



13 July 2017

Dear friends,

For many years, the Catholic Church in England and Wales has celebrated Education Sunday. This September for the second time, we will celebrate Education Sunday at the start of the academic year.

We pray for the work of our Catholic schools in the coming year, that they may continue to nurture a love of learning and of Christ in their students.

The theme of this year's Education Sunday is 'Gathered in my Name', taken from today's Gospel. In this reading Jesus teaches us that wherever two or more are gathered in His name, that He is there among them. This passage has a special resonance for Catholic schools, as we know that when children gather to learn and to pray, they are gathered in His name. By extension, when children gather in Catholic schools across the country, Jesus is there among them. Praying together is a central part of life at a Catholic school, and both Catholics and non-Catholics take part in this. While non-Catholic parents can withdraw their children, almost all pupils take part in this across the country. As well as in prayer children are always gathered in Jesus' name, throughout the different aspects of life at Catholic school.

On this day, it is important to give thanks for our teachers, support staff and volunteers, who work hard every day to ensure our schools are inclusive welcoming centres of learning. Although they are not in schools every day, behind the scenes school governors provide invaluable support to our schools, so that they may continue to offer the academic, spiritual, moral and religious education to all. These parishioners volunteer their time as governors to promote and protect the Catholic ethos of our schools. They provide a further active link between our schools and the parishes they serve, and we are all grateful for all that they do. If you have any interest in becoming a school governor yourself, please make yourself known to your parish priest.

I hope and pray that in the coming year, our Catholic schools continue in their faithfulness to the Gospel, enriching the lives of all the students they serve and drawing our schools and parishes ever closer together.

+ Malcolm Mc Mahon OP

Most Reverend Malcolm McMahon OP

Archbishop of Liverpool
Chairman of the Catholic Education Service