

Autumn 2018

In this edition:

- ◇ 10th anniversary
- ◇ November Remembrance
- ◇ Creating curriculum
- ◇ School Celebrations



Words to the Wise

*"I sought my God and my God I couldn't find;
I sought my soul and my soul eluded me;
I sought to serve my brother in his need, and I found all three;
My God, my soul, and thee."*

William Blake



P.S. Please forward this newsletter onwards to your whole school community.



Le Chéile 10th Anniversary

It is with great pride that we celebrate the 10th anniversary of Le Chéile schools Trust this year. It is also humbling, when we consider the 800 year tradition of the Dominicans and the 246 years of Ursuline Secondary School Blackrock, Cork and the many other centenaries, and golden and silver jubilees of our congregations and schools. We realise that 10 years is a very short time. However, it is well worth celebrating the faith and trust that the fourteen religious congregations placed in each other and in us to carry on their educational work in so many communities around Ireland. It is also worth celebrating all the work that our school leaders are currently doing to keep our Catholic schools relevant and popular in a changing Ireland.



The main focus of our celebration will be the Le Chéile Conference on 7th and 8th February 2019. The theme of the conference is Welcome, Wisdom and Witness, which is the emerging unifying motto for all Le Chéile schools. We look forward to welcoming Sr. Monica Joseph, Superior General of the RJM congregation as our keynote speaker. The theme will be reflected in our special invitation to all schools to invite two parents to join us for the Conference on Friday 8th February. This year we will conclude the Conference with a celebration of Mass where we look forward to hearing the newly commissioned Le Chéile hymn composed by two of our teachers. As always we look forward to meeting our students and, this year, instead of a presentation, their work will be evident in the opening procession and throughout the Mass.

Other aspects of our celebrations include a Prayer Service in each school in January using a template provided by Le Chéile and we're currently planning an Art Exhibition for students and an educational conference for teachers—both to be hosted in Le Chéile Secondary School Tyrrelstown in September 2019.

It is appropriate that Le Chéile is engaging in a strategic review, facilitated by Dr. Joe O'Connell, as the basis of our planning for the next ten years. We look forward to presenting a progress report at the Le Chéile AGM on 7th February.

November.....Remembering

For me, November is the month of the colour purple. You might think that this is a surprising colour to depict the grey and dark days of November and you would be right. Purple usually belongs to a different time of the year. However, this purple thinking is not about nature or weather. This is a colour that reminds me of someone who has passed away from my life and it is their colour. I distinctly remember them during my childhood wearing a vivid purple dress. They loved 'Milk Tray'. I remember the purple cardigan that I bought for them at Christmas, even though they had passed. It was a moment of forgetfulness – I just knew they would have loved it. But the colour purple means more than any of these. The colour purple reminds me of how magic they were in my life: they always made me feel extraordinary. November is a month during which we remember those who have died. We open up a bigger space in our busy lives for them to be present. When you think about family and friends that you have lost, what colour represents their specialness to you. Take a little time to reflect on why you have made this choice. Perhaps November is no longer the grey and rainy month, but one filled with colour as we remember and pray.



*At the rising of the sun and
at its going down
We remember them.
At the blowing of the wind
and in the chill of winter
We remember them.
At the opening of the buds
and in the rebirth of spring
We remember them.
At the blueness of the skies
and in the warmth
of summer
We remember them.
At the rustling of the leaves
and in the beauty of autumn
We remember them.
At the beginning of the year
and when it ends
We remember them.
As long as we live, they too
will live; for they are now a
part of us as we remember
them.*

(Prayer adapted from © Jewish Prayer Book/ Sylvan Kamens & Rabbi Jack Riemer)

The Literacy Programme at St. Louis High School, Rathmines

Since 2015, St Louis have been running a literacy programme geared towards student-ownership. The gist of it is that under the guidance of their teacher, students create literacy tests for each other, then administer and correct them (2nd Year creates an exam for 1st Year etc.).

Over the three years, they have monitored growth, both in the students' awareness of the importance of spelling, grammar and punctuation, and in their performance as writers. Significantly, those who correct the tests learn as much, if not more, than those who take them.

Last summer, the school digitised and uploaded some of the tests on to the Scoilnet website to make them available nationally. They can be accessed at <https://www.scoilnet.ie/search/?q=st%2Blouis%2Bhigh%2Bschool>. Alternatively, students can Google: Scoilnet, and search for Louis High School.

Religious Education Clusters

This year RE teachers have been meeting to discuss 'Making Equality Matter in RE: Responding to Diversities in Catholic Schools'. Mr Sean Henry has facilitated the workshops and he has suggested that we must begin to move away from models of inclusion to models of equality in our schools. He suggests a matrix of four domains for responding to diversities: equal participation in school and classroom resources; in moments of respect and recognition; in moments of love, care and solidarity; and equal participation in power and decision-making. Sincere thanks to all the RE teachers who have engaged in the clusters and for the insights and wisdom that they shared.

Middle Leaders

Post-primary schools have spent many months considering the needs of their students and how best the AP1 and AP2 posts can respond to these needs. Distributed leadership has become a central focus for Le Chéile schools and this was demonstrated very clearly at the recent weekends in Dublin and Cavan during our course on Middle Leadership. Over seventy teachers are engaging with different sessions on leading ethos, teaching and learning, change and wellbeing. The team at Le Chéile would like to congratulate all who are taking part and we are enjoying the dialogue and discussions on the challenges and opportunities that face a leader of education in the twenty-first century schools in Ireland. We wish all the middle leaders the very best as they continue the course and lead a school based project that will enrich the characteristic spirit of the school and enhance teaching and learning.

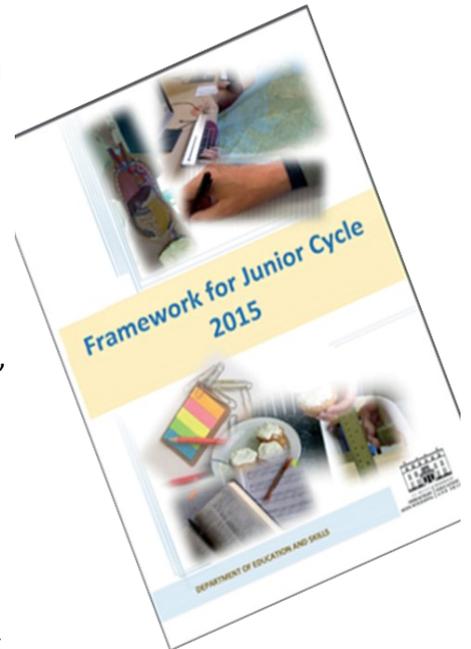
RE Specification

The new RE specification is now ready and can be downloaded from the NCCA website. It offers great opportunities for schools to engage in dialogue about the importance of RE in their curriculum. It responds to Statements of Learning 5,6,7 & 8. A Catholic school, whether with a full cohort of practicing Catholic students or, with a mixed population of religious practices and none, can use the specification to help young Catholics encounter and engage with the tradition they are associated with and to facilitate others to engage with that tradition, with their own tradition, if they have one, and with non-religious worldviews.

**Principals, Deputies and Board Members if you have not received a copy of the Le Chéile Handbook or Contacts Book, please contact the Le Chéile Office.
For the purpose of Data Protection please ensure that you have permission to forward any photographs of your students for inclusion in our newsletter and website.**

Over the past number of years, the education system of lower secondary in Ireland has moved into the territory of becoming curriculum makers. Educational agencies such as the Department of Education, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, State Examination Commission etc. have, through much consultation, offered the ingredients of a new curriculum for Junior Cycle. It took a while for these ingredients to be clarified and chosen but now we have an agreed curriculum recipe for Junior Cycle. Leaders of schools have taken these ingredients: 8 Principles, 24 Statements of Learning and 8 Key Skills and have begun to mix them together according to their own school’s educational needs and socio-cultural contexts. They have been offered certain choices in the type of ingredients they can use including, subjects, short courses, Wellbeing, other areas of learning and they have the agency to make the curriculum that best suits their students needs and school ethos.

Teachers are also very much involved in this process of curriculum making and have the primary role in successfully crafting this curriculum. Through their collaborative planning and practice, they bring the ingredients and mixture into creation through their teaching, assessing and learning. Subject knowledge, skills, values and dispositions become alive in the human encounter of the classroom. The curriculum develops through their dialogue with students about the knowledge and skills they already have and by connecting to new and powerful knowledge, values and competences. Students are not just curriculum eaters but also have become curriculum makers. They are responsible also in this process and therefore must be encouraged to actively engage in the educational experience. Parental involvement is not just about the practice of icing the cake. Their assistance throughout the creation is essential. The educational strength of the curriculum at Junior Cycle depends on the inter-relationship and intra-relationships of all curriculum makers. The making of the Junior Cycle is a highly collaborative process, combining and connecting all the complex layers and roles of the education system. What this may become, depends on a synergy of understanding, openness, hard work and support for all elements involved in the making. Education and thus curriculum making is a highly creative act (Biesta, 2013). Whether you are a leader, teacher, student or parent, every new recipe needs practice, time and new skills. If you have a spare moment you might like to consider, how curriculum making is working out for you this year? (Audrey Doyle)



Salerno Students participate in WMOF Mass

Pictured right are the Leaving Cert. Students from Jesus & Mary Secondary School, Salerno, Galway, who were Ministers of the Eucharist at the Pope's Mass in the Phoenix Park. Also included in the picture is Sr. Angela, School Chaplain and Claire Daly,



10th Anniversary Conference: An Invitation to participate in our Choir

As part of our first Conference Mass, we hope that one hymn would be sung by a **choir of Principals, Chairpersons and guests**. Cliona McDonough, Principal, St Louis Rathmines, has very kindly offered to be our choir leader/ conductor/teacher. If sufficient people are interested she will choose a suitable hymn and record it. The recording will be sent to all in advance – we hope that by listening to it in the car on the way to and from work (and any other time you wish!) you will not only learn it quickly, but also add to your wellbeing! If you are attending the Conference and are interested in participating please contact the Le Chéile Office.

Is your school celebrating any special anniversary or event this year?? Do tell us and share your story



Ard Scoil Raheny Celebrating 50 Years

Minister Bruton joined the Student Council, Colm Mythen Principal, Br Damien and Eilis Humphreys to plant a tree in Ardscoil La Salle Raheny in October as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations of the school. November saw a gathering of both the school and local community for a re-union of past pupils and staff. The evening offered an opportunity to engage in the school logo “where everybody knows your name”!

Worry never solved a thing on this earth - never did & never will!”

Jacinta Kitt

St. Aloysius Carrigtwohill recently hosted a student-parent-staff ‘triangulated’ workshop with Ms. Jacinta Kitt. The college community were treated to the wisdom, reassurance & encouraging words of Ms. Kitt regarding ‘Building & Enhancing Positive Relationships’ in our school, home & work environments. Ms. Kitt’s unique talent for delivering solid advice in the midst of belly aching laughter was both relatable & inspiring based on all the unanimously positive feedback.



ramsgrange_community_school



Ramsgrange Community School—Proud of their Generous Student!

3rd year student, Emily Sinnott recently cut off her lovely long locks for the Laura Lynn foundation! Emily and her classmates raised €312.60 in just 30 minutes from donations following an assembly where her hair was put into two plaits and cut off in front of her whole year group! What great courage for a great cause!

10th Anniversary Conference 7th & 8th February 2019 - Accommodation Update

There are currently bedrooms available in the Athlone Springs Hotel for the 2019 Conference (7th & 8th Feb.). When the office has allocated all the rooms that we are responsible for, we will release any remaining rooms in the Hodson Bay in January and tell all the schools at the same time.

November

- 10th, 17th and 24th Nov. Board of Management Training - JMB / Trusts at Regional venues
- 20th Nov. [Cluster Meetings Dublin South and West Cluster](#) - Talbot Hotel Stillorgan
- 21st Nov. Middle Leader Training Dublin (5/6) 5.00– 8.00pm Talbot Hotel Stillorgan
- 27th Nov. [The South Cluster](#) - Springfort Hall, Newtownpothouse
- 27th Nov. RE Cluster Dublin North Margaret Alyward Centre, Glasnevin
- 28th Nov. Middle Leader Training Cavan (5/6) 5.00– 8.00pm Slieve Russell Hotel, Cavan

December

- 4th Dec. [The West Cluster](#) - McWilliam Park Hotel
- 6th Nov. [Dublin North Cluster](#) - City North Hotel, Gormanstown
- 11th Dec. Chairperson’s Meeting and Dinner Clayton Hotel Liffey Valley
- 31st Dec. 2017-2018 Accounts (electronic and **one copy of the signed hard copy**) sent to the Le Chéile Office.

January 2019

- 23rd Jan. Middle Leaders Webinair for both centres
- 27th Jan.—1st Feb. Catholic Schools Week

February **7th & 8th Le Chéile AGM, Conference and Student Event**