

Archdiocese of Dublin

Education Secretariat

Post-Primary Diocesan Advisers' Blog - April 2025

Dear Chaplain and R.E. Teacher,

All the members of our team in the Education Secretariat join me in wishing you a happy and a blessed Easter season. Easter is a time of hope and renewal, a time of new life.

In this Jubilee year, Pope Francis calls us all to be "Pilgrims of Hope." Our Jubilee Year began with opening of the Holy Door in St. Peter's Basilica on December 24th 2024. The Holy Door is deemed holy since it calls all those who walk through it to walk in holiness of life. In choosing to pass through this door, pilgrims open themselves to receive forgiveness, mercy and grace, to be bearers of hope in a world increasingly marked by despair and pain. "Tonight" said Pope Francis, "the door of hope has opened wide to the world and God speaks to each one of us and says there is hope also for you."

I sincerely hope that in the solemn days of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday, we too may make that journey together with Jesus through the door of death itself and emerge with Him to find the stone rolled away and life renewed and restored. In the words of Pope Francis as he opened the Holy Door and invited Christians and indeed peoples of all faiths and none to enter its portals, "With haste let us set our hearts to find the Lord." Like Mary Magdalene on that first Easter Day, let us not be afraid of the darkness that surrounds us and then like her, without delay, carry that hope so as to dispel the darkness and really be pilgrims of hope.

This Jubilee year, which is only celebrated every twenty-five years, offers us spiritual renewal and invites us to commit and be involved in the task of transforming the world in whatever way we can. May you and every member of your school community experience the joy of this renewal.

With every good wish,

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What is a Jubilee Year?

A brief history and meaning behind a tradition

When **Pope Francis** opened the Holy Door in St. Peter's Basilica on the night of December 24, 2024, he inaugurated the Jubilee Year of 2025.

The Jubilee Year is centred on the theme of hope, *"to invite everyone to an intense experience of the love of God that awakens in hearts the sure hope of salvation in Christ."*
Pope Francis

The Christian Jubilee is also called a *holy year*, its purpose is to encourage holiness of life, strengthen faith, and encourage acts of charity and fraternal love.

This is the 27th ordinary Jubilee in the history of the Catholic Church since Boniface VIII celebrated the first one in the year 1300.

In order to help us understand the significance of the Jubilee, we recall its biblical origins and briefly revisit the historical events that have shaped the Jubilee we are now celebrating.

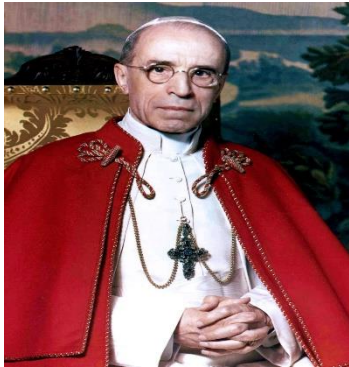
The Christian Jubilee has its origins in the Jewish religious tradition. It is first recounted in the Book of Leviticus (25:10-14), that every 50th year be observed as a Jubilee, a year of rest for the land, liberation of the slaves and a general enfranchisement of the people aimed at restoring equality and reducing the distance between rich and poor.

The Book of Deuteronomy (15:1-11) adds to this the cancellation of debts. This Jubilee institution was also taken up by the prophet Isaiah (Is 61:1-2), and Jesus made the words of the prophet his own at the beginning of his ministry when he presented himself as the fulfilment of "the year of the Lord's favour" (Lk 4:18-19).

Pope Francis has recalled that *"the proclamation of the first Jubilee, in the year 1300, was preceded by a journey of grace inspired by popular spirituality."*

News began circulating in Rome at the end of 1299 claiming that a total plenary indulgence would be available to all those who visited the **Basilica of St. Peter's** from sunrise to sunset on January 1, 1300, while lesser indulgences could be obtained in the following days. Crowds came to St. Peter's and were soon joined by a huge number of foreign pilgrims France, Germany, Spain and England.

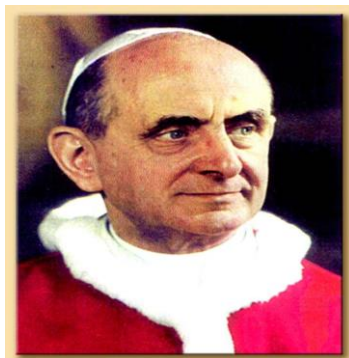




After World War II (1939 – 1945), **Pope Pius XII** held a jubilee Year in 1950 as “the year of the great return, the year of the great pardon.”

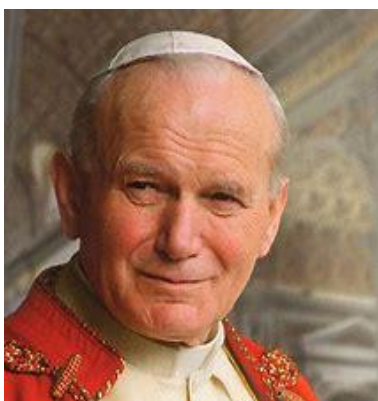
During it he proclaimed the dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven.

He canonized Maria Goretti, a virgin martyr at the age of 11, at a ceremony attended by 200,000 people. Visitors were given a “pilgrim card” which, for that occasion, was recognized as having the same validity as a passport within Italy. Ever since, pilgrim cards have been available for the Jubilee Years.



Pope Paul VI held the Jubilee Year in 1975, 10 years after the ending of the Second Vatican Council, with the themes of conversion, renewal, reconciliation and social justice.

It was the first Jubilee with events broadcast worldwide.



Pope John Paul II celebrated two Jubilee Years.

The first to celebrate the 1,950th anniversary of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

The second, the ordinary Jubilee observed every 25 years.

He beatified two of the children of Fatima and held a World Youth Day attended by more than two million young people.



Pope Francis' first Jubilee Year was the extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy in 2016.

For the first time in the history of Jubilees, he opened a Holy Door other than in Rome in the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Bangui, Central African Republic, November 29, 2015. He opened the Holy Door in St. Peter's on December 8, 2024 and decreed that a "Door of Mercy" be opened in cathedrals, sanctuaries, hospitals and prisons throughout the world.

The second is the current Jubilee of Hope, which Francis inaugurated by opening the Holy Door in St. Peter's on the evening of December 24. He made history on December 26 by opening another Holy Door in the Chapel of Rebbibia, Rome's largest prison, as a sign of hope for the inmates there. He is the first pope to open a Holy Door in a prison. He called on pilgrims during this Jubilee Year *"to discover hope in the signs of the times that the Lord gives us" and "to recognize the immense goodness present in our world, lest we be tempted to think ourselves overwhelmed by evil and violence."*

Pope Francis listed at least eight ways in which we can be agents of hope in today's world. He said *"the first sign of hope" in this war-torn world should be "the desire for peace."* He reminded everyone that *"those who are peacemakers will be called children of God"* and said, *"the need for peace challenges us all, and demands that concrete steps be taken."*

He called on believers *"to be signs of hope" in countries where there is a decline in birth rates by their "openness to life and responsible parenthood," and by working - so through legislative efforts - "for a future filled with the laughter of babies and children."*

"We are called to be tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardships of any kind."

He called for efforts at the government level *"to restore hope" to prisoners through amnesties, pardons, improving prison conditions and the abolition of the death penalty.*

Before Christmas, he called for the reduction of the federal sentences of prisoners on death row in the United States.

He also urged believers to be *"signs of hope" for the young, the elderly, the sick and those in hospital or affected by illnesses or disabilities, for migrants and for those who often lack the essentials of life.*

The canonization of two young people Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati will take place during the Jubilee Year.

Name _____

Date _____

The Jubilee Year of 2025



Directions: Read about the Catholic Church’s 2025 Jubilee and answer the questions.

Every twenty-five years, the Catholic Church celebrates a sacred Jubilee to encourage special prayers and sacred pilgrimages. From Christmas Eve in 2024 to the Epiphany on January 6, 2026, Pope Francis invites us to be “Pilgrims of Hope.” Catholics are encouraged to embark on a holy journey, known as a pilgrimage, to Rome or other sacred sites closer to home.

The holy doors of the four major basilicas are normally cemented shut, but during Jubilee Years they are opened! Pilgrims will enter these sacred buildings through the holy doors as a symbol of salvation through Jesus Christ, who once called himself “the gate” through which we are saved (John 10:9). But you don’t have to go to Rome to celebrate the Jubilee! Pilgrims can gain a special grace called an indulgence either for themselves or the souls in purgatory by visiting the four major basilicas, but also through visits to other sacred sites designated by local bishops.

Additionally, we can obtain an indulgence by practicing works of mercy, such as giving to the poor or visiting the sick, or by performing acts of penance like fasting from food, devices, or entertaining media. This 2025 Jubilee is a special opportunity to experience God’s love as “pilgrims of hope.”

1. What are some ways you can participate in the Jubilee?

2. Why do you think “hope” is a good message to share in the world today?

3. What are things you can give up as an act of penance during the Jubilee year?

Extracts from the Homily of Archbishop Dermot Farrell
St Patrick's Day 2025 **St Mary's Pro-Cathedral**



The *Jubilee of Hope* we celebrate this year, has asked us to consider our hope anew, this fundamental quality of Christian life. In the busyness of our lives, but also in the frenetic nature of life today, we can lose sight of that which makes a difference. Hope is foundational for every person, whether they consider themselves people of faith or not. When we lose hope - consciously or sub-consciously, our lives lose their coherence, and unravel. We see the consequences all around us, not just in the resignation that can characterise many of the streets which surround this Pro-Cathedral, but also in the deadness implicit in what, those materially much better off, do to numb the pain of the perceived pointlessness of how they earn their daily bread.

You may say that the Church is poor, that it has no people, that we are old and weak. But the living Church - the Church on the way *to life* - has never been afraid of poverty. The Church that is close to Christ knows all about weakness (see 2 Cor. 12:9 - 10).

Let us take heart from Pope Francis's long journey with the poor. For him, *"Christian hope embraces the certainty that our prayer reaches God's presence; not just any prayer but rather the prayer of the poor!"*

(Message for the Eight World Day of the Poor, 2024)

Let us take heart from his witness in weakness during these last weeks.

Without that authentic hope in what God is doing through Christ in the world, there will be no renewal of the Church.

During the week of March 12th, Members of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference gathered in Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth, for their Spring 2025 General Meeting.

The President of the Conference is Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh, and the Vice-President is Archbishop Dermot Farrell of Dublin.

The main issues discussed by bishops during their Spring General Meeting included:

- [World peace to be prayed for at Mass on Saint Patrick's Day](#)
- [#Lent2025 and preparation for Holy Week and Easter](#)
- [Irish Bishops' Drugs Initiative reports on the effects of vapes](#)
- [Invitation to young people to become charity volunteers to help the vulnerable](#)
- [Trócaire's Lenten campaign supporting the people of Guatemala](#)
- [Child safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland](#)
- [Local and national pilgrimages during Jubilee Year 2025](#)
- [Discerning a vocation to the Priesthood](#)
- [Update on the Synodal Pathway of the Catholic Church in Ireland](#)
- [Election of officers of the Bishops' Conference](#)
- [Restructuring administrative apparatus of the Bishops' Conference](#)
- [In Memoriam](#)

During their Spring 2025, General Meeting in Maynooth, the Bishops of Ireland urged us to actively participate in both local and national pilgrimages as part of this Jubilee Year of Hope. Bishops said, "This Jubilee Year 2025 not only represents a time of grace and spiritual renewal for the entire Church, but also offers the opportunity to the faithful to experience reconciliation, mercy, and renewed communion with God and with our brothers and sisters. "For the Jubilee Year, individual dioceses have designated local pilgrimage venues for special Jubilee celebrations, incorporating the plenary indulgence granted by the Holy Father.

We have also designated three national pilgrimage sites for the Jubilee Year:

Our Lady's Shrine, Knock, Co Mayo
Croagh Patrick, Co Mayo, and
Saint Patrick's Purgatory, Lough Derg, Co Donegal.

For more information about the pilgrim's passport visit [Pilgrimpassport.ie](https://pilgrimpassport.ie)
Visit CatholicBishops.ie to read the Bishops' Spring General Meeting full statement.

DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL – UPDATE



The final discernment for the nine members of the Diocesan Pastoral Council from across the Diocese has taken place. From the names that were put forward by the Deaneries in December, through the First, Second and Third levels of Discernment, these were brought to 45 candidates. In the Fourth Level of Discernment, this was brought down to 23 candidates who are being considered, nominated by the Deanery members. Out of these candidates, nine will be chosen through a Final Discernment.

The candidates have participated in an Information Day to give them a better idea of the role of the Diocesan Pastoral Council and the commitment that is being asked of them. They will also meet members of the Final Discernment Group. At all the levels of discernment there have been laity and clergy working together, as will be the case in the Final Level. The discernment process which has taken place at all stages from the beginning of this journey, follows the synodal way of prayer, silence, discussion, prayer and decision. The final discernment will follow the same method.

Once the final discernment has taken place the candidates will be appointed to the Diocesan Pastoral Council. When the candidates have accepted the invitation to be a member of DDPC, the names of the members and date of the Commissioning in St Mary's Pro-Cathedral will be shared with us.

Alongside the discernment process for the lay members of the Diocesan Council, the Permanent Deacons and Female Religious have been engaged in a process to choose their candidates.

The criteria for membership is that each person should be prayerful, participative, pastoral and practical in planning and also partnership driven. The second set of criteria for membership is the Diocesan Pastoral Council would provide a mix of gender, ethnicity, age, service/ministry and urban/rural/socio economic areas of the Diocese. As these criteria are applied, the candidates emerge. For candidates that are not selected for membership of the Diocesan Pastoral Council this time, it is no reflection on their gifts and abilities but is staying true to the process of working with the membership criteria.



Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network



<https://www.popesprayer.va/>

<https://popesprayerusa.net/>

Small Group reflection

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

April 2025: For the use of the new technologies.

Let us pray that the use of the new technologies will not replace human relationships, will respect the dignity of the person, and will help us face the crises of our times.

Pope Francis has been sceptical on the rapid growth of technology, by famously saying
“technology cannot replace human contact.”

“Face to face contact is essential for human life. It promotes trust and security, and this allows for a more meaningful conversation. We should always remember, never let screens control you, instead, control the screens!

We can make the most use of technology today, to teach and share different information, having more content tailored to the younger generation. This not only makes the younger generation more engaged, but it also reaches to a vast audience in a matter of seconds. We should also, however, teach the importance of human creativity and that humans are a creation of God, and no technology, big or small, can replace what was created by Him. Learning how to balance life and technology will help anyone survive in our world today.”

Rohith Kinattukara, a student in Griffith College

In an article by Margaret Hickey, Mount Melleray, Remembered...

Alive! Free Catholic Monthly Newspaper, February 2025

“The closing of Mount Melleray was not an accident that nobody could foresee. Perhaps we might say it was lost, not because of fire but because a fire had been going out slowly, decade by decade for more than half a century. The fire of faith once extinguished isn't as easy to restore as a burnt building. We need to make a reckoning as our faith heritage continues to weaken in the face of an advancing secular and in many respects hostile tide.”

Technology can be of great benefit to our lives by enabling us to better ourselves, helping those in need and even allowing us to spread the word of God. We need to find new public spaces to express the message of faith in actions and words. We need to reach out, engage and evangelise our students using ‘new media.’ As a Church, we are challenged to provide new opportunities that will help young people to witness to faith even online.

A Lenten Reflection

"Lent stimulates us to let the Word of God penetrate our life and, in this way, to know the fundamental truth: Who we are, where we come from, where we must go, and what path we must take in life." Pope Benedict XVI

You are loved by God.
Each and every one of you:
Cherished, adored, liked – just as you are.
God loves you, Jesus loves you, and the Spirit loves you:

Three-in-One. No exceptions.
Follow Christ's footsteps,
Walk into the wilderness – and dance in the desert.
Beloved of God, come on a journey.

Reflection: Fr. Pat O'Donoghue

"I think most people are on to something very sound when they approach Lent as a time to get some of the clutter out of their lives, to silence some of the jangle in their hearts and to awaken that seasonal hunger that can remind us who we really are and what it is we truly want." Fr. Joseph A. O'Hare, S.J.

What Needs Changing in My Life?

We start to come to know that by asking. *"Lord, help me to know what needs changing."* It is often said, *"Be careful about what you ask for."* This is one of those requests that God must surely want to answer. Then, we have to listen. With a little bit of reflection, most of us will just begin to "name" things that make up our ordinary habits and ways of being who we are, that we are not very proud of.

Things we do and things we never get around to doing. We can "feel" the call to change our attitudes, our self-absorption, or our way of interacting and relating with others. Perhaps a loved one, a friend, a family member, a colleague has told me something about myself that gets in the way of communication, that makes relating to them difficult.

Maybe I don't take God very seriously. I go to Church at the week-end and contribute my share, but I don't really take time to deal with my relationship with God. Perhaps I have let my mind and fantasy get cluttered.

I might begin to name a number of self-indulgent habits. I may realise that I rarely, if ever, hear the cry of people in poverty and cannot remember when I have answered that cry.

One of the roadblocks in my relationship with God and others may be deep wounds or resentments from the past, things I continue to hold against others or myself.

We have broken promises and broken friendships. We know where we have come from – from lives of comfort or confusion or indeed distress.

We all have a different story to tell and in need of God's forgiveness.

Lent is a time of repentance and of turning our hearts and minds back to God. It is a time to reflect truthfully about ourselves and make changes in our lives. Every Lent we too are on a journey with Jesus.

Lent is ...

A time to struggle with our selfishness.

A time to struggle with our lack-lustre performance on many fronts,

A time to improve.

A time to struggle with insensitivity in our dealings with family, with teachers, with friends.

A time to struggle with attitudes that are negative.

A time to struggle against our compulsions – to eat too much, to smoke, to waste time, to talk too much, to talk too little.

A time to struggle with the things that knock us off the path of friendship with God.

A time to struggle to be more of what we might be.

A time to struggle to lift our life-act onto a new level.

A time for new timetables and good resolutions.

Jesus struggled. An inner struggle, inner turmoil, inner distress.

The kind of struggle that drives people mad. Or the kind of struggle that makes saints.

As we approach the end of Lent,
may we reflect truthfully about ourselves,
and be grateful for all we are and have been given.

Questions for Reflection.

God is constantly speaking to me in all the events of my life. My task is to pay attention to Him.

- What gladdens my heart?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- Is there an experience which moved me to compassion?
- What invitation is God making to me in my life?
- Can I think of a time when I experienced forgiveness in my life?
- What do I need to ask God to help me overcome and ask for forgiveness?

"AS LENT IS THE TIME FOR GREATER LOVE,
LISTEN TO JESUS' THIRST...
'REPENT AND BELIEVE' JESUS TELLS US.
WHAT ARE WE TO REPENT?
OUR INDIFFERENCE, OUR HARDNESS OF HEART.
WHAT ARE WE TO BELIEVE?
JESUS THIRSTS EVEN NOW,
IN YOUR HEART AND IN THE POOR --
HE KNOWS YOUR WEAKNESS.
HE WANTS ONLY YOUR LOVE,
WANTS ONLY THE CHANCE TO LOVE YOU."

~ BLESSED TERESA OF CALCUTTA





HOLY WEEK is a wonderful opportunity for spiritual and personal growth.

It covers themes from Eucharist to death to new life, and the Resurrection.

Each year we are invited to celebrate, remember and reflect on these events and what their relevance and meaning are to our lives and how we live.

Palm Sunday is the commemoration of our Lord's triumphant entry into Jerusalem five days before His crucifixion. Scripture references are in Matthew 21:1-11, Mark 11:1- 11, Luke 19:29- 44, and John 12:12-19. This day takes its name from the fact that as Jesus approached Jerusalem on a donkey, the huge crowd that followed carried palm branches as they praised Him. The people hailed Him as the long awaited "Son of David," that is, the Messiah.

Palm Sunday has a dual focus, with the blessing and distribution of palms to remember our Lord's jubilant entry into Jerusalem and a reading of the Lord's Passion, setting out for us the events of the coming week.

Holy Thursday remembers the events in the upper room the night before Jesus died. These upper room events are described in Matthew 26:20-30, Mark 14:17-26, Luke 22:14-35, and John 13-17. In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the focus is on the institution of the Lord's Supper and the eating of the Passover meal. John focuses on the words of Jesus and His washing of the disciples' feet.

At the end of Mass, the altar is stripped, in preparation for Good Friday. This symbolizes Christ's being stripped by the Roman soldiers prior to His crucifixion. Sometimes referred to as Maundy Thursday from the Latin root *mandatum*, means "commandment" or "mandate." On that Thursday Jesus gave His disciples a new commandment, which is why we use the term Maundy today. The word in this context is used by Jesus after He washes the feet of His friends.



"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another."

Good Friday was the last day of Jesus' life on earth before His resurrection. He was betrayed by Judas and denied by Peter. His disciples scattered.

He was arrested and was placed on trial falsely, condemned, beaten, mocked, and required to carry His own cross to the place where He was crucified and died. "The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head." Though he was offered something to dull the physical pain, Jesus refused. He chose to face the pain of death. They stripped Him of His clothes and cast lots for them, fulfilling another prophecy. Two prisoners were crucified alongside Jesus. One mocked Him, but the other said, "'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' Jesus answered him, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.'" (Luke 23:39-43) It is called Good Friday because, by Jesus' death, he became the final, complete sacrifice for our sins.



"The question for us to ask during Holy Week is where we stand during the Passion of Our Lord?"

- Am I acting the part of Pilate, Peter, Judas or am I instead aligned with the women of Jerusalem, Mary or Veronica, Simon of Cyrene or the good thief?

This is not the week that was but the week that is because every day people drag their crosses up a million Calvaries."

Fr. Ronan Drury

Holy Saturday. Jesus' body rested in the tomb on Holy Saturday, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 53:9. Preparations were made for Jesus' body and placement in the tomb until 6pm, when preparations for the Sabbath began. *"The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment."* Luke 23: 55 - 56.

On Easter Sunday, Jesus rose from the dead, fulfilling the prophecy.



Early in the morning, the women who had prepared the spices before the Sabbath returned to Jesus' tomb to find it empty. *"He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay."* - Matthew 28:6

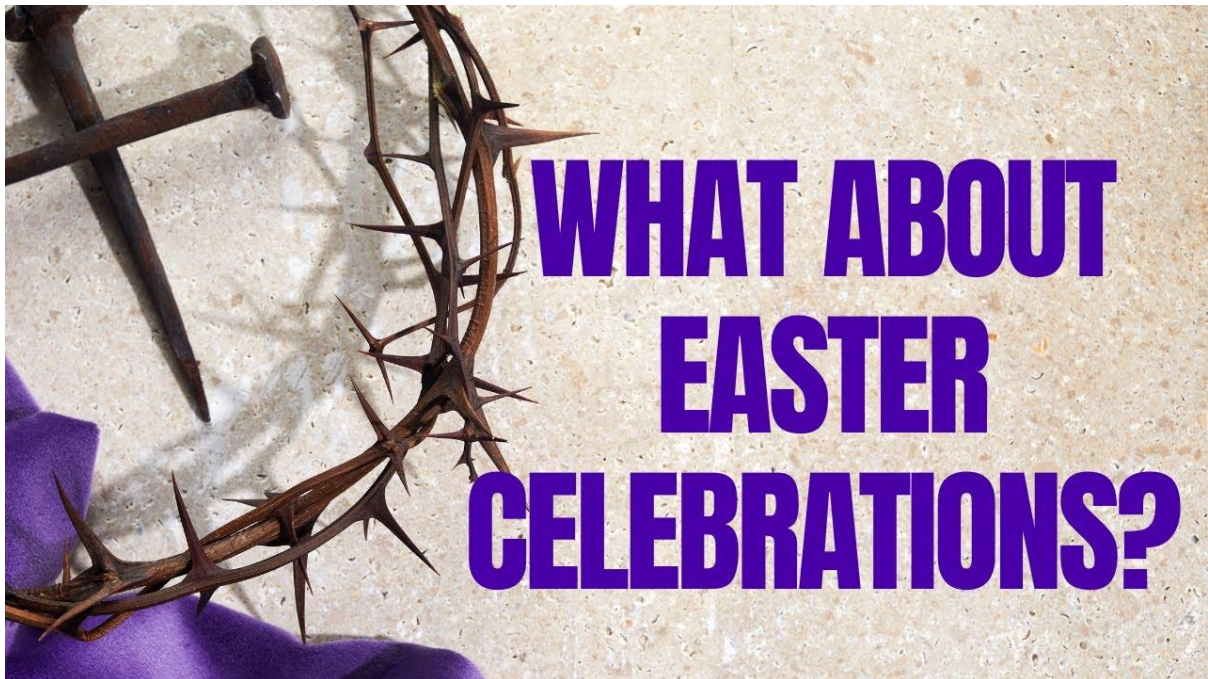
Mary Magdalene arrived first. *"Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb."* - John 20:1

Two men in dazzling clothes told them Jesus was not there. These words are a reminder that Jesus said He would have to die – and die He did. They also tell us that while his death was terrible, we can take heart that He is no longer dead. The tomb is empty!

The women, both afraid and joyful, remained first silent, and then went quickly to find the eleven disciples.

The understanding and outlook of the disciples changed greatly on Easter Sunday. A few days before, the disciples saw Jesus suffer His agony and die on the cross. No doubt their hearts were broken. When Jesus arose from the dead on Easter Sunday it was a victory over sin, death and evil. He proved that He was God. When the disciples saw the empty tomb they understood the teaching of Christ. Our ancestors believed that the sun danced and that nature celebrated on Easter Sunday because Jesus had risen from the dead.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST IS THE GREATEST FEAST IN THE LITURGICAL CALENDAR.
As we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, we should always remember that this Jesus was the same Jesus who spent his life serving others, healing the sick, challenging the powerful, taking seriously those whom society undervalued and pushed to the margins: women, children, people in poverty, those with disabilities and others.



When growing up in the West of Ireland, I had a great experience of the Easter ceremonies which were very much part of the life of the parish community.

It would be wonderful if we could encourage the young people of today to attend Holy Thursday Mass, the ceremony of the Passion and Veneration of the Cross on Good Friday and experience the church in darkness on Holy Saturday night.

In terms of their faith development, could we find a way to lead the young people to engage in what is the most powerful and formative moments of ritual our faith offers us?

Holy Week is the most sacred time of our Church's year. We are Easter people and our story is told and experienced in and through the rituals of Holy Week. The ceremonies of Holy Week are punctuated with deeply meaningful and significant moments; rituals which form us as a followers of Jesus Christ and as a community of faith.

Ritual of its very nature is participative. In nourishing our faith, ritual speaks to all our senses - smell, sight, sound, touch and taste. The Easter Ceremonies are rich with ritual, the washing of the feet on Holy Thursday, the kissing of the Cross on Good Friday, the lighting of the Paschal Fire and its procession through the darkened church on Holy Saturday night. These simple gestures are a physical affirmation of our faith in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. But they are more than that. The ritual of the Holy Week ceremonies somehow draws us in and forms us in a way that stories and words cannot. They are profound moments of experience which give us our identity as Catholic and Christians. They not only make us who we are but they illuminate what we are. Our faith is not in the fact that Jesus was born some 2000 years ago, our faith is in the Risen Jesus who lives within and among us now.

Easter is a time of huge significance for people of faith and for the faith of people.

Easter Themes for Reflection and Teaching

At this time of year, students are approaching key moments - exam preparation, transitions, and for some, the final weeks of their school journey.....
The following 2 reflections and liturgical suggestions may help you continue to inspire your students on their journey of faith.



Mary Magdalene, the first witness of the Resurrection, shows us the power of encountering the risen Christ.

Her tears of sorrow turned into joy as Jesus called her by name.

This moment reminds us that Jesus sees and calls each of us personally.

Biblical Testimony: Mary Magdalene
(John 20:11-18)

Explanation:

- **Mary Magdalene's Encounter:** Mary Magdalene encounters Jesus but mistakes Him for the gardener.
- **Recognition:** Jesus reveals Himself to Mary, and she recognizes Him.
- **Commission:** Jesus instructs Mary to go and tell the disciples about His resurrection.

Discussion Questions:

1. What do you think Mary felt when she realized Jesus was alive?
2. Why do you think Jesus chose to reveal Himself to Mary first?
3. How can we, like Mary, boldly share the good news of the resurrection with others?

Suggested Activity: Invite the students to write a message of hope on a cardboard tombstone template to place in a box - one to be taken by each student to reveal and share a hidden message of hope.

Closing Prayer: God Our Father, thank you for the powerful truth of Jesus' resurrection. Help us, as young people to grasp the significance of this event and let it transform our lives. May we continue to grow in faith and share the amazing message of Jesus' resurrection with those around us! Amen.

The Road to Emmaus - Encountering Christ (Luke 24:13-35)



The story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus is one of recognition, journeying, and transformation. How often do we walk alongside Christ without recognising His presence? This Gospel passage is a powerful resource for exploring themes of faith, doubt, and revelation with students.

Suggested Activity: Divide students into pairs to role-play the conversation between Jesus and the disciples. Invite them to reflect on times when they have recognised God's presence in unexpected moments.

Reflection Questions:

- How do we recognise Jesus in our daily lives?
- Have there been moments where we only saw God's work in hindsight?
- What emotions do the disciples experience in this story, and how do they change?
- How can we cultivate a heart that is open to encountering Jesus in others?

Quote for Reflection: "Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe." - St. Augustine

Even in a Time of Intolerance

“We all have a part in shifting the story.”
Joy Harjo, 23rd US Poet Laureate

There is, in an overfull classroom,
a woman teaching not only history,
but compassion. There’s a barista
making hearts in the foam
of every cappuccino she serves.
There’s a man helping another man
on crutches as he struggles to cross
the icy street. There’s a library room full of women
chanting about praying for their enemy.
There are students raising money
to help those with breast cancer and AIDS.
Two girls are laughing for the joy of laughing
'til their faces are tear-streaked
and their ribs and bellies are sore.
There’s a poet who pours courage and music
into every word she shares with the world.
And another woman hears those words
and thinks, “Me. That poet is talking to me.”

This is how we change the world one kind act,
one true word, one long laugh at a time. Because
now, that woman is ablaze with wondering:

What is my part in shifting the story?

Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer

***This is how we change the world one kind act, one true word,
one long laugh at a time.***



On April 22, 2025, **EARTH DAY** will mark its 55th anniversary – a perfect moment to reflect on how Earth Day has made a lasting impact on our planet and proof that together we can change the world for the better.

What is Earth Day?

Earth Day, celebrated on 22nd April each year, is the annual event dedicated to awareness about the various environmental challenges that face our planet.

Each year, Earth Day has a variety of themes, signifying a new focus on a particular environmental concern.

In 2025, these themes include:

Volunteering: millions of people will take part in Earth Day, and it is hoped that many will volunteer to improve the environments where they live. This could involve anything from cleaning up litter to help plant new trees.

Artists for the Earth: to help spread the message of environmental urgency, art can play a huge part in capturing the public’s imagination.

Education: it is only by focusing on the next generation that the environmental fight can continue to be fought.

Events: awareness events, such as street rallies and marches, will bring the causes of Earth Day to the doorstep of homes throughout the world.



The Voice of Earth Speaking God's Presence

Earth teach me stillness
as the grasses are stilled with light.

Earth teach me humility
as blossoms are humble with beginning.

Earth teach me caring
as the mother bird nestles her young.

Earth teach me gentleness
as the deer walks softly through the forest.

Earth teach me courage
as the tree which stands straight alone.

Earth teach me limitation
as the ant who crawls along the ground.

Earth teach me freedom
as the lark who sings and soars.

Earth teach me joy
as the bee delighting in the nectar of life.

Earth teach me resignation
as the cycle of life turns and turns.

Earth teach me to be generous
as the rain and snow water the soil.

Earth teach me to remember kindness
as the blossoms turn rejoicing towards the sun.

Earth teach me gratitude
as the soil begins a new journey
toward the autumnal harvest.

Earth teach me to know the Author of Life
as I gaze daily in wonder
at the marvellous mysterious substance of all creation.

Author known only to God

Mary T Malone has rewritten several of the phrases


“Glance at the sun. See the moon and stars. Gaze at the beauty of Earth’s greenings. Now think what delight God gives to humankind.

But we are to work with it.

For without it we cannot survive”

Hildegard of Bingen

What can I/my family/school/neighbourhood do to safeguard our earth?



**“A prayer
for our
earth”**

All-powerful God,
you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.
O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned
and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty,
not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.

— Pope Francis, *Laudato si'*

Some Information and Websites to Explore.....

Pilgrims to Rome

The calendar of events and all relevant information for pilgrims to Rome can be found on the [Vatican's Jubilee website](#), including how to get a free digital pass that will be needed to take part in the main Jubilee events: www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/contatti.html.

Jubilee Year and Hymn

Ooberfuse Band has released a reggae version of the official hymn for the Jubilee Year - Pilgrims of Hope. Watch the video at [this link](#). For the recording the band teamed up with sisters from the Community of Our Lady of Walsingham.

The Irish Catholic bishops have a web page with several resources. Check it out [here](#).

IRISH CATHOLIC ARTICLE

[Click here for a PDF](#) of an article recently published in the *Irish Catholic*, by Fr Gareth Byrne, Moderator of the Diocesan Curia and Chairperson of the *Building Hope* Pastoral Strategy Implementation Group.

The introduction to the article, titled **Risking a journey that would transform our lives and Church**, reads: "In the Dublin Diocese, Archbishop Farrell is planning for a future full of hope with an innovative Pastoral Strategic Planning Resource". [The text of the article is available here](#).

CALLED TO MORE

Called to More is a Catholic media company based in Ireland. They run the largest Catholic YouTube channel and Instagram account in Ireland & the UK where they publish videos, podcasts and articles to help young people live their faith in the world today. Called to More can be found on [YouTube](#), [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#) and [Facebook](#).

Conversion of Heart for the Earth - A Lenten Journey of Faith and Creation Care

<https://laudatosimovement.org/lent/>

Earth Day 2025 Global Theme – Our Power, Our Planet – You Tube

<https://www.bing.com/videos/riverview/relatedvideo?q=Earth+Day+2025+you+tube&refig=deac8ed1f4c74c2aa55fd0d63b3ef069&pc=U531&ru=/search?q=Earth+Day+2025+you+tube&form=ANSPH1&refig=deac8ed1f4c74c2aa55fd0d63b3ef069&pc=U531&mmscn=vwrc&mid=0E5FBFB0F588035F40D90E5FBFB0F588035F40D9&FORM=WRVORC&ntb=1&msockid=04f1012408c411f0a3cb00f181c33680>



**The Stations of the Cross led by
Pope Francis at World Youth Day –
You Tube**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HTFqoRXyULo&ntb=1&msockid=50162dc608c111f0a03a720b3ef06c23>

The Stations of the Cross for Teens (Life Teen version)

<https://strichards.com/documents/2020/4/The%20Stations%20of%20the%20Cross%20for%20Teens%20Life%20Teen%20version.pdf>

Stations of the Cross for Young People - Pontifical Mission Societies

<https://phillymissions.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/TeenStationsoftheCrossEnglish-PHL-2016.pdf>

The Stations of the Cross for Young People - Catechetical Centre

<https://catecheticalcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/stations-of-the-cross-for-young-people.pdf>

The Station of the Cross for Young People - Clondalkin Parish

<http://www.clondalkinparish.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/stations-of-the-Cross-Youth.pdf>

Station of the Cross - You Tube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ah1xt1E8ENk>

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soprano

RAPHAELA MANGAN
alto

ANDREW GAVIN
tenor

JOHN MOLLOY
bass

RTÉ CONCERT ORCHESTRA • PROINNSÍAS Ó DUINN, conductor

ADAM AND EVE'S CHURCH, MERCHANT'S QUAY

SATURDAY 12th APRIL 2025 at 4.00pm (one hour duration)

TICKETS €22.50 – available from Eventbrite and the shop in Adam & Eve's Church, Merchant's Quay

Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Knock

Saturday, April 26th

11 a.m. Tea and coffee as pilgrims arrive

12 noon Workshops on the Jubilee of Hope 2025

Canonisation of Blessed Carlo Acutis;

Outdoor Stations of the Cross;

Tour of the Knock Museum;

Prayerful Preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation

3 p.m. Pilgrimage Mass celebrated by Archbishop Farrell with the Sacrament of the Sick.

Reminder.... Chaplains / R. E. Teachers Retreat 2025

Date: Tuesday, April 29th Time: 10 a.m. - 3.00 p.m.

Venue: Ovoca Manor, Avoca, Co. Wicklow

Cost: €30.00 per person including lunch

Register: www.scriptureunion.ie/retreat

To Conclude:



Míle fáilte romhat, a Rí an Domhnaigh,
A Mhic na hÓige a rinne an t-aiséirí.
A Mhic Mhuire, fóir orm,
A Íosa 'Mhic Mhuire, dean trócaire orm.
Glóir do Dhia, glóir do Dhia,
Glóir do Dhia naofa.
Céad blóir leatsa, a Rí an eolais.
Is tú mo mhórghrá, a Mháthair Íosa.

Ár bPaireacha Dúchais
Diarmuid Ó Laoighaire, S.J.
A CHNUASAIGH

*Happy Easter! Jubilate Deo!
Alleluia*

Sr. Bernadette and Sr. Concepta



AT THE BREAKING OF THE EASTER DAWN

**"At the breaking of the Easter dawn
May the Risen Saviour bless your home
With grace and peace from above,
With joy and laughter, and with love;
And when night is nigh, and day is done
May He keep you safe from all harm."**

Author unknown

Sunrise at 'The Reek'