

Primary Newsletter February 2018

Lent Thoughts

Not quite sure how we got to Lent. In my head Christmas has just finished! Still here we are and we need to help our pupils really understand what Lent means. The following is taken from Pope Francis' words to start this Lenten journey



*“Lent summons us, and enables us, to come back to the Lord wholeheartedly and in every aspect of our life... In his description of hell, Dante Alighieri pictures the devil seated on a throne of ice, in frozen and loveless isolation. We might well ask ourselves how it happens that charity can turn cold within us. What are the signs that indicate that our love is beginning to cool? More than anything else, what destroys charity is greed for money, “the root of all evil” (1 Tim 6:10). Creation itself becomes a silent witness to this cooling of charity. The earth is poisoned by refuse, discarded out of carelessness or for self-interest. The seas, themselves polluted, engulf the remains of countless shipwrecked victims of forced migration. **Almsgiving** sets us free from greed and helps us to regard our neighbour as a brother or sister. **What I possess is never mine alone. How I would like almsgiving to become a genuine style of life for each of us!** How I would like us, as Christians, to follow the example of the Apostles and see in the sharing of our possessions a tangible witness of the communion that is ours in the Church!*

During Lent therefore can we make an effort to encourage our pupils to fast and pray and to be clear about the reasons we are doing these things. The pope has called for a special day of prayer on **9th March**. At least one church in every diocese will be open for 24 hours with Eucharistic Adoration. In school can we try to keep this day as a special day and offer pupils the opportunity to go to reconciliation on this day.

Teaching Lent

- Booklets to support the God matters syllabus and the new outcomes are now on the website together with the Easter Booklets.
- There are specific feast days in Lent including St Joseph and St Patrick. Don't forget to celebrate the feast days of St Patrick and St Joseph. Look on http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=89 for information about St Patrick.

St Joseph tends to get overlooked. His feast day is 19th March. We know very little about him but if you look at what we do know it tells us something about our own lives. His plan for his life was completely disrupted he had to trust in God even when it was really difficult to do so. We know Joseph was a man of faith, obedient to whatever God asked of him without knowing the outcome. When the angel came to Joseph in a dream and told him the truth about the child Mary was carrying, Joseph immediately and without question or concern for gossip, took Mary as his wife. When the angel came again to tell him that his family was in danger, he immediately left everything he owned, all his family and friends, and fled to a strange country with his young wife and the baby. He waited in Egypt without question until the angel told him it was safe to go back (Matthew 2:13-23). He shows by his life the need to place your trust in God. He was also prepared to put his own needs to one side to see to the well-being of others.



Wednesday 28th March. The Chrism Mass in the Cathedral. This is an opportunity for the whole diocesan family to gather together. The cathedral will be full with representatives from every parish. Some schools are already on holiday this week but if in school, consider taking some of your older pupils to the mass

Lenten Resources

- <http://www.oxford.anglican.org/children/childrens-work-resources/lent-and-easter-resources.html> this site, belonging to the Diocese of Oxford, has ideas from previous years but some of these ideas are really interesting. Well worth a look. Please remember this is an Anglican site
- <https://missiontogether.org.uk/lent/> These are really interesting resources especially geared for primary. Please try to support Mission Together.
- <http://forum.catholicyouthwork.com> This is a catholic youth ministry site if you follow the links for resources you will find links to other sites with Lent ideas
- Look at the Cafod website they have some fantastic reflections and materials for Lent.
- For Lent books try <http://www.loyolapress.com/lenten-activities-for-children.htm> which has a raft of resources
- Mary's Meals - This site has a lot of interesting material about 'Making a Difference' which would be useful in Lent www.marysmeals.org.uk
- More resources including liturgy ideas for staff on our own schools website and ideas on the main Clifton Diocese

Teaching Other Faiths: A Day for Primary Coordinators 21st February (Dunstan Centre). This day will focus on the teaching of Judaism and Hinduism. Cost £40

The Judaism part of the course will be led by Nic Abery. Nic Abery is a member of the Jewish community and an experienced teacher. Her programmes and curricula are being used by primary, secondary and supplementary schools, family education institutions, synagogues and teacher training schemes. Nic has already worked with our secondary teachers and is a very engaging speaker. Please book with Graham if you have not already done so.

Primary Leavers Masses 13th and 14th June 2018

- All schools are expected to attend this event and please try to make this a priority over other events that may occur on the same date.

- Please note the following: In order to balance numbers and conform with Health and Safety requirements, schools from Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire are expected to attend on 13th June 2018. Schools from Bristol, Bath, North Somerset, Swindon and South Gloucestershire are expected to attend on 14th June 2018. If you have a concern about this please contact the department as soon as possible.
- **Our theme this year will be: Building the Kingdom of God** This is to support the Diocesan theme of Mission. **For the offertory schools should write a one sentence explanation of how they have supported this theme during the year and make a symbol of this that pupils can bring up at the offertory.** In thinking about this theme schools could mention: any charity work they have done, any work to support justice - for example supporting refugees or any work they may have done to promote peace in our society.
- Can I ask that the sentence you have written and details of your chosen symbol **MUST** be sent to graham on graham.tiley@cliftondiocese.com by **Friday 25th May at the very latest**
- One or two representatives from the school are asked to process in with the school's banner at the start of mass. The banners will be stacked at the side of the cathedral and pupils asked to come and stand with them five minutes before mass begins. They will be given clear instructions as they arrive.
- Please remember that coaches are not able to park at the cathedral itself but only drop off there.
- Everyone should try to be in place **at least 15 minutes before** mass begins.

Assisi: 2018- Saturday 27th to Tuesday 30th October

This trip is definitely running and we have booked places however you can still join in if you wish. The cost is £300 per person excluding flights and insurance. (If you wish to bring your partner then there is a reduced cost for partners of £200).

The costs include:

1. Dinner, Bed and Breakfast including wine with Dinner;
2. Transport to and from Rome Fiumicino Airport
3. A guided tour of the main Basilica
4. Our guide for the trip
5. All handouts etc.

To confirm your place on the trip please register with Jenny Fitzgerald (jenny.fitzgerald@cliftondiocese.com) asap.

Just a reminder about **the Retreat for Senior Leaders Thursday 8th March at Ammerdown. Cost £75 Time 10am-3pm** For further details see January's newsletter. Please try to come. Please book with Graham.

Many thanks for all you do.

God Bless

Ann Fowler