of £10. We would also encourage schools to take part in **Missio's Artwork Competition** and the **Justice & Peace Christmas Card Dungavel initiative**.

During the period of Covid restrictions, several priests shared **Advent and Lenten Reflections for staff** on YouTube. We now propose to move to a model where Father Matthew will share a format for an Advent service. This might be an opportunity to invite your chaplain to lead the service with staff, depending on his commitments.

Following the success of last session's **Generation Hope** Camp for S1-S3 pupils, a week has been set aside exclusively for Paisley Diocese (week beginning 27 May tbc). We are also grateful to those schools who have engaged with **NET** to provide high quality spiritual input for young people. The Diocesan Youth Commission is holding a **World Youth Day event for S3 pupils** on Thursday 23 November (10.00—2.30) in the Cathedral - thank you for your support.

Thank you for all that you do to keep Christ at the centre of your school and for sharing it on social media.

Best wishes,

Neil Roarty

Neil Roarty
Director of Schools



*Our Lady of Paisley;
pray for us*

Inside this issue:

Catholic Education Week 2023	2
Reviewing Our Vision and Values	4
Sanctuary Space - St Joseph's Primary School	7
Developing the Faith of Staff through Prayer Breakfasts - St Cadoc's Primary School	9
Laudato Si' - St. Anthony's Primary School	10
Justice and Peace Scotland – General Information and Christmas Card Campaign	12
Missio Resources	14
SCIAF Resources	15
Themes for Prayer and Assemblies	16
Diocese of Paisley - Education and Youth Calendar: 2023-24	19
CLPL (October-January)	20

Catholic Education Week 2023

“Pilgrims of Faith” - Monsignor Denis Carlin

Pilgrimage has been a part of church tradition since the early centuries, perhaps most famously since the fourth century to the Holy Land to walk where Jesus walked. The Muslim occupation of the land we now call Israel/Palestine put paid to that, but new possibilities soon emerged, focussing on sites connected to the apostles like Rome, resting place of Peter and Paul, or Santiago de Compostela, the reputed tomb of St James in North West Spain. Nearer to our own time we can add the shrines of the Marian apparitions in Lourdes and Fatima. Here in Scotland it is very encouraging to see renewed interest in St Columba's Isle of Iona. We are spoiled for choice! But what is a pilgrimage?

I think that each pilgrimage starts off from where we are and involves a journey to somewhere we believe God wants us to be, even if only for a short while. It is always a journey of discovery, of growth, of conversion and of purpose. On that journey of faith, we meet people, we both accompany and are accompanied, we give and we receive, we are challenged and hopefully grow closer to God and our neighbour.

Looking at it that way, the whole of our lives from Baptism to death and judgement is a journey of faith in which we travel with many people beside us. Integral to that “big pilgrimage” is our vocation as teachers, priests, spouses, parents or whatever. I am contemplating celebrating my fifty years of priesthood next 29th June. As I look back over my journey I am increasingly aware of all those who have helped me in many ways, at many levels, to approach my pilgrimage goal. In attempting to share my own faith, I have received much more than I have ever given.

Good teaching demands good learning, the ability to be surprised at and appreciative of what others (even those in our care) can give us. Pilgrims who walk the way of St James to Compostela have a greeting they exchange with others on the road: ***Buen Camino***. May your walk of faith always bring you closer to God and those you love and serve!



Catholic Education Week 2023 — “Pilgrims of Faith”

A Prayer Service for Staff (Mgr D Carlin)

(Continued from page 2)

Leader: We place ourselves in the presence of God to listen to his word and to ask his help.

Reading: **Matthew 28:16-20**

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him, they fell down before him, though some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, “All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Go therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.”

Leader: Lord Jesus, we believe that you walk with us. Help our faith to deepen and grow on the journey. *Lord, hear us*

Help us to remember that you are with us every step of the way. *Lord, hear us.*

Help us when we falter on the journey and lose heart. *Lord, hear us.*

Help us to help others on the way. *Lord, hear us.*

Help us to see you in those who travel with us. *Lord, hear us.*

Help us to have an open mind and an open heart. *Lord, hear us.*

Help us to remember always what our journey is for. *Lord, hear us.*

Help us to truly appreciate all who help us. *Lord, hear us.*

Leader: We sum up all our prayers as we turn to the Father and say:

Our Father.....

Loving Father, we make these and all our prayers in faith because we make them through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Hymn: **Walk with me, O my Lord**

Reviewing Our Vision and Values

Prayers, Resources and Reflective Questions

Reviewing School Values

The theme of the recent Afternoon of Reflection for Head Teachers was the Beatitudes: what they mean, what they mean for us and what they mean for our schools and our values. The following prayers and resources are offered as a support to schools planning to review and refresh their Vision and Values.

Prayers as we Reflect on our Values

These short prayers might be appropriate at meetings when staff are reflecting upon our values and how they are lived in our schools. They may also be suitable for pupil assemblies, depending on the age and stage of the children and young people, as they consider how they and their fellow pupils experience those values; and how they themselves live those values.

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

*Jesus, I trust in you. Please grant that I may always bring your **Hope** into our school.*

*Jesus, I trust in you. Please grant that I may always bring your **Love** into our school.*

*Jesus, I trust in you. Please grant that I may always bring your **Mercy** into our school.*

*Jesus, I trust in you. Please grant that I may always bring your **Forgiveness** into our school.*

*Jesus, I trust in you. Please grant that I may always bring your **Truth** into our school.*

*Jesus, I trust in you. Please grant that I may always bring your **Justice** into our school.*

*Jesus, I trust in you. Please grant that I may always bring your **Peace** into our school.*

*Jesus, I trust in you. Please grant that I may always bring your **Faithfulness** into our school.*

Leader: Let us now pray together in the words Jesus Himself taught us:

Our Father....

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

Resources

Several resources exist to help those schools who will be reviewing their values.

- *Developing in Faith - Promoting Gospel Values, SCES (including the appendices published in 2019)*
- *Christ at the Centre*, (Monsignor Marcus Stock, Catholic Education Service - England and Wales – pp 15-17, Catholic Truth Society 2005 and updated in 2012) https://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/images/Christ_at_the_Centre_1.pdf
- *Gospel Values for Catholic Schools*, Raymond Friel, Redemptorist Publications (11 Jan. 2017)
- *Developing in Faith: Prayers and Reflections for Staff - Promoting Gospel Values pp 5-6* (TEAMS/Education Resources for Schools/Staff Reflection Resources).

Reviewing Our Vision and Values

(Continued from page 4)

In addition, *Centred in Christ* contained articles on Gospel Values in the following editions:

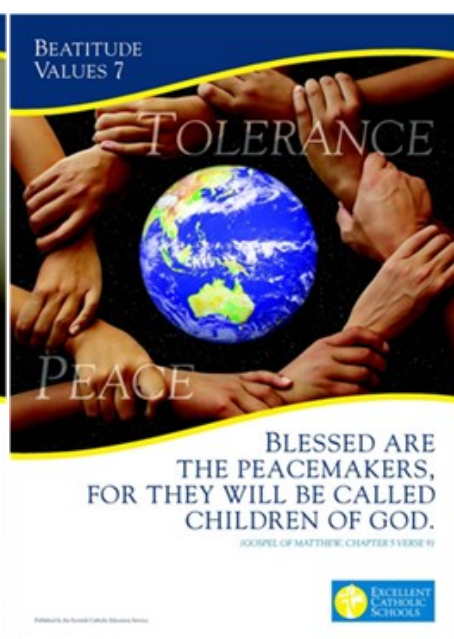
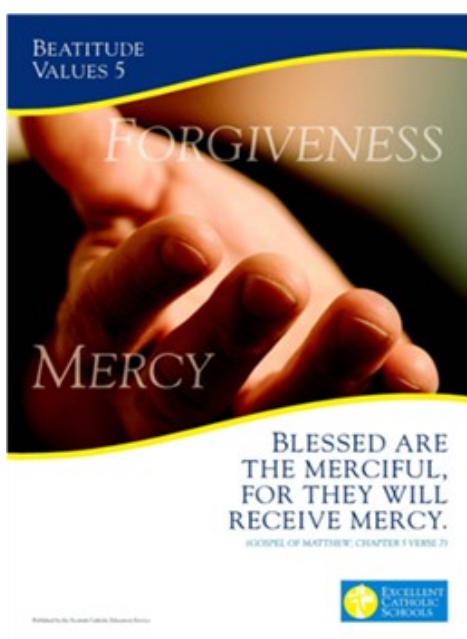
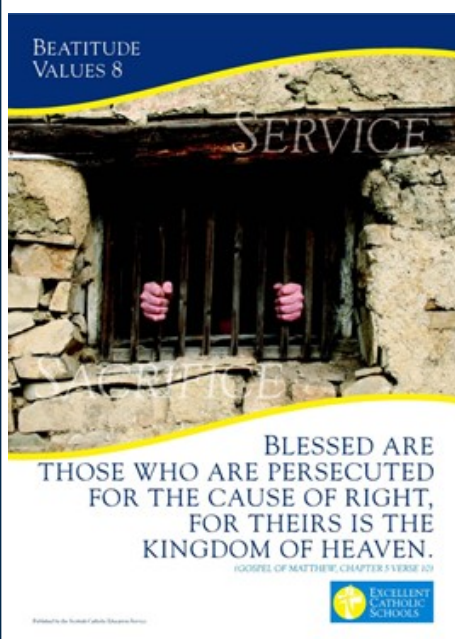
- Promoting Gospel Values, January 2020, pp2-4
- Taking a Closer Look at Justice – Church Teaching, January 2020, p5
- Trying to Get Fairness Right – A High School's Experience, January 2020, p6
- Promoting Gospel Values: Reflection and Prayer Service, Father John Eagers, January 2022, pp2-5
- Relating Gospel Values to Objective Truths, January 2022, p6
- Qualities of Good Leadership – Integrity, October 2022, p7.

These can be downloaded from TEAMS/Education Resources for Schools

Values for Life

In 2008, SCES published a resource '*Values for Life*' which enables schools to examine their values in relation to Gospel Values, rooted in the Beatitudes, and the four *Curriculum for Excellence* values. It also encourages schools to reflect on how those values are made concrete in the life of the school. SCES still has some copies of the pack, CD and posters available.

- *Values for Life* Folder (Booklet, CD and Values for Life poster) - £35.00
- *Values for Life* Booklet - £8.00
- *Values for Life* CD - £20
- *Values for Life* Poster - B2 Size £2.00
- *Values for Life* Folder and eight Beatitude posters - £45.00



Reviewing Our Vision and Values

(Continued from page 5)

Key Questions

- How far do **Gospel** Values underpin our curriculum, policies, ethos and pastoral care?
- Is there a distinction between Gospel values and virtues and processes such as 'Teamwork' and outcomes such as 'Excellence'?
- Which members of the community did we engage in agreeing our values? How did we involve all staff (not just teachers), pupils, parents and parishes?
- How well do we share our values? How far do we 'unpack' their meaning?
- How far do we live the values of the Gospel – not just teach them? How far do we enable children and young people to experience them?
- How well do we share our values with all members of the community, including parents and partner agencies?
- How do we monitor the impact of our values?

HMI and the Values of Catholic Schools

Leadership of Change

The headteacher reviewed the values recently with the chaplaincy team so they reflect better the teachings of the Gospel. These values are deeply embedded, widely understood, and evident in actions and behaviours. As a result, staff and young people enjoy positive and caring relationships.

St Benedict's High School, April 2023

Strengths of the School

Confident and happy children who are proud of their school and use their school values very well to shape their learning and relationships.

St Mary's Primary School, September 2023

Particular Strengths of the School

"The school's strongly positive ethos, including the way in which the school, as a community of faith engaged in learning, puts its values into practice."

HMI Report of a Catholic High School, 2010

Curriculum and Meeting Learning Needs

The curriculum is successful in its aim of providing a high-quality Catholic education based upon Gospel values."

HMI Report of a Catholic High School, 2010

Sanctuary Space



St Joseph's Primary School - Hannah Addison

An Introduction to Sanctuary Space

St Joseph's Primary School's 'Sanctuary Space' has developed over a number of years with the original aim being defined by pupils from the school *Pastoral Committee* as a 'tranquil space to connect with God, with others and to grow in faith'.

Sanctuary Space has grown and now provides a dedicated area where students can foster their relationship with God. This space serves as a peaceful and contemplative environment for prayer, reflection and spiritual growth. It is designed to support the holistic development of pupils, nurture their spiritual wellbeing and encourage a deeper understanding of their Catholic faith.



How Sanctuary Space Operates

Our school Pastoral Committee have been committed to nurturing this space and allowing children to take it in the direction that best enhances their spiritual connection with God.

Sanctuary Space first began in the Season of Advent. Once weekly, during Advent lunchtimes, the Committee set up the prayer space with an Altar, a crucifix, candles, religious images, religious quotes/posters and prayerful hymns and songs.

All pupils were then able to 'drop in' during their lunch break and engage in prayer reflection or take time to meditate. As *Sanctuary Space* has developed, the Pastoral Committee have included various opportunities for reflection throughout the liturgical year such as; October and May Rosary Reflections, Catholic Education Week Reflections, Advent Reflections, Lenten Reflections and much more. The invitation to utilise *Sanctuary Space* has been extended beyond the pupils to the staff, and they have greatly benefited from its presence.

Benefits

St Joseph's pupils have fed back on some of the key benefits. Some include;

A Safe Space- The prayer space provides a quiet and sacred environment where pupils can engage in personal and communal prayer, fostering a deep connection with God. It offers a place to seek guidance, express gratitude, and find solace in times of difficulty. Pupils have identified *Sanctuary Space* as somewhere they can 'just be' with no expectation.

Inclusivity - A particularly special element of *Sanctuary Space* is its inclusivity. It welcomes individuals of all backgrounds and faiths, encouraging unity and understanding. It is a place where students can find support in their journey of faith.

Nurturing Faith Development - By having this designated prayer space, the significance of prayer is explored and encouraged to allow pupils to develop a personal relationship with God and grow in their faith. This nurturing environment allows students to explore their beliefs, deepen their understanding of Catholic teachings, the school values (*Hope, Compassion, Justice, and Love*) and **all** the Gospel Values. It aims to cultivate a sense of spirituality that can positively impact their overall wellbeing.

Sanctuary Space in St Joseph's Primary School

(Continued from page 7)

Advice

Some practical suggestions to consider when creating such a space:

Group/Committee - Use an existing committee or group to develop the concept for your school. Perhaps the Mini Vinnies Group or a faith group within your school.

Start small - To begin, it is advisable to start small and gradually expand the *Sanctuary Space*, adding elements and features as needed. Perhaps dedicating one lunchtime within the season of Advent or Lent to trial the concept.

Location - *Sanctuary Space* is not just about a physical location. Finding a space or room in a busy school is difficult. To ensure flexibility and mobility, consider keeping the resources for the *Sanctuary Space* in a dedicated box, allowing for easy transportation and the ability to set up the space in different rooms as needed.

Simplicity - Organise the space with the items and resources gathered (*a small Altar, bibles, crucifix, statues, religious posters etc*) Additionally, include comfortable cushions and soft lighting to promote a serene atmosphere. There is no need for planned activities.

Prayer - Start and finish with a communal prayer to dedicate the time to God.

Communication - Lastly, ensure you have communicated and encouraged pupils and staff to utilise the sanctuary space for personal prayer, group activities and spiritual reflection.

Creating a *Sanctuary Space* in your school develops further opportunities for nurturing the whole child – mind, body, and spirit. It stands as a symbol of the enduring importance of Catholic education and the power of reflection and prayer in shaping young hearts and minds.



Developing the Faith of Staff through Prayer Breakfasts

St Cadoc's Primary School - Joanne Baker

Prayer breakfasts in a Catholic school offer a unique opportunity for staff to come together in friendship and deepen their faith. These gatherings extend beyond the classroom, nurturing a sense of community and spirituality amongst staff members. At St Cadoc's Primary our logo is 'Together in Faith and Learning'. Staff reflect during prayer breakfasts, nurturing not only their own faith development, but at the same time, supporting and enhancing through discussion, the faith development of colleagues.

Prayer breakfasts serve as a reminder that faith is not just a personal journey but a communal one. In the busy world of a school, these moments of stillness allow staff to pause, reflect and reconnect with their spiritual selves.

Sharing breakfast and prayer creates a sense of unity and belonging as a Catholic family. It fosters a supportive environment where staff can learn from one another in times of need and celebrate each other's joys. Identifying joy in our day to day interactions is a reminder of why we do what we do, focusing on the positive and celebrating the small achievements. Through this we develop feelings of gratitude, compassion and peace.

Through prayer and reflection staff strengthen their understanding of their Catholic faith. It becomes a guide and they build resilience when facing the challenges of teaching and nurturing our young people.

Prayer breakfasts provide a platform for discussion surrounding faith related topics. Staff can share their insights, doubts, and experiences, fostering a deeper understanding of their Catholic selves and the role it plays in their lives.

In a Catholic school faith is an integral part of our mission. These gatherings are a powerful reminder of the school's values and purpose. They reinforce the idea that faith development is not only for the pupils but extends to the entire school community.

Making time throughout the week offering a nurturing space for staff to come together, strengthen their faith, and support each other in their shared mission of educating and nurturing our pupils forms the identity of St Cadoc's. These gatherings go beyond professional development, they are an essential part of the holistic approach to education in a Catholic school.

Practical Matters

Breakfast is continental with croissants, butter, jam, yoghurts, mini packets of cereal, tea and coffee.

Anything that isn't eaten can then be used for the next week apart from the fresh pastries. It is also then easy to set up with staff helping themselves.



Laudato Si'

St Anthony's Primary School - Jacqui McBurnie, Head Teacher

How our *Laudato Si'* journey began

All schools were invited by Pope Francis to become a *Laudato Si'* school, supported in Scotland by SCES. St. Anthony's Primary School took up this invitation and began by establishing a *Laudato Si'* staff Working Party. Our next step was to establish a pupil group made up of children across all stages of the school with the aim to encourage pupil voice. We arranged a meeting with the school Chaplain and launched *Laudato Si'* with a whole-school service, as provided in the *Laudato Si'* school resources. At that point, we introduced the *Laudato Si'* hymn and a school prayer for Creation to be used daily in morning prayer and at our monthly Mass.

How it works in our school

We ringfenced time at a staff meeting to introduce the programme to all colleagues. At the meeting, we shared the *Laudato Si'* goals and planners which we had previously merged with the TiOF and Diocesan planners. This was to give colleagues an opportunity to begin an interdisciplinary approach to *Laudato Si'*, whilst running in parallel with the Liturgical planners. As a school, we decided to focus on four main *Laudato Si'* goals across the year: Response to the Cry of the Earth, Ecological Spirituality, Ecological Education, and Response to the Cry of the Poor. To support us in promoting Response to the Cry of the Earth and Ecological Spirituality, we contacted SCIAF to provide interactive workshops explaining the work the charity does. As a whole school, we created a prayer bouquet for our altars, and we designed a door display to showcase our work on the story of Creation and the ways in which we could be caring for the Earth.

Our impact so far

Listed below is the impact of our initial work of *Laudato Si'*:

- We increased staff awareness of the delivery of *Laudato Si'* and the content within.
- We raised pupils' awareness of the need to protect the world we live in, often promoting this at:
 - School lines
 - Within class
 - During monthly House meetings
 - During the *Laudato Si'* pupil group meetings
- We increased pupil voice and learning opportunities as a result of the *Laudato Si'* pupil group.
- During Lent, we had the opportunity to explore the impact the destruction of the environment is having on others through the SCIAF Wee Box Appeal.
- We improved children's awareness of what they can do to protect their own local environment by participating in the Team Up to Clean Up Campaign and through the use of playground litter picking ambassadors.

Laudato Si' – St. Anthony's Primary School

(Continued from page 10)

- Promotion of integrity when looking after our school environment and local community.
- The Green House launched recycling school uniforms to allow parent and school relationships to be strengthened. The Retro Rail event has taken place during parents' nights and open afternoon events. In addition, it has been used to support children who are in need of new uniforms when required. This supports the school's commitment to reduction of landfill sights.
- *Laudato Si'* pupil group led the Rosary during the month of May appreciating everything Mary did for us and the beauty in the world around us.

Advice for schools new to *Laudato Si'*

The first piece of advice is to identify one goal the school can begin to unpick – don't be scared of a right or wrong response as *Laudato Si'* is a lifelong journey within the school to support and encourage the new generation to care for the Common Good. Take time to work on the Bible references as this is where the key elements of *Laudato Si'* can be found. We would also suggest that, from the starting point, invite the local community to get involved and allow the pupils to see *Laudato Si'* in action (e.g. SCIAF, Team Up to Clean Up, RSPB, St. Vincent de Paul etc.).



Justice and Peace Scotland – General Information and Christmas Card Campaign

Anne-Marie Clements,
Catholic Social Teaching Engagement Officer, Justice and Peace Scotland:
Annemarie.clements@justiceandpeacescotland.org.uk

Justice and Peace Scotland is a commission of the Catholic Church, operating on behalf of the Bishops' Conference of Scotland. The Justice and Peace Commission facilitates local, national and international action in areas of human rights, social justice, peace building, and promoting care for creation in addition to supporting Scotland's Catholic community to respond to the social-political issues of today. All Justice and Peace activity is underpinned by the values of the Gospel and the Church's *Catholic Social Teaching*.



CST is authoritative Church direction and teaching on social, political and economic issues. It is the call from the Church to live out the Gospel while challenging injustice in today's world and is the "moral compass" that guides all Justice and Peace activity.

We are eager to work with schools, both pupils and staff, to raise awareness of Catholic Social Teaching so as to facilitate connections between our Catholic faith and the issues young people may care about in today's society such as poverty and the cost-of-living crisis, climate justice and care for the environment, capital punishment and imprisonment, or migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, for example.

Justice and Peace is available to facilitate a variety of talks and workshops on a wide range of human rights and social justice topics or to provide a general introduction to CST for pupils or staff. We can tailor inputs to your chosen topics and subject areas to provide a Catholic perspective on a particular issue whilst ensuring relevance to the overall learning and teaching within the school and to other school initiatives such as Laudato Si Schools or the Rights Respecting School Award. Please get in touch to find out more.

Dungavel Immigration Detention Centre – Christmas Card Campaign

We would like to invite all Paisley schools, Primary and Secondary, to join us in sending Christmas Cards to those individuals currently detained in Dungavel Immigration Detention Centre.

At Justice and Peace we believe that immigration detention is inhumane and unjust and we instead advocate for alternatives to detention based on compassion, love, and respect for the human dignity of all. At present there is no time limit in the UK on how long a person can be held in detention and this lack of certainty along with being held in prison-like conditions can leave those detained in serious mental distress, particularly

Justice and Peace Scotland – General Information and Christmas Card Campaign

(Continued from page 12)

when we consider that many detainees will already have come from troubled backgrounds or be victims of traumatic experiences. To hear what Archbishop William Nolan said during a recent Justice and Peace Scotland solidarity event outside Dungavel, please watch this short video: [Archbishop Nolan Dungavel June 2023 - YouTube](#).

In Matthew 25: 31 – 46, we encounter the scene of the Last Judgement where the righteous inherit the kingdom prepared for them by the Father. We hear how this inheritance is gained through love expressed in concrete actions: “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, *I was a stranger and you welcomed me*, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, *I was in prison and you visited me*.” And of course, we know the famous connection Jesus makes between the recipients of our loving actions and Himself: “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these... you did it to me.”



Although we cannot visit our brothers and sisters in Dungavel, we wish to respond to Christ’s call to welcome them by sending messages of love and hope, particularly at the time when we welcome the infant Jesus into our hearts at Christmas. We have recently found out that around 40% of the detainees in Dungavel are Christian, which has prompted our Christmas Card Campaign. However, cards will be delivered to all detainees who would like them as Jesus has told us Himself that when we welcome the stranger, we welcome Him.

If your pupils would like to create Christmas Cards for Dungavel, please contact us **as soon as possible** and we will provide an information guide and arrange a date to collect the cards from your school.

If helpful before completing the activity, we can provide more details about Dungavel and immigration detention in general or come in to deliver a talk, tailored for primary or secondary, about where the cards are going and why. We hope this will provide a special way to involve Paisley schools in the work of Justice and Peace and to express love as a concrete action this Christmas.



Gerard Gough, Missio Scotland: gerard@missioscotland.com

Our Advent resources can be found at [Missio Scotland Advent Resources](#). They include:

- * Star of Hope
- * Peace paperchain
- * Joyful Angels
- * A Gift for the World
- * The Nativity

We would ask our schools to consider giving a £50 Christmas gift to the missions by ordering a set or sets of our Caring Christmas Baubles. They are free to order. [Caring Christmas Baubles](#)

Examples of how our contributions support children in other parts of the world can be found at <https://www.missioscotland.com/primary-schools>

We would be delighted if all our Paisley schools would take part in the Missio **Christmas Artwork Contest**:

https://www.missioscotland.com/files/ugd/14e040_9fe6422c8e304acf92064febef595e6e.pdf.

A short video can be found here: [Christmas Artwork Contest 2023](#)

The prize-winners will receive a £20 gift voucher for Smyth's Toy Superstore and their artwork will be used as Missio Scotland's official Christmas cards in 2024. **Closing date for entries – Friday 8 December.** Winners will be notified on the week commencing 15 December.



Five Star Missio Scotland School

We hope that schools will work towards becoming Five Star Missio Scotland Schools and achieve their own Missy Moo mascot. To be credited with all five stars, a school will have to complete the following activities:

1. Pray the Mission Rosary during Mission Month
2. Commission Missio Champions
3. Put on a Missionary Saints play (using Missio's existing website resource)
4. Fundraise for Missio Scotland
5. Take part in our Christmas art competition.

Evidence of participation in these tasks will be required to gain the related star and for use on our social media.



SCIAF Resources



Mark Booker, Senior Development Education Officer

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Let me take this opportunity to thank Catholic schools in the Diocese of Paisley for your continued solidarity with the work of SCIAF as we work with the most vulnerable families across the world, responding to emergencies and empowering thousands to work their own way out of poverty. Your generosity, in prayer as well as in fundraising, is not taken for granted. Please use the links below to access resources to support learning.

Our website www.sciaf.org.uk/resources will give you access to lots of resources that link in with CfE and TIOF Experiences and Outcomes. Please spend time looking over these resources that include lesson plans, activities, videos and more. They include a new **Rugby for Peace** resource as well as **Caritas** and **Pope Francis Faith Award** materials.



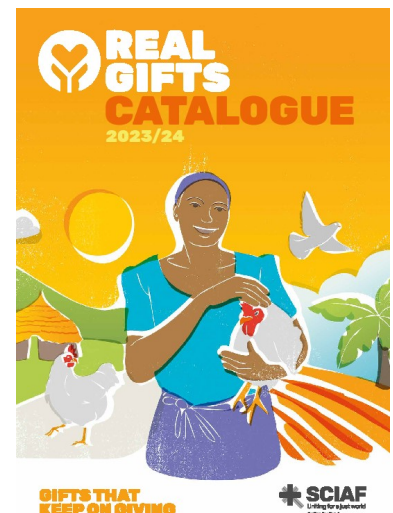
We have a new Laudato Si' Schools Scotland resource that contains hyperlinks to resources for each 'goal'.

[Laudato Si Schools Scotland](#)

You can download our new SCIAF education booklet that highlights new resources and ones from previous years. [SCIAF resources](#)

If you are interested in fundraising this Advent, then our **Real Gifts appeal** gives you the opportunity to raise money for gifts that make a real difference to the lives of people living in poverty. We have more gifts to choose from and, once again, you can order a sale or return Real Gifts box to sell in the staff room or at a Christmas Fayre. Classroom activities will help support pupil learning on the impact of Real Gifts. Look out for them [here](#)

Email to find out more and/or request a SCIAF Real Gifts sale or return box getinvolved@sciaf.org.uk



Themes for Prayer and Assemblies



Diocese of Paisley
Education Department

November

Prayer for All Saints (1 November)

Dear God, thank you for the example of the Saints. I desire to join in their company, worshipping you forever in Heaven. Please help me follow their footsteps, and yours, Jesus Christ. Please help me to conform myself to Your image, seeking Your will in all things, as the Saints did. Please help me to devote myself, and all that I do, to Your glory, and to the service of my neighbours. Amen.

<https://www.praymorenowas.com/prayer-saints-day>

The Holy Souls

November is the month of the Holy Souls. During this month we pray especially for our departed friends and loved ones who are making their journey towards the eternal light of God. Please include appropriate prayers for the Holy Souls each day.

Prayer for All the Faithful Departed

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Prayer for Eternal Rest

*Into your hands, O Lord,
we humbly entrust our brothers and sisters.
In this life you embraced them with your tender love;
deliver them now from every evil
and give them eternal rest.
The old order has passed away:
welcome them into paradise,
where there will be no sorrow, no weeping or pain,
but the fullness of peace and joy
with your Son and the Holy Spirit
forever and ever.
Amen.*

De Profundis (Psalm 129)

*Out of the depths I have cried unto Thee, O Lord;
Lord, hear my voice.*

Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

If Thou, O Lord, shalt mark our iniquities: O Lord, who can abide it?

For with Thee there is mercy: and by reason of Thy law I have waited on Thee, O Lord.

My soul hath waited on His word: my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

From the morning watch even unto night: let Israel hope in the Lord.

For with the Lord there is mercy: and with Him is plenteous redemption.

And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Eternal rest give to them, O Lord.

And let perpetual light shine upon them.

May they rest in peace.

Amen.

(Continued from page 16)

November Feast Days and Memorials

St Margaret (16 November)

- [A Prayer to St. Margaret of Scotland, Patroness of Mothers & Learning - Totus Tuus Family & Catholic Homeschool](#)
- [PRAYER TO ST MARGARET OF SCOTLAND | Prayers4reparation's Blog \(wordpress.com\)](#)

Christ the King (20 November)

- [Prayer to Christ the King - My Catholic Life!](#)

St Andrew (30 November)

- [St Andrew Prayer | DAILY PRAYERS \(daily-prayers.org\)](#)

Persecuted Christians – #Red Wednesday, 22 November

Every year, ACN's **#RedWednesday** Campaign highlights the plight of Christians across the world who suffer religious persecution. Christians in many countries routinely face detention, violence and abuse for their faith. Increasingly in some countries, Christians are facing legal and structural oppression, such as young people being denied access to Higher Education. Priests have been abducted.

This year **#RedWednesday** will take place on Wednesday 22 November. We invite our school communities to support the **#RedWednesday** Campaign and stand in solidarity with persecuted Christians. Check out our **#RedWednesday** Schools Resources, which include assemblies, prayer materials and lots more to support your fundraising and awareness raising in your school community. Our resources are full of information and personal stories to help your students understand the issue of religious persecution and the **#RedWednesday** message > [Aid to the Church in Need | Resources \(acnuk.org\)](#). Could your school community become a **#RedWednesday** Fundraising Hero? Download our **#RedWednesday** Fundraising Pack > [Aid to the Church in Need | #RedWednesday Fundraising \(acnuk.org\)](#).

Perhaps our young people could reflect on how easy it is to practise their faith in Scotland and make the effort to attend Mass every Sunday – a privilege denied to millions of their fellow Catholics.

Open Doors UK produces an annual World Watch List which ranks the countries where Christians face the most persecution: [Serving Persecuted Christians Worldwide - Persecution Trends - Open Doors UK & Ireland](#)

5,621 Christians killed

Around the world, 5,621 Christians were killed for their faith last year: approximately 15 a day.

140,000 Christians displaced

Around 140,000 Christians were displaced from their home or country for faith-related reasons in the past year. The majority of these are from [Myanmar \(15\)](#). (*World Watch Ranking 15*)

2,110 churches attacked

More than 2,000 churches and church buildings were attacked, looted or forcibly closed. Almost half of these were in [China \(16\)](#). (*World Watch Ranking 16*)

(Continued from page 17)

Persecution in Nigeria

The persecution facing Christians in Nigeria is extreme, as Islamic militants and armed bandits attack with increasing impunity. This mostly affects believers living in the Muslim-majority north and Middle Belt, but it's also spreading to the south. Christians are often specifically targeted because of their faith. Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), for example, want to eliminate the presence of Christianity in Nigeria. More Christians are killed for their faith in Nigeria than in the rest of the world combined - 14 every day, on average.

Men and boys are targeted, with the aim of destroying livelihoods and stifling Christian population growth. Christian women and girls in northern Nigeria are vulnerable to persecution for their faith and gender – they are frequently targeted for abduction, sexual assault and forced marriage. Christians are dispossessed of their land and their means of livelihood, and many live as internally displaced people or refugees.

In northern states that operate under Sharia, Christians can be treated as second-class citizens, whilst Christians who convert from Islam face rejection from their own families and often physical violence.

Late November/December

Advent

Advent is the time of prayer and reflection in anticipation of the Second Coming and of Christmas. This year, the First Sunday of Advent falls on 3 December. The Fourth Sunday traditionally focuses on Mary. Information is available on a number of websites, including:

[The Liturgical Season of Advent \(catholiceducation.org\)](https://www.catholiceducation.org/)

[What is Advent? - LifeTeen.com for Catholic Youth](https://www.life-teen.com/catholic-youth/)

[Following Mary's Advent Footsteps \(catholiceducation.org\)](https://www.catholiceducation.org/).

Primary Advent Day—Sunday 26 November (2-5pm)

Please share information about the Primary Advent Day with pupils and their families. It will take place in St Mary's, Paisley. The October day was a great success. Please encourage pupils to come along.

Diocesan Resource

Father John Morrison, Vicar Episcopal for Youth and Vocations, has provided an Advent Assembly (TEAMS/ Education Resources for Schools/Prayers and Assemblies).

The Travelling Crib (P2)

We hope that once again the Travelling Crib will have a strong impact on children and their families. (CoC, October 2022, pp 8-9)

Aid to the Church in Need

ACN has produced Advent prayers and readings suitable for both primary and secondary schools. We encourage you to remember suffering Christians around the world and keep them in your prayers during this time. The Advent Candle Activity can be used to countdown to Christmas, encouraging students to record their prayers and preparations during Advent: [Aid to the Church in Need | Advent Prayers and Readings \(acnuk.org\)](https://www.acnuk.org/) ACN will add to their Advent Resources: [Aid to the Church in Need | Resources \(acnuk.org\)](https://www.acnuk.org/)

Diocese of Paisley - Education and Youth Calendar: 2023-24						
Month	Date	Day	Time	Event	Location	Target Group
OCT	29	SUN	2-4pm	Family Day (concluding with Mass celebrated by Bishop John)	St John's, Barrhead	Open to all ages
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' 'Pilgrims of Faith'	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	Teaching and support staff
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
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	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	Craigmarloch, St Francis', St John's, St Michael's & St Colm's

Diocese of Paisley - Education and Youth Calendar: 2023-24						
Month	Date	Day	Time	Event	Location	Target Group
MAY	19	Sun	2-5pm	Primary Day - Pentecost	St Mary's, Paisley	P4-P7
MAY	22	Wed	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	All Saints, St Mary's & St Patrick's
MAY	23	Thu	6.30pm	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
27 - 31 MAY				Generation Hope Camp for Paisley Diocese	Cairn Brae Camp, Crieff	S1-S3
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 teaching and support staff – particularly NQTs

CLPL (October-January)			
Course	Date	Time	Venue
Sacrament of Confirmation – Session 1 <i>Teachers new to P7 and other interested staff</i>	26.10.23	4.00 - 5.30	All Saints Primary, Greenock
Sacrament of Confirmation – Session 1 <i>Teachers new to P7 and other interested staff</i>	1.11.23	4.00 - 5.30	Diocesan Offices
Sacrament of Reconciliation <i>Teachers new to P4 or interested staff</i>	2.11.23	4.00 - 5.30	All Saints Primary, Greenock
Sacrament of Reconciliation <i>Teachers new to P4 or interested staff</i>	8.11.23	4.00 - 5.30	Diocesan Offices
Strengthening Home-School-Parish Links (Clergy and Head Teachers)	9.11.23	- 3.00	Cathedral Halls
S1 R.E. Books 2 and 3	23.11.23	9.30 - 12.30	Diocesan Offices
National CHAPS Conference	23 & 24/11.23		
Principal Teachers of Religious Education (Senior Phase/SQA)	12.01.24	9.30 - 12.00	Diocesan Offices
Sacrament of Confirmation – Session 2	17.01.24	3.45 - 5.30	All Saints Primary, Greenock
Sacrament of Confirmation – Session 2	18.01.24	3.45 - 5.30	Diocesan Offices