

Scottish Catholic Education Service

SCES

Catholic Education Week 2024. Speaker Notes.



SCOTTISH CATHOLIC
EDUCATION SERVICE

Catholic Education Week 2024. Speaker Notes.

- The theme for Catholic Education Week 2024 is *Pilgrims of Hope*.
- The following notes may be used by speakers at Mass or assembly.
- If schools would rather write their own input for parishes, etc. these notes can serve as a possible framework.

Introduction

My name is _____ and I am a ___ year pupil from _____. Thank Fr. _____ for allowing me to speak to you all today to mark Catholic Education Week. The theme for this year's Catholic Education Week is inspired by the Jubilee Year 2025. Pope Francis stated in his February 2022 letter announcing the Jubilee:

"We must fan the flame of hope that has been given us and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision. The forthcoming Jubilee can contribute greatly to restoring a climate of hope and trust as a prelude to the renewal and rebirth that we so urgently desire..."

Our school community contributes to restoring a climate of hope:

- Learning is shaped using Gospel values, so that we learn to use our gifts and talents to be better versions of ourselves.
- We join in prayer every morning, and remember our Church, spread throughout the world.
- Our school promotes social justice so that the mission of the Church is heard by all.
- The school vision is to educate the whole person- body, mind and soul - so that we may be confident in our response to God's call.
- Our school is a place of worship and celebration and is an opportunity for all to encounter Christ.



Distinctive Nature of Catholic Schools

Points to consider:

- Our Catholic schools are communities where Jesus is the 'driving force' behind the school's planning and actions.

What have we learned this year from Jesus' teachings?

- We are communities of faith and learning.

How does our school engage with our faith community?

- Work with homes and parishes to provide a rounded, holistic education and system of support for young people's physical, intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual well-being and development.

What extra-curricular activities does our school offer?

- Catholic schools in Scotland are inclusive communities.

How does our school observe celebrations of other world religions?



Pilgrims of Hope

Points to consider:

'The beauty of the Christian faith lies not in its theological explanations but in the lives of people who dedicate themselves to prayer, charity and sharing the Gospel'

1. What examples can you share from within your school community that show life dedicated to 'prayer, charity, and sharing the Gospel'?

'Be discoverers of beauty, seekers of the treasures of faith...because faith cannot remain a memory of the past'.

2. What examples can you share from your school community that show how you are discoverers of beauty, seekers of the treasures of faith'?

'Always remember: the witness of life communicates the beauty of faith.'

3. What examples can you share from your school community that show how your school community; including families, and the parish, are journeying together to communicate 'the beauty of faith'.



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What does 'Pilgrims of Hope' mean for the Parish?

So, what does this mean for us in the parish of _____?

How do we live as people following in the Way of Jesus?

We were created to be in a loving relationship with God, our family and our world.

In our homes, in this parish [and in our schools] we learn how it feels to be treated with love, with compassion and with mercy; we learn about the importance of acting with justice and integrity; we experience understanding, kindness and gentleness.

We can then learn how to use these virtues and values in our interactions with others and, in so doing, we take the message of Christ to those we meet, within our communities and beyond.

Speakers may choose to add details specific to their parish; what does the parish offer for young people to participate? Caritas/Pope Francis Faith Award, Children's liturgy, altar server groups, special feast day celebrations, pilgrimages and retreats, volunteering opportunities, Mini Vinnies etc...



What does 'Pilgrims of Faith' mean for our school?

Points to consider:

- School(s) work together with parishes to give children opportunities to grow in love of God and with each other. Here are some of the examples of the ways in which our schools and parish work together as a community of faith and learning, living in the example of Jesus:

We are challenged to use our talents for the service of others and so we [insert local details] *Caritas/Pope Francis Faith Award, school buddy/mentor system*

And we put into practice the things we learn about the love of Jesus through our own acts of witness, in our contributions to charities such as [insert local details here] *volunteer/fundraise*

by participating in parish activities such as [insert local details here] *Choir, leading children's liturgy, volunteer stewards/cleaners, managing parish social media etc.*

by showing loving concern for others in our school when we [insert local details here] *foodbank, coat/toy appeals etc.*

Conclusion

Points to consider:

Thank the congregation for listening today, and for joining _____
School, in celebrating Catholic Education.

We are growing in our learning and growing in our love of God and neighbour by following Jesus, as Pilgrims of Hope. We are learning to become faithful disciples through our commitment to living a life of witness.

Thank Fr. _____ for allowing us to speak and for supporting our school. *If Father is not Chaplain to the school, remember to include your chaplain's name here.*

We will continue to remember you in our prayers.

