

Post Primary Diocesan Advisers R.E. News Update October 2022

Dear Chaplain and R.E. Teachers,

Welcome to the October issue of the R.E blog. I hope you all had a great start to the new academic year. I trust the blog will continue to be useful for you as an educational resource in your work in schools and parishes. In addition, I would be more than happy to receive any contributions you may wish to share with fellow Chaplains and R.E teachers or any suggestions for in-service /support days which the Diocese could provide.

Please contact me if you want to include your name/school on our mailing list to receive the blog monthly.

I would like to draw your attention to Pope Francis' monthly intentions and videos, which are an excellent resource for teaching and/or prayer opportunities. This month the intention is:

“A Church Open to Everyone”

We pray for the Church; ever faithful to, and courageous in preaching the Gospel, may the Church be a community of solidarity, fraternity and welcome, always living in an atmosphere of synodality.

Sr. Bernadette and I were privileged to launch the new 2022/23 Ember teams for 20 schools this September. We wish them well as they lead faith initiatives in their schools.

Finally, school visits have begun for this academic year, and we look forward to continued collaboration with you as we work to promote the faith of the young people in our care. Do not hesitate to contact us at our new diocesan offices at any time. Please note our new address: **Education Secretariat, 51 Home Farm Road, Drumcondra, DO9 W5W4.**

Le gach dea-ghuíf,

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A Prayer of Blessing this October

Lord, be before me and show me the right path.
Be beside me and protect me.
Be behind me and preserve me from all malice.
Be beneath me and save me, lest I should fall.
Lord, be within me and comfort me when I am sad.
Be around me and defend me from those who would do me harm.
Lord, be above me and bless me. Amen.

Homily of Archbishop Farrell at Mass for the Opening of the School Year 22nd September 2022

I welcome all who have joined us for this Mass for the opening of the academic year.

The world around us always faces many challenges, but it is a long time since we have lived in times as unsettled as these. There is much uncertainty, anxiety, and hardship. We read about mobilisations and invasions, the ongoing brutal war in Ukraine; there are also major wars in Afghanistan, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen, and many other places. More than one quarter of world's population feels the effects of war. That is a stunning statistic. Right now, we have millions of people facing the possibility of starvation because of the unfolding famine in the Horn of Africa. We continue to feel the effects of environmental issues. The economic outlook seems uncertain with the sudden and crippling rise in energy costs, inflation, and perhaps a looming recession. It's a sobering list of challenges.

It is in this difficult context that the young people in our schools, colleges, and universities live their lives, and undertake their studies. To see them in classrooms, lecture halls, or corridors, to glimpse them in the street or when they are out and about, one might think the global situation does not impinge on them, but what happens in the world at large is like the air we breathe: its presence may be almost imperceptible, but its effects, both long-term and short-term, can be very real.

And it is in this difficult context that you teach and lead in the schools and colleges of this Diocese. Consequently, it is in this context also, that the importance of various dimensions of the work and role of teachers can be perceived to make a difference and contribute to the overall wellbeing of all. I would therefore like to underline three dimensions that point towards the activity of the Holy Spirit and the closeness of the living God to us in our lives, and particularly in our service. Sometimes we run the risk of living out of what some call a 'received view' of the life of faith: "one which involves long periods of quiet, focused reflection, dark churches, and dignified liturgies. [At times], involving times spent in

contemplative prayer, and on retreat. Above all, [such a view of the spiritual life] involves solitude and collectedness. It does not involve looking after small children.” [Janet Soskice, *The Kindness of God* (Oxford: OUP, 2013), 12–13] Neither does this common view, involve creating and maintaining environments where young people are motivated to engage with their education, to develop, and to grow.

The first dimension is what one might call the Vocational Dimension of Teaching. In the *Letter to the Ephesians* we read, “some are called to be apostles, ... some prophets, some teachers... (4:11). In the Gospel we have just heard, Jesus teaches; he teaches with conviction and authority. Rowan Williams, the last Archbishop of Canterbury, someone deeply rooted in the experience and worth of teaching, reframed the Epistle’s word for the challenges of the 21st century. He says,

the process of education needs people who, themselves, have some sense of being called and ‘invited’. It has long been recognized that the best teachers tend to be those who don’t separate person and function, who find that encouraging others to respond to their fullest potential is what makes them themselves.

(Address at the National Church Schools Congress, March 2006)

When we pray for vocations, does it not also make sense to include the vocation of teaching? And further: since the Catholic school is rooted in the wider community — comprised both of believers, and of people who do not designate themselves in this way — parents, families, and extended families, can we expect the teacher fully to live out their vocation on their own, or the school adequately to fulfil its educational role, apart from the community? Must we not continue to foster networks of community involvement, and develop ways that encourage those called to be teachers to enter deeply into the life and mystery of this vital service of all God’s people? Is this not what Pope Francis means by Synodality?

The second dimension might be termed the challenges for teachers of working within the cultural matrix of a digital world. The digital world risks being a self-made world, one which lacks historical perspective, has little, if any, sense of the past, or of community. Existential, cultural, and community perspectives are essential, not only for the understanding of the faith, but are also foundational for an engagement with history and earth sciences. Not every young person is passionate about our Common Home: how can one be when so much happens for them in the virtual world?

The third dimension is the importance of Leadership. The big challenge is to find good educational leaders who create an educational milieu in which children, young people and parents can enter more deeply into the mysteries of life and faith. In the Book of Proverbs, we read,

Like flowing water is the heart of the king in the hand of the Lord,
who turns it where he pleases. (21:6)

A good leader, a person of vision, one whose vision is born of experience, someone who can establish a good direction and steer a good course, makes all the difference in the flourishing of a school, or indeed any institution where people lie at the core, and that includes our parishes! The good leader brings their colleagues with them; this happens

because people are given a sense of being valued, of being listened to, of being heard. This is at the heart of what we mean when we speak of Synodality: we are on a road together.

Like flowing water is the *heart* of the king in the hand of the Lord,
who turns it where he pleases.

In the end, it is not a question of methodology or technique, it is a question of the heart. The good leader is a person of heart—with a *heart* for their colleagues, with a *heart* for their students, with a *heart* open to the promptings of the Spirit, even when these are not recognized as such. Let us never forget that God is always at work among us. Let us not lose heart! Let us keep before us the need to nurture among younger teachers the gifts that permit educational and faith leadership. The Christian faith is profoundly open to the future: let us seek out those who will inspire and guide the next generations. A broad vision of leadership brings with it, the responsibility of identifying and calling the leaders of tomorrow from among the gifted teachers in our schools and colleges today.

To finish, I put before you the closing lines of a reflection from the late Bishop Ken Untener (d. March 27, 2004), of Saginaw, Michigan in the USA. Reflecting on all that can be expected of any who undertake a life of service, and that's what a life in education truly is, he remarked,

We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something and to do it well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders, ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own.

May Christ the Teacher shape our hearts and bless the work of our hands (see Psalm 89).

October is Mission Month when Catholics are asked to pray for and support its missionaries around the world. Many of your Founding Religious Orders are /have been involved in Mission work. Perhaps this month you could investigate one area of the globe where they are /have a presence.

There are resources for the month at: www.missio.ie

Here you can read the story of Sr Veronica in Nigeria, whose photo features on the publicity material:

<https://missio.ie/missionary-stories/building-peace-in-nigeria/>

She has helped build good relationships between Christians and Muslims in the state of Kaduna through founding a women's interfaith council. ... (very readable in the classroom!)

There is a prayer service here:

<https://missio.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/3-Childrens-Mission-Month-Resource.pdf>

Sacramental Support Evening:
Accompanying Families in Faith

Archdiocese of Dublin
THE OFFICE FOR MISSION AND MINISTRY

**PARISH
INFORMATION
EVENING**

Monday
3rd October
7:30 pm - 9 pm
on Zoom

**REGISTER
NOW**

by sending an email to:
jacinta.kennedyralph@dublindiocese.ie

**THE
LAUDATO SI
AWARD**

Archdiocese of Dublin



In each Parish in the coming weeks there will be information on the **Laudato Si Award**. Some of your Students may be interested in participating or you may be willing to become active in its role out in your Parish.

Lourdes Pilgrimage 2022

“Go and tell the priests.... to build a chapel here.... and that people should come in procession”. Words of Our Lady to St Bernadette at Lourdes



Extract from Fr Gareth Byrne's Homily in Lourdes

With Mary, Our Mother, we pray for the Church in the Archdiocese of Dublin at this time of reflection and change. We pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the protection of Mary as we move forward and plan for the future with Archbishop Farrell and our Building Hope initiative. We pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life, to the diaconate, to the lay apostolate and to lay ministry in the Archdiocese, in humble and loving service of each other.

Congratulations to all the teachers and students who travelled to Lourdes to bring all our petitions to Our Lady and St Bernadette on our behalf.

Religious Feast Days

October 1st Feast of St Therese of the Child Jesus



Pope John Paul II stated:

Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face is the youngest of all the "Doctors of the Church", but her ardent spiritual journey shows such maturity, and the insights of faith expressed in her writings are so vast and profound that they deserve a place among the great spiritual masters.

<https://www.littleflower.org>

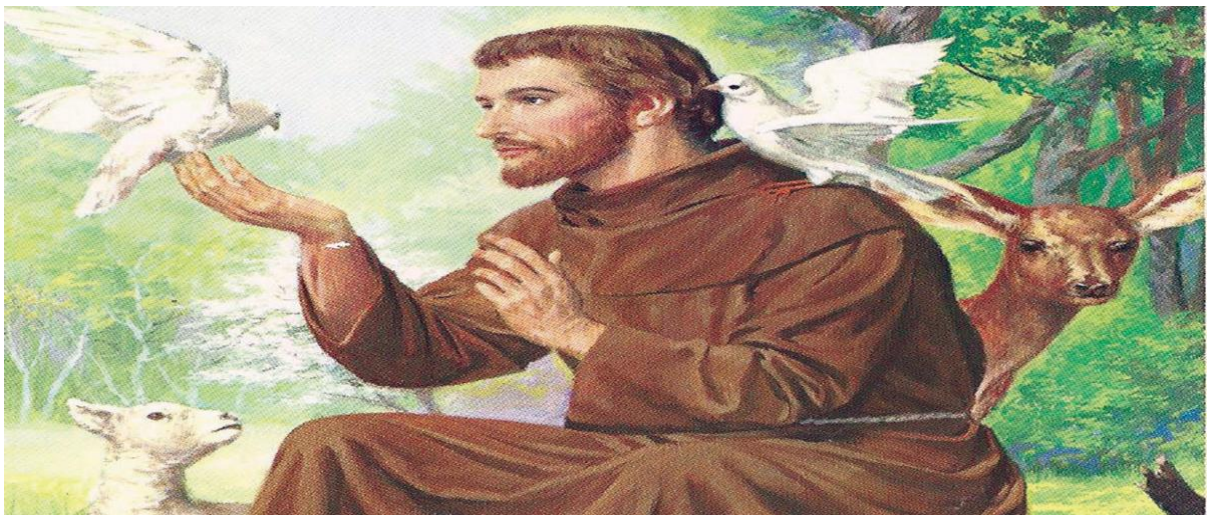
October 2nd Feast of the Guardian Angels

How many of us pray to our guardian angels? Devotion to the Angels is an expression of faith in the enduring love and care extended to each person daily by God. Servants and messengers of God, they help us in our work and study protecting us from harm.

<http://www.franciscanmedia.org/feasaint-of-the-guardian-angels/>

<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date2018-10-02>

October 4th Feast of St Francis of Assisi / Season of Creation Ends



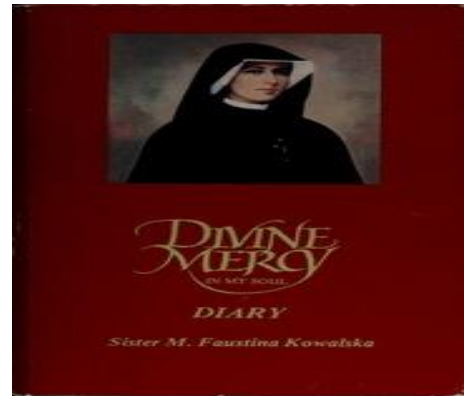
"First do what is necessary. Then do what is possible. And before you know it you are doing the impossible" Words to live by from St Francis. See below for further information on this great Saint as we come to the close of the Season of Creation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rG5jVcYA1aM>

<http://education.dublindiocese.ie/october-4th-st-francis-Of-assisi/>

<https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saintid=50>

October 5th Feast of St Faustina



St. Faustina is an example to all of us today of how God calls even the humblest and those with a simple lifestyle to be His messenger on earth. The Divine Mercy message given to St Faustina is focused on the mercy of Christ, calling us to trust in his forgiveness and openness to our intercessions.

<https://www.thedivinemercy.org/message/stfaustina/>
https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=510

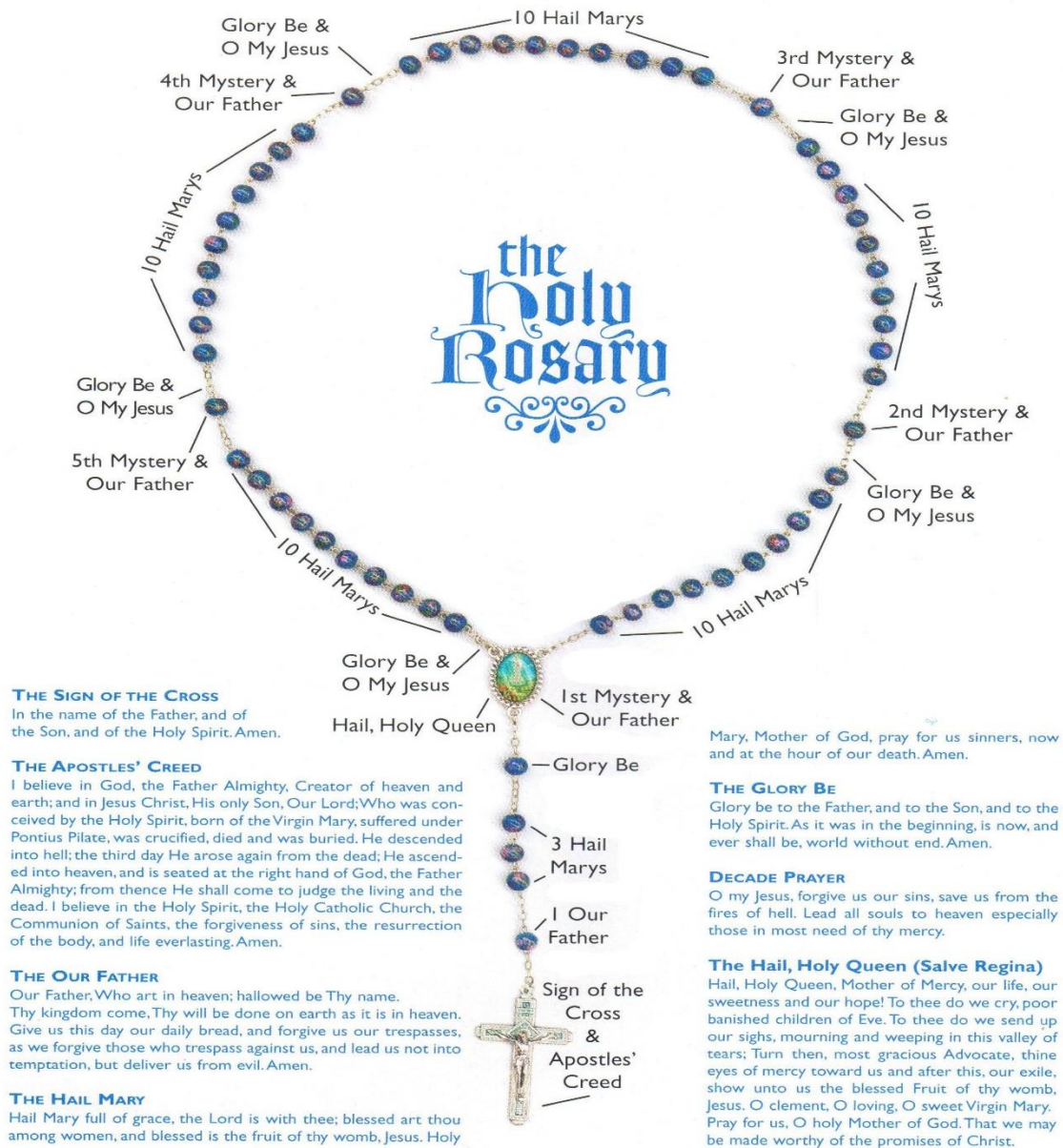
October 7th Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary

“The whole purpose of the Rosary is to lead to this deep experience of Our Lady, who together with Jesus breathes the Spirit into us”

One of the most lasting memories for students who travel to Lourdes to help with the elderly, sick and infirm pilgrims is the candlelight procession with thousands of pilgrims holding lighted candles and praying the Rosary making their way to the Grotto each night.

There may be a variety of languages, but all are gathered with one purpose, to honour Our Lady of Lourdes and to ask her to intercede for each person gathered and the intentions they bring with them to her apparition site in Lourdes. Perhaps this month you can lead your class in a decade of the Rosary in your school.

Pope St John Paul asked of us “The Rosary is a prayer both so humble and simple and theologically rich in Biblical content. I beg you to pray it.” The recitation of the Rosary is one of the best ways of honouring Mary and of meditating on the life of her Son through reflection on the Mysteries as we pray each decade.



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For further information see:

<http://www.how-to-pray-the-rosary-everyday.com/month-of-the-holy-rosary.html>

<https://www.thereligionteacher.com/the-month-of-the-rosary-is-october/>

<http://education.dublindiocese.ie/2016/10/17/october-17-2016>

October 11th Feast of St Canice



A native of Glengiven, Ireland, Canice, an abbot, preached across Ireland and Scotland. He was a close friend of the missionary priest, Saint Columba of Iona, and witnessed several prodigies in the life of the latter. In one instance, a pagan king who had refused to open his gates to Columba was startled to see the bolts unfastened and the gates opened by unseen hands after Columba had made the sign of the cross. One day, as Canice was eating, he heard the voice of Columba, who at that moment was aboard a ship foundering in a storm at sea. Canice thereupon ran to the chapel so hastily that he lost one shoe. As Canice knelt to pray for his friend, miles away Columba watched the churning sea around him suddenly subside. Having seen in a vision Canice's dash to the chapel, Columba thanked him in his heart, saying, "Your swift course to the church with one shoe exceedingly assists us."

October 15th Feast of St Teresa of Avila

Prayer is an act of love. Words are not needed". Teresa of Avila

Saint Teresa of Avila, a sixteenth century Spanish saint and mystic, was very aware that every Christian has a role to play in making Christ present in the world. St Teresa was born in Avila in 1515 and died in Alba, Spain in 1582. When she was 7 years of age, she ran away from home in the hope of being martyred by the Moors; in this way, she said she could come to see God. At the age of eighteen, she joined the Carmelite Order and chose to serve God as a nun. With the help of St John of the Cross, she reformed most of the Carmelite convents and founded new ones. She reached the highest degree of prayer and through prayer obtained such knowledge of divine things that in 1970 Pope Paul VI named her the first woman Doctor of the Church. This was a great honour, especially for a woman of her time. She was canonised in 1622.

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLfIV99jZo>

<http://education.dublindiocese.ie/st-teresa-of-avila/>

<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2018-10-15>

October 18th Feast of St Luke the Evangelist

St Luke, the inspired author of the third Gospel and of the Acts of the Apostles, was a native of Antioch in Syria and a physician, and one of the early converts from paganism. He accompanied St Paul on a considerable part of his missionary journey. He was also his companion while in prison at Rome on two different occasions. His account of these events contained in the Acts is first hand history. Luke's Gospel is, above all, the Gospel of the Merciful Heart of Jesus. It emphasises the fact that Christ is the salvation of all men, especially of the repentant sinner and of the lowly. Today, especially during these difficult days of the pandemic ask your students to pray for doctors and those who care for the sick, through the intercession of St Luke, who is patron of physicians.

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/da.cfm?date=2020-10-18>

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



Pope John Paul on his visit to Ireland in 1979

October 22nd Feast of St John Paul II Pope

Today we celebrate the feast day of Saint John Paul II the great defender of life and the family of our times. The Church has chosen to celebrate his feast not on the date of his death, which was on April 2nd, 2005, but on the anniversary of his formal installation as universal pontiff on October 22nd 1978

Pope John Paul II sometimes called Saint John Paul or John Paul the Great, born Karol Joseph Wojtyla was the head of the Catholic Church from 16 October 1978 to his death in 2005. He was the second longest serving Pope in history, and as he was a Pole, he was the first non-Italian Pope in 455 years. The last non-Italian Pope was Pope Adrian VI, who died in 1523

He is the first ever Pope to visit the White House, and a Mosque. He travelled more than any other Pope before him, visiting many of the countries of the world. He is also famous for starting the annual World Youth Day. After he was beatified, his title was changed to Blessed John Paul II. John Paul II was canonised by Pope Francis on April 27, 2014, which means that the Polish Pope is now known as Saint John Paul II

<https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saintid=6996>

October 23rd Mission Sunday

Today we celebrate and commemorate all who are Missionaries for Christ in our World. The following reflection reminds us that we are all called to proclaim God in our daily lives

Liberate Divinity

Every day becomes a new miracle.
God can find us everywhere.
Deep in our buried heart
Lies the seed of Divinity.
The luminous shadow of His Presence,
Breathes in our silent prayer.

Each day, God liberates the Divine Image in you,
Revealing your inner beauty.
Plunge boldly into the vastness of things.
A star died and we became.
God's indwelling nearness has found
Our soul – world.

God pulsates with His silent energy
Within the depths of who we are.
Drink deep from His inner wisdom.
Our silence reveals
An awe – filled nothingness wherein He lives.
He is our mysterious certainty.

Silence bridges our path to Him.
Protecting the seed sleeping
In the depths of our being,
He sings His silent music.

Speaking to the secret places within,
He pours out His glorious love.
Revealing the beauty of waiting,
His presence fills us.
His graceful energy flows out
From the altar of our hearts.

October 28th Feast of St Simon & Jude Apostles

Today the church celebrates the feast of Saints Simon and Jude whose names occur together in the Canon of the Mass and are also celebrated on the same day. Possibly this is because they both preached the gospel in Mesopotamia and Persia where it is said they had both been sent, but in actual fact we know nothing for certain about them beyond what is told us of their being called Apostles in the New Testament. St. Jude is the author of a short Epistle, which forms part of the New Testament.

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saints-simon-and-jude>

Other notable events and Updates

Archdiocese of Dublin

See the Archdiocese of Dublin website for information on events which take place throughout the diocese

<http://www.dublindiocese.ie>

The Ember Programme

Congratulations to the newly commissioned Ember Teams in our Schools. Following training in Ovoca Manor they are now actively leading faith initiatives in their Schools. We would like to thank their Teachers and School Management who are supporting them. Our sincere gratitude to Bishop Eamonn Walsh, Mgr Dan O'Connor and Fr Gareth Byrne who travelled to Ovoca Manor to preside at the Commissioning Ceremonies. We look forward to engaging with the Teams during this academic year. Applications to join the Programme for 2023/24 will be notified to schools through the Blog in early 2023.

October 1st The International Day of Older Persons. What is it?



The day was designated on December 14, 1990, by the United Nations General Assembly to increase awareness of older persons, recognize their impact, highlight their issues and extend support that will allow them to grow old with dignity. The first time the world celebrated the International Day of Older Persons was on October 1, 1991. The theme for 2022 is **'Resilience of Older Persons in a Changing World'**. According to the United Nations, older persons who are at least 60 years old are expected to increase in number to 1.4 billion in 2030 and 2 billion in 2050. The current number of older persons is approximately 700 million and the exponential increase of this demographic over the next three decades presents major challenges to almost all sectors of society. The change will affect the financial and labour markets, health care, and housing and social protection, among other sectors.

Initiatives such as the International Day of Older Persons help to promote the dignity of our aging population by addressing their interests and needs and the theme for this year couldn't be more apt. **Resilience in a changing world**, which has been recently highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic

disrupting critical services globally, is exactly what we all need. There are several things we can do to celebrate the International Day of Older Persons and showcase their resilience and impact on society. See link below for further information.

Source: <https://www.seniorfitness.net/the-international-day-of-older-persons-2022>

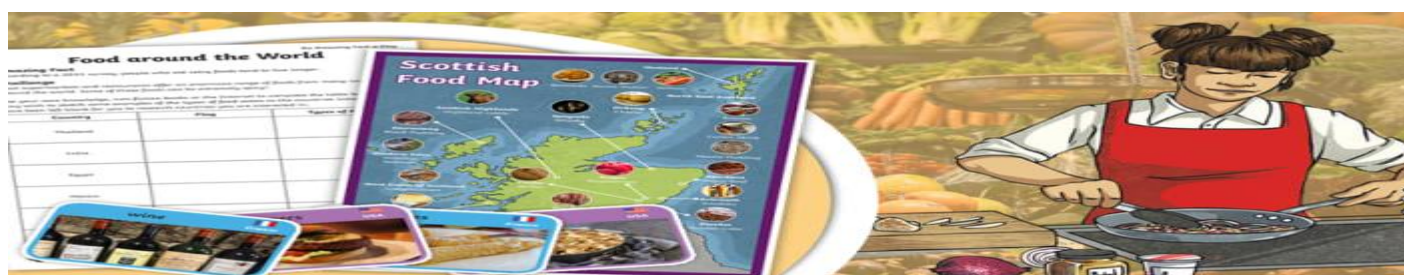
5th October World Teachers Day

To all who share their gifts and talents as Teachers in our Diocese we thank you for your commitment and the support you give to so many young people. Assuring you of our thoughts and prayers on this special day for Teachers



[World Teachers' Day | UNESCO](#)

October 16 2022 World Food Day



World Food Day is celebrated every year around the world on the 16th October; the date that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FOA) was founded in 1945. First commemorated by the FOA in 1979, World Food Day aims to promote healthy diets and eradicate hunger issues by 2030.

World Food Day adopts a new theme every year, with previous themes including *Family Farming* (2014) and *Our Actions are our Future* (2018).

The theme for 2022 is 'Safe food today for a healthy tomorrow' which stresses that production and consumption of safe food have “immediate and long-term benefits for people, the planet, and the economy.”

World Food Day also hosts an annual poster competition, with 2022 brief calling on *“all children and teens around the world! If you’re between ages 5 to 19, we want you to use your imagination and create a poster of your favourite food hero at work. The world is full of food heroes – from farmers to drivers, shop assistants, food bank or government representatives etc., who despite various challenges, such as the current COVID-19 pandemic, work hard to make sure that food makes its way from farms to our table.”*
[World Food Day 2022 - Information and Teaching Resources. \(twinkl.ie\)](https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/world-food-day-2022)

17th October

The International **Day for the Eradication of Poverty** is held annually on 17 October to provide:

- an opportunity to acknowledge the effort and struggle of people living in poverty.
- a chance for them to make their concerns heard; and
- a moment to recognize that poor people are the first ones to fight against poverty.

Through resolution 47/196, adopted on 22 December 1992, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) declared 17 October as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, and invited all Member States to devote the Day to presenting and promoting, as appropriate in the national context, concrete activities regarding the eradication of poverty and destitution.

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/day-for-eradicating-poverty>

24th October 2022 – Diwali – Diwali is Lord Rama defeated Ravana, to welcome him back home to Ayodhya. On this day, every house in India is lit with diya to celebrate lord Rama’s victory and arrival.



31st October All Hallows' Eve

All Hallows' Eve falls on **31st October** each year, and is the day before **All Hallows' Day**, also known as **All Saints' Day** in the Christian calendar. The Church traditionally held a vigil on All Hallows' Eve when worshippers would prepare themselves with prayers and fasting prior to the feast day itself. The name derives from the Old English 'hallowed' meaning holy or sanctified and is now usually contracted to the more familiar word Hallowe'en.

A brief history of the festival

In the early 7th century Pope Boniface IV consecrated the Pantheon in Rome, formerly a temple to all the gods, as a church dedicated to Saint Mary and the Martyrs, and ordered that that date, 13th May, should be celebrated every year. It became All Saints' Day, a day to honour all the saints, and later, at the behest of Pope Urban IV (d. 1264), a day specially to honour those saints who didn't have a festival day of their own.

In the 8th century, on 1st November, Pope Gregory III dedicated a chapel to all the saints in **St. Peter's Basilica** in Rome. Gregory IV then made the festival universal throughout the Church, and 1st November has subsequently become All Saints' Day for the western Church.

Hallowe'en and Samhain: It is widely believed that many Hallowe'en traditions have evolved from an ancient Celtic festival called **Samhain** which was Christianised by the early Church. Samhain is a Gaelic word meaning 'end of the summer'. This festival is believed to have been a celebration of the end of the harvest, and a time of preparation for the coming winter.

It is widely accepted that the early church missionaries chose to hold a festival at this time of year to absorb existing native Pagan practices into Christianity, thereby smoothing the conversion process.

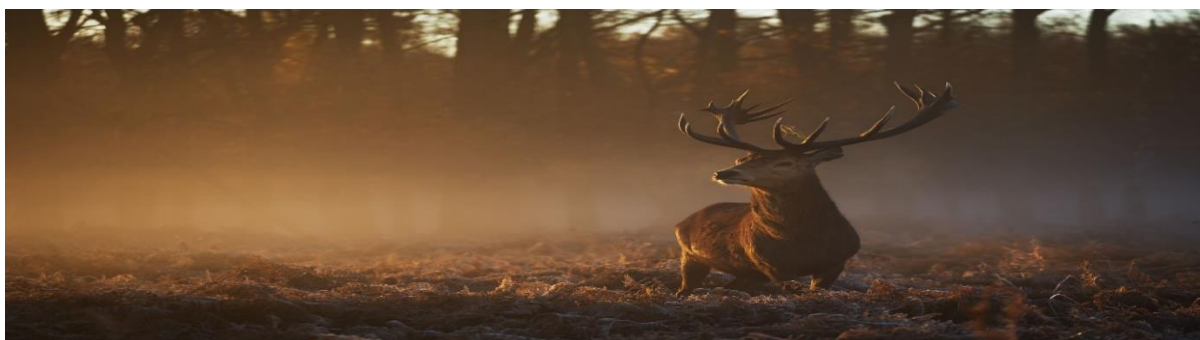
Reminder

For those seeking inspiration on engaging Senior Students in your classes don't forget the Credible Catholic Resources, all seven modules, freely available to download and adapt that were circulated last year.

[Credible Catholic | Catholic Schools Partnership](#)

Edith Stein's, "Essay's on Woman" [Chapters 3-8] Resource Book: Stein, Edith. (1959, 1987).

Woman. 2nd Ed. Revised. Trans. Freda Mary Oben. Washington, DC: ICS Publications. Start Date: Sunday 9th October 2022 Time: 15.00 – 16.30 hrs Venue: Edith Stein Room, St. Teresa's Priory St Teresa's Carmelite Church Clarendon Street Dublin 2 Further information: 087.1384367 or 087.2206092 Continual meetings: 23rd October, 6th November, & 20th November



November is a month of commemoration for the faithful departed. Attached, just in case you are starting your planning for November before Halloween, is a liturgy from the National Centre for Liturgy and another from the Diocese of Derry. There are also resources for the month included in the [CatholicSchools.ie](https://www.catholicschools.ie) website ... these are easily adaptable to ETB schools too!

<https://www.catholicschools.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/November-Moment-CSW-2022-Post-Primary-Liturgy.pdf>

This Liturgy is also translated into Gaeilge and there is an accompanying worksheet and PowerPoint.

[Prayers for Boards of Catholic Schools | Catholic Schools Partnership](#)

Prayer for the Week - *Aware of God's Gifts and our response.*

Almighty God, we thank you
for all your goodness and loving kindness.
You create us, keep us, and bless us in this life.
You showed your love for us above all
by redeeming the world in Jesus Christ.
You bring us to life in your grace
and fill us with the hope of glory.
Make us aware of all your gifts.
that we may truly appreciate them.
We want to praise you not only with our words
but also in our lives, by serving you
and by walking before you in kindness and justice
all the days of our lives
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen