

Chaplaincy Newsletter

April 2019



This is an extract from *CHRISTUS VIVIT (Christ is Alive)* Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation to young people and the entire People of God.

“Christ is alive! He is our hope, and in a wonderful way he brings youth to our world, and everything he touches becomes young, new, full of life. The very first words, then, that I would like to say to every young Christian are these: Christ is alive, and he wants you to be alive!”

2. He is in you, he is with you and he never abandons you. However far you may wander, he is always there, the Risen One. He calls you and he waits for you to return to him and start over again. When you feel you are growing old out of sorrow, resentment or fear, doubt or failure, he will always be there to restore your strength and your hope.

Jesus is risen, and he wants to make us sharers in the new life of the resurrection. He is the true youthfulness of a world grown old, the youthfulness of a universe waiting “in travail” (Rom 8:22) to be clothed with his light and to live his life. With him at our side, we can drink from the true wellspring that keeps alive all our dreams, our projects, our great ideals, while impelling us to proclaim what makes life truly worthwhile.

Christ is alive! We need to keep reminding ourselves of this, because we can risk seeing Jesus Christ simply as a fine model from the distant past, as a memory, as someone who saved us two thousand years ago. But that would be of no use to us: it would leave us unchanged, it would not set us free. The one who fills us with his grace, the one who liberates us, transforms us, heals and consoles us is someone fully alive. He is the Christ, risen from the dead, filled with supernatural life and energy, and robed in boundless light. That is why Saint Paul could say: “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile” (1 Cor 15:7).

125. Alive, he can be present in your life at every moment, to fill it with light and to take away all sorrow and solitude. Even if all others depart, he will remain, as he promised: “I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Mt 28:20). He fills your life with his unseen presence; wherever you go, he will be waiting there for you. Because he did not only come in the past, but he comes to you today and every day, inviting you to set out towards ever new horizons.

This whole document speaks powerfully of young people and the church. It reminds all of us of the need to see in Christ the one who helps us become fully human and of the needs of the young.

The Year of Prayer.

Please see Bishop Declan's letter which is attached to this newsletter.

A key aspect of our work this year is **the Vocations Exhibition**. Please look at the dates and support this. Please let Graham know the venue you are attending, the approximate number of pupils and your expected time of arrival. Tea and Coffee will be provided for staff. There will be sweets for pupils, if your risk assessment permits this. All venues have parking and please note the venue is always the parish hall **not the school**.

Conference for Chaplains

National School Chaplaincy Conference 2019

Wednesday 12th - Friday 14th June Liverpool Hope University

I realise this is late notice, but we have only just received the confirmed details. You can find out more information on <http://jesuitinstitute.org/NSCC2019/NSCC2019Index.html> The draft programme is attached to the end of this newsletter. I think it looks really interesting. It is an ecumenical conference organised by the Jesuits, so you would have a chance to share with colleagues from Anglican schools.

The God who Speaks

The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales will dedicate the year 2020 to Sacred Scripture. The initiative, announced in February 2019, has been given the name "The God Who Speaks", and takes place in cooperation with the British Bible Society. Several events are scheduled throughout the year to "celebrate, live and share" the Word of God. The year will also serve to commemorate two important anniversaries of Scripture's role in the Church. 2020 will mark the 10th anniversary of Pope Benedict XVI's Apostolic Exhortation *Verbum Domini*.

It is also the 1,600 anniversary of St. Jerome's death, whose Latin Vulgate translation of the Bible would go on to serve the Western Church up until the last century. On 30 September 2019, the feast of St. Jerome, the Bishops' initiative, will be officially launched, and on 1 December, the First Sunday of Advent, the campaign year begins. The Year will be focused on **three themes celebrating, living and sharing the Word of God**. Schools will be invited to reflect on how they do this. I realise that this coincides with the **Year of Communion** for our own Diocese however, I do not think this is an either-or situation but feel that we can combine both of these initiatives. I would ask you to consider two possible strategies to take place ideally in the Spring Term of the next academic year. Firstly, is it possible to organise a partnership day for members of your chaplaincy teams on Scripture and secondly, is it possible to organise a partnership day for staff on these themes? More details about both of these years will be available in September. There will be a PowerPoint for use in assembly available for the feast of St Jerome this year (not the anniversary year) so you can, if you wish, begin to introduce the theme to pupils and staff. This will be sent out in September.

The Primary Schools' Leavers Mass

Details of this are in the Primary newsletter and on the website.

Mission Together

Please remember that our charity for the Year of Prayer is Mission Together. We are asking each school to see if they can do one event that will raise the equivalent of 50p per pupil. Unless you have already sent your money to the charity please bring your cheque with you to the Education mass in October. **In order to try and do my bit** to support this **I am taking part in the Cotswold Way Challenge**. Tony and I are aiming to do 50K in approximately 14 hours. This will take place on 29th June. If you feel like supporting me I now have a Just Giving Page. It is <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Ann-FowlerClifton>

Tony (my husband) has stupidly agreed to do this with me and he is doing his walk to raise money for St Rose's Special School in Stroud. **If you are in the Gloucester Partnership** would you consider supporting him? His face book page is <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/TonyHickeyStRoses>

On the day you will be able to follow our progress on line on the Cotswold Way Challenge site <https://www.cotswoldwaychallenge.com/>

Canonization of John Henry Newman

The actual date of the canonization has not yet been announced but it is worthwhile preparing for this. Blessed John Henry Newman was a 19th-century theologian, poet, Catholic priest and cardinal. Originally an Anglican priest, he converted to Catholicism in 1845, and his writings are considered among some of the most important church writings in recent centuries.

Ordained a Catholic priest in 1847, he was made a cardinal by Pope Leo XIII in 1879, although he was not a bishop. Newman spent a lot of his life in Birmingham and was also particularly dedicated to education and founded two schools for boys. Although no date has yet been confirmed there is a suggestion that this might take place in October. I will be sending out a PowerPoint to use as the basis for an assembly and I would encourage all partnerships but particularly the **Newman partnership** to think about how they might celebrate this event.

Celebrating Easter to Pentecost

Stations of the Resurrection. There are some examples of these highlighted in the Primary Newsletter and last year's Chaplaincy Newsletter.

Pentecost

A couple of thoughts:

Firstly, thinking about scripture

- The story of the Risen Jesus begins with the same community who abandoned him. He returns to them despite their fragility and failure and offers the gift of peace. Peter takes on a position of leadership despite the fact he betrayed Jesus. The message is clear in this church - you can be a leader even if you fail and betray; Jesus offers

hope, offers peace, offers a new way of being, offers a new start. How do we convey this to pupils?

- The effect of the Pentecost event, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is seen in the first community described in Acts 2:42-47. They live in a radically different way. So, if we want to talk about the effects of Pentecost then we might ask pupils and ourselves:

1. How do **we** share with those in need? (The disciples shared all they had)
2. Do we recognise Jesus' presence in our lives?
3. How do we pray together?
4. How do we witness to the difference Jesus makes in our lives?
5. When others see us, would how we live make them want to have what we have?

Secondly thinking about decorations in school and our celebrations

1. Flags/banners/streamers etc. anything that will 'wave' or catch in a breeze, in reds oranges and yellows to simulate fire. Hanging from ceilings/doorways. Connected to them, or on them, pieces of scripture referencing the Holy Spirit. If pupils have a small version, if you are reading the Pentecost story in class or assembly, as they wave them they would seem like a rushing wind.
2. In Italy Pentecost is often called the Feast of Roses. Red and Yellow roses represent the flames of Pentecost. You could use cut outs of Rose petals as part of the focal area so that pupils could write on the Petal either the things they wanted the Spirit to change in them, or the gifts or fruits of the Spirit they wanted.
3. Holy Spirit Holes. In the past, cathedrals tended to be centres of life for the local community. Pentecost was one of the great holidays celebrated in these cathedrals. In fact, many of them were built with special consideration for this great festival. The ceilings, often so richly painted, disguised a number of trap doors that were used expressly for Pentecost celebrations. Parishioners would be drafted to climb up on the roof. At the appropriate moment during the liturgy, they would release live doves through the trap doors. These doves would come swooping down on the congregation as living symbols of the presence of the Holy Spirit. At the same moment, the children were encouraged to make whooshing and drumming sounds, like the wind. Then, finally, as the doves swooped and the winds rose, the trap doors were again opened, and bushels of rose petals were showered upon the congregation, symbolising tongues of flame falling upon the faithful below. The holes through which this was done were called, "Holy Spirit holes." Please don't think I am suggesting you create holes in your school roof or release live doves! Apart from anything else Health and Safety regulations would prevent us



doing this today, but the ideas behind the practice were twofold. In an age before most people could read it was a dramatic way of retelling the story. How can we make the story come alive for pupils today? Secondly it was meant to get people to ask the question how does the Spirit get into our lives today and how do we share that Spirit with others? Do we notice the Spirit within us, do we speak in a language - in voices - that can be heard?

Thank you for all you do.

Ann Fowler
Deputy Director