

## Secondary Schools Newsletter March 2006

*“Lord I pray that something will happen to me this Lent.  
I know I need to change  
For the visions that once swept the leaden skies of monotony have dimmed and faded  
And I would see them again  
Forgive me for the times I was too busy to pray  
For the decisions I made without reflection  
For the times I blamed you when things went wrong,  
For the times that stress, anxiety, fear, guilt or failure  
Kept me from allowing you, to be the centre of my life.  
Lord do for me what I cannot do for myself  
Change me, lead me to a new tomorrow  
With a new heart and a new spirit, yours  
and so transform me into your likeness.”*

From the Loreto Prayer Book

I know what a busy term this is for all of you, hopefully you will get time to make your own Lenten journey. You may find the following websites and books of some use

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/christianity/lent.shtml>

<http://www.refuel.org.uk/curric/festivals/lent/>

<http://www.christian-aid.org.uk/worship/resources/lent/>

<http://www.culham.ac.uk/>

(This is a superb site and has an assembly section if you follow the links)

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

(Again a very good site, follow the links for good ideas)

<http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/>

(Once on the site click on Spirit of the Season to find some good material for Lent. It is also worth checking previous years for ideas)

All these websites then link you through to other information

### **Books which may be useful:**

- Stages on the Way: Wild Goose Worship Group
- Stations of the Cross for Teenagers: Gwen Costello
- Together on Our Way: Joseph Donders
- Forty Days Plus Three: John McIlhion (Not suitable for most students, but may give you ideas)
- Journey of Faith for Lent Mary Shrader (This comes as a student workbook and a leaders book)
- Lent and Easter Readings from Iona Neil Paynter

## **News in Brief**

### **Attainment levels in RE.**

The draft versions have already been sent to everyone for trailing. Comments need to be with me as you break for Easter. If you are attempting specific pieces aimed at one or more of the levels then it would be useful to have these as well. If by any chance you need a new copy of the levels please ask. If you want to see changes you need to comment.

### **Inspection: section 48**

All our inspection team have now completed at least one inspection under the new guidelines. They are meeting on March 8<sup>th</sup> to review the criteria in the light of their experiences. Any changes will be sent to schools after the meeting. Note there will be no changes made to the schedule for Religious Education, inspectors will simply be looking to see if they can make the descriptors more useful.

### **Ed Excel**

The board are looking for schools to trail a new version of the exam which gives multiple choice answers for some sections. Anyone interested should contact the department.

### **The Directory**

In view of the 14-19 curriculum and other considerations it was the view of NBRIA that the directory needed revision. Further details will be available after the Bishop's Low Week conference.

### **Everybody's Welcome?**

In 2004 the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales launched a major programme of listening to the needs of families in our church. At the end the Bishops published an interesting report of what was heard called "Not Easy but Full of Meaning."

In April 2005 the Bishops of England and Wales agreed a plan of collaborative action to meet the needs identified in the report. These needs have been summarised as follows:

- **Welcoming, family-friendly parishes (2006)**
- Marital and family spirituality (2007)
- Helping parents and grandparents to pass on faith in God (2008)

Bishop Declan launched the initiative in our diocese with a pastoral letter on the Sunday before Lent. One of the avenues parishes will be exploring is how young people can be helped to feel welcomed in church. If schools and parishes could cooperate over this agenda it might prove a basis for useful dialogue.

## Dates for your Diary

### 1. Heads of RE Day Wednesday March 15<sup>th</sup> 2006

This day will 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 have been 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. I would also appreciate it if you could encourage any of the local clergy you think might find this relevant to attend.

### 2. Chaplaincy Day And Heads of RE Day Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2006

This will be a joint day for any members of RE departments 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.

## 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 welcome 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/](http://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. Many new materials are in preparation for use in schools, examples of these will be sent out as soon as we have them.

## 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.**
- 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.

Many thanks for all you do.

*Ann Fowler*

Secondary Schools Adviser