

Education Sunday 2017

Mass booklet

“Gathered in my name...”



*'For where
two or three
are gathered
in my name,
I am there
among them.'*

Matthew 18: 20

Foreword

The Catholic Community gathers every year on Education Sunday to celebrate the people working and studying in Catholic education; the teachers, staff, pupils and all those who contribute.

Similar to recent years, Education Sunday 2017 comes at the start of the academic year, allowing us to come together in prayer and celebration for the coming terms.

This year's theme is 'gathered in my name', a quote from today's Gospel. This theme allows us to reflect on the truth that when pupils gather in Catholic schools, they are gathered in Jesus' name. This year, at Masses across the country, Catholics will hear about how children are gathering, what happens at school and the values that run through this.

Churches play a vital role in education in this country, running one third of all schools. The Catholic Church is the largest provider of secondary schools, and the second largest provider (after the Church of England) of primary schools in the country. Every day, more than 850,000 students attend a Catholic school. We also have a thriving University and College sector.

Our community is rightly proud of its schools. Catholic schools remain the most ethnically and socio-economic diverse schools in the country. And continue to outperform the national average from primary through to GCSE.

It is important to pay tribute to the many teachers, leaders, support staff and governors, without whose dedicated commitment Catholic schools would not be the nurturing and thriving places so many children benefit from.

We hope these resources will help you plan your Education Sunday as a celebration of the commitment and achievements of Catholic education. Education Sunday provides an opportunity for schools to share their work, strengthening the partnership with parishes which is vital to maintaining the ethos and mission of our community's schools.

Paul Barber
Director of the Catholic Education Service

Liturgy

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading: Ezekial 33: 7-9

If you do not speak to the wicked man, I will hold you responsible for his death

Psalm: Psalm 94: 1-2, 6-9, 7-8

O that today you would listen to his voice! Harden not your hearts

Second Reading: Romans 13: 8-10

Love is the answer to everyone of the commandments.

Gospel Acclamation: John 17: 17

Your word is truth, O Lord, consecrate us in the truth

or 2 Corinthians 5:19

God in Christ was reconciling the world to himself, and he has entrusted to us that they are reconciled

Gospel: Matthew 18: 15-20

If he listens to you, you have won back your brother

Bidding prayers

These are some draft bidding prayers which you may want to use in addition to your usual intentions.

Bidding prayers are an opportunity for local school children to take part in the Mass in a visible way. If they want, pupils could attend Mass and read in their school uniforms.

For our schools, that they may be welcoming, open places where the children of our community can gather in the name of Christ

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

For those who work in our schools, that they may be blessed with the gifts of the Spirit

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

For all parents, that they may be guided by the Holy Spirit as they continue to nurture a love of Christ in their children.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

Homily

Liturgy of the Word

We have prepared some general bullet points which priests and deacons may like to use in preparing their homily on Education Sunday.

- *This Sunday's Gospel reading contains a strong message from Jesus to his followers on how to live their Catholic faith. It focuses on both the mistakes we make as Catholics, and the reconciliation that God can offer us.*
- *As well as focusing on our mistakes, this passage celebrates the unity of a group of Jesus' followers coming together to pray. Jesus tells these disciples 'if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father.' And 'For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.'*
- *The gathering of two or three in Jesus names happens in a host of different settings, but crucially, every day, over 850,000 pupils across England and Wales gather in the Lord's name in Catholic schools. As well as all the necessary curriculum subjects, pupils at Catholic schools learn the Gospel and Catholic values, and practice charity in their local communities.*
- *Collective worship is a central part of the life of a Catholic school, be it in Mass, in class or together in assembly. Both the Catholic and non-Catholics at our schools take part in this, while parents can choose to withdraw their children, participation is nearly universal.*

Priests may want to talk about a local Catholic school, highlighting its links with the local community, and the school's contribution to the wider Church.



Showcasing Schools

Mass on Education Sunday is an excellent opportunity for Catholic parishes and schools to work together to showcase schools. This allows members of the Catholic community to learn a bit more about a local Catholic school.

There is a range of effective ways of showcasing schools, including:

- Using the cards from the Education Sunday resources, and displaying these in an appropriate place in the church
- Encouraging pupils from Catholic schools to wear their school uniforms to Mass
- Arranging for bidding prayers to be read by pupils in school uniform
- Arrange for pupils to do the second collection in school uniform

This list is not exhaustive, and the features of different schools is to be recognised. Other ideas such as singing the school song or having the school choir sing at mass, could be a succesful way to show a parish their local Catholic school.



In addition to pupils, schools may want to invite staff and volunteers to Mass, including teachers, teaching assistants, playground or home-time volunteers.

St Thomas Aquinas - Patron Saint of Education

A Prayer for Students



Come, Holy Spirit,
Divine Creator, true source of light and
fountain of wisdom!
Pour forth your brilliance upon my dense intellect,
dissipate the darkness which covers me,
that of sin and of ignorance.
Grant me a penetrating mind to understand,
a retentive memory,
method and ease in learning,
the lucidity to comprehend,
and abundant grace in expressing myself.
Guide the beginning of my work,
direct its progress,
and bring it to successful completion.
This I ask through Jesus Christ,
true God and true man,
living and reigning with You and the Father, forever and ever.

AMEN

For more information on Education Sunday 2017, go to
catholiceducation.org.uk

