



Primary Newsletter January 2017

Happy New Year. I hope you all had a happy and peaceful break.

Unusually I want to begin the newsletter for both RE and Chaplaincy in the same way this year reflecting on the same issue.

We are still in the Christmas season, though you might be hard pressed to know that from the world around us, and it seems right to reflect on the incarnation. Christ was born, in all the ways the world recognises, powerless and weak. In the early days of his life his family were forced to become refugees fleeing a violent and oppressive regime. The first people to whom the 'Good News' was announced were Shepherds. The Shepherds represent the marginalised. They are the ones others rejected because they don't keep the rules, they don't fit in. They signify the direction of Jesus' life. The focus is not on the powerful, not on status but on those who are vulnerable. They foreshadow Jesus' future style of leadership; there for those with whom other leaders don't normally associate. The marginalised, the broken, the failures. The mission Jesus outlines, the mission we take part in, the mission we try to live out is one where we come not for the healthy but the sick, where the 'Good News' is aimed first and foremost at those who fail and who feel rejected.

Data shows that pupils with statements of special educational needs (EHC's) are 7 times more likely to be excluded from school. 3000 of those excluded in 2014-2015 had moderate learning difficulties, more 2000 were autistic. Pupils from the most disadvantaged 25 per cent of families in England are almost three years of schooling behind pupils from the most advantaged families¹

As we celebrate the incarnation I would ask you to consider how are we supporting those who are weakest in our schools.

- a) How are we supporting the most disadvantaged pupils through Chaplaincy?
- b) How are we catering for pupils with specific needs in RE?
- c) How do we evaluate the difference we make to those children on the margins?

I know many of you have excellent practice in these areas as you meet with others in your Hubs I would ask you to share the excellent work you do with others.

CCRS

The next session is on January 13th and January 14th and is on Sacraments

In this session we will be considering what we mean by a sacramental church, how we understand things like 'Grace' how we teach sacraments to pupils.

You can join in at any point and are welcome just to attend the course even if you don't want to do the written work for the qualification. In that case we will provide a certificate of attendance. This is a good opportunity to both increase your knowledge and discuss your work with other teachers. The aim is to make this relevant to teaching. Full details are in the course booklet.

¹ Taken from Achievement of 15-Year-Olds in England: PISA 2015 National Report
December 2016 Chapter 6

The Modular Course

A programme designed to develop and support teachers in their theological and practical RE knowledge. The course takes the four major documents of Vatican II as outlined in the 'Revised Curriculum Directory' and considers their implication both for teaching and the life of the school. It aims to be practical as well as provide knowledge. **The first session is on the 1st February.** If you are an RE Coordinator you should attend this course. It is also suitable for those who simply wish to increase their knowledge. Full details are in the course booklet.

Levels of Attainment

The working group has been looking at the possibility of outcomes for Year Groups. At present there is also a national debate going on and it is not yet clear what the outcome may be. We will try to keep you informed. In the meantime please continue to use the levels. The next meeting of the group is January 26th. The group will also be looking at p levels and early years.

Relationship and Sex Education

We have revised our guidelines in the light of new national guidelines. An updated copy of our documentation will be sent out to all schools in January. **Please use the guidelines to review your policies and curriculum.**

God Matters: The next topic for this is Revelation.

Materials for this unit are on the website although the website is still not working correctly. The unit therefore appears at the top of the page. When teaching this try to instil the idea that in scripture we look for meaning. Younger pupils may not be able to arrive at the meaning themselves but they should know there is one! Sometimes when teaching miracles for example children can be left with the idea that Jesus was some kind of magician. Try to help them understand the purpose of miracles. You may need to think about your selection of material here. Within this section Year 4 covers the feast of the presentation and Year 5 looks at the baptism of Jesus. Since both these feasts occur within the next term try to link your teaching activities with the Church's year. If you have questions please get in touch.

Come and See

Look at <http://www.nottingham-diocesan-centre.org.uk/index.php/information-for-primary-schools/come-see/spring> for help with planning and possible newsletter for parents.

Monitoring of RE and Catholic life

This should be taking place on a regular basis. Please remember to include pupil voice as well as looking at lessons/displays/work/prayer areas etc. If you need any help with this please get in touch. Opportunities for spiritual and moral development should exist across the curriculum.

People of Hope

In his pastoral letter for the start of the New Year Bishop Declan wrote to the diocese asking them what kind of church they would like to see and what does it mean to be catholic today?

We would like pupils to join in this discussion. Would you ask your pupils to consider the following questions:

- How do you think a Catholic should be living today to help build the world Jesus wanted to see. (Rephrase as build the Kingdom of God if that is appropriate for your age group- consider sub questions here: What did Jesus do, say, is it still relevant, is prayer/Eucharist important- (*views should be informed ones!*) What makes it difficult to be a Catholic etc.
- How can the diocese be better at living in the way Jesus wants? What do we have to do to make this happen? How can churches be a beacon of hope in a world struggling to deal with so many crisis?
- All responses should be sent directly to me (ann.fowler@cliftdioocese.com) no later than **February 24th**

If you are also consulting with the adult school community then please follow the instructions and questions in the pastoral letter.

Liturgical Dates 2017

Sunday 8 th January	This is when the feast of Epiphany will be celebrated
Monday 9 th January	Feast of Baptism of the Lord
Tuesday 2 nd February	Feast of Presentation of the Lord/Candlemas
Wednesday 1 st March	Ash Wednesday
Thursday 17 th March	Feast of St Patrick
Monday 20 th March	Feast of St Joseph (This is transferred from the 19 th)
Sunday 9 th April	Palm Sunday
Wednesday 12 th April	The Chrism Mass in the Cathedral
Thursday 13 th April	Holy Thursday
Friday 14 th April	Good Friday
Sunday 16 th April	Easter Sunday
Monday 24 th April	Feast of St George (In England transferred from the Sunday)
Sunday 28 th May	The Ascension
Sunday 4 th June	Pentecost

There will be more about St Joseph and St George in the next newsletter.

Resources

- <http://www.missiontogether.org.uk/> This is the website of Mission Together which is part of Missio. Mission together is about children helping children. Their website contains lots of materials. Bishop Declan is the Chair of Missio and it would be wonderful if we could support them during Lent.
- **Peace Sunday January 17th**. The theme this year is “*Nonviolence: A Style of Politics for Peace*” Resources for this day are on the Pax Christi Website www.paxchristi.org.uk
- For Lent 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
- For an assembly for Candlemas try <http://www.assemblies.org.uk/pri/1846/candlemas> (Last year’s January newsletter also had an assembly for Candlemas in it. If you would like a copy of this you will now find it on the Chaplaincy section of the website)

- The week of prayer for Christian unity runs from the 18th to the 25th January. To find out more or download resources go to: <https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2017>
- **The day for Victims of Trafficking is Wednesday 8 February** [St Josephine Bakhita]

St. Josephine Bakhita was born in Sudan in 1869 and died in 1947. She was herself sold as a slave suffered as a slave and eventually bought by the Italian Consul. She went with the consul to Italy and became a catholic and then a nun. Her life story is really interesting and more details can be found from a variety of sites but try initially

http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2015/02/08/st_josephine_bakhita_the_life_of_a_modern-day_african_st/1122239

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2017

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is traditionally observed from the **18th to the 25th January**. This year's theme is 'Crossing Barriers'. The resources for 2017 are available as downloads. Please go to: <https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2017>

These materials have been prepared by the German Churches and reflect a country trying to come to terms with the refugee situation. In the light of recent events around the world it is important we consider how we can be united.

Many thanks for all you do
Ann Fowler