



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON

ST PHILIP HOWARD CENTRE, 6 SOUTHGATE DRIVE, CRAWLEY, RH10 6RP

4th November 2020

Dear Colleagues,

I hope you had as restful and restorative a break as possible over last week's half term. I do not underestimate how difficult the ongoing situation is for schools and how relentless it can feel. But despite the gloomy outlook as we embark on a second nation-wide Lockdown, time and time again diocesan schools have shown themselves to be places of purposeful learning and joyful activity. It has been both humbling and uplifting to visit Primary and Secondary schools and to see the extraordinary ways in which children are nurtured and enabled to flourish, mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually.

What the world is going through this year will be spoken about for generations to come. When people look back on 2020, they will tell the story of how the world had to pause – travel was suspended, people had to isolate themselves and had to learn new ways to study, to communicate, and do business. They will speak of how new opportunities were found for people to gather virtually – not only for lessons, socialising and decision-making – but also for prayer and praise of God. I am sure that many people have grown closer to God through this crisis. Our forced seclusion and restricted personal freedoms have certainly reminded us that we are not invincible, and we are far from being in control of everything. We are quite dependent on each other and on God. This year has shown us just how precious – and fragile – life is; love and family are fundamental to our safety and wellbeing. We must nourish not only our physical health, but also our mental, emotional and spiritual well-being if we are to truly 'keep body and soul together'.

As we enter November and the month of Remembrance, we remember all those we have loved and lost, and pray for their eternal rest. We also pray for all those who have lost a loved one, for those who were unable to say goodbye, and for those who are suffering the pain of grief. In the current context, this has a particular poignancy. Now, perhaps more than ever before, it is critical in this month of remembrance that we also remember the living. Despite working closely together, it is quite feasible that none of us is fully aware of all the pressures another colleague may be under and it is more important than ever before that we look out for one another. If you are worried about someone – or even if you are just not sure that all is well – please check in on them. An act of kindness goes a very long way at the best of times and even more so at the moment.

I am delighted to let you know that we have appointed new Primary and Secondary Advisers for RE and Catholic Ethos after some very competitive interviews! My thanks and appreciation go to all those who applied for the posts. Anna Flood will take up position as Primary Adviser for Sussex schools and Emma Sharp has been appointed as Primary Adviser for Surrey schools. Anna and Emma will be joined

EDUCATION SERVICE

SCHOOLS@ABDIOCESE.ORG.UK | 01293 511130

WWW.ABDIOCESE.ORG.UK | REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 252878



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON

ST PHILIP HOWARD CENTRE, 6 SOUTHGATE DRIVE, CRAWLEY, RH10 6RP

by Claire Franke who takes on the role of Secondary RE Adviser. All three are outstanding in their field and already well known to many of you. The whole DES team is looking forward to Anna, Emma and Claire joining us from January 2021! I know that schools will make them welcome as they get to know their schools from January. I am equally pleased that Sarah Feist will be remaining with us in a part-time capacity to continue her work on CSI and to collaborate on particular projects with the new Advisers. Over the past five years Sarah has done a lot of excellent work with, and for, schools and I am delighted she will be able to continue this partnership in new ways.

Our CPD on-line offer continues to be well-attended and well-received. Thank you to all those who have attended thus far and contributed to the professional dialogue. Please continue to book places through Claire Martin on claire.martin@abdiocese.org.uk

I am delighted to report that Bernadette is doing well after recent surgery. She is in good spirits and the outlook is encouraging. Bernadette and her family have been greatly heartened by the many messages of love and support received from schools - thank you to everyone who has been in touch. Your kindness has meant a great deal, carrying Bernadette through some difficult times and reminding her of how much she is loved.

Earlier today Simon Stevens (Chief Executive of the NHS) said medical chiefs were drawing up plans for wide-scale rollout of a potential vaccine over the next two months, in case one of them is ready in time for Christmas. Even in times such as these, there is reason to be hopeful for where there is hope, there is faith. And where there is faith, miracles happen.

Lastly, Pope Francis speaks to us eloquently about hope: "Life is often a desert, it is difficult to walk, but if we trust in God, it can become beautiful and wide as a highway. Never lose hope; continue to believe, always, in spite of everything. Hope opens new horizons, making us capable of dreaming what is not even imaginable."

Let us keep the Pope's words in mind as we look beyond the desert and lift our eyes to the horizon.

Warmest wishes to you all,

Marie Ryan BA (Hons) MA, MCIL
Director of the Education Service

EDUCATION SERVICE

SCHOOLS@ABDIOCESE.ORG.UK | 01293 511130

WWW.ABDIOCESE.ORG.UK | REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 252878