

Seeking the Face of Christ (schools)

This is intended only as a guide for those schools who have asked for further clarification or suggestions on how to tackle the material especially with younger children. It is not intended to be prescriptive or definite. If you wish to take a different line please do so. If you are only going to tackle a couple of questions please think about the ones highlighted. It would help if you could record both the views of staff and the views of pupils and send them to seeking@cliftondiocese.com before you finish for summer.

Made in the Image and Likeness of God

This section explores our belief that each of us is unique, called into being by God, loved by God and to quote Cardinal Newman, “necessary for His purpose.” As it says in most retreat centres God don’t make rubbish. We share in the life of God and each of us reveals something of God. Through the incarnation, through Jesus God also shares in our life. If we want to know how we should live, if we want to know what it really means to be created in the image and likeness of God, then we need to look at the life of Jesus
Questions you may like to ask

For staff (Please focus on good practice so this can be shared)

- Do your pupils have a positive self image? Do they know they are loved? How can we help them develop a more positive image, through the prayer life of the school, through behaviour etc (Please focus on good practice so this can be shared)
- **Is the prayer life of the school fully inclusive, do we give pupils the opportunity to take real responsibility for this? Do you think this happens in parishes? What if anything would you like to see change in the parish to make them more welcoming to children and young adults**
- What can the diocese do to help support young people on their spiritual journey?
- **If our school has expertise in welcoming pupils from other cultures and their families how can we help share this good practice with parishes?**
- How are pupils with disabilities welcomed? If there are none in the school how do we help pupils become aware of the needs, rights and dignity of people with disabilities? (perhaps especially those with learning disabilities since this can be a hidden problem)
- How do we/can we help pupils overcome any form of prejudice
- How do we/can we encourage pupils to work for justice and peace. How can we link this in to parish work
- Given that we try to promote dialogue with other faiths through the Re syllabus how can we develop this work and involve the parish? Can we help educate others about other faiths?
- How can we use our knowledge in schools to help the parishes develop their life and liturgy

For Pupils

- Do you think the way we speak to and behave to others reflects the fact that we believe everybody is loved by God? Be Honest!!
- Do you understand and feel involved in everything that goes on in church? If not what are your ideas for making things better? What would help more young people to be involved in their parishes?
- When you look at the life of Jesus what do you think was important to him in the way he treated others? What should we actually do to be like him? Do you think your parish and school give you enough opportunities to help others? What would you like to organise in your parish if you could?

God in all things

This section reminds us of our belief that there is no difference between the sacred and the secular, God is present in every aspect of our lives. “In the nuts and bolts of everyday life” You cannot be a Christian just on Sundays

For staff

- Does your personal faith (or the ethos of the school) come across in every subject you teach? Do we provide for spiritual development in every subject? Do we help students see God in all aspects of life?
- Does prayer and worship in school connect faith to life? Do we in school use a range of prayer activities that use the imagination of pupils? Does the parish do enough to tap into the imagination of young people and make use of their (at times!) altruism? How could this be improved?
- Do we encourage care and concern for the environment?

For pupils

- Do you think God is with you in everything you do?
- Do you think we should be concerned about our planet? What would you like the parish to do to show our care for the environment?

The Communion of God’s people

This section reminds us that the nature of our faith is communal. We believe that the interior life of God is a community of persons bound by love. You cannot be a Christian on your own. We live and die with our neighbour. If we want to love God we need firstly to love others. Our society places great emphasise on individuality, individual freedom, individual rights; but we believe that freedom is for something, we believe in the common good, we believe that we are called to build the kingdom.

For staff

- **How do we encourage pupils to see themselves as part of a community? On retreats pupils often say that they felt as though they belonged. Does the parish create that sense of belonging; does it encourage both adults and**

young people to see themselves as part of a community? Does it take young people seriously/

- How can the school and parish work together to develop real links, sharing and learning from one another?
- How does the school foster an appreciation of reconciliation/forgiveness etc
- How does the school which may well have many pupils from other Christian denominations within it foster good ecumenical links?
- Are other catholic agencies welcomed and supported within the school?
- How can we foster and strengthen a sense of being part of a universal church?
- **Given the reality that numbers of clergy are declining and those who are here have more and more commitments how can we best support chaplaincy work within schools and how could this link in with a diocesan system?**

For pupils

- Do you think you can be a Christian on your own? What makes you feel this way?
- Is it important to help others? How can you do this in your situation? Do you think your parish does enough to help others?
- Do you feel you belong in your parish? What makes you feel this way?

Revealing the Face of Christ

This section looks at evangelisation. The church exists not for its own sake, not to get more members but to be Good News; to build the Kingdom of God where all are welcomed.

For staff

- How are we Good News to those within the school community? How are we Good news to those in the local/wider community? Be specific, what do we actually do? If the parish ceased to exist tomorrow would the local community notice or care?
- What do you think Christianity has to offer young people today? How should it go about doing this?
- How do help our pupils develop so they can argue rationally about faith?

For pupils

- How would people know you are a Christian? How are you good news for others?
- If you could only tell people three things about Jesus what would they be?
- What do you think priests should be saying to young people about Jesus?
- Would do you think Christianity can do to help people?