



Archdiocese of Dublin Education Secretariat

Post Primary Diocesan Advisers R.E. News Blog – September 2023

Dear Chaplain and R.E. Teacher,

It is a pleasure to greet you all at the beginning of this new school year and to wish you every blessing and success in the months ahead.

I am sure that, like me, many of you have mixed emotions about new beginnings. You may feel anticipation, excitement, anxiety or hope.

These feelings are not unlike that moment when we are on board a plane about to take off for a new destination and we hear the cabin crew announce, "Can we ask you to please ensure that your seatbelts are securely fastened and your luggage safely stored in the overhead locker.... In the event of turbulence or loss of pressure, the oxygen mask above your head will lower automatically....." Likewise, it helps me to know that in the event of difficulty or turbulence in the year ahead, I can rely on the Holy Spirit working in me and through me and that all will be well.

There may indeed be times of turbulence in the year ahead. We may feel tossed around at times. These are turbulent times, to say the least. We are living through the breakdown and breaking open of much that has defined life as we have known it. There is economic meltdown, climate countdown, technological shutdown, political upheaval, war, migration, but through it all we will emerge unscathed if we place our trust and our hope in the hands of the God who loves us.

The Rev. Cameron Trimble, an Evangelical Pastor and a pilot, writes of how she learned from her instructor to navigate turbulence. She says, "we are going to hit turbulence ahead, my Instructor informed me, you will learn something about your airplane.... If you tighten your grip on the yoke you reduce the aerodynamics of your aircraft, you as a pilot will make the flight less steady, less safe and less stable. So remember when the going gets rough fly loose."

During this year, may we turn to the ways of wisdom and ways of the Spirit which include cultivating intuition, patience, ingenuity and discovering together (as quoted in Richard Rohr, Daily Meditation, Week 18.)

Bon Voyage as you set out on this new academic year. May the Holy Spirit guide you in ways of peace.

We are here to support you in any way we can. We look forward very much to visiting you in your schools during the year. Do not hesitate to contact us at our diocesan office at any time.

Please note our address: **Education Secretariat, 51 Home Farm Road, Drumcondra, DO9 W5W4.**

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Sr. Bernadette Carron

Post - Primary Diocesan Adviser

bernadette.carron@dublindiocese.ie

Sr. Concepta Foley

Post - Primary Diocesan Adviser

concepta.foley@dublindiocese.ie



Month of Fruitfulness, Month of Harvesting, Month of Returning to School.

“What will this year bring? We do not know! It will bring its usual times of work and play, experiences of success and failure, all the things that are part of school life. It is a new beginning; the planting of a seed that will grow for a year, the seed of fruit that will blossom in times to come. It is a new hope; hope for good work, for friendship, for fun, for learning. In this coming year, may there be learning, prayer and fun.

May there be hard work, faith and friendship. May no one in this school be lonely; may no one be left out in class; may no one suffer through the others here.

As we begin this year in hope, in prayer and in friendship, may the Lord begin it with us, be with us during it, and successfully bring it to its conclusion.”

Fr. Donal Neary S.J.

September - A Time to Reflect on our Identity and Ethos.

“Catholic education will only bear enduring fruit in a context where schools live out their ethos authentically. The school is the gateway to the social, intellectual, mental and moral development of students which is achieved in a holistic way, educating the whole person. Education is a factor that humanizes society, because it helps us to transcend individualism, to appreciate differences, to discover community, to be responsible for our common home”.

Archbishop Dermot Farrell - May 2023

When we reflect on our education ministry today, we realise that the current demands are light years away from what they used to be twenty or even ten years ago. We often hear parents remark how different education today is from that which they experienced in their own time. Those of us who are teaching or involved in education for the past so many years will not fail to note the same.

We can ask two basic questions:

- What does it mean to be a Catholic school today?
- What does it mean to be relevant given the kind of environment we have?

The changing conditions of life in society necessitate that some values be stressed more than others at a given time. Our “core values” are the priority values relative to the needs of the time which should be reflected in all aspects of life within our schools.

The Jesuit Institute has produced a working document for their schools on the identity and ethos of a Catholic school. It could prove a key starting point for further discussion within our school communities.

<https://www.jesuitinstitute.org/Pages/EthosCatholicSchool.htm>

Our collective efforts as we listen to the Holy Spirit will bring forth new life and new possibilities within our schools. As we respond to the many challenges which will be our contribution towards “renewing the face of the earth” and making it a “home” worth living in for future generations, let us ask the Holy Spirit to enable us to teach with wisdom and to teach with truth and love as we help shape the future.

This is what we are about: We plant seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development.

Saint Oscar Romero



The Parable of the Sower – A reflection by Pope Francis during the Angelus on July 16.

First, Pope Francis stressed that parents “sow goodness and faith in their children, and that they are called to do so without being discouraged, even if at times they seem not to understand or to appreciate their teachings, or if the mentality of the world is against them.”

He then addressed young people and explained that they “can sow the Gospel in the furrows of everyday life... a small seed that you cannot see, but with which you entrust everything you have to Jesus, and so he can make it ripen.” He also said that study “is tiring and not immediately satisfying, like sowing, but is essential to build a better future for all.”

Finally, Pope Francis spoke of the “sowers of the Gospel” – “who live and preach the word of God often without immediate success.”

“Let us never forget, when we proclaim the word, that even where it seems that nothing is happening, in reality the Holy Spirit is at work, and the Kingdom of God is already growing, through and beyond our efforts.”

He said “go ahead joyfully” and remember the people who placed the seed of the word of God in us and how our faith began.

Pope Francis shared some questions for us to reflect upon. Perhaps, we can use them for discussion and reflection with our students throughout the year ahead:

Do I sow goodness? Do I only care about reaping for myself, or do I also sow for others?

Do I sow some seeds of the Gospel in everyday life: study, work, free time?

Do I get discouraged or like Jesus, do I continue to sow, even if I do not see the immediate results?

*If you want to help students grow spiritually,
remember, there are four things you can do.*

*Help them spend time with God.
Help them spend time with others.
Help them share their stories.
And help them use their gifts.
And remember . . .
you can plant
and you can water
but it's God who makes things grow.*



*Someone in your classroom is waiting for a friend.
Somewhere in your brain, there's a story to be penned.
Something in this school year, is waiting to be known,
And when you discover it, your mind will be blown!*

In 2008, at the 150th anniversary of the consecration of St. Kilian's Church, Mullagh, Co. Cavan, Fr. Ronan Drury reached out to young people present – encouraging them to hold on to their Christian heritage.

"To the young people of the parish today, I would say to you that it's you the parish depends upon with your youthful energy and vision. You touch things here today that you cannot willingly let die: your religious and social history, your Christian identity, the blood that runs in your veins. You may in the years ahead wander far away from home or church and the beliefs absorbed in your childhood may come to be questioned and rejected or accepted more firmly. Either way, let there always be the assurance of a special place where values remain, where prayer is valid, a holy place waiting to shelter you: home. Disagree with it, change it but stay with it, it's the only one we have."

Fr. Ronan Drury (deceased)
Professor of Homiletics in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth

Year of Prayer for Vocations to the Diocesan Priesthood

Archbishop Dermot Farrell – Message for Vocations Sunday, 2023

Things take the time they take.

Don't worry.

How many roads did St. Augustine follow before he became St. Augustine?

(Mary Oliver, Felicity, 2015)

Finding our way is rarely easy. How many roads did Augustine follow before he became Saint Augustine... before he found his way? Finding our way through life can be wonderful, but can also be very daunting. Particularly for young adults, but not only for them, discovering what one wants to do with one's life can be very difficult.

The wisdom of Mary Oliver in her light-filled lines is first-hand, and hard-won. How many roads did Augustine take before he became Saint Augustine? How many roads did you take before you became you? How many roads did your family take, before it became the family you now are?

It takes time to discover who we are, and who we need to be. It also takes time to figure out what we can do in life to express, sustain, and flourish as the person we truly are, and need to be. Who we truly are, is the person God calls us to be. This is the deepest sense of vocation: God calls us to become ourselves, "to have life, and have it to the full." (John 10:10) To lose sight of this, is to lose sight of the living God who calls us into life, and sustains us day-in-day-out.

True vocation is dynamic, alive. It can, therefore, be difficult, at least initially, to hear God's call. Vocation takes time. Life calls us constantly; God calls us constantly, but it takes time to hear. It takes time to receive the gift of life.

It is in this perspective, that I want to say three things about vocation: three things that are true for every person—whether we are people of faith, or people who do not see themselves in this way.

It is God who calls: to seek one's vocation in life is to engage with the mystery of who of we are, the mystery of life itself, and the mystery of God who is.

We are called through life: while we hear our call deep within, it is always heard in dialogue with those around us, and with the world.

We are called to life: our true vocation is life-giving—for ourselves and for those we encounter. Our true calling in life stretches us, lifts us beyond ourselves.

In such a perspective many of our 'concerns' about vocation fall away, and the real challenges of vocation can be seen in another light. In that light, might we wonder about our prayer for "vocations." First, rather than telling the Lord what we want—more priests, more religious, perhaps we might need to pray—and pray deeply: What do you want, Lord? What is your will?

Second, most reflection on the scarcity of vocations has been "either-or"—either priests or laity, priestly ministry or lay ministry, religious vocation or lay vocation. This is a fatal logic for the life of the Church! Christ's way is both-and: both slave and free, both men and women (see Gal 3:28). We pray for servants of the gospel—both lay and ordained, both women and men, young and old.

Third: we might pray with ever increasing earnestness—that Christ be known. As he says in today's Gospel, "I am the gate. Anyone who enters through me will be safe..." (John: 10:9) It is he who is "the light of the world," "the way, the truth, and the life." (John 8:12; 14:6) Let us pray that the world may come to know him! The harvest is rich. Let us the pray the generous Lord of the Harvest, to send labourers into his harvest. People with generous, warm and courageous hearts, women and men, young and old, who together have come to know his Son. May "the Lord's goodness and kindness follow us all the days of our life." (Psalm 23:6)

Archbishop Dermot Farrell



A Date in your Diary!

September, 28th



What Really Matters in Our Lives

Sometimes we feel swamped, weary, discouraged, unable to focus on anything.... It is all part of being human. We know that the friends of Jesus locked themselves in after His death, they refused to come out, declined all invitations, retreated from life. All except two, Cleopas and his companion, who decided to walk away from the others and to take refuge in the familiar, in their old lives and their old ways. Their story is one we know well. Jesus Himself walks beside them but they do not yet recognise Him. They share their story with a stranger and in the sharing, there comes healing, transformation and renewed strength. "Stay with us" they ask....and in the supper that followed their eyes and hearts were opened, their hope rekindled and renewed. The disciples recognised Jesus in the Breaking of the Bread – their lives changed forever. **Road to Emmaus, Luke 24: 13 -35**

It matters greatly that we too invite Jesus to journey with us in this new school year. We too need to gather together in the name of our whole school community and say "Stay with us Lord..."

Archbishop Dermot Farrell invites us to a celebration of the Eucharist in order to pray together that our new school year be a rich and blessed one.



"What we experience in our daily lives is what we bring to the Eucharist, there to express it, celebrate it and deepen it by plunging it into the great mystery of Christ's death and resurrection made present again in the Mass."

Our Splendid Eucharist

Raymond Moloney SJ

The Mass will be celebrated in St. Patrick's /DCU on Thursday, September 28 at 7 p.m.

We invite you to come to this Mass.

Join us in praying for ourselves as teachers/chaplains and for our students, our schools and our whole school community.

Apostolic Nuncio to Ireland

Our new Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Luis Mariano Montemayor and Archbishop Dermot Farrell on the Occasion of the Liturgical Reception in St. Mary's Pro-Cathedral, Dublin.



During the summer, Archbishop Dermot Farrell welcomed on our behalf, the new Papal Nuncio to Ireland, Archbishop Luis Mariano Montemayor from Argentina.

The Nuncio is the personal representative of the Pope and charged with continuing and deepening the friendship which exists between Pope Francis and the people of Ireland.

"Archbishop Montemayor, on behalf of the faithful, clergy, religious, and those who live a consecrated life, I welcome you to Dublin—to the place, and to the Church called into life in this place. We are very glad that you have come to be with us." Archbishop Farrell

We welcome Archbishop Luis Mariano Montemayor and we pray for him and for all who are taking up new responsibilities and leadership roles especially in our schools that the Spirit may guide them in ways of peace and justice.



Vatican has released the List of Participants in October Synod

Excerpt from Report by Joseph Tulloch

The Vatican has published the full list of participants who will take part in the upcoming Synod on Synodality assembly in October. **For the first time it contains non-bishops.**

A third of the 364 voting delegates in the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops were chosen by Pope Francis.

Many of the non-bishop participants (who are a minority, at around 21%), were proposed by bishops' conferences around the world, before being approved by Pope Francis. Others were appointed directly by the Pope.

For the first time, lay people will not only participate in the Synod of Bishops assembly, they will be full members, with the ability to vote on the final document at the end of the process in October 2024.

Prominent names from around the English-speaking world include Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay; Professor Anna Rowlands, a theologian at Durham University in the United Kingdom; and US-based writer and commentator Fr James Martin, SJ.

A "mixture" of the People of God

Speaking at a press conference in the Vatican, Cardinal Grech stressed that the delegates had been selected so as to produce a "mixture" from various parts of the Church.

Most obviously, there will be an even mix of participants from six different continents, and the non-bishop members will be evenly divided by gender. Cardinal Grech also stressed, however, that there will be representatives from the various sui juris Eastern Catholic churches, and that an effort was made to include disabled Catholics too.

Cardinal Grech went on to explain that not everyone named on the list will be a "member", and thus able to participate in discussions at the Assembly and vote on proposals. Those in section B on the [list](#), the "Special Envoys", will be able to discuss but not to vote, while those in section C, the "Other Participants", will play a role in facilitating and or/advising on the process, but will neither intervene nor vote in discussions.

The Cardinal also highlighted, finally, that the list of participants is not final – the lists of delegates from other Christian churches are still to arrive, and some names will likely be changed if members fall ill ahead of the assembly.

Spirituality and Ecumenism

Next to speak was Bishop Luis Marín de San Martín, Undersecretary of the Synod, who highlighted that the upcoming assembly is not an isolated event, but rather part of a continual process.

The Spanish Bishop also stressed the synod's spiritual dimension, pointing out that all participants will attend a three-day retreat together beforehand.

The Synod's other Undersecretary, Sr. Nathalie Becquart, noted that one of the central points to emerge from the synodal consultations was the importance of involving young people in the process. For this reason, she said, Synod organisers would be present at the upcoming World Youth Day in Lisbon, where they will have a stand.

Sr. Becquart also stressed the importance of the interreligious dimension of the assembly.

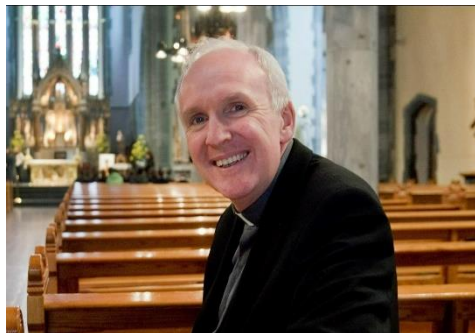
Listen to Sr. Nathalie Becquart

<https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=f41184c035b57460JmltdHM9MTY4ODg2MDgwMCZpZ3VpZD0zODJlZTk5NS1jNmM1LTYSOTEtM2ZlOC1mYjk3Yzc0YTY4ZWEmZW5zaWQ9NTQzOA&pnt=3&hsh=3&fclid=382ee925-c635-6991-3fe8-fb97c74a68ea&psq=vatican+news+sr.+nathalie+becquart&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cudmF0aWNhbm5ld3MudmEvZW4vdmF0aWNhbm5ld3MvMjY4ODg2MDgwMCZpZ3VpZD0zODJlZTk5NS1jNmM1LTYSOTEtM2ZlOC1mYjk3Yzc0YTY4ZWEmZW5zaWQ9NTQzOA&ntb=1>

Participants include:

Bishop Brendan Leahy of Limerick and Bishop Alan McGuckian, SJ of Raphoe will both be attending the most diverse Synod in the history of the Synod of Bishops with numerous lay men, lay women, religious sisters, and priests also attending as voting members.

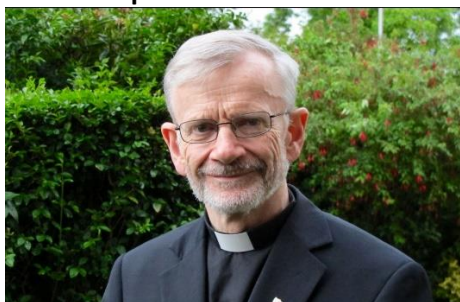
Bishop Brendan Leahy



Welcoming the announcement, Bishop Leahy said, "I very much look forward to the gathering in October. I believe the positive engagement and valuable inputs on the part of many in Ireland in the Synodal pathway to date have helped to prepare me. I am thinking of the special atmosphere and spiritual conversations we experienced."

"I pray that the October assembly will be a time of going deeper still, in listening together with participants from across the world to what the Spirit is saying to the Church at this time, so often described by Pope Francis as an era of transformation".

Bishop Alan McGuckian SJ



Bishop McGuckian SJ said, "I am excited to be a part of an authentic discernment of the Holy Spirit at work in the People of God, as we listen together to the Scriptures and the Church's tradition. We ask for the prayers of all the Faithful for inspiration for all of us who will gather in Rome that this Synod will bring us all closer to Christ and his Saving Love in the world."

Two additional Irish people will also be attending the Synod. Rev Prof Eamonn Conway from the Archdiocese of Tuam is attending as one of the experts and facilitators, and Sr Pat Murray, IBVM who is the Executive Secretary of the UISG (International Union of Superiors General) is one of the women religious representing the Superiors General.

Rev. Professor Eamonn Conway



Sr. Pat Murray IBVM



Download full list of participants

https://mcusercontent.com/5d77b8797349ec78b2ec47f6a/files/77864bd4-fbaf-addc-026d-f2f626f59f96/List_of_Participants.pdf

On September 30, the Synod will be preceded by a major ecumenical prayer vigil to be held in St Peter's Square, entitled "Together - Gathering of the People of God" which will be led by the Pope, together with the leaders of many other Christian churches.

From October 1 – 3, all the 400 participants will go on a three-day retreat outside Rome, conducted jointly by Fr. Timothy Radcliffe, O.P., the former master of the Dominicans and Mother Maria Ignazia Angelini, O.S.B. Abbess of a Benedictine Abbey in Viboldone, near Milan.

"Pope Francis has insisted since its initiation that the synod is meant to be a spiritual event, not a parliamentary-style gathering."

"Having reported on all the synods since 1985, I have come to believe that this synod could well be the most transformative event in the Catholic Church since the Second Vatican Council."

Gerard O'Connell
America's Vatican Correspondent.

Home – Irish Synodal Pathway

<https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&p=df2690c06d23cee4JmltdHM9MTY4ODg2MDgwMCZpZ3VpZD0zODJlZTkYNS1jNjM1LTYSOTEtM2ZlOC1mYjk3Yzc0YTY4ZWEmYW5zaWQ9NTM0MA&pbn=3&hsh=3&fclid=382ee925-c635-6991-3fe8-fb97c74a68ea&psq=Synod+latest+news&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly9zeW5vZC5pZS8&ntb=1>



<https://popesprayerusa.net/>

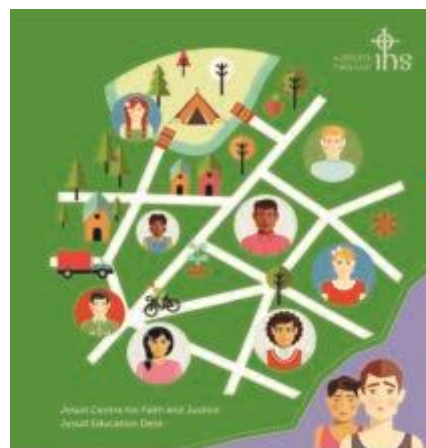
<https://popesprayerusa.net/popes-intentions/>

Pope Francis' intention – September 2023

For people living on the margins

“We pray for those persons living on the margins of society, in inhumane life conditions; may they not be overlooked by institutions and never considered of lesser importance.”

ON THE MARGINS – JESUITS INTERNATIONAL



ON THE MARGINS

Teacher resource materials for the junior cycle of post-primary education

Teacher resource materials for the Junior Cycle of Post-Primary Education

This module has been created to develop students' capacity for ethical reasoning, critical thinking and skillful analysis of social justice issues and to foster empathy for people living on the margins of society. To achieve these goals, the module encourages active and reflective learning in keeping with the best traditions of Ignatian pedagogy.

<https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&p=2cba90fedd2eafdaJmltdHM9MTY4ODk0NzlwMCZpZ3VpZD0zODJlZTkyNS1jNjM1LTU5OUEtMTZlOC1mYjk3YzcyOTY4ZWEmYW5zaWQ9NTE4Mg&ptn=3&hsh=3&fclid=382ee925-c635-6991-3fe8-fb97c74a68ea&psq=on+the+margins+Jesuit+international&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuaWppLmllL3dwLWNvbmlbnQvdXBsb2Fkcy8yMDIxLzA0L09uLXR0ZS1NYXJnaW5zLnBkZg&ntb=1>

The Season of Creation begins on September 1, World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, and ends on October 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology beloved by many Christian denominations



“Let Justice and Peace Flow” is the theme chosen for [Season of Creation 2023](https://seasonofcreation.org/).

“But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!” (Amos 5: 24) and so we are called to join the river of justice and peace, to take up climate and ecological justice, and to speak out with and for communities most impacted by climate injustice and the loss of biodiversity. As the people of God, we must work together on behalf of all Creation, as part of that mighty river of peace and justice.

Season of Creation <https://seasonofcreation.org/>

Dance of the Cosmos

“As long as Earth remains an “It”, a “Thing”, rather than a living, vibrant reservoir of life, humans will continue to use and abuse her. We need a loving relationship with this generous, vulnerable planet on which we live. Only then will we allow her songs of rich abundance to dance in the rhythms of our lives, only then will we respond with reverent care and live with daily gratitude.

Whenever I allow myself to get inside the skin of creation, I know I am in the embrace of Earth. I sense the vital essence, the dancing dynamism, and I bow to the One who holds this dance in an eternal embrace.” **Joyce Rupp**

Message of Pope Francis for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, 1 September 2023



“The entire material universe speaks of God’s love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God.” Pope Francis, Laudate Si’ 84

In his message for the 2023 Season of Creation, Pope Francis highlights our interconnectedness with God, with each other, with ourselves and with all of creation.

<https://seasonofcreation.org/2023/05/25/message-of-pope-francis-for-creation-day-2023/>

Teaching Care for Creation – Catechist’s Journey – Loyola Press

https://www.google.ie/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKewifvq3HjuH_AhWXd8AKHfsgDIQQFnoECDQQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fcatechistsjourney.loyolapress.com%2F2015%2F04%2Fteaching-care-for-creation%2F&usg=AOvVaw2RtZTLDOOArV_Y9cF4tf_R&opi=89978449

Season of Creation 2023

https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKewi9r6n8geL_AhVYTUEAHTCXDPsQFnoECA4QAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fseasonofcreation.org%2F&usg=AOvVaw1fCsIRBzaM76K4yTv-SPhb&opi=89978449

“To listen to the cry of creation is not like shutting out all other sounds in order to hear a single bird’s cry in a forest. The environment is around us, within us, above us, beneath us and beyond us. Its voice is the voice of the universe. When we listen to the cry of one part of the environment to which we have responsibility, we are led also to attend to all the relationships that compose our environment and to the way in which they interact with one another to form the world in which we live. Care for the

environment will embrace all our relationships, ranging from those with the air we breathe, the food we eat, the things we buy, the way we travel, dress, speak, listen and work, to our relationships with ourselves, with family, friends, hospitals, people who are homeless and excluded, schools, workplaces, banks, politics and with our world. Care for the environment is not one single aspect of our lives. It embraces all aspects of our lives."

Fr Andrew Hamilton SJ - Jesuit Communications and Jesuit Social Services

Let us follow the example of
St Francis of Assisi and take
care of our common Home.

- Pope Francis



"LAUDATO SI', mi' Signore" – "Praise be to you, my Lord".

In the words of this beautiful canticle, Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. **Laudate Si', 1**

Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Praised be you, my Lord, with all your creatures,
especially Sir Brother Sun,
who is the day and through whom you give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendour;
and bears a likeness of you, Most High.
Praised be you, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,
in heaven you formed them clear and precious and beautiful.
Praised be you, my Lord, through Brother Wind,
and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather
through whom you give sustenance to your creatures.
Praised be you, my Lord, through Sister Water,
who is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.
Praised be you, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom you light the night,
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong". **Laudate Si', 87**

“The care of the Earth is our most ancient and most worthy, and after all, our most pleasing responsibility. To cherish what remains of it and to foster its renewal is our only hope.”

Wendell Berry, Writer/Environmental Activist



The Creation Song by Kate Simmonds and Mark Edwards.

https://www.google.ie/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwig9-ufhOH_AhVTSEEAHZzPDLwQtwJ6BAGOEAI&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3D1I7KuvV8wfE&usg=AOvVaw3jePrIOln1K65hiR9GoMor&opi=89978449

Season of Creation Song

https://www.google.ie/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwil446bheH_AhU-TkEAHbWeC_Y4ChC3AnoECAwQAg&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DflzgT5u6W8&usg=AOvVaw1NFeewOe5RtArlwPHAK8rc&opi=89978449/

For the Beauty of the Earth – John Rutter

https://www.google.ie/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjQk-jthuH_AhVBTUEAHsdJCSlQtwJ6BAGUEAI&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DxlBkpAm3fhw&usg=AOvVaw30jEKcggr2K-nAP8AaW4k1&opi=89978449



**“We are here on spaceship Earth,
sharing a common Planet and a common
past as well as a common future.”**

Sr. Anna Hennessy

Mary, Mother of God - The Blessed Virgin Mary - Chosen and Faithful

In Ireland, we often say that May is the month of Mary and that is true but we could also say that September is the month of Mary, our Mother.

On September 8th, we celebrate Mary's birthday.



Then four days later on September 12th, we have the Holy Name of Mary.

Mary's name is holy because she is the Mother of God.

On September 15th, we remember the Sorrows that Mary bore and the suffering she endured with her only Son for our salvation.



Mary is portrayed in the New Testament as the one who faithfully followed Jesus, persevered in trials and opened her heart to God.

Mary was chosen to be the mother of Jesus. She accepted an enormous responsibility of nurturing, safeguarding, and guiding Jesus as he grew in wisdom, age, and grace.

She lived out the will of the Father not just in that one marvelous moment of the Annunciation but over a lifetime which culminated in the painful death of her Son. In the presence of Mary, Jesus drew his first and last breaths. Then Mary entered into the sufferings of humanity when she took the dead body of Jesus in her arms. At the cross, she was given to us as Mother. She placed her faith in Jesus as his followers gathered in despair and confusion.

Mary did not hold back when the angel Gabriel told her that she had found favour with God and despite all the unknowns, Mary said “yes” to God. “May it be done to me according to your word.”

Mary believed in Jesus. She prepared him for his mission and supported him throughout his life.

Mary models for us what it means to struggle to live the Gospel by showing us what we are called to be.

We must ask ourselves how we too can find ways to say “yes” to God in our lives. For most of us it is difficult to say “yes” when we cannot control the outcome.

It is so hard to say “yes” to the unpredictability of life riddled with joy and sorrow, hope and despair and sometimes fear.

Yet, we believe in God’s infinite love and care for us.



The image of Our Lady is a photograph of a statue of Mary which stands in the gardens of the Basilica of the Annunciation in the Holy Land.

What is most striking about the statue is her hands.

Look closely and you will see that Mary’s hands are chipped. This is because all the countless pilgrims who come to visit this Holy place have come to hold her hand, honouring her as the Mother she is. Surely there can be no better prayer than to place our hands in Mary’s hands and ask her to give us support, guidance, solace and courage throughout this new school year.

Pope Francis has told us that Mary has three very important lessons for today's Christians.



“Be Joyful, Help Others, Never Give Up.”

Pope Francis has said that Mary teaches people to experience the joy of Christ and share it with others; to never let adversity beat us down; and always help those in need with love and mercy.

He has said people should imitate how Mary responded to God's call to help others in need with the same joy, haste and perseverance.

"Victory is to those who repeatedly rise up, without getting discouraged. If we imitate Mary, we cannot sit with our arms crossed, just complaining or perhaps avoiding any effort so that others do what is our responsibility..."

Making a difference and helping others does not have to be done on a grand scale, he said, but entails doing everyday things "with tenderness and mercy."

Pope Francis encourages us to persevere.

Mary relied on God and his goodness for the strength and courage needed to stay by Christ's side no matter what and to encourage his disciples to do the same.

"In this world in which long-lasting values are rejected and everything is changing, in which the disposable triumphs, in which it seems people are afraid of life's commitments, the Virgin encourages us to be men and women who are constant in their good works, who keep their word, who are always faithful." Pope Francis

A PRAYER TO MARY

*May Our Lady bless your going, your coming and your staying.
May she bless you in your thinking, your doing and your saying.
May she bless you in your joys; may she bless you when you weep.
May she bless you in your waking and may she bless you when asleep.
May she keep her arms around you.
May she fold you in her heart,
'Till you are close with her and Jesus
Where you never more will part.*

Br. John Manley OFM. Cap. Rochestown College, Cork.

A Lesson Plan on Mary's "Yes" - Let It Be Done

<https://young-catholics.com/5884/fiat-lesson-plan-marys-let-it-be-done/>

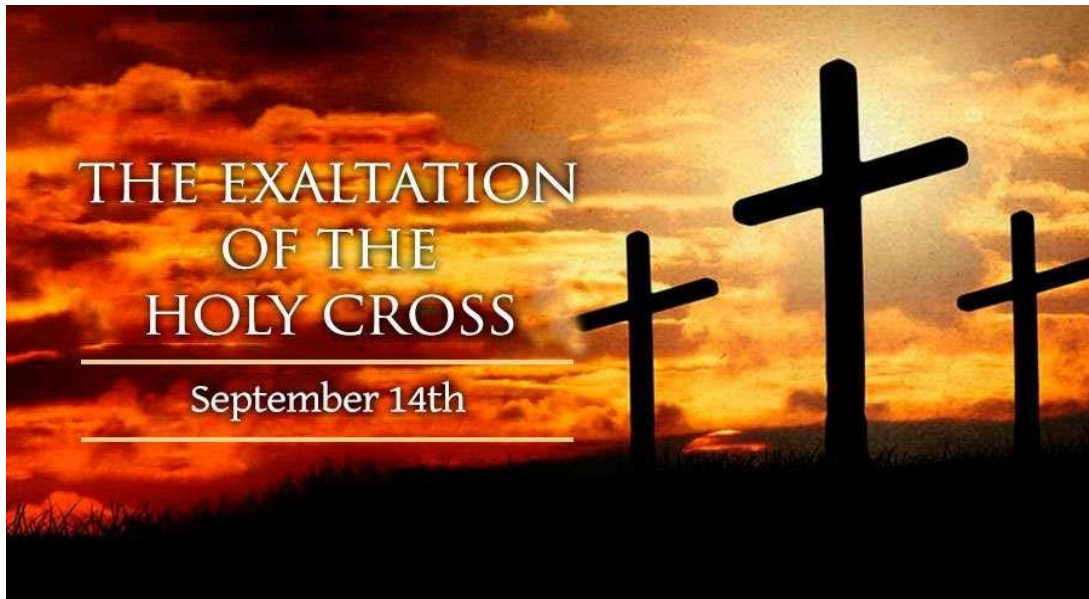
**15 year old Irish boy sings Gaelic hymn A Mhuire Mhathair (O Mother Mary),
accompanied by 14 year old sister on piano.**

https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=9a531e2792a04c6cJmItdHM9MTY4OTAzMzYwMCZpZ3VpZD0zODJlZTkYNS1jNjM1LTYSOTEtM2ZlOC1mYjk3Yzc0YTY4ZWEmaw5zaWQ9NTE4OA&ptn=3&hsh=3&fclid=382ee925-c635-6991-3fe8-fb97c74a68ea&psq=A+Mhuire+Mhathair+14+year+old+boy+with+sister+you+tube&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cueW91dHVIZS5jb20vd2F0Y2g_dj1VTTJKaEFXcE5sNA&ntb=1

50 Reasons why 50 Teens pray with Mary, the Mother of God.

https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=dac469d33a2825b9JmItdHM9MTY4ODUxNTIwMCZpZ3VpZD0zODJlZTkYNS1jNjM1LTYSOTEtM2ZlOC1mYjk3Yzc0YTY4ZWEmaw5zaWQ9NTE4OA&ptn=3&hsh=3&fclid=382ee925-c635-6991-3fe8-fb97c74a68ea&psq=50++reasons+why+50+teens+pray+with+mary%2c+the+mother+of+God+you+tube&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cueW91dHVIZS5jb20vd2F0Y2g_dj0zelBqS0hMSVIVTQ&ntb=1

14 September - The Exaltation of the Holy Cross



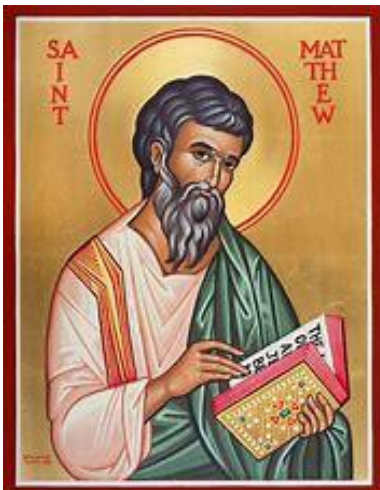
The discovery of the true cross is dated 14 September 320. The churches on Calvary were dedicated on 13 September 335. St. Helena is credited with discovering the true cross, after which the Church established this feast day.

The cross is transformed into the greatest symbol of selfless love.

On this feast, we are invited to look at the cross which will help us to reflect beyond the immediacy of our lives. Wounds are healed and from the cross we receive life.

Through the cross of Jesus, God says to each of us, 'I love you with an everlasting love, I call you by your name you are mine, do not be afraid.'

21 September - St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist



The call of St. Matthew, the tax collector, to be one of the twelve apostles of Jesus is described in the Gospel which bears his name. It is hard to imagine a more unlikely person for Jesus to call as a companion than Matthew. Tax collectors, as part of the Roman government were despised by the Jewish people. No good Jew would have anything to do with them. By calling Matthew, Jesus invited an outcast to enter into friendship with him.

According to tradition, Matthew wrote down the stories and words of Jesus.

The first Gospel had its origins in him.

24 September - World Day of Migrants and Refugees

Theme of the 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees



The 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees will be celebrated on Sunday, 24 September 2023. Pope Francis has chosen as the title for his traditional message, "Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay."



Cardinal-elect Marchetto at the service of migrants and refugees

One of Pope Francis' prime concerns is for migrants and refugees, *Archbishop Marchetto, said noting that they are often treated "in a very, very bad way when they are fleeing places of suffering."*

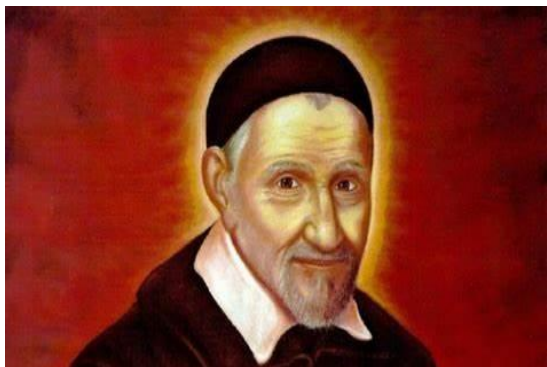
In particular, he noted, climate refugees are destined to increase in number, so it is crucial that rules, regulations and policies must be put into place in order to be able to welcome them with a fraternal attitude.

"In whatever place we decide to build our future, in the country of our birth or elsewhere, the important thing is that there always be a community ready to welcome, protect, promote and integrate everyone, without distinctions and without excluding anyone," **Pope Francis**

World Day of Migrants and Refugees Message 2023

https://www.google.ie/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwj28iMxqyAAxXcWEEAHZ-1A3YQFnoECBgQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.humandevlopment.va%2Fen%2Fnews%2F2023%2Fpublicacion-del-mensaje-de-la-jornada-mundial-del-migrante-y-ref.html&usg=AOvVaw2EnMpJzD_p3ShBIPYJaSSq&opi=89978449

27 September – St. Vincent de Paul



St. Vincent de Paul was born in Pouy, France, on April 24, 1581. His family were French peasants and lived on a farm in Pouy. Like all peasants his parents struggled, but his father was determined to give him a good education. Vincent was sent to Dax, where the Franciscans had a school. In 1596, he entered the University of Toulouse to study theology and philosophy. He was ordained there in 1600.

For St. Vincent de Paul, becoming a priest provided him with the means to move from his family's poverty. He set out to make his way in the world. His first ten years as a priest were spent in comfort, enjoying privileges and success in his ministry.

Under the influence of his spiritual director, Vincent took up the position of chaplain and tutor to the de Gondi family, a rich and powerful family in Paris. It was during this time that a great change came over him. He had a change of heart when he was called to hear the confession of a dying man who expressed his thanks to Madame de Gondi. His response was to preach a sermon on general confession in the village chapel of Folleville on 25 January 1617, the feast of Paul's conversion. The consequences of this sermon opened Vincent's eyes. He came to realise that God was leading him to preach the Gospel to the poor. He dedicated the rest of his life to the service of the poor. He dedicated the rest of his life to the service of the poor. He founded the Congregation of the Mission, (the Vincentians) in 1625 to preach the Gospel to the poor and for the education of the clergy. Vincent helped reform the clergy and the manner in which they were prepared for priesthood. With St. Louise de Marillac, he established the Daughters of Charity in 1633 to care for the sick, the orphaned and the aged.

Vincent died in Paris on September 27, 1660. His body was exhumed in 1712, 53 years after his death. His bones have been encased in a waxen figure which is displayed in a glass reliquary in the chapel of the headquarters of the Vincentian Fathers in Paris, Saint Vincent de Paul Chapel, rue de Sèvres. His heart is still incorrupt, and is displayed in a reliquary in the chapel of the motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity in Paris.

A Collection of Spiritual Reflections for Young People - A resource for Vinnies Young Adult members, groups, conferences and volunteers. It is also for teachers to share with members of St Vincent de Paul Conferences, Social Justice Groups or R.E. classes within their schools. https://www.google.ie/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKWjUoaer4yAAxWuWEEAHTnABrcQFnoECBAQAQ&url=http%3A%2F%2Fsetoncampusministry.weebly.com%2Fuploads%2F1%2F4%2F3%2F6%2F14360800%2Fpeaceout_4_-2011.pdf&usq=AOvVaw1K1d1MTlvJtQnVQHLHJ2rx&opi=89978449

Advice from St. Vincent de Paul, in everyday situations we experience in serving our neighbour.

<https://vinformation.org/en/advice-from-saint-vincent-de-paul-in-everyday-life/>

29 September - Saints Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Archangels



Each of the archangels performs a different mission in Scripture:

Michael protects

Raphael guides

Gabriel announces

In the Bible, it says there are seven archangels, it names only three; Saints Michael, the warrior who drove Lucifer and the rebel angels out of heaven into hell; St. Raphael, the guide and guardian of Tobias, a young man whose father had sent him on a dangerous mission and St. Gabriel, God's favourite messenger who told Mary that God had chosen her to be the Mother of his Son, Jesus.

30 September - St. Jerome – Patron of Librarians

St. Jerome was a Latin scholar. About 366, he became secretary to the newly elected Pope Damasus whose dream was to produce a new Latin translation of the Bible based on the original Greek and Hebrew manuscripts which would be reader friendly. He recognised Jerome's flair for language. Jerome took on the task. He produced accurate translations of the Psalms, the four Gospels, all the Epistles and the Book of Revelation. In order to improve the translation of the Old Testament, Jerome studied Hebrew, the language in which God had spoken to the prophets. It took Jerome 26 years to complete h St. Jerome broke open the Word of God for the laity. Biblical teaching and the reading of Scripture became accessible to his "students," and hunger for more biblical knowledge began to spread among the people.



Creating A Hope Filled Future



Living the Magis in Lisbon

Summer 2023

Those of us who are familiar with Ignatian spirituality will know that the term “Magis” refers to that which is greater. St Ignatius Loyola wanted his men to do everything for “the greater glory of God.” (Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam).

A great gathering of over two thousand people from the Ignatian family worldwide, all between the ages of eighteen and thirty, took place in Lisbon ten days prior to World Youth Day. The young pilgrims were greeted by Pope Francis who urged them “to truly believe and become what they truly are – a future full of hope.” Young people are not called to be superheroes but rather hope bearers!

Later he told leaders of governments that their challenge is to invest more in youth and less in weapons of destruction.

In his homily during the opening Mass of the Magis experience, the Jesuit Provincial, Fr. Almeida SJ, referred to Mary Magdalene whose feast day it was, as the first Apostle, the first teacher of faith, the first bearer of the Good News of the Resurrection. He invited the assembled youth to pause for a moment in perfect silence and call to mind one special person who told them about Jesus, one person who enabled them to meet Jesus and have a personal relationship with Him.

As Catholic schools our primary task is to facilitate an encounter between each student and Jesus, source of our life and hope.



Fr Almeida made several key points about Mary Magdalene as a teacher.

His words are as relevant to us as they were to her two thousand years ago.

Why was Mary Magdalene the one to meet the risen Jesus in the garden that morning?

Because she was looking for Him and because she was there! Sometimes all we can do is show up! God will do the rest! Perhaps we could reflect on the value and the grace of showing up when we feel like throwing in the towel!

Mary Magdalene experiences emptiness and sadness. We too are familiar with these emotions. How often are we faced with a sense of our own emptiness and sadness when we lose someone we love, when a dream falls apart, when a relationship falls apart, when our work or a family situation overwhelms us, when we cannot find meaning in life.

Mary Magdalen weeps and her tears blur her vision and hide a new reality.

Mary Magdalen's sadness causes her to isolate herself from the group, from those she loves and trusts. The Risen Jesus sends her back to her friends.

Mary Magdalen hears the Risen Jesus call her name "Mary." When hearing Him call her name, she recognises Him.

Mary Magdalen is sent to announce, to tell her story of encounter with Jesus, to change despair to hope.



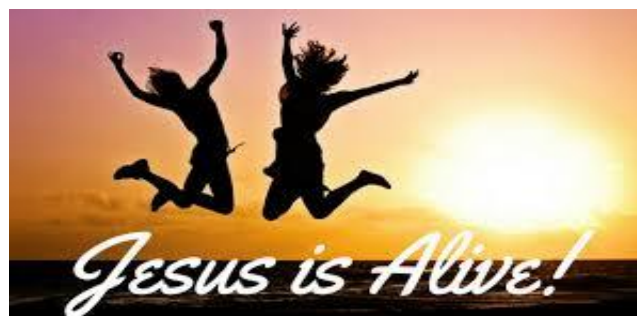
As teachers, we too must be bearers of hope, not letting sadness, doubt or despair overpower us.

Open My Eyes Lord Lyrics

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eo6gZAUuQ3E>

Let us stay with Jesus.

Let us be there when we feel him close and when we don't. Let us tell our friends, our colleagues and our students, "Jesus is alive." "I have met him." Death no longer has the last word!



Our Pope Dreams!

Do you have a dream? Something you long for? Is being a teacher, a dream come true for you?

During a meeting with the young people gathered at the University of Lisbon, Pope Francis told his young audience that his dream is that young people all over the world would be teachers of compassion, of new opportunities for our planet and its inhabitants. His dream is that young people find new ways of ensuring that there is room for all. Our church is a place of belonging and there must be room for all.

In a challenging and inspiring address to thousands of students in Lisbon, Pope Francis told them that education should not be seen as a license or a pathway to pursue personal wellbeing but as a mandate to work for a more just and inclusive society.

He went on to say that true education must do more than perpetuate the present global system of elitism and inequality. Knowledge must be embraced as a responsibility if it is to bear fruit. Pope Francis recalled the book of Genesis and the first question that God asks “Where are You?” **Genesis 3:9** and the second “Where is your brother?” **Genesis 4:9**. Pope Francis reminded the youth of the words of one of Portugal’s great poets Sofia de Mello. When asked what she would like to see her country achieve in this new 21st century she replied, “the attainment of social justice and the reduction of the gap between rich and poor”. This remains the most urgent challenge we face.

The Portuguese poet Jose de Almada (1893 - 1970) wrote “I dream of a country where everyone is able to become a teacher.” And applying these words to himself Pope Francis went on, “This old man now speaking to you also dreams that yours will be a generation of teachers. Teachers of humanity, teachers of compassion, teachers of new opportunities for our planet and its inhabitants ... teachers of HOPE”!

“Everyone needs to know that God is near, and that all he needs is a small response on our part in order to fill our lives with wonder.”

Pope Francis, launching the gathering of hundreds of thousands of young people in Lisbon.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_wugTi6_HH0

Renewal of Faith in Ireland



Light the Fire, Slane Hill

The fire alight on Slane

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

Light the Fire – Live from Slane

https://www.google.com/search?q=light+the+fire+slane+august+2023+you+tube&rlz=1C1GCEA_enlE879IE879&oq=&aqs=chrome.0.69i59i450l8.188399585j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:12bfe4a9,vid:qZmXykvSyYE

Archbishop Eamon Martin celebrated Mass on World Youth Day (6th August) at Slane, Co. Meath, in a Light the Fire of Faith Service. Sr Briege McKenna, Fr. Pablo Escriva de Romani and Dana were in attendance.

In the Spirit of World Youth Day, pilgrims from across Ireland joined Archbishop Eamon Martin for Rosary, Mass, and a Healing Service.

Dana sang her new song, Light the Fire, an anthem inspired by St. Patrick, who famously lit the Easter fire, the Fire of Faith, the birth of Christianity in Ireland at Slane in 433 AD.

The Paschal candle was lit as part of the ceremony on the Feast of the Transfiguration as pilgrims prayed for a renewal of faith in Ireland.

Archbishop Eamon Martin recalled St. Patrick's own experience as he prepared for this event: "Sometimes we forget that St. Patrick came first to Ireland as a frightened teenager, forced into slavery. He knew he was a sinner, but he grew to know and love God through prayer and sacrifice. The light of faith will be kept alive and spread and renewed in Ireland in families that pray and from young person to young person – as Dana's new song puts it: lighting the flame of faith in their own hearts and in the hearts of others!"

As we prayed for a rebirth and renewal of the Church in Ireland, I remembered you, our teachers and chaplains, keepers of the flame of faith, that you may be blessed abundantly and know much the Church values and appreciates you and the work you do in passing on the faith.

Go mbeannaí Dia thú and an obair go léir a dhéanann tú.

*Prayer of Consecration of Ireland
to the Most Holy Trinity*

“O Most Holy and Undivided Trinity -

Father, Son and Holy Spirit -

we entrust and consecrate ourselves,

our families, our homes, our parishes, our Dioceses,

Ireland and all her people, to your Most Sacred Majesty

through the intercession of St. Patrick, St. Brigid,

St. Colmcille and all the saints and Martyrs of Ireland.

Through their prayers, together with the powerful

intercession of Mary, Our Lady of Knock, Queen of Ireland,

we ask, O Most High and Merciful God, that you would

renew our hearts, our Church and our Nation, banishing

all falsehood from our homes and our shores.

Light the fire of the Holy Spirit in our land today

as you did so powerfully in St. Patrick's time,

so that Ireland will once again be renewed

in Faith, Hope and Love.

We make this prayer in faith and confidence in your merciful love, through Christ our Lord -

“Christ with us.

Christ before us.

Christ behind us.

Christ in us” - AMEN.

Glory be to the father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit who is, who was, and who is to come.

M.Purdy and E. Kelly, St.Patrick's Pilgrim Guides

Light the Fire - Hill of Slane - August 6th

The Flame of Being

We begin to understand ourselves and others in terms of light, warmth and love.



From Fr John Main, “Meaning, Significance, and Purpose” in *The Hunger for Depth and Meaning*, ed. Peter Ng (Singapore: Medio Media,), p. 149.

It’s as though we are rushing through our lives, and in our hearts, there is the flame of a candle. Because we are moving at such high speed, this essential interior flame is always at the point of going out. But when we sit down to meditate, when we become still, when we are not thinking in terms of our success or self-importance, of our own will or desires, when we are just still and simple in the presence of the One who is, then the flame begins to burn brightly. We begin to understand our selves and others in terms of light, warmth and love. [. . .] Saying the mantra leads us to stillness where the flame of being can burn bright . . . and where we discover that the value that each of us possess arises from who we are in ourselves. We discover our rootedness in God.

Another way of saying that our vision expands is to say that we come to see beyond mere appearances, into the depth and significance of things. . .not just. . .in relation to ourselves but. . .to the whole of which we are part. This is the way of true self-knowledge and it is why true self knowledge is identical with true humility. Meditation opens up for us this precious form of knowledge, [and] this knowledge becomes wisdom. . .when we know no longer by analysis and definition but by participation in the life and spirit of Christ. [. . .]

By stillness in the spirit we move into the ocean of God. If we have the courage to push off from the shore we cannot fail to find direction and energy. The further out we travel the stronger the current becomes, and the deeper our faith. For a while the depth of our faith is challenged by the paradox that the horizon of our destination is always receding. Where are we going with this deeper faith? Then, gradually we recognize the meaning of the current that guides us, and we see that the ocean is infinite.

Camino, Summer 2024



Plans are currently being made to host a Young Adult Camino in Summer 2024 for the Archdiocese of Dublin. It will be the final stage, walking the 110kms from Sarria to Santiago, with a day trip to Finisterre. Upon reaching the Cathedral in Santiago, those walking will get their Compostela. Three preparation sessions will be held in March, April and May. Register your interest now by filling in the following form: <https://forms.office.com/e/q4xqzF4Vwv/>. All queries can be sent to natalie.doherty@dublindiocese.ie.

. . . *Every New Day I Have a New Chance*

After struggling to choose an answer to the question of what is most precious in my life, I believe I now see it clearly: Most precious to me is the assurance of the grace of God-----and its availability!

To me this means

that God loves me when I least deserve to be loved

that God accepts me----- as I am-----in so many ways unacceptable

that God forgives me-----again and again-----when I fall short of my commitments

that every new day I have a chance-----a fresh start-----to try again.

It is this grace which gives me the courage (and endows me with some skill) to attempt to do more than I am able to do, and to become more than I can ever become.

God's grace frees me to dare and to risk.

Margaret L. Sonnenday

To conclude - As we begin a New School Year:

We would like to wish you and all of our Principals /Deputy Principals together with the school communities the very best for 2023/2024.

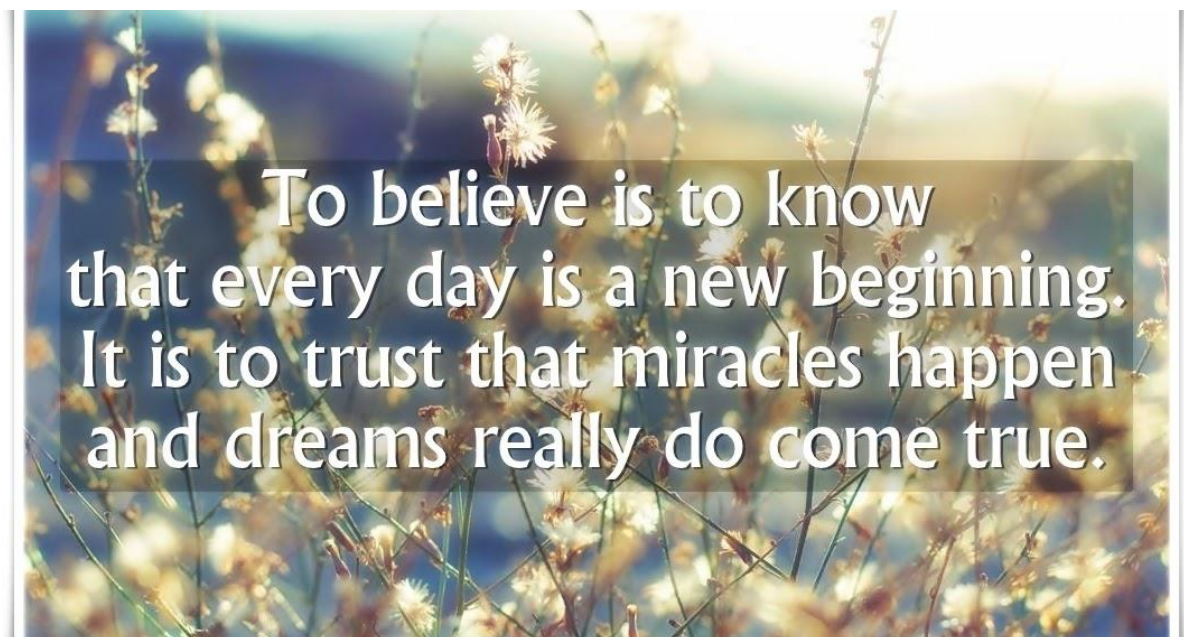
We hope this year will be a time of continued growth for staff and students.

May this academic year be full of joy and God's blessings. May it be a year - expecting, hoping and trusting in the future and what it holds for us.

Please be assured of our prayers as we participate in nurturing the seed of faith in our young people.

Let us together renew our belief in the Holy Spirit who gives each of us the power to do more than we can believe or dare to ask for. Amen

Sr. Bernadette / Sr. Concepta



**To believe is to know
that every day is a new beginning.
It is to trust that miracles happen
and dreams really do come true.**

Let us be inspired by the words of Playwright Sean O'Casey:

***"Every action of our lives touches on some chord that will
vibrate to eternity."***

