

Centred on Christ

APRIL 2024



Our Lady of Paisley; pray for us

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Dear Colleague,

I hope you are feeling refreshed after the Easter holiday. The summer term is always a demanding but rewarding time as children celebrate the Sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation. We also keep SQA candidates in our prayers and wish them every success.

We look forward to our P7 (and P6) pupils participating in the **Diocesan Consecration to Jesus through Mary** which begins on 29 April and concludes on 1 June. (*Centred on Christ*, January 2023).

We have included **Themes for Prayers and Assemblies** which you may find useful in celebrating the devotional and liturgical life of the Church between April and June. Father Matthew, our Vicar Episcopal, has also provided a **Prayer and Reflection Service for staff** on the theme of the Sacred Heart.

Prior to Easter, we issued schools with the **Joint Education and Youth Calendar** for next session. We hope that this will prove helpful when planning your own school calendars. It would be especially helpful if you could possibly avoid clashes between your collegiate time plans and the Diocesan Masses for staff. We would also ask Head Teachers to 'save the date' of the **Afternoon of Reflection** which we have scheduled for **Wednesday 9 October**.

Last session, 95% of Diocesan schools gave us their *Developing in Faith* return. We would be grateful if all schools would share their self-evaluation for this session with the diocese—if possible, by the beginning of June. They are invaluable in enabling us to plan support for schools and to identify strengths which can be shared across the diocese (six Case Studies in this edition were identified through DiF reports).

On Page 17, we publish a summary of the **Diocesan Education Department's Strategic Plan** for 2024-25. Schools' *Developing in Faith* returns and our Cluster visits have helped to shape the plan, as well as taking on board the views of partners and stakeholders. We are grateful that you include aspects of Diocesan priorities within your School Improvement Plans. The full Strategic Plan will be issued later this term.

The **Diocesan Parent Forum** will meet in the Diocesan Offices on **Monday 13 May** at 7pm. Please let us know of any topics you would wish us to address.

The **Thanksgiving Mass** will be celebrated in the Cathedral on **Wednesday 12 June** at 4.30pm. All staff are very welcome to join Bishop John for this Mass, but we would particularly welcome NQTs, mentors and Head Teachers.

We are very grateful for the years of service to Catholic education by retiring teachers and other staff. If you wish to nominate a member of staff for a **Diocesan Commendation**, please see the guidance on TEAMS/Education Resources for Schools/ Handbook for Head Teachers.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of assistance to you.

Best wishes,

Neil Roarty

Neil Roarty
Director of Schools



Entrusting our Prayers to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Father Matthew Carlin

Each part of this short reflection could be read by a different reader (up to four); alternatively, the school chaplain or another person could lead the whole thing. It should take place in the school oratory (in the case of a High School) or a quiet classroom. It would be helpful to photocopy the last part of the reflection, the Litany, so that all participants can follow easily and respond.

(Reader 1)

Introduction

Prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is an ancient tradition, going back at least a thousand years. Such devotion invites us to focus on the love of God shown to us in the Person of Jesus. In St John's First letter we read: "God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them." (1 Jn 4:16) Modern devotion to the Sacred Heart is associated with St Margaret Mary Alacoque (1647-1690). From her comes the practice of the devotion to the Sacred Heart on the first Friday of each month. Let us bring our loved-ones, and all the intentions of our own hearts, before the Heart of our loving Saviour.



Pause for a few moments of silent prayer.

(Reader 2)

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John:

"Since it was the day of Preparation, in order to prevent the bodies from remaining on the cross on the sabbath (for that sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him; but when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. He who saw it has borne witness – his testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth – that you also may believe." (John 19:31-35)

Pause for a few moments of silent prayer.

(Reader 3)

Reflection

This passage seems strange at first; it is not clear why St John should insist so emphatically on the detail that both water and blood flowed from the wound in Jesus's side. We can understand this, however, as a special moment in which the love of God, who sent His only Son into the world for our sake, is revealed. The blood and water flow, as it were, from the very heart of Jesus. He pours out His life for our sake. We share in this life, in the Love of God, especially by our participation in the sacraments; principally by our Baptism (water) and our reception of the Holy Eucharist (blood).

Pope Pius XII wrote: "What is here written of the side of Christ, opened by the wound from the soldier, should also be said of the Heart which was certainly reached by the stab of the lance... Hence the wound of the most Sacred Heart of Jesus, now that He has completed His mortal life, remains through the course of the ages a striking image of that spontaneous charity by which God gave His only begotten Son for the redemption of men

**Prayer and Reflection on the Eucharist for Staff
Father Matthew Carlin**

(Continued from page 2)

and by which Christ expressed such passionate love for us that He offered Himself as a bleeding victim on Calvary for our sake." (Pius XII, Encyclical Letter *Hauretis aquas*, 78)

Pause for a few moments of silent prayer.

Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (Short Version)

(Reader 4)

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

God the Father of heaven:
God the Son, Redeemer of the world:
God the Holy Spirit:
Holy Trinity, one God:

Heart of Jesus, Son of the eternal Father:
Heart of Jesus, formed by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mother's womb...
Heart of Jesus, tabernacle of the Most High...
Heart of Jesus, house of God and gate of heaven...
Heart of Jesus, most worthy of all praise...
Heart of Jesus, King and centre of all hearts...
Heart of Jesus, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge...
Heart of Jesus, in whom dwells all the fullness of God...
Heart of Jesus, in whom the Father was well pleased...
Heart of Jesus, of whose fullness we have all received...
Heart of Jesus, patient and rich in mercy...
Heart of Jesus, source of life and holiness...
Heart of Jesus, obedient even unto death...
Heart of Jesus, pierced with a lance...
Heart of Jesus, source of all consolation...
Heart of Jesus, our life and resurrection...
Heart of Jesus, our peace and reconciliation...
Heart of Jesus, victim for our sins...
Heart of Jesus, salvation of those who hope in you...

Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world,
Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world,
Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world,

Jesus, meek and humble of heart,

Let us pray:

O God, who in the Heart of your Son, wounded by our sins, bestow on us in mercy the boundless treasures of your love; grant, we pray, that, in paying him the homage of our devotion, we may also offer worthy reparation. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

(Response)

*Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.*

*have mercy on us.
have mercy on us.
have mercy on us.
have mercy on us.*

have mercy on us.

*Spare us, O Lord.
Graciously hear us, O Lord.
Have mercy on us.*

*Touch our hearts and make them
like Your own.*

Integrating Companions on the Journey within our PRD Processes

In 2016, SCES published *Companions on the Journey* aiming to provide a framework for CLPL on the Catholic mission of our schools and to integrate it within the PRD process. The document can be downloaded from the SCES website: <https://sces.org.uk/companions-on-the-journey/> It asks teachers to reflect on how they can accompany children and young people on their journeys of faith, just as Christ accompanied the two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

Companions on the Journey (CoJ) sets out six areas for Catholic School CLPL:

- Personal Spiritual Development
- Vocation of the Teacher
- Catholic School Mission and Identity
- Religious Education
- Catholic Curriculum Issues
- Catholic School Leadership.

It takes each of these areas and exemplifies how different types of CLPL could be linked to the various stages of the teacher's career and GTCS Professional Standards, from Provisional Registration to Headship. Both SCES and Diocesan CLPL Programmes show the links to the six CLPL areas and the five stages of the GTCS Standards.

Reflection

- How far do we integrate *Companions on the Journey* within our PRD processes?
- Do we encourage teachers to reflect on at least one of the six areas for Catholic School CLPL **before** their PRD meeting?
- How far does the teacher identify what they hope to achieve by participating in relevant CLPL? What difference will it make to them and to the school community?
- How far do we make the SCES and Diocesan programmes available to staff as part of the PRD and Improvement Planning Processes?
- Within the area of Religious Education, do we encourage teachers who do not have the CTC to undertake *Setting Out on the Road?* (Teachers who do not have the CTC are unable to teach RE.)
- What types of CLPL do we plan within our own collegiate programme? How far do we provide opportunities for Personal Spiritual Development? How far have we made use of Diocesan documents such as *A Community of Faith: Centred on Christ* to meet teachers' needs in understanding Catholic School Mission and Identity?
- Is Leadership CLPL only for teachers aspiring to senior leadership positions or do we nurture our leaders from the early stages of their careers? How can we do this within the school and with the support of the Diocese and SCES? The example given in *Companions on the Journey* for Provisional Registration is understanding the Role of Parents as "first educators". Can we encourage them to read and reflect on the diocesan document *Partnership with Parents: From Ideal to Action?* For those aspiring to SLT posts, can we encourage them to participate in the Diocesan course on *Leadership in Catholic Schools?*
- How do we know if our CLPL programme has been effective in meeting the identified needs of teachers?

Faith Disciples and Community Prayer Walks



St. Fillan's Primary School - Claire Mackenzie

Faith Respect Responsibility Trust Teamwork Success

Faith Disciples

The most important core value we share as a school and parish community is 'Faith' as this is the value which supports the nurturing of all our core values through our thoughts, words and actions. Each month, we have a whole school spotlight on a core value, Gospel value and school aim. There are opportunities at weekly Assemblies to discuss and showcase our achievements in living by these values and aims. Children are rewarded with certificates and House points for demonstrating actions that are 'Above and Beyond' the St. Fillan Standard.

Staff and children expressed an interest in recognising and celebrating the value of 'Faith' in a special way and so the 'Faith Disciples Award' was born!

The initiative was launched by the Head Teacher at a special Assembly which enabled children to consider the role and responsibilities that Disciples had as 'Friends of Jesus'. Children then made connections between themselves and the Disciples in the role they have in school as: Effective Contributors, Confident Individuals, Successful Learners and Responsible Citizens. The 'School Improvement Committee' created posters depicting opportunities which would encourage their peers to actively demonstrate their faith and discipleship in action. Staff worked collaboratively to create a list of the features of effective discipleship and how this could be portrayed during the school day.

Staff and children are encouraged to view the role of a 'Faith Disciple' by keeping 'Christ at the Centre' and considering three key questions:

- What would Jesus think?
- What would Jesus say?
- How would Jesus act?

Two children from each class are recognised at Assembly for their achievements in demonstrating the various attributes of being a 'Faith Disciple' and they are rewarded with a certificate which is shared with the wider school community via the Seesaw app. Throughout the session, both staff, children and families are invited to nominate children to receive this recognition.

"It makes me proud to be a Faith Disciple. I think it is important to be a friend to everyone and to love one another as Jesus does." (Primary 5 Pupil)



*Be Brave Unleash Creativity Demonstrate Excellence Show/Radiate Enthusiasm
'In Learning, we are growing and succeeding Together.'*



Faith Respect Responsibility Trust Teamwork Success

(Continued from page 5)

Community Prayer Walks

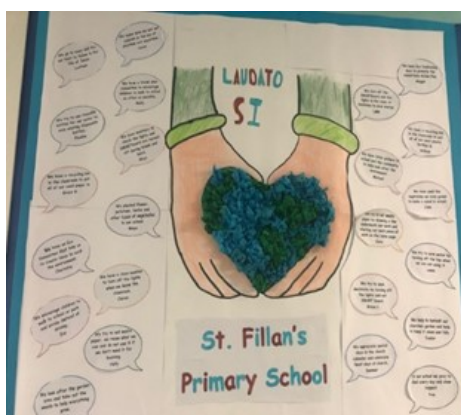
During Lent each year, as well as focussing of the importance of fasting and almsgiving, we try to find different ways to incorporate meaningful opportunities for prayer and quiet reflection. We have facilitated this in a variety of ways including community prayer events at the Grotto, Lenten reflections and meditations at our Family Values Assemblies and visits to the Church to experience active engagement with the Stations of the Cross.

Last year, the children planned and facilitated a 'Prayer Walk' around our beautiful village in Houston. The walk was a simple way for us to lift up prayers for people and the planet and it enabled us to admire the beauty of God's creation. This enabled our teachers to remind the children that prayers are like giving a special gift to others as they strengthen our connection and relationship with Jesus.

Each class was provided with a set of prayer cards focussing on various aspects of creation. The children had the responsibility of finding objects and taking a moment to stop, observe the aspect of creation and its beauty, consider times when they have neglected to look after the world or each other and to ask God's forgiveness by reciting a short reflection from the prayer card. The start of the journey was opened with our school prayer and concluded by the children's hymn of choice and the SCIAF 'Wee Box' prayer.

This year, we hope to extend the invitation to our families and Parish Priest who may be able to provide the class with a special blessing. Our older children have suggested that the 'Stations of the Cross' could be incorporated as a means of physically walking in solidarity with Jesus.

"I thoroughly enjoyed the prayer walk with my class. It provided a much-needed opportunity to step back from the busyness of the school day, get out into the fresh air and pray in a meaningful way with the children. I was then able to make relevant links with this experience and our work around the Laudato Si Programme." (Primary 4 Class Teacher)



Be Brave Unleash Creativity Demonstrate Excellence Show/Radiate Enthusiasm
'In Learning, we are growing and succeeding Together.'

Time for the Lord – Advent 2023

Notre Dame High School, John Paul McGovern

This year, as part of our Faith Life calendar, we decided to introduce an opportunity for increased Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament by holding a day called "Time for the Lord". This took place during Advent and allowed staff and pupils greater time for prayer and reflection as well as being able to spend time with the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

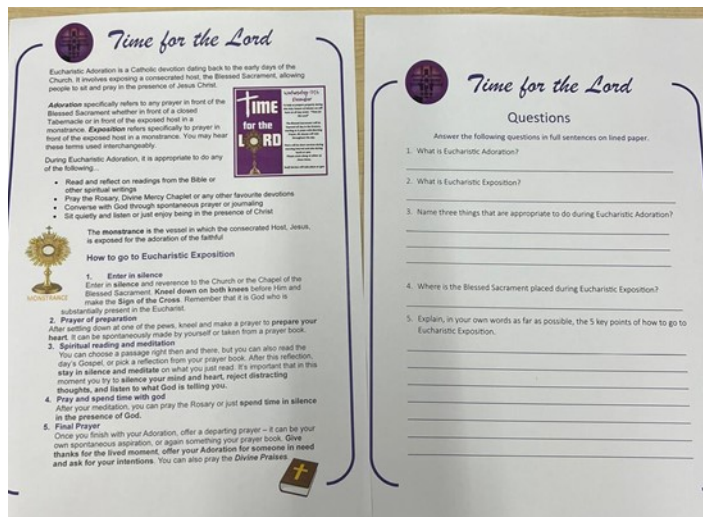


The day began at 8.30am with Morning Prayer in the School Oratory which was attended by both staff and pupils. During Morning Prayer, the Blessed Sacrament was exposed and remained so for the remainder of the school day. To ensure that the Blessed Sacrament was never left unattended Caritas pupils volunteered to be present in the Oratory during their study periods that day and members of staff from across the school also volunteered their time during non-contact periods.

In addition, each period was split into three blocks of fifteen minutes and RE classes participated in a short Prayer Service during this time that included silent reflection and various prayers before the Blessed Sacrament. On returning to class, pupils spent the remainder of the period completing learning activities around Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

During morning interval and lunchtime our Chaplaincy Ambassadors led short Prayer Services and the Oratory remained open afterwards for private prayer. Time for the Lord concluded after the school day with an Advent Staff Reflection service followed by Benediction.

Pupils fully engaged in these experiences and afterwards spoke about it being a highlight of their day and many have asked for another opportunity at some point in the future. Moving forward we hope to build upon this success and next time open up Time for the Lord to members of the wider School Community and local Parishes.



Christian Meditation

“Silence is the language of God.”

St Clare’s Primary School – Ashley Pinna

At St Clare’s, Christian Meditation (The Ignatian Method) is embedded in our daily practice, having been introduced to staff and learners back in 2020. It can be described as a state of active open attention on the present moment. As Christians, our ultimate spiritual goal is to be in complete union with God, surrounded by love and be welcomed into heaven. One of the aims of participating in Christian Meditation, is to fill each and every one of our breaths with God.

When introducing Christian Meditation, our overarching aims were to support widespread adverse experiences in children, and provide a time and space for our learners to be nurtured, allowing both the learners and staff members to feel calmer and less anxious.

Initially, a member of teaching staff engaged in Christian Meditation CLPL and trialled it with her class. From there, as a whole school, we participated in the training and began implementing it into our daily routine; participating in Christian Meditation every day after lunch, and often as a whole school during weekly Assembly.

Each Christian Meditation session starts and ends with specific prayers. The music tracks, which guide you through the meditation, start at 1 minute long and increase by a further minute each time, until a maximum of 15 minutes. Whilst meditating, learners are encouraged to close their eyes or join their hands in prayer. Teachers also participate in each session. Certain classes use the St Ignatius Method as an Examination of Conscience, prior to meditating.

Since its introduction, our learners have benefited from building a stronger relationship with God, through silent prayer. As we meditate we reflect on sacred words and examine our conscience, placing our Christian values at the centre. It not only exposes children to a different style of prayer, it also creates beautiful moments of calmness to be with God throughout the school day which benefits overall wellbeing.

Maranatha – ‘Come, Lord Jesus.’



See also the article by Eileen Tompkins, Head Teacher of St Vincent’s Primary, East Kilbride, in *Centred on Christ*, April 2020. It is available on Teams/Centred on Christ, 2019-20.

The World Community for Christian Community

The WCC website contains advice and resources on Christian Meditation:

<https://wccm.org/meditation-resources/the-practice/>

It includes a leaflet for schools:

<https://wccm.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Meditation-in-Schools-leaflet-singles-13322.pdf>

Shining a Light on This is Our Faith

Anthony Hutcheson - St Mark's Primary School

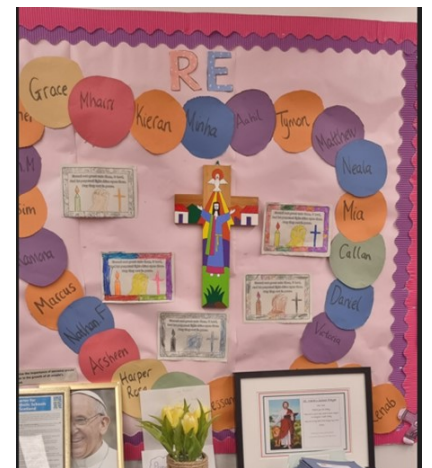
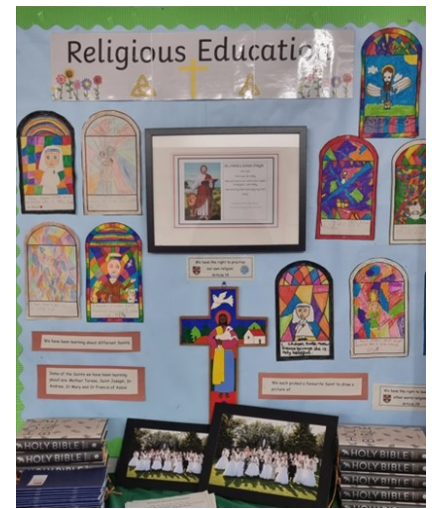
Following their attendance at a diocesan professional learning event on 'This Is Our Faith', class teachers Gillian McKay and Leanne Murphy were keen to share their learning and support colleagues on improving the delivery of the Religious Education programme in St. Mark's. Here they reflect on the development work that they led and the impact of this work across the school.

Staff used weekly Assembly time to develop their knowledge and understanding of 'This Is Our Faith' and the core learning within it. An initial focus on the scripture which underpins the Catholic Faith, written within section 2 of the TIOF document, allowed staff to gain a better understanding of how the Strands of Faith and the Church's teaching underpin the core learning at each stage.

Improved knowledge of the Strands of Faith allowed staff to look at how the core learning within TIOF could be addressed through thematic approaches. Assembly Focus sessions were used to explore and discuss the Diocese of Paisley planners in greater depth. Staff worked together across stages to share expertise and ensure a consistent, progressive approach to planning for religious education. These ongoing discussions led to clearer expectations for all staff on how to plan and deliver engaging learning experiences with the core learning of TIOF as the foundation.

Feedback from staff noted an increase in knowledge and confidence in using This is Our Faith to plan learning. In addition, feedback during staff meetings, as well as results of staff surveys and peer visits, indicated that the Diocesan Planners reduced workload and supported staff in planning engaging RE lessons. All staff were positive about the input from the Diocesan RE adviser on 'Divine Pedagogy'. This session affirmed practice and provided valuable next steps for teachers to deepen their faith and adopt a range of creative approaches in leading the faith formation of the children in their care.

Peer learning visits identified good practice across the school in planning and teaching engaging RE lessons. Furthermore, the environment and nurturing ethos in all classrooms reflected the school's commitment to Gospel values of love, compassion and tolerance. As a school, we continue to embed nurturing approaches. Almost all feedback from peer learning visits indicated that the classrooms were nurturing and welcoming environments that promoted positive relationships. The school received the National Nurturing Schools Programme Award in recognition of our whole school approaches to nurture and trauma-informed approaches.



Shining a Light on This is Our Faith Anthony Hutcheson - St Mark's Primary School

Staff also reported that they had a better understanding of the teaching of the Catholic Church and the theology that underpins This is our Faith. They feel more confident when discussing their personal beliefs and values and are more familiar with resources that can help to extend their knowledge of the faith. All staff agreed that the regular inputs on TIOF provided meaningful and relevant CLPL which directly supported their teaching of RE across the curriculum.



This year, we have built on this work to explore the theme of Serving the Common Good and are renewing our commitment to Catholic Social Teaching through a whole school approach to campaigning and youth advocacy. This work will form an important strand of our efforts in being recognised as a Gold Rights Respecting School. The children very much see themselves as change makers and are excited to find tangible ways of putting their faith into action to support their brothers and sisters in need.



Thursday Tea, Toast and Prayers

Claudia Kearney, St Thomas' Primary School

Trying to involve parents in the liturgical and prayer life of the school, any school, can be a challenge. Everyone is busy and time is always short. Over the course of the last year and a half, I spent a lot of time thinking about how to create a "moment" in the school day when parents, their children and staff could come together in prayer. As the Principal Teacher of a small village primary school in Neilston, I believe my role as RE Coordinator is to promote our Catholic faith by, among other things, developing and strengthening the partnerships between our school and our families and our school and our parish.

During the first term in October 2022, I organised a new Rosary group which ran two mornings per week. Flyers, email and Twitter announcements were sent out in the preceding week explaining how it would work. On the designated days, I would go out into the playground at 8.45am and invite parents and pupils, who were arriving at school, to come together and form a circle, and we would then pray the Rosary.

After around three weeks, it was becoming clear that the format was problematic. The weather was an obvious problem! On a couple of occasions, we had to abandon the gathering because of driving rain and, as those early weeks went by, it was obvious our weather was only going to worsen.

With this in mind, I decided to change tack in November and opt, instead, for an indoor arrangement. In parallel with the move indoors, I reduced the frequency of the prayers to one day a week in the hope of increasing parental participation...and also decided to offer the incentive of a cup of tea and some toast. So, "**Thursday Tea Toast and Prayers**" was born. Thankfully, the format changes worked and attendance started to climb.

We are a small school with a roll of 150 pupils and 12 teaching staff, so I was more than pleased, on the first Thursday of November 2022, when our inaugural "**Thursday Tea Toast and Prayers**" session was attended by around 15 pupils, 10 parents/carers, our school chaplain and 2 members of staff. Just over a year later, attendance has more than trebled for parents, pupils and staff, while the activity has become a valued part of the school week during October's month of the Holy Rosary, November's month of the Holy Souls, Lent and the



Thursday Tea, Toast and Prayers - Claudia Kearney, St Thomas' Primary School

(Continued from page 11)

month of May for the Blessed Virgin Mary. This has provided valuable opportunities to remember that we are a Catholic school with a mission to evangelise and support our pupils on their faith journey.

Importantly, the Rosary is led by our *Laudato Si'* and Mini Vinnie Ambassadors who rotate every Thursday to lead the Mysteries and prayers. Depending on the liturgical time of the year, prayers and dedications are appropriate to the season. We also use the prayers to pray for peace and for our common home as part of our *Laudato Si'* mission.



On a practical note, the session lasts around 30 minutes. Doors open at 8.30am allowing all those who want to take part to come into the hall. I normally set up before leaving school the day before and make up the tea and coffee flasks on the morning, while one of our canteen staff makes the toast, with quantities made dependent on the number attending – we haven't run out of toast yet! Participants can have their tea and toast before or after the prayers and are free to time things in a way which works best for them. The Rosary lasts for 15 minutes within the half hour time slot.

Earlier this year, I emailed an evaluation form to parents asking those who'd been taking part to give me some feedback. The responses received were overwhelmingly positive and encouraging and made it clear that our school community wanted the **Thursday Tea, Toast & Prayer** mornings to stay!

If you're looking for a way to encourage more parental involvement in the prayer life of their children and the liturgical activities of the school, I'd strongly recommend **Thursday Tea, Toast & Prayers**. Obviously, you don't have to hold it on a Thursday - any day that suits your school should work. It has the advantage of encouraging parents to come into school while they are on the doorstep anyway, dropping off their children. We still have our Class Masses and First Friday Masses and we invite parents to these, but daytime attendance can be a problem for many parents/carers.

Ultimately, **Thursday Tea, Toast & Prayers** provides an opportunity for parents and carers to engage with their children's prayer life, it supports the faith mission of the school and contributes towards our universal mission of evangelisation.

While I've been really heartened to see my colleagues increasingly embrace this prayerful moment in the school week and been enthused by the growing attendance of parents and carers, most of all I've been humbled by the genuine devotion of the children. Children love to pray the Rosary and spending time with them before the start of a busy school day feels reverential and rewarding. It also reminds us of what Jesus said to his disciples about the youngest among us: **"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them. For it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs."** Matthew 19:14.



St Cadoc's on a 'Missio' ...

Joanne Baker

St Cadoc's embarked on our journey to become a 5 Star Missio Scotland school last session. We invited Gerard from Missio to lead an assembly informing our pupils about Missio Scotland and the work they do. Engaging our pupils in learning about the work of this important charity raises global awareness and fosters empathy, compassion and a sense of social responsibility amongst our children.

This launched our Missio Champions within the school. Children are actively involved and meet during our Committee time each month. The committee shared the Missio Christmas Art Competition which furthered us on our journey by receiving another star!

Our Missio Champions lead the committee by discussing their plan for the term and what they wish to achieve. Over the last couple of months we have had a focus on Lent, preparing for this

special liturgical period in our school. The children have worked hard to create and make items to sell at stalls during their own lunch times and the money will go towards Missio, raising funds to support the 'WEE BOX appeal'.

During assemblies our Missio Champions and staff are able to provide opportunities for children to reflect on the impact that they can have on the world and have created a rich and impactful experience for the children involved. Our Lenten assemblies have a Missio focus and children learn about the projects that Missio supports around the world.



St Cadoc's on a 'Missio'... - Joanne Baker

(Continued from page 13)

The Missio Scotland website provides both Primary and High School resources for staff to share with the children to support and guide them in ways to help other children across the five continents of the world.

We look forward to gaining more stars and completing our Journey by receiving a 'Missy Moo' to represent the hard work and dedication of our Missio Champions.



Children's Rosary Groups

OUR LADY OF PEACE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Friends of Divine Mercy started a Children's Rosary Group in Our Lady of Peace Primary School in September 2023. This is part of the wider Children's Rosary movement, started by Dr Blythe Kaufman in the USA, which has inspired groups to be set up in many countries around the world. They use the Rosary book that Dr Kaufman has written; this is the same book Bishop John uses each evening at 9 p.m. when he prays the Rosary with his people online.

The Friends begin by explaining to the P4 class what they are doing. The children write out their prayer intentions and put them into a box. They also pray for all other Children's Rosary groups throughout the world. The children lead the Rosary and those who do not want to lead a decade are asked to lay a rose at the feet of the statue of Our Lady of Fatima. After the prayers, the children are given juice and biscuits. A Bible story, linked to the Mysteries of the Rosary they have prayed, is read to the children. The children are then given the opportunity to ask questions.

Mrs Claire McLaren, Depute Head Teacher of Our Lady of Peace Primary School, commented:

"We have been delighted to welcome the Friends of Divine Mercy into the school. The children in Primary 5/4 have loved being involved in the Children's Rosary.

The purpose of the group is to encourage our children to pray. The prayers are child led and our children have flourished with the opportunity to lead prayer within the class. The children look forward to the Children's Rosary session every week and a joyful cheer can be heard from the class base when the adults arrive. The children enjoy a story from the Bible, offer their own special intention and pray together. This has helped our children to learn the Rosary and how the Rosary is connected to the Bible. Some children involved with Children's Rosary planned and led our Prayer Breakfast. "

'I love a Wednesday afternoon as I can put the name of who my prayers are for in the box and it makes it very special and I feel good inside.'

'The ladies are so nice and kind. They make praying fun.'

'It is a very special time in our class and we all listen and try our best.'

'We get to pray together, think about special people. We get a drink and biscuit too.'



Children's Rosary Groups

(Continued from page 15)

MARY RUSSELL SCHOOL

Mr Liam Coyle, Head Teacher of Mary Russell School, has been praying a decade of the Rosary each week with the RE class. The Friends of Divine Mercy joined the class to pray several decades with the children.

Mr Coyle commented: "I was delighted to welcome Helen Border from the Children's Rosary group into Mary Russell to deliver a session on the Children's Rosary group with our Catholic RE class. Our class always starts with a decade of the Rosary and a reflection on one of the Mysteries of the Rosary. It was great to be able to explain to our pupils that as part of the Children's Rosary Group our prayers will be united to the prayers of children all over the world. It was also powerful to develop the understanding that in all the countries of the world people are praying the Rosary and asking for Our Lady's intercession for themselves, their families, their problems, their schools, and communities, just as we do in Mary Russell School.

ST CONVAL'S CHURCH, LINWOOD

Canon Michael McMahon, Parish Priest for St Conval's Church, agreed for the Children's Rosary to be started in his parish. It was advertised in the church bulletin and started several months ago. This group is run by ladies in the parish. Although the numbers are small at present, they are hoping for more children to join in the coming months.

Helen Border, Friends of Divine Mercy

Other Information about Children's Rosary Groups

The Diocesan Education Department is grateful to schools for promoting the Rosary particularly during October and May. Rosary Groups are a way of enabling children to pray the Rosary throughout the year, although we know that Mini-Vinnie and Laudato Si' Groups often fulfill this role. We believe that the most effective practice is for them to be initiated and sustained by school staff. One example is the Rosary Group in All Saints Primary.

- Rosary Group in All Saints Primary Greenock – *Centred on Christ*, August 2022 (pp4-5) – Teams/Centred on Christ/2022-23

Guidance and resources on how to set up a Rosary Group can be found at www.childrensrosary.org

- About Us
 - What is the Children's Rosary?
 - How the Children's Rosary Began
- Form a Children's Rosary
 - How to start a group
 - How to register a group
 - Resources to start a group.
- Resources (including)
 - Children's Rosary Book
 - Music
 - Theme Song Videos



Diocese of Paisley
Education Department

Draft Summary of Strategic Plan 2024-25

- 1. Continuing to build up the Diocesan Family of Schools and work in partnership with stakeholders and Church Agencies to achieve shared goals**
 - a) To embed Developing in Faith and Diocesan toolkits within schools' self-evaluation processes in order to facilitate the identification of schools' support needs and the sharing of good practice across the Diocese.*
- 2. Offering Appropriate CLPL and Developing Leadership for Learning in Faith**
 - a) To provide spiritual support for teachers including an afternoon of reflection for Head Teachers.*
 - b) To liaise with Local Authorities re Diocesan NQT and Leadership in Catholic Schools courses.*
 - c) To provide CLPL which supports schools in the delivery of Equality and Inclusion policies.*
- 3. Supporting Curriculum Planning and Meeting Learners' Needs on their Faith Journeys**
 - a) To support schools in their planning of Other World Religions which aligns with TIOF.*
 - b) To continue to enhance the Primary curriculum by embedding the National Schools Singing Programme (NSSP) in Inverclyde Primary Schools.*
 - c) To continue to plan, implement and review the Diocesan Secondary curriculum in the Broad General Education phase and provide appropriate information for parents on the revised course.*
 - d) To continue to review and enhance the Senior Phase R.E. programme in collaboration with schools.*
 - e) To continue to work with SPRED and further develop links between schools, SPRED and the Diocesan Education Department and further liaise with schools to support pupils with Additional Support Needs to grow in faith.*
 - f) To provide support for schools in meeting the needs of all young people, made in the image of God, which enables them to respond sensitively and in line with Church teaching to those who have a particular protected characteristic.*
 - g) To nurture the spiritual development of children and young people by preparing for and participating the Holy Year and to explore how the Diocese can ensure a legacy of the Carlo Acutis Eucharistic Miracles Encounter.*
- 4. Strengthening Home-School-Parish Links by Supporting Parents, Chaplains and Schools**
 - a) To continue to share and extend good practice in Home-School-Parish partnerships.*
 - b) To further develop the Diocesan Parent Forum as a means of consulting parent representatives and developing support for Parent Councils and to contribute to the National Catholic Education Forum.*
 - c) To continue to deliver support for school chaplains and to continue to engage with schools in further developing arrangements which support the work of chaplains.*

Themes for Prayer and Reflection



Diocese of Paisley
Education Department

April

Easter

When schools return after the Easter holidays, we will still be celebrating the Season of Easter which provides an excellent opportunity to reflect on the messages of the Resurrection.

Father John Morrison has once again kindly provided an assembly which can be found in TEAMS/Education Resources for Schools/Prayers and Assemblies/April-June.

During Lent, many of us would have meditated on the Stations of the Cross. In 1988, Father Sabino Palumbieri proposed the creation of a complementary set of stations, which focus on the appearances of Jesus from the Resurrection and the events which follow up to Pentecost.

Like the Stations of the Cross (Via Crucis), the Stations of the Resurrection (Via Lucis) consists of fourteen stations. There are a number of versions which have slight differences as to the fourteen events which comprise the stations, but most focus on:

- Jesus rises from the dead. (Mt 28:5-6)
- The women find the empty tomb. (Mt 28:1-6)
- Mary Magdalene meets the risen Jesus. (Jn 20:16)
- Jesus appears on the road to Emmaus. (Lk 24:13-27)
- Jesus is recognised in the breaking of bread. (Lk 24:13-27)
- Jesus appears to the disciples in Jerusalem. (Lk 24:36-39)
- Jesus gives the disciples his peace and the power to forgive. (Jn 20:22-23a)
- Jesus strengthens the faith of Thomas. (Jn 20:24-29)
- Jesus appears by the Sea of Tiberias. (Jn 21: 3-13)
- Jesus commands Peter to feed his sheep. (Jn 21:15-17)
- Jesus commissions the disciples and sends them into the whole world. (Mt 28:16-20)
- Jesus ascends into heaven. (Acts 1:9-11)
- Mary and the disciples wait in prayer. (Acts 1:12-14)
- The Holy Spirit descends at Pentecost (Acts 2:2-4)

You may wish to touch on some of these at appropriate points during the Easter season. Some versions are:

[Stations Of The Resurrection \(Via Lucis\) - Catholic-Link](#)

[CM SR booklet 111418.indd \(columban.org\)](#)

[Stations of the Resurrection : Via Lucis — Conference of Religious \(corew.org\)](#)

[23 \(columbans.co.uk\)](#)

Appropriate resources can also be found in the P1-P7 Planners.

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April

The Eucharist

A key plank in the Diocesan Spiritual Recovery plans has been the encouragement of Catholics to return to the celebration of Sunday Mass #Home to Mass. *Centred on Christ* (April 2021) contained a feature article on The Eucharist by Bishop John and Father Paul Brady, Vicar Episcopal for Liturgy. It also contained Case Studies from two High Schools on Eucharistic Adoration. Father Joe Balmer described how he enabled children in Primary Schools to experience Eucharistic Adoration (August 2023). In January 2022, St. Paul's Primary School shared its practice in enabling children to attend Mass in the parish during the school week as well as monthly Family Masses. The Family Mass in St Joseph's Parish, Clarkston, was shared in *Centred on Christ* in August 2022. Other schools have also encouraged children and their families to return to Mass and shared their practice at the Joint Meeting of Clergy and Head Teachers on Strengthening Home-School-Parish Links (November 2023).

Schools may wish to focus on the theme of the Eucharist using the PowerPoint assembly on 'Five Loaves and Two Fish' by Father John Morrison, Vicar Episcopal for Youth and Vocations. (Diocesan TEAMS /Education Resources for Schools/Prayers and Assemblies/Themes April to June.)

Perhaps schools could discuss with their chaplains how they could introduce **Eucharistic Adoration** - even on a small scale initially.



May

1 May Feast of St Joseph the Worker

St. Joseph has two feast days. The first is 19 March: Joseph, the Husband of Mary. The second is 1 May: Joseph, the Worker. It would be opportune to highlight the latter feast day which Pope Pius XII established in 1955. It allows young people to relate to St Joseph through their work in school and at home and, like St Joseph, invite God to be part of their endeavours. At this time, when many young people aged 16-24 face unemployment, we think of St Joseph who would have had to search for work when the Holy Family fled to Egypt. Like present day refugees and asylum seekers, St Joseph had to ensure the safety of Mary and the Child Jesus by escaping from King Herod.

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“An aspect of Saint Joseph that has been emphasized from the time of the first social Encyclical, Pope Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum*, is his relation to work. Saint Joseph was a carpenter who earned an honest living to provide for his family. From him, Jesus learned the value, the dignity and the joy of what it means to eat bread that is the fruit of one’s own labour.” (Pope Francis, *Patris Corde* - #6 A Working Father)

Father John Morrison, Vicar Episcopal for Youth and Vocations, has provided a PowerPoint and notes for an **Assembly on St Joseph**. These can be found in Diocesan TEAMS /Education Resources for Schools/Prayers and Assemblies/Themes April to June. In addition, **Missio** has provided resources for Levels 1 and 2 on St Joseph: <https://www.missioscotland.com/schools>



Prayer to St Joseph the Worker

Joseph, by the work of your hands
and the sweat of your brow,
you supported Jesus and Mary,
and had the Son of God as your fellow worker.

Teach me to work as you did,
with patience and perseverance, for God and
for those whom God has given me to support.

Teach me to see in my fellow students
the Christ who desires to be in them,
that I may always be charitable and forbearing
towards all.

*(Extract of a prayer in “Devotions to Saint Joseph” by
Brian Moore, S.J. published by the Society of St. Paul.)*

<https://teachingcatholickids.com/st-joseph-saints-for-kids/>

A Simple Invocation

Perhaps at the end of morning prayers a short prayer could be added:

*St Joseph, protector of the Child Jesus and
Patron of the Church, pray for us.*

or

*St, Joseph, patron of workers, guide me in my
work at school and at home.*

Children’s Prayer to St. Joseph

St Joseph,
watch over me
and care for me
just as you cared for
the child Jesus;
and by your help,
may I come to know
your Son,
and so grow
in strength
and wisdom
and the favour of God.
Amen.

(Continued from page 20)

Devotions to Our Lady

May Devotions are a longstanding tradition in the Church with a focus on our relationship with the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is a time when we recall that on the Cross, Jesus said to Mary, "Woman, here is your son."; and to St John, "Here is your mother." (John 19:26-27). Since the time of the apostles, the Church has seen this as Jesus giving His mother Mary to be mother of the Church and to each of us as our mother. (<https://catholic-link.org/>) You may wish to use The Litany of Loreto - <https://childrensrosary.blogspot.com/2012/08/litany-to-blessed-virgin-mary.html>. A hymn that could be included in an assembly - *Hail Mary - Gentle Woman* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RERoQ1biLdE>

Consecration to Jesus through Mary (P7/P6)

Bishop John invites all P7 pupils and their families to join him in a 33 Day Consecration to Jesus through Mary. It will begin on 29 April and end on 1 June. The actual Consecration will take place on 1 June. **You may wish to open this to P6 who could lead Rosary Groups when they progress to P7.**

We still have some books available (free of charge to schools) from the Diocesan Offices (curia@rcdop.org.uk). Full details and hyperlinks can be found in *Centred on Christ*, January 2023.



Rosary for Peace (Aid to the Church in Need)

Each year **Aid to the Church in Need** invites Primary Schools to participate in their **Rosary for Peace (13-17 May)** and the associated **Maisie Milk initiative** as a fun and educational tool to fundraise for Christian refugees and displaced families around the world. <https://acnuk.org/resource/maisy-milk/>

Rosary Groups

All Saints Primary School shared practice on its Rosary Group in the August 2022 edition of *Centred on Christ*. Information can also be found at www.childrensrosary.org. More recently, Our Lady of Peace Primary has set up a Rosary Group.

June

Sacred Heart

The Church dedicates the month of June to special devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Solemnity of the Sacred Heart this year falls on 7 June. God is Love and the Sacred Heart of Jesus - present on earth in the Blessed Sacrament - is the human manifestation of God's Love for each of us. "The Heart of Jesus is the ultimate symbol of God's mercy." (Pope Francis, 2013)

We are invited in this month to consider the charity of the heart of Jesus and seek to grow in love for Him and for those around us.

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Perhaps we could explore with children:

- words which describe the heart of Jesus (e.g. love, compassion, care, forgiveness and mercy);
- what wounds His heart: (e.g. bullying, name -calling, holding grudges, spreading gossip about people, excluding people from your group of friends).
- How we can 'repair' those wounds (e.g. through spending time in prayer, doing things to show we are sorry, performing acts of kindness).

"Dear Sacred Heart of Jesus, I love You so much and I give You my heart. Help me to love my neighbour as a child of God. Help me to love myself as a child of God. AMEN."

<https://www.catholicmom.com/articles/2011/03/05/sacred-heart-of-jesus-lesson-plan>

Father John Morrison has produced a PowerPoint and notes for a Sacred Heart Assembly. (TEAMS/Education Resources for Schools/Themes for Prayer and Assemblies/April-June.

Holy Spirit

Pentecost Sunday this year falls on 19 May. **Father John Morrison has produced a PowerPoint and notes for an Assembly on the Holy Spirit. (TEAMS/Education Resources for Schools/Themes for Prayer and Assemblies/April-June.**

During this period when our P7 Confirmandi are preparing to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation, we remember them especially in our prayers.

God our Father,

Watch over our Confirmandi as they prepare to receive your Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation.

We pray that they will continue to be strengthened in their relationship with You.

Please guide them on their journey as they draw nearer to You,

Increase in them the fruit of your Spirit:

the spirit of wisdom and understanding,

the spirit of love, patience and gentleness,

the spirit of wonder and true holiness. Amen.

We pray to the Holy Spirit:

That love may fill our hearts so that we are open to others ...

Response: Come, Holy Spirit, help us to transform our world

That all your children may find joy in their lives...

That wars may cease, and peace may come...

That all peoples may learn to be patient and tolerant...

That those who suffer may experience kindness...

That generosity may be given to those in need...

That we may be faithful to the Lord's command to love all our sisters and brothers...

That vulnerable and forgotten people may receive gentleness and respect...

That we may be able to put others first to help them in their need...

**"The fruit of the spirit is
love, joy, peace,
patience, kindness,
generosity,
faithfulness, gentleness
and self control."**

Galatians 5:22-25

CAFOD
Catholic Agency for
Overseas Development

Diocese of Paisley - Education and Youth Calendar: 2023-24						
Month	Date	Day	Time	Event	Location	Target Group
APR	17	Wed	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	Confirmandi - St Thomas', St Mark's & St John's
APR	18	Thu	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	Confirmandi - St Charles', St Peter's & St Paul's
APR	24	Wed	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	Confirmandi - St Cadoc's & St Clare's
APR	25	Thu	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	Confirmandi - St Catherine's, St Fergus, St James', St John Ogilvie & St Mary's
APR	29	Mon		33 Day Diocesan Consecration to Jesus through Mary begins (ends on 1 June)	School-based	P7 pupils
MAY	1-31			ACN Rosary for Peace	School-based	P1-P7
MAY	1	Wed	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	St Anne's, St James' & St John Bosco
MAY	2	Thu	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	OLM & St Joseph's
MAY	9	Thu		Ascension Day	School-based	P1-S6
MAY	12	Sun	2pm - with Mass at 4pm	Family Day on theme of Mary (Marriage and Family Commission)	St John's Church, Barrhead	Open to all
MAY	15	Wed	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	OLOP, St Anthony's, St David's, St Fillan's & St Margaret's
MAY	16	Thu	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	Craigmarloch, St Francis', St John's, St Michael's & St Colm's
MAY	19	Sun	2-5pm	Primary Day - Pentecost	St Mary's, Paisley	P4-P7
MAY	22	Wed	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	All Saints, St Mary's & St Patrick's
MAY	23	Thu	6.30pm	Celebration of Confirmation	St Mirin's Cathedral	St Andrew's, St Joseph's, St Ninian's and St Joseph's & St Patrick's Parish
MAY	26	Sun	2-5pm	Day for Altar Servers	Diocesan Offices	Altar Servers
JUN	3	Mon	TBC	National Caritas Awards Ceremony	Clyde Auditorium	Caritas Students
JUN	5	Wed	1pm	Mass for Pupils from ASN Schools	St Mirin's Cathedral	
JUN	11	Tue	9.45-3pm	Teaching in Catholic Schools	Cathedral Halls	S6
JUN	12	Wed	4.30pm	Thanksgiving Mass	St Mirin's Cathedral	All teaching and support staff – particularly NQTs

CLPL (April to June)			
Course	Date	Time	Venue
Paisley Diocesan CHAPS Conference	26.04.24	9.30 - 3.30pm	Gleddoch House
Principal Teachers of Religious Education	8.05.24	9.30 - 12.00	Diocesan Centre
Overview of S1 R.E. Course (Books 2 and 3) – for all S1 R.E. teachers	4.06.24	10am - 2.30pm	Diocesan Offices
Primary RE Co-ordinator Meeting	5.06.24	4pm - 5.15pm	Diocesan Centre
Primary RE Co-ordinator Meeting	6.06.24	4pm - 5.15pm	All Saints Primary
Thanksgiving Mass	12.06.24	4.30pm	Cathedral

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