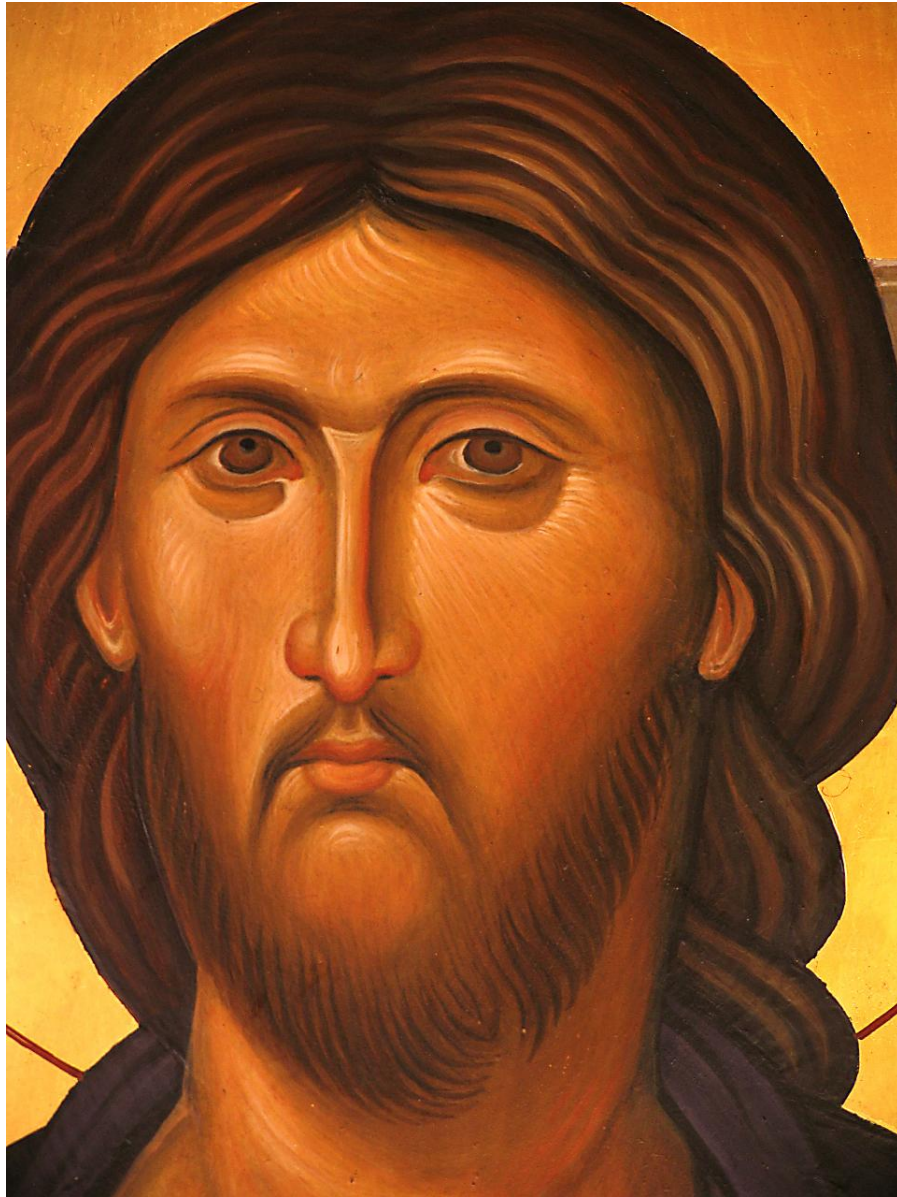


# **Diocese of Clifton**

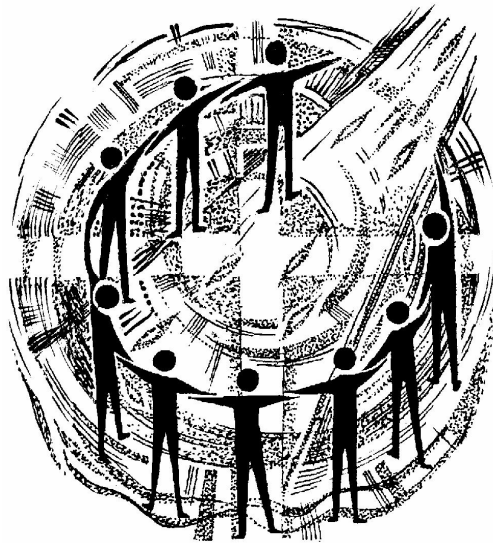


## **Seeking the face of Christ**

*Draft Guidelines for Schools 2008*

*'Our entire existence and being  
should shout the Gospel from the rooftops.  
Our entire person should breathe Jesus.  
All our actions and our entire life  
should proclaim that we belong to Jesus.  
Our lives should be a mirror image of an evangelical life.  
Our entire being should be a living sermon,  
A reflection of Jesus,  
something that proclaims Jesus,  
that makes others see Jesus,  
and that shines like an image of Jesus.'*

(Blessed Charles de Foucauld)



## Introduction

I would like to thank all the schools and particularly all the young people who responded to our Diocesan Consultation *Seeking the Face of Christ*.

John Paul II, wrote *“the future of the world and of the Church belongs to the younger generation”*<sup>1</sup> It has always been true that the Catholic School participates in the evangelizing mission of the church, that schools exist as does the whole Church, not for its own sake but to communicate Christ to others, but this is particularly important today. Young people do not attend services in their parishes in the way they used to in previous generations. There are many, often complex, reasons for this, but one consequence is that it can be difficult for parishes to reach out to young people and offer them the vision and hope of the Gospel.

In contrast, Catholic schools within our Diocese educate approximately 22,000 young people. Through our schools we also have an opportunity to reach out to parents, many of whom would otherwise have no contact with the Church. Our schools are not an *add on* but integral to the life of the Church and, reciprocally, schools should see themselves as a part of the Church community working in partnership with the parishes wherever possible.

It is sometimes said that the effectiveness of the Catholic School should be measured by the number of young people it brings into their local parishes. However, whether they go to Church or not the school offers those young people and their parents an opportunity to be part of a community which offers a vision of life based on the Gospel, places Christ at the centre of all it does and as a community draws its hope from the resurrection. They are places where the truths of our faith can be explored and experienced.

In order for this to happen the school must be authentic. A Catholic school is authentic when it lives by the vision of the Gospel and this vision must find expression in the way the school organises itself and the way in which the community relates within itself and to the wider community of which it is a part. The school must offer a distinctive language for understanding life and interpreting human experience.

The Catholic School is not in existence simply to serve Catholic needs and surround itself with a protective shield but exists to encourage and enable pupils to become active citizens contributing to the common good of society. The Catholic School is not about creating a ghetto but recognising the responsibility Christians have for creating a just environment in which the dignity of all is upheld and bonds of

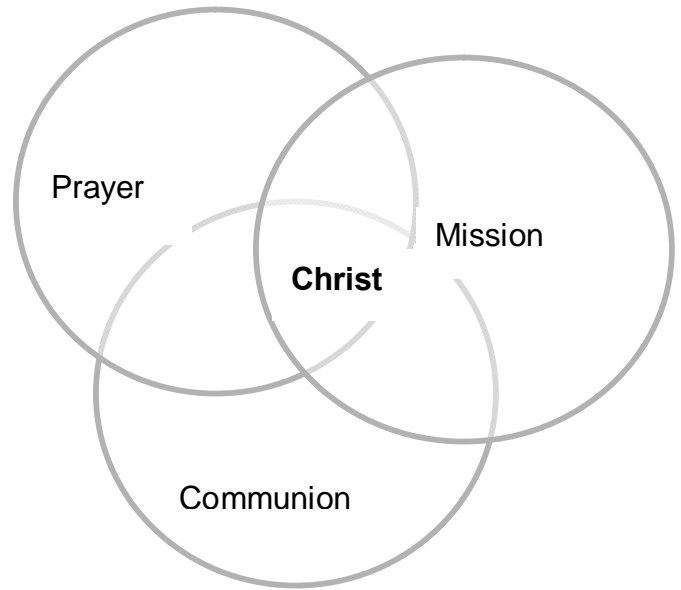
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<sup>1</sup> John Paul II, Apostolic Letter Tertio Millennio Adveniente, n.58.

cooperation forged. The Catholic School is about conversation- about being open to discover the wonder of creation the wonder of life, the wonder of God. It can provide for those who belong to it, an understanding of what it is to be human but it can also contribute through its lived experience to the wider conversation in society of how to live a life that is good, fulfilling and true and to bring an end to wars, rumours of war and the creation of a just society.

We have divided this document into three areas:

Church as Communion  
Church of Liturgy and Prayer  
Church of Mission



These areas are overlapping and interconnected. What centres them all is Christ who is at the heart of our whole endeavour. Making him known both to ourselves and to others is our deepest vocation.

These guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive; they represent the best practice already taking place within our schools and reflect the comments of those who contributed to the initial consultation. Hopefully, they will offer guidance for future planning.

The final Pastoral Guidelines document to be published in the autumn of 2008, will set out a roadmap for practical ways in which we can implement that vision. Hopefully they will be a springboard for us to work together in mission.

**Timeline**

**30 April 2008**  
**Autumn 2008**

**Final deadline for feedback to the Pastoral Guidelines Steering Group**  
**Diocesan Pastoral Guidelines published**

**WHERE TO SEND YOUR RESPONSES:**

“Seeking the Face of Christ”, Alexander House, 160 Pennywell Road, Bristol BS5 0TX

Email responses can be sent to: [seeking@cliftonDiocese.com](mailto:seeking@cliftonDiocese.com).

## How to approach this Booklet

This document is a further step in drawing up the Diocesan Pastoral Guidelines and seeks to incorporate the wisdom and insights that have emerged from the initial consultation in 2007. Even if you have not been involved in this process so far your participation in the next step will be very welcome.

This document, which is based upon all the responses we have received from parishes, schools and individuals, forms a part of the overall guidelines and draws out the areas of specific concern to schools. However it should be read in conjunction with the main document. Each section has three parts:

- 1) What we have heard**
- 2) What needs to be done**
- 3) Specific proposals**

When you read each section, the questions you need to ask yourself are:

Is this a priority?

Do you agree with the way in which it might be tackled?

How might your school engage with this priority?

Proposals which occur in bold type also occur in the main document.

## THE CHURCH CELEBRATING LITURGY AND PRAYER

Once Jesus was in a certain place praying, and when he had finished one of his disciples said, *Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.* He said to them, *Say this when you pray;*

*Father, may your name be held holy,  
your kingdom come;  
give us each day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our sins,  
for we ourselves forgive each one who is in debt to us.  
And do not put us to the test.* (Luke 11:1-4)

Just as the first disciples turned to Jesus and asked him to teach them to pray so we too make their words our own: *Lord, teach us to pray*

As Christians we find in Christ our example of what prayer is and how to pray. St John the Baptist De La Salle, the patron saint of teachers wrote; *"You must therefore devote yourself thoroughly to prayer. Earnestly ask Jesus Christ to make His Spirit come alive in you. Let your teaching be energised by His Spirit and draw all its power from Him."*

We must be not only a people of prayer ourselves but help the young people entrusted to our care develop and grow in their own understanding of prayer. This means prayer should be appropriate to the age and faith development of the community. It should respect the right of the individual to make a free response to God's call and help pupils develop their awareness of the prayer of the Church.

Prayer should never be divorced from life, nor a bolt on to the life of the school, but must underpin all we do and who we are. It is to the extent that we are rooted in prayer, both communal and solitary, that we will be able to discover our mission and have the strength to carry it out.

# Prayer

## 1. What we have heard

*We need to be aware that Mass is not the only liturgy and we need different liturgies for different groups*<sup>2</sup> *Retreats: more imaginative use of these, be they for a week, a weekend or a day, (we need) to do more to really open up and explain the immense riches of our liturgical cycle* *let the young develop different liturgies* (Stroud)

*The prayer life of our school tries to be as inclusive as possible* St Joseph's (School) Devizes

*We need a greater understanding of the spirituality of the Church's year*

*We need to find the meaning in our liturgies*

*Children need to be fully included in masses in school and parish* Holy Family Patchway (School)

*(We need to) ensure the integration of school/ordinary life and our faith exists, and is always present through every aspect of the curriculum* St Edmund's Calne (School)

## 2. What needs to be done

We need to rediscover, and at times reinterpret, the richness of our spiritual heritage. We must help pupils connect faith to life so that prayer informs practice and is integrated into the practicalities of our everyday lives. All staff (teaching or non-teaching) should be supported through appropriate inset provision in order that their own understanding of prayer and liturgy develops and they feel confident in their ability to lead their pupils in prayer. There is a desire for alternative liturgies which are inclusive, both in language and culture and schools and parishes need to work together to share their understanding and expertise. Parishes and Schools have asked to be supported in providing liturgical catechesis and in developing their liturgies. The growing number of Catholics arriving in our Parishes and schools who come from different cultural traditions means that we have new resources for reinvigorating our prayer life. Examples of good practice need to be collected and shared by all. (Please note some points raised by schools are addressed in the youth section of this document)

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<sup>2</sup> Where the quotation is not attributed to a Parish it is from the Diocesan Study Day at St Bede's College 20<sup>th</sup> October 2007

### 3. Specific proposals

| Action  | By when                              | Responsible person/group   |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| Schools to continue to develop an environment that, through its visible signs, reflects our beliefs   | ongoing                              | All staff led by SMT   |
| Schools to continue to provide inset for all staff on prayer  | Ongoing                              | SMT/Governors  |
| Schools to continue to provide adequate resources for prayer  | ongoing                              | SMT/Governors  |
| To continue to ensure as far as possible that prayer underpins all aspects of life in school, including explicit examples of prayer such as grace before meals.   | ongoing                              | All staff led by SMT   |
| Schools to continue to help all subject areas to contribute to the prayer life of the school and to make an explicit contribution to the spiritual and moral development of pupils.   | ongoing                              | All staff led by SMT   |
| Schools to continue to develop liturgies which are appropriate to the age, faith development and cultural traditions of pupils and to inculcate pupils into the life and prayer of the church   | ongoing                              | All staff led by chaplaincy and RE departments                           |
| Schools to celebrate with the diocesan family through the specific primary and secondary school Masses and to take part where possible in diocesan and national events  | ongoing                              | Schools/Dept schools/Governors   |
| All schools to explore the role of chaplaincy within their community and how provision for this might be made. Chaplaincy must then be effectively resourced.   | By 2010                              | SMT/Governors/Parish with the support of Dept schools/colleges           |
| <b>All Schools to continue to develop their retreat programmes for both pupils and staff.</b> Governing bodies should encourage head teachers to take part in the diocesan retreat day for heads.   | <b>Ongoing</b>                       | <b>Schools/ Governors</b>  |
| <b>Each appropriate Diocesan Department to consider how they can support the prayer life of Parishes, Schools and individuals and to produce a series of exemplar material showing how prayer can be integrated and linked to our lives today</b> | <b>Ongoing but initially by 2009</b> | <b>Each Department but coordinated by Department for Adult Education</b> |
| <b>Deaneries/Parishes/Schools to review and strengthen their links; consider joint chaplaincy work</b>  | <b>July 2009</b>                     | <b>Deanery Parish Councils/schools</b>                                   |

- To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?
- What could we change in our Parishes/Schools that would help us become people of prayer?

## THE CHURCH AS COMMUNION

On the night before he died for us Jesus prayed these words:

± pray not only for these,  
but for those also who through their words  
will believe in me.  
May they all be one.  
Father, may they be one in us,  
as you are in me and I am in you,  
so that the world may believe it was you who sent me. (John 17:20-21)

Jesus Christ has revealed that God is a communion of three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, continually pouring out love for one another and he prays that his followers will reflect this communion of love in the way in which we share our life and gifts with one another.

The School can reflect the society of which we are all a part . a society that is often restless, lost and hurt, living without hope. A society that believes %I increase my income or have a good job the inner truth of %Who I am+ will be made clear+. We know that is not true. The challenge for schools is to draw out of the individual the truth of his or her heart and to help them understand that we can only know that truth in relationship to others. We are made in the image and likeness of God who is relationship and we are called by God in our uniqueness into community. In our diversity our %uneness+is rich.

To achieve that %ommunion+is a challenge and it can never be fully achieved on earth. Life is a process of coming into communion with God and others. In that process we have to face self-interest, ignorance, injustice, individualism, brokenness in relationships, illness and death. But the power of God to heal is stronger than all of this. %ommunion+is about loving one another into life. Communion is not an idea but a way of living life . a way in which we discover the meaning of life and make connections with one another. With the wisdom of the present and the wisdom of the past, we can live wisely now and for the future. Our schools can become %ommunions+if we live with this vision and celebrate the presence of the God who calls us and enables us to live in communion. Our schools don't achieve communion in its fullness but are instruments of communion.

# Supporting Family Life

## 1. What we have heard

Supporting Family Life was an area of concern for many Parishes who felt that families were coming under increasing pressure in today's world. There was also recognition that family life was no longer straightforward and that there were many different types. The need to be welcoming to all was frequently expressed as was the need to be able to reach to families who feel put off by Church. Within this area concern was also expressed for those families who had children with disabilities or who had members suffering from mental health issues. The area of supporting family life was generally only referred to indirectly by schools, many schools however spoke about offering a safe haven for pupils, supporting the more vulnerable children and offering fresh starts to some. All schools who contributed spoke of their desire to be inclusive for children with disabilities.

*"For our part we need to be more aware of disability issues"* (Blaisdon).

*"The parents of children attending children's liturgy are a group that needs to be welcomed, evangelised, involved."* (St Gregory's, Cheltenham).

Variations on this from other Parishes talked about the need to involve parents of children in first communion or confirmation programmes.

*"Many parents who send their children to Catholic Schools do not come to Church: how do we help these parents feel welcomed and involved in Church"*

*"We need to encourage prayer in the family. How do we do this?"* Taunton **(School)**

*"We must support families and help them in their prayer life"*

*"Families take different forms we need to let them know Church is for them too"*

*"We believe taking a lead in parish masses during the year as a parish school is very important. It draws families in and creates a sense of community"* Holy Family Swindon **(School)**

*"At school strong, reassuring and open links are built to make parents more aware of the day to day life of our school"* St Joseph **School** Devizes

*"Relationships need to be built between parish, family and schools by lay people 'on the ground' who are trained and available to provide this pastoral care."* **School** Chaplain

## 2. What needs to be done

Parishes and schools to work together, to help and support those families who may not be in formal contact with the Church by considering a variety of joint initiatives. Encourage all Parishes to work with schools to develop liturgies that are family friendly and which speak to people about their everyday lives. Develop a sense of the spirituality of everyday life. Schools to share their expertise in helping those families who have children with disabilities feel that they are able to be fully involved in the Church and develop the skills to support these families with catechetical programmes designed to involve their children. Ensure that there is a safe environment in which children and vulnerable adults can flourish.

### 3. Specific proposals

| Action   | By when                | Responsible person/group   |
|--|------------------------|--|
| Seek a coordinator for marriage and family life who will liaise with schools   | Nov 2008               | Bishop and Director for Adult Education  |
| See that every Parish and school has the opportunity to be fully involved in initiatives supporting family life, such as 'Home is a Holy Place' and has access to training and resource materials to support these initiatives | Ongoing                | Coordinator working with Adult Education/Schools department and the Diocesan Pastoral Council        |
| Develop a range of liturgies to support and involve families; provide resource materials for family prayers and devotional practices which connect with the lives of people today  | Ongoing                | Department of Liturgy/ Department for Adult Education/Department for schools                         |
| Provide training for working with children with disabilities for those responsible for children's Religious Education  | Initially by July 2009 | Department for Adult Education.  |
| Provide appropriate training to provide support for families who are experiencing difficulties, broken relationships and bereavements  | Ongoing                | Co-ordinator for married life, with the support of Marriage Care, Rainbows and the ASDC <sup>3</sup> |
| Where possible Schools and Parishes to share good practice in this area and develop joint training days  | Ongoing                | Department for Adult Education / Schools Department  |
| See that marriage care materials such as Marriage Care, ASDC and contact details are promoted and available in each Parish and School  | Jan 2009               | Marriage Care, Parish contacts, Schools.   |

- To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?
- How is your school already supporting family life in all its aspects?

<sup>3</sup> Association for Separated and Divorced Catholics

## Youth

### 1. What we have heard

Many Parishes and schools stressed the need for support in their work with youth both with the appointment of a Diocesan Youth Coordinator and in terms of resources and training. Questions being asked were:

*How do we provide a safe environment in which young people can flourish?"*

*"The Diocese should provide for a youth officer" (Portishead)*

*"(We need to) empower young people by setting up an active youth ministry in the diocese"*

**St Bede's (College)**

*"there is a lack of 'fun' about parishes-there should be more activities and we should be allowed to do more." Pupil St Peter's High School Gloucester*

*"The ministry of the church in schools tends to be focused around the formal liturgies rather than the day to day activities of the children's lives" Head of RE*

### 2. What needs to be done

Respond to Parish and school requests to be supported in their work with youth; this needs both training and resourcing.

Explore ways of helping young people who do attend Church to feel part of the community and be fully involved in Parish life. Liturgy needs to be appropriate and to speak to their hearts and minds. The Good News should be presented in a way that makes sense to them. Many young people do not attend Church but do attend Catholic Schools and we need to meet them where they are instead of waiting for them to come to us.

Schools have contact with young people in a way that others do not and we need to explore creatively how the links between School and Parish can be deepened. Ecumenical links should be developed so that we can learn from and support each other in our work with young people. Resources and good ideas can be shared throughout the Diocese.

### 3 Specific proposals (These are reproduced in their entirety from the main document)

| <b>Action</b>   | <b>By when</b>                            | <b>Responsible Person/Group</b>   |
|---|---|---|
| A Diocesan youth committee, (DYC) to be formed to inspire and help develop youth programmes at the Parish level and to line manage and develop a job description for a Diocesan youth co-ordinator          | Jan 2009                                  | Bishop  |
| A Diocesan youth co-ordinator to be appointed   | April 2009                                | Bishop  |
| Diocesan youth gatherings/events to be organised  | From July 2008                            | Schools advisers and DYC, Coordinator   |
| A formation programme for youth leaders to be developed   | July 2009                                 | Schools advisers DYC and Youth Coordinator  |
| Training to be provided for youth leader, chaplains and clergy in developing liturgies for young people   | July 2009                                 | Youth Co-ordinator, DYC and Schools advisers  |
| A newsletter to be developed and issued on a regular basis for youth leaders  | Nov 2008                                  | Schools DYC, co-ordinator advisers  |
| A webpage to be developed for youth   | July 2009                                 | Communications Officer and Youth Co-ordinator   |
| A contact list to be developed for youth leaders in each Parish   | July 2009                                 | Parishes and Co-ordinator   |
| Deaneries to formulate a strategy for youth evangelisation in their area and to consider the appointment and financing of a deanery youth worker  | July 2009                                 | Deanery Pastoral Council with the help of the DYC   |
| Deaneries/Parishes/Schools to review and strengthen their links; consider joint chaplaincy work   | July 2009                                 | Deanery Parish Councils   |
| Young people to be encouraged to become Parish leaders and where possible Parishes to form Youth Parish Councils alongside the Parish Pastoral Council  | On going                                  | Parishes with the help of DYC   |
| All secondary Schools to have a named person responsible for chaplaincy with the time and resources to carry out their work: Primary Schools to explore options for chaplaincy in conjunction with Parishes | On going                                  | Schools Department and School leadership teams  |
| Schools to implement retreat and spiritual formation programmes and to involve the Parishes in these programmes   | On going                                  | Schools Department<br>Schools RE co-ordinator   |
| To explore and initiate at both Diocesan and Parish level ecumenical projects in working with youth, particularly those projects which take the form of outreach  | On going but initial reports by Sept 2010 | Diocesan Youth Co-ordinator, Diocesan Pastoral Council Parish Pastoral Councils and youth leaders |

- To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?
- How would help your school involve itself in the work the Diocesan Youth Department?

# Formation

## 1. What we have heard

Many responses identified the need for a richer understanding of scripture and the importance of the catechesis of adults for Christian maturity and a missionary Church. It was felt that this should be the shared responsibility of Bishop, Priests, Deacons and Laity. The importance of formation of the whole community is integral to communion and mission. For schools the understanding was that adults working with young people model a way of life. If the adults themselves had a limited awareness of what it means to be part of our faith story then it was unlikely that the children would be able to develop a full understanding. Schools also expressed the view that clergy needed to be specifically trained in how to relate to young people.

*+Adult education/formation to increase knowledge of faith+(Taunton)*

*%Somehow the Diocese needs to educate and inform adults, possibly in local settings, rather than Diocesan wide. The Diocese could provide local formation facilities+(Burnham-on-Sea)*

*“We need to develop mature attitudes to faith through education” School Chaplain*

*“Could the diocese assist us with in-service training in ethical issues?” St Brendan’s College*

*“homily-continuing professional development needs to be provided so that they (priests) are trained to deliver vibrant and dynamic homilies” Holy Family Patchway*

*“Possible launch of a training programme for Head Teachers, teachers, teaching assistants and clergy, working together” St Joseph’s Nympsfield (School)*

## 2. What needs to be done

Schools to set as a priority inset with regard to distinctive nature of the school and the understanding of faith. They also need to raise awareness of catechetical programmes that are already available and encourage staff to take part in them. Clergy need to be offered opportunities to develop their skills for use when working with young people.

### 3 Specific proposals

| <b>Action (for everyone)</b>  | <b>By when</b> | <b>Responsible person/group</b>                      |
|---|----------------|--|
| <b>Scripture courses will continue to be developed and information about them made available to schools</b>                               | <b>Ongoing</b> | <b>Department for Adult Education</b>                |
| <b>A resources manual for Adult Education will be produced and distributed to schools</b>   | <b>2010</b>    | <b>Department for Adult Education</b>                |
| Formation in faith is a lifelong activity. Schools need to adopt the appropriate strategies to promote this through their inset provision | Ongoing        | SMT/Governors with the help of appropriate providers |

| <b>Action (for Priests)</b>  | <b>By when</b> | <b>Responsible person/group</b>                    |
|--|----------------|--|
| <b>All Priests to be encouraged to take part in an annual programme of formation which would include working and developing liturgies for young people</b> | <b>Ongoing</b> | <b>Department of Ongoing Formation for Priests</b> |

- **To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?**
- **How does your school already make use of the opportunities provided for formation?**

## THE CHURCH OF MISSION

For the Christian to be missionary is to share in the mission of the Son. We too are sent by the Father to be witnesses to the Gospel. And we too are called to leap to our feet in the service of others. When talking about our modern western culture pope John Paul II said "The more globalised the market becomes, the more we must counterbalance it with a culture of solidarity that gives priority to the needs of the most vulnerable"<sup>4</sup>

Our schools are under increasing pressure to adopt a market approach to education, to promote an understanding of life based on individualism and consumerism. This is not in keeping with the values of the Gospel. Our desire to promote the Common Good means also that school communities need to be not only in conversation with the Catholic community but also the wider community of which they are part, sharing resources and insights into the meaning of life which is brought by the Gospel.

We cannot find our identity as Catholics in isolation from others. We recognise that being a Catholic today is recognising the responsibility Catholics have for creating a just environment in which the dignity of all is upheld and bonds of co-operation forged. Catholic schools are about helping form citizens who act for the common good. As Martin Luther King said: "We must learn to live together as brothers and sisters or perish together as fools."

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<sup>4</sup> Homily for the Workers' Jubilee 2001

## Welcoming and Outreach

### 1. What we have heard

There was a recognition that ~~a~~welcome~~q~~was far more than the way you were greeted when you walked into the building, although the importance of having someone greet you and smile at you cannot be underestimated.

Particular concern was expressed for those newly arrived nationalities and families and the way in which we integrate.

*%We should like to see the Diocesan Guidelines include something on the situation of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and would be ready to collaborate on this ....*

*We should like to see a Diocesan network established to advise Parishes and schools on refugee and asylum issues .... (Diocesan Commission for Justice and Peace)*

*"We need to reach out to the 'stranger' - people of all nationalities.+*

We need to ~~%be~~ *be inclusive not exclusive – regardless of race, mental state, sexuality+* (Brockworth).

*"The only way to overcome prejudice is through education"* Holy Family Patchway

*"Parishes should offer an authentic welcome, not a token gesture."* St Peter's High School Gloucester

### **"What needs to be done**

We need to create school communities that see outreach as a vital part of their mission and who are prepared to take risks in order to bring the ~~G~~ood News~~q~~to others. We need to form communities who are concerned about welcoming all and seeing in each individual the image of God. We need to support those who feel marginalised. Schools working with parishes need to be active in their local areas so that they make a positive impact on the area, working ecumenically where possible.

### 3 Specific proposals

| Action   | By when        | Responsible person/group   |
|--|----------------|--|
| Schools to continue to develop a culture of openness and welcome   | ongoing        | SMT/Governors  |
| <b>Parishes and local Catholic Schools to consider jointly ways of reaching out to parents/ families of children who attend school but who do not have contact with the Parish</b> | <b>Ongoing</b> | <b>Parish Pastoral Councils/ School leadership/ chaplain</b>       |
| <b>The Bishop's Conference initiative such as 'All are Welcome' to be more fully disseminated throughout the Diocese</b>   | <b>Ongoing</b> | <b>Diocesan Pastoral Council</b>                                   |
| <b>Diocesan Guidelines to be produced for welcoming and supporting migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and distributed to schools</b>  | <b>2009</b>    | <b>Diocesan Pastoral Council/ Commission for Justice and Peace</b> |

- To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?
- How will your School become more outward looking and deepen its awareness of the needs of the wider community?

## Living for Others

1.

### What have we heard

Many schools and pupils spoke about their work in support of CAFOD and/or Third World projects. There was an understanding that the way we responded to the needs of others was a clear witness to our faith. Most talked about the need to do more and to learn from others.

*“Be more active in social justice and ethical issues”* (Holy Family (Parish), Swindon)

*“We should foster unselfishness and a desire to work for the common good”* (Cirencester)

*“We could build on the altruism of young people by encouraging them to help the more disadvantaged in our community and showing them Christianity in action”* St Peter’s and St Paul’s.

*“Pupils need to be given opportunities to support others and make choices. In doing this they can incorporate Christ’s teachings into their own lives”* St Edmund’s Calne (**School**)

*To show that we are Christian... “ask what Jesus would do, do something about poverty, help others+ Various responses from **pupils** from different **schools** there were many very similar comments.*

2. **What needs to be done**

We are called to follow more closely the example of Christ, to feed the hungry, to welcome strangers, to visit those who are sick or in prison. We can learn from the example of St Francis of Assisi and preach the Gospel, using words if necessary.+Within our schools we need to encourage a wide range of activities that reflect our support for the common good. The links between faith and action need to be made explicit.

### 3. Specific proposals

| Action   | By when        | Responsible person/group   |
|--|----------------|--|
| <b>Diocese to collect and share good examples of Justice and Peace Projects, including those which take place in schools</b>   | <b>Ongoing</b> | <b>Commission for Justice and Peace/<br/>Diocesan Pastoral Council</b> |
| <b>Parishes to form and support Justice and Peace groups to support the work of organisations like CAFOD/ Pax Christi. Schools to do the same</b>  | <b>Ongoing</b> | <b>Parish Pastoral Council and Schools</b>                             |
| <b>Parishes and Schools to work together to support common projects</b>  | <b>Ongoing</b> | <b>Parish Pastoral Council and Schools</b>                             |
| Schools to develop a range of liturgies which reflects our concern for the Common Good and to plan, where possible joint liturgical events with parishes on these topics   | ongoing        | Schools /Dept of liturgy/ Dept for Schools                             |
| Schools to help all staff grow in their understanding of the implications of Catholic teaching on social justice   | ongoing        | Schools/ Dept for Schools  |
| Schools to develop resources and training. To help all subject areas understand the implications of this teaching for specific curriculum areas and where it might most appropriately be incorporated into schemes of work | ongoing        | Schools/Dept for schools   |

- **To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?**
- **In what ways do you already work with your feeder parishes to support the common good**

# Dialogue

## 1. What we have heard

Our outreach should include dialogue with other faiths and those of no faith. Schools talked about the need to prepare pupils to live in a multi cultural, multi faith society and of the pressures of a secular society where the role and purpose of faith schools was often misunderstood.

*Interfaith dialogue to be given greater emphasis and where it is operating examples of good practice to be made available* (Trowbridge)

*What resources are there for interfaith dialogue?* (Melksham)

*Identification of existing links with non-Christian religions* (Westbury-on-Trym)

*We need to establish links to enable the exploration and understanding of other faiths.....we need to reduce fear, promote friendship and create a state of openness*.

*we need to engage with the wider community more. People could see us as being different (Well we are) but this shouldn't mean we isolate ourselves.* St Francis Nailsea

*A number of our students are practising Muslims and often we find that they are allies in creating an awareness of the spiritual within a predominantly secular culture* **St Brendan's College**

## 2. What needs to be done

To try to promote an understanding of the search for truth that exists within other faiths, and to recognise that the Second Vatican Council says clearly that the Church rejects nothing which is true and holy in these religions.<sup>5</sup> Where possible we need to encourage interfaith dialogue and action to promote the common good and engage in dialogue with contemporary society and its problems. We should also listen attentively to the voices around us, act with justice and compassion and bring hope to bear on a world too often torn by hatred, war and injustice.

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<sup>5</sup> Vatican II: Decree on the Relation of the Church to non-Christian Religions, (Nostra Aetate) 1965,

### 3. Specific proposals

| Action  | By when               | Responsible person/group                                      |
|---|-----------------------|---|
| Promote the Bishops' Conference materials on other faiths; for example those found on <a href="http://www.catholic-ew.org.uk/resource/interfaith/index.htm">http://www.catholic-ew.org.uk/resource/interfaith/index.htm</a> | Ongoing but from 2008 | Diocesan Interfaith Coordinator/<br>Diocesan Pastoral Council |
| Parishes and Schools to seek ways of sharing with other faiths their spiritual heritage.  | Ongoing but from 2009 | Parishes/Schools with help from the appropriate Departments   |
| Schools to continue to develop the students' understanding of other faiths.   | Ongoing from 2008     | Schools with advice from Schools Department                   |
| Schools to continue to develop their approaches to community cohesion and to share with Parishes their work in this area.   | Ongoing from 2008     | Schools/Parishes  |
| Parishes and schools to seek to undertake projects which actively make a positive difference to their local environment and /or the wider world community.  | Ongoing               | Parish Pastoral Councils/ schools                             |

- To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?
- What does your school need to do in order to have more effective dialogue with other faiths?

# The Environment

## 1. What we have heard

Schools were concerned about making the link between our sacramental vision of life and lifestyle: to be active stewards of creation. Many mentioned the concept of stewardship and the need to witness to our beliefs through our actions. Many talked about the good work that was already taking place in this area. They felt there was a need for this work to be more widely known. There was also recognition that this area attracts the interest and support of young people and parishes cited Schools as an area of good practice and the possibility of learning from their experience was mentioned.

*“Be sustainable and environmentally aware in everything we do as a Parish – as Christians we should lead the way on these issues” (Portishead)*

*“As Christians our concern for the environment should be based on our belief that the environment not only manifests God, but is the context in which we seek the face of Christ and also reflects that face. We should be active stewards of the creation of which we are part”(Calne)*

*“Working on deeply felt social and environmental issues can also be a way of ‘being Church”*

*“(we can engage Students by) focusing on issues like global warming which youth are passionate about and start to enable them to see and encounter Christ through working on these issues “ St Bede’s **College***

*“We should care for the planet because God created it and we should look after what God has made” Pupil St Francis Nailsea (**School**)*

## 2. What needs to be done

At all levels we need to become aware of how we interact with the environment and what specific steps can be taken to live sustainably and witness to our beliefs by becoming active stewards of creation. Our liturgy should reflect a concern for the environment. In environmental issues we can work ecumenically. These issues particularly interest young people who would welcome being involved in this work.

### 3 Specific proposals

| Action   | By when  | Responsible person/group   |
|--|----------|--|
| Resource material to be produced for Schools and Parishes outlining the spirituality of the environment and advice on where guidelines on carrying out environmental surveys can be found            | Oct 2008 | Schools' Department and the Commission for Justice and Peace/ Liturgy Department |
| Liturgical resources about the environment to be produced for use in Parishes/Schools to help people make connections between faith and life   | Ongoing  | Schools/Liturgy Department, Commission for Justice and Peace                     |
| The Diocese to plan to become a Fairtrade Diocese <sup>6</sup>   | Jan 2010 | Diocesan Pastoral Council/Commission for Justice and Peace                       |
| Schools/Parishes to consider carrying out surveys and looking at their carbon footprint  | May 2009 | Schools/Parishes   |
| Parishes and Schools to be encouraged to support CAFOD's environmental work and to make use of its resources to help Parishioners explore ways of putting the ideas into practice in their own lives | Ongoing  | CAFOD<br>Schools/Parishes  |

- To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?
- How far does your school support sustainable living?

<sup>6</sup> The Fairtrade Foundation officially recognizes a diocese as Fairtrade if its offices and at least 30% of its churches and Schools pledge to serve only Fairtrade tea and coffee whenever providing refreshments, to endeavour to use other fairly-traded items wherever possible, to promote the use of fairly-traded items amongst our congregation and to support the principles of Trade Justice and sustainable living.

*“What is needed today are heralds of the Gospel;  
Who are experts in humanity,  
Who know the depth of the human heart,  
Who can share the joys, the hopes, the agonies, the distress,  
Of people today  
But who are, at the same time, contemplatives,  
Who have fallen in love with God”*

*Pope Paul VI*

