



Celebrating Catholic Schools Week in Your Parish

Catholic Schools Week 2012 begins on Sunday, 29 January, the Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time. Over the past three years, parishes throughout the country have responded with great generosity and creativity to the invitation to take time during this week to celebrate the contribution made by Catholic Schools to their communities. This can be done in a variety of ways: during the Sunday Liturgy, by joining in the activities in the parish schools and by creating opportunities for the parish community to connect with the school community. There are many different ways in which parishes might choose to celebrate Catholic Schools Week and the following are just some suggestions that might help. We hope that this material will be useful to parishes as they begin their preparations for Catholic Schools Week 2012. You may also like to download the newsletter for Catholic Schools Week 2012 which is available on www.catholicbishops.ie.

Sunday, 29 January

Celebration of the Eucharist for the Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Parish Liturgy Group will be a great resource in helping to prepare for this Mass. Encourage them to ensure that Catholic Schools Week becomes part of the annual life of the parish. It will always begin on the last Sunday in January.

Planning Meeting

- Consider how best the schools in your community might become involved in this Sunday's celebration of the Eucharist. Arrange a meeting with the principals and teachers in the weeks prior to Catholic Schools Week and discuss the various ways that the work of Catholic Schools can be highlighted and celebrated during the liturgy on that day. Invite a member of the Liturgy Group to this planning meeting.
- The readings, prayers of the Faithful etc. for the Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time can be found in the December/January edition of *Intercom*. These will also be available in Irish. There are also homily notes for the Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time in the January edition of *The Furrow*. Consider who might best proclaim the Word at the Mass – a staff member, a member of the Board of Management/Board of Governors? Some of the children might sing the psalm and Alleluia. Encourage the children preparing for Confirmation to write and read a Prayer of the Faithful.
- The theme for this year's Catholic Schools Week, 'Catholic Schools: Christ's Living Body Active in our World', is taken from 'Though We Are Many', the hymn specially written for the 50th International Eucharistic Congress which takes place in Dublin from 10 – 17 June, 2012. The hymn could be learned by the children and sung at Mass on this Sunday. A child from the school could be invited to light the International Eucharistic Congress candle before Mass begins.





Parish Newsletter

- Ensure that Catholic Schools Week is brought to the attention of the wider community by placing a note in the parish newsletter. Include specific public activities planned in your parish. Sample text might read as follows:

Sunday, 29 January marks the beginning of Catholic Schools Week 2012. The purpose of the week is to highlight and celebrate the wonderful contribution that Catholic schools make to our local communities and society in general. This year's theme is **Catholic Schools: Christ's Living Body Active in our World**. Our parish is joining in the celebrations by ...

Pupils from the parish schools might distribute the newsletter at Mass.

Display Area

Consider working with the school to create a display showing the ways in which the parish schools are 'Christ's living body active in our world'. This display could depict their work with local and national charities, their contributions to the local community and any other relevant activities.

Boards of Management

- Boards of Management in the Republic of Ireland will be very recently formed and this might be an ideal opportunity to thank those who have served on the previous board and acknowledge and congratulate the new members.
- Put Catholic Schools Week 2012 on the agenda for your next meeting.

The Pastoral Council

- Bring Catholic Schools Week to the attention of the **Pastoral Council** and ask them how the parish might best celebrate it this year. Consider the possibility of hosting an evening on the importance of Catholic Education in Ireland today.

The School

- The chaplain might take the opportunity this week to **visit as many classrooms as possible**. *The Catholic Schools Week Resource** will help you to find a focus for your visit as it offers a theme for each day's work. You might bless the throats of the children on the Feast of St Blaise in some of the classrooms.
- Encourage schools to participate in Grandparent's Day on 1 February.
- Visit the staffroom this week. You might even bring a cake or a box of biscuits!