



# Le Chéile Update

Le Chéile Spring Edition 2016

Volume 8 Issue 6

Spring 2016

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## Words to the Wise

*There is a new world,  
and a new man  
Who walks amazed  
that he so long was  
blind, and dumb;  
he who now towards  
the sun lifts up a trustful  
face in skilful song,  
And fears no more the  
darkness where his day  
began.*

James Kirkup

*There is a New Morning*



**P.S.....** We are still receiving post from schools at our old address. Please inform your school community of our new address as we are no longer able to access our old address.



## Spring has Sprung!

*Despite the recent spell of cold weather the signs of spring are all around us bringing new hope and new energy.*

*This though is a particularly busy time in schools, particularly for our Principals. May you have every blessing for this hectic period and we hope that you can get some well-deserved rest over the holidays. We wish you a very happy Easter and hope you will all experience the joy of the risen Lord.*



## The 2016 Le Chéile Conference

This year's Le Chéile Conference generated a high level of engagement and thoughtful reflection. The variety and content of the workshops were appreciated with many requests that we return to and further develop some of the topics raised over the two days.

We had the largest student contingent ever this year and hopefully they will engage with their school Anam Caras to develop the Le Chéile *Pay It Forward Day* in their schools. We appreciated all the contributions and feedback from our participants as we continue to develop this important event for our Le Chéile Community.

Among the many significant contributions was that of Fr. Peter Mc Verry. His starting point was that when young people tell him they don't believe in God, he asks them to tell him about the God they don't believe in. He usually ends up telling them that he doesn't believe in that God - a censorious, judgemental God. The God he believes in is a God of mercy and compassion, who is tolerant of our weaknesses and forgiving of our offences. How we understand God determines how we understand what God wants, and therefore it influences our attitudes, priorities and behaviour.

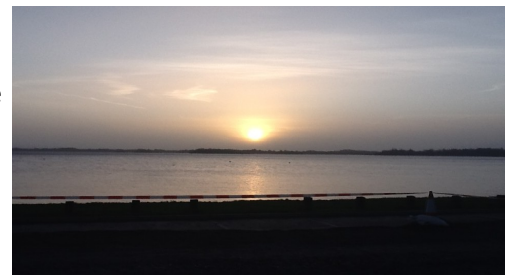
To grow into the image and likeness of the God of compassion, we have to become the compassion of God to others. The God of compassion is 'good news to the poor'. However it is far more threatening to the lifestyle and securities of those of us who are not poor than the God whose passion is the observance of the law.

The early Christian community understood that this radical inclusiveness, revealed by the actions of Jesus had implications for their community and life together. In their community, no-one was to be unwanted, rejected or marginalised. Everyone had the same dignity of being a child of God and that dignity was to be recognised and affirmed by the way in which the Christian community reached out to them and accepted them.

Fr. Peter concluded with a challenge to us all: 'If we do not care and share, if we do not reach out, then there is no hope, and we will have destroyed, yet again, God's dream for our world.

A community where everyone's needs are met through the caring and sharing of each one in the community, where everyone feels loved, valued and respected, would surely be the Kingdom of God on earth.'

As we face the daily challenges in our schools and the greater external challenges of the changing social, economic and political landscape around us, hopefully we will remember Fr. Peter's challenge to continue to care, share and reach out in hope to contribute to God's dream for our world.



*Our thanks to Karen O' Donovan for our annual sunrise picture from Hodson Bay.*

Previous issues of the Le Chéile Newsletter and other related publications are available on the publications page of the Le Chéile website.

## Seasonal Reflection



On Good Friday we are asked, 'Were you there when they crucified my Lord?' It is an uncomfortable question and one most of us would rather avoid. Jesus died and is buried and all is apparently over. We recall the Lord going forth to sacrifice so that we too may win the laughter of Easter Day.

On Easter Sunday we marvel at the miraculous. The crucified Jesus has unexpectedly become the risen Christ. The eternal has invaded the transient. The Jesus of Good Friday has shown once and for all that God's relationship with each of us transcends the limitations of this life. Lent is a time of waiting, not for Godot, but for God.

It is ultimately not about our experience but about Jesus opening up a way for us through the very powers that would otherwise destroy us. It evokes a faithful waiting on God in the darkness of faith and invites a spirituality of silence.

Only in silence and contemplation can we allow God to reveal the divine greatness to us. During Lent we are given the breathing space to prepare for the real presence. It is a gentle call to slow down and reflect on the bigger picture.

Who is the God of the Paschal Mystery for us today?

The God of the Easter story is an impatient figure, hungry to transform us into worthy bearers of the name 'Christian'.

Jesus came on earth to love and be loved. The Christian life is an exchange of love - the love we receive and the love we give for Christ.

Lent is a welcome opportunity to savour the energy, joy, and trust of the unique Easter laughter.

It is a time when we are particularly conscious of the wisdom of Brendan Kennelly's incisive words, 'Self knows that self is not enough.'

## Master in Spirituality

The leading international **MA in Applied Spirituality** will start again with a week in August (15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>) at Milltown Park, Dublin and will be followed by 3-day block delivery each month. Having previously run in Milltown Institute, and All Hallows College, the course proved attractive to teachers and those working in the field of education but it is also open to interested others. Early applications are advised. For further information please contact Michael O'Sullivan, SJ email: spiremos@gmail.com

## Pay it Forward Day

This year we will have a **Le Chéile Day on 15<sup>th</sup> April, which will coincide with a 'Pay it Forward Day'**. This event is a tangible expression of the caring schools we strive to create. It is an opportunity for the entire school community to be involved in a simple shared activity with an investment of only time and imagination. We ask each school to organise its own way of marking this event and maybe to record it for our Pay It Forward news section on our website.

**Updates:** In addition to the poster mailshot, website and updates at our Cluster Meetings, our Anam Caras will keep the school updated on suggestions and ideas.

**Resources:** We will post out the Advertising Posters and Information Leaflets to your school and update our website with your suggestions.



## Le Chéile Schools Teachers' Retreat Day 6<sup>th</sup> February

*"Be still and know that I am God"* was the theme for the retreat and it was an opportunity to do just that. It was what the group participating in the day agreed that they wanted from the experience. It was a joy to welcome Fr. Donal Neary SJ as the facilitator. For some of us (myself included) the prospect of spending the day with Donal was enough of a draw as he brought back wonderful memories of 'Mater Dei' days.

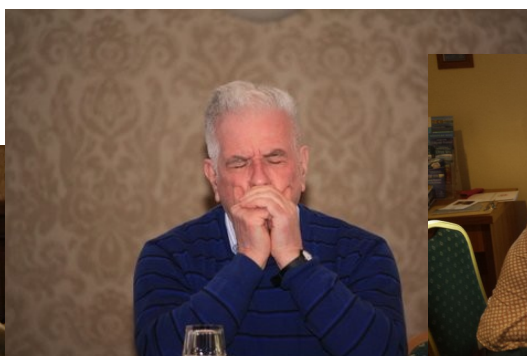
As we all are so acutely conscious of these days, very few people in society can find adequate time to be still in their day. 'Mindfulness' has become the buzz word. But where did this practice come from? Not from 'eastern' traditions as many believe, but from our own Christian contemplative traditions; traditions dating back to the early Christian monasteries in our own isle. And so the day began with contemplation on gratitude, a very useful mindful practice, a wonderful way to be conscious of the grace of God in our own lives. In times of stress or difficulty a sense of being grateful or thankful for the good in our life can bring us energy, can help us through the darker times. Fr Donal spoke of the nature that was beginning to be reborn all around us and how the consciousness of God's gift of nature brings humility to our lives. We were invited to spend some time on our own, in thought and prayer, around these issues. During this time participants explored the natural surroundings of the retreat centre, noticing nature as it sprang forth, some doodled or made drawings, while others quietly reflected and prayed in the chapel. It was a lovely time. The group followed this with a very honest, thought-provoking and valuable discussion that brought important issues to the forefront of our minds.

Chaplains also gathered for their own lovely day of sharing and reflection with Brian Grogan S.J. and John Scally and we look forward to this annual event.

*Sarah Redmond Chaplain St. Tiernan's Community School*



## Conference 2016



Lots of reflective concentration at this years conference.....



Busy, happy students, do you recognise them??



Thank you once again to everyone who contributed and helped out at our conference, including our photographers, Br. Pat for our video, the teachers who organised our student events and their Principals who facilitated their participation in the conference.

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



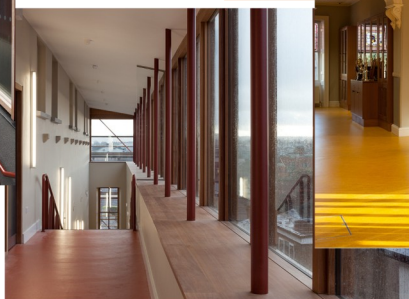
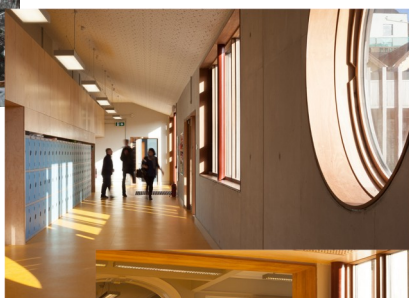
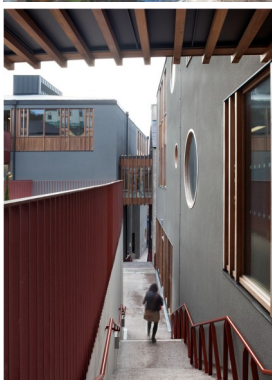
## St. Angela's Cork Return to their New Building

Students and staff of St. Angela's were delighted to return to the creative mix of new and old when they moved back to their new school buildings in December. With some outstanding views of the city from some of the classrooms to the rooftop sports pitch everyone had much to explore on arrival. Judging by the comments and enthusiasm at their open day it is obvious everyone is delighted with the results. Congratulations to the Principal, the Board of Management, the entire school community and the design and construction team for negotiating their way through this difficult process!

From this .....

.....to this!!

We send our best wishes to everyone in St Angela's as they all get to know and love their new school!



## The Consultation on ERB and Ethics.

Submissions on proposals will be accepted up to **31<sup>st</sup> March** at [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie). A number of background documents have been developed in consultation with the Catholic Schools Partnership and the Council for Catechetics, with the support of CPSMA, to help you with drafting a submission. Submissions do not have to be particularly long or detailed and could depend on your own perspective, experience and expertise. For further information contact: [kate.liffey@iecon.ie](mailto:kate.liffey@iecon.ie).

### Reminder of Important Dates

11 <sup>th</sup> January	Submit <b>ONE</b> copy of the original signed <b>2014-2015 Accounts</b> (and an electronic copy) to the Le Chéile Office
	<b>Cluster Meetings</b>
7 <sup>th</sup> April	The South Cluster Meeting - Springfort Hall, New Two Pothouse
12 <sup>th</sup> April	The West Cluster Meeting - Mc William Park Hotel, Claremorris
14 <sup>th</sup> April	Dublin North & South Cluster Meeting now combined (on this occasion only) in a new venue - Liffey Valley Hotel
	<b>RE Teachers Meetings</b> 1.00-4.00pm
5 <sup>th</sup> April	West - Mc William Park Hotel
7 <sup>th</sup> April	Dublin - City North Hotel, Gormanston
14 <sup>th</sup> April	The South - venue Moran Silver Springs
13 <sup>th</sup> April	<b>Middle Leaders Training</b> 5.00 –8.00pm Talbot Hotel Stillorgan Dublin, <i>Final Session and Presentation of Certificates Principals are invited to join their teachers on this evening</i>
15 <sup>th</sup> April	<b>Le Chéile Day - Pay It Forward</b>
21 <sup>st</sup> April	Le Chéile Schools Board of Management Chairpersons' Meeting and Dinner

Visit [www.lecheiletrust.ie](http://www.lecheiletrust.ie) for further news items, logos, photographs and archive materials.  
If you have any news items or pictures that you would like to see on our website please send them in!!