



Catholic Schools Week 2019

Catholic Schools: Celebrating the Work of Our Local Catholic Schools

STAFF TO STAFF

Introduction

‘Christ is the foundation of the whole educational enterprise in a Catholic school ... He is the One who ennobles humankind, gives meaning to human life, and is the model which the Catholic school offers its pupils’ (CS, 34-35). As teachers working in Catholic post-primary schools, we educate towards intercultural dialogue. In this way, we as teachers nurture the inclusive and diverse nature of our classrooms and school communities. In giving expression to the characteristic spirit of our local Catholic post-primary school we make clear to our pupils and their parents that Christ is the unseen but ever-present teacher in our classroom. Last year, we celebrated the fact that our school communities are best understood as a family of families and that in this unity there is also diversity. Similarly, this year it is important for teachers to take a moment to recognise and celebrate the unity in diversity that is so characteristic of their Catholic schools, as well as the privileged role that they have as educators, working in Catholic schools, in building up the kingdom of God through nurturing the sacramental imagination of pupils and challenging them in matters of faith and reason.

As educators working in Catholic schools it is always useful to contemplate the word ‘and’. The word ‘and’ is perhaps the most important word in the Catholic tradition as it implies and demands relationship. One

reads always in the Catholic tradition of faith and reason, human and divine, presence and absence. When one recognises this point it is clear that relationship is at the very heart of our Catholic faith, primarily our relationship with God but also other human persons. By encountering and entering into relation with other people one truly encounters Christ’s presence in their midst. In this way, by celebrating the diversity and the unique dignity of each person in our Catholic post-primary schools and educating toward intercultural dialogue, teachers working in Catholic post-primary schools make a unique and meaningful contribution to their local communities and wider Irish society.

Reflection

‘From the pedagogical and intercultural points of view, the finest gift that Catholic education can make to a school is that of witness. Catholic schools give witness to a constant, personal network of relationships, which are lived out between the poles of personal identity and otherness. This network is marked by dynamic osmosis, in the various dealings between adults, between teachers and students, and among students – without prejudices of culture, sex, social class or religion.’ (*Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools: Living in Harmony for a Civilization of Love*, 48-50).





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'Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts' (Col 3:16).

- The above scriptural references and papal teachings are concerned with the concept of the contribution of Catholic education. Write a diary entry for one day of the week. Try to account for the various ways in which your activity that day moved from the Catholic vision for education and how this manifestation impacted your school or your classroom environment. Having completed the diary entry, reflect on the vision of Catholic education and the potential that it embodies to positively affect both our outward and inward lives. Could your daily activity have given richer expression to a Catholic vision of education?
- Watch the following video on Continuing the Ministry of Christ: https://youtu.be/dE8_FezjbQ0 (5min 27sec). Discuss the insights rised in this video. From you discussion, discern two ways in which members of staff could better communicate the model of Christ in the daily life of the school.

PRAYER

A PRAYER FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATORS

Heavenly Father, who promised that all those who instruct others in the ways of holiness will shine as stars for all eternity, fill our hearts and minds with true knowledge and the art of teaching. Give us patience and understanding, justice and prudence, humility and fear of the Lord. Grant us wisdom and charity so that with a pure and holy love of God we ourselves may enjoy all these gifts and impart them to our pupils. Teach our children to be obedient to your laws and docile to your inspirations. Let them be instruments of your peace in their homes, in our land, and in the family of nations as becomes children of the sons of God in the Mystical Body of Christ. May the blessings of your sevenfold Gifts be in all who teach and in all who learn through the Holy Spirit who is the Love of the Father and the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

(Prayer taken from the website catholicity website) www.catholicity.com/prayer/prayer-for-teachers.html

