



Archdiocese of Dublin
Education Secretariat

Post Primary Diocesan Advisers R.E News

May 2022

Dear RE Teacher / Chaplain,

Welcome to the May issue of the R.E. Blog. I hope that you are renewed and ready for a new term. May is a month dedicated to prayer to Our Blessed Lady. Those old enough to remember the rendition of Sidney Mc Ewan's "Bring flowers of the rarest" know how important this month is in Ireland. We have an abundance of celebrations, not least the graduation of your Leaving certificate students, whom we hold before the Lord in prayer in the coming weeks.

We begin by reflecting on our inner relationship with God and what our vocation in life is. Vocations Sunday is on May 8th this year. Mid way through the month we celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima, and keep in mind all the people who have been displaced and living in unsafe conditions this day.

The R.E. News has the calendar of events for this month and reflections that may be of assistance to you and your students as we continue our Easter Journey. The good news for school choirs is that Emmanuel is back and please note the information on the JP11 Awards and Ember programmes on offer to all schools.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of assistance to you in your work as Religious Educators. Thank you to all the RE Co-ordinators and Chaplains who have returned their school contact forms. Your co-operation in updating our records is invaluable.

As we come towards the end of the school year we wish to thank you for your invitations to visit, your openness and above all your care for the students you support daily. We look forward to continued collaboration in the new academic year.

May the Lord and His Blessed Mother keep you safe and well this summer.

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Dates and Information

See the Archdiocese of Dublin website for information on events, which take place throughout the diocese. Ideas for Graduation Masses and Services can be accessed there as well

<https://www.dublindiocese.ie>



EMBER GRADUATION CEREMONY

Congratulations to the 14 Ember Faith Schools who will celebrate their Graduation on Tuesday 3rd May. The day begins with a Service of Welcome, guest speakers and of course refreshments in DCU. We thank Fr Seamus McEntee, Chaplain in DCU, for his help and support in arranging our venue. The day will conclude with the presentation of Certificates and Mass in Our Lady of Victories Church, celebrant Mgr Dan O'Connor.

The students and their teachers have worked within their school to enhance the faith lives of their community and have been excellent ambassadors for the teaching and spreading of Jesus message this year. Well done to all.

If your school is interested in becoming an Ember School, please contact the Post Primary Diocesan Advisors for information. Training takes place in late August and early September.



POPE JOHN PAUL II AWARD

The Pope John Paul II Award is a faith achievement award for young people between the age of 16 and 18. It is non-competitive, inclusive, flexible, and voluntary. The John Paul II Award

enables participants to take an active part in the life of their Church – in the life of their community and society. The Award is committed to helping young people enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional and social development through participation in school, parish and community activities."

Would you like to offer this Award to your Students?

In September Sr Bernadette and Sr Concepta will be coordinating the Award, just email us. We look forward to hearing from you.

<https://thepopejohnpauliaward.co.uk>

EMMANUEL 2023

Emmanuel is on the way back!

We have provisional bookings for four nights in 2023 at the Helix

Save the dates – 27 and 28 February and 1 and 2 March

If you are one of our regulars, you will know the score.

We welcome new schools and teachers who want to put their toes into the water with this exciting project. It is a liturgical music programme for second level schools throughout the Archdiocese of Dublin since 2004.

Music is chosen by the Emmanuel Team and presented to schools during September. Over 60 schools take part over four days with music rehearsals, some fun and faith-based input. Students can audition for solo parts or for the orchestra in November using a system they can manage themselves once parental approval is given.

Grainne Clinton, our Coordinator, is back with us again so you will hear more from her than from me in the future as she is our main contact person for Emmanuel.

You can express your interest and select your preferred date by emailing Grainne on emmanuelsschoolconcert@gmail.com

Please pass this on to the Music or R.E. teachers or the Chaplain.

With kind regards

Father Pat O'Donoghue

Director of Emmanuel

LitMus Office

Department for Mission and Ministry



Ecumenical Bible Week



New Appointment by Pope Francis



The announcement was made on 23rd April that Msgr John Kennedy, a priest of the Archdiocese of Dublin, has been appointed by Pope Francis as one of two Secretaries to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. In a document issued last month, *Praedicate Evangelium*, on the Roman Curia and its service to the Church and the World, Pope Francis confirmed that the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith would comprise two Sections, Doctrinal and Disciplinary, each coordinated by a Secretary who assists the Prefect in the specific area of his competence. Msgr Kennedy has been appointed Secretary with responsibility for Discipline.

‘The task of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith is to help the Roman Pontiff and the Bishops in proclaiming the Gospel throughout the world, promoting and protecting the integrity of Catholic doctrine on faith and morals, drawing on the deposit of faith and seeking an ever deeper understanding of it in the face of new questions.’ (*Praedicate Evangelium*, 69).

Msgr Kennedy was ordained as a priest of the Archdiocese of Dublin in 1993. In 1998, he was invited by Cardinal Desmond Connell to study Canon Law at the Gregorian University in Rome. He began working at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in January 2003 and was made a Chaplain of Honour to the Pope, with the title of Monsignor in 2008.

In congratulating Msgr Kennedy on his new position we wish him every blessing in this important leadership role in the Church, contributing significantly to the proclamation of the Gospel throughout the world.



Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for May
is directed at our young people through
the intercession of Our Lady

Faith-Filled

Young

People

We pray for all young people, called to live life to the fullest; may they see in Mary's life the way to listen, the depth of discernment, the courage that faith generates, and the dedication to service.

<https://www.usccb.org/prayers/popes-monthly-intentions2022>



We're delighted to announce the return of the Immigrant Council's free [annual conference](#) exploring different elements of migrant integration, taking place over 3 days next month in-person in Dublin and Galway, as well as online. The Immigrant Council's annual [Integration Conference](#) brings together national and international migrant experts and activists as well as allies to discuss key areas of integration, sharing ideas and identifying positive actions to promote effective migrant integration and inclusion in all sectors of society across Ireland. The theme of this year's conference is coalition building to achieve equality, recognising that together we can accomplish so much more than individually.

World Youth Day Invitation

World Youth Day will take place next year in Lisbon (August 2023). It is hoped that many young people will travel from the Archdiocese of Dublin. We invite teachers to consider identifying students who may wish to take part. There will be practical and pastoral preparation in advance. It will also support existing initiatives such as Ember, Emmanuel and John Paul II Awards. It is hoped that former students and some teachers may take on leadership roles too. The full pilgrimage details will be announced in the Autumn. This is a great opportunity to reach out and invite young people to take part on the biggest youth event next year. For more

information contact Gerard Gallagher in the Office for Mission and Ministry. Email wyd@dublindiocese.ie to register your interest

May 1st Blessed are the Workers Matthew 13:54 – 58



Normally the Feast of St Joseph is celebrated on this day but as it falls on the Third Sunday of Easter this takes precedence. This does not negate the fact that the rights and dignity of workers should be always respected.

May 2nd Feast of St Athanasius

Athanasius suffered many trials while he was bishop of Alexandria. He was given the grace to remain strong against what probably seemed at times to be insurmountable opposition. Athanasius lived his office as bishop completely. He defended the true faith for his flock, regardless of the cost to himself. In today's world we are experiencing this same call to remain true to our faith, no matter what.

May 3rd Feast of St Philip and St James Apostles



Philip was from Bethsaida. It is he who brought Nathanael to Jesus (Jn 1:43). He has a Greek name and brought some Greeks to introduce them to Jesus (Jn 12:21-22). After Jesus's last supper discourse, Philip says to Jesus, "Show us the Father and we will be satisfied." Jesus, says, "Philip, have I been with you all this time and you still do not know me." Perhaps with his Greek name, Philip is being presented as a typical rationalist. At any rate his faith would have been confirmed after Pentecost with that of the other apostles.

James sometimes called James the Less, and also called the "son of Alphaeus" (Mt 10:1-4) and "the brother of the Lord". He emerged as the ruler of the Church in Jerusalem after the Ascension and played a central role in the Council of Jerusalem. He was prominent in backing the decision not to impose Jewish customs on Gentile converts (Ac 15:13-21) and in commissioning Paul as an apostle to the Gentiles.

Jerusalem and the poor

James asked that wherever Paul went, he should remember the poor, and Paul organised a collection for the Church in Jerusalem (Rom 15:26-28, Gal 2:10, 2Cor 8:9 and Acts 24:17). In recent years papal documents have returned to this theme in talking about solidarity with and a preferential option for the poor (especially in the thought of John Paul II).

The Letter of James

The poor of the Christian communities are central also to the Letter that is entitled “of James”, but rather than being an indication of actual authorship, this is more likely an example of what is called “pseudepigraphy”, that is, the attribution of a writing to an author to claim his spiritual authority to approve its contents.

<https://www.catholicireland.net/saintoftheday/saints-philip-and-james>

May 4th Feast of St Conleth

St Conleth is believed to have come from the Wicklow area. While living as a hermit he was persuaded by Brigid to act as priest for her community in Kildare. He was venerated as a saint and Cogitosus in his Life of Brigid calls him bishop and abbot of the monks of Kildare. He was buried beside Brigid in her patronal church there. Speaking to the Synod of Bishops in Rome in October 1987, Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich, then archbishop of Armagh, drew attention to this alternative form of governance in the Church where Brigid (the woman) took the initiative and held the primacy or an authoritative role, while Conleth (the man) took a more secondary, executive and liturgical role



May 5th Blessed Edmund Ignatius Rice 5th

Edmund Rice founded the congregation of Christian Brothers and the Presentation Brothers for the Christian education of poor boys. His example was an inspiration to others. His example was an inspiration to others and for more than two centuries many have been attracted by his vision and generosity.

Blessed Edmund Rice was beatified after the Church investigated and recognized a medical miracle that was the result of people praying to the Founder for his intercession with God. The miracle was a recovery from a terminal medical condition that the patient's doctors could not explain.

A Reflection on Vocation

What word was it that called you?

Can you remember?

I know it wasn't just one word,

One single, obvious invitation.

The Word came slowly,

Sometimes surely,
Through the words and actions of many people,

Can I now be that word for others?



May 8th World Day of Prayer for Vocations

Each year the Church sets aside a day to reflect on how each one of us contributes to the life of the Church. For many years we spoke of a person having

a vocation and most times we thought that that was only for those who became a Priest or joined a Religious Order.

What are the 4 vocations in life?

Although your specific calling will be unique to you, there are four 'categories' of vocation that the Church uses to help us discern God's plan: **marriage, single life, priesthood and religious life**. In each of these four ways of life, God calls us to respond to his call freely and generously.

What are you called to be? Have you considered becoming a Mother, Father (marriage), Priest, Nun, Sister, Brother, Consecrated Virgin or remaining Single. All are vocations, all carry with them the promise made to God to live a good life.

We can talk about a vowed life, joining a group of like-minded men or women who promise to remain celibate, obey the rule of their Religious Order and in most cases take a vow of poverty where everything they own, earn, or are gifted is shared by the group. They pray together and serve the Church and its people.

Marriage is often not viewed as a vocation today, but the promise made by a couple to bring their children up as members of the Church is a huge responsibility and lifelong commitment. We are the Church, the people of God and without the dedication of Parents there will not be any ordained Ministers or members of Religious Orders.

In our diocese there are just over 200 parishes, with 35 congregations of Religious Priests, 7 congregations of Religious Brothers and 74 congregations of Religious Sisters that you can contact if you have any questions about their way of life. Perhaps you could investigate the Congregation of Sisters or Brothers working in your area with one of your classes or send them a invitation to speak with your students.

<https://dublindiocese.ie/religious-orders>



May 10th Feast of St Comgall

Comgall was born in the Dal Riada area of the north-east coast of Ireland about 517. Magheramorne near Larne lays a claim to being his birthplace.

His father was a soldier and he himself became one for a while before going for training as a monk with the ascetical St Fintan at Clonenagh in Co Laois. He also studied at Clonard with Finian and at Clonmacnoise with Ciaran. We next find him practising the monastic life on an island in Lough Erne where he was ordained a priest by Bishop Lugidius.

When the senior lecturer of his monastery, Columban, at the age of fifty went as a wandering missionary with a group of twelve to Europe, this started a trend of monks going into voluntary exile for Christ to Scotland and to the European continent. In 555 Comgall founded his own monastery at Bangor, Co Down. This soon became the largest monastic centre in Ireland with several daughter houses and a total population of around 3,000. He successfully combined the austerity of Fintan with the scholarship of Finian.

“Love Christ and Hate Wealth”
Comgall wrote a *Rule* for his monks which was quite severe, but its kernel is said to have been: *“Love Christ and hate wealth”*. Comgall himself ate only once a day.

Anamchara

Central to Comgall’s teaching was his strong advocacy of the *anamchara* or “soul-friend”. When Colmcille died, Comgall is recorded as saying: “My soul-friend has died, and I am without a head; for a man without a soul-friend is a body without a head”. Miracles claimed for Comgall concern the sense of sight: he once healed a blind man by smearing saliva on his eyes and another time he caused blindness to fall on some thieves. Comgall died at Bangor in 603 and his relics were kept there till in 822 they were scattered by Viking raiders. He was an inspiration of the *peregrinatio pro Christo* movement. His figure as a monk still appears at the top of the coat of arms of Bangor town

<https://www.catholicireland.net/saintoftheday/st-comgall-of-bangor>

May 13th Feast of Our Lady of Fatima

Our Lady of Fatima is the title given to the Blessed Virgin Mary in connection with her apparitions to three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal. Our Lady of Fatima told the shepherd children to pray the rosary daily for the end of the war (World War I). Mary continued to appear once a month for 6 months to the three children, Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco. In October of 1930, the Bishop of Leiria-Fátima approved the visions as “worthy of belief.”

The Fatima message emphasizes central truths and devotions of the Catholic faith: The Blessed Trinity, the Eucharist, penance, the Rosary, and sacrifices for the conversion of sinners.



The three secrets of Fatima are:

- A vision of the souls in Hell.
- Prediction of the end of WWI and a prediction of the beginning of WWII as well as a request to consecrate Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.
- A vision of the Pope, along with other bishops, priests, religious and lay people, being killed by soldiers.

The Visionaries



Lucia dos Santos

The oldest of the three visionaries of Fatima, Lucia was the youngest of seven brothers and sisters. She received harsh criticism after telling family and friends about the visitations, so much so that she was reluctant to return to the Cova da Iria on July 13, 1917. The other seers convinced her to go back. Following the deaths of her cousins, at 14 years old, she was sent to the Dorothean Sisters of Villar and in 1928 became a sister of St. Dorothy. In 1946, she entered the convent of the Carmelite Sisters of Coimbra and was known as Sister Maria Lucia of the Immaculate Heart. She was visited by Mary on several more occasions. Following her death in 2005 at the age of 97, Pope Benedict XVI in 2008 waived the normal five-year waiting period before the start of a canonization cause.



Blessed Francisco Marto

Francisco was 9 years old at the time of the apparitions, during which he saw the Blessed Mother but could not hear what she was saying. Described in Lucia's memoirs as a musically gifted boy, pensive and easy-going, Francisco chose to "console Jesus for the sins of the world" in private prayer following the apparitions. He fell ill during an influenza outbreak just one year after the apparitions at Fatima, and he embraced his suffering, reciting the Rosary daily as instructed by Our Lady. He received his first holy Communion on his deathbed. In her memoirs, Sister Lucia wrote, "He flew away to heaven in the arms of our Heavenly Mother." He was beatified by Pope St. John Paul II in Fatima on May 13, 2000.



Blessed Jacinta Marto

Jacinta was just 7 at the time of the apparitions. After seeing the vision of hell, the young girl dedicated herself to praying for the salvation of souls. She refused water during the hot summer. Like her brother, Francisco, Jacinta fell ill with influenza, but her suffering was even greater than his. She underwent surgery and several other minor procedures to try to save her life. Her pain was offered for the conversion of sinners. She suffered from pneumonia and tuberculosis, which forced her hospitalization, during which she was visited by the Blessed Mother three more times. The hospital chaplain refused to give her Communion, saying he would return the following day, but she died shortly after. She was beatified on the same day as her brother, May 13, 2000, by Pope St. John Paul II.

<https://www.ocp.org>

May 14th Feast of St Matthias Apostle

How does one qualify to be an apostle? The first act of the apostles after the Ascension of Jesus was to find a replacement for Judas. With all the questions, doubts, and dangers facing them, they chose to focus their attention on finding a twelfth apostle. Why was this important? Twelve was a very important number to the Chosen People: twelve was the number of the twelve tribes of Israel. If the new Israel was to come from the disciples of Jesus, a twelfth apostle was needed. But Jesus had chosen the original twelve. How could they know whom he would choose? Peter had one criterion, that, like Andrew, James, John, and himself, the new apostle be someone who had been a disciple from the very beginning, from his baptism by John until the Ascension. The reason for this was simple, the new apostle must become a witness to Jesus' resurrection. He must have followed Jesus before anyone knew him, stayed with him when he made enemies, and believed in him when he spoke of the cross and of eating his body -- teachings that had made others melt away. Matthias was chosen. He was the twelfth apostle, and the group was whole again as they waited for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Legends like the Acts of Andrew and Matthias testify to Matthias' enthusiastic embrace of all that being an apostle meant including evangelization, persecution, and death in the service of the Lord.

<https://www.catholic.org/saints.saint.php?>

May 16th Feast of St Brendan

In 484 Saint Brendan was born in Feint near the port of Tralee, in Co. Kerry. He was baptized at Tubrid, near Ardfert, by Saint Erc. He spent his first year with his parents, then he went to the home of the local chieftain, Airde mac Fidaigh at Cathair Airde in Listrim, three miles to the East. He returned to his family at the end of his fifth year and completed his studies under

Saint Erc, who ordained him priest in 510. Between the years 510 and 530 St Brendan built monastic cells at Ardfert, and, at the foot of Mount Brandon, Shanakeel— Seana Cill, usually translated as "the old church"— also called Balynevinoorach.

From here he is said to have set out on his famous seven years voyage for Paradise. The old Irish Calendars assigned a special feast for the "Egressio familiae S. Brendani", on March 22; and St Aengus the Culdee, in his Litany composed at the close of the eighth century, invokes "*the sixty who accompanied St. Brendan in his quest for the Land of Promise*".

St Brendan is chiefly renowned for his legendary journey to The Isle of the Blessed as described in the ninth century **Voyage of St Brendan the Navigator**. Many versions exist, that tell of how he set out onto the Atlantic Ocean with sixty pilgrims (*other versions have fourteen, plus three unbelievers who join at the last minute*) searching for the Garden of Eden.

One of these companions is said to have been Saint Malo, the namesake of Saint-Malo in Brittany, France. If it happened, this would have occurred sometime between 512-530 AD, before his travel to the island of Great Britain. On his trip, Brendan is supposed to have seen St. Brendan's Island, a blessed island covered with vegetation. He also encountered a sea monster, an adventure he shared with his contemporary St. Columba. The most illustrated adventure is his landing on an island which turns out to be a giant sea monster called Jascon. This too, has its parallels in other stories, not only in Irish mythology but in other traditions, from Sinbad the Sailor to Pinocchio. As the legend of the seven years voyage spread, crowds of pilgrims and students flocked to Ardfert. Religious houses were formed at Gallarus, Kilmalchedor, Brandon Hill, and Inistooskert in the Blasket Islands, to meet the wants of those who came for spiritual guidance from Saint Brendan. Saint Brendan is the Patron Saint of sailors and travellers. At the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, a large stained-glass window commemorates Brendan's achievements.



<https://www.saint-brendan.org/history.asp>

May 24th Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians



The church focuses in this feast on the role of Our Lady's intercession in the fight against sin in the life of a believer. Secondly, the church focuses on Our Lady as one who assists Christians as a community, through her intercession, in fighting against anti-Christian forces.

In the Opening Prayer for Our Lady Help of Christians, the Church prays that through Our Lady's intercession God will "grant wisdom to our leaders and integrity to our citizens" we need this now more than ever in our world.

May 25th Feast of St Mary Magdalene

St. Mary Magdalene was a disciple of Jesus. According to the Gospel accounts, Jesus cleansed her of seven demons, and she financially aided him in Galilee. She was one of the witnesses of the Crucifixion and burial of Jesus and, famously, was the first person to see him after the Resurrection.

<https://catholic.org/saints>

May 26th The Feast of the Ascension of the Lord



In Ireland The Ascension of the Lord is celebrated on Sunday 29th May this year to allow more people to attend Mass.

The Ascension is the event, where Jesus arose into heaven, at the end of his time on earth.

Jesus' time on earth began with his birth. It was interrupted for three days by His death on the Cross. During that time, He descended into the realm of the dead and preached the Gospel to the good people who died before Him. This allowed those good and holy souls--the righteous dead, as we call them--who accepted Christ as their Saviour to proceed to heaven. On the third day after his death and burial, Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, an event we call the Resurrection. He spent the next 40 days preaching and preparing His disciples to perform the work of preaching and baptizing all people.

At the end of this 40-day period, Jesus ascended into heaven. We call this the Ascension.

<https://www.catholic.org/news/hf/faith/story.php>



A REFLECTION

In you,
Our humanity was taken into God.
You opened the path that reaches to Heaven. You called us to be heralds -
Messengers of Good News.
To spread Your Gospel
To every corner of the earth.
You committed Your mission to us -
To bring good news to the poor;
To set prisoners free;
To heal the sick;
To comfort the dying.

Jesus, You are not absent;
You are alive in our midst.
We base our faith on You.

Now is the Lordship of God -
Present in space and time.
The Crucified and Risen Lord
Is in profound communion with us.
Jesus, You left Galilee but did not leave us alone. All You came to do, Lord, was complete.

Jesus, now glorified, transfigured,
Raised to be with the Father,
Confirm us in our mission.
Keep us open to Your presence.
Clothed with power from on high,
You send us out,
To speak in Your name.
Where You are gone, we will follow. We too will be with the Father,
Called to become one with you. [Ann Crowley](#)

May 27th Feast of St. Augustine of Canterbury

St. Augustine was born in Rome and died in Canterbury, England, in 604. When Pope Gregory I heard that the pagans of Britain were disposed to accept the Christian Faith, he sent the prior of St. Andrew, Augustine, and forty of his Benedictine brethren to England. Despite the great difficulties involved in the task assigned to him, Augustine and his monks obeyed. The success of their preaching was immediate. King Ethelbert was baptized on Pentecost Sunday, 596, and the greater part of the nobles and people soon followed his example. St. Augustine died as the first Archbishop of Canterbury.

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-augustine-of-canterbury/>

31st May The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth

Today's feast is about both two women and two men. The Blessed Virgin Mary goes to visit Elizabeth to assist her in her final days of pregnancy. But as she greets Elizabeth, the babe in Elizabeth's womb—John the Baptist—leaps for joy at the presence of Jesus in Mary's womb. Great mysteries of life are at play here.



This is a late feast, going back only to the 13th or 14th century. It was established widely throughout the Church to pray for unity. The present date of celebration was set in 1969, to follow the Annunciation of the Lord and precede the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist. Like most feasts of Mary, it is closely connected with Jesus and his saving work. The more visible actors in the visitation drama (see Luke 1:39-45) are Mary and Elizabeth. However, Jesus and John the Baptist steal the scene in a hidden way. Jesus makes John leap with joy—the joy of messianic salvation.

Elizabeth, in turn, is filled with the Holy Spirit and addresses words of praise to Mary—words that echo down through the ages. It is helpful to recall that we do not have a journalist's account of this meeting. Rather Luke, speaking for the Church, gives a prayerful poet's rendition of the scene. Elizabeth's praise of Mary as "the mother of my Lord" can be viewed as the earliest Church's devotion to Mary. As with all authentic devotion to Mary, Elizabeth's (the Church's) words first praise God for what God has done to Mary. Only secondly does she praise Mary for trusting God's words.

Then comes the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55). Here, Mary herself—like the Church—traces all her greatness to God.

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/visitation-of-the-blessed-virgin-mary>