



Archdiocese of Dublin
Education Secretariat

Post Primary Diocesan Adviser R.E. News Blog

February 2023

Dear Chaplain and R.E. Teacher,

“Jesus embodied the highest level of enlightenment. He spent his brief adult life describing it, teaching it, and passing it onto future generations. Jesus intended to save the world by showing others the path to God-consciousness.”

This month we are celebrating many different aspects of our faith life and journey. We begin with the Feast of St Brigid, a time to reflect on our heritage and spirituality, move swiftly to the Presentation of the Child Jesus in the Temple, giving us the opportunity to focus on our baptism. We have the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes and the Day of Prayer for the Sick, and of course, Ash Wednesday on February 22nd begins the Holy Season of Lent.

February is a good time to reflect on the God who is always doing new things in our lives. Lent gives us the opportunity to spend time in prayer, to be still, to breathe. Your students may need some quiet time, following their mock exams to be calm and realise that what is asked of us is to do our best in all things. Matthew’s Gospel is a time of journeying with Jesus, a time of renewal and hope.

The Prophet Micah gave us an insight into living God’s word daily when he proclaimed....

“Act Justly,

Love Tenderly,

Walk Humbly with God”

May we each find a motto we can live by and if we as Diocesan Advisers can assist you in any way feel free to contact us.

Beannacht Dé ort,

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31st December 2022

Statement of Archbishop Dermot Farrell

on the death of

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

This morning, the last morning of the year, our heavenly Father brought Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI home to the house in which—as the Lord Jesus himself assures us—there are many rooms (see John 14:2). We pray for Pope Benedict’s eternal rest, and give thanks for all that God wrought through his ecclesial service as Pope, as pastor, as theologian, and as teacher of our shared faith in Jesus, the Light of the World (see John 8:12). We mourn the loss of a person who gave hope and direction to the Church, in particularly difficult times. Pope Benedict made the voice of the Gospel heard, both in season and out of season (2 Tim 4:2). His episcopal motto, *Cooperatores Veritatis*—Co-workers of the Truth (see 3 John 1:8)—captured his lifetime of service, during which he humbly placed his many gifts at the service of the Church, the people of God on our common pilgrimage home to our Father. That radical humility, given its most profound actualisation in his courageous decision to resign from the office of Pontiff in 2013, was a prophetic testimony to his profound freedom as a human being and as a person in Christ (see Gal 5:1).

The prowess and clarity of his theological thinking, his power of judgement, and his personal interaction with many people set Pope Benedict apart. Many of his writings are characterised by a depth of content and the simplicity of language which only comes from a profound appreciation of the mysteries of the faith. As he himself said in his spiritual testament, “I come from theology and I knew that my strength, if I have one, is to announce the faith in a positive form. That is why I wanted above all to teach from the fullness of Sacred Scripture and Tradition,” and still, there is a need to “proclaim the faith in true and good forms, but that we understand it anew for the present world, and learn to express it newly,” and then shape a new way of living too” (see Pope Benedict XVI, Last Testament in his own Words with Peter Seewald, p190, 222).

In this moment of mourning, we remember his Pastoral Letter to the Catholics of Ireland (19th March 2010) on clerical sexual abuse, especially of minors. This letter, at such a painful time for the Church in our land had value not only for Ireland but for the Universal Church. Over a decade later, there is still need to do as he did in the wake of a parallel controversy in the Archdiocese of Munich, he asked for forgiveness from those affected. The Church may not shy away from the questions that remain unanswered.

Of Christmas he would say, “Christmas calls us to enter into the very silence of God. ... To become silent means to develop a sensitivity to the interior, a sensitivity to our conscience, a sensitivity to the Eternal in us, the capacity to listen for God.”

May the Lord who called his servant, Pope Benedict XVI, to himself, give him the quiet peace which he sought all his life. May he grant him eternal rest.

Dermot Farrell
Archbishop of Dublin

February 1st St. Brigid's Day, Mary of the Gael



St Brigid is one of the three patron saints of Ireland. She is believed to be a native of either Faughart, Co Louth or, perhaps, of Co Kildare. Her father, Dubhrach, was a chieftain, and her mother's name was Brocessa.

As a child Brigid gave bread, butter, eggs and chicken to people in need. She loved the company of the wild animals and birds. Her father wanted her to marry a poet. Brigid refused and went to become a nun with a group of her friends.

Brigid founded her principal monastery in Kildare. Hundreds of priests, holy women and scholars flocked there. There were monks as well as nuns in her monastery. She was gifted land by the King of Leinster and remained in Kildare until her death in 525.

Later a Cathedral, a round tower and a high cross were built in memory of the monastery founded by St Brigid. Today the Brigidine Sisters have a centre for prayer and reflection called Solas Bhride, Pilgrimage and a Peace and Justice Conference are core components of the work.

For upcoming events at the centre - <https://solasbhride.ie>

Prayer

Lord you inspired in St Brigid such wholehearted dedication to your work that she is known as Mary of the Gael; through her intercession bless our country: may we follow the example of her life and be united with her and the Virgin Mary in your presence. Amen

Instructions for Weaving the Brigid's Cross can be found on <https://brigidine.org.au>

Traditional prayer when hanging the Brigid's Cross:

**"May the blessing of God and the Trinity be on this cross
And be on the home where it hangs.
And on everyone who looks at it"**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3yGRtx>

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

February 2nd Feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple – Candlemas Day



Candlemas commemorates the purification of Mary, 40 days after the birth of her son Jesus. This day also marks the ritual presentation of the baby Jesus to God in the Temple at Jerusalem.

The Gospel of Luke says that Jesus was met by Anna and Simeon. Simeon held the baby | Jesus and called him a Light to the World.

This purification was a Jewish tradition which considered women to be unclean after the birth of a child. For 40 days for a boy, and 60 days for a girl, women were not allowed to worship in the Temple. At the end of this time, they were brought to the Temple or local Synagogue to be purified. After the ceremony women were allowed to take part in religious services again.

The festival is called Candlemas because this is the day that all the Church's candles for the year are blessed. Traditionally, people buy candles for use in the church and for use at home. All the candles are blessed during Mass and distributed. A candle blessed on Candlemas was used in homes during times of high winds or lightening storms and especially when a sick or housebound person was receiving a visit from the priest.

On Candlemas night, many people place lighted candles in their windows at home. Like some other Christian festivals, Candlemas draws some of its elements from paganism. In pre-Christian times, it was the festival of light. This ancient festival marked the mid-point of winter, halfway between the winter solstice and the spring equinox.

February 3rd Feast of St Blaise and the tradition of Blessing of Throats

Despite all new inventions and advancements, educators rely on their vocal chords to deliver their courses and build in their students the confidence to be the voice for those in our world who have been silenced or oppressed. I have always looked forward to the Feast of St Blaise and the annual blessing of throats that takes place.

St Blaise was a Bishop at Sebaste (now the city of Sivas in Turkey) in what was then the Roman province of Armenia- Cappadocia). During a persecution he was martyred in 316 AD.

In the Middle Ages Blaise became one of the most widely venerated saints in the Western Church even though he was from the East. Different accounts of his life and stories about

him appear in the 9th century martyrologies and these give us a clue to the source of his wide popularity.

The most significant detail tells us that when Blaise had been captured and was on his way to prison, a boy was brought to him in danger of choking from a fishbone stuck in his throat. Blaise prayed over him, and he was cured. It is said Blaise had practiced as a physician before becoming a Bishop, and today he is also the patron saint of veterinarians.



February 8th – St Josephine Bakhita

Pope Francis has stated, “Human Trafficking is a crime against humanity.” “It’s a disgrace that people are treated as objects, deceived, raped, often sold many times for different purposes and, in the end, killed or, in any case, physically and mentally damaged, ending up thrown away and abandoned.”

“I encourage those who work helping the men, women and children who are enslaved, exploited, abused as instruments of work or pleasure, who are often tortured and mutilated. It is my hope that government leaders may work decisively to remove the causes of this disgraceful scourge; it is a scourge unworthy of society. May each one of us feel committed to being a voice for our brothers and sisters, who have been humiliated in their dignity.”

<https://www.catholicworldreport.com/2019/04/11/pope-francis-calls-human-trafficking-a-crime-against-humanity/>

Human Trafficking or Modern Slavery is a practise that all should condemn and reject in our world today. Conscious of the huge movement of people throughout the world due to war, hunger, poverty and persecution we need to be alert that this gives rise to Human trafficking. Slavery is not something that happened in the past it is as prevalent today as in the 18th and 19th centuries. On the feast day of St Josephine Bakhita, herself a slave, may we pray for all who are in danger.

At the most recent Chaplains Day Sr Liz Byrne and Sr Mary Ryan from APT- Act to Prevent Trafficking addressed the conference. They will visit your school and speak to your students on request.

Reflection & Prayer to End Human Trafficking

January 11 – February 8, 2023



St. Josephine Bakhita was born in southern Sudan in 1869. As a young girl, she was kidnapped and sold into slavery. She was treated brutally by her captors as she was sold and resold. She did not remember her name; Bakhita, which means "fortunate one," was the name given to her by her kidnappers.

Daily Prayer

God of hope and peace, touch our hearts and energize our ongoing efforts in abolishing human trafficking, a heinous crime against humanity, so that every victim is freed and every survivor's life renewed. You blessed St. Josephine Bakhita of Sudan with compassion for others. May her prayers comfort and strengthen the women, men, and children who are in search of freedom.

(Say appropriate daily prayer below)

We ask for transformation of heart for those who inflict pain, anguish and grief on our vulnerable sisters and brothers. Give us generosity to stand in solidarity with others so that together we heal the hearts and lives of all Your people. *Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever. Amen.*



<p>Jan. 11 Nat'l Human Trafficking Awareness Day</p> <p>We pray for our enslaved brothers and sisters around the world who desperately need of our advocacy and support.</p>	<p>12 We pray for social workers who witness the impact of abuse and coercion which torments survivors endlessly.</p>	<p>13 We pray for those who work tirelessly to eliminate human trafficking and provide safe spaces for survivors.</p>	<p>14 We pray for children survivors of sexual abuse; may they be given the support and help to heal their bodies and spirit.</p>
<p>15 We pray that we become more compassionate and generous to people who have been sexually exploited.</p>	<p>16 We pray for elected officials in every community to recognize the evil of human trafficking and work hard to abolish it.</p>	<p>17 We pray for children in the foster care system who are targets of immoral pimps who lure them into sex trafficking.</p>	<p>18 We pray for hope and consolation for the family whose child is missing and most likely is now being trafficked.</p>
<p>20 We pray for the victim of forced labor who most likely manufactured the shirt I am wearing today.</p>	<p>21 We pray for the distraught young adults who contemplate or have attempted to die by suicide.</p>	<p>22 We pray for courage to call the hotline when we suspect a person is a victim of enslaved labor.</p>	<p>23 We pray for men who fall victim to perpetrators of transnational organ traffickers.</p>
<p>25 We pray for the healing of all who have suffered trauma due to the violence of human trafficking.</p>	<p>26 We pray for nannies, cooks, farm workers, domestic workers and garment workers who will not be paid this week.</p>	<p>27 We pray for Church leaders to be involved along with their parishioners to fight against human trafficking.</p>	<p>28 We pray policymakers enact stronger laws to protect children and young adults from the egregious crime of pornography.</p>
<p>30 We pray for persons harmed by a friend, relative, or stranger who shared violent or sexually explicit images without consent.</p>	<p>31 We pray for victims of child and forced marriage, violating their human rights and making them susceptible to violence.</p>	<p>Feb. 1 We pray for people who are abused by their spouses or partners and are too ashamed to tell.</p>	<p>2 We pray for victims of criminal exploitation who have been coerced to smuggle or sell drugs and commit crimes.</p>
<p>4 We pray for police officers, judges, and community leaders who work together to make their communities safe.</p>	<p>5 We pray for LGBTQ+ young people who are seen as particularly vulnerable to violence, abuse and sex trafficking.</p>	<p>6 We pray for the young victims of cyberbullying, peer-to-peer violence, hate speech, and violent content inciting self-harm.</p>	<p>7 We pray for an end to human trafficking through education, advocacy, and empowerment of survivors of human trafficking.</p>
			<p>8 Feast of St. Josephine Bakhita We pray that all people believe in the inherent dignity of every human person.</p>

February 11th Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes / World Day of the Sick

Each year we celebrate the apparition of Our Lady to a young French girl Bernadette Soubirous in the small town of Lourdes in 1858.



Thousands of Catholics visit each year and especially the Sick and those who care for them.

The Dublin Diocese undertakes two pilgrimages to Lourdes each year at Eastertime and in September. The pilgrimage in September is one of the biggest events in the Diocesan calendar and is led by Archbishop Dermot Farrell.



Approximately 2,000 pilgrims travel to Lourdes from all over the Diocese. Of these, 180 are sick pilgrims staying at the Accueil Notre Dame which is 'a place of welcome' close to the Grotto with many of the facilities of a modern hospital. Another 550 of the pilgrims are voluntary helpers, made up of nurses and doctors, male and female helpers, known as handmaids and brancardiers, a team of chaplains and the Dublin Lourdes Choir. A further 200 young people assist as well in the care of the sick pilgrims and many of these are from secondary schools and colleges from around the Diocese. Parish Groups and individuals from every corner of the Diocese comprise the remainder of the Pilgrimage.

[Lourdes Resources | Education Secretariat \(dublindiocese.ie\)](http://dublindiocese.ie)

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS XXXI WORLD DAY OF THE SICK

11 February 2023

“Take care of him”

Compassion as a synodal exercise of healing

Illness is part of our human condition. Yet, if illness is experienced in isolation and abandonment, unaccompanied by care and compassion, it can become inhumane.

When we go on a journey with others, it is not unusual for someone to feel sick, to have to stop because of fatigue or of some mishap along the way. It is precisely in such moments that we see *how* we are walking together: whether we are truly companions on the journey, or merely individuals on the same path, looking after our own interests and leaving others to “make do”. For this reason, on the thirty-first World Day of the Sick, as the whole Church journeys along the synodal path, I invite all of us to reflect on the fact that it is especially through the experience of vulnerability and illness that we can learn to walk together according to the style of God, which is closeness, compassion, and tenderness.

World Day of the Sick Prayer Service

**‘Take Care of Him – Go and Do the Same Yourselves’
World Day of the Sick 2023**

Introduction

February 2023 marks the 31st celebration of World Day of the Sick instituted by Saint John Paul II. We will reflect on the tender and challenging letter of Pope Francis for this occasion intertwined with the scripture he chose for our nourishment, in particular the parable of the ‘Good Samaritan’. ‘Illness is part of our human condition. Yet, if illness is experienced in isolation and abandonment, unaccompanied by care and compassion, it can become inhumane.’ (Pope Francis 2023)

In that spirit, we place those who are sick in mind, body, or spirit at the centre of our time of prayer with God who is charity and love. Let us surround them with compassion.

Song

Ubi Caritas (Taizé)

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.
Loving and compassionate God,
Be with all who reach out to you in their illness.
May we keep them always in our hearts.
Encourage us to hold them when they feel abandoned.
Enfold them in your divine circle of care.
We pray this in the Spirit, through Christ, our living Lord. Amen.

Song

You Are the Centre (Margaret Rizza)

Reading Luke 10:29-32

'But wanting to justify himself, he (the lawyer) asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?"

Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead.

Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.'

Pause

Reflection WDS 2023 (Pope Francis)

'Here it is especially important to recognize the condition of loneliness and abandonment. This kind of cruelty can be overcome more easily than any other injustice, because – as the parable tells us – it only takes a moment of our attention, of being moved to compassion within us, in order to eliminate it.'

Song: Shelter Me, O God (Michael Joncas)

Reading Luke 10:33-34

'But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.'

Pause

Reflection WDS 2023 (Pope Francis)

'Two travellers, considered pious and religious, see the wounded man, yet fail to stop. The third passer-by, however, a Samaritan, a scorned foreigner, is moved with compassion and takes care of that stranger on the road, treating him as a brother. In doing so, without even thinking about it, he makes a difference, he makes the world more fraternal.'

Song : He Ain't Heavy He's My Brother (Bob Russell/Bobby Scott)

Reading Luke 10:35-37

'The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.'³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?'³⁷ He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Pause

Reflection **WDS 2023 (Pope Francis)**

‘Indeed, the conclusion of the parable of the Good Samaritan suggests how the exercise of fraternity, which began as a face-to-face encounter, can be expanded into organized care. The elements of the inn, the innkeeper, the money and the promise to remain informed of the situation all point to the commitment of healthcare and social workers, family members and volunteers, through whom good stands up in the face of evil every day, in every part of the world.’

Song : Healer of my Soul (John Michael Talbot)

Reading **Ezekiel 34:3-4**

‘You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fatlings; but you do not feed the sheep. You have not strengthened the weak, you have not healed the sick, you have not bound up the injured, you have not brought back the strayed, you have not sought the lost, but with force and harshness you have ruled them’.

Pause

Reflection **WDS 2023 (Pope Francis)**

‘The above-quoted prophecy of Ezekiel judges harshly the priorities of those who wield economic, cultural, and political power over others. The World Day of the Sick calls for prayer and closeness towards those who suffer. Yet it also aims to raise the awareness of God’s people, healthcare institutions and civil society with regard to a new way of moving forward together. God’s word is always illuminating and timely; not only in what it denounces, but also in what it proposes.’

Song : Stand Beside Me (Columba McCann)

Reflection **WDS 2023 (Pope Francis)**

‘As I noted in *Fratelli Tutti*, “The parable shows us how a community can be rebuilt by men and women who identify with the vulnerability of others, who reject the creation of a society of exclusion, and act instead as neighbours, lifting up and rehabilitating the fallen for the sake of the common good”.

Indeed, “we were created for a fulfilment that can only be found in love. We cannot be indifferent to suffering”’. *Pause*

‘These past years of the pandemic have increased our sense of gratitude for those who work each day in the fields of healthcare and research. Yet it is not enough to emerge from such an immense collective tragedy simply by honouring heroes. Covid-19 has strained the great networks of expertise and solidarity and has exposed the structural limits of existing public welfare systems. Gratitude, then, needs to be matched by actively seeking, in every country, strategies and resources to guarantee each person’s fundamental right to basic and decent healthcare.’

Song **Ave Maria (Jacques Arcadelt)**

Reflection **WDS 2023 (Pope Francis)**

On 11 February 2023, let us turn our thoughts to the Shrine of Lourdes, a prophetic lesson entrusted to the Church for our modern times. It is not only what functions well or those who are productive that matter. Sick people, in fact, are at the centre of God's people, and the Church advances together with them as a sign of a humanity in which everyone is precious, and no one should be discarded or left behind.

Prayer

Hail Mary

Reflection **WDS 2023 (Pope Francis)**

'To the intercession of Mary, Health of the Sick, I entrust all of you who are ill; you who care for them in your families, or through your work, research, and volunteer service; and those of you who are committed to weaving personal, ecclesial, and civic bonds of fraternity. To all, I impart my heartfelt blessing.'

Song

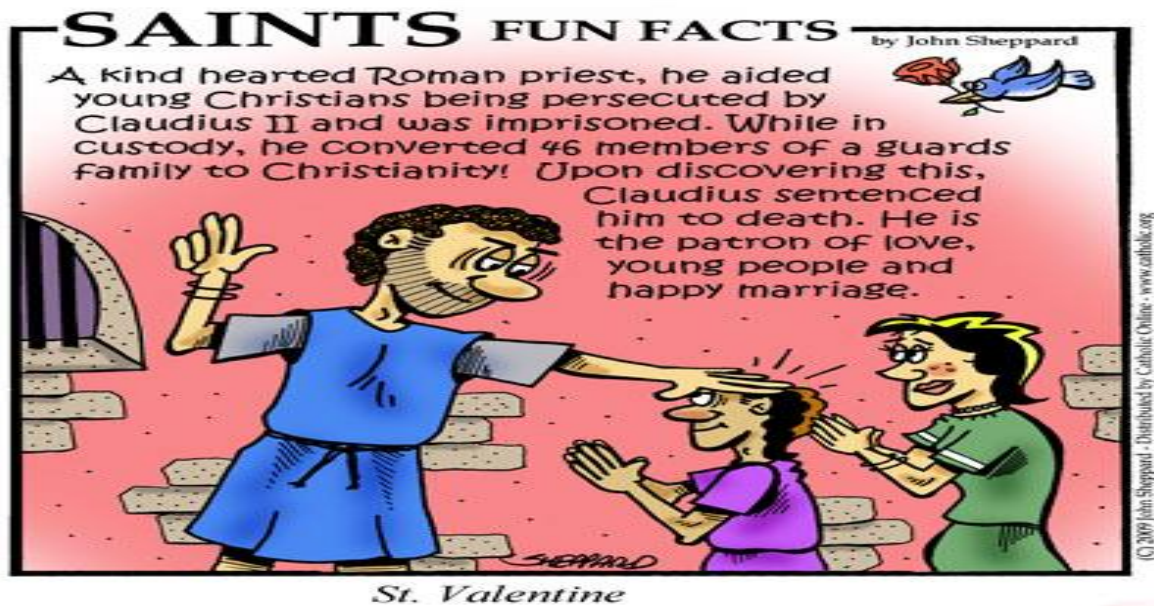
A Mhuire Mháthair (Traditional)

Closing Prayer **Let us pray,**

God of tenderness and compassion,
You sent your Son to share our human nature,
to restore all people and to heal the sick.
Look with love on all who ask for prayers.
Support them with your power,
give them hope in times of suffering
and keep them always in your care.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Song: The Bells of the Angelus (Lesbordes)

February 14th Feast of St Valentine



February 14th Feast of Saints Cyril and Methodius

Holiness means reacting to human life with God's love: human life as it is, crisscrossed with the political and the cultural, the beautiful and the ugly, the selfish and the saintly. For Cyril and Methodius much of their daily cross had to do with the language of the liturgy. They are not saints because they got the liturgy into Slavonic, but because they did so with the courage and humility of Christ.

Because their father was an officer in a part of Greece inhabited by many Slavs, these two Greek brothers ultimately became missionaries, teachers, and patrons of the Slavic people. After a brilliant course of studies, Cyril refused the governorship of a district such as his brother had accepted among the Slavic-speaking population. Cyril withdrew to a monastery where his brother Methodius had become a monk after some years in a governmental post.

Cyril's first work was to invent an alphabet, still used in some Eastern liturgies. He translated the Gospels, the psalter, Paul's letters, and the liturgical books into Slavonic, and composed a Slavonic liturgy. Their free use of the vernacular in preaching led to opposition from the German clergy. The bishop refused to consecrate Slavic bishops and priests, and Cyril was forced to appeal to Rome. Their new liturgy was approved by Pope Adrian II.

Methodius was papal legate for all the Slavic peoples, consecrated a bishop and then given an ancient see. When much of their former territory was removed from their jurisdiction, the Bavarian bishops retaliated with a violent storm of accusation against Methodius. As a result, Emperor Louis the German exiled Methodius for three years. Pope John VIII secured his release. Patrons of Moravia, and specially venerated by Catholic Czechs, Slovaks, Croatians, Orthodox Serbians and Bulgarians, Cyril and Methodius are eminently fitted to

guard the long-desired unity of East and West. In 1980, Pope John Paul II named them additional **co-patrons of Europe**.

Lent 2023 Ash Wednesday 22nd February



The three pillars of Lent are Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving.

Ash Wednesday is a day of Fast and abstinence. What does this really mean today?

Today all adults under 70 years and in good health are invited to eat one meal and two collations, that is a reduced amount of food at two meals. No meat or fowl to be ingested. In the world today we hear a lot about plant-based diets, the difference with fasting is we consciously decide to eat less and to feel the hunger pangs, to be in solidarity with our brothers and sisters who have little or no food to eat.

During the Lenten Season we are called to reflect on our faith journey and to see how we can improve our relationship with God. We begin with the outward sign of our commitment by wearing ashes. The offer of Blessed Ashes to staff and students is a symbolic moment in the faith life of your school. The time to repent and turn back to God is now.

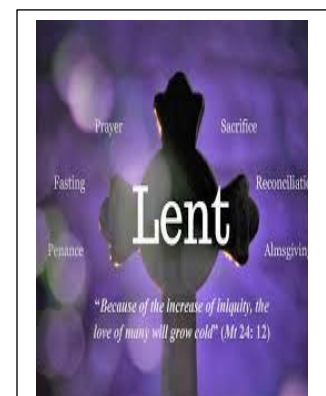
At the link below to Jared Dee's website you can find an **Ash Wednesday Lesson Plan** along with a number of other helpful items that may prove useful for the first week of Lent week.

[Ash Wednesday Lesson Plan \(thereligionteacher.com\)](http://thereligionteacher.com)

Blessing Prayer and Giving of Ashes

Dear Friends in Christ, let us ask our Father to bless these ashes which we will use as a mark of our repentance.

Lord, bless the sinner who asks for your forgiveness and bless + all those who receive these ashes.



May they keep this Lenten season in preparation for
the joy of Easter. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel.

Remember, man, you are dust and to dust you will return.

February 26th First Sunday of Lent

A Lenten Reflection on the Temptation of Jesus in the Desert Mt 4:1-11

Jesus was led by the spirit into the desert... to take time.... To take time out.... To be still....
To be in touch with the core of his being..... the centre of life.

We picture Jesus going off alone to wrestle with the conflicting pulls of his life. How best to
live out his vocation in life before the Father. Such pulls, struggles, temptations, we all
experience.

Temptation is an ongoing struggle.... Often the same difficulties and problems keep coming
up.... It was no different for Jesus.

Jesus was at his lowest ebb. The desert is cold, he is lonely, fasting , isolatedthe devil is
slick... temptation comes when we are at our lowest .. vulnerable.

For Jesus the struggle is very real – good versus evil – what is the best way to live out our
life? Jesus is put under pressure, a pressure which is attractive, to do what he knows is not
right.

The tempter said... “If you are the Son of God, turn these stones into bread”.

The temptation to be “relevant” To do something that will make a real impression on on
others.

“If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down” ... the temptation to be a star/hero .. to go
it alone .. all look up to me.... “I will give you all these kingdoms if you fall down and worship
me” ... the temptation to be powerful ... To build an empire.

Jesus was idealistic, He wanted to work for the poor, sick, weak, but here is a call to be
the Controller... to use his gifts for himself.. advance your own career ... you are very
important .. forget about the needy...

The temptations were very difficult for Jesus .. He was tired and exhausted...but he made
good choices..

The forty days and nights Jesus spent in the desert, praying and fasting, brought about an
integration of body, mind and spirit, a wholeness and strength which enabled him to
overcome the temptations.

Jesus walked the Lenten road ahead of us. Let our eyes be focused on him. Let us watch his struggles... let us pray with him for strength and courage to stand back...to breathe new life into us ...to ask real questions..

What is the most important thing for me in life?

Elie Wiesel wrote:

“Indifference is more dangerous than anger and hatred... Indifference is not a response. Indifference is not a beginning; it is an end. And, therefore, indifference is always the friend of the enemy, for it benefits the aggressor – never the victim, whose pain is magnified when he or she feels forgotten”.

The Gospel on this first Sunday of Lent urges us to ask uncomfortable questions.

When have I turned away from the suffering of another?

When did I feel overwhelmed by a crisis? Paralysed?

Think about steps you might take to this Lent to engage with an issue in your community.

How can you be of service?

More Lenten resources available from [Post Primary - Trócaire \(trocaire.org\)](http://Post Primary - Trócaire (trocaire.org))

Pope Francis Prayer Intention For February

For parishes

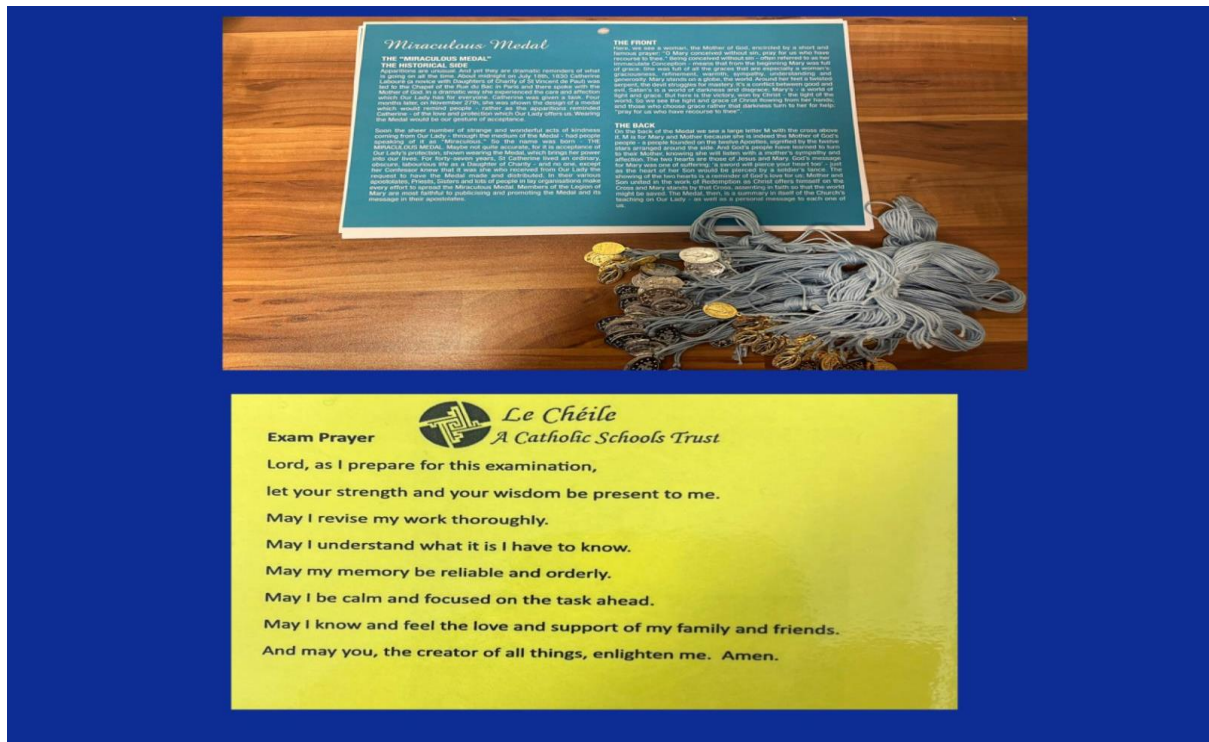
We pray that parishes, placing communion at the centre, may increasingly become communities of faith, fraternity and welcome towards those most in need.

Catholic Schools Week 2023



Congratulations to all who participated in Catholic Schools Week. There have been some wonderful celebrations and many grandparents have been blessed to be invited into both

the Primary and Post Primary Schools in the Diocese. To all the teachers who worked with the Religion and Ethos Teams in your schools we extend our thanks.



As the mock exams begin, CPC Kilcullen, shared this idea for your school to consider.

February 20th World Day of Social Justice

HOW TO OBSERVE WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

Advocate for a social cause: There are several social issues that need attention. Do your research and advocate for a cause. It could be anything related to race, education, healthcare, malnutrition, etc. Use social media to conduct a digital campaign. Start a conversation, build dialog, call for action, and try to make a difference in the world.

Organize a social justice event: There are many social justice events that take place around the world to raise awareness. You can either start one in your own neighbourhood to attract more people or volunteer to host an already recurring event. Contribute with your time and efforts to create a fair world for everyone.

Educate yourself on social issues: Many social issues go unnoticed due to the lack of information available in the world. Equip yourself with adequate knowledge through books, conversations with the most affected groups. Travel around the world to see the conditions in other countries.

You may have a Social Justice / Peace and Justice Group in your school. Prepare a morning reflection on your school intercom.

Ceiliúradh CEIST 2023

The Ceist Schools in the Diocese will be busy this month. On Feb 1st they will celebrate in their own school and their month ends with their Student Leadership Conference.

They are very anxious to build on the very exciting and successful inaugural Ceiliúradh CEIST day last year and showcase the fabulous work being done daily. The theme for this year's day is *'One Good Deed'* and we are looking forward to hearing how they celebrated as we visit the schools in the weeks ahead.

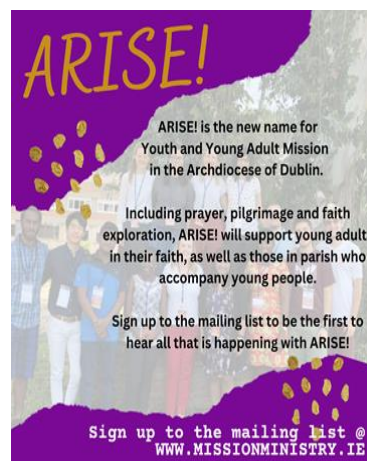
WEEKLY EZINE an added extra to your weekly resources

Sharing the Good News is the newsletter of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference. If you would like to receive this weekly ezine, you can do so at <https://catholicnews.ie/newsletter/>. You are encouraged to invite others to do so too. Send articles and photographs for use in *Sharing the Good News* to info@catholicbishops.ie.



ARISE!

ARISE! is the new name for Youth and Young Adult Ministry in the Archdiocese of Dublin. Including prayer, pilgrimage, and faith exploration, ARISE! will support young adults in their faith, as well as those in parish who accompany young people. **Sign up to the mailing list** to be the first to hear all that is happening with ARISE! <https://forms.office.com/e/3rfLFnUXiR> or contact natalie.doherty@dublindiocese.ie.



ARISE! Lent is a series of workshops for young adults on key areas of social justice and how we can get moving on areas that matter. Evenings take place in St Paul's Church, Arran Quay, from 7pm each night. Details in poster and for more information, email natalie.doherty@dublindiocese.ie. **Register interest now at:** <https://forms.office.com/e/rwJkixXMyi/>.



Building Hope through God's Word

Saturday, February 11, 10am to 1pm at St Paul's Centre for Mission & Ministry, Arran Quay. A morning workshop for those leading Adult Faith Sharing Groups and Children's Liturgy. This will help you to grow in confidence. It's an opportunity to explore Lenten resources and how to use them in your parish community led by Peter Siney and Patricia Carroll. **To register please email peter.siney@dublindiocese.ie** indicating your area of interest.



Emmanuel 2023: The soloists and choirs in schools are all busily preparing for the concert in the Helix Each day before the concerts, students are invited to take part in faith-based workshops, with reflections and rehearsals of music for the night ahead. Each morning of workshops is followed by full rehearsals and then a live concert every evening where parents, family members, teachers and the public get to enjoy the fruits of the

musical and spiritual preparations. The students take the music and prayers they learn during Emmanuel and adapt them to prayer services in their school communities throughout the year.

Booking is open now for Emmanuel 2023 Concerts of liturgical music at the Helix. Join us on any of the three nights –February 27/February 28/March 1/March 2 at 7.30pm. Bring your music group with you for an inspirational night like you never experienced before. Book now at 01 700 7000 or www.helix.ie.



The Irish Synodal Pathway is producing Synodal Sunday Videos view them here.

[Irish Synodal Pathway – YouTube](#)

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_FRMSDThwB16Le0coKta8Q

New Publication: In this month of February when we honour St Brigid , you may have a desire to learn more about the women who formed our history and culture.

The Amazing Women of Old Ireland
New book covers daring exploits of St Brigid and 22 more inspiring Irish women

In her debut book *St Brigid & Other Amazing Irish Women*, Lorraine Mulholland celebrates the stories of 23 mostly unknown courageous, faith-filled women who despite not being as famous as their male counterparts like St Patrick or St Colmcille, continue to hold a special place in the hearts of the Irish.

"Ireland is currently witnessing a revival of culture on many fronts and it is exciting to observe the real-time revitalisation of our social fabric," says the excited debut author.

Lorraine is the face behind the popular Twitter account *Irish History Bitesize*, and has amassed thousands of followers (12k+) from around the world by sharing interesting facts, concise biographies and important dates of Irish history.

"Over the years, I've noticed from my online observations that a significant aspect of this cultural enrichment has been the highlighting of previously overlooked contributions of women in different fields like science, writing, and even history," she continues.

As Lorraine researched for her new book, she realised that with a more inclusive eye, it was easy to lift the powerful women of these stories from the footnotes to being the heroines of their own wild tales.

For example, we learn that despite St Patrick banishing all snakes from the island, it was young Attracta who got rid of the final few and saved a village.

We also learn of Dahalin who saved her Church in Kerry from a band of pirates, and of Ité who refused to be married off to a nobleman so she could follow her faith and fasted long enough for angels to appear and convince her father to let her pursue her path.

With a unique narration style that mirrors her flair for tweeting, Lorraine Mulholland breathes life into the often misrepresented and forgotten stories of 23 strong, idealistic women worthy of being role models for young readers across Ireland and beyond.

St Brigid & Other Amazing Irish Women by Lorraine Mulholland is published by Columbia Books and will be available on www.columbapublishers.com and in all good bookshops in January 2023.
For review copies or interview inquiries, please contact Mahak Verma (Marketing & Publicity) at mahak@gracccommunications.ie or +353 (1) 6874028.

The Pope John Paul II Awards

The Pope John Paul II Award is a faith achievement award for young people between the age of 16 and 18. The Award is committed to helping young people enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional and social development through participation in school, parish and community activities. As well as the feeling of personal achievement that a participant will gain from taking part in the Award, participation will help demonstrate the young person's commitment to a task and goal. The Pope John Paul II Awards are now being promoted by Education Secretariat and open to all schools who wish to become involved. Please contact Sr Bernadette or Sr Concepta for details.

bernadette.carron@dublindiocese.ie

concepta.foley@dublindiocese.ie



Ember Renewal Day.



On January 17th the 20 Ember Teams from the Diocese met in St Patrick's Campus DCU for a day of reflection and sharing of their journey to date as Faith Leaders in their schools. Our thanks to Fr Paul Hampson and the Staff of the College for their hospitality and support.

Applications for Ember 2023/24 will be notified to all current schools and schools who have expressed an interest in joining the Faith Programme during February



ASH WEDNESDAY A REFLECTION

Dust you are, And into dust you will return.

We are stardust In a state of consciousness,

Come from Heaven. We cannot be destroyed,

Only reborn constantly. Like the rainbow in the sky –

Stardust in the air, shining – Dancing through the earth.

By God's breath we are made – Made of wonder, Made of dreams.

We leave a residue everywhere we rest.

We are pilgrims, On a cosmic journey, Stardust dancing

In whirlpools of infinity.

Be humble, you are made of Earth. Be noble, you are made of Heaven.

You are light, You are wonder, You are life.

Dust and ashes touch your forehead today. Holy Spirit come.

Breathe your life into us. Speak the truth of humanity –

The humility of our beginning; The simplicity of our departure.

How simple and sublime we are. A creation of God's eternal Word.

Awaken us to the beauty, That holds and enfolds us.

Open our eyes to who we can become.

Signed with the Cross of Ashes, May we bless the Father who creates us,

The Son who transforms us, The Spirit who energises us.

Dust you are, And into dust you will return.

As we journey through Lent, may we find peace of mind, courage to share our faith, and wisdom to encourage others to walk the path of freedom with us.