



## Secondary Schools Newsletter September 2019

I hope you had a good break and spent at least part of the time relaxing! At present it seems as though wherever you look things are on the point of falling apart, yet we are called to be a People of Hope. This is an extract from A Ted Talk given by Pope Francis. It is a reminder of the fact that we need to work together.

“We all need each other, none of us is an island, an autonomous and independent "I," separated from the other, and we can only build the future by standing together, including everyone.

To Christians, the future does have a name, and its name is Hope. Feeling hopeful does not mean to be optimistically naïve and ignore the tragedy humanity is facing. Hope is the virtue of a heart that doesn't lock itself into darkness, that doesn't dwell on the past, does not simply get by in the present, but is able to see a tomorrow. Hope is the door that opens onto the future. Hope is a humble, hidden seed of life that, with time, will develop into a large tree. It is like some invisible yeast that allows the whole dough to grow, that brings flavour to all aspects of life. And it can do so much, because a tiny flicker of light that feeds on hope is enough to shatter the shield of darkness. A single individual is enough for hope to exist, and that individual can be you. And then there will be another "you," and another "you," and it turns into an "us." And so, does hope begin when we have an "us?" No. Hope began with one "you." When there is an "us," there begins a revolution. The revolution is tenderness.

And what is tenderness? It is the love that comes close and becomes real. It is a movement that starts from our heart and reaches the eyes, the ears and the hands. Tenderness means to use our eyes to see the other, our ears to hear the other, to listen to the children, the poor, those who are afraid of the future. To listen also to the silent cry of our common home, of our sick and polluted earth. Tenderness means to use our hands and our heart to comfort the other, to take care of those in need..... The future is, most of all, in the hands of those people who recognize the other as a "you" and themselves as part of an "us." We all need each other.”

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### **The Extraordinary Month of Mission: October 2019**

There are more details of this in the Chaplaincy newsletter, but we have several events going on to support this. They are;

**Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October. A session for Link Governors for RE.** This day will consider the role and responsibility of the link governor and will consider new developments in both RE and

Relationship Education. The session runs from 10am until 12pm and will take place in St Augustine's Downend parish centre.

**October 13<sup>th</sup> The Canonisation of Cardinal Newman.** In the Chaplaincy section of the website there is a power point available to use as a basis for an assembly on that day.

**October 17<sup>th</sup> A Day of formation.** This day is for all Coordinators and chaplains and will take place in the St John's centre Trowbridge. In the morning everyone will be together for the Key note talks. **Bishop Declan** will be talking about his own faith journey and then **Fr Andrew Pinsent** on science and faith and his own response to this debate. Fr Andrew is Research Director of the Ian Ramsey Centre for Science and Religion at Oxford University, a Research Fellow of Harris Manchester College and a member of the Faculty of Theology and Religion at Oxford. He is also a priest of the diocese of Arundel and Brighton in England.

In the afternoon there will be two different sessions: one of which will be on current developments in RE led by **Philip Robinson** who is the national RE adviser. Philip will be updating you on both the new developments in the Curriculum Directory and the latest information about the GCSE and A level specifications. In the preliminary discussions on the CD there was a split between the primary and secondary sectors. As a result, this has been significantly revised. Philip will share these changes with you and seek your views. **It is important you are present at this day.**

Chaplains will be with **Fr Tim Byron SJ**. Fr Tim is the current chaplain to the Universities of Manchester, serving approximately 85,000 students in his role, which comprises the largest in Western Europe. He supports students to engage in an inspiring range of voluntary activities, from soup runs, to running the first student-run foodbank in the country. Fr Byron has travelled extensively throughout his career, from working in the shanty towns in Peru in his student days, to spending time in prisons, schools living with gypsies, and travelling in Madrid and the Philippines as part of his Jesuit formation. He is at present working with Fr Adrian Porter to develop school chaplaincy. Please try to support this day.

### **October 22<sup>nd</sup> Education Mass 7pm Clifton Cathedral.**

This year the mass, in celebration of The Year of Prayer, will focus on the work of schools during this Year and we will be joined by members of the Missio Executive Team. We hope that all schools will be represented and will be able to bring with them either a cheque for the money they have raised for Missio or a reminder of the work they did in support of Missio (Mission Together for Primary). We will also be welcoming back into the Cathedral our pilgrimage cross which will have completed its journey around the Diocese.

During the Mass there will be an opportunity for all governors, staff and chaplains to renew their commitment to Catholic Education. Refreshments will be available in the Apostles room after the Mass. All members of the school community including parents and pupils are invited to attend. I realise that this is a difficult journey for many of you but I really would appreciate it if we all come together to celebrate. **All details are in the Chaplaincy newsletter.**

### **Section 48**

There will be a new national Framework introduced which will apply to all Diocese in England and Wales. The proposed date is September 2020. At present the document is available for consultation. The diocesan inspectors have already responded in detail to the consultation and a summary of their feedback would be:

- Too many criteria especially in the Catholic Life Section

- Inspectors are being asked to make very subjective decisions especially in the outstanding/good boundary. The language of the grade descriptors is often confusing.
- As it stands it would seem incredibly difficult for a school to receive an outstanding grade
- Some of things being asked of schools are outside of their remit.
- We believe schools would lose faith in any judgements and would struggle to write a SEF or produce evidence

### **Please look at the proposed framework and make your own comments**

The draft evaluation and grade descriptors are being made available for consultation. They can be downloaded here:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1j7rzaM1kJW-nkMmJAB1-mpj-Ruzi-9z2>

The views of school leaders and teachers are a vital part of this consultation which will inform the final shape of the framework. To participate in the consultation, please submit your responses using the following link:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfFVhIpAlFsUVvqvpNeLxfSnEp0ZXn9571\\_FvQgjHhlzpaRbw/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfFVhIpAlFsUVvqvpNeLxfSnEp0ZXn9571_FvQgjHhlzpaRbw/viewform?usp=sf_link)

A pdf of the questions is available by clicking on the link below. This will allow you to read the questions and consider your responses before submitting the response electronically. Please only submit responses using the google form and not via e-mail attachment.

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1Qb0IGEYp6Ez55J0oKI3\\_XVLYhHAGZhBS](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1Qb0IGEYp6Ez55J0oKI3_XVLYhHAGZhBS)

The consultation remains open until September 20<sup>th</sup>.

Please note our own inspectors during the present cycle of 48 inspections and monitoring visits will be looking at how relationship and sex education is delivered in the school and the design of the curriculum.

### **GCSE**

Firstly, the CES survey designed to analyse trends and attitudes has been sent out to schools. So far approximately 25% of Catholic schools have completed the survey but only 2 schools within Clifton. Without this information it is difficult to engage in meaningful conversations so if you have not already done so please complete the survey **as soon as possible before 23 September**. The letter from Philip reads as follows:

*“Dear colleagues,*

*As with last year we would like to collect the GCSE results for all Catholic schools in England and Wales. The response from schools last year was excellent and was enormously useful in our ongoing dialogue with Ofqual and exam boards, as well as in helping dioceses and schools benchmark performance against diocesan and national averages.*

*In addition to collecting the GCSE results this year we are also collecting A Level outcomes.*

*Finally, there are also some additional questions to help us to gain a much clearer national picture of the levels of satisfaction with each exam board and the impact of the GCSE reform on entries to A Level.”*

**The link for the completion of the electronic survey is:**

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfjtWSEbhpA0T8pobF5D2H\\_HKC6BNABxdrvunXbHEZSLsJ3lg/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfjtWSEbhpA0T8pobF5D2H_HKC6BNABxdrvunXbHEZSLsJ3lg/viewform?usp=sf_link)

**If you would like to see the full survey prior to completing it online, please download the pdf using this link**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1p6RA5zXgmr6R18fY08Go2Jv4L3nCf4Af/view?usp=sharing>

A final analysis of 2018 results showed that overall entries for the GCSE dropped but entries from Catholic schools did not hence we make up a greater proportion of the total entries.

Preliminary results from this year's analysis would indicate greater dissatisfaction with Ed Excel than any of the other boards. Catholic schools overall seem to be performing well.

Just to give clarity to the short course situation, any school wishing to enter pupils for a short course may, from the diocesan perspective, do so but you would of course need the agreement of your head and governors to do so. Unlike the full GCSE there is no set route you have to take with the short course though if you are choosing a non-Catholic option you must satisfy your governors and the diocese that this will help students grow in their understanding of Catholicism. The GCSE requirements have not changed.

## **Scripture**

There is a growing concern over the way scripture is being used and taught. If scripture is only being used piecemeal, (quotes to support various arguments for example) then students may be receiving a distorted view of how Catholics engage with and understand the Bible. This year begins the Year of the Word and is an opportunity to review how we help students to engage with scripture. One quote from a pupil explaining the difference between 'Fundamental Christians' and 'Liberal Christians'. *"Fundamentalists believe all of the Bible is true, Liberals believe only some of it is!"*

## **Sixth Form Conference November 27<sup>th</sup>: Women in Religion**

This conference will focus specially on the role of women in religion and the approach of three different faith groups. The conference is being organised with the help of Gavin D'Costa who is the Professor of Catholic Theology at the University of Bristol. Gavin studied under the theologian, John Hick. He was also Joseph McCarthy Professor at the Gregorian University, Rome. He acts as an advisor to the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales and the Anglican Church on matters of interreligious dialogue and theology. He also advises the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Vatican City.

The Confirmed speakers are as follows:

- **Dr Carmody Grey**, many of you will have read her work in the Tablet and she is Assistant Professor in Catholic Theology at Durham university.
- **Dr Yafa Shanneik** is a lecturer of Islamic studies at Birmingham University and her research interest is the authority and leadership of Muslim women and the changing nature of women's participation in religious practices in Europe and the Middle East.
- **Lindsay Simmonds**. Lindsay studied at Nishmat in Jerusalem and was a Bruria Scholar at Midreshet Lindenbaum, and is a graduate of the London School of Jewish Studies. In 1998, Lindsay became a faculty member of the LSJS where she has lectured, written and convened courses for almost 20 years, focussing on women in Biblical narrative, Jewish Law and the Talmund.

Please try to support this conference. As you can see, we have some excellent speakers and we hope this conference will provide some insight into the role of women in faith. Please let Graham know if you are coming and your numbers.

## Sixth Form General RE

- Could you please ensure I have an up to date copy of your syllabus for this together with an explanation of how it is to be delivered and the % of curriculum time allocated to it. (Bishops' Conference requirements state 5% of curriculum time)
- Pax Christi: Working jointly with Quaker Peace and Social Witness, Pax Christi have produced a series of lessons for A level work in Peace education. The lessons can be found at <http://paxchristi.org.uk/peace-education/a-level-re/> If you cannot use them with your particular A level scheme they would also support general RE. There are 3 topics so far and include lesson plans and resources.

## A Future Full of Hope

In advent we move into The Year of Communion. This will be run alongside the Year of the Word. Updates and documentation will be given on The Day of Formation.

## The CCRS

Many departments are now operating with non-Catholic members of staff. There is no issue with this as only the Head of Department is a reserved post **however you must ensure that whilst respecting the beliefs of others, they feel able and confident in teaching all aspects of Catholicism.** One route might be the CCRS. Full details of this are available in our course booklet. But we begin the course on September 21<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> with the Old Testament Module. We complete 4 modules a year on a rolling programme. Each module involves one Saturday and one day in school time. Heads agreed they would support this programme. **Bishop Declan** has written the following:

*“I would like to commend the CCRS Course as a necessary part of ongoing formation for teachers within our Catholic schools both at primary and secondary level. To maintain and help develop Catholic ethos of our schools it is essential that teachers have a basic knowledge of the Catholic faith and are able to share this with students. Young people can sometimes be very challenging in their questions and this is true in matters of faith and belief. This course is designed to help teachers respond to the needs of their students as they make their journey in faith.”*

## So, what do you need to know about being a link governor in RE?

**Date:** October 5<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 10 to 12 (Tea/Coffee available beforehand)

**Venue:** Alexander House

This is a short course for **link governors in RE**

This will look at recent changes in RE both in terms of curriculum and assessment. It will consider how governors fulfil their role and the evidence they need to have for section 48 inspections. We will try to respond to any questions governors may have and also take a brief look at relationship education and the changes coming into force from September 2020. Please try to encourage your link governor to come to this.

Please book a place by contacting Graham on [graham.tiley@cliftondiocese.com](mailto:graham.tiley@cliftondiocese.com)

Thanks for all your work.

Ann Fowler