



Catholic Schools Week 2010

A Light for Every Generation

Resources for the Post-Primary School Community: Home, School & Parish



Post-Primary Resources

Catholic Schools Week 2010



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Catholic Schools Week 2010

Dear Chairperson, Principal and Priests and Parish Team Members,

Schools are important places. We spend a lot of time in them. This includes a significant proportion of that most formative period in life between 4-5 years of age and 17-18 years of age. When schools are working at or near their best they are truly a remarkable human achievement. Young children have a safe place to pray and play and learn; adolescents grow into a deeper intellectual, emotional and moral world; teachers use their personal and professional abilities to challenge and mould new generations; parents and other adults give of their time and money to support the educational enterprise. The hope is that by 17-18 years of age a young adult who is free, rational and capable of mature relationships will be able to cross the threshold into higher education or the world of work.

For schools to perform at or near their best they need the support and challenge of the broader community. Catholic Schools Week is an important time for Catholics in Ireland to express their solidarity with all of those involved in schools. The theme for this year, 'Catholic Schools – A Light for Every Generation', suggests that parents, teachers, pupils, priests and the wider community are all part of this endeavour. We often talk today about the need for home, school and parish to work together if Catholic education is to achieve its goals. This week is a tangible expression of such co-operative endeavour.

In a time of serious economic recession there is the ever present temptation to empty education of its heart and soul so that it may become more relevant to the market place. But what would education be without music and mathematics, religion and science, literature and technology, art and geography? These are not opposites vying with each other but each discipline can provide food for the soul and the mind, not least in a time of economic uncertainty.

Catholic schools do not exist primarily for the service of the economy but for the growth of the human person who is called to live in solidarity with other persons in search of the common good. In support of these schools the Church in Ireland has established the Trustee Support Service in Northern Ireland and, more recently, the Catholic Schools Partnership in the Republic. This new partnership body will seek to support the work of all first and second level Catholic schools in the Republic of Ireland.

Catholic Schools Week in 2009 was a success. Please support the events associated with the week in your area in 2010!



Michael Drumm

Fr Michael Drumm

Executive Chairman
Catholic Schools Partnership



Catholic Schools Week 2010

Before You Begin

The resources in this pack are intended for use with all those working in partnership with the school community. The resources are designed to be used with:

Before You Begin

- Students in the classroom
- Staff members
- Parents
- Members of Boards of Management/Governors
- The wider parish community

In an effort to make these resources more accessible the pack has been sent to all principals, chairpersons of Boards of Management/Governors and priests. The different resources available for each target group are clearly defined within the pack. It might be useful for a meeting involving representatives from the staff, Board of Management/Governors, Parent Association/Council, parish team and school chaplain to take place before Catholic Schools Week begins. This would enable decisions to be made as to which elements of the resources your particular school community will highlight during the week. Some of the issues discussed at such a meeting might include:

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This symbol appears on pages that can be photocopied and sent home to parents

- The Mass to begin Catholic Schools Week
- Communication with parents
- Assembly to mark the Feast of St Blaise/Grandparents Day
- Grandparents Day, 3 February
- Parish initiatives or events to mark the week
- Time for staff and Board of Management/Governors to reflect on Catholic Schools Week

We hope that you find the resources included in this pack helpful as you celebrate Catholic Schools Week this year. Copies of this resource are available to download as gaeilge and in Polish on www.catholicbishops.ie.

These resources have been prepared by Mairead Ní Bhuachalla, Brigid Gilligan, Maura Gray, Tonya Hanly, Maurice Harmon, in consultation with the Steering Committee for Catholic Schools Week 2010. The members of the Steering Committee are:

Monsignor Jim Cassin, Fr Ger Condon, Fr Martin Delaney, Fr Paul Farren, Ms Eileen Flynn, Sr Maighread Ní Gallochóhair, Ms Tonya Hanly, Ms Maura Hyland, Mr Ferdia Kelly, Ms Maeve Mahon, Ms Bernie Martin, Mr Tony McCann, Ms Orla Walsh and Sr Eithne Woulfe.



Catholic Schools Week 2010

Sacred Space

Many schools already have a Sacred Space in the entrance area of their schools. This Sacred Space is a very simple way to reflect your school's Catholic ethos. The celebration of Catholic Schools Week offers an opportunity to create a Sacred Space if you do not already have one and provides a new focus for existing spaces.

A Sacred Space will almost certainly have the following as its key elements:

- Green cloth to signify that we are in Ordinary Time
- Candle
- Bible
- Cross or Crucifix
- Holy Water
- Statue

For Catholic Schools Week you might add some of the following:

- A framed copy of the school's Ethos Statement
- A list of all staff members
- A Poster advertising Catholic Schools Week
- A Prayer Petition box or basket (all members of the school community might be invited to put their prayers in the box/basket during the week and the intentions could be prayed for at the Prayer Services or Assemblies during the week)
- School motto, crest, picture of Patron Saint

As the week progresses the following might be added:

Monday

- A St Brigid's Cross or Crosses
- Posters advertising the Grandparents Day on Wednesday

Wednesday

- Candles for the Feast of St Blaise

Friday

- If you have gathered the work of the week into a book this could be placed in the Sacred Space.

Display Areas

Teachers might be encouraged to have displays in or outside their classrooms depicting elements of the Catholic life of the school.

Sacred Space

Display Area





Catholic Schools Week 2010

What Is Catholic Schools Week? A Fact Sheet

What Is Catholic Schools Week?

Catholic Schools Week gives us the opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the tremendous contribution that our Catholic primary and post-primary schools make not just to Irish society, but to the mission of the Church. Last year marked a very successful beginning of an all-Ireland celebration of Catholic Schools Week and we hope this year to build on that foundation and continue to create a space where we can proudly articulate and celebrate our ethos and identity.

What is the Theme of Catholic Schools Week in 2010?

What is the Theme of Catholic Schools Week in 2010?

This year the theme for the week is '**Catholic Schools – A Light for Every Generation**'.

Is Catholic Schools Week Only for Schools?

Catholic schools are committed to the education and formation of the young person in every aspect of their lives. Thus Catholic schools are light for parents, pupils, staff and society in every generation. In selecting this theme we are clearly connecting the vision of Catholic education with the mission of the Gospel, to bring the light of Christ to the world and to allow that light to shine through and in all that we do in our work in Catholic schools. This theme reminds us that we are constantly challenged to let that light shine for the present generation and this will remain part of our task for future generations.

The Role of Grandparents in Catholic Schools Week

It also allows us to remember with great gratitude all those who through their work in establishing schools and places of education brought the light of Christ to many generations of Irish people in the past.

How Do I Get Involved?

Is Catholic Schools Week Only for Schools?

The events scheduled for Catholic Schools Week will take place in schools, in parishes, at diocesan and at national level. This book provides resources to help extend the celebrations into homes all over the country. There are also resources to help dioceses and parishes to be involved in the celebrations. Pope Benedict XVI has asked us this year to pray especially for our priests and so we include some resources to encourage school communities to respond to this request. It is our hope that through using the many different resources offered that the key mission of schools in the Church, the home, in parishes and in the life of the nation will be highlighted during this week.

The Role of Grandparents in Catholic Schools Week

For the first time we are inviting Grandparents to participate in Catholic Schools Week. We are designating **Wednesday, 3 February as 'Grandparents Day'** and we hope that on this day all schools will invite grandparents to come to school with their grandchildren and participate in some of the activities outlined in this resource pack. We are delighted to acknowledge the support and help given to us by the National Grandparents Pilgrimage and look forward to making this event a part of our annual celebration.

How Do I Get Involved?

Keep a look out in local and national media for activities connected to Catholic Schools Week. Ask your local school principal/Parent Association/Board of Management/Governors representative how the school is celebrating Catholic Schools Week. More information will be available on www.catholicbishops.ie.



Catholic Schools Week 2010

What Is a Catholic School?

The Catholic School

- Offers a distinctive vision of life and corresponding philosophy of education based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- Strives to create a learning environment where every child is encouraged and enabled to develop to their full and unique potential as human beings, made in the image and likeness of God
- Seeks to form pupils who will unselfishly use their gifts for the common good and are committed to work for a more just and caring society
- Is a welcoming and inclusive community that is respectful and tolerant of all religious traditions and beliefs
- Works in partnership with parents and the parish community to keep the light of faith received at baptism burning brightly
- Provides opportunities for worship through prayer and the celebration of liturgy and the sacraments

Based on *Vision 08: A Vision for Catholic Education in Ireland* (A Pastoral Letter of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference).

What Is a Catholic School?

The Catholic School





Catholic Schools Week 2010

How to Celebrate Catholic Schools Week as a Diocese

How to Celebrate Catholic Schools Week as a Diocese

Some Suggestions

Some Suggestions

Send a letter to every school and every parish to encourage them to celebrate Catholic Schools Week while at the same time thanking schools for what they are already doing to promote Catholic education.

Consider a **Diocesan Mass** with representatives from every school, primary and post-primary, as an opportunity to give them that sense of being part of a wider community. This could be done on a deanery level.

The bishop might send a **personal letter** to every member of the Board of Management/Governors thanking them for giving of their time and encouraging them to reflect upon the Catholic ethos of

the school and how they uphold it. Ideally this letter should be posted to the home of each person and not simply photocopied and handed out at a board meeting.

Use the **local media** in some way to highlight Catholic Schools Week, newspaper articles, radio interview etc.

Invite teachers, parents, Boards of Management/Governors and Pastoral Councils throughout the diocese to an **evening event** on some topic related to Catholic education e.g., the Irish Bishops' Conference Pastoral Letter, *Vision 08: A Vision for Catholic Education in Ireland*.





Catholic Schools Week 2010

How to Celebrate Catholic Schools Week in Your Parish

Sunday, 31 January, the fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, marks the beginning of Catholic Schools Week 2010. Each parish is encouraged to focus on Catholic Schools Week in the Sunday Liturgy that day and during the following week.

Catholic Schools Week is intended to highlight the interrelated roles that parish, school and home have in the life of the Catholic school and aims to involve the whole community in celebrating it. There are different ways this could happen. Here are some suggestions:

Sunday, 31 January

- Involve the schools in the Sunday parish liturgy for the fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time. **Visit the schools** in the previous weeks and talk to the principal and teachers. Invite and help them to prepare the liturgy. Provide them with the readings, prayers of the Faithful etc. contained on pages 27–30.
- Let your **Liturgy Committee** know in good time that it is happening so that they can help prepare the liturgy and music for the various celebrations you decide to have. Make sure that the music is accessible to everyone.
- Consider asking your Pastoral Council/ Liturgy Committee to send out invitations to **Parents, Grandparents and others** to come to the parish celebration of Catholic Schools Week.
- Encourage the schools in your parish to create a **visual display** on some topic e.g. local saints or holy places; the present-day faith community etc. and provide a space for them in the church or parish hall where these can be displayed. Try to involve as many of the students in your school or other schools within the parish so that the visual display includes a great diversity of images and ideas. Some may prefer to represent these ideas in music, dance and drama.

- Include a note in the **Parish Newsletter**. Sample text might read as follows:

Catholic Schools Week

Sunday, 31 January marks the beginning of Catholic Schools Week. The purpose of the week is to promote the contribution that Catholic schools make to our society. The theme this year is 'Catholic Schools – A Light for Every Generation'. During the coming week(s), we invite you to join us in celebrating the contribution that our Catholic school(s) make(s) to the life of our faith community here in the parish of

Provide list of events/celebrations.

The Pastoral Council

- Bring Catholic Schools Week to the attention of the **Pastoral Council** to get their ideas as to how the parish could celebrate it.
- Invite someone to speak to the **Pastoral Council** about the importance of Catholic schools and the contribution they can make to be 'a light for every generation'. Invite the **Board of Management/ Governors** and **teachers** to this meeting.

How to Celebrate Catholic Schools Week in Your Parish

Sunday, 31 January

The Pastoral Council





Catholic Schools Week 2010

How to Celebrate Catholic Schools Week in Your Parish

The School

The Community



The School

- Visit the classes and talk to the students about Catholic Schools Week and what it means. Some questions to guide their reflection: How does our Catholic school help us as students to be a light for every generation? How do we want to live our lives in the future so that we can be a light for every generation?

- Consider adopting a **Saint's name** for your parish school if it doesn't already have one. Invite the whole parish community to be involved in this project.

- Encourage your local school to create and maintain a **Sacred Space or notice board** in the entrance hall or prominent position for the benefit of all who visit the school, letting them know about the Catholic ethos of the school and how it celebrates its faith life at important times of the year e.g., Advent/Lent.

- Consider drawing up a **vision and mission statement** for the school if it is not already done.

- If resources allow, perhaps the parish could give a **candle** to every family attending the local schools as well as a **prayer card** of the prayers that the students learn at school to encourage them to pray as a family and be a 'light for every generation'. These candles could be blessed in the parish church on Tuesday, the **Feast of the Presentation of the Lord**.

- Gather the school community, parents, teachers and Board of Management/ Governors to a short prayer service or '**Twilight Retreat**' during that week. Invite someone to facilitate a session on guided prayer. Provide a cup of tea afterwards!

The Community

- Given that **St Brigid's Day** falls during the week, arrange an evening for families to make crosses in the parish or school hall and have a short prayer service. Alternatively, you could suggest to the principal to invite some of the older members of the community into the school and show the students how to make the crosses.

- **Send out a circular** to every family to outline what a Catholic school is and the contribution it has made in the past, can make in the present and will make in the future.

- Consider using this week to launch a **Sacramental Preparation Programme** in the parish for either First Communion or Confirmation e.g., *You Shall Be My Witnesses*. This might be an ideal opportunity for secondary school students to mentor children preparing for the Sacraments.



Catholic Schools Week 2010

A Light for Every Generation

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The information on this page needs to be photocopied and sent home to parents

What is Catholic Schools Week?

Catholic Schools Week gives everyone involved in Catholic education the opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the tremendous contribution that our Catholic schools make to every aspect of life in Ireland. Last year was the first time that we marked this special week across the whole island of Ireland. It was a very successful beginning and this year we want to build on that foundation and continue to create a space where we can proudly articulate and celebrate our ethos and identity. It is hoped that during this week that all members of the school community, parents, staff members, Board of Management/ Governors members and pupils will take time to reflect on what it means to be in a Catholic school and how we can all best support the wonderful work that is done in our Catholic schools.

What Makes a School Catholic?

The following statements are based on *Vision 08*, a document published by the Bishops of Ireland last year. They help us to understand better what makes a school Catholic. Please take a moment during Catholic Schools Week to read these statements.

Catholic schools offer a distinctive kind of education which allows the light of faith to be seen in everything that happens within the school community.

Catholic schools are rooted in the values of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Catholic schools help each child to develop to their full potential.

Catholic schools help every member of the school community to see God 'in the bits and pieces of everyday life'.

Catholic schools seek to create open, happy, stimulating and caring environments in which every child is encouraged to develop their abilities and talents in a balanced, integrated and generous way.

Catholic schools help students to become responsible and caring members of society.

Catholic schools work closely with the parent and parish communities to provide an excellent education for the students in their care.

A Prayer for Parents

(Adapted from a prayer by Marian Wright Edelman)

*Creator God, thank you for the gift of our children,
their lives to share,
their bodies to nurture,
their minds to mould,
and their spirits to enrich.
May we always be deserving of their trust,
supportive of their hopes
and encouraging of their dreams.
Let your grace and love fall on these,
our most precious gifts,
like a gentle breeze giving inner strength,
peace and patience for the journey ahead*
Amen

A Light for Every Generation

What is Catholic School Week?

What Makes a School Catholic?

A Prayer for Parents

For you to think about

- Try putting the name of your child's school at the beginning of every statement. Do these statements paint a picture of your child's school?
- What can you do as a parent to support the work of the school at home?
- How is the light of faith seen in all that you do in your home?
- How can you help your child see God 'in the bits and pieces of everyday life'?



Catholic Schools Week 2010



Morning Prayer as We Begin Catholic Schools Week

Morning Prayer as We Begin Catholic Schools Week

Leader We welcome everyone here this morning to mark the start of Catholic Schools Week. We begin our prayer with the Sign of the Cross. The theme of Catholic Schools Week is 'light' so let us join in singing our opening hymn:

▶ Christ be our Light

The Principal or Religious Education Coordinator may like to introduce the Prayer Service and Catholic Schools Week using the following:

Introduction This morning, we ask God's blessing on all of us here at All across the country this week, schools like us are celebrating Catholic Schools Week. We give thanks for all who belong to our community here at We now invite to light a special candle which will burn brightly in our school's Sacred Space. This candle is a symbol of the presence of the God who is with us always and everywhere and especially this morning in our school.

The candle can be placed in the Sacred Space following the prayer service. Additional information regarding the setting up of a Sacred Space can be found on previous pages.

▶ Instrumental music can now be played softly.

Leader Let us spend a few moments thinking quietly about all the things we learn here in Sometimes we learn, through the mistakes we make. Let us remember the people who help us to learn, especially our principal, deputy principal, our teachers, our classroom assistants, our school secretary and caretaker. We give thanks to God our Father for all the care and work they do here at

Today is also the 1 February, the feast of St Brigid. St Brigid was a good and kind person who looked after the poor, the sick and the lonely. We pray that we will try to be like St Brigid in the way we help others this week.

Leader We remember that Brigid always took care of people who were in need. We now ask her to pray for us and for our needs this morning.

Response Pray for us

St Brigid, woman of prayer	<i>Response</i>
St Brigid, generous and kind	<i>Response</i>
St Brigid, who fed the hungry	<i>Response</i>
St Brigid, who welcomed everybody	<i>Response</i>
St Brigid, who spoke about Jesus	<i>Response</i>
St Brigid, who lived like Jesus	<i>Response</i>
St Brigid, who protects us all	<i>Response</i>
St Brigid, raised up to Heaven	<i>Response</i>



Catholic Schools Week 2010



(The newest member of staff could be invited to read the following poem)

Brigid, A Blessing Christy Kenneally

*Brigid, light to the darkness
Hope to the downcast
Woman of faith
And of Ireland.
As water
Falling from full-sky
Brought benediction
To the crop and creature.
As water falling from cupped hand
Brought benediction
To the new born Christian
We sprinkle water
Here and now
In this a place
Made blessed by our children.
May the dark of the heart never hold them
May the light of the faith always lead them
May it shine like the pillar of fire before
them
And scatter the dark of their days
As it mastered the shadows of yours
Brigid
Light to the darkness
Hope to the downcast
Woman of faith
And of Ireland.*

Note: you may like to invite a member of the Board of Management/Governors/ Parents Association to read the Psalm

Psalm: 90:13-17

Let your loveliness shine on us, and bless the work we do, and bless the work of our hand.

Concluding Prayer

*Let us pray together in thanksgiving for all here present this morning in the words our Father gave us:
Our Father/Ár nAthair*

Leader Before we go back to our classrooms, and to the work of this day, let us offer each other a sign of peace.

🎵 Closing Hymn Suggestion

Christ be Beside Me

Morning Prayer as We Begin Catholic Schools Week



Catholic Schools Week 2010



Thoughts for the Day

(The following could be used at the beginning of class or spoken over the intercom each day)

Thoughts for the Day

Monday *St Brigid's day falls on the first day of spring. It is a day associated with new growth, lengthening days and renewal. St Brigid was a caring, compassionate woman with a strong faith. She is a wonderful role model for us as we strive to protect our environment and the gifts which God created for us. Today is also an ideal time for us to remember and celebrate our own birth through baptism.*

Loving God, as we begin this Catholic Schools Week, we pray today in memory of St Brigid, we ask you to be with us and to guide us. Give us a renewed appreciation of our creation story. Fill us with love for our world. Make us prayerful and faithful just like Brigid. As we begin this week, which talks of a light of faith which has been handed down to us and which we too will pass on, may we reflect on what our faith means to us in our lives. How often do you think about your faith? How often do you do something that marks you out as a person of faith? This week try to do or say something which will make you a light of faith here in school or at home.

Tuesday Today is the feast of the Presentation of The Lord. On this day we remember that Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the Temple to be blessed. While they were there they met Simeon and Anna, two elderly people who had waited and waited all of their lives for this day. Simeon was a great prophet and tells us in Luke's gospel that his eyes had now seen our salvation and that Jesus was the light of revelation. May our eyes always be open as Simeon's were to see the light of our faith which guides us wherever we are. Through our actions and words may we show others the light so that our faith will always burn brightly.

Wednesday *'When we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all' Galatians 6:10*

Help me to pay attention so that I will see the opportunities which may arise to do good. May I use today to be kind and honest, patient and fair. Maybe there will be an opportunity to reach out the hand of friendship to someone in difficulty. Maybe some of these things will take courage. Maybe they will mean that I have to sacrifice my precious time. Help me to see them anyway.

Thursday *You are the light of the world ... Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your father in heaven. Matthew 5:14-16*
Loving God, you challenge us always to be the best that we can be and to be a light for others. Mother Teresa spoke about good works being a chain of love. What work will you do today which will add to the chain of love already formed in your home or in your school? Your challenge today is to do two good works for others. Can you rise to that challenge?

Friday As we come to the end of this Catholic Schools Week, we give thanks for our friends, our teachers and our communities. Give us a deeper understanding of the gift of our Catholic education. An appreciation of the gift of education in this school may not be the foremost of our minds at the moment but may be the core values that we receive here inform our decisions, our relationships and the paths we will travel. We pray together the journey prayer:
*Arise with me in the morning,
Travel with me through each day,
Welcome me on my arrival.
God, be with me all the way.*

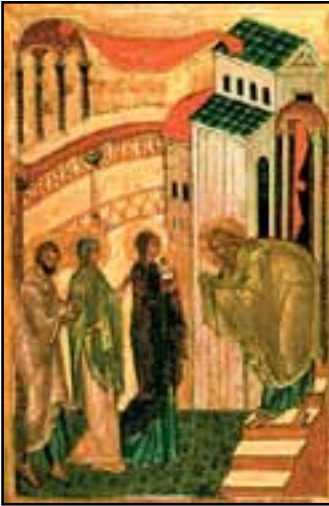
Amen





Catholic Schools Week 2010

2 February Feast of the Presentation of the Lord



About the Icon

St Joseph is shown on the extreme left, as an elderly man with white hair and beard. The Theotokos stands beside him with her arms extended toward her Son, Jesus. She is traditionally shown in blue garments. The doors of the temple are seen in the background, and the infant Christ is held by the elderly St Simeon, the God-Receiver, in front of and above those doors. Behind St Simeon stands St Anna the Prophetess, who proclaimed on seeing the Christ Child that he was the long-awaited Messiah.

Tasks: Discuss with students the icon in detail.

2 February Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

About the Icon

Tasks

Scripture Readings

Background to the Feast

Some Things to Do

Use the festal icon to relate the story of the feast to your students and identify each of the figures. Copy and mount the festal icon and ask your students to colour it carefully. Display the icon at your sacred place in the classroom for the feast.

Scripture Readings

Old Testament: Leviticus 12:2-8

Epistle: Hebrews 7:7-17

Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

Background to the Feast

Forty days after Christ was born he was presented to God in the Jerusalem Temple according to the Law of Moses. At this time as well, His mother Mary underwent the ritual purification and offered the sacrifice as prescribed in the Law (Leviticus 12). It was at the Temple that the elder Simeon and prophetess Anna, filled with the Holy Spirit, confirmed that the infant was the new-born Messiah who would 'cause the fall and the rising of many in Israel'.

Some Things to Do

On the feast of the Presentation, we bless candles for use all year long. This is to remind us that Christ is the 'Light that enlightens all mankind'. Bring a candle to church to be blessed. It can then be used at evening meals in the family home.

Discuss with your students the idea that Christ is the 'Light of the World'. (He guides us in the way we should live. He helps us overcome evil. He gives us understanding of the ways of the Father. Explain that this is the reason for lighting candles in church, and encourage them to light candles at each service.)



Catholic Schools Week 2010

3 February Feast of St Blaise

3 February Feast of St Blaise

Lá Fhéile
Naomh Bláisias



St Blaise is best known as the patron saint of people with sore throats. In many places on 3 February – his feast day – people gather in churches for the blessing of throats. The blessing is a sign of the people's faith in God's protection and love for the sick.

Using two crossed and unlighted candles, the priest (or other minister) touches the throat of each person, saying:

Through the intercession of Saint Blaise, bishop and martyr, may God deliver you from all ailments of the throat and from every other evil: in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

Usually the blessing takes place in Mass. It follows the homily and the prayer of the faithful. If done outside of Mass, a brief celebration of the word of God with the scripture readings suggested in the Lectionary is recommended before the blessing is given.

Who was St Blaise? And how has he become so famous for the blessing of throats? Blaise was a bishop at Sebaste (now the city of Sivas in Turkey in what was then the Roman province of Armenia-Cappadocia). During a persecution – probably ordered by Constantine's ally and co-emperor Licinius – he was martyred in 316 AD. This much at least seems to be historical fact, according to the *New Roman Martyrology 2004*. In the Eastern churches his feast falls on the 11 February, in the West on 3 February.

Lá Fhéile Naomh Bláisias

Easpag agus mairtíreach a mhair i Sebaste san Airméin sa 4ú aois ba ea Naomh Bláisias. Tá sé sa traidisiún go raibh sé ina dhochtúir leighis sarar deineadh Easpag de agus gur leigheas sé buachaill a bhí á thachtadh. Tugtar onóir dó mar phátrún daoine a bhfuil tinneas scornaí orthu. Is comhartha é, beannú na scornach, dár gcreideamh i nDia a thugann aire dúinn agus a thugann grá do dhaoine atá tinn.

*Beannú na Scornach
Trí idirghuí Naomh Bláisias,
Easpag agus Mairtíreach,
go gcosnaí Dia tú ó gach éalang scornaí
agus ó gach tinneas eile,
trí Chríost ár dTiarna*

Amen



Catholic Schools Week 2010

Grandparents Day

One of our best hopes for the future is to link old with young and to pursue opportunities that bring generations together. Grandparents are our heritage. Some of us may never have had the opportunity to get to know them, but those of us lucky enough to have grandparents in our lives can surely appreciate how fortunate we are. Grandparents are essential members of our families and communities. They are witnesses to the fundamental values of life which we should all treasure. In some families grandparents are the glue which keeps everybody together. Sometimes we get so caught up in our own lives that we forget to spend time with them or to acknowledge our love and gratitude for them.

This Catholic Schools Week might be the opportunity to celebrate the gift of your grandparents and to share your experiences of them with your school community.

The following are activities that you might like to engage with during this week:

Compile a collage of photographs of grandparents throughout the school. Surround the collage with words you associate with grandparents.

Debate Topic: How significant is the role of grandparents in Irish society today.

Invitation: Invite grandparents into the school on Wednesday to join in the Assembly. Invite them to give witness to their faith and how their life journey has been.

Write a Prayer: The Irish National Grandparents Association was launched in September 2009 to celebrate the role that grandparents play in our society today. The Chairperson, Mrs Catherine Wiley, met with Pope Benedict XVI before the launch and he gave her the prayer for grandparents on page 17 which he especially wrote to honour grandparents. This prayer was read for the first time in Knock in September. The association has asked students to write a prayer for their grandparents and to type it onto the website prayer forum at www.NationalGrandparentsPilgrimage.com.

Interview: Record an interview with individual/groups of grandparents.

Grandparents Day

Activities





Catholic Schools Week 2010



Assembly

Jesus told us that where two or three are gathered in his name that he is among them. We welcome him among us this morning as we take a moment to gather our thoughts and ourselves as we prepare to pray ...

Sacred Space

- We bring a suitcase as a sign that a journey is underway
- A map shows us where we are going. Maps like this have been used for generations to show others a path
- A high visibility jacket to remind us not to be invisible but to let ourselves and our talents be seen
- A photo album filled with pictures of people who mean something to us and to our school community
- Water, essential for any journey and a reminder that through our baptism we begin anew with Christ
- A bible, a book filled with hope and powerful words of those who went before us on their faith journey
- If you have invited grandparents to the school today a representative might be invited to bring forward a lighted candle and place it in the Sacred Space.

Courtesy of Ms Sinead Groarke, Scoil Muire agus Pádraig, Swinford. Co Mayo

▶ Opening Hymn All are Welcome

*Let us build a house
where love can dwell
And all can safely live,
A place where
saints and children tell
How hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,
Rock of faith and vault of grace;
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions.*

Chorus: *All are welcome, all are welcome,
All are welcome in this place.*

*Let us build a house where love is found
in water, wine and wheat:
A banquet hall on holy ground,
Where peace and justice meet.
Here the love of God, through Jesus,
Is revealed in time and space;
As we share in Christ the feast that frees us.*

Chorus

Marty Haugen

Opening Prayer

Loving God, as we gather here today we ask you to be with us and to guide us so that we may be sure in faith and strong in hope. We remember today those who created the faith communities that we have today. We give thanks for their reliance, perseverance and deep faith. May we never forget this legacy and may we continue to build on it so that we too leave a path of faith and hope for others to follow.

Amen

Reading 1 Ezekiel 36:26-28

And you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

Reading 2 John 15:9-17

You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit.



Catholic Schools Week 2010



Assembly

Intercessions

Response Lord, hear us

We pray that our Church leaders be inspired by the word of God to lead with justice, responsibility and respect for the dignity of the human person. *We pray to the Lord.*

May we continue to build good relationships so that our school is a place of welcome and inclusion where students learn in a safe and happy environment. *We pray to the Lord.*

We pray that those involved in Catholic education in this country will continue to work faithfully, with hope and enthusiasm to spread the word of God. *We pray to the Lord.*

We remember the people in our families and parishes who contributed to this school and who created for us a community of education and hope. *We pray to the Lord.*

May we always cherish and protect our environment. It is a precious gift from God to be handed down to future generations. May we always promote environmentally friendly practices here in school, at home and in our communities. *We pray to the Lord.*

St Joachim and Anne were the grandparents of Jesus, and the mother and father of Mary. We have gathered together this morning and remembered grandparents. We remember in a special way those who cannot be with us as we listen to a very special prayer from Pope Benedict XVI in honour of all our grandparents.

Lord Jesus,

you were born of the Virgin Mary, the daughter of Saints Joachim and Anne. Look with love on grandparents the world over.

Protect them! They are a source of enrichment for families, for the Church and for all of society.

Support them! As they grow older, may they continue to be for their families strong pillars of Gospel faith, guardians of noble domestic ideals, living treasuries of sound religious traditions.

Make them teachers of wisdom and courage, that they may pass on to future generations the fruits of their mature human and spiritual experience.

Lord Jesus,

help families and society to value the presence and roles of grandparents.

May they never be ignored or excluded, but always encounter respect and love.

Help them to live serenely and to feel welcomed in all the years of life which you give them.

Mary, Mother of all the living, keep grandparents constantly in your care, accompany them on their earthly pilgrimage, and by your prayers, grant that all families may one day be reunited in our heavenly homeland, where you await all humanity for the great embrace of life without end.

Amen

(Pope Benedict XVI)



Catholic Schools Week 2010



▶ **Hymn** Bind us Together, Lord

Assembly

As a reminder today of all that we believe in, we recite together the Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
 I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
 He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
 and born of the Virgin Mary;
 He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried.
 He descended to the dead.
 On the third day he rose again.
 He ascended into heaven,
 and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
 He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the holy catholic Church,
 the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins,
 the resurrection of the body,
 and the life everlasting.

Amen

Closing Prayer

Lord God, may we be prophets of our time and witnesses to the faith handed down to us from previous generations. May we be people of joy, hope, faith and love so that we can spread your word wherever we go.

Amen

▶ **Closing Hymn** Walk in the light



Catholic Schools Week 2010



French Bible Wordsearch

French Bible
Wordsearch

L	C	A	N	T	I	Q	U	E	S	S	D	D	S	E
S	A	J	É	R	É	M	I	E	D	O	O	A	A	U
E	S	M	U	É	S	X	M	É	E	P	L	N	I	Q
G	Z	T	E	A	U	U	B	S	U	H	E	I	D	I
U	H	É	R	N	A	S	A	O	T	O	I	E	B	T
J	S	D	C	S	T	R	O	S	É	N	M	L	A	I
M	S	E	P	H	G	A	E	J	R	I	É	E	K	V
E	I	R	U	E	I	B	T	Z	O	E	H	X	F	É
J	O	C	N	Q	R	E	A	I	N	S	É	O	H	L
X	O	E	H	E	I	C	L	E	O	B	N	D	A	E
S	S	N	V	É	H	N	İ	C	M	N	O	E	B	U
E	I	O	A	A	E	A	O	I	E	E	S	J	A	M
D	R	O	R	S	S	S	E	R	B	M	O	N	Q	A
P	I	I	R	E	H	T	S	E	H	È	O	T	U	S
P	E	E	T	S	A	I	S	É	L	C	C	E	Q	I

Find the following words

ABDIAS	CANTIQUES	CHRONIQUES
DANIEL	DES	DEUTÉRONOME
ECCLÉSIASTE	ESAÏE	ESDRAS
ESTHER	EXODE	EZÉCHIEL
GENESE	HABAQUQ	JOB
JONAS	JOSUÉ	JOËL
JUGES	JÉRÉMIE	LAMENTATIONS
LÉVITIQUE	MICHÉE	NOMBRES
NÉHÉMIE	OSÉE	PROVERBES
PSAUMES	ROIS	RUTH
SAMUEL	SOPHONIE	ZACHARIE



A Light for Every Generation

A Light for Every Generation

Materials Needed

For this service you will need copies of the introductory readings for the four readers. On your prayer table place a candle, a Bible and a flashlight.

Leader God's gift of light makes things visible. All the colourful things we can see depend on light. God made the light for us to enjoy the beauty of flowers, mountains, streams and rainbows. God also gave us the light of faith, so that we might place our trust in God throughout our lives.

Reader One Scripture tells us:

God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness (Genesis 1:4)

Reader Two For Christians, light is the symbol of truth, faith, wisdom, virtue, grace, charity, and all other spiritual qualities that signify the presence of Christ. St John wrote: *Whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what Jesus had done has been through God (John 3:21)*

Reader Three Anyone who does God's work is light to the world. Matthew's gospel says: *People don't light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Rather they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:15-16)*

Reader Four Light conveys to the human mind a sense of joy, optimism, goodness, purity, beauty, festiveness, dignity and life. In one of his letters, St Paul said: *The works you do will be visible to all, for the light of day will reveal them (Romans 13:12-14)*

Leader At this time we will turn off all the lights in the room, except the candle on the prayer table and the flashlight. Be conscious of the differences in colour and shading because of the light made by both. If possible, leave the lights off for the guided meditation.



Catholic Schools Week 2010



A Light for Every Generation

Guided Meditation

Close your eyes. Take a deep breath and feel yourself relaxing. As you inhale and exhale, let go of all stress, anxiety and worry. Feel yourself emptying and relaxing as you begin to journey inward. The word 'light' also means of little weight; not heavy; a light load.

- See a golden light hovering above your head ... See the light glowing, as it hovers above the crown of your head ...
- Imagine that this light is the light of God ... See it beginning to expand to grow larger as the beam of light surrounds your head ... See this halo of light settling down on the top of your head ... Feel your own spirit merging, becoming one with it ...
- Feel the sense of peace this light brings ... It is a joyous feeling, like when something wonderful has just happened to you ... Take another deep breath ... Your face should now be completely relaxed ...
- Imagine now that this golden light is spreading downward from your head into your face and neck ... Feel the comforting heat coming from it ... Feel light spreading throughout your entire body and let it remind you that God is very near ...
- Let a sense of lightness and joy take over your body ... This joy is the feeling you get when God is merged with your light ... God knows you better than anyone ... God knows you better than you know yourself ...
- God always sees the best in you, the finest you ... You know you have this side of you, but you cannot always see it ...
- Spend a few minutes talking with God now. Thank God for the gift of Light and tell God whatever you want ...
- Invite the group to discuss this experience if they seem interested in doing so. Or allow them to write about it in their prayer journals.

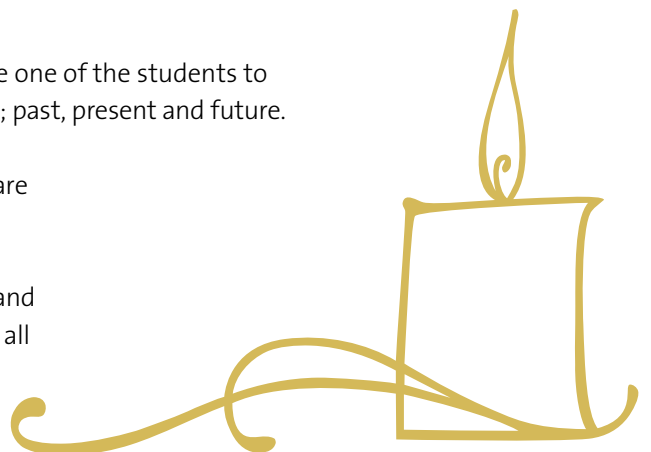
Closing Prayer

Leave the candle burning brightly on your prayer table and invite one of the students to hold up the flashlight as a sign of God's light for every generation; past, present and future.

Left Side Dear God, you brighten the whole world because you are the giver of life and light.

Right Side We need you to shine on our lives so we can understand more, do better, and stay in the warmth of your love. Thank you all for your light and for all your gifts to us.

Amen





Do You Believe in Food?

Do You Believe in Food?

Recipes

Food is an important ingredient in all our lives and it is interesting to chat with students about what foods they like to cook and eat. Do we ever think of cooking as a way to discuss religious traditions? In the pages that follow we meet with Patricia Kieran and Catherine McNally who offer us some cookery ideas that allow for opportunities to explore a faith story or religious tradition where food is a key ingredient. Recall the story and explore its meaning with the students. You may identify how members of a faith community celebrate this story or sacred text through religious festivals or ritual or faith based traditions. You may try some of these during a Home Economics class.

You will need

125g/4oz of plain flour
Pinch of salt
2 eggs
300ml/half pint of milk
1 tsp of Vanilla essence
or a quarter tsp of
cinnamon if desired
Oil or butter for frying

Lenten Pancakes

This recipe reminds us of the biblical story of Jesus fasting in the desert (Mt 4: 1-11, Mk 1: 12-13, Lk 4, 1-2). Pancakes are traditionally eaten on Shrove Tuesday. Prior to making this food, students could explore the importance of prayer, penance and almsgiving (doing good works) during the liturgical season of Lent. Catholics fast and do not eat meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. The carnival of Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) celebrated in Brazil and many other parts of the world is a festival which ends on the day before Ash Wednesday. When the student's grandparents were young children (prior to 1966) the Lenten fast was more severe and many Catholics did not eat eggs during Lent (one meal and two collations per day). Catholics used up all of their surplus eggs before lent by making egg-rich foods like pancakes. They collected eggs from their hens during Lent and had a surplus of eggs for Easter. On Easter Sunday morning they came home from Mass and enjoyed their boiled, poached and fried Easter eggs! You might ask the children to ask their grandparents or other members of their community about their memories of fasting during Lent. You might also ask them to tell you about their memories of 'Pancake Tuesday'.

Method Sieve the flour. Add the salt. Make a well in the centre. Break in the eggs and add the milk slowly so that you make a smooth batter. Add the oil/butter to a pan on a medium temperature, wait until it has melted, and then add in a ladle of the pancake mixture. Turn or toss when the pancake is lightly brown.

You will need

6oz Vanilla Ice Cream
3 tbs Honey
3 cups of milk
Glasses
An electric Blender

Promised Land Smoothies Land of Milk and Honey Milkshake

A 'land flowing with milk and honey' is a poetic way of describing the Promised Land. This refers to the land of Canaan which the Lord promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and which Moses finally saw, but did not enter, before he died (Deut 34:4). The phrase 'the promised land' is used in popular parlance to describe a wonderful place that people cannot wait to reach. Canaan is described as a fruitful, beautiful land which abounded in all good things. Discuss with the students the story of Moses and the promised land which the Lord first promised to Abraham and his descendants (Deut 34:4). Get a map and explore the location of Egypt and Canaan on the map. You may find useful maps at <http://www.bible.ca/maps/maps-the-exodus.htm>. *And I am come down to deliver them out of the land of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land flowing with milk and honey: unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.*

Method Blend all the ingredients until the mixture becomes smooth. Add more milk or honey to taste. Remind the students that this land was plentiful.



Catholic Schools Week 2010

You will need

60g/2oz plain flour
 125g/4oz medium oatmeal
 pinch of salt
 1 level tsp baking powder
 60g/2oz margarine

Lough Derg Oatcakes

Fasting is part of the Catholic tradition and indeed Catholics fast for Mass by not taking any food (only water and medicines) for an hour before receiving the Eucharist. Fasting has been part of the Jewish and Christian tradition for thousands of years. Deut 9:7-21 tells us that Moses fasted for forty days and nights before (and indeed after) he received the stone tablets on which the covenant was written. Jesus fasted in the desert. 'In all that time he ate nothing so that he was hungry when it was over' (Lk 3:2; Mt 4:2). St Paul fasted for three days after he was converted on the road to Damascus. In Ireland there is a long tradition of fasting associated with St Patrick. Tradition says that St Patrick spent forty days barefoot and fasting on the holy island of Lough Derg in County Donegal. The tradition associating Lough Derg with fasting goes back for over a thousand years. <http://www.loughderg.ie/index.cfm/area/information/page/about>. Today pilgrims from all over Ireland and many parts of the world go to Lough Derg to pray and fast over a three-day period. While on the island they have one meal a day of oatcakes and/or dry toast accompanied by black tea or coffee. Why do people do this? While making these oatcakes, discuss the importance of fasting with the children. Fasting involves not eating as much food as we normally would while simultaneously turning to God and saying sorry for the times when we have not shown love in our lives. In fasting, Christians walk in solidarity with those who do not have enough to eat in the world. Fasting means taking time out from the things we normally take for granted and thinking and praying so that we can refocus our lives on God, others and ourselves.

Method Preheat oven to moderate, gas 4/180C. Mix oatmeal, flour, baking powder and salt. Cut margarine into chunks, and rub into the flour mixture. Add about 2 tablespoons water to bind it together. Knead the dough until smooth. Roll out on a surface lightly dusted with flour until its about 3–5mm (1/4–1/2in) thick. Cut it into circles and place the biscuits on a baking sheet and bake in the centre of the oven for 15–20 minutes or until light golden. Remove from oven, remove the baking sheet, and place on a wire rack to cool completely.

For the butter icing

280g/10oz butter, softened
 560g/20oz icing sugar, 2–4 tbs milk and 1 tsp of vanilla essence

*For Chocolate butter icing add in one dessertspoon of cocoa powder

Saint Brigid's Cross Cake

This recipe is designed to make one cake in the shape of a St Brigid's cross for the whole class. Brigid's crosses are traditionally made on 1 February, her feast day. St Brigid of Kildare is often called Mary of the Gaels. She is Patron Saint of dairy workers and many stories abound of her generosity to those in want. While making this class cake you might explore stories associated with Brigid and dairy produce, particularly ones where she gave away her father's butter to the poor.

The recipe included here is simply for the butter icing. For the cake you will need to buy four plain or chocolate Swiss rolls. You can use two plain and two chocolate Swiss rolls if you wish. To make a base for your St Brigid's cake get a large tray and cover it with tinfoil. Arrange the four Swiss rolls into the shape of a Brigid's cross on the tray.

Method Beat the butter in a large bowl until soft. Add half the icing sugar and beat until smooth. Then add the remaining icing sugar with one tablespoon of the milk. Beat until creamy, then add the vanilla essence and mix. Add extra icing sugar to thicken or a little extra milk to get the right consistency. Spread the butter icing over the four Swiss rolls arranged in the shape of a St Brigid's cross. You might like to make a pattern on the butter icing by gently moving the prongs of a fork on the surface of the cake. If you put marshmallows or sprinkles on the cake it looks particularly festive. Share with your class.



Catholic Schools Week 2010



The Year for Priests 2009–2010

Activities

Saint John Vianney

The Year for Priests 2009–2010

Pope Benedict XVI has proclaimed this the 'Year for Priests'. This year is meant to benefit our priests, but it is also meant to benefit all members of the Church. Our priests give their lives for us – their lives are literally spent in service to us. Therefore, a year dedicated for them is also for us. During this special year, treat yourself to some basic information about the priesthood.

The Whole Church is a Priestly People, yet Christ is the true priest. Through our baptism, we all share in his priesthood. There are two ways to participate in Christ's priesthood:

- the common (or baptismal) priesthood of the faithful
- the ministerial priesthood of bishops and priests

The **ministerial priesthood** is at the service of the common priesthood. Priests' lives are literally spent in service to us. The Church states that the priest's office 'is in the strict sense of the term a service'. Priests exercise their service to us in three ways: by teaching, divine worship and pastoral leadership. The ministerial priesthood is one way Christ builds up and leads his Church ... thus every priest is a gift to us from God!

Ordination is the sacramental act that integrates a man into the order of bishops, priests or deacons. When a man is ordained, he receives a gift of the Holy Spirit that permits the exercise of a sacred power for the service of the faithful. This sacred giftedness comes only from Christ himself through his Church.

Activities

Compose an essay from one of the following themes:

- 'What the Vocation of Priest Means'
- 'A Priest That Has Influenced My Life/Our School'

Saint John Vianney

Who was St John Vianney? He was born 8 May 1786 and died 4 August 1859. After many difficulties including military service, academic struggles, the anti-clerical context of the French Revolution, he was ordained priest on 13 August 1815. He served as an assistant priest in Ecully and as Parish Priest in Ars where he was famous for his sanctity and radical spiritual transformation of his parish and its surroundings. His ministry of the sacrament of reconciliation was legendary, with him devoting up to eighteen hours a day in the confessional. He was canonised in 1925.

Discuss the life and ministry of John Vianney in small groups and record findings; present findings to class. Discuss why he was canonized.

John Vianney was known for giving away his belongings or selling his possessions to buy food for those in need. Challenge students to think of needs at the parish or community level and then decide on a project to help the needy through donated items or a fundraiser. This could be a school or parish-wide project under the patronage of St John Vianney with prayers to him throughout the project. This could be a year-long project, with a different class each month sponsoring their chosen charitable organisation.



Catholic Schools Week 2010

Catholic Schools Week Wordsearch



Discuss in class the significance of each of these words.

Catholic Schools Week Wordsearch

Q	L	O	W	N	J	R	H	N	M	H	E	K	E	W
P	B	J	D	M	E	Q	O	C	O	C	U	T	H	H
F	M	I	D	S	D	I	P	L	I	P	H	T	T	Z
T	F	S	P	R	T	Z	I	V	A	O	F	V	F	Y
W	R	E	R	A	Y	S	R	R	S	J	V	J	L	A
E	C	A	C	W	T	E	T	R	L	E	V	M	E	Y
T	C	U	D	I	S	N	N	O	I	G	I	L	E	R
X	D	I	C	I	E	Y	T	I	N	U	M	M	O	C
E	I	R	T	R	T	E	V	I	S	U	L	C	N	I
S	G	V	S	S	W	I	C	D	F	Y	P	F	I	I
E	S	H	E	N	U	U	O	W	J	A	K	A	P	I
S	I	P	K	X	A	J	E	N	R	Q	M	I	Q	N
P	O	O	J	E	J	O	R	I	J	O	Z	T	V	D
H	C	F	U	L	V	H	S	X	K	G	L	H	Q	Q
H	F	V	V	W	N	H	Z	K	F	F	Y	X	T	Q

Find the following words

COMMUNITY	EDUCATION	ETHOS
FAITH	HOLISTIC	HOPE
INCLUSIVE	JUSTICE	PARISH
PARTNERSHIP	RELIGION	RESPECT
SERVICE	TRADITION	



Catholic Schools Week 2010



Lesson Plan

Community and Vocation

Objectives:

- To enable the student to know what a community is
- To gain a deeper insight into vocation and key words associated with it
- To be familiar with vocation as a calling to serve within their own community and parish
- To understand their own role within a community

Introduction:

- Write the term 'Community' on the board
- Brainstorm their understanding of what a community is

Development:

- Explain key definition of community as a group of people who share something in common
- List the different types of communities in your school area
- Give out worksheet on key terms on vocation
- Read through the worksheet and answer the questions
- Recap on learning and conclusion

Conclusion: Complete the puzzle.

Lesson Plan

Community and Vocation

Vocational Wordsearch

Find the following words

- CONVENT
- HOLY
- LAITY
- LIFE
- MEDITATION
- MONASTERY
- NUN
- ORDERS
- ORDINATION
- PRIEST
- RELIGIOUS
- SEMINARY
- VOCATION
- VOWS

Vocational Wordsearch

N	D	E	Y	V	O	B	V	A	S	Q	F	S	C	L
J	O	K	U	J	O	S	G	T	U	X	Y	W	O	B
C	D	I	U	G	O	C	X	L	O	W	L	O	N	F
O	H	X	T	X	S	O	A	D	I	G	S	V	V	T
F	F	L	T	A	V	U	X	T	G	E	M	L	E	L
N	Y	X	Z	G	T	R	T	Y	I	V	G	R	N	G
A	W	T	O	Q	A	I	R	O	L	O	P	K	T	M
F	T	L	I	F	E	E	D	X	E	I	N	W	K	I
C	U	H	U	A	T	K	T	E	R	S	U	A	N	O
N	Y	S	Q	S	L	Q	S	E	M	I	N	A	R	Y
Z	U	W	A	T	S	E	I	R	P	M	I	D	L	N
P	R	N	Z	B	O	E	N	N	M	X	E	O	D	S
N	O	I	T	A	N	I	D	R	O	R	H	B	W	J
M	O	Z	A	L	B	L	V	Q	S	Y	T	M	D	E
D	H	A	B	B	A	O	K	K	A	R	Y	H	C	U



Catholic Schools Week 2010

31 January 2010 Mass to Celebrate the Beginning of Catholic Schools Week



31 January 2010
Mass to Celebrate
the Beginning
of Catholic
Schools Week

Entrance Antiphon Save us, Lord our God, and gather us together from all the nations, that we may proclaim your holy name and glory in your praise.

Opening Comment Today marks the beginning of Catholic Schools Week. We celebrate and give thanks for the many gifts that Catholic education brings to our families, our parish and our society. We also pray that our schools will continue to form faith-filled people who will be 'light to all generations'.

Opening Prayer Let us pray (*joining in the praise of the living God for we are his people*)

*Father in heaven,
From the days of Abraham and Moses,
Until this gathering of your Church in prayer,
You have formed a people in the image of
your Son.*

*Bless this people with the gift of your
kingdom.*

*May we serve you with our every desire
and show love for one another even as you
have loved us.*

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading *Jeremiah 1:4–5:17-19*

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah

*I have appointed you as a prophet to the
nations.*

In the days of Josiah, the word of the Lord was addressed to me, saying, 'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you came to birth I consecrated you. I have appointed you as prophet to the nations.

So now brace yourself for action. Stand up and tell them all I command you. Do not be dismayed at their presence, or in their presence I will make you dismayed. I, for my part, today will make you into a fortified

city, a pillar of iron, and a wall of bronze to confront all this land: the kings of Judah, its princes, its priests and the county people. They will fight against you but shall not overcome you, for I am with you to deliver you – it is the Lord who speaks.'

This is the Word of the Lord

Psalm 70 1-6, 15. 17 r. 15

My lips will tell of your help. In you, O Lord, I take refuge; let me never be put to shame. In your justice rescue me, free me: pay heed to me and save me.

Response

Be a rock were I can take refuge, a mighty stronghold to save me; for you are my rock, my stronghold. Free me from the hand of the wicked.

Response

It is you, O Lord, who are my hope, my trust, O Lord, since my youth. On you I have leaned from my birth, from my mother's womb you have been my help.

Response

My lips will tell of your justice and day by day of your help. O God, you have taught me from my youth and I proclaim your wonders still.

Response



Catholic Schools Week 2010



31 January 2010
Mass to Celebrate
the Beginning
of Catholic
Schools Week

Second Reading *1 Corinthians 12:31–13:13*

A Reading from the First Letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

There are three things that last: faith, hope and love; and the greatest of these is love.

Be ambitious for the higher gifts. And I am going to show you a way that is better than any of them. If I have all the eloquence of men or of angels, but speak without love, I am simply a gong booming or a cymbal clashing. If I have the gift of prophecy, understanding all the mysteries there are, and knowing everything, and if I have faith in all its fullness, to move mountains, but without love, then I am nothing at all. If I give away all that I possess, piece by piece, and if I even let them take my body to burn it, but am without love, it will do me no good whatever.

Love is always patient and kind: it is never jealous; love is never boastful or conceited; it is never rude or selfish; it does not take offence, and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people's sins but delights in the truth; it is always ready to excuse,

to trust, to hope and to endure whatever comes. Love does not come to an end. But if there are gifts of prophecy, the time will come when they must fail; or the gift of languages, it will not continue for ever; and knowledge – for this, too, the time will come when it must fail. For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophesying is imperfect; but once perfection comes, all imperfect things will disappear. When I was a child, I used to talk like a child, and think like a child, and argue like a child, but now I am a man, all childish ways are put behind me. Now we are seeing a dim reflection in a mirror; but then we shall be seeing face to face. The knowledge that I have now is imperfect; but then I shall know as fully as I am known. In short, there are three things that last: faith, hope and love; and the greatest of these is love.

This is the Word of the Lord



Catholic Schools Week 2010

Gospel Acclamation *Luke 4:18*

The Lord has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives.

Gospel *Luke 4:21-30*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Like Elijah and Elisha, Jesus is not sent to the Jews only

Jesus began to speak in the synagogue, 'This text is being fulfilled today even as you listen'. And he won the approval of all, and they were astonished by the gracious words that came from his lips.

They said, 'This is Joseph's son, surely?' But he replied, 'No doubt you will quote me the saying, "Physician, heal yourself" and tell me, "We have heard all that happened in Capernaum, do the same here in your own countryside."' And he went on, 'I tell you solemnly, no prophet is ever accepted in his own country'.

'There were many widows in Israel, I can assure you, in Elijah's day, when heaven remained shut for three years and six months and a great famine raged throughout the land, but Elijah was not sent to any one of these: he was sent to a widow at Zarephath, a Sidonian town. And in the prophet Elisha's time there were many lepers in Israel, but none of these was cured, except the Syrian, Naaman.'

When they heard this everyone in the synagogue was enraged. They sprang to their feet and hustled him out of the town; and they took him up to the brow of the hill their town was built on, intending to throw him down the cliff, but he slipped through the crowd and walked away.

This is the Gospel of the Lord



31 January 2010
Mass to Celebrate
the Beginning
of Catholic
Schools Week



Catholic Schools Week 2010



31 January 2010
Mass to Celebrate
the Beginning
of Catholic
Schools Week

General Intercessions

Celebrant We now bring all our prayers to God, who created each one of us in his image and likeness so that we might fill the earth with his love and peace.

For the Church; that together we may be a beacon of light, hope, justice and integrity.
Lord, hear us

For all Christians; that we may respond to the gift of the Spirit and be prophets of God in our time working together for a world in which each and every person is respected and nurtured.
Lord, hear us

For the gift of faith; that we may live life with a discerning heart and deep confidence in our loving God.
Lord, hear us

For our Catholic Schools and all those involved in education, teachers, administrators, pupils and parents; that God's Spirit may shape their minds and hearts so that they may be a source of hope and light in their families and communities.
Lord, hear us

For all children and young people; that they will always be protected and helped to develop and grow through healthy and nurturing relationships.

Lord, hear us

For the sick and all those in need at this time; may each person be strengthened by the love that surrounds them and supported by the active care of family, parish and community.

Lord, hear us

For all those who have died recently, especially N. & N., and all the dead; that they may find rest with God as we may give thanks for the richness they brought into our lives.

Lord, hear us

Celebrant God our creator, we come to you in prayer through your Son Jesus Christ who is our hope and our light. Hear and answer the prayers that we have made in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen



Catholic Schools Week 2010

Reflection for Boards of Management/Governors Members and Staff

Reflection
for Boards of
Management/
Governors
Members and Staff

The following might form the basis of a short reflection on 'What is a Catholic School?' with staff and members of the Boards of Management/Governors during Catholic Schools Week 2010.

In the past two decades, Ireland has changed radically to become more culturally and religiously diverse. Many changes have impacted on the educational landscape and as with all change many questions arise in Catholic schools such as: What is a Catholic school? And who is a Catholic school for? During the week dedicated to reflection upon Catholic schools the following pages invite you, as a Board of Management/Governors and staff, to reflect upon two of the four questions on the next page in relation to your own particular situation. It is suggested that you give a period of time to reflect on these issues during a Board meeting and a staff meeting.

Catholic education in general and Catholic schooling in particular has a history and a tradition that is handed down from one generation to the next. Each generation needs to reflect on that history and tradition, including the writings that have grown up around it, to see how relevant it is for the contemporary situation and how it can be developed in the future. The following extract is taken from the **General Directory for Catechesis** of the Catholic Church, n.259.

'The Catholic school is a most important *locus* for human and Christian formation. The declaration for the Second Vatican Council, *Gravissimum Educationists* "makes a decisive change in the history of Catholic schools: the move from school as institution to school as a community". Catholic schools "are no less zealous than other schools in the promotion of culture and in the human formation of young people. It is however, the special function of the Catholic school to:

- Develop in the school community an atmosphere animated by a spirit of liberty and charity;
- Enable young people, while developing their own personality, to grow at the same time in that new life which has been given them in baptism;
- Orientate the whole of human culture to the message of salvation".

The educational task of Catholic schools is bound to be developed along the basis of this concept proposed by the Second Vatican Council.¹

¹ Congregation for the Clergy, General Directory for Catechesis, Rome 1997, n.259.



Catholic Schools Week 2010

Reflection for Boards of Management/ Governors Members and Staff

Questions for discussion

Prayers

Questions for discussion:

1. In this extract we meet the word 'Catholic'. Catholicism is not a stand-alone reality. In his book *Catholicism* (1994), Richard McBrien stresses that the word Catholic is a qualification of Christian and Christian is a qualification of religious and religious is a qualification of human. What is our understanding of the word Catholic? Does it refer to a person or a community, a parish, a family that is rooted in the Christian tradition of Roman Catholicism?
2. How does the Catholic faith come alive within our school? Do we as a staff or a Board of Management/Governors '*Enable young people, while developing their own personality, to grow at the same time in that new life which has been given them in baptism*'?²
3. The word Catholic comes from the Greek word *kath'holou* meaning 'according to the whole', and it has connotations of welcome and universality. Is our school community a welcoming community that is '*animated by a spirit of liberty and charity*'³ for all people?
4. How do we encourage our students and staff to bear witness to their Catholic faith and live it out in the world? Does our school have a transformative role?

You might like to begin or conclude your discussions with the following prayers

Staff Prayer

Jesus, our teacher and our Lord! You taught with authority and compassion. You touched the lives of so many people who sought understanding, healing and most of all someone who would listen. Help us to be that voice of authority and compassion in our school community. May we touch lightly with your grace and your love the lives and spirits of those we teach. May we always seek to see the best and expect only the best in each other and in our students. May our hearts be open always to your voice and your love and may we, like all those called to teach unto justice, shine like the stars of heaven as beacons of hope in our school communities.

Amen

Board of Management/ Governors Members' Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, we gather together in your name to work for the good of our school.

We know that you are with us as we reflect on the issues before us at this meeting.

May we be guided in all that we do by the gifts of wisdom and understanding, of right judgement and courage, bestowed upon us by your Spirit.

May the outcome of our work continue to ensure that our school community is a place of openness, compassion, justice and peace.

Help us to keep you ever at the centre of all that we do. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen

² Ibid, n.259

³ Ibid, n.259

