



# Le Chéile Update

Le Chéile Autumn Edition 2016

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## Words to the Wise

"Freedom exists not to do what you like, but having the freedom to do what you ought"

Jim Caviezel

(Actor who played Jesus in the Passion of Christ)



P.S.



Please forward this newsletter onwards to your whole school community.

## School—a place of hope and courage!

The news from the ASTI last Friday that they propose seven strike days before Christmas and the withdrawal of supervision and substitution from 7th November is disappointing in terms of the potential negative impact on student learning.

We hope and pray that this dispute will be resolved quickly and that we will be able to return to normal school work including the implementation of the revised junior cycle programme as soon as possible.

The last few weeks have been very busy in all our schools. At our recent Cluster Meetings we acknowledged the work of the schools as presented in the End of Year reports to Le Chéile. The Cluster meetings continue to be a great place for open and honest discussion where Principals and Chairpersons can share experiences and expertise. Among the topics discussed were our 'conversations on ethos'—a process that we hope to continue in all our schools this year with a special emphasis on student conversations.

In October we welcomed over 100 teachers to the first session of the Middle Leaders course which we are running again this year with the Loreto, Spiritan and Jesuit Trusts. In addition to the Dublin venue we also have a group of over 40 teachers attending in Waterford.

We were pleased to welcome into the Le Chéile family in September the newly appointed teachers in our schools. As they face the challenges ahead we wish them courage and conviction in their work in the context of the schools' values and vision.

We extend our thanks to the Congregational Leaders for their engagement with the Síol Board of Directors at the end of September in looking at future developments for Le Chéile.

*"Faith is the courage to face reality with hope"*

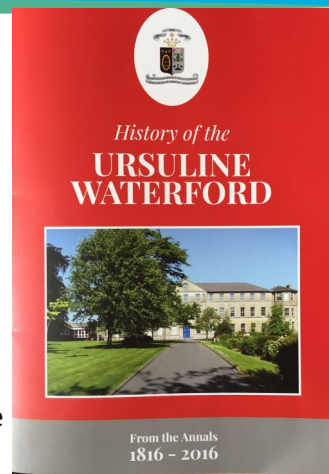
(Robert H. Schuller)

## Congratulations to Ursuline Waterford

It was a pleasure to attend the 200 years' celebration of the Ursuline Sisters in Waterford on 7th October.

Congratulations to Sr. June Fennelly on editing the History of Ursuline Waterford. As she says in the introduction, this book "gives one such an appreciation of the extraordinary stature of the women who went before us, of their initiative and courage and their abiding trust in God".

May that initiative, courage and trust in God live on in all our Le Chéile schools!



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



Recently I completed the number one item on my bucket list, a visit to Robben Island in Cape Town to see a tiny cell which could have been a cold tomb of loneliness and despair. Inside the sterile, cinder block cell was a toilet, a thin mattress with pillows and a brown blanket. A single window looking into the courtyard has thick, white bars, matching the ones on the door to the cellblock's hallway. Yet while he was a prisoner there even when little sunlight shone into that cell, Nelson Mandela could see a better future – one worthy of sacrifice. The start of the new school year is a time of idealism, inspiration and influence. It is a time when we are challenged by people like Mandela to make our schools and our world a better place. It is a time to recall the words of Robert Kennedy:

*It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time we stand up for an ideal, or act to improve the lot of others, or strike out against injustice, we send forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centres of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.*

## Tony Lee joins the Le Chéile Team

We're delighted to announce that Mr Tony Lee has now joined the Le Chéile team as School Governance and Leadership Development Officer. Tony has been principal of St. Aloysius College, Carrigtwohill ( a Le Chéile school!!) for fourteen years. Previously he was Principal in Scoil Mhuire, Kanturk and Deputy Principal in Nagle Community College, Mahon, Cork. Tony started his career as a teacher of Physics, Science and Maths in Mannix College, Charleville before moving to Nagle Community College in 1984, firstly as a teacher and then being promoted to Deputy Principal there in 1999. Tony has been a Council member of AMCSS/JMB from 2009 to 2012 and then served as Vice President from 2012 to 2015. He led the work on developing the new proposed middle management structures, which were agreed in principle by the management bodies of the ETBI and Community and Comprehensive Schools sectors as well as the JMB. With his breadth of experience we know that Tony will be a great asset to the Le Chéile community and we look forward to working with him.



## Reminder about Upcoming Training & Events

**Deputy Principal Seminar:** Joining the Spiritan and Loreto Schools Trust we are once again co-presenting the Deputy Principals' Seminar which will replace our previous one day event this year. The seminar is on 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> November 2016 in the Bloomfield House Hotel, Mullingar. The Application Form is on our website and further details will be forwarded to schools before the event.

## Cluster meeting Update "Conversation on Ethos" Projects

Following our recent Cluster Meetings we would like to remind our Principals and Anam Caras that schools are now invited to start planning their school "Conversation on Ethos" project. It was agreed that students will focus on their own school and congregational heritage and that two students will bring their school project to the Le Chéile Conference in Athlone on 2<sup>nd</sup> February where all the students will develop the idea. Some sample questions the students could consider include:-

- ◆ Who founded the Congregation? When? Why?
- ◆ What remains the same? What is different in the school and society?
- ◆ If the founder of the Congregation came back today would they be pleased with what they see?

Further information will be sent by e-mail after the mid-term break.

## Board of Management Trustee Appointments

We are conscious that there are people who would like to participate in the great work of our school Boards of Management but they never get the opportunity to make the connection at the appropriate time. Do you know someone who would be willing to share their skills, experience, time and enthusiasm on a school Board of Management? A neighbour, friend or colleague of any age with perhaps legal, business or construction Industry experience? If so, we would genuinely welcome your suggestions for appointees as we have a large number of boards that change, throughout the country, every year.

*A copy of all our Course brochures, reply forms etc. are available on our website*

**The correct Logo for Le Cheile Schools Trust is available on our website**



There was great excitement when we finally moved into our new building. Staff and students had been looking forward to this day since we opened in Mill Road in 2014. We watched (not so patiently) all summer as the builders worked so hard to get the building 'school ready'. The day we started to move our furniture in it seemed impossible that we could teach there ten days later. Teachers waded over and back through puddles carrying all our earthly possessions, side stepping the painters, the carpet layers and the glass installers. We will never be able to fully explain the mammoth task it was to get in and be able to start teaching by September 1<sup>st</sup>. One of my happiest memories is seeing the students arrive from their homes, through the park. Finally our school in the locality it was opened for. Now a mere six weeks later as I look out of my office with working wifi, books on shelves, fabulous interesting classrooms, wall displays and happy, cosy students the memories of the grief are beginning to fade (thankfully!). We look forward to phase two being delivered in January and finally taking possession of all of our amazing building in July.

Do please come and visit - all are welcome! *Aine Moran—Principal*



#### The Students Verdict.....

"You can't imagine there is a school here when you see the building site at the front of the building." *Gabriel*

I can't believe this is only a quarter of our building - it's huge!" *Lola*

"I'm glad it still feels as welcoming as the school was in Mill Road". *Martyna*



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

## Magic Moments

We decided to travel to World Youth Day in Krakow as part of the Patrician Secondary School (Newbridge Parish). We are currently completing the Pope John Paul II Award (Papal Cross). We had fundraising activities and preparation days to complete before we left on our pilgrimage. We were excited about the idea of going abroad with our Diocese (Kildare and Leighlin) and meeting other young people. Our Bishop Denis Nulty travelled with us along with our parish priest and our Pope John Paul II Leader/Teacher Ms Molloy.

At the World Youth Day events, we were overwhelmed with the amount of people who were gathered in one area through the one faith. It was awe inspiring to see such a profession of faith and to see the flags from all over the world (and trying to figure out which flag represents which country). The theme of World Youth Day was "blessed are the merciful". There is a lot of hardship that comes with pilgrimage, i.e. lots of walking and we slept on mats in a school. World Youth day is not just one day, it is a week of activities.

One day in Blonia Park as we waited for the Mass to start, Pope Francis arrived in his popemobile and he passed right by where our group were located. It was incredible to see Pope Francis in person, to see a man who is so influential and the leader of the Catholic Church. The crowd went wild and rejoiced at the sight of the Pope. When he started to speak, people wholeheartedly listened to every word using radio devices to translate the words spoken.

The crowd of people praying together, the emotion of the people and the diversity of countries that surrounded us was amazing. We felt that we were at home, a member of a global family coming together to celebrate our faith journey and to praise God. The theme of World Youth Day was "Blessed are the merciful" which was associated with the image of the Divine Mercy. Ms Molloy brought us to the Convent of Sister Faustina, where the image of the Divine Mercy is kept. There were crowds of people at the convent as Sister Faustina was the Patron Saint of World Youth Day, it was very special and an honour to see where she lived and her tomb. We then went to the Pope John Paul II Centre which was factory where John Paul worked during World War II. The factory is now the JPIL Centre. There was a first class relic of Pope John Paul II which was set inside the altar. The cassock which he wore on the day of the assassination attempt in 1981 is also kept in the church. There were thousands of people in the area as Pope John Paul II is so heroic to our generation and a beacon of inspiration to the young people of the world. We carry on his legacy as we proceed on our pilgrimage and our faith journey. Friendships and faith were formed through our mutual love of Jesus and memories that will last a lifetime and forever stay in our hearts.

*(By Sean Campbell and Cian Lookman)*



## Meet some of our new First Years from around the country!



Nicholas Quinn, Olympic Athlete returned to his former school, St. Gerald's DLS Castlebar and is pictured below with some 1st year students.



Ellie O'Connor-St. Mary's Killester, who received the first Commendation of the year in 1<sup>st</sup> Year for Enthusiasm and Hard Work, presented here by Ms Gilligan (Year Head) and Ms Foley (Tutor).



**Adjust your E-mail filters Let Le Chéile In!!** Please ensure your e-mail system does not filter any e-mails from Le Chéile Schools Trust. A number of recent e-mails sent to teachers went directly to their Junkmail.