

School Chaplaincy

- A new model for a new time

This article sketches the development of new thinking and an innovative response by EducareM to the significant need and demand for chaplaincy provision in Catholic schools in England. The call of the Church since Vatican II to discover new ways in which to engage Catholics of all ages and in particular, young people, in the evangelising mission of the Church in education has long taxed the minds of Bishops and Catholic educationalists alike. This article offers the possibility of new models for our time.

Keywords: Catholic school pupil chaplaincy; leadership; mission; peer evangelisation; witness; doorways into parish.

Introduction

What I thought was going to be a straightforward meeting with a group of Head teachers in the Diocese of Salford led to a discussion which by the end left most people feeling even more frustrated and at sea than when they arrived. The source of the frustration was the Bishop's request for all schools and colleges in the diocese to appoint a lay chaplain if they were not being served by a member of the clergy. Many Salford priests were having to take on more than one parish not to mention schools, hospitals and prisons. The challenges were well known, even if there were enough suitably qualified lay chaplains available, many school budgets simply could not afford to support the appointment of a full time chaplain. Bishop Terence Brain understood the difficulties. However, the spiritual and pastoral needs of the students had to come first.

Understanding the challenge

The continuing shortage of priests for parishes shows little or no sign of reversing. Combine this with a limited provision for training lay Catholics to work as chaplains in schools; the lack of financial resources,

particularly in primary schools, to pay a living wage, the outlook for supporting school lay chaplaincy is bleak. According to the Catholic Education Service for England and Wales (CES) figures for 2014, there are 2245 Catholic schools and colleges in England and Wales, including the independent sector, serving the needs of 845762 pupils of which according to the CES data; 'The proportion of Catholic pupils in maintained schools and colleges decreased slightly once again, to 69.5% compared to 70.2% in 2013.' If only the schools are considered, the figure was 70.5% (71% in 2013). For the independent sector, the proportion was 36.7%, hardly different from the figure for 2013. As for last year the percentage figures do not tell the full story; in the primary phase the number of Catholic pupils recorded actually increased by about 9,000, but the total number of pupils recorded also rose, by about 12,000. In secondary schools the number of Catholic pupils was almost identical to the figure for 2013, but the total number of pupils whose affiliation was recorded rose by about 7,000. The challenge is not just to support Catholic students, but to provide chaplaincy support for all pupils and adults within a school community. Having researched the possible potential for lay chaplains coming into the school sector from Higher Education, it was clear that with just St Mary's University Twickenham and Newman University in Birmingham providing suitable training for those wishing to work in Catholic school Chaplaincy, the supply of well-trained lay chaplains was clearly not going to meet the needs of today, let alone in the future. The National Association of Catholic Chaplains (NACC), do offer helpful advice and support for those seeking entry into chaplaincy. However, the supply chain remains thin.

New thinking for a new time

Having consulted with head teachers across all sectors it was clear that real efforts were being made to find suitable lay chaplains with the necessary professional training. Many were looking creatively at the possibility of appointing on the basis that if a candidate clearly had potential the school would provide for their ongoing professional



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development. Some heads and parishes are working together to fund a lay chaplain to work for more than one school. What has become clear is that this often leads to the chaplain being pulled in many directions and the chaplaincy provision being too thinly spread and eventually not really being very satisfactory for anyone.

Inspiration from within

I was invited to carry out a pre Ofsted review of a primary school in Hertfordshire which had included a conversation with a cross section of 9-11 year olds on the topic of their contribution to the Catholic life of the school. I asked the question: how do you see your role in building up the Catholic life of the school here in St Joseph's? I was not expecting the responses that flowed from the pupils. Their awareness of what they might do far exceeded anything that I had ever thought of before, especially from pupils of such a young age. It was clear that what they desired was the opportunity to be given a leadership role in developing the spiritual life of the school, share their faith as young catechists, as well as being part of the decision making process. It was at

this point that I realised the solution to the chaplaincy issue may not be 'out there' but in fact staring me in the face. It was within.

A pilot group emerges

The challenge had come from the Diocese of Salford, but it was necessary to try out this new idea in a more local and controlled area to see how it might develop, especially with primary schools. Working with a small group of six schools, one secondary and five primary, we began to map out the parameters of the pilot. The first concern was how was this going to fit within both canonical and diocesan requirements. Canon law is clear. Canons 564 and 565 clearly state that only an ordained priest, appointed by the local Ordinary may act as a chaplain to a school. However, there is provision for lay people to be part of the chaplaincy team. The addition of the word 'Lay' clearly denotes their position and status. Though this is in some cases a contentious issue as there is the school of thought that the title should clearly state that they are a chaplaincy team member rather than given the title Lay Chaplain. For the sake of clarity and being seen to be compliant with Canon Law, we opted for the following practice. Teams would be set up following clear guidelines which demonstrate the line of authority and accountability;

Bishop
Parish Priest
Governors
Head teacher
Adult responsible for the chaplaincy team on a day to day basis if the priest chaplain is not able to be in school.

Finding the Adult Lay Chaplain/Lay leader of the team

It is important to be clear about the role. A lay chaplain is someone who is trained and qualified for the post. They naturally become the leader of the chaplaincy team working with the appointed priest chaplain and the head teacher. Someone who is appointed as the adult lay leader of the team may not necessarily be a qualified lay school chaplain but who has some theological background and potential to be developed in their chaplaincy team role. They may well eventually become a qualified lay school chaplain. They will be working under the guidance of the priest chaplain and head teacher. The Diocese needs to be fully involved in

the whole recruitment and selection process from the initial meeting of the governors to discuss the desirability of appointing an adult lay chaplain/leader of the chaplaincy team, through to the eventual appointment of the successful candidate. Many diocese do have guidelines for these appointments on their websites. It is really important that the Head teacher and or priest chaplain explains to all the staff the chaplaincy initiative. The role description and person specification must be displayed internally for all to see and if the resources are available, an advertisement for the post of Lay Chaplain placed externally. Applicants must apply in writing to the Chair of Governors. The usual selection process follows (including a reference from the applicant's Parish Priest). Interviews are then carried out in the normal fashion and hopefully an appointment is made. The newly appointed Lay Chaplain/Lay leader forms part of the selection panel for pupil chaplains.

Identifying possible lay leaders

What do you do if you can't find a suitable person to appoint as a full time lay chaplain? Once more we realised that the solution may well lie within the community. This is when we turned to see if within the school there were supporting adults who were catechists in the parish, or had good experience of working in and supporting faith development. What we discovered was in each school often there were support staff working in a variety of roles who had this background. Governors have proved to be another avenue for possible lay leaders of the team. What they often lacked was the confidence to step forward because they felt they were not qualified enough. It was at this point that the role of the priest chaplain and head teacher was very important. Looking for the potential to develop in a possible candidate rather than one that appears to have all the qualifications and experience opens up a whole new avenue of possible candidates. It was necessary to informally sound people out and reassure them of both support and ongoing training as part of their professional development so that they felt supported and affirmed. It was then that we saw people stepping up. So often they turned out to be just the right person. What of course is essential is the ongoing theological and professional training for that person. In the diocese of Salford it has been recognised that this is something that must be offered as part of their ongoing diocesan

continuing professional development (CPD) provision for schools.

The role of the adult lay chaplain/leader of the pupil chaplaincy team

As we have already identified not all schools can either afford to or find an appropriately trained and qualified lay chaplain. In the past this has often served to stall the process of setting up a chaplaincy team or, equally unhelpful, the task and responsibility has fallen to the RE coordinator or Head of department. This practice is far from satisfactory for a number of reasons. The person responsible in school for religious education has little or no time to give to the post and secondly it can often lead to a conflict of roles. The person responsible for religious education is leading the most important area of learning in the school (RE is the core of the core curriculum) and often has a number of other whole school responsibilities that only add to an already considerable area of responsibility. To add chaplaincy to this as well often leads to little or nothing of significance actually happening, not to mention frustration all round. With the role being separated from the RE department it can flourish.

The role of the lay adult chaplain or leader of the chaplaincy team

This person will be responsible for supporting the Catholic life of the school on a daily basis through:

1. Developing the leadership skills of the pupil chaplaincy team
2. Providing support for staff in the delivery of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils across the curriculum.
3. Liaising with clergy for the delivery and development of the sacramental provision for the whole school.
4. Assist with the pastoral care of staff and pupils.
5. Assisting with the delivery and development of the prayer life of the school supporting assemblies, tutor prayer times, prayer groups and assisting teachers in helping young people to pray.
6. Developing and leading retreat experiences for staff and pupils.
7. Developing the use of the chapel/prayer room/ sacred spaces or areas, for all staff.
8. Outreach to feeder parishes.

9. Assist with outreach to families.
10. Developing outreach work supporting local, national and international charities. (Caritas, CAFOD, CARJ, Christian Aid, CAP, Tradecraft)
11. Setting up of Youth Justice and Peace groups in schools. Working for change – being the change makers.

Developing and supporting the pupil led chaplaincy media desk in the school which works to:

1. Develop a culture of "It's great to be Catholic".
2. The design and production of ICT communications across the school through the intra-net and interactive whiteboard reflections for tutor groups.
3. The production of monthly news letters
4. The dissemination of news, points of view and comments for comment!
5. Communicating with other Catholic schools' chaplaincy media teams to team up for events and sharing of reflections, worship ideas and materials for key times of the year.
6. Linking with the diocese for activities, news and events (Youth)
7. Engaging with the diocesan Youth Worker to be part of the Diocesan Youth scene.
8. Working with other schools to be part of a young people's forum for change – the young Church of today working to create the Church for tomorrow.
9. Provide training for leadership in the Church. Young Catechists. Secondary schools linking with feeder primaries assisting with the preparation of sacraments. Offering retreat days for Year 3 pupils in the secondary school.
10. Supporting pupils preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Responsibility of Head teacher in setting up the teams

The Head teacher meets with the appropriate group: Year 5 (Primary), Year 10 (Secondary) and Year 12 (Sixth Form) and formally explains each of the following:

The Vision of Chaplaincy for the school.

Who can apply?

Explanation of why the appointed comes from the Bishop.

Explains that this is a major commitment, a far greater responsibility than the head boy/girl.

It is an opportunity to develop their leadership skills.

An honour to serve.

Applicants must:

Apply in writing to the Head teacher saying what they would bring to the Catholic life of the school as a pupil/student chaplain. Prepare a 5-10 minute presentation to the selection panel. Attend an interview. All appointments must go through the selection process to ensure the pupils are not selected on a casual basis.

The Head Teacher needs to:

Display the role description (See below)

Form a selection panel of:

The Parish Priest (Chaplain), a Governor, the Adult Lay Chaplain and the Head teacher.

The role of a pupil chaplain is to serve as a member of the chaplaincy team to support the Catholic life of the School

You will be entrusted with the responsibility of:

Giving joyful witness to Jesus Christ in school, at home and in your local community.

Helping to support the delivery of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils across the curriculum.

Developing the media desk, school chaplaincy web page and communications in school with other chaplaincy teams.

Liaising with clergy for the delivery and development of the sacramental provision for the whole school.

Caring for all pupils and helping staff.

Assisting with the delivery and development of the prayer life of the school, supporting assemblies, class prayer times and prayer groups.

Developing and leading retreat experiences/social justice theme days for the school.

Developing the use of the chapel/prayer room/ sacred spaces or areas.

Being present on parents' and open evenings to help with the welcome of all the community.

Developing outreach work and supporting local, national and international charities.

Working for social justice and the transformation of society – being the change makers.

The pupil interview process

Applicants must be baptised Catholics. However, the issue of attendance at Sunday Mass is difficult as in the case of many students this is out of their control.

Experience has taught us to foster the desire rather than penalise those who would like to attend but are not able to. All applicants must be interviewed separately. Select between 8-10 pupils (try to resist going beyond 10 as this may become too difficult to manage). Aim to appoint only the strongest applicants to ensure the highest quality.

The appointment of a pupil chaplain is guided by the canonical requirement to both witness to and practise their Catholic faith. However, it is important to recognise the value of pupils being encouraged to be people of faith.

After appointment, the following actions are required;

Notify the Diocese of the names of the pupil chaplains. They will provide the letter of appointment which will be given out at the Commissioning Service. If this is the first time the Chaplaincy team has been formed – the whole team attends the training day and Commissioning Service at the Cathedral. Attendance in support of the pupil chaplains by the Parish Priest, Head teacher and a governor for the training and Commissioning not only consolidates a clear understanding of the relationship between the lay and ordained members of the team, but also serves to reinforce the seriousness of the commitment.

Training day for the full team prior to the commissioning

This day has developed significantly over the past three years, as we recognised the many diverse needs of different chaplaincy teams at both primary, secondary and 6th form college levels. For the diocese of Salford training takes place in their diocesan centre which is conveniently adjacent to the Cathedral. In Westminster Diocese training has taken place in parish centres and halls. What has proved very useful is running the training for eight schools at a time (space permitting) and having teams together from across the phases. At first the secondary schools and colleges were rather taken aback to find themselves being trained with 9-10 year olds! However, this soon disappeared once they saw and heard the levels of commitment and readiness of the younger pupils to step up and witness to their faith as well as their ability to organise and lead independently of adult support. For the primary school pupils it was also important that they experience teenagers

who were keen to be leaders in the faith, people who are proud to be Catholic.

What does the training include?

Part 1

Essential to understanding what a pupil chaplain is calls for an explanation of the route meaning of the word chaplain from the Latin capellanus, from capella meaning chapel. The origin of the word capella has been the source of much debate and controversy over the years. The most common view is that the word is derived from the capa or capella of St. Martin of Tours. This was a cloak much revered by the French as a sacred relic, so much so that it was carried with them when they went to war and placed under a tent on the battle field. This tent gradually received the name capella and the guardians of the cloak, that which is most precious, were called capellani. Favouring the St Martin of Tours version of the story we sought to give the pupil chaplains a sense of the sacredness and importance of their role and responsibilities. A dramatic improvisation of the story of St Martin serves to set the scene and provide the pupils with a way of explaining the meaning of chaplaincy back at school. To this we add an exploration of the meaning of being a guardian and proclaimer of that which is most precious today.

Part 2

Here time and consideration is given to their place as evangelisers and witnesses to Jesus Christ as part of the mission of the Church led by their Bishop. Each team looks at how they are going to introduce to the whole school/college who they are and what they are setting out to do. This usually takes the form of an assembly, exhibition, or school 'road show' entitled 'Meet the chaplaincy team'. Each team share their ideas so that they can learn from one another.

Part 3

It is essential that the teams learn how to develop a plan of action. To do this we introduce them to a typical school development plan template and share illustrations from other chaplaincy teams as to what they might consider including for their school's development. Key to the success of their development plans is the necessity of meeting with the senior leadership team to agree the plan and then finally to take the plan to the

Experience of both these meetings is that the pupil teams actually engage with the leadership of the school in a face to face dialogue and decision making process about the future development of the Catholic life of the school in a very mature and professional manner.

of commissioning can be prepared and sent to the school for the commissioning celebration. The commissioning is delegated by the Bishop to the Priest Chaplain. The Commissioning Service is carried out by the Parish Priest who is the Chaplain either in the school or preferably as part of the Sunday liturgy in Church.

Example development Plan

Action	Resources	Person(s) responsible	Start date	End date	Success criteria
Meeting with SLT to discuss DP					
Meeting with Governors to discuss DP					
Plan meetings for team					
Introduce team to school Road Show Assembly					
Design chaplaincy area and get equipment					
Set up Media desk					
Allocate pupil chaplains to year groups					
Attend staff briefing to talk about chaplains leading prayer once a week					
Plan for Justice and Peace theme days across the school					
Design Chaplaincy page on school website					
Plan retreat days for year groups					
Set up prayer group for Pupils and staff Parents					
Talk to year groups about which charity they want to find out about and support					
Review and evaluation meeting					

What happens after the first team has moved on?

Where Chaplaincy teams are established and the school is appointing their new team they follow the same procedures for selection as the first team. The new team members are trained 'in house' at the school by the priest/head teacher/lay chaplain. The training and induction can be supported by the outgoing experienced pupil chaplains and their adult team leader. Names of the successful chaplaincy team members are

A note of caution

Very often many more pupils apply than can be appointed. Experience has taught us that it is not good practice to simply let this enthusiasm go unrecognised or undeveloped. However, neither is it good to commission more than you can really effectively support. We have found that a maximum of 8 pupil chaplains at primary level and 10 at secondary level works best. Commissioning more can run the risk of losing control simply because it is too many

a matter of numbers, but quality and effective leadership. We have found that by being very clear at the outset of the invitation to apply, the Head teacher explains that those who are not successful will be invited to become an associate team member attached to a particular responsibility. An example of this would be to be on the media desk team or charity team where both teams are being led by a pupil chaplain who needs plenty of helpers to get their area of responsibility off the ground.

What about schools where there are significant numbers of pupils who are not baptised Catholics?

To date there are over 1200 pupil chaplains in the diocese of Salford. The Lay Chaplaincy teams have been extremely successful with over 120 schools now operating under this new model. It has been the selection process of pupil chaplains that has given rise to a growing concern about the way in which pupils who seriously wish to be part of the Chaplaincy team, are excluded because either they were not baptised Catholics or belonged to another Christian denomination or faith group.

As an increasing number of Heads enquired about what to do when they simply did not have enough Catholics to form the Chaplaincy teams, we began a process of discernment about the way forward. Pivotal to this process were the following:

1. Our living out of the mission of the Church in education.
2. Understanding that these are Catholic schools that must remain authentic and true to their core purpose.
3. What are these core purposes?
4. If a Catholic school admits pupils from other denominations and faiths, what are our reasons for doing this?

To help us in this process we went back to the following documents:

- Code of Canon Law
- Trust Deed
- Instrument of Government
- Ethos Statement
- Teaching of the Church on Catholic education with particular reference to the models of Catholic schools found therein.
- Teaching of the Catholic Church on inter-faith dialogue.

- Catholic Schools, Children of Other Faiths and Community Cohesion: Loving Tenderly, Acting Justly, Walking Humbly.
- Meeting God in Friend & Stranger. Catholic Bishops' Conference

Whilst there are many inspirational documents on inter-faith dialogue it was the challenge of how to translate this into reality in a Catholic school in the Diocese of Salford and other interested diocese. With reference to the teaching of the Church on Catholic education over the past fifty years we recognised the following models as integral to the mission of the Church in education in our diocese.

Model 1

A Catholic school where the majority of pupils and staff are all practising Catholics. This model is supporting those families for whom education and the practice of the faith are very important. It acts in support of the family and the parish in coping with all the tensions of 21st century, bringing up their children as young people where life, faith and culture are integrated.

Model 2

A Catholic school where the Head teacher and senior leaders are Catholic, but many of the pupils and staff may be either practising Catholics, from other faith traditions or no faith at all. Here the Church is responding to the need to support those who may not know Jesus Christ, struggle with many of 21st century issues and in particular those who have been pushed to the fringes of society and become marginalised.

Model 3

A Catholic school where there are very few Christians in the area. The Head teacher and senior leaders are practising Catholics, but many others are not. Here the school is primarily acting as an agent of evangelisation, witnessing to Jesus Christ and the Gospel.

The context of schools in the Diocese of Salford

As far as the development of Lay Chaplaincy had been concerned we were clearly operating out of model 1. What we were being challenged to grapple with was the mission of the Church that is also found in models 2 and 3. We recognised that the majority of schools within the diocese were model 2 and a small number were closer to model 3 due to the demographic changes

in the population over the past 15-20 years. Significant numbers of Hindu and Muslim families had relocated to particular areas impacting on the local schools' intake. However, it is clearly the case that many schools are made up of pupils from a variety of religious backgrounds, even if the majority of pupils are Catholic.

Forcing the decision

The challenge became immediate on one occasion when a school on its way to the training day phoned to enquire,

'Is it alright for our Muslim children to be commissioned today?'

Clearly this was a very difficult moment. Not wanting to embarrass or offend the school or make the Muslim pupils feel that they were not accepted, we had just one hour to find a way forward. As a result we took refuge in the 1988 Education Acts requirement for every child to be spiritually, morally, socially and culturally educated and at the end of the day the Muslim pupils were missioned to help develop spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) education across the school. Whilst this dealt with the immediate difficulty, it was neither satisfactory nor clear about the status of the team as a chaplaincy team. Nor did it really address the issue of the faith development of the pupils of other denominations or faiths.

The way forward

The questions were still with us.

- How do we enable pupils of other faiths and denominations to develop their faith?
- How can we be one united authentic team?
- Is it chaplaincy or is it something else?
- So where does chaplaincy fit in?

In drilling down to what it was we were trying to do we recognised the following:

- All pupils are admitted to a Catholic school because it is right for them to be there. The call to dialogue with other faiths and traditions is at the heart of the mission of the Church- Engaging in a divine synergy which enables God in you to speak to God in me, taking us both to a place not yet discovered or dreamed of.

Dialogue and Proclamation - The mystery of the unity of all mankind

In dialogue, Christians and others are invited to deepen their religious commitment, to respond with increasing sincerity to God's personal call and gracious self-gift, as our faith tells us, always passes through the mediation of Jesus Christ and the work of his Spirit

- All pupils are part of God's family.

First comes the fact that the whole of humankind forms one family, due to the common origin of all men and women, created by God in his own image.

Since many of you do not belong to the Catholic Church and others are non-believers, from the bottom of my heart I give this silent blessing to each and every one of you, respecting the conscience of each one of you but knowing that each one of you is a child of God.

- All are called to live in communion.

Correspondingly, all are called to a common destiny, the fullness of life in God. Moreover, there is but one plan of salvation for humankind, with its centre in Jesus Christ, who in his incarnation "has united himself in a certain manner to every person."

Finally, there needs to be mentioned the active presence of the Holy Spirit in the religious life of the members of the other religious traditions. From all this the Pope concludes to a "mystery of unity" which was manifested clearly at Assisi, "in spite of the differences between religious professions."

....In Vatican II in the Constitution Gaudium et Spes. The Council teaches that Christ, the New Adam, through the mystery of his incarnation, death and resurrection, is at work in each human person to bring about interior renewal.

Let Christians, while witnessing to their own faith and way of life, acknowledge, preserve and encourage the spiritual and moral good found among non-Christians, as well as their social and cultural values.

By admitting pupils of other faiths and traditions to the school, the governors have the responsibility of developing or enabling the growth of every pupil's faith and their knowledge and understanding thereof. They

are not there to 'make up the numbers'.

The G.I.F.T. Model

Interestingly it was from Africa that we discovered a way forward. The Rwandese people have a tradition that when they wish to give a gift of great value to someone they weave a grass basket and paint an intricate design on the outside. Every basket is unique and only given on a very special occasion. The basket is then presented to the person with the understanding that it contains the most precious gift that they have to give - their love, thanks, gratitude. Once given they should never be sold as they contain the gift of great price. Some religious communities and parishes often use these baskets as Tabernacles.

Guardians of the 'Gift of great price'

As mentioned above when preparing the Catholic pupil chaplaincy teams we focus very much on the story of St Martin, stressing the role of the Chaplain as the guardian of that which is most precious - the Christian faith. In moving the focus away from St Martin's story but keeping the same focus of guarding and promoting that which is most precious to each one - their faith - we were able to reconcile diversity and unity.

The G.I.F.T. teams' training was underpinned by St Paul's analogy of the body (Corinthians 12:12) - in order to emphasise the uniqueness of each person and their special role in helping their school and community to grow in faith.

How did we prepare the teams?

The selection process followed the same lines of application and interviews as the pupil chaplaincy teams; each pupil having to write a letter of application saying what they felt they would be able to bring to the faith life of the school. Consent from families and faith leaders was also sought so that no one felt there was any risk of proselytization. On the training day the pupils worked with their lay leaders and Head teachers on their development plans which included the celebrations of each faith group in the school and the inclusion of ways in which they would actively develop dialogue and learning about and from each other.

Missioning Service

It was agreed by the schools and the

diocese that the G.I.F.T. teams should be missioned in the Cathedral like the Catholic pupil chaplaincy teams. In this way it sends a clear message that the Church is serious about its recognition of all our pupils. Families, governors and faith leaders were all invited to be present. As each team member answered the call of their name and stepped forward their family members and faith leaders stood in recognition of their commitment to and support of the young person.

What happens now?

The four primary schools which have agreed to pilot this model will continue to work very closely with the diocese of Salford so that we can all learn how to improve and develop the way forward. They are visited by diocesan staff a few months after their commissioning to see how they are doing and to give any further support or training.

Conclusion

The speed with which this initiative has grown is extremely positive. However, its very success calls for careful monitoring and ongoing evaluation. Where schools and diocese have been careful to consult with EducareM about setting up these models of team chaplaincy and ensuring that the appropriate preparation and training is provided, there is a high level of success. As with all new initiatives, there is the danger of ideas being taken up without careful consideration and guidance. Sadly this has happened in a few cases and one then has the difficult task of trying to undo the damage and put things right. However, the positive far outweighs the negative. As we move through the fourth year of this initiative we are yet again being faced with a new challenge. How to continue to harness the leadership skills of so many young people as they move from one phase to another in their schooling. By the time our pupils have been pupil chaplains for two years they are very confident and competent in planning, leading and witnessing to their faith. We are now being asked to look at ways in which we can transfer this enthusiasm and commitment into parish life. Perhaps this is the greatest challenge of all. One thing is for certain, it is not the young people who lack the desire to be leaders in their faith community. The question is, will they be welcome and allowed to use their leadership skills and training in their parishes?