

Primary Newsletter February 2020



I haven't quite taken leave of my senses. I realise Lent begins on the 26th February and that this is a picture of a nativity scene! However, this is a nativity scene with a difference. It is called 'The Scar of Bethlehem' and it is by Banksy. It depicts the birth of Jesus, set under Israel's West Bank separation barrier with a bullet hole shaped like a star. Faded graffiti tags reading 'love' and 'paix,' French for peace, adorn the base of the walls. The piece is displayed at the "Walled Off Hotel," a Palestinian guesthouse in Bethlehem that was designed by Banksy and is filled with his artwork. I don't know what meaning the artwork has for Banksy himself. When I look at it, it reminds me of several things: Firstly, that governments use walls to divide and separate, to create a them and us situation whereas as Christians we are meant to see each other as family, brothers and sisters who need each other. The bullet hole above is a reminder of the violence that infiltrates our world, that touched the life of Jesus and his family when they were forced

to become refugees and still affects the life of millions today. The words at the bottom speak of peace but without justice you cannot have peace. However, this doesn't just refer to the structures in society it refers to my life too. I create division, I separate people, those I will help, those I won't, those like me those who are not. I can create or perpetuate unjust situations; I can see problems in terms of numbers not people. I think above all it reminds me that if Christmas, if the incarnation has meaning then it must affect the way I live. Perhaps Lent is a good time to ask - am I really living in the light of the incarnation. Do I really believe that Christ is present in, 'the least of my brethren', that I need to feed the hungry, to welcome strangers? Lent is a time to change to let Christmas become a reality in me.

Some Ideas for focal points and liturgy during Lent

You can of course use work pupils produce in RE lessons - it is also possible some of these ideas could be adapted for work in RE lessons.

- The liturgical colour for Lent is purple. Remember when planning and delivering a liturgy in Lent there is generally no Gloria and no Alleluias (we normally say or sing Alleluia before the Gospel)
- Themes during Lent would be: Journey towards God; Desert experience, Temptation and Reconciliation, Baptism.
- You could highlight sections of the readings from Sundays during Lent. Share these readings with pupils. Help them reflect on the readings and create their own response to them. For example the response to the psalm on the first Sunday is "Have mercy on us O Lord for we have sinned" (For younger pupils you might just have to explore the whole idea of sin and what it might look like). Sin is to break a relationship with God, to miss the mark. How do we 'miss the mark', fail



to live up to the way God wants us to live? Pupils could illustrate this with their own drawings, make a collage from newspapers of words like bad tempered, selfish etc.; they could write their own prayers asking for God's help to be better. Older pupils could reflect on the way as a society we do things wrong for example is it right we spend so much money on chocolate over Easter when so many go hungry?

- They could use the information on the Cafod website to help understand what life is like for others etc.
- What Lent means to me. The drawing shows one artists view of the things that are important to him during Lent. What about us? Perhaps the drawings change as we go through Lent? Make a display perhaps?
 - In order to follow Jesus more closely what must we leave behind? What must we do? Have an image of Jesus. Each child draws around their footprints. On one footprint they write/draw something they need to give up, for example being unkind to a brother or sister, on the other footprint they write something they need to do, for example make time for God. These can be used in the Stations of the Cross display or liturgy

- You can make paper crosses from newspapers and cut out images showing the suffering in the world. Younger children could just make a cross and write or have scribed some words that indicate suffering or upset e.g. hurt, sadness. Place the individual paper crosses around a crucifix. Older pupils could also research the problems of each of the sufferings shown and prepare a little summary of this to go with the crosses. Older pupils could also use this to lead younger children in prayer or a reflection (for example they could produce a power point)
- Attached to the end of the newsletter are suggestions to distribute to families to help them think more deeply about Lent. In this Year of Communion, we are trying to connect to both families and parish so they might be worth a look.
- There are resources listed in the Chaplaincy newsletter

Primary Leavers Masses 17th and 18th June 2020

- 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.
- As you are aware, we always have a theme for our offertory procession at the Primary Leavers Mass. This year as part of our work for the Year of Communion we are focusing on Catholic Social Teaching. Our Booklet for staff on this is on the governors' section of the website and a simpler version for pupils is on the Chaplaincy section of the website under chaplaincy Training 2019/20. We are asking all schools to create a symbol to represent their work and to complete the following statement:

This year we have been focusing on as part of our work on Catholic Social Teaching. Our Symbol is which represents our work to.....

Examples

it could say

1. "This year we have been focusing on the idea that *God wants us to help make sure everyone is safe and healthy and can have a good life* as part of our work on Catholic Social Teaching. Our symbol is a *Ship* which represents our work to raise money for *The Apostleship of the Sea*

Or perhaps

2. "This year we have been focusing on the idea that *The world was made by God, so we have to take care of all creation* as part of our work on Catholic Social Teaching. Our symbol is a *Tree* which represents our work *to plant trees to help the environment*

Details of numbers attending and the sentence describing the offertory symbol should be entered on the booking form appropriate to your partnership, which can be downloaded from the Schools & Colleges website <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/courses>. When complete please email the form to graham.tiley@cliftondiocese.com as soon as possible but no later than **Friday 22 May**.

- 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 by at least 15 minutes before mass begins.

A Day for Coordinators: Teaching Other Faiths: 5th March (Dunstan Centre, Keynsham)

This day will focus on the teaching of Hinduism in the morning and in the afternoon, there will be an update on the revised Curriculum Directory. Please let Graham know if you are attending. It is a 10am start with tea and coffee from 9.30am. Lunch is provided.

Head Teachers Conference 27th March at Bath Spa

This conference will consider:

- How will initial teacher courses educate and train new recruits into the teaching profession preparing them for the new curriculum to develop and support them to become educated and highly skilled teachers, who will ensure that all children receive the very best education and care they deserve?
- The Bishop's Pastoral Plan for the Diocese and how Cafod can help support this
- Ensuring the future of our diocesan schools

Please let Graham know if you are attending. Parking details and a map will be sent out shortly.

World Water Day 22nd March <https://www.worldwaterday.org/>

Pope Francis has spoken a great deal about climate change and the need to protect our environment. Water, climate change and social justice are closely linked. This day is intended to help us focus on the way we use water and what we can do to protect our environment.

World Book Day March 5th

This year we are being asked to use this day to help us focus on Scripture. The Bishop of Wrexham writes:

“One specific way our schools can be engaged with a sense of unity is to make a distinctive mark with World Book Day (WBD) this year by focusing on the book that is the Bible, or just one of its seventy-three books, perhaps a Gospel and if so St. Matthew's. There could be the reading of favourite Bible stories or of some of the less familiar ones; there can be Bible themed collective worship, the potential is enormous. Another suggestion would be to invite into your schools local personages –MPs, AMs, Mayors, Community Police Officers, Fire Officers, even celebrities if they have them in the locality and others- asking that they read their ‘favourite’ Bible story or passage and give a few words of explanation as to why it is special to them. Such an activity is both good publicity/marketing/community engagement of schools and thus a form of evangelisation

as well as a demonstration to the children that ordinary, everyday people read and read the Bible. Secondary schools might choose to have a 'Gospel readathon'. This, other ideas and resources can be adapted from the WBD website <https://www.worldbookday.com/> to make World Book Day, a Bible Day, a God Who Speaks Day.

The Rt. Reverend Peter M. Brignal

Relationship and Sex Education

The new guidelines come into force from September 2020. There is material available now on our website to help support staff. You will find this under the Governor section of the website.

MARCH 25th. The Ten Ten theatre company are putting on a day and will explore their relationship programme and how it might be used within school. It is an opportunity to explore the materials and ask questions about aspects of the materials.

Venue: St Dunstan's Keynsham

Time: 10-2.30 (Tea/Coffee from 9.30)

Cost: £20

If you are planning on using their materials, or want to explore this course before you buy, this would be a good opportunity to come along and find out more.

Full details of all courses are available from the office or the website. It would be helpful if you could book on early to help us plan.

Thank you for all you do and your help and support.

Ann Fowler

Some Suggested Family Activities during Lent

During each week of Lent try at least one of these activities:

- Make time once a week to sit together; ask everyone to talk about one thing that made them happy during that week. If you want, you could make a display of these things with photographs or pictures. You could then thank God for these happy times. In a similar way you could share one thing that made you sad anxious or afraid. Try to talk about why you feel that way and then ask for God's help.
- Look at a newspaper together as a family. Identify one group of people who need help and decide one action the whole family could do together to make a positive difference. (make it something that everyone can do)
- If you have access to the internet check out the work of Mission Together at <http://www.mission-together.co.uk> decide on some practical ways you could help.
- Decide to not watch TV for at least one hour a week when you normally would during that time do a family activity like play a game (the old-fashioned kind not computer) or go for a walk then remember all those people who don't have access to technology
- During one day make a chart of all the times each person uses water, washing, drinks, etc remember or find a little more out about the number of people who don't have clean water. **World water Day is March 22nd** Try to find out about this. Look at the website <https://www.worldwaterday.org/> to find out how you can help and how climate change affects water.
- When we eat food try to make an effort to remember where our food comes from. Remember those in the world who go hungry. Perhaps as a family you could say grace that is thank God for all we have. A simple one might be: ***“Lord thank you for the food we eat. Help us remember to help those who have less than we do. Amen”*** Or just say your own words.
- Everyone draws around their own hands. On each finger/thumb write one thing we can do to help others. If you can put them on a poster called Helping Hands and display it in your house.
- Sit together as a family everyone names someone they think needs help and then pray for that person by just saying Please God helpand name the person or write the names on a piece of paper and fold into a loop. Put all the loops together to make a chain and then everyone holds the chain and thinks about or prays for the people in the chain
- Each person chooses a piece of music and everyone else has to listen. They say why they like that music. (No one can say anything bad about their choice!)
- Each person in the family should make an image or symbol of themselves. The symbols get passed round and everyone has to say something positive about the person whose symbol they are holding
- If you have a computer look at <http://picturemyworld.cafod.org.uk/> and talk together about what it must be like to live in that country.