

Easter -
Pentecost

Missionary Discipleship



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MISSIONARY DISCIPLESHIP

Once again, I am delighted to commend to parishes and schools these excellent resources on 'Missionary Discipleship', the spiritual theme that I have asked that we particularly focus on during the Church's Season of Eastertide to Pentecost. I'm very grateful to the small team of generous people who have worked hard to produce these.

I am delighted that so many people in our parishes and schools are already engaged in mission and play an active part in the wider community within which their parish or school is situated. I pray that the resources offered here will prove helpful in evaluating what's already happening and in stimulating further reflection on how to engage even more people in the mission that Christ Jesus asks of all his disciples: 'Go make disciples of all nations' (Matt. 28:19).

I find it interesting that when Catholics in England and Wales were given back their freedom to practise the faith, and when the hierarchy was restored in 1850, people as different as Cardinal Manning and Cardinal Newman were very conscious of their responsibility to encourage and help facilitate the full and active involvement of the laity in the social, cultural, political and scientific life of England and Wales. Manning emphasised the importance of social and political involvement, while Newman stressed the need for the laity to be fully involved in the cultural and scientific aspects of society. But both of them had a vision of the Church's missionary role in society that was broad and not narrow. Although there was much to be done to build up, once again, the infrastructure of the Church in terms of first schools and then church buildings, they saw clearly the broader vocation and mission of the laity.

The Second Vatican Council also gave us a renewed vision of the Church at the heart of the world and at the service of the world. It encouraged us all, lay men and women, boys and girls, young people, religious, clergy and bishop, to be actively involved in that missionary work, in and through the every-day circumstances of our lives: "Since the whole Church is missionary, and the work of evangelisation the fundamental task of the People of God, this sacred Synod invites all to undertake a profound interior renewal so that being vitally conscious of their responsibility for the spread of the Gospel they might play their part". Subsequent Church and Papal documents have continued in that same broad understanding of mission."

"People today put more trust in witnesses than in teachers, in experience than in teaching, and in life and action than in theories. The witness of a Christian life is the first and irreplaceable form of mission. Christ whose mission we follow is the supreme witness and the model of all Christian witness" (Pope John Paul II, 'The Mission of the Redeemer', 42).

"If the whole Church takes up this missionary impulse, she has to go forth to everyone without exception. But to whom should she go first? When we read the Gospel we

find a clear indication: not so much our friends and wealthy neighbours, but above all the poor and the sick, those who are usually despised and overlooked, "those who cannot repay you" (Lk 14:14). There can be no room for doubt or for explanations which weaken so clear a message. Today and always, "the poor are the privileged recipients of the Gospel", and the fact that it is freely preached to them is a sign of the kingdom that Jesus came to establish. We have to state, without mincing words, that there is an inseparable bond between our faith and the poor. May we never abandon them". (*Pope Francis, The Joy of the Gospel, 48*)

That brief and inadequate historical perspective serves to remind me that our missionary vision for our diocese will be too narrow, if we focus our attention only on the role and involvement of the laity within the internal structures of our parishes and schools. The potentially rich and diverse missionary apostolate of all within the parishes and schools of our diocese deserves more encouragement and appropriate support, and it is my intention that we will do all that we can to facilitate and develop even more lay leadership across our diocese.

A key aspect of missionary discipleship is always the recognition of the essential role of the Holy Spirit in our lives as disciples of Christ because, as St Paul emphasises, 'No-one can say, Jesus is Lord except in the power of the Holy Spirit' (I Cor. 12: 3). I would like, therefore, to see some preaching/teaching in our parishes and schools, on the role of the Holy Spirit, in preparation for the Solemnity of Pentecost. Faced with our current challenges as a diocese, we can choose either to close our eyes and bury our heads in the sand, or we can ask the Holy Spirit to open our eyes more widely and to equip us with the grace and courage we need to follow Christ wherever he may be leading us. There can surely be only one viable response: 'Lord, through the guidance of your Holy Spirit, help us to know your will, and then give us all that we need to follow you as your missionary disciples'.

May Eastertide 2019 be a most fruitful time of missionary discipleship coming out of our parishes and schools.

+ Patrick

Bishop Patrick

INTRODUCTION TO THIS RESOURCE

This resource pack has a different feeling to other two we have preciousely put together - the aim of this document is to be much more reflective. There are some ideas presented and questions raised for you to discuss as a community; parish, school or family, to answer each in our own way on how to be a missionary disciple. It may be the case that a lot of what is presented here is already happening in your school or parish. The questions we can then ask are: how can we engage more of the community with this? How can we communicate this better? How can this have a greater impact for those we are doing it for?

Each section is structured, looking at two points as to how we live out our faith and be missionary disciples: Servicing and Sharing. Service is the way in which we are called to give of our time and/or money to help others; acts of charity and love. This could be within our parish or school community or other projects we are involved in during our spare time. Service is very much about the proclamation of the Gospel through action. Sharing is then focused on the proclamation of the Gospel by words. This is not necessarily proclaiming like St Paul on the street corners and market places, though it can be. This is much more about us finding ways to openly and honestly share with others why we are Catholics, what effects our faith has in our lives, and how having a personal, real and loving relationship with Jesus gives us hope, joy and peace – even in the most difficult times.

This idea of service and sharing comes from the two calls Jesus gave to St Peter – to catch fish (share) and feed his sheep (serve). The mission of the Church, and therefore the mission of every parish, school and catholic, is twofold; to care for those who are in our community and help them grow but also to reach out to others and draw them into relationship with Christ and his Church.

The aim of this resource is to get you to step back and consider how you are already doing this in your context and how you can do it even more joyfully and intentionally. Finally, the section on Pentecost looks at how we can pray and prepare for a New Pentecost in our Diocese, a fresh powering out of the Holy Spirit that leads us to break out of the safety of the upper room to declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, He is risen and He is calling all to freedom!

We offer this resource with a prayer, firstly of gratitude for all that is being done by so many people in our diocese and of petition that the Lord will bless all of our work and make it fruitfully abundant.

Let each and every one of us pray as we heard recently from David Wells' talks; 'What are we going to do today Jesus?'

MISSIONARY PARISHES

The parish is the place where the mission of the Church can be lived out at the most localist level; the place community can grow and the Gospel can have the biggest impact on the world. Our parishes are communities of families forming the family of God. There are wonderful people each week giving so much of their time out of love of God and love of neighbour. Do we acknowledge this? Are there more people who would like to be involved? Below are some thoughts, ideas and topics to consider, ensuring our parishes can be missionary in diverse and meaningful ways.

SERVING

Spotlight

Each parish has their own groups and activities, but what does the average person in the pew know about them. Could they benefit from the services offered or support in leading/delivering them? Why not take this opportunity to shine a spotlight on these groups? During the time of the notices, before or after the Sunday Masses each week of Eastertide, could somebody speak about what they do in the parish. How they live out their missionary discipleship. This could be someone from the St Vincent de Paul Society, catechists, cleaners/caretakers, etc. The key thing is to hear their personal story, how they have seen their acts of service help others and bring themselves closer to Christ; with an invitation to get involved. This could be followed up with 'open house meetings', where they are structured to be welcoming and engaging for new people. This does not just have to be focused on Church groups, there could be people in your parish involved in other organisations which are having an impact on the community.

A proposed structure of such a talk could be:

1. Introduction to who they are – what they do outside of church – job, family etc.
2. What group/ministry they are involved with; how it helps the church or wider community, what skills, charisms or experience are needed to do it.
3. Personal testimony; how it has an impact on the people they serve and on themselves. Direct quotes from the people served can be very powerful.
4. Invitation on how to get involved and when open house meeting will be.

What we do

Similar to the spotlight, so could work very well alongside, would be a booklet or leaflet of all the different ways the Parish serves the local community. This celebrates what is happening and highlights where more support is needed. Often people may feel like they do not know how to get involved. What could be very helpful as well as having the name of a person for each group/activity would be to have a picture of them. It can be embarrassing or an extra barrier for those who are new to the parish to be told 'See Jim' and not know who Jim is or where to find him.

Website and Social Media

Does the parish website help those in the parish? Is it regularly updated with information that needs to be known; contact information, events, timings etc. Or is it an online parish archive where it is easier to find the 3rd week of Ordinary Time's bulletin from 2003 rather than the dates of the First Holy Communion programme or when the Sacrament of Reconciliation is available? Are there people in the parish who could help run the website as a group so it is not a tasking process for one person?

How does the parish use social media to keep in contact and encourage parishioners? Often social media is written off as most of the parishioners aren't interested but current statistics show that there are more people in the UK on Facebook over 50 than there are under 24.

Could there be the opportunity to use YouTube or 'Going Live' on Facebook for the housebound to feel involved at Mass.

Housebound Parishioners

How do we ensure that the members of our parish community who can't get to Mass on their own are involved? Are we aware who they are? When people aren't there do we miss them?

Ways we could help others could be by organising lifts for those who can't make their own way or having a programme of house Masses that rotate round the parish and carers. Family can be invited to share in with neighbours and other local parishioners gathering together.

Are there day trips or parish events we do especially for the housebound? Are the general parishioners aware of them and how they can help? Or a communal celebration of the Sacrament of the Sick to gather people together? Is there a programme of visiting, or phone calls to see how they are getting on? Is there a team of people who could visit to do things like gardening, DIY or befriending?

Is there a way of using the internet to stay connected to the parish celebrations or hearing the homilies from Masses? Even if they were just emailed to parishioners to read?

How can housebound parishioners be missionary disciples? Can they pray for particular needs in the parish? Praying for those preparing to receive the Sacraments? Can they carry out any administrative tasks from home? Can they bake or make food for fayres or celebrations? Could they host a house bible or prayer group?

Parish Feast Day

What makes the parish feast day any different from any other day or celebration? How can we bring the parishioners of different ages, backgrounds and interests together to celebrate the day and being part of the community?

Weekly activities, Pilgrimages, Retreats and Missions

There are a number of diocesan pilgrimages that are available to engage with – local martyr shrines, nationally to Walsingham, internationally to Lourdes or even are there places that as a parish could be visited? How do we engage and encourage this as a parish? How does the experience of those who go, feed into the rest of the parish when they return?

Outside of the Sunday Mass (and week day Mass) what do we offer our parishioners to grow spiritually? Are people aware about them and how to get involved?

What do we offer for our parishioners to experience retreats or missions? To help them break through the day to day business to hear God's call for them, can we offer retreat days, weekends, or weeks. For those who might not be able to afford to go away or have time, can we bring the retreat to them in the form of missions, talks, prayer experiences – such as Light Nights for the parishioners, or Reconciliation Services.

SHARING

Welcoming

If new people join the parish how are they inducted into the life of the Church, how are they made to feel a part of the family? How are their skills shared and encouraged? How are they introduced to others and encouraged? How are their needs met? How are they encouraged to grow as a disciple and engage into the life of the Church?

If someone who never entered a Catholic Church before walked into your parish Church, how would they be greeted and welcomed? If they are not a Catholic is there somebody who can help explain what is going on in the Mass? Are they introduced to others?

Needs of the wider community – local, national, international

One of the most respected teachings of the Church is its social teaching, its defence of and work for the most vulnerable in society. How is this made incarnate in your parish? What global needs are you responding to? What percentage of the parishioners are engaged with this? Are the parishioners presenting global concerns to other parishioners or is it only what comes from the Diocese or Bishop's Conference? How could this be shared better with the whole parish? What national needs have the parish identified? Do we communicate the reason why we do this work? It is not just because it is a good thing to do but we are called to carry on Christ's work of healing and mercy.

How are we reaching those on the peripherals of our society and witnessing to them the love of Christ? The Church has a strong moral teaching that directs us to live a holy life, however how do we welcome those who don't follow that and love them as Jesus does so that one day they will want to live this way too? How as a Church can we support people who are slaves to addictions, victims to prostitution, members of gangs? No one is exempt from Christ's call to follow him. Do we commit to pray for an end to abortion and help support women or couples in crisis pregnancies so they can feel confident that they can keep their child? Refugees and asylum seekers are vulnerable in society, how can we support them to adapt to life in the UK and come to know Christ and his Church if they don't already?

We don't have to reinvent the wheel, there are lots of Catholic and Christian Charities that are doing this work who you can connect with, or who can offer guidance, support and train parishes to get going?

Examples of how parishes are already doing this; a Derby parish who are using their parish centre as a homeless night shelter, while some parishioners in Loughborough recognised that during the summer holidays there will be many children not getting enough to eat, as their main meal comes at school. Therefore, they created a lunch club with fun activities, to feed these children.

Please contact the Justice and Peace Fieldworker, Paul Bodenham, at justice.peace@dioceseofnottingham.uk who can give you even more advice and support.

The question we must ask ourselves is: with the exception of our parishioners who would miss our parish church and community if we were not here?

Keeping Churches Open & Light Night

Appendix 7 is a resource from the Diocesan Adult Formation Department about how we can keep our Church open throughout the day so that people can come in to pray. We build Churches to glorify God, as a place to worship him and as a place that people can come to know him. Having a locked door can put people off our community, though it is extremely hard to have our doors open 24/7 we can maybe display when it is open.

Appendix 1 is a sheet used by a parish when they held their first Light Night, based on the concept of *NightFever*. There was the opportunity and invitation for people to light a candle before the Blessed Sacrament, there were greeters to welcome and beautiful music. People shared their testimony of how they have felt God change their lives and Adoration took place throughout. There was Confession available and people to speak or pray to. Many parishes have celebrated this type of event and can testify that the simple invitation to come and light a candle can open conversations and even encourage people to come back. The key thing with an event like this is what is the follow up, is there information about the parish and future events people can take away with them?

Accessibility to Unchurched, Non-Catholics, & Non-Practising Catholics

The Sunday Mass is the core gathering and central to the life of the parish, however the Mass is not aimed at being an entry point for people new or distant from faith. For some people it has been their conversion point, walking in off the street and discovering something completely different and (hopefully) awe inspiring. However, for most people we may know who are not practising Catholics, the Mass might not be the best place for them as their first contact with parishes. Are there other, regular celebrations, services or events that could be an easier way in for people? This could be social events where the work of the parish is shared through testimony or celebration. Services of the Word which are open to discussion, sharing and personal testimony. Or even social action that contains times of prayer and emphasising the 'why' we do what we do not just the 'what' we do.

The key here is to see that joining a Church is different from join another group like a sports club, hobby activity or political action group. In the Church we have to offer the very thing that all people seek; life in union with God. As St Augustine put it 'our hearts are restless until they rest in you.' There is a saying what you win people with, is what you win people to. If people experience a big showy event with music and lights, that is what they might expect all the time. If you win them to social or sporting events that do not have a time of prayer/sharing of the Gospel, they might not be comfortable when this starts to replace the social aspect. Win people with genuine community and the power of the Gospel, then help them discover in the weekly parish life, genuine community and the power of the Gospel.

How would this look in your parish context?

Website and social media

This has already been mentioned in the previous section but it is important to remember that lots of people will 'visit your parish' without stepping out of their house. They may explore and make judgements on your parish from their first impression of the website. Make sure key information is easy to find – Mass times, contact information, how to get to the Church through public transport and where they can park, recent photographs that celebrate the diversity of your Church, information about what you do and how to get involved. Also include; picture and welcome from the clergy, pictures of people who may lead particular ministries and testimonies of how being part of this parish is a great joy. It is always nice to be able to find out the history of the parish or the teachings of the Church, however this does not have to be front and centre. It may be a case that you link this to other websites such as the Vatican, the Bishop's Conference or Catholic Answers where they can search in more detail for particular teachings.

Challenges

Appendix 3 contains a list of challenges for Eastertide of ways we can share our faith. It could be worth sharing these with parishioners. Appendix 5 is a printable version template that could be handed out at Mass.

MISSIONARY SCHOOLS

In the document *Christ at the Centre* from the Catholic Education Service and The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, the first of four reasons for the existence of Catholic Schools is to assist in the Church's mission of making Christ known to all people; while the fourth is to be a service to society (Stock, *Christ at the Centre*, pp.7-9). The core mission of Catholic Schools therefore, is in sharing the gospel and serving society. It is something that the schools of the Diocese of Nottingham do extremely well and is one (of many reasons) so many of our schools are oversubscribed.

Pastoral support and care, charitable work and community action are particular strong points of Catholic schools. However there are many non-faith schools that can be just as good in these areas, so what makes them Catholic? It might not actually be the 'what', as the actions, procedures and policies could be very similar. It is the 'why'. The reason we do these things. Every aspect of our school life from education standards, buildings, behaviour management, prayer life and more, should demonstrate our love of God and our love of neighbour.

This section of the document, like the parish section, looks at what it means to be a school of missionary disciples. This will look at certain topics, asking questions and suggesting ideas. The main hope is for schools to reflect on how they are serving the community and sharing the Gospel and how they could do that more effectively.

SERVING

Spotlight

All members of our school community are involved in wonderful ways of serving the school and wider community, however how many people know about this and how can it be shared? As suggested above, could there be a weekly sharing in Assemblies, Acts of Worship or during Collective Worship about what charities, acts of service or volunteering they (pupils or staff) are involved in and how it helps other? A proposed structure of such a talk could be:

1. Introduction to who they are – what year they are in or their role in school.
2. What group/ministry they are involved with; how it helps the school or wider community, what skills, charisms or experience are needed to do it.
3. Personal testimony; how it has an impact on the people they serve and on themselves. Direct quotes from the people served can be very powerful.
4. Invitation of how those present can get involved.

These could also be shared in a newsletter for the school or trust and on social media (given the right permissions have been sort).

Charities and Charitable Work

The charitable work of our schools is incredible, even in the most deprived areas. Hundreds if not thousands of pounds are raised each year; it is also a way of engaging and involving non-Catholics in the life of the school. What charities are the school supporting? How is that celebrated in the life of the school? Do we know the impact of the money raised? Are there other ways that we can support them? Can pupils or staff have the opportunity to do some of the work that is done? Can our fundraising ideas be linked more closely to the work of the charity? What impact has our fundraising had? Will someone from the charity or (if it is appropriate) one of the beneficiaries, come to speak to a group of students, an assembly or be interviewed and filmed? Why do we go with this charity, what link does it have with our community? Are there other charities who might have a stronger link or are in need of our support?

It is important to ensure the aims of the charity are in keeping with the Church's teachings? Some questions we can ask if we are not sure are: does the charity directly, enable, campaign for or give money/support towards: abortion, distribution of contraception, foetal stem cell research, foetal or embryo experiments/treatments that happen not for the benefit of that child or lead to their destruction, euthanasia, education programmes that go directly against the Church's teachings on social, theological and moral issues, sex reassignment surgery.

Charitable works were greatly increased in schools during the Year of Mercy. Can we make these acts a regular part of school life? Either inside or outside of school? Are there opportunities for pupils and staff to volunteer in school to take care of others, or to do actions that will benefit the school as a community?

Faith in Action Award

The faith in action award is a nationally recognised programme that aims to help children and young people live out their faith by serving their local, school and parish communities. You do not have to be a Catholic to take part either. More information here: <https://ndcys.com/faithinaction/>

Family and Parish Days

There is increasing pressure on schools to be 'one stop shop' for all sorts of social care, as it is often schools who have more contact than other agencies, including parishes. As a school how can we involve more of the family in the life of the school? Do we have lunches or afternoon teas for elderly relatives or parishioners? Are there people who would like to volunteer for work experience or to help out (after the appropriate checks) in school, who we can support? In a primary context, can older pupils organise activities for those not yet at school or in a secondary school? Can students organise events for primary school? What support is needed in the parish –

cleaning, groundwork, teas and coffee, music, fayres and how can the school support? Is there an opportunity for parents who pick up or drop off to meet or pray together? How could the school support this?

SHARING

Missionary Challenges

Appendix 2 has some challenges that pupils and staff can try and achieve

Testimonies and Easter People

Testimonies of how Christ has changed lives for the better are very powerful, especially when they are peer to peer. Can there be times in liturgies, celebrations or collective worships where pupils and staff are able to share the positive impact faith has had on their lives? Can those who have received significant Sacraments share about how these have affected them or why they wanted to receive this Sacrament? Often it is in being part of a Catholic school that both staff and pupils decide to become Catholic. This is a truly wonderful event in the life of the school, how is this shared and celebrated? Do they get the opportunity to share their story?

Can these be shared (if appropriate) on the schools' website – so that there is a 'Stories of Faith' section that can inspire those who visit the website. Alternatively (or as well as) this could become part of the school or trust newsletter.

One of the initiatives of this year is to share the stories of 50 people in the diocese for the 50 days of Easter. If you have anyone in school who would like to do this please follow this [link](#) or email adult.formation@dioceseofnottingham.uk for the link.

Feast Days

When we come to our school, parish, house or class feast day, what makes it different from another day? What is the impact on our lives, hearts and minds by having this special day? How is this shared with the school and wider community? How are we living like our patron? What can we do better? Why is this patron so important and why do we choose/were they chosen for us? How can their work be carried on by us?

Adoration/times of encounter

Being a missionary disciple leads back into encounter. Firstly, because we need to constantly be re-encountering Christ so that we can share him in his fullness with others; but also being a missionary disciple means that we want other people to encounter him too.

The *Encounter Him* document for schools are full of adaptable services, could these be open to families, friends, parishioners and led by pupils? Could we have our own

version of 'light night' in school where the Chapel, or a suitable room, is made available for people to stop and pray, go to reconciliation, light a candle, have someone to talk to, or just have silence? This could be for those within school or out of school (if obvious safeguarding procedures were put in place and followed). This could even be working with other local non-faith schools and inviting them to our services and events or visiting them to deliver assemblies about what we do.

Website and Social Media

The school website or social media accounts are often the first point of contact for people with our school. What makes our website and use of social media different from non-faith schools? Do we share and publicise the 'why' as well as the 'what'? Do we share the impact of what we are doing so that the activity/celebration/liturgy is not just a nice thing to do but a necessary thing to do? Can we make our website/social media a place that inspires others to follow Christ, or to at least to seek to know more about him?

Induction and Welcoming

When new staff, governors and pupils join our community, how are they inducted and welcomed? How are they encouraged to share their skills, talents, experiences and charisms for the good of all? How are their particular needs, worries and concerns met? If they are not Catholic how do we ensure that they feel involved in the complete life of the school and also given the opportunity to explore our faith at their pace to see if they too would like to become a disciple? How do we ensure that our community doesn't seem like a closed group of perfect people?



MISSIONARY PEOPLE

Pope St John Paul II in his Apostolic Exhortation on the mission and vocation of the lay faithful in the Church and the world, *Christifides Laici*, wrote that the laity are 'called to allow the newness and the power of the gospel to shine out every day in their family and social life, as well as to express patiently and courageously in the contradictions of the present age their hope of future glory even "through the framework of their secular life".' (CF 14). Each one of us are called by the dignity and vocation of our baptism to be Missionary People. We are called to be leaders in various ways in our parish/school and witnesses in our ordinary life. Not every lay person is called to work for the Church, but every lay person is called to work for Christ.

SERVING

Parish Involvement

To paraphrase JFK, ask not what your parish can do for you, but what can you do for your parish! Of course we are in need of different ministries and support from our parish but each one of us has been called as a parishioner to build up our parish. Your parish is weaker without you, it is stronger with you. Each of us, through the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation have received unique charisms, gifts from the Holy Spirit, for the good of our faith and for the mission of the Church.

What skills and passions do you have? How can you use them to build up the parish community? What would you love to see happen in your parish? How could you make it happen? What kind of support do you need to make it happen?

What are you already doing in your parish? What have been the successes? What hasn't worked out and what do you think stopped it from working? What support do you need for the work that you do in the parish?

Volunteering and Charity Work

How are you already serving your local community? Does your faith connect or inspire you with this work? What do you believe to be the need in the local community and how as a parish/school could you encourage others to help you respond to it? Does your parish know about the voluntary or charity work that you do or intend to do how could you get others on board?

Living out Prayer and Service

Appendix 5 is a collection of 20 ideas of how we can live out our prayer with simple actions done regularly.

SHARING

Each person is called to spread the Gospel, to share the Good News of the life-transforming relationship with Christ through the power and message of his life, death, and resurrection. The mission field we work in will be very different for each of us in our own context. Isn't it great when friends from different groups or situations get on, and you can share this friendship with others? This is the core of what being a missionary is, sharing your friendship with Christ with your other friendships and relationships in your life.

Commitment to people

Nearly every Catholic has people in their lives who have left the Church or never had the opportunity to know Christ. We know that the joy, of a relationship with Christ lived out as a member of the Church, is so good that we would like them to experience it too. We also know that we don't want to come across judgemental or 'preachy', it is a fine balance to get right. It is said the American evangelist D L Moody had a list of 100 people which he knew that weren't Christians. He prayed for each of the 100 people every day, that they would come to know Christ. He would shower them with acts of love and talk with joy, at appropriate times, about his faith, not why they should be followers of Christ just why it worked for him. He died aged 62 and 98 of the 100 on his list had become Christians. At his funeral, the final two opened their hearts and minds to Christ.

We don't need a list of 100 but may be 2 or 3 who we can pray for, spend time with and love. When questions of faith come up, speak openly, gently invites to share in events with your parish community, coming to Church. Not all the time, just at key moments that the Holy Spirit will prompt.

Feast Day

A practice in many European countries is to celebrate your 'name day' which is the feast day of the saint you are named after. It is a common practice in this country when it is our birthday to bring cake or treats into work with us to share with our friends and colleagues. We could celebrate the two traditions and on the feast of our baptismal or confirmation patron, celebrate it by sharing treats with colleagues and explain a little about the saint.

Alternatively we could celebrate the feast days of our colleagues and friends by getting them a small gift, writing them a little card or doing an act of kindness for them.

Challenges

Appendix 3 contains a list of challenges for Eastertide of ways we can share our faith.

Social Media Witness

Our use of social media is also an important witness to others. We should always consider the effect our posts and updates have on our identity of a missionary disciple. We may be the only Catholic, so to all those who read it; what impression does it give of the Church? The other side of this is, are we as vocal about the joys of our faith as we are about our favourite TV programme or sports team? Would people know we are a Catholic.



PENTECOST – PARISHES, SCHOOLS AND PEOPLE

The final section is a selection of ideas as to how we can prepare for and celebrate Pentecost in our communities.

Easter People

One of the initiatives of this year is to share the stories of 50 people in the diocese for the 50 days of Easter. They will be displayed on Bishop Patrick and the Diocese of Nottingham's social media accounts and the Diocesan Website. We invite you to share them with others to read and reflect on. If you have anyone in community who would like contribute please follow this [link](#).

Novena

A great Catholic tradition is praying Novenas (nine days of prayer) on the lead up to a feast. This tradition finds its origins with the apostles, who for the nine days between the Ascension and Pentecost Sunday, were in the upper room praying with Our Lady. After these days of prayer, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon them and the Church was born. They were filled with the courage and charisms to go out and be missionaries. We invite all parishioners and members of our school community to pray for the days between Ascension and Pentecost a novena to the Holy Spirit, praying for a new birth, a new Pentecost in every community and heart in our Diocese. A simple one can be found online [here](#) on the website 'Pray More Novenas', <https://www.praymorenovenas.com/novena-to-the-holy-spirit> or in a printable form in Appendix.

Thy Kingdom Come

This is an initiative that aims to bring all Christians together to celebrate Pentecost - to celebrate what we are doing as Christian communities to build God's kingdom in our local community, and to be inspired and pray for the gifts to witness more to the risen Lord. Most importantly to pray that more people will come to know Jesus Christ. For more information, resources and local events please visit the organisation's website: www.thykingdomcome.global

Red Celebration

A very simple thing that we can do to mark and raise the awareness of Pentecost is to wear red on the day of Pentecost. This could be done as a school community in one of the days following or as individuals, we could make a point of wearing something red everyday of the following week and share why we are doing this.

APPENDICES 1 -9 on pages 18-35

WELCOME TO LIGHT NIGHT AT THE ASSUMPTION

What is Light Night?

Light Night is built on a simple action: to light a candle in Church. This simple action reminds us of so many things. The light represents Jesus as being the light of the world, the vapour rising reminds us of our prayers rising to heaven and the wax slowly evaporating reminds us of Jesus' sacrifice. The flame reminds us of the power of hope and the power of God's presence within us, dispelling darkness.

Whenever you feel ready come forward to light your candle and place it on one of the stands in front of the altar. Take a moment to offer to God the person or situation you are praying for. Feel free to kneel, stand or sit, whichever makes you feel most comfortable, it is your time to encounter Jesus and for Him to encounter you, to place before Him whatever you need to.

Adoration

Throughout our service, we will celebrate something called Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, or Adoration. As Catholics we believe that during the Mass the bread and wine are transformed into the actual Body and Blood of Jesus, this is Jesus truly present with us. On the Altar is a special stand called a Monstrance which means 'to show' in Latin. The Monstrance holds the Body of Jesus, the consecrated host so we can see Him. We believe this is Jesus with us. The prayers we will use for this service are on the back of this page.

Tonight is an opportunity for you to spend some time with Jesus, to talk to Him in prayer, to challenge and question Him and to receive from Him everything that you need to.

Feel free to kneel or sit, to just be comfortable in his presence.

Touching the Hem

You may have noticed that coming down from the Monstrance is something that looks like a scarf. This is called a stole and one of the vestments that a priest wears in Mass. It is a symbol of the priests' calling to be like Jesus in today's world and to do what He did. We will hear a bible story of a woman who went and just touched the hem of Jesus' clothes and was healed. This stole is touching the Monstrance holding Jesus. You are invited to come forward (when you are ready) and to touch the hem just as the woman did; you may be surprised at how powerful this action can be.

Reconciliation

To the right of the Altar there is a door with a light above it. In here Fr Christopher is waiting to help you be reconciled to God, to take away all your sins, mistakes and failings and give you a fresh start. We call this the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Confession. This happens in complete confidence, he will never tell anyone what you said, no matter what. If you are not a Catholic, do not worry, just let him know and he will have a chat with you and give you a blessing.

Tonight is an opportunity to let go of any pain or hurt you may be carrying. Jesus wants you to be free of all of this. The priest will guide you if you are not sure what to do or say.

We hope you enjoy your evening. This is your time with Jesus, stay as long as you wish. If this is your first time visiting our Church, you are very welcome to join us again! Our weekend Masses are Saturday 4:30 pm or Sunday 9:00 am.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

At the start of our service during our first hymn, Fr Christopher (our priest) will bring Jesus who we believe is present in the Blessed Sacrament (the consecrated host) from the Tabernacle. At this point, if you are able to, please kneel.

After this there will be times of silence, music, bible readings, and people sharing their testimony. Please feel free to come forward at any point to light your candle or to touch the hem of the stole (information on the other side of this page).

Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament

As our time of Adoration comes to an end we sing this traditional Latin hymn in honour of Jesus. The English translation is given alongside.

Tantum ergo Sacramentum
Veneremur cernui:
Et antiquum documentum
Novo cedat ritui
Praestet fides supplementum
Sensuum defectui.

Genitori, Genitoque
Laus et jubilation
Salus, honor, virtus quoque
sit et benedictio:
Procedenti ab utroque
Compar sit laudatio. (Amen.)

Down in adoration falling,
Lo! the sacred Host we hail,
Lo! o'er ancient forms departing
Newer rites of grace prevail;
Faith for all defects supplying,
Where the feeble senses fail.

To the everlasting Father,
And the Son Who reigns on high
With the Holy Spirit proceeding
Forth from each eternally,
Be salvation, honour blessing,
Might and endless majesty. Amen.

Priest: You have given them bread from heaven

Response: Having all sweetness in it.

Priest: Lord Jesus Christ, you gave us the Eucharist as the memorial of your suffering and death. May our worship of this sacrament of your body and blood, help us to experience the salvation won for us and the peace of the kingdom, where you live with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Response: Amen

All remain kneeling while the Priest elevates the monstrance, at this point we are receiving a blessing directly from Jesus, he then returns to in front of the Altar and leads the Divine Praises.

Blessed be God.

Blessed be His Holy Name.

Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man.

Blessed be the Name of Jesus.

Blessed be His Most Sacred Heart. Blessed be His Most Precious Blood.

Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.

Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most Holy.

Blessed be her Holy and Immaculate Conception.

Blessed be her Glorious Assumption.

Blessed be the Name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.

Blessed be St. Joseph, her spouse most chaste.

Blessed be God in His Angels and in His Saints.

Appendix 2 School Challenges

“We are an Easter People!”

Become a ‘Missionary Disciple’ in Eastertide.

[Easter Sunday to Pentecost]

Take the Challenge!

1. Read a Bible story every weekend or ask a grown up to read one to you.
2. Tell your favourite Bible story to a friend.
3. Ask a friend to share with you a Bible or religious story that is special to them.
4. Make a poster about Jesus and put it on your bedroom window so people can see it.
5. Learn the names of Jesus’ Twelve Disciples. Who is your favourite disciple and why?
6. When you meet someone who is feeling sad, tell them you will say a prayer for them – and remember to do it!
7. Find a new charity to help.
8. If you don’t usually go to Church, ask your parent/carer if they will take you. If you already go regularly, ask your priest if you can help as a welcomer one Sunday (if you enjoy it, maybe you could join the rota with your family).
9. Look for an opportunity every day to do an act of kindness for someone.
10. Be joyful – Jesus loves you!

Appendix 3 Parish Challenges

Together in Christ: Saying 'Yes' to Missionary Discipleship.

Pope Francis has challenged every Christian to be actively involved in evangelisation – in our churches, communities, work places, schools, gyms - wherever we meet other people. It is an essential part of living out our baptism.

If we worry that our knowledge of the faith is too patchy to be of much use in bringing others to Christ, Pope Francis reminds us that, *'anyone who has experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love'* [Evangelii Gaudium: The Joy of the Gospel].

So this Eastertide why not take up the challenge, step out of your comfort zone, and become a 'Missionary Disciple'?

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19).

Eastertide Missionary Disciple Challenges!

Easter Sunday to Pentecost

1. Give/send Easter cards or messages to friends and family
2. Look for an extra charity to support that lives out the Gospel values e.g. social justice, outreach to the needy, pro-life, care for creation
3. Read one of the Gospels and talk about it with a friend
4. Wear a visible cross or crucifix whenever you are able
5. Go to Mass to celebrate the solemnity of The Ascension of the Lord (if this is not possible, read the Readings for the day and pray about them)
6. Start conversations about faith - ask three people about their own beliefs, truly listen to what they have to say, share your faith with them
7. Let people you meet, work or go to school with know that you are a Catholic e.g. drop into conversation something that happened or you heard at Mass; tell someone you will light a candle for them
8. Pray a decade of the Rosary at least once a week in a public place e.g. on the bus, at the hairdressers, in the park, before a football match, on your lunch break
9. Consider volunteering to help at your parish e.g. refreshments, reading, children's liturgy, cleaning, maintenance, starting a study group, setting up a toddler group, praying for others
10. Put a Christian symbol on or in your car (or other mode of transport!)
11. Do an ARK (a Random Act of Kindness) every day
12. Whenever possible keep a smile on your face and joy in your heart!

Appendix 4 Saying 'yes' & challenges

Print the next page double side and you can cut these into small flyers to take away

<p>Together in Christ: Saying 'Yes' to Missionary Discipleship.</p> <p>Pope Francis has challenged every Christian to be actively involved in evangelisation – in our churches, communities, work places, schools, gyms - wherever we meet other people. It is an essential part of living out our baptism.</p> <p>If we worry that our knowledge of the faith is too patchy to be of much use in bringing others to Christ, Pope Francis reminds us that, <i>'anyone who has experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love'</i> [Evangelii Gaudium: The Joy of the Gospel].</p> <p>So this Eastertide why not take up the challenge, step out of your comfort zone, and become a 'Missionary Disciple'?</p> <p><i>"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."</i> (Matthew 28:19).</p>	<p>Eastertide Missionary Disciple Challenges! Easter Sunday ~Pentecost</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give/send Easter cards or messages to friends and family 2. Look for an extra charity to support that lives out the Gospel values eg social justice, outreach to the needy, pro-life, care for creation 3. Read one of the Gospels and talk about it with a friend 4. Wear a visible cross or crucifix whenever you are able 5. Go to Mass to celebrate the solemnity of The Ascension of the Lord (if this is not possible, read the Readings for the day and pray about them) 6. Start conversations about faith - ask three people about their own beliefs, truly listen to what they have to say, share your faith with them 7. Let people you meet, work or go to school with know that you are a Catholic eg drop into conversation something that happened or you heard at Mass; tell someone you will light a candle for them 8. Pray a decade of the Rosary at least once a week in a public place eg on the bus, at the hairdressers, in the park, before a football match, on your lunch break 9. Consider volunteering to help at your parish eg refreshments, reading, children's liturgy, cleaning, maintenance, starting a study group, setting up a toddler group, praying for others 10. Put a Christian symbol on or in your car (or other mode of transport!)
<p>Together in Christ: Saying 'Yes' to Missionary Discipleship.</p> <p>Pope Francis has challenged every Christian to be actively involved in evangelisation – in our churches, communities, work places, schools, gyms - wherever we meet other people. It is an essential part of living out our baptism.</p> <p>If we worry that our knowledge of the faith is too patchy to be of much use in bringing others to Christ, Pope Francis reminds us that, <i>'anyone who has experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love'</i> [Evangelii Gaudium: The Joy of the Gospel].</p> <p>So this Eastertide why not take up the challenge, step out of your comfort zone, and become a 'Missionary Disciple'?</p> <p><i>"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."</i> (Matthew 28:19).</p>	<p>Eastertide Missionary Disciple Challenges! Easter Sunday ~Pentecost</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give/send Easter cards or messages to friends and family 2. Look for an extra charity to support that lives out the Gospel values eg social justice, outreach to the needy, pro-life, care for creation 3. Read one of the Gospels and talk about it with a friend 4. Wear a visible cross or crucifix whenever you are able 5. Go to Mass to celebrate the solemnity of The Ascension of the Lord (if this is not possible, read the Readings for the day and pray about them) 6. Start conversations about faith - ask three people about their own beliefs, truly listen to what they have to say, share your faith with them 7. Let people you meet, work or go to school with know that you are a Catholic eg drop into conversation something that happened or you heard at Mass; tell someone you will light a candle for them 8. Pray a decade of the Rosary at least once a week in a public place eg on the bus, at the hairdressers, in the park, before a football match, on your lunch break 9. Consider volunteering to help at your parish eg refreshments, reading, children's liturgy, cleaning, maintenance, starting a study group, setting up a toddler group, praying for others 10. Put a Christian symbol on or in your car (or other mode of transport!)

Appendix 5

20 ideas for living out Prayer

1. Begin and end every day with a short prayer. Start the day by inviting the Holy Spirit to inspire and guide you. End the day by spending time with God to review it.
2. Pray a blessing for every person you spend time with today, not imagining that you know what's best for them, but according to God's love for them.
3. Choose a person in church or in the community and do something tangible for them at least once a week in Eastertide. Don't tell them, just plan it and do it.
4. Over the days of Eastertide, read the entire book of Psalms, one by one, in order.
5. Make a meditation out of one daily task, such as making a cup of coffee, ironing or cooking a meal. Do the task carefully and notice everything about it. Be silent.
6. Make small gestures today. Open doors for others. Let someone pass first. Wait and smile. Be a generous driver! Let someone out!
7. At home, sing your favourite hymn or thank God cheerfully for all your blessings.
8. Take time to find out where you can donate blood, put a date in your diary, do it! You could help save the lives of three people by donating a pint of blood.
9. Strike up a conversation with someone in a shop or on a bus. Just be friendly.
10. Today, take time morning and evening to become aware that you are breathing and that you are alive. Give thanks.
11. Send an encouraging email, text or card to someone who would appreciate some support or thanks. Make sure it's about them and not you.
12. Spend a whole day without complaining about the weather, food, drink, politics or ... anything at all.
13. Finish something today, bring it to closure. Put it to bed. Enjoy the ending. Then enjoy starting something new.
14. Go on a media fast for 24 hours. No TV, no radio, no internet, no newspaper.
15. Listen to someone today without interrupting. Pay close attention to what they say. Give them space to express themselves. Forget yourself and listen.
16. Today, notice the shapes, patterns and colours of everything you see: clothes, buildings, cars, streets, plants. Public art.
17. Be kind to a non-human this week: feed the birds; donate to a wildlife charity; take a dog for a walk; only buy dolphin-friendly fish products.
18. Help the environment this week: reuse something; take an item to the local recycling centre; save leftover food and prepare it for another meal; donate books to a charity shop; buy environmentally-friendly washing up liquid; don't press Print.
19. Go for a prayer walk: walk around your locality and pray for every home, every business, each person you pass, for all the car drivers and passengers.
20. Go for a whole day without using a plastic carrier bag. Take a cotton bag when you go shopping.

Appendix 6

Novena sourced from www.praymorenovenas.com

Novena to the Holy Spirit - Day 1

Charity

Let us bow down in humility at the power and grandeur of the Holy Spirit. Let us worship the Holy Trinity and give glory today to the Paraclete, our Advocate. Oh Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Your gift of Charity within us. The great charity of all the host of Saints is only made possible by your power, Oh Divine Spirit. Increase in me, the virtue of charity that I may love as God loves with the selflessness of the Saints. Amen.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

Novena to the Holy Spirit - Day 2

Joy

Let us bow down in humility at the power and grandeur of the Holy Spirit. Let us worship the Holy Trinity and give glory today to the Paraclete, our Advocate. Oh Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Your gift of Joy within us. All of the Saints are marked with an uncompromisable Joy in times of trial, difficulty and pain. Give us, Oh Holy Spirit, the Joy that surpasses all understanding that we may live as a witness to Your love and fidelity! Amen.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

Novena to the Holy Spirit - Day 3

Peace

Let us bow down in humility at the power and grandeur of the Holy Spirit. Let us worship the Holy Trinity and give glory today to the Paraclete, our Advocate. Oh Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Your gift of Peace within us. The Saints were tempted, attacked and accused by the devil who is the destroyer of peace. When we are accused by the devil, come to our aid as our Advocate and give us Peace that lasts through all trials! Amen.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

Novena to the Holy Spirit - Day 4

Patience

Let us bow down in humility at the power and grandeur of the Holy Spirit. Let us worship the Holy Trinity and give glory today to the Paraclete, our Advocate. Oh Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Your gift of Patience within us. Oh Holy Spirit, you give lavishly to those who ask. Please give us the patience of the Saints who are now with you in heaven. Help us to endure everything with an eternal patience that is only possible with your help. Amen.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

Novena to the Holy Spirit - Day 5

Kindness

Let us bow down in humility at the power and grandeur of the Holy Spirit. Let us worship the Holy Trinity and give glory today to the Paraclete, our Advocate. Oh Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from

evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Your gift of Kindness within us. Jesus approached sinners with immense kindness. Holy Paraclete, please treat us humble sinners with the same kindness and give us the ability to treat all others with that kindness as well. Amen.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

Novena to the Holy Spirit - Day 6

Faithfulness

Let us bow down in humility at the power and grandeur of the Holy Spirit. Let us worship the Holy Trinity and give glory today to the Paraclete, our Advocate. Oh Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Your gift of Faithfulness within us. You, oh Lord, are ever faithful. You are faithful until the end. Though we are weak and distracted, please give us the grace to be faithful to You as you are to us! Amen.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

Novena to the Holy Spirit - Day 7

Gentleness

Let us bow down in humility at the power and grandeur of the Holy Spirit. Let us worship the Holy Trinity and give glory today to the Paraclete, our Advocate. Oh Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Your gift of Gentleness within us. Despite the gravity of our sins, oh Lord you treat us with Gentleness. Dear Holy Spirit, give us your power to treat all in our lives with the Gentleness of the Saints. Amen.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of

the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

Novena to the Holy Spirit - Day 8

Self-Control

Let us bow down in humility at the power and grandeur of the Holy Spirit. Let us worship the Holy Trinity and give glory today to the Paraclete, our Advocate. Oh Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Your gift of Self-Control within us. Your Martyrs had the overwhelming self-control to go joyfully to a painful death without shrinking from the opportunity to join You in heaven. Give us this self-control to have command over our emotions and desires that we may serve You more fully. Amen.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

Novena to the Holy Spirit - Day 9

Goodness

Let us bow down in humility at the power and grandeur of the Holy Spirit. Let us worship the Holy Trinity and give glory today to the Paraclete, our Advocate. Oh Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Goodness within us. We want to be like your Saints in heaven. Holy Spirit, renew us by your power with your Goodness that we may bring the Good News to the world. Amen.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS



This resource asks two simple questions of our churches;

1. Are we open for business?
2. Do we advertise the fact?

Our buildings can be a great resource for the parish and wider community. They provide a sacred space, a place of refuge and peace among the noise and chaos of life, to which people can retreat for just a moment to pray, reflect, enjoy a few minutes quiet.

Sadly, many of our churches are open for services only, or just at certain times during the day or week. The need we feel for peace, reflection and prayer does not happen by appointment or during pre-appointed hours. Someone walking by a church might be drawn to come in, only to find the door locked because 10 minutes ago, the designated time for opening came to an end.

This resource is designed to help a parish community consider whether to open the doors of the church building all day, every day as an act of mercy, welcome and outreach, and if so, how to do that safely and to maximum effect.

To open a church all day, every day is to take a risk. Something could get stolen or a building could be damaged.



Crime is inevitable in an open church, so minimise the risk, opportunity and property vulnerable to theft.



The Crime Prevention Triangle helps us understand how to minimise that risk.

Crime will occur when all three sides of the triangle are present.

Remove one or more, and the risk is lessened.

Suitable target - - if you leave large brass candlesticks out and unsecured, they will get stolen. **Action – remove valuable items that would be attractive to criminals.**

Motivated offender - - there are people who are quite willing to commit crime against a church. **Action - - there is no real defence against this but if a church serves the community, there may be a sense from the locals that this is 'their' building and so to be treated with respect**

Absence of capable guardians - - If there is no 'presence', either physical or by means of CCTV for example, then a church is more vulnerable to crime. **Action - - it is questionable whether having people in church 'watching' during open hours is wise. All it may do is place elderly and vulnerable people at risk. More effective might be CCTV, either dummy or real cameras, and the use of Smartwater. These measures accompanied by signs are a good deterrent.**

Top tips for opening your church

- **Get advice**
Talk to your local Crime Prevention Officer. Often Police Forces have people who specialise in Church safety. They will advise you on what measures to take.
- **CCTV**
This is useful as a deterrent and in catching an offender after the event. However, CCTV is of limited use, rarely giving clear enough images to secure identification. It may be worthwhile getting dummy cameras fitted at minimal cost to act as a deterrent. Always put up signs informing people of the presence of CCTV, even if the cameras don't work. The sign will be the deterrent.
- **Smartwater**
To mark valuable items with this is a requirement of the Catholic Church Insurance Association. It means that anything taken and later recovered can be quickly identified and returned. Always put up signs informing people of the presence of Smartwater. The sign will be the deterrent.

- **Lighting**
Ensure the church grounds are well lit and consider having some lights in the church entrance or porch triggered by a motion sensor. This will provide light for people to safely enter the church and also will alert others to the presence of visitors.
- **Restrict access**
Which areas are you happy for people to have access to and which would you want to keep private? Lock the sacristy and other areas that can be secured. If you would rather people didn't enter the Sanctuary, then a simple solution would be to close altar gates if you have them or put a rope barrier across the entrance to the Sanctuary. Even if these can be easily stepped over, they provide a psychological barrier. An alarm across the Sanctuary entrance is expensive and only effective if it can be heard outside the church. Having access on a key code is fine for parishioners who know the code, but useless for the passer-by who wants to pop in to pray. Either the church is open, or it isn't.
- **What can be stolen?**
Remove items of value that you don't want taken. Any brass candlesticks etc are a prime target. Decide what you are not particularly concerned about losing; CTS pamphlets or booklets for example are of little value and may actually benefit someone.
- **Create activity**
If a building looks occupied or busy, then offenders are deterred. Simple actions can help, like encouraging parishioners to pop in when they pass the church or suggest to your Parish Priest that he could stick his head in the church door whenever going out or coming back from something. Having cars parked in the church car park or near the church door gives the impression that someone is around.
- **Does the Church *look* open?**
Even if the church door is left unlocked, it may appear to be closed for business and passers-by may be reluctant to cross the threshold. Consider having a notice on the front door inviting people to come in. 'Church Open. Come in and pray' may be all the invitation someone needs.
- **What do people experience when they cross the threshold?**
Consider:
 - Votive candles available for lighting – follow basic fire prevention advice.
 - A prayer board on which people can place written prayers for the parish community to join in
 - Leaflets and pamphlets about the Catholic faith
 - Gentle music playing on a loop to create a sense of the sacred
 - Notices about RCIA, social groups, Alpha courses
 - Ensure noticeboards and the porch to the church are tidy and welcoming and clear of clutter.

Resources

- www.cbcew.org.uk/CBCEW-Home/Departments/Evangelisation-and-Catechesis
- www.catholicnews.org.uk/Home/Special-Events/Proclaim-15-Building-Missionary-Parishes
- www.catholicfamily.org.uk/projects/everybodys-welcome

- http://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/information/diocesan-commissions/01_commission-adult-formation

GUIDING PEOPLE AROUND OUR CHURCHES

Parishes often keep their churches locked because they say no one would want to come in. The demand could be a lot bigger than you think. When a church opens its doors for the first time one of the most common responses from visitors is, "Oh I've gone past this place on so many occasions and always wanted to see inside but it's never open." So if there is any one answer to this question, it's probably 'More people than you think'.

First impressions count!

Make sure all the signs and notice boards display clear, unambiguous information so visitors can tell at a glance when the church is open. If it's not been open regularly before, people may carry on walking past, assuming that they won't be able to get in.

Putting out an A-frame or prominent sign outside the church to announce that it's open is an effective way of overcoming this. A template is available for use to laminate. Please adapt as necessary or take a photograph of your open front door or just write: "Church Open".

Is the entrance easy to find and clearly signposted?

Keep all your notice boards tidy and up to date, but also informative and attractive.

Display eye-catching publicity like photographs of star attractions such as a magnificent roof or colourful stained-glass windows. Don't underestimate the power of good signage: a notice saying 'Please feel free to walk around' will put visitors at their ease and ensure they don't peer quickly through the door before walking away.

Look at the approach to the building. Do the front door, the steps, the path, the churchyard look well-maintained? Does the building look like it's regularly used and cared for? If not, then it's off-putting to potential visitors and many won't even bother to find out whether they can get in.

Keep the door – or at the very least the outer door – physically open. Does the interior look clean and cared for? Is there clutter that you could tidy away or dispose of?

Is there an area set aside for quiet prayer and contemplation? Is it clearly identified as such?

SEE: 'ASSESSING YOUR CHURCH WELCOME' SHEET – discuss the outcomes with each other. This is also a useful tool for assessing how others view your parish at any time.

How to share information

You might want to think about producing a detailed booklet for visitors who want in-depth information and a brief leaflet to guide people who just want to see the highlights.

Put up information boards next to notable features such as tombs, stained glass windows and important furnishing: make sure they're easily legible and easy to digest.

Open just part of the building that you can easily control, such as an entrance lobby, side chapel or transept.

This can work well if your church building is well frequented during the day but you still want to be able to provide a quiet space open to everybody at all times. It's good if you can choose a part of the building from which the rest of the interior can be clearly viewed.

Church buildings bear witness to the Christian faith. They offer a sign and celebration of the presence of God in a community. A locked door is a universal symbol of exclusion, while an open church expresses God's welcome, His presence, His creativity, His justice, His healing and His forgiveness. Allowing friends and strangers to enter your building freely is a simple but always effective act of hospitality.

If you need any help or further guidance in keeping your church open, email:
adult.formatiom@dioceseofnottingham.uk



"The Church which "goes forth" is a community of missionary disciples who take the first step, who are involved and supportive, who bear fruit and rejoice. An evangelizing community knows that the Lord has taken the initiative, he has loved us first (cf. 1 Jn 4:19), and therefore we can move forward, boldly take the initiative, go out to others, seek those who have fallen away, stand at the crossroads and welcome the outcast. Such a community has an endless desire to show mercy, the fruit of its own experience of the power of the Father's infinite mercy. Let us try a little harder to take the first step and to become involved. Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. The Lord gets involved and he involves his own, as he kneels to wash their feet. He tells his disciples: "You will be blessed if you do this" (Jn 13:17). An evangelizing community gets involved by word and deed in people's daily lives; it bridges distances, it is willing to abase itself if necessary, and it embraces human life, touching the suffering flesh

of Christ in others. Evangelizers thus take on the "smell of the sheep" and the sheep are willing to hear their voice. An evangelizing community is also supportive, standing by people at every step of the way, no matter how difficult or lengthy this may prove to be. It is familiar with patient expectation and apostolic endurance. Evangelization consists mostly of patience and disregard for constraints of time. Faithful to the Lord's gift, it also bears fruit." **(EG24)**

*'Open Churches' & 'Assessing your Church Welcome' Produced by Fr Joe Wheat,
Crossing the Threshold 2015 – Adapted by Adult Formation 2019*

For further help with this project email: adult.formatiom@dioceseofnottingham.uk

Assessing Your Church Welcome

DETAILS OF WHEN YOU ASSESSED:

TIME	DATE	LOCATION (e.g. if more than one church/mass centre in the parish)
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The view from the pavement

Are the church grounds tidy?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Average ☐ Poor ☐ Terrible

Comments

The Notice Board

Can the main notices be read from the street?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Only during the day

Comments

Is the board tidy, in good repair and up-to-date with service times?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments

Are the phone numbers of the parish priest and the parish office clearly displayed?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments

Are posters friendly and colourful?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments

The Porch/Church

Is the porch/church tidy?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments

Are notices kept up-to-date and well displayed?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments

Are the posters friendly and colourful?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments

Is there plenty of information to show the activities of the parish?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments

Is there information about people responsible for various activities - their names and telephone numbers?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments

Are prayer leaflets available and easy to find?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments

Are 'quiet spaces' signposted?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments

Are valuables locked away outside service times?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments

ST MARY'S CHURCH



YOU ARE WELCOME