



CLIFTON DIOCESE

Chaplaincy Newsletter September 2006

*I arise today, through God's strength to pilot me;
God's might to uphold me,
God's wisdom to guide me,
God's eyes to look before me,
God's ear to hear me,
God's word to speak for me,
God's hand to guard me
God's way to lie before me,
God's shield to protect me
God's host to secure me.*

(From St Patrick's breast plate)

Welcome back. I hope your holiday enabled you to renew your energies for the coming year. We begin with the words from St Patrick's breast plate, an act of trust that whatever we do God is with us. As the debate based around "On the Way to Life" continues one thing that does seem clear is that the Gospel offers a profoundly different way of looking at life. The world situation seems at times to deteriorate with every news bulletin. We need to keep our eyes fixed on the Gospel if we are to offer any form of hope to our world.

*"In our public life we move further and further away from God and the things of God, and yet in the hearts of men and women I believe the yearning for God is becoming more and more intense. When the first apostles went out into the streets of Jerusalem they had nothing material to give to the poor and needy. "Silver and gold I have none", said St Peter, "but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, walk." The crippled man, his handicap cured went leaping into the temple in order to praise God. The towns and cities of our land are full of people who do not need our silver and gold but desperately need to hear the Good News of the Gospel. They are lamed and crippled without God. They perish because they do not have any vision of life and its meaning, and about the right way to find happiness. They need to know, they need to experience, that there is a God who loves them. How do we do it? The answer is simple but very demanding. We need the inspiration of the spirit; we need to speak about God as people who know him, **it can only happen if we learn to pray.**" (Cardinal Hume: To be a Pilgrim)*

Holy Days:

You will have read over the summer that three of the Holy Days have been transferred to the Sunday. I am sure there are very good reasons for this but we are all aware that a large number of children will not attend the parish Mass on a Sunday. The pattern and rhythm of the Church's year form an important part of our identity. It would be a shame if attention was not drawn to these great feasts in school. Celebrating them does not always have to be through means of a Eucharist, it might be that a special assembly or a Para-liturgical service are equally as appropriate but it would be a great loss if they were not marked in some way in our schools.

Meeting for Chaplains

Friday September 29th at Alexander House.

10.00am coffee- 10.15am start. 3.00pm close

An opportunity to meet together at the start of the new term; to pray together, to welcome new chaplains and discuss national, diocesan and school priorities. The theme continues the discussion raised by the document "On the Way to Life". In particular we look at developing good practice between schools and parishes. Cost £10 including lunch. Please indicate as soon as possible if you are able to attend. It would be wonderful to have a full house! **Our next meeting will be Friday 2nd March.** Our theme here will be relationships with other faiths.

Chaplaincy Meetings

If you hold chaplaincy meetings in your school I would be delighted to receive an invitation to attend one in order to form a better picture of chaplaincy throughout the diocese.

Dates for Your Diary

- **NQT Day Tuesday 26th September 2006**
This day is also open to those who are new to Catholic education and will be held at Alexander House. The focus of this will be to new teachers to help them develop their understanding of what it means to teach in a faith school. This would also be suitable for more experienced staff new to faith schools.
- **Mass for Teachers and Governors Tuesday 21st November 2006 at 7.30 pm.**
This will be held at Clifton Cathedral and our main celebrant will be Bishop Declan. It will be an opportunity for all to rededicate their work to God. Afterwards tea and coffee will be served in the Apostle's room to give everyone a chance to meet their colleagues from around the diocese. **I would appreciate it if you could draw this event to the notice of all your colleagues and parents and encourage them to attend. In particular if you try to encourage your school not to hold any other events on that night I would be grateful.** If you would be willing to help with the music, (please!) could you contact me as soon as possible?
- **"Come Lord Jesus" Tuesday 14th and Thursday 16th November 2006. This will held on the 14th at Alexander House and on the 16th in the Wiltshire area. (venue to be confirmed). Both courses begin at 4.30pm and continue till 8.30pm** An opportunity to reflect on the meaning of Advent and Christmas as individuals and as members of school communities. . This will be an ideal opportunity for all members of a school community including teachers, governors and support assistants to come together in prayer. The aim will be not only to reflect on the meaning of Advent for ourselves as individuals but also consider how we might best open up the meaning to our students. Further details will be found on the website.

- **Education Sunday February 4th 2007**
A more detailed information pack giving details of how you can support this event will be available from the CES in November
- **Secondary schools Mass Wednesday 9th May 2007**
Further details will follow before Christmas. If you would like to take responsibility for a specific part of the Mass please would you confirm this in writing as soon as possible
- We are fortunate to be able to announce that on the 12th July 2007 Bill Huebsch will be leading a day for all Chaplains and RE staff on catechetics. In 1990 Bill established the Vatican II project which aims to keep alive the spirit of Vatican II. His most recent work, "Growing in Faith" aims to help schools and parishes develop their catechetical programmes. The day promises to be both inspiring and challenging.

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

Resources

There is a magazine called "Roots" which is a worship and learning resource supported by the Church's Together group. It has three components; a magazine for children and young people, a magazine for clergy and laity responsible for leading worship and a web site www.rootsontheweb.com. You can see samples of their material and order on line or you can phone 01733 325002

I hope you all managed a summer break and look forward to meeting you soon hopefully on the 29th September. May I wish new Chaplains a successful term and hope it is relatively stress free. My prayers and thoughts are with you all

God Bless

Ann Fowler
(Chaplaincy Coordinator)