

Newsletter No.6

November 2008

Welcome to our sixth newsletter edition! November marks a month of reflective thought and celebration. After prayers for All Saints at the beginning of the month, and commemoration of both service and civilian personnel who sacrificed their lives in times of war, tomorrow, we will end the month with celebration of The First Advent Sunday on 30 November which – especially in the light of our third item this month – might be of particular interest this year to your colleagues and pupils.

Themes for our newsletter this month include:

- 1. Eco Awareness Week at Christ College, Cheltenham**
- 2. St Teresa's Environmental Training Awareness Day**
- 3. Operation Noah launches "Reclaim Christmas" Campaign**

1. Eco Week at Christ College Cheltenham

Christ College in Cheltenham recently held its first Eco Awareness Week. Chris Carr at Christ College informs us that each year group held an Eco Assembly and activities included creating artwork using recycled materials and planting trees in the school grounds. There were workshops focussing on biodegradability and limiting energy use. Science Teacher and Eco Award coordinator Lee Bradley said: "The first Eco Week at Christ College was a great success. The students were engaged with the activities and lessons delivered on the environment. They are now in a better position to educate their families so that more of the community will recycle and understand the benefits of doing so". Christ College holds a nationally recognised Eco Schools Silver Award, and is the most recent arrival on our Catholic Schools Eco-Network. For more details go to:

<http://www.christcollege.org.uk/pages/news/text/1/news021.html>



Mo Braham, Gloucestershire County Council, gives a talk to students at Christ College Cheltenham illustrating the differing biodegradation timelines of materials.

2. St Teresa's Environmental Awareness Training Day – including prayers, thought-provoking speakers and the New Octopus Garden

The following article was contributed by Alison Spurrell:

Staff at St Teresa's Primary School in Monks Park Bristol were recently treated to a wonderful training day, led by CAFOD, on the role of Catholic Schools in teaching about Environmental issues. The day began with a

prayer, when we thanked God for his wonderful world. Staff and visitors gathered for this at our brand new octopus-shaped growing beds. This gardening facility for all pupils has recently been created, after winning a competition in the Bristol Evening Post. (The octopus shape was chosen so that children could easily reach the whole growing area when working on the tentacles: each of the seven classes at the school has its own tentacle, with a gardening club formed to work on the eighth, as well as the octopus head. See the Clifton Diocese website <http://www.cliftondiocese.com/octopus-arrives-at-st-teresas>.) It was a beautiful sunny morning and this was an inspiring start to our day.



Planting takes place at the octopus garden.

Two keynote speakers gave us such a lot to think about. Mike Edwards, the CAFOD Climate Change spokesman, and Mary Colwell, eminent local expert on environmental issues, challenged and encouraged us in our work with the children. Both talks were thought-provoking and fascinating.

The final session was led by Angela Warren, from CAFOD's education section in London, who led staff through the resources available from CAFOD. CAFOD have a huge range of educational resources on the environment, for all key stages, many of which can be accessed through their website. Examples include a Fair-trade shopping quiz encouraging children to replace non-fair-trade items with fair-trade goods; an activity pack and poster: "Go Green with CAFOD"; as well as dramas enabling children to focus on care for the planet and consider the effects of climate change in other parts of the world. (For more details link here: <http://www.cafod.org.uk/primary/climate-environment>). Both teaching and non-teaching staff were given the opportunity to try out various resources – the games being particularly popular! Angela led us in a closing prayer and we all agreed that the day had been a great success. Thanks to all who contributed."

3. 11 November 2008

Operation Noah will launch its "Reclaim Christmas" campaign tomorrow, to coincide with Remembrance Day. The campaign urges Christians to reflect on the approaching celebrations and consider the environmental impact of their actions. Instead of immersing ourselves in Christmas shopping and losing the true meaning of Christmas, the motto: "Shop less, live more, save the earth" suggests that a time of quiet reflection is needed as we approach the celebration of the birth of Christ. The launch of "Reclaim Christmas" will be held in London and will be marked with a talk by Father Christopher Jamison on Christianity and Climate Change. Link here <http://www.arcworld.org/news.asp?pageID=275> for our story about the

initiative, and <http://www.operationnoah.org/reclaim-christmas> for more information on Operation Noah's campaign and on Father Jamison's talk.

Perhaps most interesting for schools is a short drama called *A Present for the Future* written by Marc Norris of TenTen Theatre Company. (<http://www.operationnoah.org/resources/children/present-future-short-drama-young-people>) . It involves time travellers comparing the Christmases of 1945, 2008 and 2045 and has been described as "Dr Who meets A Christmas Carol."

If you wish to look at this newsletter on our website, or read earlier issues of our Catholic School Eco Newsletters, please go to <http://www.arcworld.org/news.asp?pageID=278>

Do let us know if there are any stories you would like to contribute to the next newsletter.

With best wishes,

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