



Archdiocese of Dublin  
Education Secretariat

27<sup>th</sup> September 2023

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 would like to be included your 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:

**For the Synod**

We pray for the Church, that she may adopt listening and dialogue as a lifestyle at every level, and allow herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit towards the peripheries of the world.

Sr. Bernadette and I were privileged to launch the new 2023/24 Ember teams for 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-ghuí,

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## Post Primary Diocesan Advisers R.E. News Blog – October 2023

### October is Mission Month

What good deed can you do in your community to assist the Church worldwide? Many of our founding Religious Orders are / have been involved in mission work. The following Homily was delivered by Mgr Dan O'Connor to a CPSMA gathering this summer. In this month of October it may help you and your students reflect on their journey in faith.



### **Homily – Feast of St. Benedict of Nursia, 480 AD – 547 AD by Mgr Dan O'Connor**

#### ***Our Schools must be a light to young people.***

Today, the Feast of St. Benedict, Patron of Europe, school children and students, is a fitting day for us who are involved in the evangelisation Ministry of Catholic schools.

Benedict and his twin sister Scholastica lived at a time of civil unrest and upheaval in the Church. They became lights of hope for Christ's people, through their monastic foundations that always included the Abbey School.

In the foundations of Benedict and Scholastica, the motto "Pax" is displayed to this day in their Abbey. Pax – the peace of the risen Christ for Benedict – was knowing the fullness of God's merciful love shown in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Benedict taught that Christians because of their baptism were bearers of the Pax – the peace and light of Christ – to the people of their time.

Benedict's rule begins with the word "Listen", listen to what the Holy Spirit is asking of each baptised woman and man, ambassadors of Christ. We are called to bring the Pax – the peace of Christ to our world as baptised people.

Benedict and Scholastica changed the face of the world and the Church. We too are part of that service to the Gospel by our service to our local primary schools. We are called to listen to the Holy Spirit in our world of change, but we are confident in the peace of Christ.

Every Bishop has to submit a report each five years of the condition of his Diocese to Rome. It is called the **Ad Limina Apostolorum** – to the doorstep of the Apostles report. A Bishop in the west of Ireland in 1745 wrote to Rome in his Ad Limina ....

“There are no churches in this Diocese. People attend Mass at Mass rocks or in isolated valleys or the hovels of the poor. There are no Catholic schools, no houses of regular clergy or religious orders of women.

The few Diocesan priests I have, are ignorant and given to drink.

The laity are ignorant of the faith, do not practice the faith except at the high festivals, are given to superstitious practices at holy wells. I doubt if the faith will survive in the Diocese.”

He signed it and dated the report ... 1745.

Poor man he was not listening. In the century that followed, seven lay women, one lay man, one priest, two Bishops and two Archbishops, through Education foundations, led Ireland into a deeper understanding of Christ the Risen Lord and His message of peace – Pax – for the people of Ireland. They were women and men of hope, like Benedict and Scholastica. They were the 13 Apostles of Irish Catholic education.

**Nano Nagle** (1718-1784), a wealthy County Cork lay woman, was so convinced of the call of Jesus the Teacher, that she opened seven free schools in Cork city for girls, and night schools for their mothers. She wanted women to be women of faith and educated to support their children. On Christmas Eve in 1775, she formed the Congregation of the Presentation Sisters. Nano encouraged a Dublin lay woman, Mary Teresa Mulally (1728-1803), a wealthy successful business woman, to found Georges Hill free school in St. Michan’s Parish. Mary Teresa never became a religious but used her wealth and her business knowledge to establish schools for women all over Dublin.

Nano’s example lead **Edmund Rice** (1772-1844), a Kilkenny born, Waterford based, merchant, to found the Presentation Brothers in 1808, to take over the schools he founded in Waterford in 1802 for poor boys.

Edmund was a widower with a young daughter Mary, who had special needs. Yet by his listening, he turned, like Nano Nagle and Mary Terese Mulally, his life and wealth to leading young people through education to know the fullness of Christ’s Pax – his peace. Again in 1822, supported by Archbishop Daniel Murray, he established the Christian Brothers as a Papal Congregation. Edmund’s lifelong motto was “God will provide”.

In Tullow, Co. Kildare, **Fr. Daniel Delany** (1747-1814) founded the first Catholic Sunday School for young people. In 1807, Daniel Delany as Bishop of Kildare & Leighlin, re-founded the Sisters of St. Brigid – the **Brigidines** – and in 1808 **the Patrician Brothers**. The Brigidines and the Patrician Brothers both followed the emigrant Irish to the British colonies.

In 1809 Daniel Murray (1768-1852) became Coadjutor Archbishop of Dublin. In 1811, Mary Aikenhead, a young Cork woman who was a convert to the Catholic faith, with the help of Archbishop Daniel Murray, founded the Religious **Sisters of Charity** known as the “Walking

Nuns”, they brought the Gospel to the homes of the poor, to the schools and to the prisons. Mary Aikenhead founded St. Vincent’s Hospital in Dublin.

At the same time a Dublin Northsider, **Catherine McAuley** (1778-1841) using her vast wealth, established a House of Mercy in Baggot St. – a school, a refuge, and a training school for women. Her brother called it Kitty’s Folly. In 1823, Daniel Murray succeeded Archbishop Troy OP as Archbishop of Dublin. On 12<sup>th</sup> December 1831, Catherine established, with the help of Archbishop Murray, the **Sisters of Mercy** in Baggot St.

Catherine was very reluctant to give up her status as a Catholic lay woman to become a religious but Archbishop Murray persuaded her that it was the only way the House of Mercy’s work would survive in Dublin and in other part of Ireland.

Also in 1831, much to the anger of other Bishops, Archbishop Murray became a member of the new National Education Board. He negotiated that in every primary school, each child for 30 minutes each school day, would receive religious education and faith formation in their own faith during the school day. Archbishop Murray argued that the Dublin parishes especially in the rural areas could not afford to support a religious congregation to found and run a school. Going with the National Board was the only way Daniel Murray could ensure education for all his people. That system continued until 1841 when the denominational system was introduced at the instance of the Presbyterian Synod.

The Coadjutor Archbishop of Dublin, Daniel Murray, had encouraged a young Dublin woman Frances Ball (1794-1861) to go to the Bar Convent in York where the **Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary** had been established by the followers of Mary Ward, the founder of the Institute.

Mary was a woman of vision who believed that education was the key to women’s freedom. She was misunderstood both by Church and civil authorities and ended up in jail and for a while, was excommunicated but was restored.

Her spirit inspired Frances – now Frances Teresa Ball, to come back to the city in the middle of the Penal Laws and open in 1822 **Loreto Abbey** Rathfarnham and the first Loreto free school in 1823.

The IBVM’s Loreto were sent by Frances Bell to Mauritius, India, USA, Canada and Australia to follow the Irish emigrants.

Daniel Murray became Archbishop of Dublin 1823 until his death in 1852 supported the work of Edmund Rice, Mary Aikenhead, Frances Teresa Ball. Daniel Murray’s episcopal motto was **“Caritas Christi urget nos” – “The love of Christ motivates us”**.

Archbishop Murray loved the Pro-Cathedral Parish. A young wealthy Waterford lay woman **Margaret Aylward** (1810-1889) brought the Ladies of Charity to help the poor women in the Pro-Cathedral Parish.

Along with Fr. John Gowan CM (1817-1897), a former Diocesan priest who joined the **Vincentians**, Margaret established the St. Brigid’s Orphanage and schools in the Northside of Dublin. Margaret was arrested and held in the women’s prison for defying regulations. She later with her group, formed the **Holy Faith Sisters**.

The West of Ireland was ravaged by the famine, then by emigration and by poverty. Archbishop John McHale (1789-1881), “The Lion of the West”, was the first Bishop to be

educated completely in Ireland. He was ordained in 1814 by Archbishop Daniel Murray and was involved with Daniel O’Connell in Catholic Emancipation which was achieved in 1829. Archbishop McHale supported the **Franciscan Brothers** of Mountbellow in their work with the education of boys and especially young farmers in the West. These Franciscans are now in Uganda, Kenya and America.

Bridget Clancy (Sr. Visitation) and Bishop Thomas Furlong, Bishop of Ferns in 1871, founded the **St. John of God Sisters** in Wexford for the nursing care and education of the poor and now serve in Australia, Africa and Pakistan.

**These 13 people are our education ancestors** emerging at the time of great uncertainty in Church and State, each of them were convinced of the importance of a Catholic school that would shape the lives of young people in following ***Christ the Teacher***. They listened to the Holy Spirit. We are called to listen to this Spirit. They were men and women of bravery who wanted to lead people into the fullness of Christ’s peace, the Pax of St. Benedict and Scholastica. We are called now by our ministry, to share that Pax, the fullness of God’s peace and love with our school communities.

In a special way, we are fulfilling our own baptismal obligations.

We were anointed at our baptism with the oil of Catechumens to strength us in our following of Christ. After our baptism we were anointed with the oil of Chrism – “as Christ was anointed priest, prophet, and King, so may you live as a member of his body”. Each woman and man by baptism share in the mission of Christ.

We were given a baptismal candle – “Bring that light burning brightly into the presence of Christ”.

We were wrapped in the baptismal shawl, the outward sign of our Christian dignity.

The priest, our parents, our godparents, touched our lips and our ears.

“The Lord opened the ears of the deaf and the lips of the dumb” – may the Lord open your ears to hear his words and your lips to proclaim his praise.

That is what **we are being missioned** to do - **to be a light to our young people, to share in Christ’s mission to help open ears to God’s word and lips to God’s praise.**

We are called to be ambassadors as Pope Francis reminds us - our baptism obliges us to be ambassadors for Christ.

We do that as ministers of God’s word in our schools.

May we know the help of ***Christ the Teacher*** as we listen to the Holy Spirit.



### **October 1<sup>st</sup> Feast of St Therese of Lisieux**

Thérèse of Lisieux, a Carmelite nun called the “Little Flower,” who lived a cloistered life of obscurity in the convent of Lisieux, France. And her preference for hidden sacrifice did indeed convert souls. Few saints of God are more popular than this young nun. Her autobiography, *The Story of a Soul*, is read and loved throughout the world. Thérèse Martin entered the convent at the age of 15 and died in 1897 at the age of 24. Life in a Carmelite convent is indeed uneventful and consists mainly of prayer and hard domestic work. But Thérèse possessed that holy insight that redeems the time, however dull that time may be. She saw in quiet suffering a redemptive suffering, suffering that was indeed her apostolate. Thérèse said she came to the Carmel convent “to save souls and pray for priests.” And shortly before she died, she wrote: “I want to spend my heaven doing good on earth.” Thérèse was canonized in 1925. On October 19, 1997, Pope John Paul II proclaimed her a Doctor of the Church, the third woman to be so recognized considering her holiness and the influence of her teaching on spirituality in the Church. Her parents, [Louis and Zélie](#), were beatified in 2008 and canonized in 2015.

Thérèse has much to teach our age of the image, the appearance, the “self.” We have become a dangerously self-conscious people, painfully aware of the need to be fulfilled, yet knowing we are not. Thérèse, like so many saints, sought to serve others, to do something outside herself, to forget herself in quiet acts of love. She is one of the great examples of the gospel paradox that we gain our life by losing it, and that the seed that falls to the ground must die to live. Preoccupation with self-separates modern men and women from God, from their fellow human beings, and ultimately from themselves. We must re-learn to forget ourselves, to contemplate a God who draws us out of ourselves, and to serve others as the ultimate expression of selfhood. These are the insights of Saint Thérèse, and they are more valid today than ever.

### **October 2<sup>nd</sup> 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/feasant-of-the-guardian-angels/>

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

### **October 4<sup>th</sup> Feast of St Francis of Assisi**

“First do what is necessary. Then do what is possible. And before you know it you are doing the impossible”. Most people know Francis as a middle-aged ascetic who loved animals. The complete story is even more interesting. Saint Francis was born in 1181 in Assisi in Italy. In his youth, he spent money lavishly on fine clothes and having fun. He became ill twice and then realised he was wasting precious time and that he should be serving Jesus instead.

Often he gave his clothes and money to the poor and served the sick in hospital. He felt he should do more and went around in rags while fasting. His father was disgusted with his behaviour and took his inheritance from him. Saint Francis had to depend on the kindness of people for food and shelter. He begged sinners to convert and return to God. He had the great power of working miracles. He loved all creatures, and the animals obeyed his commands. Saint Francis died on October 3<sup>rd</sup> 1226.

For further information, a full-length movie and PowerPoint presentations see the following links

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

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

### **October 5<sup>th</sup> Feast Day of St Faustina**

Sister Faustina was a young, uneducated nun in a convent of the congregation of sisters of Our Lady of mercy in Poland during the 1930s. She came from a poor family that struggled during the years of World War One. She had only three years of simple education so hers were the humblest tasks in the convent, usually in the kitchen and gardens. However, she received extraordinary revelations- or messages -from our Lord Jesus. Jesus asked her to record these experiences which she compiled into notebooks. These notebooks are known

today as the Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalski, and the words contained within our God’s loving message of Divine Mercy.

Though the Divine Mercy message is not new to the teachings of the Church, Sr Faustina’s Diary sparked a great movement and a strong and significant focus on the mercy of Christ. St John Paul II canonised Sr Faustina in 2000 making her the first Saint of the new millennium endless mercy. He called her the “great apostle of Divine Mercy in our time”. Today, we continue to rely on St Faustina as a constant reminder of the message to trust in Jesus’ endless mercy and to live life mercifully towards others. We also turn to her in prayer and request her intercession to our merciful Saviour on our behalf.

<https://www.thedivinemercy.org/message/stfaustina/>

### October 7<sup>th</sup> Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary

How often do you pray the Rosary? Have you ever asked the language teachers to teach the students the Hail Mary in French, German, Italian, Spanish and to pray the prayer at the start of their class. This could lead to a decade of the Rosary being recited over the school intercom later in the year. 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.

**How to Pray the Rosary**

18. Hail Mary (x10)

19. Glory Be  
20. Fatima Prayer  
21. Announce the 4th Mystery  
22. Our Father

23. Hail Mary (x10)

24. Glory Be  
25. Fatima Prayer  
26. Announce the 5th Mystery  
27. Our Father

28. Hail Mary (x10)

29. Glory Be  
30. Fatima Prayer  
31. Hail Holy Queen  
32. Sign of the Cross

14. Glory Be  
15. Fatima Prayer  
16. Announce the 3rd Mystery  
17. Our Father

13. Hail Mary (x10)

9. Glory Be  
10. Fatima Prayer  
11. Announce the 2nd Mystery  
12. Our Father

8. Hail Mary (x10)

5. Glory Be  
6. Announce the 1st Mystery  
7. Our Father

4. Hail Mary (x3) for the grace of Faith, Hope and Charity

3. Sign of the Cross

1. Sign of the Cross  
2. Apostles' Creed

**The Mysteries of the Rosary**

**The Joyful Mysteries (Monday and Saturday)**

1. The Annunciation.
2. The Visitation.
3. The Nativity.
4. The Presentation in the Temple.
5. The Finding of Jesus in the Temple.

**The Sorrowful Mysteries (Tuesday and Friday)**

1. The Prayer and Agony in the Garden.
2. The Scouring at the Pillar.
3. The Crowning with Thorns.
4. The Carrying of the Cross.
5. The Crucifixion and Death of our Lord.

**The Glorious Mysteries (Wednesday and Sunday)**

1. The Resurrection.
2. The Ascension of Christ into Heaven.
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit.
4. The Assumption of Mary.
5. The Coronation of Mary.

**The Luminous Mysteries (Thursday)**

1. The Baptism of Jesus.
2. The Wedding at Cana.
3. The Transfiguration.
4. The Institution of the Eucharist.

**DIGITAL DOWNLOAD**

printable prayer cards

### October 18<sup>th</sup> Feast of St Luke





On October 18, we celebrate the feast of St. Luke, the physician and companion of St. Paul whose gospel preserved the most extensive biography of Jesus Christ.

St. Luke wrote a greater volume of the New Testament than any other single author, including the earliest history of the Church. Ancient traditions also acknowledge Luke as the founder of Christian iconography, making him a patron of artists as well as doctors and other medical caregivers.

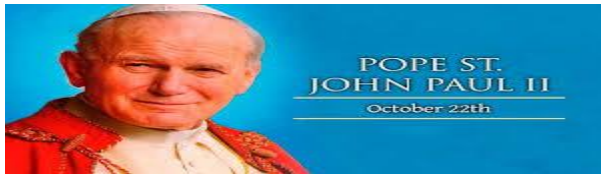
Luke came from the large metropolitan city of Antioch, a part of modern-day Turkey. In Luke's lifetime, his native city emerged as an important centre of early Christianity. During the future saint's early years, the city's port had already become a cultural centre, renowned for arts and sciences. Historians do not know whether Luke came to Christianity from Judaism or paganism, although there are strong suggestions that Luke was a gentile convert.

Educated as a physician in the Greek-speaking city, Luke was among the most cultured and cosmopolitan members of the early Church. Other students of biblical history adduce from Luke's writings that he was the only evangelist to incorporate the personal testimony of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose role in Christ's life emerges most clearly in his gospel. Tradition credits him with painting several icons of Christ's mother, and one of the sacred portraits ascribed to him – known by the title "Salvation of the Roman People" – survives to this day in the Basilica of St. Mary Major.

Some traditions hold that Luke became a direct disciple of Jesus before his ascension, while others hold that he became a believer only afterward. After St. Paul's conversion, Luke accompanied him as his personal physician—and, in effect, as a kind of biographer, since the journeys of Paul on which Luke accompanied him occupy a large portion of the Acts of the Apostles. Luke wrote this text, the final narrative portion of the New Testament, in the city of Rome where the account ends.

Luke was also among the only companions of Paul who did not abandon him during his final imprisonment and death in Rome. After the martyrdom of St. Paul in the year 67, St. Luke is said to have preached elsewhere throughout the Mediterranean, and possibly died as a martyr. However, even tradition is unclear on this point. Fittingly, the evangelist whose travels and erudition could have filled volumes, wrote just enough to proclaim the gospel and apostolic preaching to the world.

## October 22nd Feast of St John Paul 11



Pope John Paul II sometimes called Saint John Paul or John Paul the Great, born Karol Joseph Wojtyła 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>



**The following reflection on World Youth Day 2023 Lisbon and the photographs may give your students a flavour of the impact attending any pilgrimage can have on young people.**

My name is Emma Ta, and I am a graduate of St Mary's Holy Faith Glasnevin, and I had the opportunity to participate at the World Youth Day celebrations in Lisbon, Portugal from July 28<sup>th</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> August.

My faith journey began when I joined the Ember Team two years ago in 5<sup>th</sup> year. The Ember Team in our school is a faith leadership programme in which students are trained to become faith leaders within the school community. Before I joined the Ember Team, similar to many young people nowadays, I had lost touch with my faith. I felt that as the years went by my beliefs began to fade. I knew that as I began to enter a new phase in my life, I had to find a way to regain my faith again, which lead me to join the Ember Team. During my time as part of the Ember Team I grew a stronger connection with my faith by working with the younger

students in my school as well as the local parish. By creating the connection between faith and young people, it inspired me to jump at the opportunity when I was asked to join the school and the Vincentian family on their journey to world youth day this past august. Earlier this year as a Vincentian family, 9 students from St Mary's HFC Glasnevin was asked to accompany 13 students from St Paul's College Raheny and St Mary's Holy Faith Clontarf as they made their way to Portugal for the World Youth Day events.

This next chapter on my faith journey was enhanced this August by becoming a pilgrim along with millions of other young people across the globe making our way to Lisbon. Our WYD journey began in Felgueiras, Portugal. This is where we met with other young Vincentian members from across the world. I met other young people from places such as America, Spain, Panama, the list goes on. The three days we spent in Felgueiras were unforgettable. It was a once in a lifetime experience in which I've never seen so many different cultures being celebrated and appreciated in one place. An event that sticks out to me is the night of the candlelight procession. Being in that moment and time was unforgettable, being able to look down and witness thousands of people sharing a special moment was unbelievable. It was a unique memory that I'll never forget.

As we continued our WYD journey, we made our way to Lisbon. Although the experience was unique and special, there were moments when it seemed tough. Being in an environment where it's extremely fast paced and unfamiliar made it tough, not to mention the scorching sun beaming down at us. But time and time again our group was resilient, we found comfort in one another and as I reflect on my WYD journey I felt extremely grateful to have shared such a surreal experience with a united group of people.

Some days it felt as if we were in our own bubble sharing a unique experience with millions of young people away from the real world. It felt like one big family as I witnessed all the different colours in the air as people waved their flags through the city of Lisbon. The night of the vigil where we laid under the stars made me realise why I traveled all the way to Lisbon. At that moment in time, I felt the connection between me and my faith, it was almost as if my faith was restored again. It was a surreal moment to wake up in that environment and being able to welcome the Pope to World Youth Day 2023. The pure happiness and joy surrounding us palpable.

Overall, my World Youth Day journey was an incredible experience. I made lifelong friendships as well as memories that I'll cherish forever. Coming back home I learnt to appreciate my faith more and now that I continue my journey to college, I hope to continue to express my faith and hopefully influence young people to do the same.



### **October 28<sup>th</sup> Feast of St Simon and Jude**

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 has been told to 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>

### **Hymn to Autumn**



A sense of completion and accomplishment

Enwraps the land.

Earth invites us to gather, The fruits of her womb.

From soil and vine, From tree and bush,

She pours out her food for us.

Fields of grain send forth Their blessings.

Let us celebrate a festival of gratitude.  
Thanksgiving Earth is our table.  
Life ebbs and flows – An epiphany to the truth  
That all things are passing.  
But even in the passing there is beauty.  
This is a decaying season.  
All this dying is a prophesy of life to come.  
The earth is dying to live.  
We turn our eyes toward home. Earth needs transformation.  
We face the painful reality, That we are called  
To save our planet from extinction.  
We need a new heart, To face the bittersweet truth,  
Of earth's evolving story.  
Autumn speaks of connection and yearning,  
Wisdom and ageing, Transformation and surrender,  
Emerging shadows and mystery.  
Autumn invites us to new ways of living.  
Am I listening to the life, Hidden in the dying?  
Am I listening to the call for transformation?  
Am I listening to the wisdom of the earth?  
Am I listening to the beauty and fragility  
Of the earth and sea and sky.

### Year of Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life

Have you ever asked yourself or your students to consider life dedicated to the service of God and those you meet through religious life or priesthood? This is a year of prayer for vocations, to any diocese, congregation or way of serving God.

[Becoming a Priest | Archdiocese of Dublin \(dublindiocese.ie\)](http://dublindiocese.ie)



## Resources

The following are a selection of documents which may be of interest to those thinking on a life of service:

[\*The Commitment to Celibacy by Fr. Kevin Doran\*](#) (doc | 41KB)

[\*Celibacy – To Love as Christ Loves by Father John Regan\*](#) (doc | 32KB)

[\*Religious Orders and Missionary Congregations Resources\*](#) (doc | 33KB)

**Vocations Ireland** is an office made up from members of the many Religious Sisters, Brothers and Priests from Congregations, Societies, Contemplative and Missionary communities in Ireland. Our Mission is to discern, foster and encourage vocations to Religious and Missionary life. We run programmes and events for young people which have a strong focus on prayer and discernment helping those discerning their path in life to begin to discover the desire of God at work today and to discover even more deeply the love of God in their lives.

Contact Vocations Ireland for further details on discernment programs such as Samuel Groups, Explore A Way and online webinars [vocationsireland@amri.ie](mailto:vocationsireland@amri.ie)



## Prayer to Discover Your Vocation

Almighty God,  
You have made me to know you,  
To love you, and to serve you,  
And thereby to find and fulfil myself.

I know that you are in all things  
And that every path can lead me to you,  
But, of them all, there is one path especially  
By which you want me to come to you.

Since I will do what you want of me,  
I pray you; send your Holy Spirit to me;  
Into my mind to show me what you want of me;  
Into my heart to give me the determination to do it,  
And to do it with all my love, with all my mind,  
And with all my strength, right to the end.  
Amen.

## Prayer for Vocations

God our Father, send workers into your harvest.  
May the Spirit we received in baptism  
Touch the hearts of many  
To offer themselves in priesthood, religious life  
And other forms of service.  
Give the parents and families of our diocese  
The wisdom and courage to support young people  
In searching for and following the call of God in their lives.

Answering God's Call – New Podcast Series – [Listen Here](#)

Year of Vocation Launch 29 April 2023 – [HERE](#)

## The SYNOD

I write on behalf of Archbishop Farrell and the Diocesan Synodal Steering Committee,  
seeking your help.

The **Synod on Synodality – Communion, Participation and Mission, opens in Rome on October 4th**, representing the next stage in the process of listening and discerning what God wants from us His People in the world of today.

The Archbishop and our Committee are keen that this moment of opportunity be used to build on the considerable interest shown last year when almost 13,000 people of the Archdiocese participated in the initial stages of the Synodal process. We have been considering ways to raise consciousness of, and interest in the events in Rome and to help people to have a better understanding of what is occurring.

Therefore, we are asking your support with the following:

- **A letter from the Archbishop** will be provided which may be read at the Masses on September 30th / October 1st. You might like to ask your Parish for a copy of it to discuss with a senior class.
- **A series of texts** will be offered for each of the October weekends. These texts will link Synodal themes with the readings of the Sundays. Those preaching at the liturgies are welcome to read the texts provided in place of a homily or weave them into their homilies. You may also be able to access these at Parish level.
- **A weekly newsletter** will be prepared by our Committee and sent to every parish on Thursday of each week. The parish is asked to have it printed off and distributed at the weekend Masses.
- Thank you for supporting these efforts to raise consciousness and understanding of the Synod and to pray for its success. The Prayer for the Synod is attached. It is our hope that our joint efforts will benefit the people, the parishes, and the Archdiocese.

Fr Kieran McDermott





**Act to Prevent Trafficking Ireland (APT)** is a faith-based group that seeks to raise awareness of the local and global issue of Trafficking in Persons. APT works collaboratively on the prevention of the trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation. The members of APT are representatives of religious congregations and missionary societies and are a committee of AMRI.

Recently, APT launched their excellent post-primary educational resource: **cAPTives- Human Trafficking Awareness-Raising Programme**. The programme, targeted towards Transition Year and 5th Year students, consists of a four-week programme that includes 4 videos, accompanying support resources and mentoring for teachers from APT members. There is also the availability of a 5th module on Cyber Safety, recorded with Alex Cooney, CEO of CyberSafeIreland.

Each of the videos include input from a cross-section of presenters, each with their unique understanding and experience in challenging and responding to modern day slavery and human trafficking. Presenters include:

- Mr. Kevin Hyland OBE: former UK Anti-Slavery Commissioner, member of Santa Marta at the Vatican
- Ms. Ann Marie Cagney: Assistant Garda Commissioner
- Det. Superintendent Derek Maguire: An Garda Síochána National Protective Services Bureau
- Mr. J P O’ Sullivan: MECPATHS Ireland (Mercy Efforts for Child Protection against Trafficking within the Hospitality and Services Sectors)
- Ms. Alex Cooney CEO: CyberSafeIreland
- Mr. Tim Schmalz: sculptor and artist “Let the oppressed Go free”

Some of the key concerns that are addressed in the programme include issues such as:

- What do we mean by ‘Trafficking’ and is this the most appropriate terminology?
- Why do we use the words like ‘Slave/slavery’ to describe Human Trafficking?
- What is the driving force that encourages people/groups to engage in the trafficking of other human beings?
- How profitable is the trafficking of human beings?
- What can I/we do to challenge the demand for the trafficking of human beings and put an end to modern day slavery?

For more information about the APT/AMRI **cAPTives- Human Trafficking Awareness-Raising Programme**, please send an email to: [info@aptireland.org](mailto:info@aptireland.org).

**World Days for specific actions can be accessed at the following site**

[List of International Days and Weeks | United Nations](#)



**1st October is International Day for Older Persons**

Population ageing is a universal phenomenon. Virtually every country in the world is experiencing growth in both the size and the proportion of older persons in the population.

**5<sup>th</sup> October World Teachers Day** celebrates all teachers around the globe.

**10<sup>th</sup> October** is celebrated as **World Mental Health Day**. It is one of the most important days in October because it spreads awareness about mental health conditions and aims to destigmatize people with mental health disorders. This day is also about providing support to those who deal with mental health conditions.

**16<sup>th</sup> October** **World Food Day Poster Contest 2023**

What comes to your mind when you think of a water and food secure world? Join the World Food Day Poster Contest and show your creativity by designing a poster showing your water action for food. The submission deadline is 3 November 2023.

**17<sup>th</sup> October World Eradication of Poverty Day**

Today we express our solidarity with the people who must live with poverty and social exclusion in our world. The theme this year is: “Building Forward Together: Ending Persistent Poverty, Respecting All People and our Planet”.

For information on what you can do see:

<http://www.un.org/en/events/povertyday>

### **The Ember Faith Development 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 Fr Brough PP Arklow, Fr John McNamara PP Balbriggan and Mgr Dan O’Connor Education Secretariat 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 2024/25 will be notified to schools through the Blog in early 2024.**

**Due to the overwhelming request for places on the Faith Programme several schools will be trained in October, and we look forward to our Gathering in January 2024 of all involved.**

**“Fan into flame the gift of God within you”**



### **Emmanuel Concerts 2024**

Preparations for Emmanuel 2024 are under way in many schools across the Diocese. Teachers came together in Our Lady of Victories Church on 13<sup>th</sup> September to receive their induction to the music being performed in the Helix in March 2024. Four nights of beautiful music by Students in our Schools.

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.

Good luck to all involved. Further information available from The Emmanuel Team at

[www.litmus.dublindioocese.ie](http://www.litmus.dublindioocese.ie)



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The Pope John Paul II Awards are open to young people of all abilities between the ages of 16 and 18 years. There are four Awards:

The Papal Cross Award.

The Gold Award.

The Silver Award.

The Bronze.

The Award requires a commitment from the young person and a lead person in the school. For more information contact either :

Sr Bernadette Carron

or

Sr Concepta Foley

[Bernadette.carron@dublindiocese.ie](mailto:Bernadette.carron@dublindiocese.ie)

[concepta.foley@dublindiocese.ie](mailto:concepta.foley@dublindiocese.ie)

<https://thepopejohnpauliiaward.com/the-pope-john-paul-ii-award-explained/>

Archdiocese of Dublin Courses on offer



**Thursday Evening Course for Adults**  
**Venue: DCU St. Patrick's Campus, (MDCCE),**  
**Drumcondra Rd, Dublin, 9.**

***PATHWAYS***

***Exploring Faith as an Adult***

The *Pathways Programme* is geared towards those who wish to explore issues and questions of: faith; ministry; the Church today and the nature of belief, in an environment appropriate to Adult Learning and Adult Faith Development.

#### **About the Course**

The programme is run by the Archdiocese of Dublin, over two years, from late September to late May each year. It takes place on **Thursday evenings from 7.00p.m. -9.30 p.m.** in DCU St. Patrick's Campus, (MDCCE), Drumcondra Road Upper, Dublin, 9. **The next starting date for the programme will be on Thursday 28th. September 2023.** See contact details below. **Early application is advisable as places will be limited.**

**For further information please contact:**

Eileen Houlahan, *CHF*, PhD, Director, *Pathways Programme*,

Diocesan Office for Mission and Ministry. Tel: +353 1 8087594

Email:

[ehoulahan@dublindiocese.ie](mailto:ehoulahan@dublindiocese.ie); [pathways@dublindiocese.ie](mailto:pathways@dublindiocese.ie)

***Liturgy Seminar (Autumn) – October 14:*** Venue - Ard Scoil Rís, Griffith Avenue, Marino D09 AK30

**Registration**

**9.00am**

**Workshops**

**9.30am**

**Tea/Coffee**

**11.00am**

**Workshops**

**11.20pm**

**Closing Prayer 12.50pm**

Welcome to our first Liturgy Seminar since Covid 2020.

Four workshops are offered and since they are repeated you can choose to attend two of them.

**1. 'What we can do together':** Exploring Parish Partnerships from the perspective of Liturgy and Music. **2. 'Refresh and Renew':** An opportunity for priests to reflect on the art of celebrating the Eucharist. **3. 'What has prayer got to do with it?':** Spirituality for liturgical ministers – a journey. **4. 'How technology can add to our parish celebrations?':** Ideas shared and tips offered for making full use of screens and other aids

We invite a contribution of €12 per person payable on the day. Please follow the link attached to reserve your place by 5pm on Wednesday, October 11: <https://forms.office.com/e/8LekGYwgeQ>

For further information please contact [angela.mcgarra@dublindiocese.ie](mailto:angela.mcgarra@dublindiocese.ie) or telephone 01 8087537

### ***Diocesan Youth Leadership Course***

Beginning in September, a new Diocesan Youth Leadership Course will take place. This course will equip young adults to take on leadership roles in their parish setting and for peer-to-peer ministry, as well as training those looking to accompany young adults in their parish. Each month, new skills are learnt and will be put into practice at the retreat day which will be shaped and organised by the course participants. For more information email [natalie.doherty@dublindiocese.ie](mailto:natalie.doherty@dublindiocese.ie). Register here: <https://forms.office.com/e/vnhG5552SW>

### **WEEKLY EZINE**

*Sharing the Good News* is the newsletter of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference. If you would like 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](mailto:info@catholicbishops.ie).





This will be a time of refreshing, renewal and relaxation spending time with like-minded people involved in R.E./Chaplaincy work in schools from around Ireland. A time to receive instead of giving, a time to 'recharge the batteries' before a new school term but above all a time of encouragement. This weekend is a wonderful opportunity to take some time out in the beautiful surroundings of Scripture Unions Ireland Retreat Centre Ovoca Manor located in the Vale of Avoca, Co Wicklow.

Mark 6:31 'Come away to a quiet place by yourselves and rest awhile'.

## **RESOURCES**

Credible Catholic Non-Exam RE Resource for Senior Cycle:

<https://catholiceducation.ie/credible-catholic/>

Credible Catholic video walkthrough of resource (starts at 16 minutes in):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vUphbW-rS4>

Living Love RSE resource for Junior Cycle:

<https://catholiceducation.ie/living-love-rse-resources/>

Light of Faith free online courses:

<https://www.lightoftruth.uk/join>

Franciscan at Home Learning Tracks for RE Teachers:

<https://franciscanathome.com/national-catechetical-office-irish-episcopal-conference->

How to register for free:

1. When you enrol in this course you need to register in the blue section on the right.
2. Choose: My parish or school is already registered.
3. Then fill out the form. Select for diocese the National Catechetical Office.
4. Keep selecting the National Catechetical Office for diocese.

Udemy online course on Early Irish Saints for RE:

Free coupon (expires in 5 days) for 1,000 students:

<https://www.udemy.com/course/st-patricks-ireland-an-introduction-to-celtic-Christianity/?couponCode=2178D45ECCAF8C912824>

Catholic Faith Formation Ireland YouTube Channel:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWK\\_KC0gOqVC3wMIQn0P9VA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWK_KC0gOqVC3wMIQn0P9VA)

Council website with documents:

<https://religiouseducation.ie>

**‘Start of Year’ Pack of resources** shared with us by Frank Brown, Ethos & Faith Development Officer at the Spiritan Education Trust (most in word format so you can download, adopt & edit as needed and appropriate for your school) that may be useful which includes:-

- The **Faith and Mission Calendar 2023**
- Suggestions for **opening year liturgies, masses, etc.**
- A few printable **prayers/prayer cards** for teachers, students, parents, etc
- A suggestion for the **opening prayer for the first staff meeting**
- A resource for making the month of September or any month one of **‘30 Days of Prayer for our Children’** – as a preparation for the feast of Claude Poullart des Places, 2nd Oct, *Spiritan Founder* – This can be download & shared with the full school community and beyond.

These can all be downloaded, printed and shared from this link -

[https://spiritaneducationireland-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/frank\\_brown\\_spiritaneducation\\_ie/Eu43FR7X9EhBqybztEgIVCOBHxK2vpOWQX8ajplkCFOQDA?e=1IPdNf](https://spiritaneducationireland-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/frank_brown_spiritaneducation_ie/Eu43FR7X9EhBqybztEgIVCOBHxK2vpOWQX8ajplkCFOQDA?e=1IPdNf)

**EARTH BLESSING**



Blessed are you, Earth,  
Bright gift of life awakening.  
You gladden our hearts each morning, As you put on your robes of splendour.

Blessed are you, Earth,  
In you is life, delicate and endangered. We journey with you each day. You  
invite us to become your partner.

Blessed are you earth,  
You invite us to praise,  
The free gifts of the Earth.  
Without cost we gaze upon your glory.

You are a gospel of good news. Your renewing rains,  
Remind us of your power.  
Your seasons are miracles of birth.  
With your wand of many colours, You work your magic in our hearts.  
Each year you amaze us,  
With the miracle of returning life.

We see the drama of life unfolding, In gardens, forests and fields.  
Nature calls us home to ourselves. Every tree, every bush, every shrub,  
Every flower, every blade of grass, Is precious and full of promise. They  
reveal earth's secrets.  
They speak of Spring and Resurrection. They speak of Summer Joy.  
They speak of Autumn Dying.  
They speak of Winter Waiting.

Blessed are you Earth,  
Our common home.



As scripture says “ **May we Act Justly,**

**Love Tenderly,**

**Walk Humbly with God”**