

## Christmas 2017

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### Words to the Wise

**Pray, hope and don't worry. Worry is useless. God is merciful and will hear your prayer.**

*(Padre Pio)*



### World Meeting of Families



*The World Meeting of Families will be held in Dublin on 22nd to 26th August 2018, based around the theme: 'The Gospel of the Family: Joy for The World.'*

### Christmas Greetings!

*"Where God is born, hope is born; and where hope is born, persons regain their dignity."*

These words were part of the homily of Pope Francis on Christmas Day last year. As we prepare for Christmas we're reminded of the importance of bringing hope to others, whether by donating to charities, creating hampers, visiting people in need of companionship or simply looking after each other. Our schools are communities of care and hope and at this time of year we invite our students to remember the real meaning of Christmas and not just the excitement of shopping and socialising. We are invited to think not just about what we want but about what God wants for us and to reflect on why he became one of us. It wasn't to tell us off or give out, but to love us and show us how to love one another.

*We wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas*



### Congratulations to the Religious of Christian Education Sisters, Our Lady's School, Templeogue

The RCE Congregation held a very special celebration to mark their 200th anniversary in November. Sisters from their communities all over the world and friends, including representatives from Ireland, travelled to Echauffour, in Normandy, the place where the order was founded. It was very moving to be part of this celebration which included a special Mass celebrated in the Church where the first four Sisters were professed by Fr. Louis La Fosse on 21st November 1817. Since then, the Sisters have been serving the Lord through education and other Ministries in Ireland, England, France, USA and Africa. We thank them for the inspiration, wisdom and founding values which are so evident in Our Lady's School and for the trust and confidence they have shown in Le Chéile to continue their work.



### Holy Faith Celebrate 150th Anniversary

The Holy Faith Community in Glasnevin celebrated their 150th Anniversary with a wonderful Mass broadcast on RTE television on 8th October, which was composed especially for the occasion by Sr. Marie Dunne, HFC. The Holy Faith sisters were joined by representatives from each school and representatives of Le Chéile. Current and past pupils were represented in the choir and amongst the musicians.



### Le Chéile AGM and Conference; 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2018 Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone

The theme for the Le Chéile Conference this year is *"The Le Chéile Family: Caring for Each Other"*. Details will be sent to schools and Congregations before Christmas.



On December 25<sup>th</sup>, about two thousand ago, Christ Our Saviour was born. God the Creator envisioned the future, over two thousand years forward and showed it to Mary and Joseph. A beautifully decorated evergreen tree stood proudly in the centre of the household, boasting bold shades of red and green. A gold star sparkled on top of the tree and children beneath it laughed and clutched their expensive gifts. The house was a feast for the senses as delicious smells of meats slowly cooking in the oven filled the air. A rich cake with tiny figures skating on a rink of sweet white icing took pride of place on the kitchen table. Mary and Joseph were filled with awe and delight at the vision; so much joy and celebration all because of their wonderful son! They continued to watch. Both the old and the young exchanged gifts wrapped in coloured paper and embraced after looking at the contents. The phrase "Happy Christmas!" was repeated several times. The people then sat at a long table and enjoyed a feast of steaming vegetables, tender meats, sugared cakes and fine wines. They chinked their glasses together and began to eat the delicious meal. A sadness grew in the hearts of Mary and Joseph... a celebratory day for their birth of their Son... and yet... his name was said not even once.

## Supporting Leadership in Le Chéile schools Boards of Management

Following the Cluster Meetings this term, we have asked each Board of Management to dedicate some time to the 'Conversation on Ethos', started last year based on the CSP Resource Pack. The Boards were given two documents to stimulate discussion which will be continued at the Le Chéile AGM in February.

In November we held a meeting for Chairpersons of our school Boards of Management where the richness and expertise of the group was very much in evidence. We are very grateful to all our Chairpersons for the great work they do for our schools on a voluntary basis.

## Deputy Principals

In September, 4 new Principals and 29 new Deputy Principals took up their leadership positions in Le Chéile schools. The DES decision to provide an additional Deputy in schools of over 700 students was very welcome—In 18 Le Chéile schools benefitted., Le Chéile was pleased to offer some professional development for the Deputies with their Principals in August and a joint seminar in conjunction with the Loreto and Spiritan Trusts in November.

## TY Coordinators Seminar

The importance of encouraging the student voice is universally recognised as an important feature of school life today. While it is important in all years Transition year in particular lends itself to such an experience. With this in mind Le Chéile hosted its first gathering of Transition Year Coordinators for a seminar on encouraging the student voice. The event also provided a forum for those attending to exchange ideas on good practice. The seminar took place on 22nd November in the Talbot Hotel, Stillorgan.

## Middle Leaders

Once again Le Chéile joined with Loreto, Spiritans and Jesuits to run this course in Dublin and Galway. Teachers attend six sessions in Dublin or a weekend and two sessions in Galway. The final session in each centre will include a presentation of their group projects which they carry out in their school over the year.

## Child Protection

On 11th December new legislation commences which introduces mandatory reporting of child abuse. This means that any teacher who encounters circumstances of concern is required to report to Tusla. Prior to this they would have reported to the Designated Liaison Person in the school. Joint reporting by a teacher and the DLP may be possible. Schools will also be required to carry out a risk assessment on aspects of school life where abuse could potentially occur and each school must prepare a child protection Statement by 11th March 2018. Guidelines will issue to schools shortly.

## Le Chéile Calendar and Handbook for 2017 /18

The Calendar and Handbook are available in the new members section on the Le Chéile Website, We would appreciate your suggestions for this new section of our website.

Knock Basilica was the venue recently for a wonderful Mass of Thanksgiving to celebrate the foundation of the Congregation of the Religious of Jesus and Mary and its 200 years of education in schools and colleges in 28 countries and five continents. Over 2000 people assembled including students and staff from the four primary schools, and the four secondary schools in which Sisters have worked since 1912 in Ireland. They joined with Sisters, past pupils, former Staff, parents, ex RJMs, families and friends in participating in the Mass. The main Celebrant was Rev. Fr. Michael McLoughlin from the Diocese of Galway, assisted by Bishop Emeritus Christy Jones and 18 other clergy who were past pupils or who had worked with the Sisters down through the years. The theme of the Mass was "Journeying with Claudine, Woman of Faith, Forgiveness and Communion". Founded by Claudine Thevenet in Lyons, France in 1818 in the aftermath of the French revolution, for the education of the young and to create school communities that nurtured the holistic development of young people.



Sr. Mary Mulrooney, Provincial of the Irish Province welcomed our pupils and staff from Crossmolina, Dublin, Enniscrone and Galway. She invited into the sanctuary 7 pupils from each of the primary schools, carrying flags of the 28 countries and these were reversed on a board which eventually revealed the face of Claudine Thevenet. Choirs from our Parishes and schools provided the beautiful music, (under the baton of Fiona Watts, and organist Marie Moore) the highlight of which were the solos sung by Sr. Mairin McDonagh RJM, Michael McGowan-Hannon and Darragh Jordan. The communion reflection was a hymn written specially for the occasion by Ms. Fiona Watts, from Gortnor Abbey titled "He waits in the Least".



The Basilica was beautifully adorned with flowers and symbols created by Srs. Fionnuala and Marie and the Crossmolina Ladies Committee. A unique creation by Anne Marie Cawley, past pupil of Crossmolina, was a visual representation of one of Claudine's favourite piece of Scripture "Unless the wheat grain dies...it cannot yield fruit". Her creation based on the wheat grain included many of St. Claudine's sayings and the themes of the Bicentenary Mass.

The combined prayers and offertory procession included Dr. Eilis Humphreys, Executive Director of Le Cheile Schools Trust, members of Boards of Management, Parents Councils, Family of Jesus and Mary, sisters and students. Ms. Teresa

Irwin, Deputy Principal, Enniscrone thanked all the Priests and staff in Knock for accommodating us on the day and for the use of the most beautiful Basilica and the St. John's Centre which hosted the refreshments. She also congratulated the sisters of Jesus and Mary for their contribution to education. She remembered those Irish Sisters abroad on mission and Sisters who are ill or in Nursing Homes. She concluded with the motto of the congregation "Praised forever be Jesus and Mary".



## Holy Faith Clontarf Joined by International Visitors at Peace Event



Students from Holy faith Clontarf helped plan and host a Peace Tree Planting ceremony in St Anne's Park, Clontarf, Dublin. The Norwegian Navy Brass Quintet flew in to play at the event. Students, along with representatives from the local parishes, read and spoke on peace in our time.

Principals, Deputies and Chairpersons, If you have not received your new A4 Contacts Book please contact the Le Chéile Office.

Students from Patrician Secondary School Newbridge receiving their John Paul II awards this December.



### Le Cheile Secondary School Tyrrelstown

celebrated their first school Mass inside their “nearly completed” new school. The official opening is **5th March 2018**, a date to mark in all your diaries!



### 70 years of Holy Child Killiney

This December marks 70 years of ‘Actions not Words’ in Holy Child School, Killiney. To date the school has had a number of different initiatives to commemorate this significant year. At different ceremonies they have unveiled a signpost indicating the direction of their sister schools worldwide, and a magnificent House quilt; they have installed memorial plaques in the

Chapel honouring past students and staff, and they have welcomed students and staff from other Holy Child schools at home and abroad.



*Celebrating 70 Years of Actions not Words*

### Important Dates:

31st Dec.	2016-2017 Accounts sent to the Le Chéile Office
24th Jan.	Middle Leaders Training 5.00–8.00pm Clarion Hotel Liffey Valley
1st&2nd Feb.	Le Chéile AGM and Conference, Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone
7th Feb.	Middle Leader Training Galway 5.00– 8.00pm Maldron Hotel Oranmore
21st Feb.	Middle Leaders Training 5.00–8.00pm Clarion Hotel Liffey Valley
24th Feb.	Le Chéile Retreat, Dominican Retreat Centre, Tallaght
6th Mar.	Cluster Meetings The West Cluster - McWilliam Park Hotel
14th Mar.	Middle Leaders (Final Session) 5.00–8.00pm Clarion Hotel Liffey Valley
15th Mar.	The South Cluster - Springfort Hall, Newtownpothouse
16th Mar.	Le Chéile Day—Pay It Forward
21st Mar.	Dublin Combined Cluster , Clarion Hotel Liffey Valley

Is your school celebrating any special anniversary or event this year?? Do tell us and share your story. If you have any news items or pictures that you would like to see on our website please send them in!!