



# Catholic Schools Week 2019

Catholic Schools: Celebrating the Work of Our Local Catholic Schools

## DAY 1: OUR CATHOLIC SCHOOL: LIVING TRADITION

### KEYWORDS:

**Tradition**  
**Mystery**

**Faith**  
**Justly**  
**Sacred**

**Reason**  
**Tenderly**  
**Secular**

**Catholic School**  
**Humbly**

**Listen:** <https://youtu.be/WgMUCecG3UQ> (3mins 52secs)

**The refrain:**

'To do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with our God' (Micah 6:8)

Fr Michael Drumm delivered a homily on the 17th August 2012 based on the question: 'What is a Catholic School?'

His answer comes in the following extract:

'Saint Matthew tells us that Jesus taught with Authority ... the prophet Micah cries out that God tells us what is good and what is required of us: to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God. Could you have a better motto/mission statement for any Catholic School than to teach with Authority, to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God?'

([www.Kandle.ie](http://www.Kandle.ie))

**But what does this really mean?**

If we are to follow the example of Jesus in our Catholic schools, then our schools should be full of honesty, forgiveness, compassion, fairness, justice, hope, mercy, belonging, trust, empathy, care, respect, acceptance and, above all, love.

**R**

**Reflective Exercise:** Reading through the list of Gospel values, think of a time when you experienced one of them. Call to mind the event and the feelings you experienced at the time.

**Pair Work:** In groups of two or three, identify a time when you experienced or witnessed each of the Gospel values listed below. (It can be from a friend, a teacher, or any member of staff)



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GOSPEL VALUE	EXAMPLE
Honesty	
Forgiveness	
Compassion	
Fairness	
Justice	
Hope	
Mercy	
Belonging	
Trust	
Empathy	
Care	
Respect	
Acceptance	
Love	

We began the lesson by listening to a song. The refrain was: 'To do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with our God' (Micah 6:8). Here are some examples of what it is to live out the words of this refrain – the words of Scripture.



**Watch:** <https://youtu.be/g5kcLpo0xwo> (2mins) - To do justly

**Discussion:** With your neighbour, discuss where we saw justice in this video clip.



Examine the above images and with your neighbour, explain the images of mercy shown.



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**W** **Watch:** <https://youtu.be/bgPpwb2Clx4> (4mins 10secs) - To walk humbly

**D** **Discussion:** With your neighbour, discuss the humility that is evident in this video.

**Extension Exercise:** On your own, or with one other student, find further examples of what it means to 'do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with our God.'

**R** **Personal Reflection:** What would be the benefit for all students in our schools if we all did justly, loved tenderly and walked humbly with our God?'

Christians have always wanted to understand the Mystery of Christ. We read Scriptures, we celebrate the Eucharist, we pray and reflect in order to remember Jesus but also to connect with our faith in a deeper way. The faith we now have is known as a living tradition. It has been passed on to us and we encounter it in others. It shapes the people we have become. Father Michael Drumm refers to this tradition as the 'bedrock for Catholic Schools.' The Irish tradition is a very rich tradition. From the time of St Patrick, there has been a striving for spreading the Good News and sharing the story with people. In 2010, the Irish Episcopal Conference published a directory called *Share the Good News: National Directory for Catechesis in Ireland*. In the section on the Irish Christian tradition, it examines two texts. One of these texts is attributed to St Patrick and one to St Fursa. Read both texts.

The arms of God be around my shoulders ...  
The sign of Christ's cross on my forehead ...  
The work of God's Church in my hands ...  
A home for God in my heart ...  
(St Fursa)

Christ be with me, Christ within me, Christ before me, Christ to win me,  
Christ to comfort and restore me.  
Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,  
Christ in hearts of all that love me, Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.  
(extract from St Patrick's Breastplate)

**D** **Discussion:** Do you see a connection between these texts? Is there any difference between these two prayers and the prayers you may have learned growing up?

**Extension Exercise:** Project

Read *Share the Good News* from pp. 16–21.

- Summarise the history of the Irish Christian tradition from the time of St Patrick through to the current day.

Or

- Create a timeline representing the history of the Irish Christian tradition.

**W** **Watch:** <https://youtu.be/i0xHASlpeJw> (1min 13secs)

Answer the following questions:

- Is Katie Taylor's faith something that she celebrates only on Sunday when she attends church?
- When asked about her achievement, how does she explain her successes? What role does God play in her achievements?



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Father Michael Drumm highlighted the most important principle a Catholic school can offer is the value of faith and reason. Faith refers to things in which we believe – the things in which we trust. Reason refers to the evidence we have for this faith. Reason is logic and helps us to understand things better. The Katie Taylor story shows us that her boxing success is the evidence (Reason) for her trust and belief (Faith) in God. Catholic schools ought to develop our faith and our reason. Faith refers to the world of the sacred, whereas reason can refer to the secular world. In an address in Westminster Hall in 2010, Pope Benedict XVI stated: 'I would suggest that the world of reason and the world of faith – the world of secular rationality and the world of religious belief – need one another and should not be afraid to enter into a profound and ongoing dialogue, for the good of our civilization.



**Watch:** [https://youtu.be/O\\_L\\_jw3Dc7A](https://youtu.be/O_L_jw3Dc7A) (4mins 56secs)

**Reflective exercise:** Having watched the video, do you agree or disagree with the statement of Pope Benedict? Were you surprised by any of the quotes of the famous scientists about their belief in God?

In the publication *Share the News* we are given a list of aspects of Irish Christian spirituality – our living tradition. The list presented is as follows:

1. A spirituality in harmony with nature, accepting it, respecting it, in love with it, even in its more violent expressions.
2. A natural religious spirit in the people.
3. A faith firmly rooted in the Sacred Scriptures, known and loved by people.
4. A great love for and devotion to the person of Jesus Christ, especially in his passion and at the Mass.
5. A corresponding love for Mary, the angels and the saints – above all, for Mary as Mother of God.
6. The quality of *muintearas* – the community, communion, friendship, relationship, kindness, connection with the Lord and his household in this present world and in the world to come.
7. The combining of a strong notion of 'localness' with a deep sense of communion with the Body of Christ at a universal level.
8. Hospitality as a living expression of the Gospel – the guest in none other than the living Christ.
9. Penance and self-denial as means of entering into the death of Jesus Christ
10. The phenomenon of pilgrimage.
11. A close bond of unity with the dead, giving a sense of fidelity to and continuity with the past.

Taken from *Share the Good News: National Directory for Catechesis in Ireland*, adapted from J.J. Ó Riordán, *Irish Catholic Spirituality: Celtic and Roman*, p.11

**Group/Individual Task:** Take any of the eleven aspects of our Irish Christian spirituality and research it further. You may chose something that is connected with your family. For example, you may talk to your granny or granddad about using the phrases 'thanks be to God', 'with the help of God', 'God bless her' when investigating aspect number two. You may talk to neighbours or grandparents about the idea of taking out the 'good china' when the priest came to visit the house for aspect number eight. You may investigate, perhaps even be able to carry out an interview, the idea of pilgrimage in Ireland. In particular the climbing of Croagh Patrick or the retreat in Lough Derg could be used as examples for aspect number ten. The most important part of this task is that you pick an aspect that has some connection with your life.