



# Le Chéile Update

Le Chéile Summer Edition 2017

Volume 9 Issue 10

Summer 2017

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## Words to the Wise

**"For Christ plays in  
ten thousand places,  
lovely in limbs, and  
lovely in eyes not his"**

Gerard Manley Hopkins



**P.S.**



An electronic version of this newsletter is available on our website to e-mail onwards to your whole school community, Staff, Parents, Student Council, Board or to put on your own website.

## The 2017 Le Chéile Conference

This year's Le Chéile Conference generated a high level of engagement and thoughtful reflection. Among the many significant contributions was that of our keynote speaker Senator Joan Freeman, founder of Pieta House. She began by telling the founding story of the organisation. In 2003, when she was a practising psychologist, she closed down her own counselling business and dedicated her time to finding out how she could help people who were suicidal - what would be beneficial to them and help them get through their dark time. From humble beginnings, Pieta House has grown to almost 180 therapists and administration staff, and the demand for their services has continually increased. Speaking about their flagship fundraiser, the phenomenon that is Darkness Into Light, this event is almost entirely organised by volunteers and continues to go from strength to strength. Darkness Into Light is very much about hope, and hope is something they endeavour to give each person who comes to them in their time of need. They help them feel more hopeful about the future as we continue to face the grave issue of suicide and self-harm in Ireland. It was a very appropriate presentation as the theme of our conference was a 'Journey of Hope'.

Joan's emphasis on her founding story had a particular resonance as a unique feature of this year's conference was that most of our schools prepared wonderful videos of the founding stories of their school in advance of the Conference. We are very grateful to all the students and teachers who did such great work and showcased amazing creativity on these videos. They will be an invaluable resource for teachers in the coming years for events like 'Open Days'. The videos were the first instalment of a distinctively Le Chéile response to a national project currently being organised by the Catholic Schools Partnership to encourage all voluntary schools to reflect on their founding stories and ethos. We will be beginning the second phase of this ongoing process at our day for our Principals and Chairs of Board of Management in Mullingar on 21st June. Other topics for consideration on the day will include enhancing your communication skills and the new Junior Certificate. We look forward to seeing you there!

## Catholic Education Service Proposals

The Catholic Education Service Committee recently presented an initial briefing on a Strategic Plan for *The Future of Catholic Education at Second Level in the Republic of Ireland*. We extend our thanks to the Working Group for their work over the past year and now look forward to reflecting on these proposals and submitting our response to CESC before 26<sup>th</sup> June.

## Best wishes for Exams

We would like extend our best wishes to all our students and teachers currently preparing for exams this summer. Our thoughts and prayers are particularly with those students sitting for the Junior and Leaving Certificate examinations.

**You R Bright**



**Good Luck on  
your exam!!**

## Board of Management Trustee Appointments

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 experience? If so, we would genuinely welcome your suggestions for any of the large number of boards throughout the country that change every year.

## Thank You

As we move towards summer and the end of the school year we thank all members of our school communities for their hard work, dedication and care throughout the year. We particularly wish all those who are retiring many years of good health and happiness in their retirement.



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



### Share the Dream

At our recent retreat for teachers Peter McVerry reminded us that Jesus had a dream. His dream was God's dream. He dreamt that all people would live together as one family, God's family. Jesus dreamt of a world where no-one would be hungry and have nothing to eat, where no-one would be thirsty and have nothing to drink, where no one would be naked and have nothing to wear, where no-one would be sick and have no-one to visit them, where no-one would be in prison and rejected by their community (*Matt 25*). Jesus dreamt that all people would love each other, care for each other, share with each other and respect each other. What unites us as Christians is that we share this dream of Jesus. To follow Jesus is to announce to the world that we have committed our lives to building this dream for all of us to live together as God's precious people.

### Exam Prayer

Lord, as I prepare for this examination, let your strength and your wisdom be present to me. May I revise my work thoroughly. May I understand what it is I have to know. May my memory be reliable and orderly. May I be calm and focused on the task ahead. May I know and feel the love and support of my family and friends. And may you, the creator of all things, enlighten me. Amen.

### Middle Leaders Training Presentation Night

Congratulations to all of our teachers who recently received their Certificates on completion of their Middle Leaders training programme in Dublin and Waterford. Participants submitted a fascinating array of projects including work on attendance, wellbeing, the feasibility of hour long classes, peer observation, promotion of positive behavior, formative feedback and pastoral care provision. We would like to thank all our participants for their hard work and commitment to the programme.

### Le Chéile Pay it Forward Day

Thanks to all the students and the school communities who made the third annual Le Chéile Pay It Forward Day such a great success. The number of schools participating continues to increase and some schools have chosen a different date to organise their own Pay It Forward Day. Do visit our website Pay it Forward section to read the stories and see all the photographs schools have forwarded to us, (thank you

everyone for these).

The section includes

a lovely collage from St. **Michael's Holy Faith Finglas**, (also pictured left) who also shared their Pay It Forward story...

"As a Le Chéile school, every year we like to celebrate "Pay It Forward Day" in a special way. We believe that spreading positivity is paramount in the day to day life of the school. This year, a large, eye catching display of kind words, joined hands and positive messages was set up in the school reception area giving an instant feeling that today was going to be a good day. There was a certain buzz about the place that is so hard to put in to words. Pay It Forward had every one talking. Students were given the opportunity to use their gifts and talents through a poster competition. The theme was Kindness and the entries were outstanding. Students also contributed suggestions to a box of Random Acts Of Kindness and every member of the St. Michael's community was encouraged to take an act and carry it out. We saw students who normally don't speak to each other having lunch together. Students who had fallen out forgave each other. Some students were given special treats by teachers and by our principal. The staff were treated to cakes at lunchtime! The atmosphere was electric around the school and everybody left St. Michael's that afternoon with a huge smile on their face and joy in their heart. The message is simple, making an extra effort to do nice things for each other plants a seed that grows and grows, and we encourage people to "Pay It Forward" not just annually, but in their daily lives."

Jane Keaveney (teacher)



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**St. Tiernan's** students recording their Random Acts of Kindness and getting their lollipop reward both of which brought many smiles to the school community!

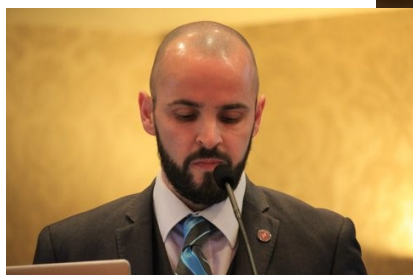


Part of the beautiful display at **Maryfield College**



Lunch time at **FCJ Buncloody** saw music, riverdance and treats for the teachers demonstrating their theme of 'In Giving we Receive'.





Thank you once again to everyone who contributed and helped out at our conference, including our photographers, (Sr. Rowena & Sr. Maire), Br. Pat for our video, the teachers who organised our student events and their Principals who facilitated their participation in the conference. The video and further pictures are available on the website.

For the purpose of Data Protection please ensure that you have permission to forward any photographs of your students for inclusion in our newsletter and website





### Le Chéile Schools collaborate to celebrate Catholic Schools Week

Students from St. Louis Rathmines accompanied by their teachers, A. Doyle, J. Moran and M. Kehoe, travelled to St. Mary's Glasnevin and arrived with great energy and enthusiasm for their day of collaboration. As the theme for this year's Catholic Schools Week was 'Catholic schools: Learning with Pope Francis to care for our common home', what better place than in the grounds of the Holy Faith Convent, to host the event? The morning began with an energy infused icebreaker on the convent lawn, overlooking the National Botanical Gardens. This afforded students the opportunity to mingle and have fun together before returning to the Margaret Aylward Spirituality Centre to listen to a talk delivered by Evelyn from The Hope Foundation. While keeping with the theme of caring for our common home, The Hope Foundation reminded us that at the centre of our shared home are the many people around the world who suffer greatly due to poverty. Sitting in such beautiful surroundings, it was easy to forget how fortunate we are. The Hope

Foundation reminded us to use the gifts we have been given to care for those less fortunate in the world.

The talk was followed by some time to reflect on the commitment both schools have towards encouraging students to look outwards and take responsibility as global citizens. Students and teachers then enjoyed refreshments and continued discussions around some of the issues raised by The Hope Foundation. The St. Mary's Ember Team then led the St. Louis students on a walking tour of the school building and grounds. This allowed students to get an insight into the daily life of another Le Chéile school. Lots of similarities and comparisons were drawn and all involved were able to connect with and get to know other members of the Le Chéile community. The day's events concluded with a prayer service which was prepared by both schools in the weeks leading up to the event. Students read prayers and sang hymns centred on the importance of hope for the future and the plans God has for us and our global community.

*Claire Murtagh*



**Plenty of Happy Faces as the Sports Hall at Jesus & Mary Secondary School Salerno progresses.....**

### OLS Win Prestigious National Competition

Meet the city girls from **Our Lady's Terenure** who trumped their rural cousins winning a national Agricultural Science Project that involved rearing some Angus calves and promoting the breed. Following a school competition to name the calves, Miriam O Callaghan (in wellingtons) the Parish Priest and some farmers joined the school community for one of the highlights of the project the naming ceremony. ( *The names of the calves are withheld for data protection purposes.....!*)



### Things to Do and Important Dates:

Inform Le Chéile if the Board of Management is changing

**31st May** Final date for e-mailing Budgets to Le Chéile Office

**21st June** Summer Principal & Chairpersons Day, **Park Hotel Mullingar** (please note new venue)

**30th June** Final date for submitting End of Year Reports to Le Chéile (Blank form will be forwarded in May and will be available on our website)

### Calendar and Handbook for 2017 /18

We are currently compiling our calendar for 2017/18. If you know of any events that may influence our schedule please tell us. This Calendar will include our training events, meetings and important dates and will be included in our handbook, on our website and distributed by e-mail. Please check your current handbook to see if your school details are correct.