



The news and information bulletin from the A & B Diocesan Education Service



November 2017



Director's Letter

Dear Colleagues,

As I write this letter it is a cold, sunny Sunday and we have just celebrated the two minutes silence for Armistice Day. I have been moved by the different ways in which primary and secondary schools across the diocese have marked Remembrance Day and have commemorated the ultimate sacrifice made by so many to enable us to live in peace. As Catholics we are fortunate not only to live in peace but also to practise our religion without fear of persecution - a privilege denied many of our counterparts across the world. With this in mind, it is even more incumbent upon us to make Catholic education the very best it can be, in celebration of the freedoms and privileges we have been afforded.

One of the key opportunities we have been afforded as a Catholic community in the past few years is the establishment of Catholic multi academy trusts (MATs). It is no accident that Arundel and Brighton MATs are known as Catholic Education Trusts (CETs) - the term is a clear statement of intent. By now all Headteachers and Chairs will be aware of the revision to the diocesan strategy for Academies, and the rationale behind the reduction from five CETs to two. The Diocese remains as committed as ever to our model of academies in Arundel and Brighton and, whilst the number of CETs has changed, the growth and further development of Bosco and Xavier CETs continue to be a key priority for the Diocese. The revised diocesan strategy presents a wonderful opportunity for the development of two outstanding Catholic Education Trusts within the South-East region and both the Diocese and the Regional Schools Commissioner's Office, are excited about the future!

We anticipate that both CETs will grow over the coming months, further increasing the capacity for robust school to school support across the diocese. The collaborative work of the Diocesan Education Service and the Diocesan Academies Strategic Board will continue apace to ensure that both CETs are places of excellence, strength and depth, and that every Catholic school is protected. We will be contacting you in the next few days with details of meetings for schools, but in the meantime please rest assured that the Diocese is excited about and committed to next steps for Xavier and Bosco CETs.

The financial arrangements for school improvement have changed significantly, and almost all funding streams now come through the Regional Schools Commissioners' Office, rather than through the Local Authorities as in the past. Regional priorities are now agreed and triaged by a SRIB (Sub-regional Improvement Board) which meets approximately every half-term. Local authorities and dioceses are members of the SRIBs, alongside the Teaching School Council and the DfE. Multi-academy Trusts, Teaching Schools and Local Authorities are entitled to bid for funds to undertake school improvement in support of agreed priorities. Dioceses are not entitled to bid for funds, so we have a key role in working closely with other parties to ensure Catholic schools are included in bids wherever appropriate. In support of this, we now have access to diocesan schools' data and have established robust internal processes to screen schools regularly. As a result, the diocese will be contacting schools individually where data suggests a school would be eligible for inclusion in a particular bid, or indicates a vulnerability which may benefit from further support. Whilst this has not traditionally been a diocesan role, the education landscape has shifted seismically, and all dioceses now have a fundamental role to play in ensuring that Catholic schools have access to the best available support in an ever-changing context.

With continued thanks for all you do for the children and young people in your care,



Marie Ryan

Bishop Richard's talks at the Headteachers' Retreat at Worth on 29 September

The transcripts of Bishop Richard's talks at the Headteachers' Retreat Day at Worth Abbey are appended (at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2) to this edition of *The Alpha Beta*.

We trust these will be helpful - in particular to those heads who attended, to those headteachers who were not able to attend, and to Chairs of Governors.

Crisis Fund

Early next term we will be establishing a 'Crisis Fund', which will be administered through the Catholic Children's Society (CCS). Parish priests and Headteachers will be able to apply for a one-off payment for individuals in extreme hardship where no other avenues of funding are available. Bishop Richard recently wrote to parishes requesting that this year's Crib Offerings go to help establish the fund. Once established, we will be asking schools to support the Crisis Fund through helping to raise money. We will give you more details nearer the time but this half-term's *Alpha Beta* provides an opportunity to raise this in anticipation. The application, which will have to be signed by the Head Teacher, will be assessed on a case by case basis by members of CCS's management team. This often involves phoning the Headteacher/Parish Priest just to get additional information to ensure they have a good understanding of the family's circumstances. At this point CCS staff can advise schools to signpost families to other support services that may be appropriate, to ensure there is no duplication and that the Crisis Fund is only used when no other help is available. Payment is made through the Head Teacher or Parish Priest and a decision is usually given the same day as the request.

Westminster Diocese recently used their own Crisis Fund to support the victims of the Grenfell Tower tragedy. On the morning of the Grenfell fire and for a few days afterwards, Crisis Fund was used to give money to four Headteachers in Catholic schools whose parents were coming in to school with no money and no means to get any. They were families who had either escaped the tower or had been evacuated from the area and were unable to go to their homes to get cheque books, ID etc. School registers were used to confirm the addresses of parents. It was several days before the local authority started to give money to families who were absolutely desperate and traumatised.

Admissions



In mid-September, the Education Service emailed schools informing them of a newly developed online Admissions Tutorial which was available on the Education Service website at: <http://www.abeducationservice.org.uk/News/View/142>. We would urge all schools to use it.

The Admissions Tutorial is designed to help all schools (whether consulting or not) and to walk them through the process of setting admission arrangements for 2019-20. It clarifies the statutory deadlines and highlights any necessary date changes or other amendments.

The Tutorial requested schools that are planning changes to their admission arrangements (and therefore needing to consult) to contact Simon Parr at the Education Service by 31 October 2017.

It also requested schools that are not planning to make changes (and therefore not consulting) to contact Simon Parr confirming this (i.e just date amends) by latest 30 November 2017.

At the time of the distribution of *The Alpha Beta*, the Education Service has so far been contacted by approximately half of the schools in the Diocese.

We would ask schools that have not yet informed the Education Service of the status of their 2019-20 admission arrangements to please contact Simon Parr as soon as possible, so that any appropriate changes can be made and any statutory deadlines met, as appropriate.

Contact: Simon Parr (simon.parr@dabnet.org) 01293 511130.

Data Request to Primary and Secondary Schools and Academies

We are sending out emails (titled 'Data Request') to schools / academies in the week commencing 13 November to request data which is really important for effective place planning in the diocese.

In the last academic year, schools were very helpful in providing the data requested. We would be very grateful if the requested information can be returned to us **by the end of November 2017**.

With many thanks in advance for your assistance.

Contact: Simon Parr (simon.parr@dabnet.org) 01293 511130

Children in Need

BBC Children in Need's vision is to change the lives of disadvantaged children and young people in the UK.

They articulate a vision, that every child in the UK should have a safe, happy and secure childhood and the chance to reach their potential. They aim to realise this vision by supporting, promoting

and publicising work that addresses the challenges that children and young people face and builds their skills and resilience. Their focus is on children and young people who are disadvantaged and they value work that empowers them and extends their choices in life.

The Catholic Education Service (CES) has received queries from schools wanting advice on whether they can allow pupils to take part in fundraising activities for Children in Need. These activities are often popular but concerns have been expressed that some of the money raised may be spent on either providing or promoting services contradictory to Catholic church teaching.

The CES has raised these concerns with Children in Need. Please see below the response from Children in Need on these matters:

"You can find information and guidance on the type of projects BBC Children in Need funds in the Guidance section of our website. BBC Children in Need does not fund projects for pregnancy testing; or advice, information or counselling on pregnancy choices."

The Diocese of Arundel and Brighton is aware that many schools would like to allow their pupils to take part in fundraising activities and having considered lists of projects supported is not aware of any that would cause concern.

Analyse School performance replaces RAISEonline

Governors may be aware that the DfE has recently built Analyse School Performance, the replacement to RAISE Online. The new service allows governors to have their own user accounts to easily identify the data that frames discussions around school performance and priorities. It is also the same view of annual performance that Ofsted inspectors use.

This is the time of year where 2017 results are being loaded for your school. As such, now is the right time for you to be asking your school to get your account set up. We really encourage governors to access the service.

In relation to the above, the DfE issued the following:

Analyse school performance (ASP) update

We are pleased to announce that KSI and Phonics data for 2017 is now available in ASP (the replacement service to RAISEonline).

KS2 Children Looked After data, including disadvantaged breakdowns, has also been added to the service. Please note: users will need to have school named access (through their Secure Access account) in order to view the new pupil list reports.

Access to ASP is via Secure Access; help with logging in is available [here](#).

Coming next: *provisional KS4 data will be added to ASP at the **end of November / first week in December**.*

In order to get access, the DfE recommend you ask your school the following:

"Please can the 'Approver' of Secure Access accounts within the school set me up with a governor role account to Analyse School Performance. If the Secure Access Approver within school is unclear how to do it, then guidance for them is available [here](#) . If the school is unclear who the Approver user is, then it is often the Business Manager, or the person who provides returns such as school census to DfE. If they are still unsure, then the school can ask to know who the Approver is within their school by submitting a [helpdesk request](#) "

Once you have your account set up, a short demonstration video is available [here](#). Whilst the demo is based on a secondary school the key functions of viewing data in detail, filtering, and scatterplots are entirely consistent across primary as well.

Building Matters

LCVAP 17-18

Many thanks to those schools which have claimed their retentions from projects done last year – now is a good time to close these out, as the ESFA team get very busy after this month.

LCVAP 18-19

The announcement in October that LCVAP rates for next year will remain the same as for this year was a welcome (and unexpected) development, slightly tempered by the news that the ESFA are reviewing the whole principle of capital allocations for years after 2018-19. This does enable us to analyse the bids received with some confidence; a panel of Headteachers will be prioritising these in the new year. As ever, it looks as if bids exceed the funding available in all four LA areas.

Healthy pupils capital funding (HPCF)

You may have seen reference to this - additional capital funding (totalling £100m) available for 2018-19 only, to improve access to facilities for physical activity, healthy eating, mental health and wellbeing and medical conditions. The allocation of HPCF will mirror the arrangements for school condition funding – VA schools will receive HPCF through LCVAP. More details on the purpose of the funding and guidance on how schools can use it will be published “shortly” according to the DfE. However – with some eight million pupils in the school system, this is about £12 per pupil on average (say £9 per pupil age-weighted) so we can't see many grandiose schemes coming to fruition. We will let you know when there is more information!

Condition Data Collection

As this report is prepared, the ESFA have just written to say:

“We have identified some data quality issues in a number of the reports which have contributed to the delay in releasing the reports. We are working with our CDC partner organisations to resolve these issues and deliver the best possible level of accuracy before making reports available to schools and responsible bodies via the CDC Portal.”

When the reports are finally made available, we would be very interested to receive feedback from those schools which have been surveyed as to the perceived accuracy and value of the exercise. In light of the forthcoming review of capital funding, this is especially important – we do anticipate that we will have the opportunity to feed into the review, and the quality of the data being used to inform decision making is clearly key.

Diarise now: Business Managers' Forum 20 February 2018

We had a good meeting on 13 September, when we welcomed some of the architects who work with our schools to talk about a variety of topics of current relevance. The next meeting is 20 February when we have someone from the DfE schools engagement team facilitating a session on “Building Procurement Capability in the Education Sector - Train the Trainer”. Let us know if there is anything else you would like to include on the agenda!

Mark Brunet, Buildings Officer (Mark.Brunet@dabnet.org)

Note to Clerks

From 1st September 2017 only yellow Foundation Governor Application forms should be used. Purple forms are no longer valid. All applications should now be on Yellow forms. Please destroy any old purple forms that you hold.

Clerks' Forum

The next Clerks Forum will take place on:

**Tuesday 22 May, 2018,
4.00pm – 6.00pm (light refreshments will be provided)
at DABCEC, Crawley.**

Details of the agenda will be communicated nearer the time. Please put the date in your diaries. These forums have proved to be very useful, offering an opportunity to share information, update on changes/developments and to network with other clerks in Catholic Schools/ Academies.

Please make every effort to book onto these forums.

Please remember to update the Education Service with any changes to the Governing body e.g. Staff governors, Parent governors LA governors etc. Also please notify us of any changes to the position of Chair or Vice Chair with full contact details.

N.B. Foundation Governors are appointed by the Diocese. Any resignations should be addressed to Marie Ryan, Director, and sent by the clerk to the Education Service at the following address: Marie Ryan, Director, Education Service, 4 Southgate Drive, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 6RP.

Standards in Religious Education – Pilot 2017/18

In the summer term of 2016, the Catholic Education Service (CES) and National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA) sent out a questionnaire to all schools, seeking their views on the document Levels of Attainment in Religious Education and on the future of assessment of Religious Education in Catholic schools. The NBRIA Curriculum and Development Working Group have developed an 'End of Phase Expectations Grid' as a first draft response to the views expressed in the questionnaire.

The CES are asking a selection of Catholic schools across the country to pilot the use of this grid, in the Autumn and Spring term of 2017-18 and the feedback from this pilot will inform the final shape of this standards grid and the larger document of which it will become a part.

In the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton, we are hoping to secure a representative from each of our deaneries to take part in this pilot. Schools taking part in the pilot will be asked to attend meetings and commit to: planning sequences of lessons, giving feedback to pupils on how well they have achieved and what they need to do next and consider how they would populate school data systems to track and record progress. They will also be asked to develop a way of reporting to governors, parents/carers and the diocese.

We would also like schools to work with their diocesan adviser to use the pilot to generate exemplar pieces of work that could be used nationally.

The draft 'End of Phase Expectations Grid' is an evolution of the Levels of Attainment in Religious Education. The survey made it clear that schools wanted an assessment tool that allowed for greater parity with other subjects in the curriculum. However, they also did not want to lose the driver words and attainment targets they had been using thus far. It was also important to secondary schools that the new standards document was a clear progression towards GCSE and A Level. The 'End of Phase Expectations Grid' is not yet a Bishops' Conference document. It is a draft document that contains one piece of a larger piece of work. Its use in a pilot has been approved by the Bishops' Department for Education and Formation. For all schools not participating in the pilot, the documents that currently determine standards and curriculum in Religious Education in Catholic schools (Levels and the RECD 2012) remain in force.

The pilot began just after October half term and should be completed by Easter 2018. An electronic survey will be undertaken at this point to inform the next steps in the reform of both the standards and the curriculum documents of the Bishops' Conference. This will be sent to you by the Diocesan Education Service and must be completed by the end of April 2018. We will keep you informed throughout the term of the pilot and update you through the Education Service website and courses/training.

It is an exciting time for us to be fully involved with the development of a new assessment tool for RE in our Catholic schools.

First World Day of the Poor – 19 November 2017

Established by Pope Francis in *Misericordia et misera* (2016) the first World Day of the Poor is on

Sunday 19 November, the 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time as preparation for Solemnity of our Christ the King.

Bishop Richard is celebrating Mass at a special event for young people (11-15 year olds) at Arundel Cathedral on this day and this event will give those present the opportunity to reflect on how poverty is at the heart of the Gospel and that, as long as it exists, there can be no justice or social peace.

The Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) have prepared very useful resources, including liturgy resources, on their website: <http://www.csan.org.uk/worlddayofthepoor>

World Meeting of Families (WMOF2018) – Dublin, 21-26 August 2018



Dublin has been chosen by Pope Francis to host the next World Meeting of Families from 21-26 August 2018, guided by the theme “The Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World”.

Held every three years, this major international event brings together families from across the world to celebrate, pray and reflect upon the central importance of marriage/ the family as the cornerstone of our lives, of society and of the Church.

The event has at its heart the following key moments:

- 21 August 2018, a National Opening of WMOF2018.
- 22 - 24 August 2018: A three-day Congress. Each day will reflect on the theme “The Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World” chosen by the Holy Father and will include an enriching programme for adults of keynote speakers, workshops, talks, testimonies and discussions; an engaging and exciting programme for young people as well as fun activities for children. The Congress will also include daily celebration of the Eucharist, prayerful activities, exhibitions, cultural events and musical performances.
- Saturday 25 August 2018: A Festival of Families, comprising a reflective concert style event within a prayerful and joyful atmosphere, in which personal stories of faith will be shared by families from all continents.
- Sunday 26 August 2018: WMOF2018 will close with a solemn Eucharistic Celebration.

The Diocese is organising a pilgrimage to the event, with a limited number of places. For information about joining Bishop Richard on this pilgrimage, please contact the Diocesan Pastoral Team at wmoF2018@dabcec.org Alternatively, you can speak to your Parish Priest who will provide you with an application form.

If you wish to attend independently, visit the ticket section of the WMOF2018 website at www.worldmeeting2018.ie/tickets for information on how to register online for the Congress and other events. Additional information and support is also available to assist with registration, accommodation, tours and transport in Ireland for individuals and groups.

Wintershall



We would urge you to experience Wintershall's annual production of *The Life of Christ* if you have not already done so.

The beautiful grounds of Wintershall form the backdrop for the most wonderful story ever to be told. Enthusiastic actors and real-life animals form the cast, engaging with the audience with thought-provoking messages that captivate the heart.

The day is filled with laughter, bleating sheep and the large crowd is fed by the disciples with the most wonderful bread! Emotions are high, particularly at the end when Jesus speaks to the audience with a message that is as relevant today as it was 2000 years ago.

To understand the depth/impact of this mesmerising performance, students need to experience it personally. It is a great way of evangelising through drama in language that is accessible to all ages.

The next performances of *The Life of Christ* take place from 19-23 June 2018. Wintershall's next event is the wonderful Nativity performed in their outside Barn theatre from 13-17 December 2017. More details are available at: <https://www.wintershall-estate.com/events/wintershall-nativity-play/>

Courses taking place in the Spring Term 2018

A summary of the courses for the months of January to March 2018 include:

SPRING TERM 2018

January

Thursday	11	Preparation for Section 48 – School Self-Evaluation	14.00 – 16.30	DABCEC
Monday	15	School Leaders' Briefing for Chairs of Governors, Vice Chair of Governors, Headteachers	10.00 – 12.00	DABCEC
Tuesday	16	Come and See Planning Workshop EYFS / Key Stage 1 Class teachers	10.00 – 12.00	DABCEC
Tuesday	23	Support for School Chaplains (Day 2 of 3)	9.30 – 15.15	TBC
Thursday	25	Come and See Planning Workshop Key Stage 2 Class teachers	10.00 – 12.00	DABCEC

February

Thursday	1	Primary Headteachers' Conference 'Formation for Mission'	9.30 – 15.15	DABCEC
Thursday	8	Aspiring Catholic Leaders - Development Day for Middle Leaders	9.30 – 15.15	DABCEC
Friday	9	Primary RE through the Creative Arts	9.30 – 15.15	DABCEC
Tuesday	20	School Business Managers' Forum	10.00 – 12.30	DABCEC
Friday	23	RSE / PSHE Conference For Headteachers, Senior Leaders, RSE / PSHE Subject Leaders	9.30 – 15.15	DABCEC

March

Friday	2	Primary RE Coordinators' CPD Day (Day 2 of 3)	9.30 – 15.15	DABCEC
Thursday	8	Secondary Heads of RE CPD Day (Day 2 of 3)	9.30 – 15.15	DABCEC
Wednesday	21	Support and training for NQTs (Newly Qualified Teachers) in Secondary Schools who teach Religious Education (Day 2 of 2)	9.30 – 15.15	DABCEC
Thursday	22	Support and training for Primary NQTs (Day 2 of 3)	9.30 – 15.15	DABCEC

Full details of all courses are listed in the Education Service CPD Handbook and on the Diocesan Education Service website at: www.abeducationservice.org.uk/Courses/.

Please note that there is a need to book these courses before attendance so that we know the number of attendees prior to the course/event taking place. Please do not turn up for courses without booking.

If you have any query concerning courses, please call the Education Service on 01293 511130.

Recent Appointments

NEWLY APPOINTED HEADTEACHERS		
Name	School	With Effect From:
Jill Keany Interim Executive Headteacher Mr Mike Calnan (Acting Head of School)	St Joseph's Catholic Primary school, Guildford	September 2017
Rachel Kershaw Interim Headteacher (covering maternity leave)	Cottesmore St Mary Catholic Primary School, Hove	September 2017
Catherine Burnham	Cardinal Newman Catholic Primary School, Hersham	September 2017
Gemma Irvine (Acting Headteacher)	St Mary Catholic Primary School, Worthing	September 2017
Tamsyn Lawlor	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Redhill	January 2018
Pete Byrne	Chatsmore Catholic High School, Worthing	September 2017

NEWLY APPOINTED DEPUTY HEADTEACHERS		
Name	School	With Effect From:
Nicholas Stopps	The Marist Catholic Primary School, West Byfleet	September 2017
Gemma Nunes	St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary school Brighton	September 2017
Georgina Morganti	St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School, Woking	September 2017
Mr Tom Collins Acting Deputy Head)	St Joseph's Catholic Primary school, Guildford	September 2017

Current Vacancies

VACANCIES		
Post	School	With Effect From:
Deputy Head	St Anne's Catholic Primary School, Banstead	January 2018
Deputy Head	St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School, Crawley	January 2018

Appendix I

First transcript from Bishop Richard's talk at the Headteachers' Retreat Day
Worth Abbey, 29th September 2019

Teach them all the commands I gave you and know that I am with you always, yes, to the end of time.¹

That text from which I have quoted as the heading of this talk comes right at the end of Matthew's Gospel. It is the moment, before the Ascension, when Jesus gives to the Apostles the Mission that will always be at the heart of the Church. It is the command to baptise and teach.

A few weeks ago, I was asked to give a Day of Recollection to the Education Service Team. As part of that day, I looked at some words that are in our common usage, in connection with schools and with the mission of the Church. One of those words was 'teach'. The Latin verb *docere* – teach. In the old English this becomes *taecon*, which also means to show. Perhaps this is helpful when we come to think of the task given to the church and, therefore, to our schools. We are not simply to tell people things – we must show them.

What, then, must we show them? If we think of the commands that Jesus has given us, we must think of the two-fold command:

“One of them put a question: ‘Master, which is the greatest commandment of the Law? Jesus said, ‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This the first commandment. The second resembles it: You must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two hang the whole Law and the Prophets also.’”²

As we know, Jesus is not negating the Ten Commandments – but summing them up. He says himself that he has not come to abolish the law.³ The love of God and the love of neighbour – these are the very simple commands that the Lord has given to us. All that the Church teaches and calls upon us all to do flow from, and lead us to, this two-fold command. This is what we teach, this is what we show.

If we look again at the text from Matthew. *Docere* has, as its counterpart as it were, *discere*. To Learn. From this comes *discipulus* – or *discipula* – disciple. The disciple is the one who learns. Are we not, therefore, in the business of showing the two-fold commandment, to disciples – learners? I have often been struck by the term ‘practicing Catholic’. I know practice means ‘what you do’ – but maybe there is a hint of ‘not having got there yet’. There is a significance here. We practice – live out our Catholic lives – because we are constantly preparing for the Kingdom.

These two commandments and the values, the way of life, the practices, that flow from them are, ultimately about the Kingdom of God. A few weeks ago, at a meeting with some of the younger clergy of the Diocese, one of them reminded us all that we are about the salvation of souls. It is all about the Kingdom.

¹ Mt. 28:20.

² Mt. 22:34-40.

³ Mt. 5:17.

In the celebration of the Mass, we pray:

“Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.”⁴

The Blessed Hope and the Coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ... Are we ready for the Kingdom of God? It is, for me, a blessed hope. Can I say, with St. Ignatius of Loyola that if the Lord appeared right now, I would just keep sweeping the corridor? Perhaps there is work to be done here in the life of every one of us.

But that is not all, if I – we – are to show, to model the commands the Lord has given us, this will demand constant watchfulness and a great deal of perseverance. St. Peter can help us here:

“ To attain this, you will have to do the utmost yourselves, adding goodness to that faith that you have, understanding to your goodness, self-control to your understanding, patience to your self-control, true devotion to your patience, kindness towards your fellow men to your devotion, and, this kindness, love. If you have a generous supply of these, they will not leave you ineffectual or unproductive; they will bring you to a real knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”⁵

This is quite some list: faith, goodness, understanding, self-control, patience, true devotion, kindness, love. We must live these all at once, too. There is an image that is often used by spiritual writers. It is based on the scriptural image of Jacob’s ladder. John Climacus talks of the Ladder of Perfection. St. Benedict, in his Rule, speaks of the Ladder of Humility. The image is a clear one – but I have often wondered if there is a problem with it – for we do not climb from one rung to the next, leaving one virtue forgotten in pursuit of the other. We need to cultivate all of them all of the time. Perhaps the ladder is a rope ladder and as we move from rung to rung, we pull the other rungs with us!

The goal, as St. Peter points out is the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is fundamental and is, surely, the *raison d’être* of the Catholic School. How often have we spoken of the principle that every lesson in our schools should be imbued with the wonder and love of God? How often is this true in fact? Can we truly say of ourselves that we ‘show’ the commands that that Lord has given us to all in our care?

It is worth noting, I think, that St. Peter refers to the Faith that you have. Faith is a gift. This we all know and we rejoice that it has been given to us. It is given freely and it is also possible, of course, for us to reject it. But St. Peter speaks of us having this faith. We then build upon it, insofar as we are open to the gifts of the Holy Spirit – for this is the list that St. Peter is giving us. We are “living stones, building a spiritual house.”⁶ Those in our care are called to be so as well and it must surely be the case that if we truly lived up to the call of the Gospel ourselves, they would take their place as parts of this spiritual house, for the message of the Gospel is irresistible.

At present, I am celebrating a lot of Induction Masses for new Parish Priests. Induction Masses provide an opportunity for the parish community to reflect on the responsibilities that are the joys of the parish priest. They are numerous and weighty. In the final analysis, these responsibilities concern the salvation of souls. The same is true of the Bishop – the responsibility for the salvation of the souls of this Diocese lies with me.

What of the Headteacher? This is more than targets, Ofsted inspections, league tables. Does the salvation of the soul sitting on the other side of your desk depend upon you? Perhaps not entirely, but

⁴ Roman Missal, Communion Prayers.

⁵ 2 Pt. 1:5-8.

⁶ 1 Peter 2:5.

at least in part. The modeling of the commandments of love, the living out of those virtues given us by St. Peter, will certainly contribute in a major way to the salvation of the students in your care.

The task is not an easy one, for sure! However, we are not alone: “Know that I am with you always, yes, to the end of time.”⁷ It is necessary for us to be very conscious that the Lord is with us in our work, for he has called us to it and he will never abandon us:

“If we have died with him, then we shall live with him.
If we hold firm, then we shall reign with him.
If we disown him, then he will disown us.
We may be unfaithful, but he is always faithful
for he cannot disown his own self.”⁸

Christ is first faithful to us – our fidelity, our faithfulness, is but a living out of the faithfulness of Christ Jesus. It is his faithfulness that we model, for are we not simply the “earthenware vessels that hold the treasure.”⁹ A constant awareness of this truth will prevent pride and will ensure that we “show” Christ and not ourselves. Surely this is the best possible model for the teacher, for it is the model that Jesus Himself shows us, emptying himself completely out of love, that we might know the wonder of the Kingdom, the destiny that is ours.

To bring those in our care to the Kingdom – is this not the goal for which we have been called?

⁷ Mt. 28:20.

⁸ 2 Tim. 2:11-13.

⁹ 2 Cor. 4:7.

Appendix 2

Second transcript from Bishop Richard's talk at the Headteachers' Retreat Day
Worth Abbey, 29th September 2019

And he set himself to teach them at some length.¹⁰

This morning, we shared in a time of *lectio divina* on the text of Mark 6:30-44 – the miracle of the Loaves and Fishes, the Feeding of the 5000.

This morning we looked at the Mission, from the point of view of the role given to us to bring others to be the living stones that form the spiritual house by showing them the two-fold command, lived out in a way so vibrant that only Christ is seen.

Now we turn to Formation – and this passage from the Gospel is a model for us.

This passage begins with the return of the Apostles from a mission. They had been doing and teaching themselves. Perhaps, at this point, they were ready for CPD! Jesus certainly offers them a rest, for they are overworked with the numbers coming to them. They head for Dalmanutha, on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. The Benedictine Monastery of Tabgha is situated there. It is a place where there is fresh water, for there are seven springs close to the spot. The name Tabgha is a corruption of the greek, heptapagon – seven springs. The grounds of the monastery still provide a place of stillness and a certain solitude on the lakeside. One might imagine that Jesus would have spent time with the Apostles, teaching them quietly away from the crowd, as he does on other occasions in the Gospels – such as the time at Caserea Philippi (a spa resort in those days).

The reality turns out to be a different one, for they have been headed off at the pass, as it were. The place is overrun with people. Jesus' response to this scene is important here: pity, on account of their lack of direction. His response – teaching, and at some length.

I would like to draw attention here to two levels already emerging. The formation of the formators – Jesus bringing his Apostles aside for time to reflect on the work they had been doing and to find rest; the formation of those who had no direction. We have here the image of the shepherd.

“I am the good shepherd:
the good shepherd is the one who lays down his life for his sheep.”¹¹

Jesus uses this image of the shepherd going after the lost sheep:

“What many among you, with a hundred sheep, losing one, would not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the missing one till he found it?”¹²

These 5000 are lost, searching, looking for meaning in the lives, for a reason for their very existence. They have already heard the Lord, but they want more. Some may simply have been following a crowd and for them, this may have been the first encounter with the Lord. This is formation at a different level, and with a very different class size!

We do not know what Jesus said on this occasion, but we do know that he spoke for a very long time. Perhaps we have a glimpse here of the time the Lord had taken – unrecorded in any great detail – in his formation of the Apostles. Just think of the many hours spent with the twelve as they walked from place to place, the many days unrecorded by the Gospel writers, when Jesus would have formed the formators to the point at which they themselves could go out to teach and prepare the way for him. Even then, they did not fully understand and we see the consequences of this all through the Gospels

¹⁰ Mk. 6:34.

¹¹ Jn. 10:11.

¹² Lk. 15:4.

and especially when they abandon him in Gethsemane and when Peter denies that he has ever known the Lord. But what is clear from the beginning of this passage is that there are two distinct groups here: Apostles, who had learned much, and the many who were at a much earlier stage on their journey.

To return to the great crowd. The high-point of the day of teaching is not words: it is action. Jesus feeds them. He engages his inner circle in this process, although it is clear from the account that they are still prone to look at things from a very worldly perspective, objecting to the thought that they might have to spend their own money to feed the crowd.

It is interesting that in Mark's text, it seems to be the case that the Apostles are the ones who have the five loaves and two fish. There is no mention here - or in Matthew or Luke - of the small boy who appears in John's Gospel. Jesus takes from the resources - poor though they are - of those he has already been teaching and forming. Their resources are meagre, but the Lord does more with those five loaves and two fish that could ever be imagined. The people, those who are really rather new to the message, are given more than they need. They have spent the day benefitting from the Lord's teaching and now they eat as much as they want - and there are baskets remaining - twelve of them.

Are these baskets a sign of the twelve tribes of Israel? Are they a sign to the twelve that because they have given of their resources, they themselves receive a reward far greater than they could imagine?

What of us? If we acknowledge that we are formators, people formed by Christ and now called to fulfill the Mission that he has given to us, we must acknowledge that there will be times when we must come aside to be with the Lord - to have CPD with Him - Retreat Time. While I might be offering a few random thoughts today, I strongly believe that retreat time should be a necessary part of our response to the Lord's call to us. He has called us and we must offer to spend time with him.

Secondly, those in our care have a real thirst for all that we offer. Like the crowd, some will be keen, some will be there out of curiosity, some will be there because they have been told to come, some will not know why they are there at all. Yet, like the Lord, they are there to be taught at some length.

Thirdly, the offering of our meagre resources - placed in the hands of the Lord (and all our work should be placed there) - will prove more effective than we could possibly imagine. The formation that we have received will impact on others in ways - and at a depth we could never imagine.

Fourthly, through the giving of ourselves, we receive rewards beyond our expectations. All of us in the room will have known such occasions. They come to us in basketfuls!!