

The Maximilian

A monthly newsletter for governors within the Archdiocese of Southwark

Edition 110
January 2024

Reflection - Canon Victor Darlington

Beloved Friends, Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
Happy New Year. I trust you had a Happy and Holy Christmas Day celebration with so many blessed times with family and friends; and the Christmas Season this year offered you a time of reflection and peace.

You may recall that last year I took you through some of our great feasts in our liturgical calendar, such as Mary, the Holy Mother of God; and of course, the Epiphany of the Lord, when we take our gifts to the infant king. This feast leads us to the Baptism of the Lord, which brings the Christmas season to an end and moves us into ordinary time. I highlight for you, some great Saints who are inspirations to all those involved in education. Saints like: Saints Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen who were doctors of the church; Saint Anthony the Abbot and Saint Agnes the Virgin Martyr; Saint Francis de Sales and Thomas Aquinas, another two great doctors of the church. Towards the end of the month, we will celebrate Saints Timothy and Titus as well as the conversion of Saint Paul. Saint Angela Merici, founder of the Company of St Ursula, is also celebrated this month which ends with the the feast of Saint John Bosco, who was one of the great teachers of young people.

All these great saints invite us to a life of prayer. In his 2023 Christmas Message our Archbishop John Wilson invites to a life of prayer this New Year:

"... We look to the coming New Year to be one of peace and we pray, give, and receive this precious gift. In preparation for the Jubilee year of 2025, our Holy Father Pope Francis has designated next year, 2024, as the year of prayer. The call to prayer is one we all can and should embrace. Often – too often – we think of God as distant or indifferent. We can put up barriers between ourselves and between God, shutting him out, not trusting his love, and not seeking his mercy.

Instead, let's use prayer to come close to God. Let's turn again to his son, the Lord Jesus, with our hopes, our dreams, our worries, and our thanks. From now, looking forward to next year, let's give prayer a go. Because prayer is strength for the weak. It will never make things worse and can only make them better. The biggest challenge to praying is just beginning. You can only learn to ride a bicycle by trying it out. It's the same with prayer. Even just praying the Our Father when we wake up and as we go to sleep at night will make a difference to our lives."



Welcome back to school and be assured of my prayers for you all this New Year 2024 and please keep me in your prayers too.

Canon Victor Darlington

Episcopal Vicar for the Southeast Area,
Commissions for Promoting Racial and Cultural Inclusion,
Education and Director of Caritas, Archdiocese of Southwark

AGM and Restructure

Please [click here](#) to view a letter from Angela Cox and Canon Victor Darlington regarding the AGM and Restructure.

Statement from His Majesty's Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman

A statement on the conclusion of the coroner's inquest from Ofsted's Chief Inspector.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/statement-from-his-majestys-chief-inspector-amanda-spielman>

Key changes to how Ofsted deal with inspections is explained in the paragraph below.

We will also make it clear through our inspection handbook that school leaders can be accompanied by colleagues in meetings with inspectors, and that they can share inspection outcomes with colleagues, family, medical advisers and their wider support group, before they are shared with parents. From next week, we will provide all schools with a number to call if they have concerns about their inspection. This will put them directly in touch with someone senior from Ofsted.

Consultations

The DfE is seeking views on the most appropriate approach for delivering minimum service levels in education services and evidence on the impact of strike action.

Opened: 28th November 2023

Closing: 11.59pm on 30th January 2024

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/minimum-service-levels-msls-in-education>

The DfE is seeking views on the content of the guidance and whether it will help to support schools and colleges, teachers and leaders to make considered and lawful decisions in relation to children who are questioning their gender and the wider school and college community.

Opened: 19 December 2023

Closing: 12 March 2024

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/equalities-political-impartiality-anti-bullying-team/gender-questioning-children-proposed-guidance/>



Gender questioning children: draft schools and colleges guidance

The government launched a consultation on Gender questioning children: draft schools and colleges guidance.

Paul Barber, Catholic Education Service Director, said: "While some clarity from the government is welcome, Catholic schools have been responding to pupils over this issue for many years, on a case-by-case basis, with sensitivity and understanding that each individual's needs vary. Catholic education focuses on the God-given dignity of each individual, regardless of what gender they are. We will be participating in the consultation in due course."

Academy Conversions and Catholic Multi -Academy Trusts in the Archdiocese of Southwark

As per Archbishop John Wilson's letter of June 2022, joining a Catholic MAT remains the direction of travel for all voluntary-aided schools and Single Academy Trusts.

Do please remain aware of the developments within the Diocese by checking the following link.
<https://www.rcaoseducation.org.uk/academisation/>

Courses & Events

Being a Foundation Governor – What You Need to Know

Tuesday 30th January 2024 5.30-7pm or
Thursday 1st February 2024 4-5.30pm
Free, Zoom
[Book](#)

Considering Becoming a Foundation Governor or Foundation Director? Your Questions Answered

Tuesday 6th February 2024 4-5pm
Free, Zoom
[Book](#)

Chairs of Governors Drop in – 1

Wednesday 7th February 2024 4-5pm
Free, Zoom
[Book](#)

Chairs of Governors Drop in – 2

Thursday 8th February 2024 5-6pm
Free, Zoom
[Book](#)

Admissions Appeal Panel Members Training

Thursday 22nd February 2024 3.30-5.30pm or
Tuesday 27th February 2024 5.30-7.30pm
Free, Zoom
[Book](#)

For Governors: Developing Vision and Virtues in a Catholic School or Academy

Wednesday 28th February 2024 5.30pm-7pm
Free, Zoom
[Book](#)

[This page](#) contains the dates and links to book onto the next series of sessions on Considering becoming a Foundation Governor or Foundation Director. This page also contains 2 A4 posters that can be used to encourage practising Catholics to become foundation governors or directors.

