

Meeting of Heads & School Chaplains with the Bishop
Tuesday, 9 May 2006, 10 am

The Education Centre, Lancaster

AGENDA

- 1. Prayer and Welcome**
(The Bishop)

- 2. Address: 'Challenges facing Catholic Education and Chaplaincy'**
(Fr Luiz Ruscillo)

- 3. Chaplaincy Paper - Discussion**

- 4. The Way Forward**

CHAPLAINCY IN CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

DRAFT DIOCESAN GUIDANCE FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF DIOCESAN HEADS & CHAPLAINS



A CONSULTATION DOCUMENT BY:

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BISHOP'S OFFICE

LANCASTER

MAY 2006

CHAPLAINCY IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

DIOCESAN GUIDELINES FOR HEADS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND CHAPLAINS

Dear Friends,

The following is to aid us in our thinking about School Chaplaincy with particular reference to the meeting with Heads and Chaplains on 9 May.

1. Introduction

This document has been prepared in response to a call from Governing Bodies, Headteachers and Chaplains regarding the role of High School/College Chaplains. Diocesan guidelines will help not only in the selection of the right candidate, but creating the necessary structure for his/her support i.e. job description, working conditions and appointment procedures. What follows is based in part on policy statements received from various School Governing Bodies/Heads and the collective experience and wisdom of a number of School/College Chaplains. This document serves as a guideline for discussion and hopefully will lead to a unified approach across the Diocese.

Chaplaincy is an essential element in the in faith and pastoral mission of our Catholic Schools.

The provision of an effective programme of spiritual and pastoral care or 'Chaplaincy' as we call it, begins with prayerful preparation, discernment and calls for:

- a. People of faith, theologically trained, and pastorally skilled.
- b. The necessary facilities and funding
- c. The support of the entire school community,

(A good Chaplaincy programme does not come about by accident. It demands conscious commitment, clear decisions and deliberate action from both the School and Diocese).

2. *Chaplaincy in the service of Evangelisation and Mission*

Questions frequently asked are: how best to preserve and develop

- a. 'Catholicity' in our Secondary Schools given the pressures of society?
- b. The distinctive nature of the Catholic school and how to promote the Gospel (*proclamation, teaching, witness*) in today's world?

The teaching and living out of Gospel values is central to the special nature of Catholic schools. This calls for a learning environment and school culture that is visibly confident in the faith – with space and time to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ anew, celebrate the liturgical year, especially the great seasons and feasts; prayer time each day; celebration of Mass; display of Catholic religious symbols; and the community's response to life's tragedies such as illness and death. The "moral and spiritual formation" promoted by Catholic education also includes a view of human life in which we are transformed by the Spirit. The above should lead to involvement in charitable works including *Justice & Peace*.

3. *Guidelines for School Chaplaincy*

School Chaplaincy is a work of the Church's pastoral ministry carried out primarily within the school community. It is not simply "youth work", since it is directed towards both the staff *and* the students. This ministry also extends beyond the immediate school community to family members, friends and neighbours.

School Chaplaincy is a ministry of the Catholic Church, and those who work in it require a *mandate* from the Diocesan Bishop. School Chaplaincy personnel (that are not priests) are now normally appointed by the school Governors, and are employees of the Governing Body. In the school, they work with the Headteacher and are ordinarily accountable to him/her. In their work, they are guided by the

policies and decisions of the Governors and the Senior Management Team. However, their fundamental *mandate* comes from the Church and they are in this sense 'ministers of the Church'.

All baptised members of the Church share in "the saving mission of the Church itself," says the Second Vatican Council. "Through their baptism and confirmation, all are commissioned to that apostolate by the Lord Himself." (Lumen Gentium)ⁱ Catholic school staff, teachers and other non-teaching staff, have this same call.

School Chaplains, like all Christians, minister in virtue of their call in Baptism and Confirmation, but their appointment and *mandate* as Chaplains represents the assignment to them of a special call to ministry and service, a fuller participation in the apostolate of the Church.

4. Who carries out this ministry?

In *The Code of Canon Law*, Canon 564 describes a Chaplain as:

"a priest to whom is entrusted in a stable manner the pastoral care, at least in part, of some community or special group of Christ's faithful."

This would appear to restrict the title of "Chaplain" to one who is ordained. However, in practice Chaplaincy work is now shared amongst priests and laity in many of our dioceses today. In general usage around the Diocese and beyond, the title "Chaplain" is used by those ministering in this way to school communities, whether the Chaplain is a priest or lay person.

In a certain sense it could be said that *our young people* are *the principal agents* for Chaplaincy work. So often Chaplaincy follows and supports them as they search for the fullness of life. And in this way the students in our schools are asking Chaplaincy workers and others to listen to their questions and to do everything possible to help them understand the one true answer to all life's questions - Jesus Christ.

5. Pastoral Role of the Chaplain

A) General Statement:

The central role of school Chaplaincy is to serve the pastoral and spiritual needs of staff and students in the Catholic Secondary School. Chaplaincy will also be a place where students and staff can find room, encouragement and opportunities to grow in their human and personal development. Thus the secondary school lives and grows as a unique Catholic Christian community to which staff and students belong and have opportunities to grow in humanity, knowledge and faith. The Chaplain provides and taps into existing evangelisation opportunities for the school community and supports the faith life of its Catholic student body, as well as encouraging those of other traditions and Faiths to continue and nurture their own journey of faith.

Nonetheless, the major role today, for the Chaplain is, as I see it, to use various and imaginative ways to proclaim afresh the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and so to inspire new-found faith in Him: *the Way, the Truth and the Life*.

By being present and highly visible in the school, the Chaplain shares in the life of the school and in the joys and the sorrows of its members, providing witness of the caring Church. The Chaplaincy, too, is available to help those who suffer or need support in times of crisis.

Increasingly young people in our schools have never had a deeply personal encounter with Jesus Christ. Many students and staff do not practice their faith for one reason or other. Often students belong to other faith traditions or none. These factors have to be taken seriously in Chaplaincy ministry.

In a very real and tangible way, the School Chaplaincy represents and symbolises the Church's commitment to its mission to young people. Thus it will be necessary for the Chaplaincy to exercise a leadership and prophetic ministry, always reminding the school community of its Christian purpose and encouraging its members to give expression to discipleship in ways which are fruitful, encouraging and life-giving for others.

Bearing this in mind, Chaplaincy ministry might be further enhanced if a member of the School's Leadership Team had direct responsibility for it. There will be times when the Chaplain/Chaplaincy Team will need to talk with the School's Leadership Team about important issues affecting the spiritual and religious mission of the school *i.e.* place of prayer, resourcing and support for Chaplaincy, discipline, inclusion policies, etc.

B) Responsibilities of the Chaplain:

i. *Witnessing to and Proclaiming the Word*

Like all Christians, those involved in School Chaplaincy are especially called to proclaim the Gospel, not only with their words but also with their lives. Such integrity of a life of faith and fidelity is a powerful evangelical witness to the Lord Jesus and his life-giving teaching.

Whilst the Chaplain/Chaplaincy Team will not usually be involved in formal teaching, they would do well to make themselves available to assist other members of staff in dealing with theological/spiritual/pastoral issues for students as these arise throughout in the School.

It would certainly be helpful if the Chaplaincy Team had opportunities to visit classrooms and contribute in ways which make use of their expertise. Once again the witness and opportunities for primary evangelisation are enormous if due preparation time is given and key objectives made clear.

ii. *Co-ordination and Leadership:*

The Chaplaincy Co-ordinator is responsible for coordinating the school's entire Chaplaincy programme. This includes the preparation of an annual Pastoral Plan and calendar of Chaplaincy events and activities, and seeing that this is correlated with the school events calendar. The Chaplain also coordinates the contributions of other staff who will be involved in the preparation and presentation of the many Chaplaincy events and activities. For example:

The Chaplaincy Team Leader should draw together a Team to assist with the overall work of pastoral ministry in the school. This Chaplaincy Team might include:

- a) some staff members (volunteers or those with assigned Chaplaincy time), including a member of the school's Senior Management Team.
- b) students (chosen because of their interest in and ability to contribute to the work of Chaplaincy).
- c) Where there is no assigned priest-chaplain; a priest who regularly visits the school for Mass and the sacraments should be invited to join the Team.

Catholic schools already have in place structures and procedures for the pastoral care of students including, in many cases, the existence of house and tutorial groups. Key Members of staff for each Year Group/House with some of their students could also be valuable members of the Chaplaincy Team responsible for promoting Chaplaincy initiatives in House/Year Groups.

'Peer-chaplaincy' should not be under-estimated. It can be quite effective when clearly supported by Senior-Management and the Chaplaincy Team.

iii. ***Bridge Building:***

Our Catholic High schools, especially in urban areas, bring together a very diverse group of people:

- different faith, ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- all social classes,
- a people with a broad spectrum of intellectual, physical, and emotional needs and abilities.

Bridging and building community within the school is an essential part of the work of Chaplaincy and in developing a truly *Catholic* education.

iv. Prayer

The Chaplaincy has an overall responsibility for the prayer life of the school community. All are called to prayer, and here the Chaplaincy has a particular role of leadership. It should include:

- Providing daily prayer in the school.
- Preparing and leading prayer for special gatherings of the school community.
- Modelling good forms of prayer, giving instruction on how to pray, and being a resource to students and staff on the tradition of prayer, both individual and communal.

v. Liturgy:

The Chaplain is responsible for preparing and coordinating liturgical services for the school. *This includes:*

- Providing for the celebration of the Eucharist throughout the school year, both with the whole school community and with smaller groupings.
- Ensuring that all those who assist at Mass in school, as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, are duly commissioned in the Diocese in the normal manner.
- Providing for the celebration of non-Eucharistic liturgies with the school community or parts of it, as appropriate to specific occasions.
- Providing for the celebration in the school of the special seasons and feasts of the Church's liturgical year.
- Initiating liturgies in response to special needs in the school community, success, tragedy, exams, *OFSTED* success, bereavement, staff *INSET*.
- Ensuring that all school liturgical celebrations are carefully prepared and in a manner appropriate for a worshipping community of young people.

Students and staff should be closely involved in the preparation and presentation of the liturgy.

vi. The Sacraments:

The Chaplain has certain responsibilities in the school with regard to the celebration of the Sacraments. *These include:*

- Where there is the reservation of the Eucharist in the School Chapel, the norms of the Church must be adhered to including the permission of the Diocesan Bishop. The Chapel of reservation should *not* be used for other school activities outside of prayer and catechesis.
- The Chaplain will arrange for the Sacrament of Reconciliation to be available to students and staff in an appropriate manner: e.g., monthly, seasonally, etc.

vii. Retreats

The Chaplain is responsible for overseeing the school's retreat programme.

Ideally a full school retreat programme should include:

- For students, the provision of days of retreat for all year groups. The Chaplain may need to coordinate the involvement of other staff members in the organizing of student retreats, especially in larger high schools.
- For staff, the provision of a staff recollection day each year. School Governing Bodies should ensure that an annual retreat day for staff is included in the schedules.

viii. Links with Local Parishes:

The Chaplain has a responsibility to foster links with the home parishes of the students. *This may involve, for example:*

- Inviting and enabling the local priest(s) to take part in liturgical celebrations with the school; also inviting and welcoming priests into school to meet their young parishioners;
- Inviting and enabling the local priest(s) to assist with reconciliation services in the school, or to visit classes or speak to groups;
- Providing the parish(es) with information about school liturgical events throughout the year, and extending invitations to attend special events;
- Being aware of liturgical celebrations and other events in the parish(es), and encouraging vigourously the participation of students and staff;
- Arranging for meetings or social times when members of the parish staff can get together with the school Chaplaincy Team, the Leadership Team, or other staff to share ideas;
- Communicating and consulting with those doing social and justice ministry in the parish, and possibly linking school and parish efforts in certain social projects;
- Attendance at times at deanery meetings to report on progress on Chaplaincy and inviting interest, help and support from local priests and people.

ix. Counselling:

The Chaplain will be available as a pastoral resource to students and staff in need of counselling support because of personal crisis, or growth in personal development. In the case of bereavement, this may include organizing bereavement groups in the school or assisting the individual to find appropriate grief counselling. The Chaplain must always be conscious of his/her own limitations and boundaries, and must know when and how to make referrals to 'professional' caregivers, with the approval of the school authorities. While the counselling element will always be an important part of the work of Chaplaincy, it should not be seen as the sum of its role and work in our schools.

x. The Spirit of the Gospel:

A central role for the Chaplaincy, in conjunction with the Senior Management Team/Leadership Group, is to witness to the Spirit of the Gospel which should permeate all aspects of the life of the school community

This would include the following:

- The Chaplain should attend staff briefings, and be able to speak on issues which have moral, spiritual and pastoral implications.
- The Chaplain should be available to act as advisor in any academic subject area where there are issues of faith and morals.
- The Chaplaincy should work in a close relationship with the teachers of the RE Department. However, he/she is *not* a member of the Department nor of any other department unless they have teaching duties.

xi. Justice and Peace:

As a particular expression of the Spirit of the Gospel, the Chaplain will seek to nurture in the school community a sense of justice. *This will involve:*

- Raising awareness of the need for change in social structures. (Faith & Justice groups, Amnesty groups, and involvement in the Life movement can be immensely helpful here).
- Raising awareness of the needs of the poor and the rejected, the defenceless, both at home and around the world, the migrant etc.

6. Facilities and Supports provided for the Chaplaincy Team

General Support:

Chaplaincy will only be as fruitful as the support and resourcing it receives from the Governors, Head and Senior Management Team.

Facilities:

- Each secondary school should have a designated chapel which is maintained and decorated as part of the fabric of the school building, thus providing a sense of the sacred.
- The Chaplaincy Team should have a private and properly equipped office which includes a space appropriate for meeting with staff or students.

Other Supports:

- Chaplaincy should be provided with an adequate budget to cover retreats, liturgies, equipment, and other Chaplaincy expenses.
- Chaplains need ongoing professional development and spiritual nourishment, and should be given time and financial resources for this purpose.

7. Reporting and Accountability

The Chaplain is responsible to the Head for daily operational matters in school. These will include the types of services provided, the timing of events, relationships with the various groups within the school community, types of materials distributed, attendance, budget, and so on.

Although an employee of the Governors and subject to governors' and school policies, on school matters a lay chaplain is a minister of the Church through the *mandate* given by the Bishop of the diocese. A priest chaplain, however, is not normally an employee of the school.

8. Qualifications and Experience

A Chaplain/Chaplaincy Team Leader increasingly needs to be a theologically educated and pastorally trained person, who helps develop, strengthen and nurture the faith of, and provide care for, the members of the school community.

In determining the candidacy of a person seeking a chaplaincy role within a school the following should be required:

- an accredited Catholic theological qualification, preferably at degree level (if not an aspiration to gain one);
- an appreciation of the requirements of Catholic education;
- a proven record of pastoral skills and suitability for work with young people;
- an ability to work closely and collaboratively as a member of a team - school community, parish clergy and parishioners;
- a degree of maturity in Catholic Faith which will give integrity to his/her work; and the capacity to articulate and communicate it to others;
- a warm personality which demonstrates a loving concern for others;
- an understanding of the developmental characteristics and needs of young people;
- an understanding of the nature and role of the Church's Liturgy in a school context and its practical implementation;
- a willingness to participate in the ongoing training programme judged appropriate by the Head of Education Services in the Diocese.

As Schools and Governing Bodies consider the above, I would ask that candidates already in employment who are without full qualifications are granted the time and opportunity to pursue ongoing studies. I think that a diocesan ongoing formation scheme should be initiated to encourage such study among our Chaplains. (Here we might look at the *Maryvale* distance-learning programme).

5. A) PROCEDURE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A PRIEST/DEACON CHAPLAIN

At the invitation of a Headteacher or the Bishop on his own initiative, after proper consultation with Head, Governors and the local Dean, would appoint a priest or deacon as Chaplain of the School. The cleric's letter of appointment would serve as his *mandate* to serve students and staff.

B) PROCEDURE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A LAY CHAPLAIN/CHAPLAINCY TEAM WORKER

So that we have a Diocesan-wide programme of good practice, I propose that we might work towards a new procedure in the appointment of Lay Chaplains:

- *In all cases the Headteacher will need to :*

- consult with the Diocesan Head of Education Services concerning plans to appoint a Chaplain;
- prepare a Job Description and clarify the contractual arrangements;
- make arrangements for advertisements;
- The Governing Body will interview applicants – with references (each school will need to determine the procedure for the interviews - it would be good practice to involve a parent representative and a person nominated by the Bishop).
- consult with the Diocesan Head of Education Services and obtain from him the Bishop's *mandate* for the appointment of the preferred applicant;
- offer the position to the preferred applicant and negotiate the appropriate contractual arrangements;
- ensure that a proper system of line-management and professional support is in place and an appropriate induction and orientation process is operational for the new Chaplain/Team Worker.

Some Chaplains speak about a feeling of isolation, and a perceived lack of support for their work, by both the Local Church *and* the School. It is important that appropriate structures be developed to address these concerns. This document from the Bishop's Office attempts to take on board some of these concerns where the Diocese is concerned.

Tensions may well arise between what is perceived to be the Chaplain's responsibility to the Diocesan Bishop and the needs of the Local Church and the day-to-day demands of the school. In most cases these concerns can be resolved if there is an open and respectful relationship between the Chaplain and the Head. It is conceivable that in some cases, the Dean, the Diocesan Head of Education Services or even the Bishop may need to assist in the resolution of the difficulty.

- *The components of a remuneration package would need to include for a Priest - Chaplain:*

- *a Stipend* - as a sign of the school's commitment and appreciation of the value of a Priest-Chaplain, a stipend should be paid which takes into account food and accommodation, car and telephone facilities etc.
- an appropriate provision of assistance in relation to professional development will be necessary also regular retreats etc.
 - *Where a lay person is appointed to Chaplaincy:*
- ❖ The salary arrangements need to take the following into consideration:
 - ✓ broadly on the level of a basic teaching salary
 - ✓ person's qualifications and experience
 - ✓ number of hours
 - ✓ the level of responsibility
- ❖ It would be helpful if there was a harmonisation of salaries for Chaplaincy in Secondary Schools across the Diocese.
- ❖ Some positive process should be set in place for an appropriate form of professional review which is helpful to the Chaplain in identifying areas of need and arranging professional development.

The above is a consultative document and I envisage changes after much discussion.

Thank you for your ministry in our Catholic Schools and I can assure that it is much appreciated.

Yours in Christ,



+Patrick O'Donoghue, *Bishop of Lancaster*
