



**CATHOLIC
EDUCATION
WEEK
February
2015**

“Jesus understands our weaknesses and sins; and he forgives us if we allow ourselves to be forgiven.”

Pope Francis

“God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy.”

Pope Francis

“Proclaiming the Joy of the Gospel”

Welcome to this special edition of St John’s RC Academy’s newsletter celebrating Catholic Education Week.



As a Catholic school, serving the secondary pupils of Perth and Kinross and the nursery and primary pupils of North Perth, we are committed to professing, living and celebrating our faith. We profess our faith through our aims, mission, values and ethos. Our motto, ‘Seek the Good’ captures our desire to always search for the positive in every relationship, encourage the strengths of our learners, and promote the achievements of all our young people. In religious education lessons, we profess the Catholic faith through the ‘This is Our Faith’ programme, giving our pupils a firm grounding in the eight strands of faith.

We live our faith through Christian witness to one another. We encourage all to live out the values of the Gospel through our lives in school, home, parish and local community. We demonstrate this in the way we treat one another and the way we promote our values. For example, we are a Fairtrade School, a Health Promoting School, and the first all-through school in the UK to achieve the level 2 Rights Respecting School Award (UNICEF’s highest award for schools). We also have more than half of our S6 pupils working towards the Caritas Award (see article), and this year we are involved in the second phase of the Pope Francis Faith Award pilot with pupils in P6 and P7. These initiatives, rooted in Catholic values and teachings, help us to share the joy of the Gospel with the whole community.

We celebrate our faith daily through our prayer – we pray that ‘whatever this day may bring, help me to seek the good within, to act in a spirit of generous love, to grow in wisdom and in grace in the footsteps of St John the Baptist.’ In partnership with local parishes, we celebrate mass weekly, on holy days and for special occasions like our annual family mass. These celebrations of thanksgiving unite and nourish our community, and help us to root our lives in the Gospel.

In our North Inch Community Campus we enjoy state of the art facilities; we promote excellent learning and teaching, and seek to nurture and develop every child and young person so that they can live life to the full. We thank you for your continual support of your local Catholic school, and we ask that you remember us each day in your prayers.

**Mr Seán P Hagny
Acting Headteacher**





JOY OF THE GOSPEL 'EVANGELII GAUDIUM'

Pope Francis begins this important document with these words:

I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unflinchingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since “no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord”. The Lord does not disappoint those who take this risk; whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we come to realize that he is already there, waiting for us with open arms.



Now is the time to say to Jesus: “Lord, I have let myself be deceived; in a thousand ways I have shunned your love, yet here I am once more, to renew my covenant with you. I need you. Save me once again, Lord, take me once more into your redeeming embrace”. How good it feels to come back to him whenever we are lost!

Let me say this once more: God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy. Christ, who told us to forgive one another “seventy times seven” (Mt 18:22) has given us his example: he has forgiven us seventy times seven. Time and time again he bears us on his shoulders. No one can strip us of the dignity bestowed upon us by this boundless and unflinching love. With a tenderness which never disappoints, but is always capable of restoring our joy, he makes it possible for us to lift up our heads and to start anew. Let us not flee from the resurrection of Jesus, let us never give up, come what will. May nothing inspire more than his life, which impels us onwards!

To read the whole text, use this link:

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium_en.html

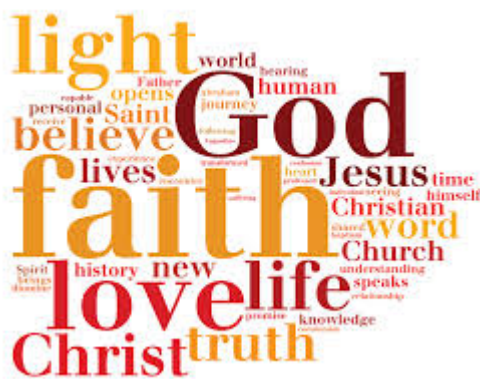
This Is Our Faith - at the Senior Phase

The Catholic Education Commission has developed a Religious Education syllabus for the Senior Phase, building on the syllabus provided in *This Is Our Faith* for the Broad General Education phase of the curriculum in Catholic schools.

The draft document proposes a number of Experiences and Outcomes, organised under the 8 Strands of Faith described in *This Is Our Faith*. This draft document is intended to provide for progression from the learning which pupils will experience in the Primary school stages and in S1-S3. The proposed experiences and outcomes are intended to be achievable across

S4/5/6 within the provision of 2 hours of formal R.E. per week which all Catholic secondary schools are obliged to provide.

The Holy See is considering this document with a view to granting a *Decree of Recognitio*, as it did for the original document. In the meantime, those responsible for teaching religious education should find the draft document to be a useful in helping them to review their current provision and to plan for future development.



The Pope Francis FAITH AWARD

The **Pope Francis FAITH AWARD** encourages young people to make and sustain an active commitment to Faith in their everyday lives. Its title stresses the most significant feature of this award - i.e. it's about Faith, one the 'theological virtues' of Faith, Hope and Love which are offered to all as the foundation for living good lives.

The Faith Award helps children in Primary 6 & 7 to realise the meaning and potential of the Gifts and the Fruits of the Holy Spirit which are offered to them for use in daily living. By providing opportunities for Prayer, Reflection and Faith Witness, this award encourages young people to apply these gifts and to see how they can bear fruit in their homes, schools, parishes and communities. It helps them to understand how their simple, everyday acts of service, inspired by Faith, can transform the world.



The Pope Benedict XVI CARITAS AWARD

The Pope Benedict XVI **CARITAS AWARD** encourages young people in the final years of secondary school to respond to God's call of love ("Caritas") through serving others. It celebrates the faith witness which young people can give within their homes, schools, parishes and local communities.

Inspired by the teaching of Pope Benedict XVI, and dedicated to him, the **CARITAS AWARD** is an initiative which builds on his conviction that "the young, with their enthusiasm and idealism can offer new hope to the world". Those who are presented with their awards at the Award Ceremony on Wednesday 3 June 2015 will be able to take pride that they have responded well to the words of the Holy Father:

"Do not be afraid to make a commitment, to face hard work and sacrifice, to choose the paths that demand fidelity and constancy, humility and dedication."



'Caritas helped me to see faith from another side. My work in the parish showed me a side to the church that I knew existed but never witnessed'.

Caritas Candidate



FAITH AWARDS



School Pilgrimage

This June pupils from St John's Academy will have the opportunity to travel into the Highlands for a weekend of outdoor activity, prayer and community life. They will make a walking pilgrimage to the hidden seminary at Scalán, where priests were trained in secret during periods of persecution and suppression of Catholicism. This is a great opportunity for our young people to learn something about the struggle for religious freedom in Scotland's past. In addition we plan to visit the peaceful Pluscarden Abbey, and to spend a day at one of many outdoor centres in the area!



A Light for Those in Need

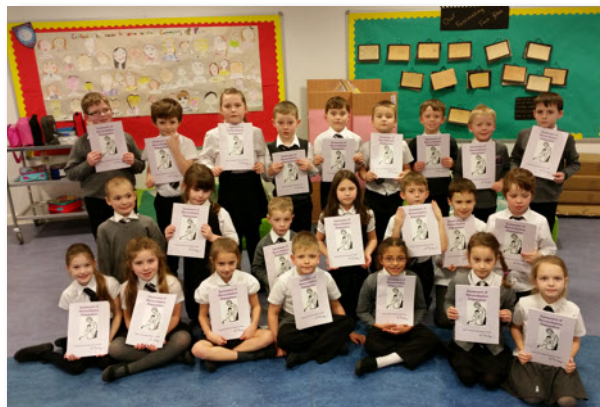
The Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF) is the main international charity we support in school. Headteacher, Seán Hagney, has worked with them over many years. SCIAF invited him to take part in a study trip with five other teachers at the end of June 2014 to learn more about how the money we raise is spent. He visited projects in Ethiopia and met with people who have directly benefited from the fundraising in our school. He has shared his experiences in school and at a recent conference for Catholic Headteachers. In SCIAF's 50th year, the school has been raising more funds which will be fund matched by the UK Government.

St John's RC Academy SSVP Group

A group of S4 pupils, under the direction of RE teacher Ms Quayle, meet regularly to plan fund raising events to support those in need within the local community.



Society of
St. Vincent de Paul
Scotland



Primary 3 Prepare for the Sacrament of Reconciliation

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