

Education Secretariat



Post - Primary Diocesan Advisers Blog - November 2024

Dear Chaplains and R.E. Teachers,

November is a special month in the Catholic tradition, a time when we reflect on the themes of remembrance and renewal. It begins with All Saints' Day, a celebration of the holy men and women who have lived exemplary lives of faith. We honour their legacies and seek their intercession as we strive to live out our own call to holiness.

As we transition to All Souls' Day, we are invited to remember our loved ones who have passed away. This day reminds us of the profound connection between the living and the deceased. In our prayers and actions, we recognize that death is not an end but a transformation. We pray for the souls in purgatory, asking for God's mercy and for our own growth in holiness.

For Catholic educators, this month is an opportunity to instil the values of remembrance and compassion in our students. We can encourage them to reflect on their own experiences of loss and to find hope in the promise of eternal life. Classroom activities might include writing letters to deceased loved ones, sharing stories, or creating memorial displays that celebrate the lives of those who have touched us.

As we remember, let us cultivate a spirit of gratitude for the gift of life and the relationships we hold dear. In doing so, we strengthen our faith community and deepen our understanding of God's love, which transcends even death. In November, we remember not just those who have gone before us, but also the ways in which their lives continue to inspire us today.

As Post-Primary Diocesan Advisers, we are glad to advise and support you in any way we can.



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In November, We Remember

In moments of loss, our hearts feel heavy and our spirits weary.

We come before You seeking comfort and understanding in our grief.

Help us to remember that loss, while painful, is a part of the journey of life.

It reminds us of the love we shared and the moments we cherished.

As we navigate through our sorrow, grant us the strength to face our emotions.

May we find solace in Your presence, knowing that we are never truly alone.

Surround us with supportive friends and family who can walk beside us in our pain.

Help us to honour those we've lost by carrying their memories in our hearts.

May we learn from their lives and let their love inspire us to live fully,
embracing each moment with gratitude.

In our darkest hours, remind us of the hope that comes after sorrow.

Let us find peace in the promise of renewal and healing, trusting that time will soften our grief.

Thank You for the gift of love and the connections we share.

We place our loss in Your hands, seeking Your comfort and grace.

Amen.

Reflection on Loss

Coping with loss can be one of the toughest challenges we face, especially during the teenage years. Whether it's the loss of a loved one, a friendship, or a dream, the feelings can be overwhelming. It's important to recognize that experiencing grief is a normal part of life, and everyone handles it differently.

One way to cope is by talking about your feelings with someone you trust—friends, family, or a counsellor. Sharing can help lighten the emotional load. Journaling can also be a powerful tool. Writing down your thoughts and emotions allows you to process your feelings and reflect on your experiences.

Engaging in activities you enjoy, like sports, art, or music, can provide a healthy distraction and help you express your emotions creatively. Remember, it's okay to take time for yourself and feel whatever you need to feel.

Don't hesitate to seek support from those around you. Connecting with others who understand your experience can make you feel less alone. Above all, be patient with yourself; healing takes time. Acknowledge your feelings and know that it's okay to grieve in your own way. You are stronger than you think.

Young Christians Need to Keep in Touch with Current Affairs

In today's fast-paced world, staying informed about current affairs is more important than ever, especially for teenage Christians. The intersection of faith and the broader social, political, and economic landscape provides numerous opportunities for personal growth, community engagement, and spiritual development.

Being aware of current events allows teenagers to engage with their faith in a more meaningful way. Understanding the world around them helps them to apply biblical principles to real-life situations. For example, knowledge of social justice issues can inspire young Christians to reflect on biblical teachings about compassion, love, and service to others. This informed perspective enables them to advocate for change and address the challenges faced by their communities.

Engaging with news and current affairs cultivates critical thinking skills. Teenagers learn to analyse information, discern credible sources, and evaluate differing viewpoints. This process is crucial not only for personal growth but also for developing a well-rounded Christian worldview. With the ability to critically assess information, they can make informed decisions that align with their faith.

Christian teachings emphasize the importance of caring for others and seeking justice. By staying informed about current issues—such as poverty, inequality, climate change, and human rights—teenagers can become advocates for change. They can participate in community service, join awareness campaigns, and contribute to discussions about how their faith calls them to respond to societal needs. In this way, they live out their faith actively rather than passively.

Christianity is a global faith, and being aware of international events can deepen teenagers' understanding of the struggles and triumphs faced by fellow believers around the world. Issues

like religious persecution, humanitarian crises, and missionary work are vital for fostering a sense of unity and empathy within the body of Christ. This awareness can also inspire prayers and support for those in need, encouraging a global perspective on faith.

Teenagers often face cultural pressures that challenge their beliefs and values. By staying updated on current affairs, they can better navigate these challenges and engage in discussions with peers. Knowledge of social trends and moral dilemmas enables them to articulate their beliefs thoughtfully and respectfully, fostering meaningful conversations with others who may have different viewpoints.

Finally, staying in touch with current affairs can lead to spiritual growth. Engaging with the world helps teenagers see God's work in different contexts and recognize the areas where their faith can make a difference. It encourages them to pray for the world, seek God's guidance in difficult situations, and cultivate a heart that is sensitive to the needs of others.

In conclusion, teenagers have a unique opportunity to impact their world positively. By keeping in touch with current affairs, they can inform their faith, develop critical thinking skills, and become advocates for justice and compassion. In doing so, they not only grow as individuals but also contribute to the greater mission of the Church. Staying informed is not just a personal responsibility; it is a vital part of living out one's faith in a complex and ever-changing world.

Are You a Faith Leader

How can we encourage students to join in the life and leadership of their school and local parish?



Last month we spoke about students from all over the Archdiocese of Dublin who participate in our Faith Leadership Programme known as the Ember Programme, this month we put before you the opportunity to offer the [John Paul 11 Awards](https://thepopejohnpauliiaward.com/) to your students.

The Pope John Paul II Award is a faith achievement award for young people between the age of 16 and 18. It is non-competitive, inclusive, flexible and voluntary.

<https://thepopejohnpauliiaward.com/>

FEAST OF ALL SAINTS

November 1st

Young people today celebrate All Saints Day through a blend of tradition and creativity. They engage in activities that make the lives of saints relatable and inspiring. Creating art projects, and sharing stories are some of the ways to celebrate these holy Men and Women. These activities help them to connect with the saints on a personal level, understanding their virtues and life stories.

To reflect on All Saints Day with young people, teachers can encourage a deeper engagement with the significance of the feast. Begin by sharing the stories of lesser-known saints, highlighting their humanity and the challenges they overcame. This makes the saints more relatable and shows that holiness is attainable for everyone.

In the classroom, teachers can create a reflective atmosphere by decorating with saint-themed artwork and playing soft, contemplative music. Encourage students to express their thoughts and feelings about the saints and how they inspire them. This can be done through journaling, group discussions, or creative projects like creating a "saint of the week" spotlight.

Teachers can also lead a guided meditation or prayer session, focusing on the virtues of the saints and how students can emulate these in their own lives. Reflect on the concept of the "communion of saints" and how this connects all believers, past and present.

By creating a space for reflection and discussion, teachers help young people to see All Saints Day not just as a day of celebration, but as an opportunity to grow in their own faith and character. Through these reflections, students can find inspiration in the lives of the saints and strive to live out their own unique paths to holiness.



All Souls Day

2nd November

The Feast of All Souls, observed on November 2nd, is a day of profound significance, especially for young people navigating a world increasingly marked by rapid change and uncertainty. This day is set aside to remember and pray for the souls of the deceased, emphasizing themes of remembrance, mortality, and the hope of eternal life.

For young people, the relevance of the Feast of All Souls lies in its invitation to pause and reflect on the deeper aspects of existence.

In a culture often focused on the present and the tangible, this feast encourages a connection with the past and an awareness of the continuity of life beyond death. It's a powerful reminder of the importance of honoring those who have come before us and recognizing the legacy they leave behind.

Additionally, the Feast of All Souls offers an opportunity for young people to engage with their own spirituality and beliefs about life after death.

It prompts introspection about the nature of the soul, the afterlife, and the enduring bond that transcend physical death. This can be particularly meaningful for young people who are dealing with their own experiences of loss and grief, providing a space to process these emotions within a supportive community.

Moreover, the feast fosters a sense of empathy and compassion as young people pray for all souls, not just those they knew personally. It cultivates a broader sense of solidarity and connection with the wider human family.

In essence, the Feast of All Souls reminds young people of the interconnectedness of life, death, and the hope of resurrection, encouraging them to live with purpose, compassion, and an awareness of the spiritual dimensions of their lives.

All the Saints of Ireland

6th November

The Feast of All Saints holds profound significance within the Irish Church, as it serves as a powerful reminder of the rich spiritual heritage that has shaped the faith journey of countless generations. Celebrated on November 6th, this feast day honors the multitude of saints who have, through their lives, demonstrated unwavering faith, courage, and a deep commitment to God's will.

In the context of Ireland, the feast takes on added meaning as it reflects the unique tapestry of Celtic Christianity. The saints of Ireland, such as St. Patrick, St. Brigid, St. Columba, and many others, were instrumental in spreading the Gospel throughout the island, blending Christian teachings with the native culture in a way that deeply resonated with the people. Their legacy is evident in the myriad of churches, monasteries, and holy sites that dot the Irish landscape, each bearing witness to their enduring influence.

The celebration of this feast invites the faithful to look beyond the well-known saints and acknowledge the countless unknown and unsung heroes of faith who have lived out their devotion in quiet humility. These individuals, through their simple yet profound acts of love and service, have contributed to the rich spiritual fabric of the Irish Church. Their

stories, though perhaps not recorded in history books, are etched in the hearts of those who follow in their footsteps.

Furthermore, the Feast of All Saints serves as a reminder of the interconnectedness of the Church. It encourages the faithful to see themselves as part of a larger community that transcends time and space. By reflecting on the lives of the saints, believers are inspired to emulate their virtues, strive for holiness, and deepen their own relationship with God.

Ultimately, the Feast of All Saints in the Irish Church is a celebration of the enduring legacy of faith, hope, and love that the saints have imparted to future generations. It is a call to live out our own faith with the same fervor and dedication, knowing that we, too, are part of the great communion of saints.

**“Saints are those who wake up while in this world,
instead of waiting for the next one.”**



St Laurence O'Toole
Patron Saint of Dublin
14th November

St. Laurence O'Toole (c. 1128–1180) is one of the most revered saints in Irish history. He was the Archbishop of Dublin, a statesman, and a peacemaker, deeply respected for his leadership during a tumultuous time in Ireland's history.

Early Life:

Laurence, born Lorcán Ua Tuathail (O'Toole in English), was a member of a noble family in Leinster, Ireland. His father, Murtagh O'Toole, was the king of the region. From a young age, Laurence showed a strong religious inclination. At the age of 10, he was taken as a hostage by King Dermot MacMurrough, but after being released, he was sent to the monastery at Glendalough, where he later became abbot at the age of 25.

Archbishop of Dublin:

In 1162, Laurence was appointed as Archbishop of Dublin, becoming the first Irish-born archbishop of the city. At the time, the archdiocese was closely aligned with the English Church, but Laurence sought to strengthen the Irish Church and reform its practices. He was known for his deep piety, personal austerity, and tireless work for the poor. He often fasted, lived a life of simplicity, and wore a hair shirt under his robes as an act of penance.

Peacemaker:

Laurence played a crucial role in efforts to maintain peace during the Norman invasion of Ireland. In 1170, after the arrival of the Norman forces led by Strongbow (Richard de Clare), Dublin was captured. Laurence helped to mediate between the Irish kings, the Normans, and the English crown. He attended the Treaty of Windsor negotiations in 1175, which sought to establish peace between King Henry II of England and the Irish High King, Rory O'Connor.

Final Years and Death:

In his later years, Laurence undertook diplomatic missions and visited Rome on behalf of the Irish Church. He fell ill while in Normandy, France, and died at the Abbey of St. Victor in Eu on November 14, 1180. Miracles were reported at his tomb, and he was canonized by Pope Honorius III in 1225.

Legacy:

St. Laurence O'Toole is remembered as a figure of holiness, humility, and reconciliation. His feast day is celebrated on November 14. He remains a patron saint of Dublin and is revered in Ireland for his efforts to protect his people and his dedication to the Church.

ANNIVERSARY PILGRIMAGE

800th anniversary of the Canonisation of St Laurence O'Toole. 10th May – 12th May 2025. Three-day Pilgrimage

Update on St Laurence O'Toole's 800th Anniversary Pilgrimage to Rouen and Eu with [Archbishop Farrell and Archbishop Jackson](#), 10th to 12th May 2025: **Booking is now open.** Contact Marian Pilgrimages, Dublin, at 01 878 8159.

November 21st

The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary:

Significance for Students Today



highlighting her role as a model of faith and obedience.

The Feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, celebrated on November 21, commemorates the moment when Mary was presented to the Temple by her parents, Joachim and Anne. This event symbolizes Mary's dedication to God from an early age,

For students today, this feast offers profound lessons. Mary's willingness to embrace her unique calling reminds us of the importance of responding to God's invitation in our own lives.

Just as Mary was prepared through her early years for her future mission, students are encouraged to recognize that their education and experiences shape them for their own unique paths.

Moreover, the Presentation invites students to reflect on the value of community and family. Mary's parents played a crucial role in nurturing her faith, illustrating the significance of supportive relationships in fostering spiritual growth. This encourages students to appreciate their own families and communities, understanding that they are integral to their journey of faith. In a world often focused on individualism, the feast emphasizes the importance of humility and service. Mary's life exemplifies these virtues, reminding students to cultivate a spirit of generosity and compassion toward others.

As students reflect on the Presentation of Mary, they are called to embrace their own identities as beloved children of God, ready to contribute positively to their communities and to grow in faith, hope, and love.

Every November, Presentation Day is celebrated around the world to honour the Irish woman and foundress of the Presentation Sisters, Venerable Nano Nagle.

The prayer focuses on the now famous Nano Nagle Icon. The Presentation Sisters have provided a very helpful booklet that assists those seeking to pray with this beautiful icon. For a soft copy of this booklet see:

<file:///C:/Users/kateliffe/Downloads/Exploring%20the%20Nano%20Nagle%20Icon%20booklet.pdf>

In this booklet we read that, "An icon is a religious work of art" and that "an icon is a visual doorway leading us and helping us to focus on God. It enables us to reflect silently and patiently."

The Icon of Nano Nagle was 'written' by Irish artist Desmond Kyne in the 1970s. Icons are described as being written rather than painted. The Icon portrays Nano Nagle immersed both in the mystery of God and amongst the people of 18th century Ireland.

The material presented here for Presentation Day 2024 can also be adapted for use for relevant parts of a Presentation Day Mass and can also be used as a standalone prayer service for groups or a whole school assembly. We know that many of our CEIST schools in the Presentation tradition, have a Nano Nagle Icon in their school. This can of course be referred to as you pray this prayer service with your students. The images used here can be the basis of a PowerPoint combining images from your own school, including your school crest.

This prayer service seeks to bring the Icon into this year's prayer time in a way that invites engagement with specific panels of the Icon at specific moments of the prayer. The richness of the Icon will not be captured here and schools themselves have found incredibly creative ways of encouraging students to engage with the image of the Lantern, the story of Nano and the Icon itself.

The suggested hymns are presented here as illustrative; your music department working with your RE teachers will be best placed to choose hymns and songs most suitable for your own students and school context. Your RE team will also be best placed to adapt this material to suit your school's history and traditions.



Thanks to the CEIST Team for this resource.

St Cecilia

November 22



St. Cecilia is a Christian saint and martyr, celebrated as the patron saint of music and musicians. According to tradition, she lived during the 2nd or 3rd century in Rome and came from a wealthy and noble family. Though there are varying versions of her story, St. Cecilia is most often remembered for her devout Christian faith, which she maintained even in the face of persecution.

The key elements of St. Cecilia's life include:

Her Marriage and Vow of Virginity: St. Cecilia is said to have been married to a man named Valerian, but she vowed to remain a virgin for her dedication to God. On their wedding night, she revealed this vow to Valerian, and he respected it. According to the story, Valerian himself later converted to Christianity.

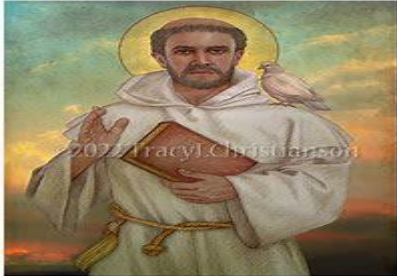
Miraculous Experiences: During her wedding, it is said that she "sang in her heart to God," which is why she is often associated with music. Another version of the legend says that when Valerian agreed to her vow, Cecilia prayed, and an angel appeared to crown her and Valerian with flowers, symbolizing their spiritual union.

Martyrdom: Cecilia and her husband were persecuted for their Christian faith during the Roman Empire's crackdown on Christianity. Despite attempts to execute her, Cecilia reportedly survived for several days after being struck three times in the neck with a sword. During this time, she continued to pray and sing praises to God, inspiring many.

Because of her connection with music and her unwavering faith, St. Cecilia became the patroness of music, musicians, and composers. Her feast day is celebrated on **November 22**, and she has been a prominent figure in Christian art and music throughout the centuries. Many composers have dedicated works in her honour, and her image is often depicted with musical instruments, especially the organ.

St Columban Abbot and Missionary

November 23rd



St. Columban (also known as St. Columbanus) was a 6th–7th century Irish missionary monk and one of the most important figures in early medieval Christianity, particularly known for spreading monasticism in Europe. Born around 543 in the Kingdom of Meath, Ireland, Columban is celebrated for his missionary work, founding several influential monasteries across what are now France, Switzerland, Austria, and Italy.

Key aspects of St. Columban's life and legacy:

Early Life and Monastic Training: Columban was educated in Ireland, where he joined the monastic community of Bangor under the guidance of St. Comgall, a renowned Irish abbot. It was there that he developed his strong sense of discipline and spirituality.

Missionary Work in Europe: Around 590, Columban left Ireland with twelve fellow monks to bring the monastic way of life to Europe, particularly to the Frankish (modern-day France) kingdoms. His form of monasticism, deeply rooted in the Irish tradition, was focused on a life of austerity, study, manual labour, and strict penitential practices.

Foundation of Monasteries: In France, he founded the famous monasteries of **Luxeuil** and **Fontaines**. Luxeuil became a major centre of learning and spirituality.

His strict monastic rules often brought him into conflict with local bishops, especially as he challenged local customs and traditions. He was exiled from the Frankish kingdoms for refusing to conform to the practices of the local church, particularly regarding the dating of Easter.

Final Years in Italy: After being exiled from Burgundy in France, Columban travelled to Italy, where he was warmly received by King Agilulf of the Lombards. There, he founded the monastery of **Bobbio** (c. 614), which became one of Italy's most important centres of learning during the Middle Ages.

Writings and Spiritual Teachings: St. Columban was a prolific writer, and his works include letters, sermons, and monastic rules. His "**Rule of St. Columban**" emphasized strict monastic discipline, penance, and prayer. He also wrote passionately about Christian unity, moral reform, and the need for humility and repentance. His **penitentials** (guides to confession and penance) had significant influence on the Church during this time.

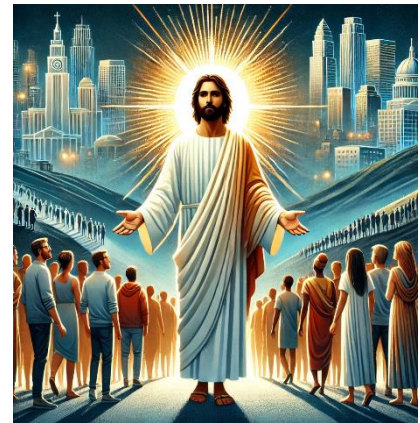
Death and Legacy: St. Columban died in 615 at Bobbio, Italy, where his monastery continued to thrive as a major cultural and religious centre. He is remembered not only for his contributions to Irish monasticism but also for his role in revitalizing Christian

life in post-Roman Europe. His missionary zeal and the spread of his monastic rule had a lasting impact on the development of monasticism across the continent.

St. Columban's feast day is celebrated on **November 23**. He is considered the patron saint of motorcyclists, travellers, and boatmen, as well as a symbol of the Irish monastic missionary tradition.

**The Relevance of
the Feast of Christ the King
for Students Today**

November 24th



The **Feast of Christ the King** remains highly relevant in today's world, serving as a powerful reminder of the need for spiritual focus and moral grounding amidst the complexities of modern life. Here are several ways in which this feast continues to hold significance:

Counteracting Secularism and Materialism: In an era where secularism and materialism dominate many aspects of culture, the Feast of Christ the King calls Christians to recognize Christ's authority over all creation, reminding them that spiritual values are paramount. It urges the faithful to resist the pressures of placing worldly success, wealth, and status above their relationship with God. This feast challenges believers to keep Christ at the centre of their lives, even when societal values may suggest otherwise.

Reminder of Christ's Justice and Peace: The world continues to struggle with injustice, war, inequality, and societal divisions. The kingship of Christ represents a reign of **justice, peace, and love**, qualities often lacking in many political systems or structures of power today. Celebrating Christ as King reminds Catholics that true leadership is based on serving others, particularly the marginalized, and calls them to be agents of peace and justice in the world. It encourages them to work for a society that reflects the values of Christ's kingdom, including love for one's neighbour, the promotion of peace, and care for the poor.

Hope Amid Uncertainty: Many people face uncertainty and fear in the face of political unrest, economic challenges, environmental crises, and social upheaval. The Feast of Christ the King reassures Christians that despite the chaos of the world, Christ is the ultimate ruler

and His kingdom will endure. This feast provides hope, emphasizing that God's plan is one of love and redemption, and that Christ will bring peace and justice in the end, even if current circumstances seem bleak.

Personal Conversion and Commitment: The celebration of Christ as King is a call for individual Christians to reflect on their own lives and ask whether Christ truly reigns in their hearts. It challenges people to examine their priorities, values, and decisions to ensure that they align with the teachings and example of Jesus. This feast is an opportunity for personal renewal, urging believers to submit every aspect of their lives—family, work, relationships, and personal goals—to Christ's lordship.

Response to Political and Social Idolatry: In contemporary culture, people often place their trust in political ideologies, charismatic leaders, or social movements to solve problems and bring about change. While these can be important, the Feast of Christ the King reminds Catholics that no earthly leader or system can take the place of Christ's sovereignty. It rejects the tendency to idolize human power or authority, reminding the faithful that ultimate allegiance belongs to Christ alone, whose kingdom is not of this world, but is eternal and rooted in love, mercy, and truth.

Universal Scope of Christ's Kingship: As a feast celebrating Christ's universal kingship, it speaks to global unity and the interconnectedness of all people under God's reign. In a world increasingly divided by race, nationality, ideology, and economic disparity, the Feast of Christ the King proclaims the idea that all people are part of God's kingdom. It encourages a sense of solidarity with the global Church and humanity, transcending borders, cultures, and differences.

Preparation for Advent: As the final Sunday in the liturgical year, the Feast of Christ the King provides a transition to Advent, a season of waiting and preparation for Christ's second coming. It reminds Christians that while they await Christ's return, they are called to live in a way that reflects His kingdom on earth—through acts of charity, promoting justice, and fostering peace. It emphasizes the eschatological hope that Christ will come again, and that His kingdom will be fully realized.

In today's world, the Feast of Christ the King serves as a powerful reminder of the values of love, justice, peace, and hope that Christ's reign embodies. It calls for a personal and societal reorientation toward God, encouraging Christians to live out their faith in a way that challenges the materialism, secularism, and injustices of the modern age. Christ's kingship offers not only hope for the future but also a present call to action, inviting believers to make His reign visible through their daily lives.

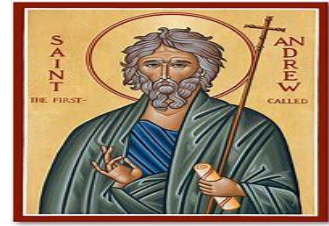
“When we start to act, hope is everywhere.

So instead of looking for hope – look for action.

Then the hope will come.

St Andrew Apostle

November 30th



Who was St Andrew and how is his message relevant today for young people.

St. Andrew is one of the twelve apostles of Jesus and is recognized as the first disciple called by Jesus. He is the brother of St. Peter and is often depicted as a fisherman, reflecting his early profession before he became a follower of Christ. St. Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland, Greece, and Russia, among others, and is celebrated on November 30th.

Life and Contributions

Fisher of Men: St. Andrew's calling by Jesus, as a "fisher of men," highlights the idea of reaching out to others and sharing one's faith, which remains a relevant message for young people today.

Martyrdom: He was martyred by crucifixion, traditionally believed to have been on an X-shaped cross. His willingness to suffer for his beliefs serves as an example of conviction and courage.

Relevance for Young People Today

Faith and Identity: St. Andrew's story emphasizes the importance of faith in shaping one's identity. Young people today often grapple with questions of purpose and belonging, and Andrew's commitment to his faith can inspire them to seek their own paths.

Community and Connection: St. Andrew was known for bringing others to Christ, exemplifying the importance of community and relationships. In today's digital age, where connections can sometimes feel superficial, his example encourages young people to build genuine relationships and support one another.

Service and Outreach: Andrew's life encourages service to others, urging young people to engage in their communities. This message resonates in today's world, where social justice, environmental concerns, and community service are increasingly vital.

Resilience and Courage: St. Andrew's steadfastness in the face of adversity teaches young people about resilience. In an era of challenges—be they personal, societal, or global—his example encourages them to stand firm in their beliefs and values.

Openness to Change: St. Andrew left his life as a fisherman to follow Jesus, symbolizing the courage to embrace change and new opportunities. This can inspire young people to pursue their passions, be open to new experiences, and take risks for personal growth.

In summary, St. Andrew's life and message resonate with young people today by encouraging them to explore their faith, build meaningful relationships, engage in their communities, and demonstrate resilience in their journey through life.

November 2024



Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network



Pope Francis has given us specific prayer intentions for each month of 2024. These intentions invite us to join in prayer and reflection on various important themes. They reflect Pope Francis' concern for various aspects of human life, the Church and the world.

<https://www.popesprayer.va/>

<https://popesprayerusa.net/>

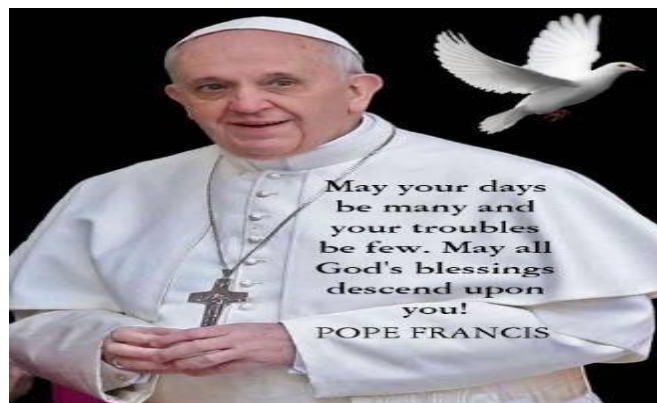
Small Group reflection

<https://popesprayerusa.net/popes-intentions/>

The prayer intention for the month of November is for “all parents who mourn the loss of a son or daughter.”

We pray that all parents who mourn the loss of a son or daughter find support in their community and receive peace and consolation from the Holy Spirit.

Pope Francis calls on the global Catholic community to pray that these parents find support in their communities and receive peace and consolation from the Holy Spirit. This intention emphasizes compassion and the Church's role in offering comfort to those experiencing profound grief. The prayer aims to ensure that those who are suffering know they are not alone and can find healing through faith and communal support.



Deepen your own Spirituality this November

BISHOP BARRON FILM SERIES

Bayside Alpha is hosting on Zoom Bishop Barron's seven-week film series 'Seven Deadly Sins, Seven Lively Virtues', starting on Sunday, October 27, at 7:30pm. To join this free course email Paul at alphabayside@gmail.com.



IRISH CATHOLIC
BISHOPS' CONFERENCE
COMHDHÁIL EASPAG CAITLICEACH ÉIREANN

WEEKLY EZINE

Sharing Good News is the newsletter of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference. If you would like receive this weekly ezine, you can do so at <https://catholicnews.ie/newsletter/>. You are encouraged to invite others to do so too. Send articles and photographs for use in *Sharing Good News* to info@catholicbishops.ie.

3rd Annual Oireachtas Essay Competition

A reminder that the deadline for Senior Cycle students to register for the **3rd Annual Oireachtas Essay Competition** is **Friday 8th November**.

Sponsored by PTSB and CJ Fallon, this Essay encourages young people, our future leaders, to reflect on democracy and the importance of political engagement.

Please mention the Competition to **TY, 5th or 6th Year** Secondary Students, and to Teachers and Parents whom you know. Students doing **AS/A Level** are also eligible.

See www.oireachtasessay.ie / www.aisteanoireachtais.ie for all the details.

Remember: **8th November 2024**. Grateful for your help.



Archbishop offers prayers following death of Bishop Donal Murray RIP

Archbishop Dermot Farrell said, “I offer my personal sympathies and prayers to his family, to the priests, religious, friends, and to the many people whose lives he touched throughout his 54 years of priestly and episcopal ministry. We ask the Lord to grant him eternal rest.

“I ask that the priests, religious and the faithful of the Archdiocese of Dublin and all those who knew Bishop Murray to join with me in praying for the repose of the soul of this faithful shepherd and a person who followed Christ with all his heart.”



ASSISTED SUICIDE AND THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN IRELAND TODAY



On Wednesday 16/10/24, a bill was introduced into the Westminster Parliament to propose a change in the law to permit assisted suicide, and tomorrow the *Final Report of the Joint Committee on Assisted Dying* will be discussed by Oireachtas members in Dáil Éireann.

Archbishop Eamon Martin said, “For all those who cherish a culture of life across these islands, the introduction of laws to permit assisted suicide is an affront to a safe and protective society. Such legislation should be strongly opposed. As a society we are defined by the extent to which we care for our most vulnerable persons including those suffering from disabilities, terminal illness or otherwise nearing the end of life. While this is a Gospel imperative, it is noteworthy that medical and healthcare professionals are also gravely concerned at an evolving political ideology which would interfere with their calling to ‘do no harm’ and which would legally erode the right to life at all stages.”

Archbishop Martin continued, “I urge all people of goodwill to contact their MPs as soon as possible to ask them to reject this law. In addition, as we expect that a general election will be held in Ireland shortly, I ask voters to contact their TDs and senators to ascertain their commitment to protecting end of life care, and to seek inclusion in election manifestos for investment to enhance palliative care and hospice provision.”

On 24 June last the Irish Catholic Bishops’ Conference published a pastoral letter *Freedom to Live Fully, Until Death Comes* reflecting the Church’s teaching on care at the end of life, along with the accompanying video *Through The Valley*. The pastoral letter stated:

‘By legislating for assisted suicide or euthanasia, the State would contribute to undermining the confidence of people who are terminally ill, who want to be cared for and want to live life as fully as possible until death naturally comes. People who are dying are entitled to be accompanied in a holistic way. We believe that palliative care services need to be more widely available, in hospitals and hospices and in the community.’

To view *Through the Valley*, a short movie drawing on the experience of family members and healthcare professionals that explores how we accompany people in the final stages of life; and to read the pastoral letter *Freedom to Live Fully, Until Death Comes*

see <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2024/06/24/bishops-statement-on-end-of-life-care-freedom-to-live-fully-until-death-comes/>





November School Remembrance Service.

Welcome/Introduction

We begin our prayer In the name of the Father...

Opening prayer

We have come together today to remember those from our school community who have died. We remember them with love; glad that they touched our lives and sad that they are no longer with us. We remember them too with the hope that the Lord our God has welcomed them home, and that one day we will be united together in heaven. We ask this in faith. Amen.

A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah

The Lord says,

“I have called you by name, you are mine.

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.

For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour. You are precious in my eyes and I love you with an endless love.’



The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Few words of reflection

... at the end of which all the names of those lost by members of the school community will be read. As each name is called a candle is lit and placed in the Garden.

(When the service is finished you can take home the candle for your loved one if you wish)

We bless our Remembrance Garden/Tree

Let us pray to God our Father through Jesus Christ our Lord in the power of the Holy Spirit. Our remembrance garden/Tree is a place of quiet peace where the memories of our loved ones have special place and all those who seek comfort and the reassurance of your presence may find it here. May it be a place of sacred beauty, of quiet contemplation and special honour to those who journey we had the privilege to share. We pray that your gentle and loving presence may always be found here and that it will always symbolise the consolation, comfort, compassion and support to be found in our community. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

As the garden/Tree is blessed with Holy Water, and as quiet music is played and we take a moment to remember those who are dear to us.

We Bring our Prayers – A Litany of Remembrance

We bring our prayers and offer a litany of remembrance for those who have passed away but whose memory and love we remember and cherish... our response is – ***With love we remember them***

Reader: At the rising of the sun and at its going down

All: ***With love we remember them***

Reader: At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter

All: ***With love we remember them***

Reader: At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring

All: ***With love we remember them***

Reader: At the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer

All: ***With love we remember them***

Reader: At the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of autumn

All: ***With love we remember them***

Reader: At the beginning of the year and when it ends

All: ***With love we remember them***

Reader: As long as we live, they too will live;
for they are now a part of us as we remember them

WE REMEMBER THEM



Reflection- Amazing Grace

Amazing Grace, How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now am found
T'was blind but now I see

T'was Grace that taught my heart to fear
And Grace, my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed

Amazing Grace, How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now am found
T'was blind but now I see

Closing Prayer

Compassionate God, You are always near those who are in pain. Your listening ear is bent towards the cries of the wounded. Your heart of love is filled with tears for the suffering. Let us always see that we are not alone, that we are loved always and that we are part of all life - each one's joy and sorrow is our joy and sorrow, and ours is theirs. May we draw strength from this inner communion. May we always be a compassionate presence for ourselves, and for all who struggle with life's pain. We ask this through Christ Our Lord, **Amen.**

Blessing

May the Lord bless you and keep you, May he make his face shine upon you. May he grant you many blessings, May you grow in faith, hope and love. May you always feel the warmth of your loved one surrounding you. May you walk the path of God's light and love, May you always feel the protection of God's loving embrace. May the Blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit Come down upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Closing reflection- Fix You- Coldplay





Snowdrops

The world may never notice,
If a snowdrop doesn't bloom,
Or even pause to wonder,
If the petals fall too soon,
But every life that ever forms,
or ever comes to be,
Touches the world in some small
way, for all eternity.

The one we loved and cared for,
Was swiftly here and gone.
But the love that was then planted
Is a light that still shines on.
And though our arms are empty,
Our hearts know what to do,
Every beating of our hearts
Says that we love you.

*I will not forget you.
I have carved you on the
palm of my hand*

Isaiah 49:15

Reflections on Loss

Unknown Author

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free,
I'm following the path God laid for me.
I took his hand when I heard his call,
I turned my back and left it all.
I could not stay another day,
To laugh, to love, to work, to play.
Tasks left undone must stay that way,
I've found that peace at the end of the day.
If my parting has left a void,
Then fill it with remembered joy.
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss,
Ah, yes, these things too I will miss.
Be not burdened with times of sorrow,
I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.
My Life's been full, I savoured much,
Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch.
Perhaps my time seemed all too brief,
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.
Lift up your heart and share with me,
God wanted me now, He set me free.

Reflection Grief

Though the silent weeping of your heart lessens, you get on, more or less, with your life; a place is kept within you for the one who is gone. No other will ever be given the key to that door. As the years go on you may not remember the departed every day with your conscious mind. Yet below your surface mind, some part of you is always in their presence.

From their side, our friends in the unseen world are always secretly embracing us in their new and bright belongings. Though we may forget them, they can never forget us; their secret embrace unknowingly shelters and minds us.

The bright moment in grief is when the sore absence gradually changes into a well of presence. You become aware of the subtle companionship of the departed one. You know that when you are in trouble, you can turn to this presence beside you and draw on it for encouragement and blessing.

The departed is now no longer restricted to any one place and can be with you any place you are. It is good to know the blessings of this presence.

Blessing Celtic Blessing

May the God of gentleness be with you,
caressing you with sunlight and rain and wind.
May his tenderness shine through you to warm
all those who are hurt and lonely.
may the blessing of Gentleness be upon you.
May the God of Strength be with you,
holding you in strong-fingered hands
and may you be a sacrament of His strength
to those whose hands you hold.
May the blessing of Strength be upon you.
May the God of Peace be with you,
taking away your fears and doubts and
may the mantle of your peace cover those who are troubled and anxious.
May the blessing of Peace be upon you.
The guarding of the God of life be on you,
the guarding of the Loving Christ be on you,
the guarding of the Holy Spirit be on you to aid
And uphold you each day and night of your lives.

Comfort me with Your love O God

Comfort me with Your love O God
Wrap me up in Your strong embrace
Shelter me from the storm O Lord
Envelop me in Your tender care

By day I pour out my heartbreak to You
By night I give you my racing thoughts

In You I take refuge
In You I will not be afraid
For you hold me strong, You hold me safe

Calm my fearful heart O God
Still my anxious mind O Lord

For all my life is found in You
All my being is given to You
All my hope begins in You

Bishop's Pastoral Letter on Immigration



The Irish Catholic Bishops' pastoral letter on the significant theme of welcoming the immigrant, *A Hundred Thousand Welcomes?* was launched on 12 October.

A Hundred Thousand Welcomes? invites the faithful to reflect on how we welcome immigrants in contemporary Ireland, and the theme is informed by the parable of the Good Samaritan.

The pastoral letter's call to action encourages people to welcome immigrants and strive to help all newcomers belong to the life of the community; to reject voices that sow division; and calls on State authorities to provide more resources to address local social and economic shortages that have been neglected for too long.

A Hundred Thousand Welcomes? is available on the [website](#) of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference, with brief videos by Bishop Donal Roche, chair of the Bishops' Council for Migrants, and by Ms Concepta DeBrun of the Bishops' Council for Justice and Peace, along with downloadable social media resources.

Further resources, including a short video with Bishop Donal Roche, can be found at <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/bishops-pastoral-letter-on-immigration-a-hundred-thousand-welcomes-downloadable-resources/>.

Useful *Websites* and *Resources* to Explore

www.dublindiocese.ie

Topic

Website

Building Hope

Archdiocese of Dublin

<https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=bb07306fd93811dbJmItDHM9MTcyNzEzNjAwMCZpZ3VpZD0zYTUxODVjOS1mNTYxLTU5MjltM2E1ZC05MTk0ZjQ4MTY4M2lmaW5zaWQ9NTlwOA&ptn=3&ver=2&hsh=3&fclid=3a5185c9-f561-6922-3a5d-9194f481683b&psq=archdiocese+of+dublin+website&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly9kdWJsZW5kaW9jZXRlmlLw&ntb=1>

Catholic Schools Week November resources

<https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=9a4fd66b8737f3a3cbfa00da3c073bc497db550bba388c3ab5190b8bab3176e6JmItDHM9MTcyOTU1NTlwMA&ptn=3&ver=2&hsh=4&fclid=0ba09c75-5b9c-612c-088e-888f5ad160e2&psq=catholic+schools+week+2024&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly9jYXRob2xpY2VkdWNhdGlubi5pZS9jYXRob2xpYy1zY2hvb2xzLXdlZWstMjAyNS1hbGl2ZS1pbi1jaHJpc3Qv&ntb=1>

To Conclude:

As we look forward to the Feast of Christ the King, may we experience the love, courage, consolation and comfort of God in our lives as we remember this November all whom we have loved and lost. Throughout the grieving may we be supported by our Communities of Faith and in turn embrace them when they too are in need.

Sr. Bernadette and Sr. Concepta