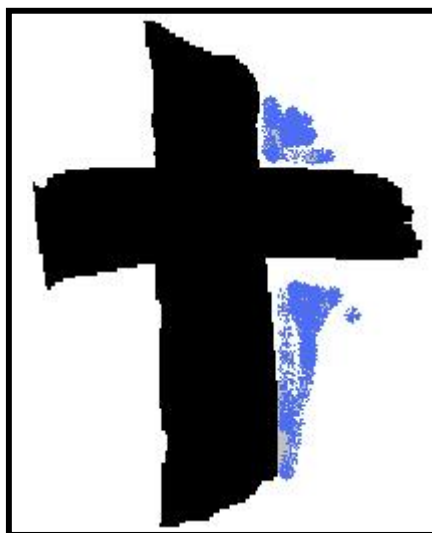


Fit for Mission? Schools



See with His eyes, Love with His Heart, Share in His Virtues

Bishop Patrick O'Donoghue

November 2007

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Introduction

Is Jesus Christ the True Centre of Our Schools and Colleges?

Of You my heart has spoken: 'Seek His face'. It is Your face, O Lord, that I seek; hide not Your face. Instruct me, Lord, in Your way. *Psalm 26: 8-9,11.*

Over the past six years as your bishop, I have had the joy of visiting many Catholic schools and colleges throughout the diocese. From the smallest village school, with its twenty or so pupils, to the large Colleges present in our towns I have been struck by their great vitality and enthusiasm.

At a time when Catholic education is being challenged by some, it is good to remind ourselves of what we have achieved in the past and what we continue to achieve in the present.

I have met many hundreds of dedicated teachers and thousands of students over the last six years and I am left with many questions. These are difficult, even challenging, questions to consider but there is urgency in raising them. They are questions we may have all asked at some point in our involvement in schools but perhaps we have chosen not to raise them so publicly before now.

- **What makes a diocesan school or college 'Catholic'?**
- **Are we losing sight of the uniqueness of Catholic education?**
- **Have we forgotten that Jesus Christ is the true centre of all that we do because we have become too focused on other demands of school life?**
- **Is the Catholic faith a living reality at the heart of every diocesan school and college?**
- **Are our pupils having a rich and living encounter with our Risen Lord?**
- **Are we transmitting the fullness of the faith in an exciting and creative way to our pupils and their families?**

If we cannot answer a confident 'Yes' to the last three of these questions, the point of keeping our schools is lost and the project of education in our diocese has failed. It is my fervent hope that we can say 'Yes' to these questions.

Together, we need to honestly and frankly look at these questions, for the very future of Catholic education in the diocese depends on the conclusions we come to, and the practical steps we agree to take together to safe-guard the Catholic identity of our schools and colleges and serve our young people in the light of Faith.

'Fit for Mission' & Catholic Schools

As you will be aware, the diocese is undertaking the 'Fit for Mission' review, the overall aim of which is to strengthen the sacramental and missionary life of each area of the diocese so that this and future generations, can have a rich and living encounter with our Lord, Jesus Christ. This is the mission of the Church, this is why we exist – to proclaim the Gospel of Christ and bring each person closer to our loving Father, through the Holy Spirit.

Due to the enormity of the task of evaluating the development needs for each of our 108 parishes, it has only been natural that up to the present time the focus of the review has been on the parishes.

The time is now right to draw our schools and colleges into this challenging, yet exciting, project – a project whose aim is to strengthen us all in order that we can enthusiastically 'proclaim the kingdom of God' (*Luke 9:2*).

I have come to the conclusion that our hopes to strengthen and deepen the missionary and sacramental life of the Church in this diocese depend largely on the engagement and commitment of our schools and colleges. For many pupils and parents the local Catholic school is their only experience of Church – our schools are at the cutting edge of the new evangelisation, called to make Christ known and loved in our communities.

I am well aware of the dedication, the struggles and the sheer hard work involved in the project of education – I have seen it at first hand. Like you, I rejoice in the Catholic schools of our diocese and express my thanks and admiration for their work and mission: teachers, non-teaching staff, governors, chaplains, parents, and the pupils themselves.

By writing the 'Fit for Mission? - Schools' document I want us to celebrate the success of many of our schools in cultivating a Catholic ethos. I also want to encourage our schools to enhance this even further by looking again at the ways in which we may develop and deepen the Catholic ethos and Catholic identity in every Primary and Secondary School, and Sixth Form College throughout the diocese. To this end, we must find ways of sharing the best practice.

I am convinced that the only guaranteed strategy for the survival of our Catholic schools and colleges is fidelity to our Catholic identity and mission.

What Happens Next?

I ask all involved in education to study this Fit for Mission document, and reflect on the range of objectives that I propose to realise our shared goals. To this end, I propose that the following happen:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 20 & 22 Nov 2007 | Launch of the 'Fit for Mission? - Schools' review at Diocesan Conferences. |
| Spring 2008 | Schools and colleges – governors, staff, students, & parents – discuss the review document and consider responses. This is to be an item on all governing body agendas across the diocese.

Engagement between schools, colleges, and deaneries to discuss how the two 'Fit for Mission?' reviews will dovetail and what joint actions should be undertaken to strengthen/re-establish school and parish links. |
| Summer 2008 | Production of <i>Development Plans</i> with priorities linked to the mission of the Church integral to all plans. Again this will be supported by an item on all governing body agendas. |
| November 2008 | Diocesan Conferences to consider the progress of 'Fit for Mission? - Schools' over the year. |
| January 2009 | In light of the document, the diocesan Inspection Schedule, Section 48, will be revised to incorporate significant elements of the 'Fit for Mission? Schools' review. |

Let this not be another bureaucratic burden, but an affirmation of the blessings we already have and an impetus to re-align our vision and energy. This is at the heart of our reason for being involved in education. Let it improve our service to young people, and renew the gospel fire dampened by the secular agenda.

The Success of our Schools and Colleges

As your bishop, with the primary responsibility for Catholic education in this diocese, let me reassure you that I am delighted to read in recent *Ofsted* reports that many of our Catholic schools and colleges are judged as 'very good'.

Catholic Education generally has a fine reputation in our country. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (*DCSF*) recognises that the great majority of Catholic schools and colleges are 'good' by key measures:

- ❖ They achieve better than average GCSE Results.
- ❖ Attainment tends to increase at the higher levels of social disadvantage.
- ❖ Test results at KS2 and KS3 show that they are performing comparatively highly.
- ❖ Ofsted's judgement on overall effectiveness concludes that 65% of Catholic primary schools are 'outstanding' or 'good', compared to 55% of non-Catholic primary schools.
- ❖ At secondary level, 60% of Catholic schools and colleges are 'outstanding' or 'good' overall, compared to 51% of non-Catholic schools and colleges.

The recent re-statement of the Government's support for faith schools in the Department for Children, Schools and Families' report, *Faith in the System: The role of schools with a religious character in English education and society*, acknowledges the role our schools and colleges play in providing a 'safe and harmonious environment for all in our society, thereby fostering understanding, integration and cohesion'.

Rightfully, the Government views our Catholic schools and colleges as effective partners in achieving its own goals of social mobility and social justice as set out in *Every Child Matters*.

The Strength of Our Catholic Ethos

Therefore, I am certain that the most important thing that Catholic schools and colleges can bring to 'Fit for Mission' is your unique role in the Church for cultivating a Catholic ethos among our young people and their families.

In a speech to the Catholic Education Service in 2006, the Rt. Hon Andrew Adonis, Schools Minister, focused on this particular strength of our schools and colleges:

'Your schools are strong on ethos; unashamed about propagating values as well as standards; and resolute in their mission to children and families of all backgrounds, including the least advantaged in our society'.

I heartily concur with the minister's emphasis on our strength in promoting a vital and all-encompassing 'ethos', that includes 'values, character, social and mutual responsibility, duty, and compassion'.

The acquisition of a Catholic ethos is as important for our young people as the acquisition of good exam results.

As the Bishops of England and Wales state in our *Joint Pastoral Letter on Catholic Schools* (2 September 2007), the Church seeks to achieve three purposes through her commitment and investment in Catholic education:

- ❖ To help everyone within the school community to grow in faith;
- ❖ To make the most of every ability they have been given, and,
- ❖ To achieve academic excellence and to prepare well for adult life in a modern and diverse society.

It is important that all involved in education in our diocese recognise that we give primacy of purpose to helping everyone within the school community to grow in faith. The primary purpose of formation in the faith must inform the *School Development Plan* of every Primary and Secondary school/college, and Sixth Form College in the diocese.

An Authentic Catholic Ethos

Refute falsehood, correct error, give encouragement – but do all with patience and with care to instruct. The time is sure to come when people will not accept sound teaching, but their ears will be itching for anything new and they will collect themselves a whole series of teachers according to their own tastes; and they will shut their ears to the truth and will turn to myths. *2 Timothy 4:2- 4.*

It is gratifying to know that our strength in cultivating an ethos in our schools and colleges is valued by secular institutions. However, it is in this very area that our freedom to teach and practise the truths of our faith is being questioned by some.

We must be honest and frank about the challenges that face us in shaping an authentic Catholic ethos in our schools and colleges. Both Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI present us with a clear assessment of these challenges:

- ❖ 'First and foremost, we have a crisis of values which... assumes the form, often exalted by the media, of subjectivism, moral relativism, and nihilism.'

(Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the threshold of the Third Millennium*).

- ❖ 'In a society where relativism has become a dogma, the light of truth is missing; indeed, it is considered dangerous and "authoritarian" to speak of truth, and the end result is doubt about the goodness of life...and in the validity of the relationships and commitments in which it consists' (Pope Benedict XVI, *Address to the participants in the Convention of the Diocese of Rome 11 June 2007*)
- ❖ Education tends to be reduced to the transmission of specific abilities or capacities whose only goal is a career or profession. (*Pope Benedict XVI*)
- ❖ The satisfaction of the desire for happiness among the new generations is reduced to the acquisition of consumer goods and transitory gratification. (*Pope Benedict XVI*).

It follows from this that our schools and colleges must be places where the 'light of truth' is cherished and spread. I would like to suggest two ways of doing this:

1. Promote respect for the authority of the doctrinal and moral truth safeguarded by the Pope and the Bishops.
2. Create an exciting and engaging environment that enables pupils to experience the light of truth, using the full range of multi-media and communication technologies.

What is at stake is the very future of our schools and colleges. Together we need to rise to the new challenges of our times when the role of Catholic schools and the Church in the public arena is unjustly challenged as being 'sectarian' and 'socially divisive'.

What is a Catholic Ethos?

Where the Spirit of the Lord is present, there is freedom' (*2 Corinthians 3:17*).

A Catholic ethos in a school and college is not a set of prohibitions rather, as Pope Benedict puts it, a 'positive option', based on the recognition of the dignity of the human person called to a loving relationship with God, called to live the spiritual and moral dignity of a child of God in the communion of the Church.

A Catholic ethos in a school or college is an 'environment permeated with the Gospel spirit of love and freedom', because – as St Paul writes – '*Where the Spirit of the Lord is present, there is freedom*' (2 Corinthians 3:17).

At the core of an authentic Catholic ethos in our schools is our Lord's injunction, '*Strive first for the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you*' (Matthew 6:33) What this means for our endeavours to create and deepen our ethos is the following:

A. Strive first for the Kingdom of God. The priority in our schools and colleges must be to strive for the values of the Kingdom of God that we find in the Gospel, especially Jesus' *Beatitudes* (Matthew 5: 3-12) : faithfulness & integrity, dignity & compassion, humility & gentleness, truth & justice, forgiveness & mercy, purity & holiness, tolerance & peace, service & sacrifice (cf. Rev Marcus Stock, *Christ at the Centre, Archdiocese of Birmingham*).

B. Strive for God's righteousness. Equal priority in our schools and colleges must be to strive, through grace, to share in God's holiness. Faced with the reality of day-to-day life this may seem like a counsel of wishful perfection, but if our schools are not about being transformed, through grace, in Christ what are they about?

As Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta puts it, striving for holiness is offering our free will, our reason, our whole life in pure faith, so that God may think His thoughts in our minds, do His work through our hands, and love with our hearts.

A most sensitive and vital element of an authentic Catholic ethos is the interaction of a school's or colleges sacramental life and its creative and comprehensive advocacy of the Church's moral teaching. It is through the mutual enrichment and empowerment of sacramental grace and a moral life in Christ that we grow into holiness, putting *on the mind of Christ* (1 Corinthians 2:16).

Consequently, our schools' and colleges' celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation and the sacrament of the Eucharist must be an expression of an ethos that promotes the Church's teaching on social justice, bioethics, and sexual morality. Furthermore, our school's teaching of *Personal, Social and Health education (PSHE)*, including sex education, must be within the context of the sacrament of marriage, and the Church's teaching on Christian anthropology and the family.

This leads me to raise this question with you – teachers, chaplains, governors, staff, pupils, families, clergy, and parishioners –

What is the one thing necessary for our schools to be permeated with the Gospel spirit of love and freedom?

The Church points us in the right direction in this beautiful passage from the Congregation for Catholic Education document, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* (1988):

'In a Catholic school, everyone should be aware of the living presence of Jesus the "Master" who, today as always, is with us in our journey through life as the one genuine "Teacher", the perfect Man in whom all human values find their fullest perfection. The inspiration of Jesus must be translated from the ideal into the real.'

As your bishop, it is my responsibility to help you create and deepen this authentic Catholic ethos in our schools and colleges. My answer to the question is this –

I encourage everyone to unite their energy, creativity, and gifts in this threefold service of their pupils:

1. To share the Father's passion to liberate His children from the slavery of sin, into the freedom and dignity of being created in the 'image and likeness of God'.

- ✓ *How do we enable our pupils to experience the wonder and richness of possessing the freedom and dignity of being made in God's image?*
- ✓ *How do we allow the Father to free those pupils who suffer the slavery of materialism, pre-marital sexual activity, alcohol, and substance abuse, the slavery of violence and bullying?*

2. To follow the Son's loving service of impoverished and suffering humanity, through advocating and establishing a culture of justice that originates in the purpose, will, and character of God.

- ✓ *How do we encourage our pupils to live in the transforming grace of Christ's power and promises?*
- ✓ *How do we allow the Son to heal those pupils who are impoverished by neglect, social exclusion, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse?*

3. To be exemplars of the freedom and dignity in intellectual, social, and moral life that comes from being transformed by the Holy Spirit.

- ✓ *How do we empower our pupils with the absolute truth of Catholic doctrinal and moral teaching?*
- ✓ *How do we allow the Holy Spirit to inspire those pupils imprisoned by doubt, cynicism, atheism, and nihilism?*

This may appear to some as abstract, even impractical, but they express the heart of the Gospel, which is God's *development plan* for each one of us! Throughout this document I will propose practical ways of realising this threefold service.

The Attractive Power of Our Catholic Faith

I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already!
(Luke 12:49).

We have to acknowledge that not all our pupils are Catholics and not all Catholic pupils are from practising families. Pope John Paul II specifically addressed the question of the admission into Catholic schools of pupils who do not share the Catholic faith when he spoke to the English and Welsh bishops in Rome:

'Their parents send them to these schools knowing the religious ethos to which they will be exposed and confident that the integrity of their children's consciences will be respected. This respect, however, should not alter the fundamental nature of the school's Catholic identity'.

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Therefore, we must conclude that the parents of these pupils have consciously and deliberately chosen a Catholic school or college because it is Catholic and we are letting them down if we do not preserve our Catholic ethos and identity.

This does not mean that our Catholic schools and colleges are engaged in proselytism, that is, seeking to convert non-Catholic members of our schools, but it does mean that every Catholic school in the diocese should be engaged in catechesis and evangelisation. There must be a clear, courageous, and comprehensive proclamation of the Church's doctrinal and moral tradition, to staff as well as pupils, and appropriate to different age groups.

Practically speaking this means that our schools should teach the faith thoroughly to all: to Catholics so that they will, with God's grace, know their faith deeply and practise it, and to others, so that they may know and experience the richness and clarity of the Catholic faith, but without infringing the integrity of their own consciences.

Together let us be confident in the attractive power of the Catholic faith, 'the catching force, the sympathetic influence of what we do, the evident fullness of love our hearts bear' (*John Henry Cardinal Newman*).

The Question of Catholics who do not Practise their Faith

Our Catholic schools are microcosms of the society of which they are part, reflecting the complexity and mixture of belief and unbelief, scepticism and faith, love of the Church and cynicism towards her.

As I travel the diocese visiting schools and colleges it is apparent to me that they are a mixture of practising Catholics and non practising Catholics, as well as many from other religious backgrounds. This situation has a profound impact on our commitment and ability to maintain their Catholicity.

I have come to a number of conclusions about this which I want to share with you:

- ❖ The question of practice and non practice among teachers has a definite impact on a school's or college's cultivation of a Catholic ethos. As Cardinal Hume puts it, 'Unless the faith means something to the teacher, it will not mean anything to those being taught'.
- ❖ It is important to distinguish between Catholics who are imperfect in their practice – which, in fact, we all are – and those who have either deliberately given up their faith or who openly reject an important part of her teaching, and communicate it to their pupils.
- ❖ Clearly this is a sensitive and difficult area. I know that many teachers in our schools are in difficulties in some areas of faith, and I want to stress that I for my part wish to do all I can to help them.
- ❖ However, we must be careful to help colleagues to see that they are contracted (see *Trust Deed* and *CES* contract) to always witness to the teachings of the Church.
- ❖ I would be failing in my duty as Bishop if I did not point out that we may not condone or encourage lack of practice of the faith in our schools and colleges.

For all of us, the journey of faith is undertaken through deeper stages of conversion, if we co-operate with good will to the workings of the Holy Spirit. It is also true to say that many teachers have been helped by their colleagues to find their way back to the practice of the faith. This is always wonderful to hear and a great example of the power of witness, love, and forgiveness.

Leadership in the Holy Spirit

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses. *Acts 1:8*

Leadership is crucial to the cultivation of an authentic Catholic ethos in our schools and colleges. Schools will naturally cultivate a variety of leadership roles at different levels, all of which must be engaged if the purpose of Catholic education is to be fully realised.

In all our schools and colleges, Heads, Senior Management Teams, and Governing Bodies must show genuine vision, commitment, and fidelity to the Catholic identity and mission of the school or college. They are not primarily called to be administrators, or bureaucrats, but to be prophets who will take a stand for the beliefs and values that underpin an authentic catholic ethos.

I pledge my support to Heads, Management Teams, and Governing Bodies who strive to be ready to challenge, in the name of the Catholic Church, all that seeks to undermine our doctrine, way of life, and mission, in order to bring about change and transformation through the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Also, all should be done to encourage pupils to realise their baptismal dignity of sharing in Christ's threefold of ministry of priest, prophet, and king (*Lumen Gentium, 10*), which is a calling to Christian leadership. Peer-to-peer leadership is particularly important in fostering respect for the person, respect for the school environment, and the cultivation of a climate of civility and good manners among the pupils.

The Catholic School and College in God's Plan of Salvation.

It is essential that every school's and college's *Development Plan* sets priorities and targets that make real the Church's understanding of the unique role of the Catholic school and college in God's plan of salvation.

Therefore, any consideration of the Catholic ethos must start by seeing its role in the wider picture of God's will and purpose, that is to give each pupil access through Christ to the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit, and so come to share in the divine life and love of the Most Holy Trinity (*Second Vatican Council, Dei Verbum, 2*).

The Deepest Truths about God and the Human Person

The Father sent His Son, so that He might dwell among us in order to educate us in the deepest truths about God and the human person (*Dei Verbum, 2-6*).

A Catholic school or college that is fulfilling its role in God's plan of salvation will set priorities and targets to create an ethos that makes these deepest truths about God and the human person a reality in the lives of all.

The Goal of a Catholic School is the Promotion of the Fully Human Person.

I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly (*John 10:10*)

The Church's recent teaching on the purpose of Catholic education states clearly that its goal is the promotion of the human person. What does this mean for the schools and colleges of our diocese? I think it means the following:

- The fundamental needs of the human person are the focus of Catholic education – intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual, and eschatological (Our eternal destiny).
- These fundamental needs can only be truly fulfilled through a rich and living encounter with the deepest truths about God and the human person.
- This is why Christ and His Gospel must be the foundation of the educational project of each school and college, because He is the '*the perfect Man in whom all human values find their fullest perfection*' (Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*).
- Therefore, the Catholic school or college is called to keep the Gospel whole and alive amongst pupils, families, and staff.

I think the following passage from the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales *Joint Pastoral Letter on Catholic schools* puts it very well:

'Catholic schools are guided in all they do by an important and coherent vision of education. This vision is based on the truth revealed by God about ourselves, our life together in community, and our ultimate destiny with God. This gives rise to an educational endeavour centred on the person of Jesus Christ, who is our Way, Truth and Life.'

The Role of Parents in God's Plan of Salvation.

It is a fundamental principle of Catholic education that parents, as co-creators with God of the life of their child, are the primary educators of their children (CCC 2223). Parents have an 'irreplaceable and inalienable' role in education because of the uniqueness of the loving relationship between parents and children.

The family is the school of love, where each person learns to love and be loved. It is only through knowing that we are loved, and that we are lovable, that we can fully become the person God intends us to be. Love is the necessary requirement for the true fulfilment of all our fundamental needs as human beings – intellectual, physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and eschatological.

Therefore, the primary responsibility and privilege of parents is to 'create a family atmosphere animated with love and reverence for God and others' (Second Vatican Council, *Gravissimum Educationis*, 3). It is through the experience and example of their parent's love, that children learn the most valuable lessons in life about kindness, constancy, goodness, service, respect for others, disinterestedness, and self-sacrifice (Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 36). The Church well understands that scarcely anything can compensate for a parent's failure in this responsibility.

The Church also acknowledges with gratitude and profound respect the fact that the truly Christian family has an inestimable importance for the 'life and progress of God's own people' (*Gravissimum Educationis*, 3), because parents are the first heralds of the Gospel for their children, initiating them into the liturgical life of the parish, teaching them by word and example about the moral life in Christ, and praying with them.

In light of this fundamental Catholic understanding of the primary role of parents in education, it is imperative that our schools and colleges collaborate with parents who are willing to contribute to the cultivation of an authentic Catholic ethos.

The Role of Teachers in God's Plan of Salvation.

I am certain that the key to a school's or colleges successful cultivation of an authentic Catholic ethos is the full realisation among teachers of the significance of their vocation – the wonder and dignity attached to the responsibility of educating the young in the faith.

I understand only too well how easy it is to lose sight of our high ideals and vision due to the pressure of work and the unremitting demands of others. But, without ideals and vision where do we draw our strength and commitment to do our best?

Through an openness to grace, teachers are invited to co-operate with Jesus the Teacher, 'the perfect Man in whom all human values find their fullest perfection' (*The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*).

Teachers have the prime responsibility for creating the unique Catholic ethos of their school or college. Therefore, I call on our teachers to deepen their commitment to embodying Christian values.

Through the teachers' daily witness, the pupils will encounter and appreciate the uniqueness of the school's ethos, and, through grace, come to know Jesus. If this witness is not present then there is little left which can make the school Catholic, (Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*).

As Pope Benedict states,

For education and Christian formation, therefore, it is above all prayer and our personal friendship with Jesus that are crucial: only those who know and love Jesus Christ can introduce their brothers and sisters into a living relationship with him (Address to the participants of the convention of the Diocese of Rome. 11 July 2007)

Obviously, the teacher's daily witness cannot be left solely to their personal responsibility and initiative. It is imperative that the Head, Senior Management Team, Heads of Year, and Class Tutors actively facilitate and support this witness to the faith through 'thinking with the mind of the Church'. For example, by the Senior Management Team ensuring that the time table is synchronised with the feasts of the Church.

The Role of Chaplaincy in God's Plan of Salvation

It is important to re-iterate the important role chaplaincy plays in the faith and pastoral mission of our schools and colleges. The chaplain is a valuable partner and collaborator with teachers in cultivating an authentic Catholic ethos.

'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.*' (Diocese of Lancaster consultation paper, *Chaplaincy in Catholic Schools, 2006*).

Chaplaincy has four essential roles, among others, to play in our schools and colleges, which require the active support of the Head Teacher and Senior Management Team:

1. Evangelisation and catechesis through proclamation of the Word;
2. Responding to the sacramental and spiritual needs of the school;
3. Pastoral care of the pupils and staff;
4. Facilitating links between the school and parishes.

Obviously, in the light of this, chaplaincy has a vital prophetic role to play in reminding the school community of its Catholic identity and mission.

The Role of Governors in God's Plan of Salvation.

In a Catholic school or college, the governors are the 'Keepers of the Catholic Vision', supporting and collaborating with teachers and chaplains in cultivating an authentic Catholic ethos. Foundation Governors, in particular, have a responsibility for the school's Catholic identity. Being a governor is not an inspectorial, or simply administrative role, but involves an attentive, committed monitoring of the life of the school.

Governors work best when they completely support the Catholic ideals of a school or college, support the school in every way, especially by attending school functions, thank the school and praise that which is good, but also as a critical friend, point out areas the school or college would benefit from developing.

It is my expectation that all our governors will study 'Fit for Mission?- Schools', which expresses my vision, as your bishop, for Catholic education in our diocese. It is also my hope that you will discuss it, and pray about it, as a governing body, and that, with the teaching staff, you will draw up school *development plans* based on its objectives and practical advice.

The inspiration and guidance of Scripture in creating a Catholic ethos.

Scripture offers us a vision of the role of education in God's plan of salvation, from which we can draw inspiration and guidance.

God the Teacher.

The Old Testament makes it clear that God is understood as the creative and insightful Teacher of Israel, who transforms the events in the life of His people into lessons of wisdom.

Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them up in my arms; but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with bands of love. I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks. I bent down to them and fed them' (*Hosea 11:3-4*)

The LORD expects Israel to adopt His ways and model her behaviour on the divine attitude of justice, kindness, and faithfulness (*see Micah 6:8*). However, the LORD does not enforce or demand compliance.

The God of love educates through inviting the response of love (*Deuteronomy 6:4-7*). The books of the Old Testament give testimony to God's desire to adapt Himself to the culture and stage of development of mankind through dialogue in order to gradually prepare Israel for His *definitive revelation in the person and mission of Jesus Christ*.

The Old Testament has an invaluable role to play in the life of our Catholic schools and colleges, as: '*a storehouse of sublime teaching on God and of sound wisdom on human life, as well as a wonderful treasury of prayers; in them, too, the mystery of our salvation is present in a hidden way*' (*Dei Verbum, 15*).

I draw the following conclusions from reflecting on how God teaches in the Old Testament –

- ✓ God teaches through words and deeds in the lives of the people of Israel. Therefore, we need to creatively and powerfully use the rhythms of the liturgical seasons to enable our pupils to connect with Salvation History.
- ✓ We must adapt our teaching of the faith to the culture and stage of development of our pupils. Therefore, we must engage the culture of our day.

As I wrote in *Fit for Mission: - A Guide*, 'We need to foster and encourage those among us who have the talent and creative skills to use music, art, film, drama, and the web to proclaim the life giving power of the Gospel. I especially appeal to young people to use their energy and enthusiasm in this New Evangelisation.' Pg?

Jesus' Invitation to Dialogue and Questioning

But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all students. And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father - the one in heaven. Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Christ. The greatest among you will be your servant. (*Matthew 23:8-12*)

Jesus presents Himself to the disciples as the only teacher, '*You have one master, the Christ*' (*Matthew 23:11*). The title 'teacher' is given Jesus more frequently than any other title, in the Jewish sense of *rabbi* – a teacher of the *Torah* and Scripture (*Matthew 10:24; Luke 2:46; John 3:10*).

Dialogue and questioning are at the heart of Jesus' method of teaching, exemplified by his common introduction to parables, 'What do you think?'

Luke's account of the disciples' rich and living encounter with the Risen Lord on the journey to Emmaus (*Luke 24:13-35*) shows dialogue and questioning as the fundamental method of the Christian educational programme. It preserves the process by which the early Christians learnt to understand the significance of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

Divine education is a process of questioning (*Luke 24:13-24*), explanation through the Word of God (*24:25-28*), insight [opening of eyes] (*Luke 24:31*), and liturgical recognition of Christ (*Luke 24:31*).

'The gospel addresses itself to reason; it responds to man's longing to understand the world and himself and to discover the way to do justice to his essential being. In this sense, catechesis is instruction' (Joseph Ratzinger, *Gospel, Catechesis, Catechism*, p 56)

The Gospels make it clear that at the heart of Jesus' teaching method was His personal relationship with His disciples. Jesus is God's purpose of education in person: encountering Christ means encountering the deepest truths about God and man, '*The truth is that only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light*' (*Gaudium et Spes*, 22).

I draw the following conclusions from how Jesus teaches in the New Testament:

- ✓ We must encourage a spirit of dialogue and questioning between teachers of mature and devout faith and pupils. Those teachers who do not practise or share the faith must be sensitive and careful in their dialogue and questioning with pupils.
- ✓ The person of Jesus is central to a school's or college's life giving proclamation of the Gospel. In practise, this means communicating the uniqueness of Jesus as true God and true man. Therefore, in Religious Education Jesus must not be presented as just one founder of a world religion among many.

The Church – Teacher of the Living Gospel

Christ the Lord handed on His teaching role to the apostles, and their successors, the bishops, in order to keep the gospel forever whole and alive within the Church, the source of all saving truth and moral teaching, and thus impart to us God's divine gifts (*Dei Verbum*, 7).

From the beginning the Church has lived her mission as a continuation of the educative plan of the Father and of the Son, through her proclamation of the Word, celebration of the Sacraments, and works of love.

Accordingly, the Christian community, as the continuing expression of God's education of humanity, is in herself *living catechesis* (*General Directory for Catechesis*, 141).

Proclaiming the Gospel in all its Freshness and Transforming Power

We are declaring to you what we have seen and heard, so that you too may share our life. Our life is shared with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ (I John 1:3).

We cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard (Acts 4:20).

Our Catholic schools and colleges must become powerhouses of evangelisation and catechesis. Again, I must stress that evangelisation is not proselytism, which is a coercive pressure to go against one's conscientious beliefs. Evangelisation is an invitation to freely consider and experience the truth of the Catholic faith.

I am concerned that a failure to appreciate this clear distinction between proselytism and evangelisation has led some schools and colleges to be inhibited about proclaiming the full truth of the Catholic faith, due to the presence of non-Catholic pupils.

Evangelisation is the proclamation of the gospel. The evangelist's purpose is 'to touch the hearts of the hearers and turn them to God'. Evangelists trust that their word and example will, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, move others to a first act of faith, or, in the case of those who are already believers, 'will deepen the conversion of their hearts to God'. Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales, *Religious Education: Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools*, p.7.

At the heart of evangelisation is the burning desire to proclaim Christ. Why do we not share the same burning desire of the first disciples, who admitted, '*We cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard*' (Acts 4:20)?

Catechesis is the process by which the faith of believers is nourished and educated. As one of the Church's central ministries, it seeks to make the word of God present as a living reality in the Christian community of today. It may be described as 'a dialogue of believers'. Its purpose is 'to help them towards a greater maturity of faith, especially in the way of understanding'. Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales, *Religious Education: Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools*, p. 7.

Catechesis is a moment or stage in the process of evangelisation. First, evangelisation evokes a questioning curiosity to know more concerning the deep truths about God and humanity, in order to lead others to make the 'yes' of faith, and then catechesis aims – as Pope John Paul II puts it – at enabling people to move from curiosity to communion with Jesus Christ.

'To catechise is to reveal in the Person of Christ the whole of God's eternal design reaching fulfilment in that Person. It is to seek to understand the meaning of Christ's actions and words and the signs worked by Him' (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 426).

To put people in communion with the Person of Christ must mean more than instruction in information or historical facts – though this 'grammar' of our faith must not be ignored – but needs to involve experience, encounter, and transformation. Hence, the importance of good liturgy and the sacraments in the life of the school and college.

Religious Education and Catechesis

Religious Education is the formation of religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills - appropriate to their age and capacity - to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life'. (Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales, *Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools*. p. 10).

Religious Education must have a key role, 'the core of the core curriculum' as John Paul II called it, and the teaching of the Catholic faith in Religious Education must be authentic, comprehensive, and structured. Pupils have a right to have the Catholic faith taught to them in its entirety, without omissions or evasions.

Religious Education must be more than teaching the knowledge and skills of an academic discipline. As John Paul II said to the English and Welsh Bishops, '*religious education is broader than catechesis but it must also include catechesis, since a principal goal of the Catholic faith must be to hand on the faith*'.

Consequently, teachers of Religious Education in the diocese must not lose sight of the evangelical and catechetical components of their work. Though Religious Education is distinct from evangelisation and catechesis – due to its educational priorities and academic rigour – there must be no false compartmentalisation between religious education and evangelisation and catechesis.

Dare to Speak the Truth

For the tradition I received from the Lord and also handed on to you, is that on the night He was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread, and after He had given thanks, He broke it, and He said, 'This is my body, which is for you.

(I Corinthians 11: 23).

The tradition I handed on to you in the first place, a tradition which I myself received, was that Christ died for our sins, in accordance with the scriptures, and that He was buried; and on the third day, He was raised to life.

(I Corinthians 15: 3-4)

We are living through a period in the life of the Church when there has been a fragmentation in the transmission of the fullness of the faith, with omissions and neglect of some key truths, and an exaggeration of other aspects.

The following fundamental teachings of the Church must not be omitted or neglected:

God and Creation – Teaching about God's revelation should not neglect to begin with assurance of God's existence from the evidence of creation (*Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 282-286*) for 'creatures came into existence when the Key of Love opened his hand (*CCC 293*), which means that creation is God's first act of revelation (*Wisdom 13:5; Psalm 19: 2*).

The Spiritual Person – The Christian vision of the human person made in the image of God with a spiritual soul as well as a body is of central importance. The soul, the seed of eternity we bear in ourselves, irreducible to the merely material, can have its origin only in God (*CCC 363; Gaudium et Spes, 18*).

Sin and Redemption – The doctrine of the Fall, rightly understood, is also highly important (CCC 385-412). We do not believe that humanity is utterly corrupt, but that it is deeply wounded in its moral instincts and abilities. Only the grace of Christ - crucified and risen - can reintegrate our nature so that we may live in authentic freedom as God intends.

To neglect the Church's teaching about sin, Jesus' redemptive sacrifice on the Cross, and the incarnation of the Son of God, reduces Christianity to a morality of shallow affirmation, or merely being nice to one another. Petroc Willey, the editor of *The Sower*, explains the effect of these distorting omissions very well,

'Children, moreover, feel cheated and betrayed by this always-smiling Christianity. They know that they are sometimes bad and that those around them are sometimes bad. They know that they have moments of hatred and greed. And they know that this inner disharmony wounds them. They know that they need forgiveness and reconciliation' (*The Sower*, April-June 2003).

As Fr Stan Fortuna, puts it in one of the songs he uses in his exciting mission with youth, *'Jesus didn't say be nice, Jesus died to pay the price'* (*Lord Have Mercy, Sacro Song 1*). The need for redemption, atonement, and salvation is as urgent today for our young people and families as it has been for the past 2000 years.

Basically, if we can't talk about Sin, we can't talk about Salvation, and ultimately, we can't truly talk about Jesus!

The Divinity of Jesus Christ – It has also been common to exaggerate the humanity of Jesus, to the neglect of His divinity, as if He were only an exceptional teacher of morality. There has been too narrow a focus on the human face of Jesus, to the point that His divinity has been obscured and eclipsed.

Many teaching resources down play Jesus' divinity and role as Saviour by presenting Him as a special person, as the child's friend and brother, which of course He is, but He is also so much more!

The Church – The Church must not be seen as somehow separate from or secondary to the central Mystery of Christ. The *Catechism* tells us that 'God created the world for the sake of communion with his divine life, a communion brought about through the convocation of men in Christ, that convocation is the Church' (CCC 760). The study, at least in outline, of Church history is also of great importance in Catholic education so that students are presented with a balanced and accurate version of historical events, among other things coming to understand the Christian foundations of European civilization.

Eternal Life in Christ – It is also crucial that we communicate the full perspective on what we mean by life in Christ, which includes the universal call to holiness in all

walks of life, a journey that continues through death to judgment, purgation, and eternal blessedness, or even - God spare us - its eternal loss.

These omissions and exaggerations must be addressed by our schools and schools as a matter of urgency.

Faith and Reason

At the heart of these omissions and exaggerations is a lack of confidence in reasonableness of faith. The secular world portrays faith as irrational, not based on evidence or open to argument. However, as Pope John Paul II highlighted in his encyclical '*Fides et Ratio*' [Faith and Reason], while they are not the same thing, faith and reason are far from incompatible. Reason is a natural gift that enables us to grasp the realities of the world around us – the mysteries of Nature – and faith is a supernatural gift that enables us to grasp with certainty the deeper realities that are greater than our minds – the mysteries of God.

Schools and college have a vital role to play in teaching our children the Catholic understanding of the relationship between faith and reason:

Right reasoning can actually be of great help in preparing the ground for receiving the gift of faith, by clearing away misunderstandings and pointing out the positive evidence of God's existence found in the things of Nature (cf. *Romans 1.20*; CCC 34-36; *Dei Verbum* 6).

Faith, in turn, sheds a clearer light on the things of this world, revealing the full wonder and order of God's works. So when we explore the doctrines of salvation, we discover an inner coherence, a divine philosophy, so to speak, that far from crushing our intellects, draws us into loving contemplation of the Living God.

Providing our young people with an understanding and appreciation of the relationship between faith and reason is the key to unlocking the rich, organic unity of Catholic doctrine.

The Best Resource for Creating a Catholic Ethos

Of course, the Word of God is the source of wonder, power, and glory that inspires our mission.

The Word of God, which is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, is set forth and displays its power in a most wonderful way in the writings of the New Testament which hand on the ultimate truth of God's Revelation (CCC 124).

The most important book published by the Holy See in this generation for Catholic education is the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and its summary, the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*. The presentation of doctrine in the *Catechism* is,

first and foremost, Scriptural and Traditional – the two ways we receive the Word of God.

Pope John Paul II describes the *Catechism* as ‘a full, complete exposition of Catholic doctrine, enabling everyone to know what the Church professes, celebrates, lives and prays in her daily life’ (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*). Its purpose is to ‘awaken in the Church of the third millennium renewed zeal for evangelisation and education in the faith, which ought to characterise every community in the Church’ (Pope Benedict XVI, *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*).

The Rich and Full Symphony of Faith

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) ‘aims at presenting an organic synthesis of the essential and fundamental contents of Catholic doctrine, as regards both faith and morals’ (CCC 11).

The organic unity of faith flows from the perfect and infinite unity of the Most Holy Trinity. The *Catechism* is a synthesis of the faith, conveying the ‘melodious symphony of revealed truth’ that originates from God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

How to Listen to the Catechism’s Symphony

In the light of its symphonic nature, the *Catechism* should be read as a unified whole, arranged around five major themes, from which the other truths of faith are developed. These themes run throughout the *Catechism*, and are picked up as variations and recapitulations informing and unifying each presentation of doctrine showing the fullness and unity of the faith.

The five major themes of the symphony of faith are:

- ❖ The Most Holy Trinity.
- ❖ The Incarnation of the Son of God: the person of Christ: True God and True man.
- ❖ The Paschal Mystery: the suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus.
- ❖ The Church: a communion in the Holy Spirit, uniting and sanctifying the People of God.
- ❖ The nature and dignity of the human person, created in the image of God, transformed through the grace of Christ.

This intention of presenting the organic inter-relationship of the faith in the *Catechism* is also facilitated by the cross-references in the margins of the text, which

allow the reader to view each theme in its relationship with the entirety of the faith (CCC 18).

The Joy of Meeting Jesus

Pope Benedict describes the key note of the Catechism's symphony of truth as trust in the biblical word. The Catechism trusts the Gospels' portrayal of Jesus, allowing us to truly know Jesus.

This sure and certain trust is the strength and value of the *Catechism* to Catholic education, because trust is the one thing necessary for a rich and living encounter between persons, between Jesus and our pupils. As Pope Benedict puts it,

'The Catechism, reading the Gospels with faith-filled courage as a many-layered and reliable whole, restores to us an amazingly rich and vivid portrait of Jesus. We rediscover as if for the first time how great the figure of Jesus is, how it transcends all human measures and precisely thus meets us in true humanity. Acquaintance with this figure evokes joy: this is evangelisation. We can talk again with this Jesus.' (Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Gospel, Catechesis, Catechism*, p. 68-69).

Build Up Trust in Christ and His Church

Sadly, our children are growing up in a secular climate that enthusiastically promotes suspicion and mistrust of Christ and His Church. We must admit that this mistrust has been fuelled by the sins of members of our community. As I wrote in *Fit for Mission: - A Guide* pg ?:

'As a community we must honestly acknowledge that at times Christians themselves conceal rather than reveal the 'authentic face of God and religion' by not living according to the Gospel, by failing to hold the true teachings of the Church, and by serious deficiencies in religious, moral or social life (Gaudium et Spes 19).'

However, without trust in Christ and His Church there can be no genuine Catholic ethos beyond a superficial appearance of Catholicity. Therefore, it is crucial that teachers build up trust among their pupils in the following ways:

- ✓ Promote an interest and devotion to great men and women saints, particularly modern saints and martyrs. Accounts of modern saints and martyrs are a particularly engaging way of providing our children with examples of people who, in our own time, led virtuous lives.
- ✓ Challenge TV broadcasts, films and books, particularly those aimed at young people, which are disrespectful, suspicious, and scornful of Christ and His Church.
- ✓ Promote films and books that build up trust and enthusiasm for the faith.

- ✓ Challenge TV broadcasts, films and music that are disrespectful and cynical about the dignity of the human person, particularly sexual love, and marriage.
- ✓ Promote TV broadcasts, films, and music that are respectful and hopeful about the dignity of the human person.

The Four Pillars of an Authentic Catholic Ethos

They devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching, to the breaking of the bread, to fellowship, and to prayer. *Acts 2:42*

The organic structure of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is divided into four parts or movements corresponding to the four fundamental aspects of our life in Christ that we see in *The Acts of the Apostles*:

1. **The Profession of Faith** – *devotion to the Apostles' teaching.*
2. **Sacraments** – *devotion to the breaking of bread.*
3. **The Moral Life** – *devotion to the fellowship.*
4. **Prayer** – *devotion to prayer.*

As Cardinal Schönborn says the Four Pillars of the *Catechism* without doubt constitute the fundamental sources of the life, the faith, and the teaching of the Church (*The Theological Concept of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, The Sower, January 2003). Therefore, we would expect to see the Four Pillars of the Profession of Faith, Sacraments, Morals, and Prayer as prominent sources informing the Catholic ethos in our schools and colleges:

- ✓ *The Profession of Faith* – The Apostles' Creed contains a summary of the great drama of God's plan of creation and salvation, the unfolding of His love, expressed through the three actions of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- ✓ *Sacraments* – The liturgy of the Church physically and spiritually incorporate us into the drama of God's plan of creation and salvation, enabling and empowering us to find our place and role – within the Church – in the unfolding of His love in Salvation History.

- ✓ *The Moral Life* – The Ten Commandments express the minimum moral conditions expected of us to participate as partners in God’s plan of creation and salvation, empowering us to belong in God’s culture of love, ‘*You shall be My people, and I will be your God*’ (Ezekiel 36:28).
- ✓ *Prayer* – The Seven petitions of the Our Father are the model of how to enter into the dialogue of love between Son and Father in the Holy Spirit that unfolds God’s plan of creation and salvation.

The Four Pillars are not separate activities, standing on their own, but must be approached as a unity that springs from a single source – the mystery of God. The unity of these fundamental dimensions is well expressed in the following sentence:

The object of the faith (First Pillar), celebrated and communicated in liturgical actions (Second Pillar), present to enlighten and sustain the children of God in their actions (Third Pillar), the basis of our prayer and the object of our supplication, praise and intercession (Fourth Pillar) (*General Directory for Catechesis*, 122).

The vitality and authenticity of a school’s or college’s Catholic ethos depends, in large part, on cultivating and maintaining the integration of faith as believed, celebrated, lived and prayed.

What follows next is a practical guide to these Four Pillars, setting out objectives for all schools and colleges in the diocese.

Pillar One: The Profession of Faith

The Profession of Faith – The Apostles' Creed contains a summary of the great drama of God's plan of creation and salvation, the unfolding of His love, expressed through the three actions of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Our Desire to Know and Love God

As we have already discussed, the purpose of Catholic education is the promotion of the fully human person. Therefore, the intellectual and emotional needs of our pupils are one of the fundamental goals of a Catholic ethos.

Intellect and emotion go together. Each one of us has been created with a desire to know and love. The satisfaction of this desire is the fundamental requirement for happiness. The *Catechism* begins with an understanding that our ultimate happiness is found in knowing and loving God.

The primary purpose underlying the teaching of the Church's doctrine in Catholic schools is so that our pupils know and, hopefully, experience the love of God:

The whole concern of doctrine and its teaching must be directed to the love that never ends. Whether something is proposed for belief, for hope or for action, the love of our Lord must always be made accessible, so that anyone can see that all the works of perfect Christian virtue spring from love and have no other objective than to arrive at love. CCC 25

The Way we Teach the Faith

Over the years I have become aware of a method of teaching the faith in our schools that has become a source of concern to me, because it limits our children's faith to what they or their teachers personally consider 'relevant'.

There is a twofold problem with allowing personal determinations of 'relevance' rather than the content of God's self revelation to determine the teaching of the faith:

- ❖ First, no one can arrive at the whole truth on the basis of personal experience, because individual experience is isolated and limited (cf. Pope John Paul II, *Catechesi tradendae*, 22).

- ❖ Second, over concentrating on the personal experience of pupils results in a failure to present the fullness of the faith or convey the whole sweep of God's unfolding love in Salvation History.

The tragic consequence of selection based on 'relevance' is that great truths of the faith are ignored or treated superficially, such as the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity, the incarnation of the Son of God, the virginal conception of Mary, Christ's real presence in the Eucharist.

To be frank, over emphasis on personal experience as the primary criterion in teaching the faith makes us the 'judges' of God's Word, when in fact God's Word – expressed through the collective experience of the Church – should enlighten and explain the meaning of our personal experiences.

The failure to teach the fullness of faith is that many of our children are leaving school with an incomplete, partial knowledge of the doctrinal and moral teachings of the Church which leaves them ill prepared for the challenges of life. As Cardinal Arinze puts it,

'It is not enough to be enthusiastic as a Catholic. It is also important to be well informed. But many Catholics, unfortunately, remain at the stage they were at age fourteen in religious matters, they are grievously ignorant. They don't know. But they don't know that they don't know, until you ask them a question. They can't defend their faith. We're not expected to understand the Incarnation or the Blessed Trinity. But we are expected to defend our faith in a way that shows that it is reasonable to believe.'

Faith Beyond Our Everyday Experience

As your bishop I want to recommend to you an approach to teaching the faith that is based on the Church's understanding of the relationship between the content of faith *and* personal experience:

- ✓ The method of teaching should respect both the dignity of the Gospel and the dignity of the person. This means in practice respecting the content of faith and respecting the capacities of the pupil.
- ✓ The teaching of the faith will give primacy to revelation, as transmitted by the Teaching Office of the Church, expressed in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.
- ✓ Therefore, the teaching of the faith will always include, and go beyond, personal experience because we are dealing with the mystery of God. There should be the expectation that teaching the faith will go beyond our own and our pupils' everyday experience.

- ✓ However, this does not mean that teaching the faith is reduced to a dry or remote academic exercise. At its best, teaching the faith takes us elsewhere, 'it opens up space for experiences that everyday experience does not know ', (Cardinal Schönborn, *The Theological Concept of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, The Sower, January 2003).
- ✓ Good Curriculum RE should always make a link between faith and the personal experience of the pupil, between truth and life, because this will make faith intelligible and enable individuals to gain Gospel insight into their own lives.
- ✓ Interpreting and illuminating personal life with the truths and data of faith should be the overall focus of teaching the faith in schools.

To help you reflect further on this method of teaching the faith I recommend Pope John Paul's encyclical, *Catechesi tradendae* (1979), and the Congregation for the Clergy's *General Directory for Catechesis* (1997).

Teach the Trinity

The problem with an experience based, 'relevance' led approach to catechesis comes to a head with teaching our pupils about the Most Holy Trinity. It is easy to see this as some exotic, theoretical subject that is totally irrelevant to the lives of staff and pupils. Nothing could be further from the truth!

The *Catechism* makes it clear that the Most Holy Trinity is 'foundational to all Christian teaching and understanding, ultimately for all reality and the purpose of life' (Caroline Farey, *Can we agree on Catechesis?*, Priests & People, October 2004).

The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith and life. It is the mystery of God in Himself. It is therefore the source of all the other mysteries of faith, the light that enlightens them. It is the most fundamental and essential teaching in the 'hierarchy of the truths of faith'. The whole history of salvation is identical with the history of the way and the means by which the one true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, reveals Himself to men 'and reconciles and unites with Himself those who turn away from sin' (CCC 234).

It follows from this key understanding of the Church that the Trinity must be at the heart of a school's and college's Catholic ethos. The question is, how do we do this? Here are a few suggestions:

- ✓ The first thing to do is move away from thinking of the Trinity as a numerical or philosophical conundrum.
- ✓ First and foremost, it is important to realise that the doctrine of the Trinity is scriptural. Knowledge of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is not primarily the result of philosophical reflection but is the expression of the profound Christian experience of encountering the event of Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and glorification. Therefore, to teach the Trinity is to teach the Word of God, not some 'higher physics' of divinity.
- ✓ The Profession of Faith section of the *Catechism* contains a succinct exposition of the scriptural data on the Trinity, and the Church's use of language to speak about the unity and diversity of God, Father, Son, and Spirit.
- ✓ Liturgy is the entry point for us to enter into the mystery of the Trinity, and provides a rich symbolism and language to teach the Trinity. As the Catechism states, 'The liturgy is...a participation in Christ's own prayer addressed to the Father in the Holy Spirit' (CCC 1073). This Trinitarian dimension of the liturgy is most apparent in the celebration of Holy Mass, from the opening sign of the cross, and including the doxology, Gloria, Creed, and the Eucharistic prayers, particularly the Third Eucharistic prayer.
- ✓ Christian prayer can only, by its nature, be Trinitarian, so when teaching prayer to our pupils it is essential that this aspect is made explicit and prominent:

There is no other way of Christian prayer than Christ. Whether our prayer is communal or personal, vocal or interior, it has access to the Father only if we pray "in the name" of Jesus. The sacred humanity of Jesus is therefore the way by which the Holy Spirit teaches us to pray to God our Father (CCC 2664).

Always, we must keep in mind that our purpose is to foster belief in the Most Holy Trinity, because as St Anselm writes, 'Those who have not believed will not experience; and those who have not experienced will not know' (*Letter on the Incarnation of the Word*)

Teach the Profession of Faith with the Catechism

The challenge of using the *Catechism* and *Compendium* in teaching the faith to children and young people is that they are written for adults, not children. Having acknowledged this, it is vital that both the *Catechism* and the *Compendium* are used by teachers in our schools and colleges, who can guide pupils in how to make best use of them. The only successful way of using these key texts of the Church in the classroom is for the material to be mediated by teachers and adult catechists.

Amette Ley, contributing author to the CTS RE series, *The Way, the Truth, and the Life*, conveys the challenge of using the *Catechism* to teach very well when she writes that being faced with all 2865 paragraphs can 'seem so daunting as to be impossible' (*Teaching with the Catechism: Tips for Teachers*, The Sower, April-June 2004).

And yet she suggest the key to unlocking this treasury of Church teaching lies in the *Catechism* itself – use the Four Pillars of our faith to give a structure to our teaching of even young children.

It's important not to pick and choose which doctrines of the Church to teach children, particularly very young ones. It is not acceptable to take an approach to the teaching of the faith that reduces it solely to the simplest, easily assimilated concepts.

I am well aware that there is the expectation in the *Core Curriculum* to teach complicated and difficult subjects, such as English grammar and Mathematics, from the earliest years. I understand it's a matter of adapting the subject material to the stage of development of the child through establishing the necessary sequence of building blocks.

The same expectation should equally apply to teaching complicated and difficult doctrines of the faith to our children from the earliest years, through systematically laying down the necessary building blocks.

In order to do this systematically, it will be necessary to adapt the *Catechism* and *Compendium* to the stage of development of the children.

A truly child-centred approach will be concerned to give the child as much of the truth about the human condition and God's solution as is understandable at the child's age and stage of development. Amette Ley, '*Teaching with the Catechism*' in The Sower (April 2004).

A resource for starting to adapt the *Catechism* to the educational development of children is the Catholic Bishops' Conference document, *Religious Education: Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools*, which sets out selected aspects of the *Catechism* according to the Key Stages.

Profession of Faith Objectives for Our Schools and Colleges.

1. Use the *Catechism*

I recommend the wide-spread use of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as a primary resource for cultivating a Catholic ethos in schools.

As bishop it is my express wish that all primary and secondary schools will have copies of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

- ✓ A complete copy of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* is to be given to every teacher in the school, as recommended by the late Cardinal Hume; and at least one copy of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is to be available in the School library.
- ✓ In primary schools, there should be at least one classroom set (say, 30 copies) of *The Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*.
- ✓ In secondary schools there should be at least one full classroom set of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* and at least one full classroom set of *The Compendium* - and these books should be regularly used in Religious Education.
- ✓ Instruction should be provided to teachers on how to understand the structure of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and how it can be best understood and used.

2. Use the Core Curriculum of the Catholic Church

In his encyclical *Catechesi tradendae*, Pope John Paul II sets out some of the essential elements that must be included in a programme of catechesis that starts from God's revelation. I expressly wish to see the following key themes creatively and richly covered in our schools:

- ✓ The Trinity.
- ✓ Man's creation and sin, including Original Sin.
- ✓ The nature and dignity of the human person, created in the image of God, transformed through the grace of Christ.
- ✓ God's plan of redemption and its long, loving preparation and realisation.
- ✓ The Incarnation of the Son of God.
- ✓ The Paschal Mystery: the suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus.
- ✓ The Church: a communion in the Holy Spirit, uniting and sanctifying the People of God.
- ✓ Prayer as a filial adherence to God beyond what we feel and understand.
- ✓ Mary the Immaculate One, the Mother of God, ever Virgin, raised body and soul to the glory of heaven.
- ✓ The mystery of lawlessness at work in our lives and the power of God freeing us from it.
- ✓ The need for penance and ascetism.
- ✓ Sacramental and liturgical actions.
- ✓ The reality of the Eucharistic presence.
- ✓ Participation in divine life here and hereafter.

Thus, no true catechist can lawfully, on his own initiative, make a selection of what he considers important in the deposit of faith as opposed to what he considers unimportant, so as to teach the one and reject the other. Pope John Paul II, *Catechesi Tradendae*, 30.

3. Teaching and Learning of the Profession of Faith.

It is vital that the same application teachers give to Teaching and Learning for other subjects is given to teaching the Profession of Faith. I recommend that schools build up skills and resources to use and adapt the *Catechism* for the classroom:

- ✓ It is my express wish that teachers, particularly RE subject specialists, and chaplains apply themselves to knowing the *Catechism* in depth, and mentor other staff in its use.
- ✓ To become more familiar with the *Catechism* as a teaching resource I also recommend that teachers enrol on the Course for Parish Catechists presented by the diocese in collaboration with Maryvale Institute. Contact the Education Department for further details.
- ✓ I recommend the following commentaries on the *Catechism*:

Schonborn, Christoph, *Living the Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Ignatius Press, 2000 – *A four volume commentary on the Four Pillars*.

Ratzinger, Joseph, & Schonborn, Christoph, *Introduction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Ignatius Press, 1994 – *a short guide to the Catechism from Pope Benedict XVI, the main architect of the Catechism*.
- ✓ For guidance and ideas about adapting the *Catechism* by age group and topic, I recommend that schools and colleges subscribe to the Catechetical journal, *The Sower: The Teaching Journal for the Home, Parish, and School*. Maryvale House, Maryvale Institute, Old Oscott Hill, Birmingham, B44 9BR.
- ✓ Willey, Petroc, Morgan, Barbara, & Morgan, Pierre, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Craft of Catechesis*, Ignatius Press, 2008 – *a useful book on how to use the Catechism in teaching, whether in school, parish or the home*.

4. Create a Catholic Environment

The Catholic ethos of a school or college is cultivated and enhanced through a range of resources that create a definite Catholic environment.

- ✓ I recommend that if any of our schools or colleges do not have a chapel or oratory, that plans are put in place to establish one as a matter of priority.
- ✓ The school library should obviously reflect and assist the Catholic ethos of the school or college with good and reliable Catholic periodicals and a comprehensive section of good Catholic books for pupils, teachers, parents and, indeed, the wider Catholic community:
- ✓ I recommend that school and college libraries display and promote in a prominent site a wide selection of *Catholic Truth Society* publications.
- ✓ It is not to be expected that a school or college library would stock non-fiction or fiction that contains polemic against the Catholic faith, religion in general, race, gender, or the dignity of the human person.
- ✓ I am very pleased when I visit a school or college and see on the walls reproductions of paintings on religious subjects. These are, of course, the works of the great masters: Michelangelo, Leonardo, Titian, Raphael, El Greco, Fra Angelico, and modern Catholic artists such as Michael D. O'Brien.
- ✓ It is also good to see the generous presence of religious statues, icons, and Catholic symbols throughout the school or college. Again, these should reflect a range of styles and be drawn from our rich heritage – ancient and modern.
- ✓ The crucifix, which is the figure of Christ upon the cross, should have a prominent place in the main public areas in a school or college and should be on every class-room wall.
- ✓ Pupils should learn of the immense contribution of the Church to music and how all the great composers have, for example, composed settings of the Mass: Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Hayden, Schubert, and so on.

Pillar Two: Sacraments

The Sacraments of Faith – The liturgy of the Church physically and spiritually incorporate us into the drama of God’s plan of creation and salvation, enabling and empowering us to find our place and role – within the Church – in the unfolding of His love in Salvation History.

Collective Worship Now – Liturgy and Prayer.

Successive governments’ commitment to maintaining the statutory requirement that schools and colleges ‘provide daily collective worship for all registered pupils’ is a major strength of the education system of our country which is, obviously, welcomed and supported by the Church.

However, the reality on the ground is more complex than this simple commitment to collective worship at first appears:

- Most primary schools have a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. Roughly one in four secondary schools and colleges in the country fully complies with the law, but others do in part.
- There is the danger of a minimal provision of collective worship in order to ‘tick the box’.
- The involvement of the State in the provision of collective worship can result in a secular emphasis on the ‘horizontal’, pupil-centred dimension of personal and social reflection, to the exclusion of the ‘vertical’ dimension of offering true and fitting worship that respects the dignity of God and the dignity of humanity.
- Due to collective worship being time-tabled in response to the statutory requirement there can be the tendency to see liturgy as something that we ‘do’ – solely dependent on pupil’s active participation – rather than seeing it from the Catholic understanding as our participation in something Christ does – His worship of the Father and His transformation of us through the Holy Spirit.

Liturgy is a Basic Human Need

To those who question or dismiss the importance of liturgy in the busy life of a school or college, my answer is that liturgy is a basic human need. As already stated, the goal of Catholic education is the fulfilment of the fundamental needs of the human person. One such need is fulfilling the symbolic dimension of human existence.

The human person, as a union of body and spirit, needs signs and symbols to express and perceive spiritual realities. And also, as a social being we need signs and symbols to communicate with others, through language, gestures, and actions. The same holds true for our relationship with God (*CCC 1146*).

In as much as they are creatures, these perceptible realities can become means of expressing the action of God who sanctifies men, and the action of men who offer worship to God. The same is true of signs and symbols taken from the social life of man: washing and anointing, breaking bread and sharing the cup can express the sanctifying presence of God and man's gratitude toward his Creator (*CCC 1148*).

Liturgy is the action of the Church that uses ritual, symbols, music, drama, art, and language to communicate the action of Christ, the Word of God made flesh. It is also through these sacramental symbols of His Church that the Holy Spirit carries on the work of our incorporation into the life of Christ, the work of our sanctification.

Fr Marcus Stock is surely right when he states that a school's celebration of liturgy and prayer is an integral part of teaching and learning in the development of a pupil's spiritual life, because it can create time to become reflective, experience the presence of God, and develop a mature spiritual life (*Christ at the Centre*, p. 14).

The Wonder of Worship

'Genuine Christian worship always requires as its foundation belief in one Holy and Eternal God, the Being of Beings, the "Maker, Lover, and Keeper" of all life; utterly transcendent to His creation, and yet fully present with and in it, besetting, sustaining, moulding – above all loving – all that is made. Its object is a Reality "higher than our highest yet more inward than our most inward part" (St Augustine), uniting within His mysterious Nature the cosmic and the personal, the extremes of tenderness and power'. Evelyn Underhill, *Worship*, p. 61-62.

If we have a sense of the wonder of liturgy we will be best placed to communicate this wonder to our pupils.

The Church's liturgy manifests and gives us real access to the mystery of Christ and the nature of the Church, accomplishing the work of our redemption (CCC 1068). Liturgy is the action of the Church that embodies the mystery of God in three, inter-related ways:

❖ *The Mystery of the Most Holy Trinity.* Through liturgy we encounter the inexpressible, the incomprehensible, the invisible, the ungraspable work of the Holy Trinity, and participate in Christ's own prayer addressed to the Father in the Holy Spirit (CCC 1073). Through the liturgy we are grounded in 'the great love with which [the Father] loved us in His beloved Son...lived and internalized by all prayer, 'at all times in the Spirit' (Ephesians 6:18).

❖ *The Mystery of Christ.* Through liturgy we have a special share in the life of Christ, who reveals the invisible God in the flesh. In His person we encounter the presence of God and in His deeds – continued through the sacraments – we are incorporated into God's plan of salvation (CCC 1066)

❖ *The Mystery of Worship.* Through the liturgy the saving deeds of the Incarnate Word are continued and made present through sacramental symbols that both disclose and hide, accomplishing the work of our redemption (CCC 1068).

What is Authentic Catholic Collective Worship – Liturgy and Prayer?

The *Catechism's* elucidation of the elements necessary for liturgy offer guidance about authentic Catholic Liturgy and Prayer:

- ✓ Liturgy and Prayer is not a private activity of a particular school or college, but is always the celebration of the Church, united with Christ. (CCC 1140).

As such, the basic attitude of all those participating in Liturgy and Prayer should be one of reverence, out of respect for the dignity of God and the dignity of each person. An attitude of reverence cannot be enforced or coerced but must be evoked through creating a reverential milieu, through music, art, and the example of leaders and teachers.

During the celebration of the Mass it is especially important that at the Eucharistic Prayer, the whole class or whole school kneel or, if this is not possible, stand as a sign of reverence before the presence of our Lord under the appearance of bread and wine.

- ✓ A sacrament is both sign and instrument (*Lumen Gentium*, 1), therefore it requires active participation in the liturgical action; it is not simply 'something' to be passively 'consumed' or witnessed but is a 'reality that must be realised' by everyone involved (*Sacrosanctum concilium* (SC 7).

Everyone's active participation in the liturgy can be facilitated through encouraging full awareness of what they are doing, their active engagement in the rite, and their intellectual, emotional and spiritual enrichment (SC 11).

- ✓ Respect the signs and symbols of the liturgy with full awareness and reverence. The purpose of the symbols used in the liturgy is 'so that the mystery celebrated is imprinted in the heart's memory and is then expressed in the new life of the faithful' (CCC 1162).
- ✓ The Liturgy of the Word is an integral part of every act of Liturgy and Prayer, expressing the reality at the heart of worship – a dialogue of actions and words between God and His children (CCC 1153).

The ministry of the Word is fundamental to the school as an evangelical and catechetical community. Therefore, it is expected that the Word of God is proclaimed at all collective worship. It must never be replaced by another secular or religious text.

To nourish the faith of the school and college community, the Word of God should be revered as appropriate to the setting, and read with thoughtfulness and clarity (Guidance from staff to readers may be necessary)

- ✓ Singing and music have a pre-eminent role to play in Liturgy and Prayer, and should be based on the following principles established in the *Catechism* (CCC 1157):
 - Music should be beautiful, expressive of prayer – praise, thanksgiving, contrition, adoration, intercession.
 - Music should involve everyone.
 - Music should express the meaning of the liturgy, appropriate to the feast or occasion.

- ✓ Religious art and images used in Liturgy and Prayer must be centred upon Christ, 'All the signs in the liturgical celebrations are related to Christ: as are sacred images of the holy Mother of God and of the saints as well. They truly signify Christ, who is glorified in them' (CCC 1161).
- ✓ Liturgy and Prayer should follow the liturgical seasons, which, over the course of the year, 'unfolds the whole mystery of Christ' opening up the riches of our Lord's prayer, powers and merits:

It is not merely a commemoration of the events of the Gospel or other events in the Church's life, in an artistic form. It is also an actualization of these facts, their renewal upon earth. The Christmas service does not merely commemorate the birth of Christ. In it Christ is truly born in a mystery, as at Easter He rises again. So with the Transfiguration, the entry into Jerusalem, the mystery of the Last Supper, the passion, burial and ascension of Christ...The life of the Church in her liturgy, discloses to our senses the continuing mystery of the Incarnation. S. Boulgakoff, quoted in Evelyn Underhill, *Worship*, p. 76.

Let Liturgy Teach in its Own Way

In the light of the importance of liturgy to a school's or college's Catholic ethos systematic and comprehensive liturgical catechesis is vital.

The *General Directory for Catechesis* identifies common problems in liturgical catechesis that may need addressing:

- A weak and fragmentary link between the liturgy and catechesis.
- Limited attention to liturgical symbols and rites.
- Catechetical courses with little or no connection with the liturgical year.
- The marginalisation of liturgical celebrations in catechetical programmes.

(GDC, 30)

The *Catechism* states that as the liturgy, particularly the Eucharist, is the source and summit of the Church's activity, it is the 'privileged place for catechizing the People of God'. Catechesis and liturgy are intrinsically linked (CCC 1074). Having said this it is important not to reduce the liturgy to being merely a teaching or explicatory tool.

Here are a few suggestions about how to let liturgy teach in its own way:

- ✓ Liturgical catechesis aims to initiate people into the mystery of Christ by proceeding from the visible to the invisible, from the sign to the thing signified, from the 'sacraments' to the 'mysteries' (CCC 1075).
- ✓ Let the symbols speak through the words and actions of the liturgy.
- ✓ Liturgical formation should take place outside the liturgy, and include the following (cf. *General Directory for Catechesis*, 87):
 - Explain what the Christian liturgy is, and what the sacraments are.
 - Offer an experience of the different kinds of celebration.
 - Make the symbols, gestures, etc. known and loved.
 - The training of Altar Servers, Readers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion in a school setting.
- ✓ An understanding of the 'sacramental journey' is useful in liturgical catechesis – the gradual and successive growth in understanding of the role and value of the Sacraments in our lives as they accompany us in our journey through life. The sacraments are integrated in our lives as we grow in understanding of what it means to be a member of the Church.

An understanding of the sacramental journey has profound educational implications. Students become aware that being a member of the Church is something dynamic, responding to every person's need to continue growing all through life. When we meet the Lord in the Sacraments, we are never left unchanged. Through the Spirit, He causes us to grow in the Church, offering us 'grace upon grace'; the only thing He asks is our cooperation. The educational consequences of this touch on our relationship with God, our witness as a Christian, and our choice of a personal vocation. Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 79.

Sacraments – Objectives for Our Schools and Colleges.

1. Teach the Real Presence from a Young Age.

Professor Eamon Duffy, of Cambridge, has recently written that many young people do not believe in Our Lord's real presence in the Blessed Sacrament. Cardinal Ratzinger comments that since the events described in John 6, the 'murmurs' of disbelief and rejection have run down the centuries, 'and in particular the Church of our own generation has been deeply hurt by them' (*God is near us*, p. 75).

In the light of this, it is an urgent priority that children from a young age are taught about Christ's real and substantial presence in the Eucharist. The following are recommended:

- ✓ The celebration of the Eucharist, as the 'sacrament of sacraments' must be every school's and college's pre-eminent act of Liturgy and Prayer.
- ✓ Liturgical catechesis in all schools must give priority to the celebration of the Mass, focusing on the Real Presence.
- ✓ Elizabeth Anscombe, the Catholic philosopher, in her famous pamphlet, *Teaching Children about the Meaning of the Eucharist* proposes that even very young children can be helped to realise the importance of the consecration during Mass. She encourages parents to draw their child close when the bell rings and quietly say, 'Look, there's Jesus!'
- ✓ Teachers with a strong Eucharistic faith are also in a position to help children from an early age 'speak the language of faith' about Christ's real presence.
- ✓ Amette Ley, contributing author to the CTS RE series, *The Way, The Truth, and the Life*, suggests that primary school children need to know at least the following:
 - The priest is doing what Jesus did in His last supper and His death.
 - The bread and wine change and become the risen Body and Blood of Jesus who comes to us in Holy Communion. (It's important to stress the risen and living aspect of Our Lord's Body and Blood, so they don't presume a dead body).
 - Receiving Jesus in Holy Communion brings us closer to Him and to others who receive Him.
 - Receiving Jesus in this way actually forgives our smaller sins and makes us less likely to commit larger ones.

(Amette Ley, *Teaching Prayer and the Sacraments in school with the Catechism*, in *The Sower*, October-December 2004).

- ✓ Arrange class visits to the local parish church to focus on the 'specialness' of Christ's presence, through Eucharistic reservation in the Tabernacle.
- ✓ Begin a programme to develop frequent celebration of the Mass with classes, key-stages and the whole school and college especially on significant feasts of the Church's year and the school calendar. This may take some time to achieve. Those who form part of the Catholic school or college community rightly celebrate Mass together whether they are catholic or not. (I would suggest at least 6 whole school and college occasions for Mass per academic year and more class and key-stage occasions for Mass).
- ✓ Encourage awe and wonder towards Christ's Eucharistic presence through cultivating an atmosphere of adoration in the school:

Worship of the Eucharist. In the liturgy of the Mass we express our faith in the real presence of Christ under the species of bread and wine by, among other ways, genuflecting or bowing deeply as a sign of adoration of the Lord. 'The Catholic Church has always offered and still offers to the sacrament of the Eucharist the cult of adoration, not only during Mass, but also outside of it, reserving the consecrated hosts with the utmost care, exposing them to the solemn veneration of the faithful, and carrying them in procession' (CCC 1378).

- ✓ Arrange a school or college Corpus Christi procession and invite surrounding parishes to participate. It does not surprise me that the schools and colleges find them to be very popular and many parishioners are delighted to take part. When schools, colleges and parishes plan liturgies together they are able to do so much more than working alone.
- ✓ The duty of Sunday Mass can be "taught" most effectively by games-teachers (and others) who ensure that in any school trip or activity taking place over a week-end, the Sunday Mass will not only be available, but treated as the most important event.
- ✓ When there is a whole-school or voluntary Mass, the Senior Management Team must ensure that no other major school event is time-tabled for the same time.

2. Challenge the Loss of a Sense of Sin.

Pope John Paul II identified a loss of a sense of sin as a major problem within the Church and society in general, which he saw as an expression of a wider denial of God. Pope Benedict describes sin-repentance-penance as belonging to the new taboos with which modern man protects himself against radical questions that challenge his self-assured pragmatism.

One of the influences behind the disappearance of the sense of sin can be traced to an educational approach that wrongly identifies a sense of sin with a morbid feeling of guilt or with the mere transgression of legal norms or cultural conditions (Pope John Paul II, *Post synod exhortation, Reconciliatio et Paenitentia*, 18).

This erroneous educational approach has its origins in the uncritical adoption of psychological and sociological models, such as the so called 'person-centred theory' of counselling with its principles of unconditional positive regard and its criticism of moral judgement as 'judgementalism'.

In my life-time, we have gone from an exaggerated sense of sin, which focused too heavily on punishment, to a lack of a sense of sin, which focuses too heavily on undemanding forgiveness. As Pope John Paul puts it:

From seeing sin everywhere they pass to not recognizing it anywhere; from too much emphasis on the fear of eternal punishment they pass to preaching a love of God that excludes any punishment deserved by sin; from severity in trying to correct erroneous consciences they pass to a kind of respect for conscience which excludes the duty of telling the truth. Pope John Paul II, *Post synod exhortation, Reconciliatio et Paenitentia*, 18)

The Second Vatican Council declared it a sacred right that children and young people 'be motivated to appraise moral values with a right conscience, to embrace them with a personal adherence, together with a deeper knowledge and love of God' (Second Vatican Council, *Gravissimum Educationis*, 1).

Therefore, it is my express wish that all schools in the diocese form our children with a true sense of sin in the context of an understanding of God that balances His radical forgiveness with His radical judgment upon sin. To this end, I recommend the following:

- ✓ All schools and colleges in the Diocese must regularly provide occasions for staff and pupils to receive the sacrament of penance and reconciliation.
- ✓ Catechesis on confession and penance must be a priority in our schools and colleges, teaching these fundamental convictions:
 - Confession and penance are the primary way of obtaining forgiveness and the remission of serious sin committed after baptism.
 - Pupils should be taught how to make an examination of conscience, appropriate to their age, made in the light of the Word of God, enabling them as individuals to say, 'I have sinned' (CCC 1454).
 - Individual, integral confession and absolution remains the only ordinary way for us to reconcile ourselves with God and the Church (CCC 1484).
 - The sacrament of confession and penance is primarily an encounter with Christ the healer through the act of absolution
 - The importance of penance to guard against the lawlessness of our wounded nature.
- ✓ All schools must present the Church's teaching on the 'powers of darkness', the devil and evil, (CCC 391- 412), following CS Lewis' observation, 'we either give him undue attention or ignore him altogether.' There is a tendency amongst some to avoid this area of the Church's teaching due to the assumption that it is out-dated, but to ignore it is to omit a central reality in Christ's ministry, 'The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil' (I John 3:8). We must not underestimate the disastrous effect the devil has on humanity, who as our adversary (I Peter 5:8) and enemy (John 8:44) works against our good.

3. Sacramental Initiation – a Collaboration of Parish and School

I recommend that, wherever possible, parishes, schools, and colleges collaborate in the deepest way in the preparation of the children and young people to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion, and Confirmation.

Schools and colleges are part of the same local Church as the parish and have the expertise for teaching. Those parts of the programme which involve the passing on of knowledge and understanding are naturally part of the school's and college's role. They can also be a point of contact and support to the parents of the children enabling catechesis and formation to take place.

Pillar Three: The Moral Life

The Moral Life of Faith – The Ten Commandments express the minimum moral conditions expected of us to participate as partners in God’s plan of creation and salvation, empowering us to belong in God’s culture of love, ‘*You shall be My people, and I will be your God*’ (Ezekiel 36:28).

Schools on the Moral Flash-points of Society.

I am very aware that our schools are daily on the moral fault lines of society, due to their contact with families. Pope John Paul II had a keen sense of the fundamental value of the family, ‘As the family goes, so goes the nation and so goes the whole world in which we live.’ Tragically, the family has become the flash-point for the separation of freedom from truth, morality from faith. Many people think and live ‘as if God did not exist’ or seek to relegate faith to the sphere of private choice.

Schools and colleges encounter this acute pastoral problem on four fronts:

- Schools and colleges are often the first to detect among children, poverty, neglect, even malnutrition, breakdown in relationships at home, domestic violence, divorce, with its harm to children, alcohol or drug addiction, and abuse.
- Schools and colleges are often the first to be aware of problems in families caused by a variety of social and economic trends in society, such as parental absence due to employment, migrancy, and the isolation of the nuclear family.
- Schools and colleges are faced with an increasing number of pupils and families who are indifferent and non-practising, with a profound apathy concerning ethical and religious formation (Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School at the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 6).
- Schools and colleges have to cope with increasing government ‘social engineering’ legislation, seeking to impose secular values on our curriculum and ethos.

As I observed previously, our schools and colleges are a microcosm of society, with its mixture of practising and non-practising Catholics, belief, and unbelief. Likewise, our schools contain a mixture of staff, pupils, and families who are enthusiastic or apathetic about moral formation.

What mustn't be allowed to happen in our schools or colleges is that the apathetic group set the level of our commitment and coverage of the Church's moral teaching for those young people who are generous and idealistic in their engagement with moral formation.

The Size of the Mountain We Must Climb

I am under no illusion how particularly difficult it is to engage in the moral formation of the young at this time. Pope Benedict was not exaggerating when he said schools and families are facing an educational emergency in the transmission of the basic values of life and correct behaviour to the new generations (*Address to the participants in the Convention of the Diocese of Rome 11 June 2007*).

Before looking at practical ways of addressing this educational emergency, it is necessary to look at the nature of the problem we are facing.

While in the past the Church has had to confront heresies about the nature of Christ, today we have to confront a pervasive heresy about the nature of man that has its basis in an aggressive consumerism that dominates our society. Basically, this world view reduces individuals from being 'persons' to 'things', so that people can be used like things. Examples of a mentality that uses people like things include embryonic research, surrogacy in IVF, pornography, exploitation of migrant labour, employment relocation due to globalisation, just to name a few.

The implications for all aspects of morality are profound, including social and medical morality, but none more so than sexual morality. The reason why the Catholic Church is so often in the news about sexual matters is not because the Church is obsessed with, or disapproving of, sex, but because she is passionate about protecting human nature from debasement and exploitation.

In his ground breaking encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, Pope John Paul II identifies the heart of the problem posed by pragmatic, materialist utilitarianism:

The only goal which counts is the pursuit of one's own material well-being. The so-called "quality of life" is interpreted primarily or exclusively as economic efficiency, inordinate consumerism, physical beauty, and pleasure, to the neglect of the more profound dimensions – interpersonal spiritual and religious – of existence.....The body is no longer perceived as a properly personal reality, a sign and place of relations with others, with God and with the world. It is reduced to pure materiality: it is simply a complex of organs, functions, and energies to be used according to the sole criteria of pleasure and efficiency.

Consequently, sexuality too is depersonalized and exploited: from being the sign, place and language of love, that is, of the gift of self and acceptance of another, in all the other's richness as a person, it increasingly becomes the occasion and instrument for self-assertion and the selfish satisfaction of personal desires and instincts. Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, 23.

Consequently, in order to cultivate an authentic and vital Catholic ethos, our schools and colleges must challenge thinking and behaviour based on this secular, materialistic model of man, with Christianity's holistic, personal model of life 'in Christ'.

See with His Eyes, Love with His Heart, Share in His Virtues.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. *Galatians 5:22-23*

Therefore, the goal of moral formation in schools is to shape a life based on God who is love. In practice, this means developing young people's awareness and understanding of their dignity and responsibility as unique persons, made in the image of God, called by Christ to the fullness of love with God and others through the virtues of the Holy Spirit.

It is essential that the Church's vision of the human person is presented as an attractive, life-affirming, and challenging enrichment of an individual's life and not as a list of condemnations and prohibitions. In order to do this the following basic approach should be taken:

- ❖ Christian faith is not simply a set of propositions to be accepted with intellectual assent, but rather a truth to be lived out, a decision involving one's whole life, a new and original criterion for thinking and acting (Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis splendour*, 88).
- ❖ Christianity is first of all a concrete way of living, a precise and recognisable form of life that the early Church called, 'the Way' (Act 22:4) (Livio Melina, *Sharing in Christ's Virtues*, p. 29).
- ❖ This truth to be lived out in a concrete way is not a theory or ideology but a person, Jesus Christ, the Word of God who took human flesh to *fully reveal man to man himself* (*Gaudium et Spes*, 22), and give a new divine significance to all human action '*in Christ*'.

- ❖ The goal of moral formation is to see myself and others with the eyes of Christ, to love with His heart, and share in His virtues. If we can see with the eyes of God, then we are capable of loving ourselves and others in the image of God, and we can share in His life. (Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, p.18).
- ❖ Moral formation must make real the fact that as an exciting and enriched way of living, Christianity does not limit freedom, but liberates us from illusory 'freedoms', thereby enabling us to really attain happy and fulfilled lives.

A true education must awaken the courage to make definitive decisions, which today are considered a mortifying bind to our freedom. In reality, they are indispensable for growth and in order to achieve something great in life, in particular, to cause love to mature in all its beauty: therefore, to give consistency and meaning to freedom itself. *Pope Benedict XVI, Address, 19 October 2006.*

Moral Life – Objectives for Our Schools and Colleges.

1. Promote Our Call to Holiness.

Too often, I think, we settle for too little from ourselves and our young people, accepting the prevalent attitude that it is 'only human' to be sinful, morally weak, and self-seeking. There is a danger of under-estimating the courage, generosity, and idealism of the young. We forget – in our lives and our presentation of the moral life – that Christ calls us to grow into perfection (*Matthew 5: 48*). As Pope Saint Leo the Great said, 'Christian, recognise your dignity' (*CCC 1691*).

The *Catechism* makes it clear that the pre-eminent purpose of moral formation in schools and colleges is to 'throw light upon the exalted vocation of the faithful in Christ' (*Optatam totius*, 16):

- ✓ Schools and colleges must take every opportunity to present the positive, life-affirming nature of the vocation of marriage.
- ✓ We can be sure that Jesus is calling young men and young women to a special share in His power and authority for service. It is vital that schools foster the vocations of future leaders in the Church. I ask that all schools and colleges pray regularly for vocations and seek to identify by name potential candidates for ministerial priesthood, the consecrated life, and lay ministry.

2. Always Teach Sex Within the Sacrament of Marriage.

With sex education being made a legal requirement in secondary schools, teaching about sexual matters can occur in many subject areas including biology, personal, and social education, religious education, and general studies. I am concerned that given this diversity of inputs and methodologies that confusing mixed messages may be given to young people. Therefore, it is paramount that no matter the subject area, any instruction in sex must be presented in the context of the Church's teaching on sexuality and the sacrament of marriage.

The secular view on sex outside of marriage, artificial contraception, sexually transmitted disease, including HIV and AIDs, and abortion may not be presented as neutral information.

All schools and colleges in the Diocese must follow the principles set out in the Pontifical Council for the Family document, *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, and other documents of the Catholic Church:

- It is imperative to give suitable and timely instruction to young people, above all in the heart of their own families, about the dignity of married love, its role and its exercise (CCC 1632).
- Parents have the primary responsibility for the education of their children - a role which is 'irreplaceable and inalienable and, therefore, incapable of being entirely delegated to others or usurped by others' (*The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*). Pg or section?
- In particular, sex education is a basic right of parents, and must be carried out under their close supervision, whether at home or in educational centres chosen and controlled by them (The Holy See, Charter of the Rights of the Family, Article 5 in Benedict XVI, *Families in Christ: Words of encouragement*, CTS, 2006.)
- Sex education must only be delegated to others with the express direction of the parents and must be given to each child on an individual basis within a family context (*The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, 23)
- Only indirect sex education should occur during the 'latency period' of children, usually from around 5 years to puberty (*The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, 78).
- No material of an erotic nature must be presented either individually or in a group (*The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, 126).

- Sexual instruction must respect modesty and pupils own sensitivity or sense of privacy (*The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, 127).
- Parents, schools and colleges must reject *secularized and anti-life sex education*, which puts God at the margin of life and regards the birth of a child as a threat (*The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, 137)
- Sterilization, contraception, abortion, and IVF should only be discussed during adolescence and only in conformity with the teaching of the Catholic Church. Therefore, the moral, spiritual, and health values of methods for the natural regulation of fertility, such as Natural Family Planning, must be emphasized (*The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, 137).
- Parents must insist on continence outside marriage and fidelity in marriage as the only true and secure education for the prevention of AIDS. Parents, schools, and colleges must also reject the promotion of so-called "safe sex" or "safer sex", a dangerous and immoral policy based on the deluded theory that the condom can provide adequate protection against AIDS. (*The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, 139).

3. Teach Respect for the Language of the Body

There have been important developments in the Church's understanding of the meaning and significance of sexual love that provide a rich and systematic way of teaching sexual morality to young people, known as the Theology of the Body.

At the heart of this teaching is learning respect for the 'language of the body'. Sexuality is not purely biological, but concerns the innermost being of each person. Fidelity, permanence, and openness to life are the integral conditions for total physical self-giving which is only possible for a man and a woman who have committed themselves to one another until death, as husband and wife.

Pope John Paul describes this as the 'nuptial significance' of the body, the insight that God has written a meaning of total self-giving into maleness and femaleness that is predicated on marriage. Through sexual love husband and wife 'speak' the language of total self-gift, that has its origin in the creative generosity and self-giving love of the Most Holy Trinity.

It is for this reason that the Catholic Church is so adamantly against sterilisation, contraception, abortion, and sex outside marriage, because they all contradict and destroy the God given meaning of the human person.

It is still early days in the development of resources and methods of teaching this respect for the language of the body, but I recommend the following:

- ✓ John Paul II. The Theology of the Body. Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1997.
- ✓ Mr Tommy Hughes, Principal Teacher of Religious Education, Glasgow, has developed the Love and Responsibility programme of study for Sixth Form students based on Pope John Paul's Theology of the Body. Those who wish to know more about this project are invited to contact Mt Hughes at 100 Dixon Road, Glasgow, G42 8AU. There is also a Faith and Teaching CPD Study Pack, *An Introduction to the Theology of the Body of Pope John Paul II* available from the Scottish Catholic Education Service.

Sexual Morality and the Catholic Ethos.

In the light of these principles, the following practical guidelines must be observed by all schools and colleges in the diocese:

- ✓ Under no circumstances should any outside authority or agency that is not fully qualified to speak on behalf of the Catholic Church ever be allowed to speak to pupils or individuals on sexual or any other matter involving faith and morals.
- ✓ Nor should a Catholic school or college ever refer a pupil to an outside agency for advice or counselling; such is the prerogative only of the parent.
- ✓ Even where supportive organisations are invited to speak in our schools and colleges – such as Life, or the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child – the written consent of the parents should be obtained before any speaker is allowed to address pupils.
- ✓ Schools and colleges must not support charities or groups that promote or fund anti-life policies, such as Red Nose Day and Amnesty International.
- ✓ Schools and colleges must carefully scrutinise Year Planners to make sure that they do not promote the services of organisations incompatible with the Church's moral teaching.

4. Empower Parents

It is essential that schools, colleges, and parishes collaborate together in empowering and enabling parents to fulfil their responsibility as the primary educators of their children about the dignity of married love, its role, and its exercise. I am aware that the responsibility for sex education has often been left solely with schools and colleges.

However, in order to place sex education back in its true context of the sacrament of marriage and the family it is imperative that schools, parishes and families develop ways of working together for the good of our young people:

- ✓ The Diocesan Commission for Marriage and Family Life is currently identifying, with the co-operation of parishes, individuals to train on the Marriage Preparation Advisors Course. It is my hope that trained married couples will be able to help parents in the moral formation of their children, if required.
- ✓ Schools and colleges can encourage parents in this role through holding open meetings to discuss ways of teaching sex education.
- ✓ Parents can also help the school or college in presenting the Church's moral teaching by upholding and supporting it in discussions in the home and through praying for the success of the school in this important work.

5. Fight for Justice

As Pope Benedict says, 'The Church cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice' (*Deus Caritas Est*, 28). Schools and colleges have a vital role to play in this fight for justice through teaching the rational arguments developed through the Church's social teaching and through awakening the spiritual energy required to make the sacrifices demanded so that social justice can prevail and prosper.

It is important that Catholics remain committed to, and involved in, our political system, particularly during a time increasingly dominated by views inimical to our own.

Many young people have a natural passion and commitment to engage with the great issues of the day. Schools and colleges are best placed to teach a proper Catholic understanding of the political issues of our time, and enable young people

to develop the knowledge and skills to critically evaluate the positions promoted by politicians and the media. For instance, there is clear Catholic teaching on such issues as justice and peace, immigration, subsidiarity in society, and the right to life, from conception to natural death.

Schools and colleges also have an important part to play in informing our young people about the current issues of justice and peace that are going to shape their lives as adults, such as the emerging 'culture of death', the promotion of a so called 'human rights' culture that infringes religious liberty, and the incipient international conflicts over natural resources, to name a few. It is a question of sensitising our consciences, through the Church's social teaching, to 'see, judge and act' according to the 'mind of Christ'.

It is right that Catholic schools and colleges will want to look at issues that are set by the media, such as the environment and the possibility of climate change, but they must do so with the eyes of faith and from our unique Catholic vision of life:

- ✓ I encourage all schools and colleges to form *CAFOD* and *Aid to the Church in Need* Groups.
- ✓ I recommend the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church,
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html
- ✓ As an alternative to *Amnesty International* groups in our schools – which can no longer be supported due to *Amnesty International's* anti-life policy – I recommend that you form a *Justice and Peace* Group or *Pax Christi* group. Also, I am very much heartened by the initiative of an Australian Catholic college in forming a Catholic human rights group, the Benenson Society, named after the Catholic founder of *Amnesty International*, Peter Benenson. I recommend that our schools and colleges contact this Society, which aims to provide a human rights campaigning network:
<http://www.staloysius.com.au/associations/benenson/default.asp>

Pillar Four: Prayer

The Prayer of Faith – The Seven petitions of the Our Father are the model of how to enter into the dialogue of love between Son and Father in the Holy Spirit that unfolds God’s plan of creation and salvation.

Young Christians at Risk!

In the face of the emergency that we face as a Church, the least we can do is be honest and frank with each other. Over the years hundreds of thousands of young people have been through our Catholic education system in the Diocese of Lancaster. Looking at the drastic decline in the number of Catholic attending Mass, I must ask these questions:

- How many of our young people have a living relationship with Jesus?
- How many have the first idea of how to pray?
- How many have really experienced His living and healing presence?

Please be assured that I am not, for a moment, laying responsibility for this failure on our schools and colleges alone! All of us share in this failure – parents, clergy, and teachers

And also, young people must share in responsibility for failing to realise the dignity and responsibility to see with His eyes, love with His heart, and share in His life. Many young people in our schools choose to take a negative attitude to prayer, participation in the Mass, and receiving the sacraments.

I know many of you, teachers, chaplains, parents, and clergy, have worked hard to give our children and young people the opportunity to deepen their prayer lives and grow spiritually. But it has, in most cases, been to no avail! The causes for this failure are complex and hard to remedy.

Having said, this I believe one of the causes of this failure is a common expectation, if not acceptance, of a shallow prayer life in our schools and colleges, and, indeed, in our homes. How often is class prayer rushed as a chore to be got over with as fast as possible? How often is class prayer neglected because prayer is not part of the teacher’s life or the students are uncooperative? **Would such neglect or lack of co-operation be accepted in any other aspect of the school’s or college’s life?**

This needs to be expressed in the strongest terms – acceptance of a shallow prayer life in our schools and colleges puts young Christians at risk!

I am not under-estimating the difficulty of teaching children and young people how to pray, but I am certain of the competency and ability of our teachers to develop strategies to educate young people about difficult aspects of learning. I hope and expect you will use your professional experience and skills to develop this Core Subject Area of the Catholic Core Curriculum – education in prayer.

Do We Live Our Lives as If Christ Did Not Really Exist?

I want to ask everyone involved in schools and colleges, the same question I have put to the parishes – Do we still believe in the power of prayer, or do we live our lives as if Christ did not really exist?

We live in a culture that honours and seeks power, money, status above all else! One of the most dispiriting things is to ask a young person what they want to do with their lives, and they answer, ‘I want to make a lot of money!’ What an impoverishment of the human spirit.

As Catholic schools we can only have one true source of power – and it’s not the power of academic success or excellence in sport or art – it is the power of prayer. Could it be that so many of our young people are spiritually weak and lifeless because we have forgotten the power of prayer?

Genuine Schools of Prayer

In his apostolic letter at the beginning of the new millennium Pope John Paul set as one of the primary objectives for the Church in the 21st Century making all our communities ‘genuine schools of prayer’ (*Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 33). He goes on to identify shallow prayer as one of the major threats to the life of Christians:

But it would be wrong to think that ordinary Christians can be content with a shallow prayer that is unable to fill their whole life. Especially in the face of the many trials to which today's world subjects faith, they would be not only mediocre Christians but "Christians at risk". They would run the insidious risk of seeing their faith progressively undermined, and would perhaps end up succumbing to the allure of "substitutes", accepting alternative religious proposals, and even indulging in far-fetched superstitions. Pope John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, (NMI) 34.

The Holy Father concludes that education in prayer should become a key-point of all pastoral planning. Obviously, schools and colleges, along with parishes, have a major role in achieving this key objective.

The *Catechism* provides some guidance on how to begin taking action on this development target:

- ✓ Teach children and young people to meditate on the Word of God in personal prayer.
- ✓ Practise meditation on the Word of God in liturgical prayer.
- ✓ Introduce children and young people to popular piety, such as the Holy Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Devotion to the Sacred Heart/ Divine Mercy, etc.
- ✓ The meaningful memorization of basic prayers offers an essential support to the life of prayer (CCC 2688).
- ✓ A certain memorisation of the words of Jesus, of important Bible passages, such as psalms and canticles, the Ten Commandments, the Creeds, liturgical texts, essential prayers, far from being opposed to the dignity of young Christians, or constituting an obstacle to personal dialogue with the Lord, is a real need (Pope John Paul, *Catechesi Tradendae*, 55).

Prayer – Objectives for Our Schools and Colleges.

Jesus has given Himself to us in His Word and in His Sacraments, therefore our spiritual life will be Catholic to the extent that our personal relationship with God is developed in the Church, through Scripture and the Eucharist:

1. Teach Meditation on the Word of God

The Bible is one of the ‘well-springs of prayer’ (CCC 2652), the source and inspiration of all authentic spirituality, which cannot be reduced to the measure of man ‘because its aim is to fashion us in the image of God’ (Jordan Aumann, *Christian Spirituality in the Catholic Tradition*, p 1).

For in the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven meets His children with great love and speaks with them; and the force and power in the word of God is so great that it stands as the support and energy of the Church, the strength of faith for her sons, the food of the soul, the pure and everlasting source of spiritual life’
Dei Verbum, 21.

Through teaching meditation on the Word of God, young people will learn that Scripture does not contain mere dead letters about a dead past, but rather Scripture contains words of life addressed to each of them individually by the living God. This is why we must also meditate on the Word of God in the liturgy of the Church, because it is only through the Church that we participate in the living body of Christ.

- ✓ There are many methods of meditation (CCC 2705-2708), but I would like to recommend that our schools teach *lectio divina*, ' which draws from the biblical text the living word which questions, directs and shapes our lives' (Pope John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 39). There are four stages in the process of *lectio*: Reading – what does Scripture say? Meditation – what does Scripture say to me? Prayer – What do I want to say to God through Scripture? Contemplation and action – What difference does Scripture make in my life?
- ✓ Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, S.J. the recently retired Archbishop of Milan used to fill his cathedral with thousands of young people when he led them through a *lectio divina* meditation of scripture. I recommend any work by Cardinal Martini on *lectio divina*.

2. Teach Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

I want to share with you something that is essential to my prayer life as your bishop. When the apostles asked Jesus, 'Lord, teach us to pray (*Luke 11:1*), He prayed with them the Our Father. Every day I spend time before the Blessed Sacrament, so Jesus can pray with me! It is only in the presence of Our Lord that we can truly learn to pray. If we want to lead our young people into a real and living relationship with Jesus, we must first let Him lead us into the prayer at the heart of the Most Holy Trinity.

It is pleasant to spend time with him, to lie close to his breast like the Beloved Disciple (cf. *Jn 13:25*) and to feel the infinite love present in his heart. If in our time Christians must be distinguished above all by the "art of prayer", how can we not feel a renewed need to spend time in spiritual converse, in silent adoration, in heartfelt love before Christ present in the Most Holy Sacrament? How often, dear brother and sisters, have I experienced this, and drawn from it strength, consolation and support! Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 25.

- ✓ Arrange weekly adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the school or college chapel. I realise that it may not be practical or appropriate at first to arrange whole school or college adoration. In the beginning, issue an open invitation to the school or college and, at the same time, personally invite faith-filled teachers, members of staff, governors, pupils, and parents. From this mustard seed of faith in a school or college, a mighty tree of grace and witness will grow!

3. Teach Devotion to the Most Holy Rosary.

It is a sad fact that devotion to the Most Holy Rosary has declined in our country, and I don't believe that it is a coincidence that there has been a parallel decline in Mass attendance and practise among Catholics. As John Henry Newman wrote, 'While Mary defends the church, neither men nor evil spirits, neither great monarchs, nor craft of man, nor popular violence, can avail to harm us'.

Praying with the Rosary is another excellent method of meditating on the Word of God, because it contains the essence of the Gospel, particularly with the inclusion of the Mysteries of Light, by Pope John Paul II, which enable us to meditate on the public ministry of Jesus. The Holy Father expressed the powerful beauty of this devotion when he wrote that through praying the rosary we share Mary's memories which – by virtue of her assumption into heaven – are eternal and present at the heart of the Church. Seeing, through her eyes, the mysteries of her Son, Mary teaches us how to pray.

- ✓ There are new ways of praying the rosary that draw on scripture and the words of the saints and martyrs. I recommend the CTS booklets, 'Praying the Rosary with the Saints', and 'Praying the Rosary with the Martyrs' as ways of encouraging young people to pray with the rosary.

4. Teach Devotion to the Saints.

As I wrote at the beginning, the main purpose of Catholic Education is to enable our children and young people to experience the joy of meeting Jesus. One of the ways of doing this is through His saints, those women, men, boys and girls, who see through His eyes, love with His heart and share in His virtues. In the thousands upon thousands of saints, we see a reflection of the face of Christ, and in their words we hear His voice speaking to us. Of particular significance to our diocese are the martyrs of Lancashire and Cumbria, who provide us with a wonderful example of fidelity to our Catholic identity and mission.

Also, the Saints are a living force and presence in the Church, because they contemplate God, praise Him, and constantly care for those whom they have left on earth (CCC 2683). We must never forget that asking for their intercession is a real power for good in our lives and the lives of our schools.

- ✓ I recommend that schools and colleges, particularly secondary schools, encourage devotion to the martyrs of the 20th century. Pope John Paul II describes the martyrs as the most authentic witnesses to the truth about our lives. This truth is a person – Jesus Christ. 'The martyrs provide evidence of

a love that has no need of lengthy arguments in order to convince' (*Fides et Ratio*, 32).

- ✓ I further recommend that schools and colleges, particularly infant and primary schools arrange for teachers and chaplains to tell our children the stories of the saints. Story-telling is a wonderful way of teaching children the profession of faith, preparing them to celebrate the liturgy with enthusiasm, encouraging them in their life in Christ, and educate them in prayer.
- ✓ A devotion to Mary – Queen of Saints, Mother of the Church, should be encouraged. She is the model of education – one who hears, who ponders and brings the Gospel to the world in the fullest way. She is our patron.

Our Lady, Mother of God, and Mother of the Church, pray for us.

Appendix 1 – Initial Action Checklist

Overall outcome required: Clear proposal for action on the specific objectives included in this document.

The following provides an extract of some of the key areas in the document for consideration, however, please feel free to draw on other areas.

Page ref	Area for reflection	Page ref	Actions	Page ref	Resources
	Is Christ the true centre of our schools?				
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes a diocesan school 'Catholic'? • Are we losing sight of the uniqueness of Catholic education? • Is the Catholic faith a living reality at the heart of every diocesan school? • Is Christ the true centre of all that we do? • Are our pupils having a rich and living encounter with our Risen Lord? • Are we transmitting the fullness of the faith in an exciting and creative way to our pupils and their families? 	9	Review the school Development Plan to ensure it is explicitly informed by formation of the faith as the primary purpose.		'Christ at the Centre', Fr Marcus Stock 'The Catholic School on the threshold of the third Millenium' Congregation for Catholic Education
	Creating a Catholic Ethos				
11	What is the one thing necessary for our schools to be permeated with the Gospel spirit of love and freedom?	10	Create / enhance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect for the authority of the doctrinal and moral truth safeguarded by the Pope and the Bishops. • an exciting and engaging environment that enables pupils to experience the light of truth, using the full range of multi-media and communication technologies • PSHE teaching within the context of the sacrament of marriage, and the Church's teaching on Christian anthropology and the family. 		The Beatitudes, Matthew 5
		18	Assist teachers / Chaplains to deepen their commitment to embodying Christian values by providing opportunities for prayer and personal friendship with Jesus		School/College Chapel or Prayer Room

Page ref	Area for reflection	Page ref	Actions	Page ref	Resources
12	<p>1. To share the Father's passion to liberate His children from the slavery of sin, into the freedom and dignity of being created in the 'image and likeness of God'.</p> <p>✓ <i>How do we enable our pupils to experience the wonder and richness of possessing the freedom and dignity of being made in God's image?</i></p> <p>✓ <i>How do we allow the Father to free those pupils who suffer the slavery of materialism, pre-marital sexual activity, alcohol, and substance abuse, the slavery of violence and bullying?</i></p>	20 20 31 31	<p>Use the Liturgical seasons to enable our pupils to connect with Salvation History.</p> <p>Ensure teaching of the faith engages the culture of our day.</p> <p>Challenge TV broadcasts, films and music that are disrespectful and cynical about the dignity of the human person, particularly sexual love, and marriage</p> <p>Promote TV broadcasts, films, and music that are respectful and hopeful about the dignity of the human person</p>		The Liturgical Cycle of the Church
12	<p>2. To follow the Son's loving service of impoverished and suffering humanity, through advocating and establishing a culture of justice that originates in the purpose, will, and character of God.</p> <p>✓ <i>How do we encourage our pupils to live in the transforming grace of Christ's power and promises?</i></p> <p><i>How do we allow the Son to heal those pupils who are impoverished by neglect, social exclusion, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse?</i></p>	22 30 30 30	<p>Communicate the uniqueness of Jesus</p> <p>Promote an interest and devotion to great men and women saints, particularly modern saints and martyrs</p> <p>Challenge TV broadcasts, films and books, particularly those aimed at young people, which are disrespectful, suspicious, and scornful of Christ and His Church</p> <p>Promote films and books that build up trust and enthusiasm for the faith</p>		
12	<p>3. To be exemplars of the freedom and dignity in intellectual, social, and moral life that comes from being transformed by the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>✓ <i>How do we empower our pupils with the absolute truth of Catholic doctrinal and moral teaching?</i></p> <p><i>How do we allow the Holy Spirit to inspire those pupils imprisoned by doubt, cynicism, atheism, and nihilism?</i></p>	22 25 29	<p>Encourage a spirit of dialogue and questioning between teachers of mature and devout faith and pupils.</p> <p>Review for areas of omissions or exaggeration, particularly, teaching on original sin and understanding the sacrificial nature of the Mass.</p> <p>Ensure the five themes of the CCC are covered.</p>	28	<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church, and its summary, the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church</i>
The Four Pillars					

Page ref	Area for reflection	Page ref	Actions	Page ref	Resources
	Pillar 1: Profession of Faith				
34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the teaching method respect the dignity of the Gospel and of the person? Is primacy given to Revelation? Does teaching go beyond personal experience but still link faith and personal experience? Does it interpret and illuminate personal life with the truths and data of faith? 	35	Teach the Trinity Ensure approach includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scriptural basis of Christian encounter with the Trinity Use of the CCC section on the Trinity. Use of Trinitarian dimension of the liturgy Trinitarian prayer 	35	Pope John Paul's encyclical, <i>Catechesi tradendae</i> (1979), and the Congregation for the Clergy's <i>General Directory for Catechesis</i> (1997)
		38	Use the CCC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCC in library CCC for each teacher Primary schools – one classroom set of the compendium Secondary schools – one classroom set of the CCC and the compendium Train Teachers in the use of the Catechism 	10	Catholic Bishops' Conference document, Religious Education: Curriculum <i>Directory</i> for Catholic Schools
		39	Use the Core Curriculum of the Catholic Church <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check that the core curriculum of the Catholic Church is covered in the school. 		Pope John Paul's encyclical, <i>Catechesi tradendae</i> (1979)
		40	Teaching and Learning for the Profession of Faith <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development understanding of the CCC among teachers Consider enrolment on the Course for Parish Catechists 	40	Schonborn, Christoph, <i>Living the Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> . Ignatius Press, 2000 Ratzinger, Joseph, & Schonborn, Christoph, <i>Introduction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> . Ignatius Press, 1994 Catechetical journal, The Sower Maryvale Institute,

Page ref	Area for reflection	Page ref	Actions	Page ref	Resources
		41	Creating a Catholic Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the stock of books, periodicals etc in the library (including the CTS) to ensure they assist create a catholic ethos Review Christian artwork including statures and symbols Review the use of Christian music Prominence of the Crucifix in public places and classrooms 		
	Pillar 2: Sacraments				
42	What is authentic Catholic Collective Worship?	44	Ensure active participation in the Liturgy is encourage by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of sign and symbol Always using the Word of God Use of appropriate music and art 		
		46	Ensure collective worship follows the liturgical seasons.		
		46	Let Liturgy teach its own way Ensure liturgy formation takes place which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains the liturgy and sacraments Allows experience of different celebrations Makes symbols and gestures known and loved Explains how sacraments are integrated in our lives 		
		48	Teach the real presence from a Young Age	48	Elizabeth Anscombe, the Catholic philosopher, in her famous pamphlet, <i>Teaching Children about the Meaning of the Eucharist</i>
		48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the celebration of the Mass to ensure it has priority 		
		49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check that teaching of primary school children covers the key points as set out in Annette Ley's article Arrange for class visits to Church Cultivate at atmosphere of adoration in the school Arrange a school Corpus Christi procession Frequent celebration of Mass with the school/college community Check that Sunday Mass is included in all school trips / activities taking place over a weekend. 	49	Amette Ley, <i>Teaching Prayer and the Sacraments in school with the Catechism, in The Sower, October-December 2004</i>

Page ref	Area for reflection	Page ref	Actions	Page ref	Resources
		50 51	Challenging the Loss of a sense of sin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure regular provision of the sacraments of penance and reconciliation to staff and pupils • Check that catechises on penance and reconciliation includes the key points • Ensure that the devil and evil is appropriately taught. Parish, school, college & sacramental preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parishes and schools/colleges collaborate more closely in sacramental preparation 		
Pillar 3: The Moral Life					
54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the faith 'lived out' as a truth in school? • How does moral formation in the school help myself and others to "see with His eyes, love with His heart, share in His virtues"? • How does moral formation make real the attainment of happy and 	55	Promote our call to holiness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review opportunities to present the vocation of marriage • Ensure regular prayers for vocations and seek to identify by name potential candidates for ministerial priesthood and the consecrated life. 		

Page ref	Area for reflection	Page ref	Actions	Page ref	Resources	
	fulfilled lives?	56	Sex Education within the sacrament of Marriage	56	Pontifical Council for the Family document, <i>The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality</i> , and other documents of the Catholic Church:	
		58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all sex education follows the principles set out in the Pontifical Council for the Family document, <i>The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality</i>, and other documents of the Catholic Church: Ensure that no outside authority or agency that is not fully qualified to speak on behalf of the Catholic Church is allowed to speak to pupils or individuals on sexual or any other matter involving faith and morals. Ensure that pupils are never referred to an outside agency for advice or counselling; the prerogative only of the parent. Ensure the written consent of the parents is obtained before any speaker is allowed to address pupils on these matters Ensure the School does not support charities or groups that promote or fund anti-life policies 			
		57	Teaching respect of the Body	58		John Paul II. <i>The Theology of the Body</i> . Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1997
		58		58		Mr Tommy Hughes, Love and Responsibility programme
		59	Empower Parents Encourage Parents in their role in sex education by holding open meetings to discuss ways of completing sex education	58	<i>An Introduction to the Theology of the Body of Pope John Paul II</i> Scottish Catholic Education Service	
		59	The fight for justice Review/form CAFOD and Aid to the Church in Need Group.	60	Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church	
	Pillar 4: Prayer					

Page ref	Area for reflection	Page ref	Actions	Page ref	Resources
61	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many of our young people have a living relationship with Jesus? • How many have the first idea of how to pray? • How many have really experienced His living and healing presence? <p>Do We Live Our Lives as If Christ Did Not Really Exist</p>	63	Teach meditation on the Word of God <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce / review teaching of meditation on the Word of God in personal and liturgical prayer. 		
62		64	Teach Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange weekly adoration of the Blesses Sacrament 	64	any work by Cardinal Martini on <i>lectio divina</i> .
		65	Teach Devotion to the Hoy Rosary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce / review acts of popular piety e.g. Holy Rosary, Stations of the Cross • Ensure meaningful memorisation of basic prayers 	65	CTS booklets, 'Praying the Rosary with the Saints', and 'Praying the Rosary with the Martyrs'
		65	Teach Devotion to the Saints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review how the school encourages devotion to the martyrs of the 20th century • Arrange story telling of the saints stories. 		