

Chaplaincy Newsletter March 2006

*"Yet even now says the Lord, return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
rend your hearts and not your clothing.
Return to the Lord your God,
For He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger,
and abounding in steadfast love"*

Joel 2:12-13

During Lent we are asked to "Come back to me with all your heart" to make a journey towards God, to the core of ourselves. There is a danger we get so caught up organising events for staff and students that we forget to make that journey ourselves. In order to solve other peoples problems, in order to make their Lent meaningful for those around us, we need to be people of prayer. Lent too is about making the connection between inner peace and outer justice. We are asked to promote the work of Cafod during Lent, to realise that prayer is not meant to be an escape from the world but at the heart of our action.

*"This is the fast that pleases me;
To loose the bonds of injustice, to let the oppressed go free
To share your bread with the hungry, and look after the homeless poor.
Then your light will shine, then you will call and the Lord will answer
You will cry for help and He will say; Here I Am."*

Dates for Your Diary

- 1. Secondary schools Mass Wednesday 17th May 2006**
Further details are included in a separate section
- 2. Chaplaincy Day Friday 16th June 2006**
This will be a joint day for heads of RE and Chaplains and will be run by CAFOD. 2007 will see the anniversary of "Populorum Progressio". CAFOD will be producing a range of materials to help schools get the most out of this document. This session will be an awareness raising day. Please note the date now further details will follow later
- 3. Annual Chaplaincy Conference June 6th -8th 2006 Ushaw College**
The main speaker is Timothy Radcliff. If your school is registered as a member of ACCE you should have already been sent conference details. If your school isn't a member they need to be! If you have lost your form replacement forms can be obtained by e mailing the department.

Further details of all courses and events will be found on our website

Vocations

Fr Robert King has become the new vocations director for the diocese. He is anxious to make contact with and support schools in their work to promote a culture of vocation. If you would a talk from Fr Robert or an assembly on the topic please contact me and I would be happy to facilitate this. Many of our students may have no contact with anyone who has responded to God's call to the religious life, it is important that we raise awareness with them. The website address for the national office is: www.ukvocation.org/ . If you would like to sign up your school for a day of prayer for vocations then again please contact me directly.

L'ARCHE

The L'arche community have asked for help in recruiting assistants to work with adults with learning disabilities in their communities in Britain. If you have sixth form students who are considering a gap year this may suit them. If you would like further details, or to arrange a speaker for your students, please contact me.

The annual Conference for Chaplaincy Coordinators

This took place in Sheffield on January 23rd-24th. The speaker was Nigel Bavidge and the topic evaluating Chaplaincy. The possibility of having a development plan for chaplaincy within the diocese was discussed; one of the difficulties here is that each school has a slightly different model of chaplaincy, however if you have any thoughts please let me know. The ACCE website has not been updated for a while but they now have a new person to do this so hopefully the site will be up and running soon. The plan is the site will contain resources for chaplains to use and to contribute too. Sr Barbara who has chaired ACCE for many years is now moving to a new post and an election for both the new chair and new executive members will take place at the summer conference.

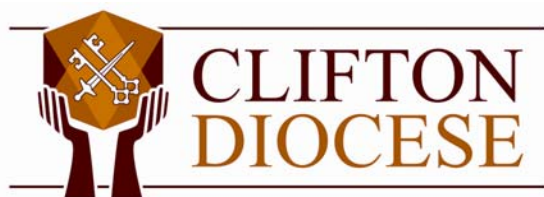
The conference on Self Harm amongst Teenagers

- This day was led by the chair of Bristol Mind and proved extremely insightful into the causes of self harm amongst teenagers. It is important to recognise that this is a growing problem amongst boys as well as girls. Although chaplains are not counsellors, nor should you try to be, you maybe the first, (only?) person a student will trust to share their problems with. It is important therefore that we are prepared to tackle this topic. If any of you were not at the meeting but would like further information, if you e-mail ann.fowler@cliftondiocese.com you will be sent a PowerPoint presentation on the topic. Websites which may be useful are: www.selfharm.org.uk or www.parentlineplus.org.uk Tel **0808 800 2222**
Child Line Tel 08001111 and Charity young minds offers a parents support line Tel **0800 018 2138**

Finally

I am trying to build up a picture of how chaplaincy works in practice throughout the diocese, **if you are holding a chaplaincy meeting I would welcome an invitation to attend.** Many thanks for all you do and the dedication you bring to your work.

Ann Fowler
Chaplaincy Co-ordinator



Secondary Schools Mass

Copies of all the arrangements will be sent separately to heads. This is about our identity as Catholic Schools and should not be simply the responsibility of the RE department or the chaplain!

Some General Points:

- Encourage, bully, demand, beg, and plead, until your head makes arrangements to bring your school. This is the one occasion all secondary schools get to gather together and helps reinforce our diocesan family identity. I know this is difficult as schools are very busy places and I know there is a cost element in hiring a coach, but we are celebrating our faith as a community.
- Please bring as many students as you can. The cathedral is very large as you know and it would be nice if we made an impression on the space. **Please make parents, priests and governors aware that they are welcome.** Through your newsletter if possible. If you have a priest associated with your school it would be nice if they came with you.
- Coaches should enter via Clifton Park road and students enter through St Paul's Door. (Marked on map). Coaches will then be asked to park on the Downs. The exception to this is St Rosie's students. Their minibuses should enter the car park at the West Door where they will be able to drop students off and then park. Cars will be able to use the lower car park. **Please be in place no later than 10.45 am.**
- Stewards from St Brendan's college will be on duty and will direct you to the appropriate places.
- All schools are being asked to take part in the opening procession where two students from each school carry a symbol of their school to lay round the sanctuary. Readers should make their way to the front of block D. Those taking part in the procession should assemble in the corridor by the Blessed Sacrament Chapel.
- The booklet for the mass will be sent electronically to your school **after Easter. Please print copies for your students.**
- If your school has not yet volunteered to take responsibility for a specific part of the mass and you would like to do so please contact me immediately. Please check with the RE department to make sure they haven't already volunteered.