

Religious Education Update

Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin September 2010



Staff Prayer

Jesus our teacher and our Lord! You taught with authority and compassion. You touched the lives of so many people who sought understanding and healing and most of all someone who would listen. Help us to be that voice of authority and compassion in our school community.

May we touch lightly with your grace and your love the lives and spirits of those we teach. May we always seek to see the best in each other and in our students. May our hearts be open always to your voice and your love and may we, like all those called to teach unto justice, shine like the stars of heaven as beacons of hope in our school communities.

Welcome Back

As another school year begins I would like to take this opportunity to welcome back all members of staff to the schools in our diocese. May the coming year be filled with all God's graces and blessings.

A new year brings many changes and I am conscious that new principals and staff members have been appointed and are taking up their positions in schools all over the diocese. I would like to take this opportunity to extend a special céad míle fáilte to all of you and wish you well in your new endeavours. All contact details for the diocesan offices are contained in this Newsletter and I hope that you will not hesitate to get in touch if we can be of any service to you and your staff.

It seems that there has been a lot of building work going on over the

summer and I hope those who have moved or are in the process of moving into new buildings have a safe transition and many happy years in their new learning environment.

The purpose of this Newsletter is to give you some information about the services offered by the diocesan offices, give you information about upcoming events at diocesan and national levels, offer some ideas for RE classes and liturgical celebrations during this term and finally to ask for your assistance in obtaining some information about your school. I hope that the suggestions contained in the Newsletter will be useful to you and your staff during the coming term.

Maevé Mahon

Statistic Forms

Enclosed with this Newsletter you will find the **Annual Statistic Form** which you are asked you to fill in and return to the office as soon as possible. The final date for receipt of these forms is **Friday, October 15th** and it would be greatly appreciated if you could have the form completed and back in the office on or before that date. The

data contained on these forms is essential in keeping information in the diocesan up to date and helps us to do our work more efficiently. The form will also be available for download at www.kandle.ie.

Continuing Professional Development



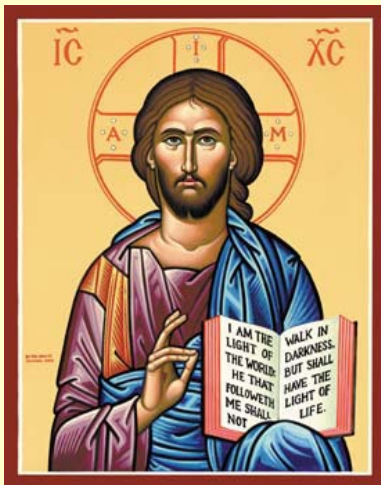
The continuing professional development of teachers is as necessary in Religious Education as in any subject area. Over the past number of years it has been impossible to secure any time for this during the school day from the Department of Education and Skills. Some schools have agreed to the suggestion that they give part or all of a **Planning Day** to Religious Education and the input given at these sessions has been favourably received by staff. I will continue to offer this service during the coming year and would be delighted to facilitate staffs in this area.

Following a request from teachers in the Carlow area I have decided to offer

Workshops for teachers newly qualified during the past three years and for teachers of First Communion Classes. Details of these can be found below.

These Workshops can only happen with the cooperation of principals and I am very grateful to the principals in the Carlow area who have been most helpful and encouraging in this regard. I would like to extend these and similar Workshops to other areas. If you are interested in organising a Workshop in your area please contact me as soon as possible. Workshops can be tailored to suit the needs of individual or clusters of schools.

Newly Qualified Teachers



The purpose of this Workshop is to offer NQTs an overview of the Religious Education programme in our schools and to give them an understanding of what it means to be a teacher in a Catholic School in the Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin. Resources to supplement and complement the existing programme will be suggested. The first of these Workshops will be held on

Thursday, September 16th in the Cathedral Parish Centre, Carlow and a second one in **Askea Boys School, Carlow on Thursday, September 23rd**. We will begin at **1p.m. and finish at 3p.m.** If any other schools in the surrounding areas are interested in participating in either of these venues please let me know by September 8th.

Teachers of First Communion Classes

This Workshop is designed for teachers who are new to preparing children for First Penance and First Communion or who are returning to this class after a long absence. It will offer an overview of the approach taken to both of these sacraments in the *Alive-O* programme and will also update teachers on the parish preparation

programmes happening in our parishes. The date and venue is **Wednesday, September 15th in the Cathedral Parish Centre, Carlow**. Once again we will begin at 1p.m. and conclude 3p.m. If any other schools in the surrounding areas are interested in participating in this Workshop please let me know by September 8th.

www.kandle.ie

Our diocesan website is widely acknowledged as a wonderful resource. It has recently been redesigned and hopefully you will find it easy to navigate the many different aspects of the site. There are a wide variety of resources and suggestions in the Primary RE section. The CPSMA pages will prove very useful for the principal and management body. We are always looking for new ideas to help make the

site more useful for our clients and so if you have any suggestions please let us know. We also welcome comments on the material posted and would love to hear from you if your school has any special event, anniversary or success story that you would like to share.

Please bookmark the site and bring it to the attention of staff and Board of Management members.

First Communion and Confirmation

The parish-based preparation programme for First Eucharist, Do This in Memory has been revised and now includes a children's resource for use at home and at Mass. It is called **THUMB**, (That's His/hers Useful Mass Book). It might be helpful for teachers to have a copy of this so that they will be able to relate to the children's experience. **Journey to Confirmation** is an additional resource developed in the diocese to complement **Alive-O₇₊₈**.

I know that many teachers find it useful and would like to remind you that copies are available from this office at a cost of €12.

You Shall Be My Witnesses, a parish-based preparation programme for Confirmation developed in the diocese is now being used nationally and more than 10000 children participated during 2010.

Further information on all these resources can be found on www.kandle.ie

Liturgical Year September -November

Celebrating the feasts of the Liturgical Year is a very simple and creative way to help children get a sense of the rhythm of the Church Year. Creating a Sacred Space in the entrance hall of the school and in each classroom provides an opportunity to give expression to what we are celebrating as members of the Church. The following are some of the feasts which will be celebrated in the coming months.

September 8th Our Lady's Birthday is an opportunity to talk about Mary with even the smallest of children. You can make birthday cards, revise the Mysteries of the Rosary and prayers associated with Mary, have a school assembly and maybe even a birthday cake.

October is full of feasts that will appeal to children. It is the month of the Rosary with the **Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary on October 7th**. It is also designated Mission month and Mission Sunday is on the 23rd this year. Check out www.wmi for further resources on mission.

Other feasts in October include; 1st Therese of Lisieux, 2nd Guardian Angels and the 4th Francis of Assisi.

November is the month in which we remember our dead. We celebrate the **Feast of All Saints, a Holy Day of Obligation, on November 1**. On the 2nd we remember all who have died on the **Feast of All Souls** and on the 6th we celebrate all the **Saints of Ireland**.

Prayer Book for Primary Schools



This Prayer Book has prayers for each class in the Primary School and is available from our office. It has proven to be very popular with schools all over the diocese and throughout the country. It costs €1.50 and can be customised for an additional fee. Please contact Christine in our office to discuss your order. Further details on www.kandle.ie

Catholic Schools Week 2011



Catholic Schools Week 2011 takes place from **Sunday, January 30th to Saturday, February 5th**. The theme for the week is '*Catholic Schools - Rooted in Jesus Christ*'. Please put these dates in the school calendar as soon as possible. Resources to help celebrate Catholic Schools Week will be available shortly after you

return to school from the Christmas holidays.

Grandparents Day which was so successful in many schools will be celebrated on **Wednesday, February 2nd**. You might like to begin planning for that event in the coming months. Keep an eye on www.kandle.ie for more information in the coming months.

Diocesan News

Successor to Bishop Jim Moriarty

As you are all aware Pope Benedict XVI accepted the resignation of Bishop Jim in April of this year. The diocese is currently awaiting the appointment of a new bishop. This appointment process can be a long one. After a period of consultation the Papal Nuncio draws up a list of suitable candidates. This list, together

with all submissions, is sent by the Nuncio to the Congregation of Bishops in Rome where the final decision is made. There is no time line available for such a decision.

In the interim Monsignor Brendan Byrne has been appointed Diocesan Administrator. He can be contacted at Bishop's House, Dublin Rd. Carlow.

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