

Spring 2019

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Words to the Wise

We don't know what the unsearchable future holds, but we know who holds the unsearchable future.....



Pope Francis on Dialogue
Dialogue is born from a respectful attitude towards the other person, from a conviction that the other person has something good to say. It supposes that we can make room in our heart for their point of view, their opinion and their proposals. Dialogue entails a warm reception and not a preemptive condemnation. To dialogue one must know how to lower the defences, to open the doors of ones home and to offer warmth. (On Heaven and Earth, 2013)



We wish all our school communities a happy and blessed Easter.

The Le Chéile Conference seems a long way off when so much has been happening in all our schools since then. The Conference was very special this year as we added a number of “extras” to celebrate our 10th anniversary. Among the special events was a celebration of Mass with the student choir and a “pop-up” adult choir. We’d like to pay special tribute to Cliona McDonough for this idea and for bringing it to fruition. We also extend a special word of thanks and congratulations to Ciaran Coll and Sr. Marie Dunne for the beautiful new Le Chéile hymn, “Together we are Called”, written especially for the 10th anniversary. It can be accessed on our website www.lecheiletrust.ie and we encourage all our schools to learn it as a unifying Le Chéile theme. Another new departure this year was to invite parents to join us on the Friday. At their special workshop they explored the conference theme “Welcome, Wisdom and Witness”, which was inspirationally presented by Sr Monica Joseph RJM, our keynote speaker.

As we move into the next phase of Le Chéile we look forward to welcoming primary schools into the Trust. We have already had the privilege of visiting the six Dominican primary schools and meeting the Principals of both the Dominican and the Ursuline schools at their annual gathering. We look forward to extending a warm Le Chéile welcome to their school communities.

We wish all the students the best of luck in the orals and practical that are being held at the moment and hope that the Easter holidays bring some well-deserved rest to our hard-working school leaders and staffs.

The Catholic School—a Creative Dialogic Community

What is different and distinct about the Catholic school is the synergy that connects together all the elements that make up a school: people, building, educational purpose, history, values and culture. This synergy lies in the belief and knowledge that each human being is a child of God and is loved unconditionally from the beginning of time. This belief is pivotal to its vision and mission. The Catholic school works by navigating between the world of the twenty-first century and the world of the divine. It is in dialogue with God and with each other. What comes up from the middle of this encounter is a way of living expressed through and in its ethos. It recognises that this middle pathway has been forged by the person of Jesus Christ and it looks to his actions and values, outlined in the Gospel, to assist with living this way of life. It draws on and is inspired by the lives and heritage of others such as its founder who responded to God’s call in their lives. The Catholic school has a particular language to explain this realm of mystery to which it belongs and it uses signs and symbols to assist its understanding. It celebrates through religious ritual, the high and low moments of the school year, and follows the Catholic calendar of religious events. The Catholic school is centrally focussed on the community of all who belong in the school. It is relational, dialogical and receptive. It offers the educational platform for students to answer questions about meaning and life. It is committed to creating a space of inclusivity, equality and openness, where people can live with and be taught by one another, however diverse such people might be. It asks that each person would grow in the goodness of their humanity through their connection, care and compassion for each other and the world. It calls the community to respond responsibly to the world and the call of society. It strives for justice and fairness in all its interactions because each and every one deserves this as a child of God. It offers hope and affirmation of life because it believes that there is a God who is working within and at the heart of life. The Catholic school therefore sees education as a creative act of God, an act worked through and within the school.

The weeks before Easter are consumed by orals and practical work but there is also an urgency about how time is running out and the end of the school year is nigh. Amidst the hum drum of this world lie moments of extraordinariness. Within the ordinary moments of school life, there can be glimpsed moments of Resurrection. Moments in the classroom or in the school where you have been uplifted and moved to a whole different dimension – beyond space and time. These are moments perhaps when the whole class are so engaged with what is being offered that time is forgotten and the bell becomes a nuisance which calls us back to reality. Or perhaps a moment when a student makes a jump or connection in their learning and you are there to witness it. There are many, many such amazing moments. These moments move us beyond time and space into eternity. The Resurrection of Christ assured us that death has been conquered. Time is no longer supreme. Within the ordinary there is evidence of this extraordinary event. Dermot Lane, an Irish theologian, reminds us, that the problem we often have is that we have the experience of the extraordinary but miss the meaning. This Easter, the search lies not in an egg hunt but for the extraordinary in our lives – glimpses of Resurrection, glimpses of eternity.



Middle Leaders

Congratulations to the seventy-eight participants who completed the Middle Leaders courses in Dublin and Cavan this year. Pictured (right) is the final evening at the Dublin venue. Once again we would like to thank our school leadership teams who facilitated their staffs participation, projects and who attended the evening. The Middle Leaders spoke about how the course had offered them the language and concepts of leadership. It extended their insights into the workings of the whole school beyond the classroom. The projects responded to the specific needs of each context and revealed a dynamic, creative and passionate group of leaders who wish to make their schools a better place for their students.



Middle Leaders Course 2019-2020

The course will run over the academic year 2019-2020 beginning in October and will take place outside of school hours over a weekend and three Wednesday evenings from 5.00 -8.00p.m. in Dublin and in Thurles (tbc - subject to interest). It is open to all teachers, post holders and non-post holders who have completed a minimum 2 years full-time teaching in the same school. For further information visit the Middle Leaders section on our website or refer to your Principal for a copy of the application form which includes a draft outline of the course content and clear applications guidelines. **Please note the earlier closing date.** A certificate of completion will be awarded to those who attend the entire course. The course will be held in the two venues below (subject to demand).

Talbot Hotel, Stillorgan Dublin—Weekend 11th & 12th October 2019

20th November 2019 - Webinar

22nd January 2020 and 25th March 2020

Thurles, Co. Tipperary—Weekend 18th and 19th October 2019

20th November 2019 - Webinar

15th January 2020 and 1st April 2020

The Le Chéile 10th Anniversary Art Competition for Students

“Celebrating Witness in Our Le Chéile Schools”

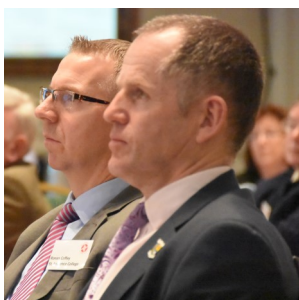


There are three Categories: Junior (Up to Junior Certificate), Senior (Up to Leaving Cert.) for 2D or 3D pieces and Video. With a max. 5 submissions per school, the competition is open to single or group (max. 3 people) entries. Departmental collaboration is encouraged. Schools first submit **their Expression of Interest by 15th May by e-mail** to a dedicated e-mail address **Artcompetition@lecheiletrust.ie**. Schools then send an Entry Form and a photograph of each submission to the above e-mail address **by 6th September**.

Submissions for the final are selected from each Cluster. **Further Information will be available on www.lecheile10.com** including: Registration of Interest Form, Entry Form, The Rationale, Guidelines for entry and Judging Criteria. Students attend a curating workshop and arrange their piece for adjudication and exhibition on 5th October at the Education Conference in L.C.S.S.T. Dublin. The Exhibition will be open for viewing for a short time before the Prize giving ceremony.



Thank you to everyone who contributed to our 10th Anniversary Conference and made it such a special event enjoyed by all. Particular mention to our schools who facilitated our teacher supervisors.





Brexit on show in Kiltimagh

Ava Charlton, a TY student of St. Louis CS, Kiltimagh is pictured modelling the entry 'Brexit' in this years Junk Kouture competition. Isn't it eggcellent!

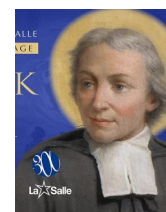
St Laurence College Loughlinstown (Marianist)

At the Le Chéile AGM and Conference we were delighted to welcome the Marianists of Ireland into the Trust. St. Laurence College is their only school in Ireland and we look forward to working with them into the future. This special event was also celebrated in the school on 26th February and it was great that Br Tom Giardino and Br. Jesse O'Neill were able to travel from the USA to be with the school and the Le Chéile community for these celebrations.



De La Salle Tercentenary Celebration

Congratulations to our De La Salle Community who recently celebrated the tercentenary of the death of their founder John Baptist De La Salle with a national gathering in Knock. Our schools participated in a variety of ways during a lovely ceremony in the Basilica having previously shared refreshments with their fellow students and staff from around the country.



Le Chéile Education Symposium—5th October 2019 in Le Chéile Secondary School Tyrrelstown

To bring our 10th anniversary to a close on 5th October 2019 the first Le Chéile Schools Trust Education Symposium will be a one day event hosted by Le Chéile Secondary School in Tyrrelstown, Dublin 15. The symposium will focus on the themes of Welcome, Wisdom and Witness as they apply to schools, teaching and learning and education leadership in 21st Century Ireland. We invite teachers, schools leaders, academics, Masters and Ph D students to submit an Abstract for a 15 minute presentation. Closing date for receipt of Abstracts is 3rd June. Further information and online submission forms are available on www.lecheile10.com.

Principals & Chairpersons' Seminar 18th June 2019

The Le Chéile seminar will once again take place in the Mullingar Park Hotel. The hotel is offering a reduced B&B rate for the night of 17th June. Details will be emailed to the schools after Easter.

Important Dates:

31st May	Budgets returned to Le Chéile Office
18th June	Principals, Chairpersons and Deputy Principals Seminar in Mullingar
28th June	Final date for submitting 2018/2019 End of Year Report to Le Chéile Office

Calendar and Handbook for 2019 /2020

We are currently compiling our calendar for 2019/2020. 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.

Retirements

A number of Principals and Deputy Principals have announced their retirements. We thank them for the wonderful service and commitment they have shown to their schools and Le Chéile. We're not saying goodbye yet but we acknowledge the emotional impact on themselves and their schools as the process of appointing their successors gets underway. We wish them every success in their future endeavours!

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!