

## Secondary Schools Newsletter November 2005

### Heads of RE Meetings

Many thanks to all heads of RE who attended the day led by Kate Ricks on “assessment for Learning”, the subsequent discussion was very valuable. If any head of RE was unable to attend and would like to see the material Kate made available or discuss any issues arising then please do not hesitate to contact me . Kate’s emphasis on the development of learning rather than simply testing and measuring obviously complements the work departments are already doing. Those of you attending the meeting will be aware that the next Heads of RE day which takes place on March 15<sup>th</sup> 2006 will now focus on the document “On the Way to Life”. The report by the Heythrop institute and commissioned by the Bishops of England and Wales, was written by Frs. James Hanvey, SJ and Tony Carroll, SJ, it provides an evaluative commentary on contemporary culture and social trends, secularisation and modernity and the part both play in the field of catechesis, religious education and formation. The document is in three parts. The first part looks at contemporary culture and attempts to work out what are the significant factors, the second part is a theological responses to that culture and the third part a commentary on the resources and responses the Catholic community can bring to handing on the faith through education, catechesis and formation. A full copy of the report can be ordered from the CES web site. At the request of the Heads of RE present at the previous meeting all deans of the diocese together with other relevant clergy will be invited to attend so that a joint discussion can take place over issues raised by the report. I would therefore value the attendance of as many heads of RE as possible on this day.

### Dates for Your Diary

- 1. Mass for Teachers and Governors Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November 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 realise that for many of you the Cathedral is not an easy journey and I know how overworked you already are but I still feel it important to celebrate publicly all the work that takes place in Catholic Schools and to try to raise awareness of this work. **I would appreciate it if you could draw this event to the notice of all your colleagues and encourage them to attend.**

- 2. “Come Lord Jesus” Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2005**

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. This event will be held at Alexander House and will cost £15 including a light supper.

### **Education Sunday**

3. In 2006 Education Sunday will take place on February 12<sup>th</sup>. The theme this year is **“Prizes that Last”**. Education Sunday is designed to be a celebration of the distinctiveness and achievements of Christian education. Celebrated since 1878, now more than ever it is important to remind ourselves why Christian education is different, why it is worth believing in, why it is worth supporting. Christian education is inclusive; it offers a vision of life which enriches all who come into contact with us. It offers a vision of life in distinct contrast to the prevailing materialism of our time. 2006 is a year of many sporting events; The World Cup, The Winter Olympics, The Commonwealth Games. The theme picks up the sporting metaphor challenging us not to run “aimlessly” but to have purpose and vision in what we do. All Schools are being asked to mark the event in some way and if possible to link with their local parish. In particular Heads are being asked to see if it is possible to speak in their local parishes on this Sunday about Catholic Education **in general**. An outline of such a talk is available from the department. It might be possible to have a group of students animate the liturgy on that Sunday in one of your feeder parishes or perhaps arrange for students work on an aspect of faith to be displayed in church. Further details are expected shortly and will be sent to you and also posted on the events section of our web site. This is a whole school endeavour and not intended to be the sole responsibility of the RE department. In fact one of the purposes of Education Sunday is to convey the distinctiveness of Catholic Education and how who we are underpins the whole of the curriculum and school life.

### **NQT Induction March 21<sup>st</sup> –23<sup>rd</sup> 2006**

A two day induction programme for newly qualified secondary teachers and those new to Catholic Education will offered at St Cassian’s centre Kintbury next year. The aim will be to help teachers understand the distinctiveness of Catholic schools and how they contribute to and support this ethos. If you know of anyone in your school that this course might benefit please encourage them to apply for permission to attend. Details have been sent to all secondary heads.

### **Section 48 Inspections**

Inspectors for the diocese have now been appointed and will receive training in November. We have had more OFSTED inspections than we initially expected though mainly in the primary sector. The new format for inspection is posted on the web site but if you would like any training connected with this then please do not hesitate to contact the department

### **Sixth Form General RE Syllabus**

For those schools doing NABs approved courses any changes to modules must be submitted to the department to ensure funding. Lessons need to be observed at least once in the academic year. In order to attract full funding, schools and colleges will need to follow a course accredited on the National Framework of Qualifications by the QCA. There will be two courses available – The National Framework course called The Way of Faith - Horizons and The Maryvale Certificate - Certificate and Diploma in Catholic Studies for Sixth Forms. Further details of “The Way of Faith” course will be sent as soon as possible to 11-18 schools and 6<sup>th</sup> form colleges

### **RE Survey Forms**

If you haven't already done so please could I ask you to complete your survey form as they provide a valuable insight into RE around the diocese.

### **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 please don't hesitate to contact me.

### **Advent**

St Cassian's centre are holding their Advent retreat for adults from the 2<sup>nd</sup> -4<sup>th</sup> December. If you would like to attend this retreat please contact the team on 01488658267 or e mail [Kintbury@aol.com](mailto:Kintbury@aol.com).

Resources for Advent can be found at:

<http://wellsprings.org.uk/advent/>

<http://www.catholic-ew.org.uk/liturgy/Resources/>

<http://www.cafod.org.uk/resources/worship/prayers/>

also useful are the RE on line site and the BBC site

As we approach Advent in a spirit of waiting and expectation we pray:

*Lord it is difficult to find  
Time to think  
Space to be  
We are not used to waiting but to doing  
More used to noise than silence  
We live not in the moment  
But in our plans, our fears and hopes for tomorrow  
Help us to be still, to be silent, to wait  
Help us to let go of our plans, dreams, and desires  
So that you Lord are born in us  
So that it is you Lord who live and move and work within us*

Thank you for all you do  
Ann Fowler

Secondary Schools Adviser