

## Education Sunday – 8 February

For well over a hundred years there has been an annual recognition of Education Sunday in England and Wales. It is a national day of prayer and celebration for everyone in the world of education. Education Sunday is traditionally celebrated on the ninth Sunday before Easter.

With this in mind, an ecumenical steering group representing different Christian denominations (together with the Association of Christian Teachers and the Student Christian Movement) meets each year to devise the Education Sunday theme. The theme for 2004 is 'Putting out into the Deep' (based on the story in Luke 5: 1-11).

### **Reproduced below is an Ignatian-style meditation on Luke 5:1-11 from ACT (Association of Christian Teachers)**

The form of Ignatian meditation chosen is lectio divina: 'a response to scripture'.

The three elements involved are:

- (i) reading (the Bible passage);
- (ii) meditating (upon the themes and images in the passage);
- (iii) praying (in response to the passage and one's own meditations upon it).

**Step 1:** Read Luke 5: 1-11.

**Step 2:** Read the following meditation:

You are at your place of work or study. You see and hear the people you know going about their normal business. But everyone looks tired and disheartened. It 's been a long day; in fact it's been a demanding week! You've all tried your best ... but it seems your best isn't good enough! Work that needed to be done on Monday still hasn't been finished and now it's Friday.

*How do you feel? (PAUSE)*

Everyone is starting to pack things away ready for the weekend when suddenly Jesus walks into the building. Jesus looks at each person in turn and smiles. He asks you to open a window for him so he can speak to the crowd of onlookers who have gathered in the street outside.

*What do you see and hear? (PAUSE)*

Jesus is in your place of work! And you have just opened a window at his request! You notice that everyone around you has stopped what they were doing and has pulled up a chair to listen to Jesus. They sit, cradling their mugs of coffee and cups of squash, hanging on every word.

*What does Jesus say that speaks to them most? (PAUSE)*

As you listen to Jesus you feel the stress easing from your body; your neck and shoulders feel less tense; your worries and concerns don't seem such a burden anymore; you begin to laugh and smile.

*What worries and burdens do you most want to be released from? (PAUSE)*

When Jesus has finished speaking to the crowd he closes the window and turns to face you and your workmates. He tells you to unpack everything you have packed away for the

weekend and says he wants to help you do your work right now. "Put out into the deep," says Jesus. You reply, "Lord, we've worked all week and haven't accomplished a thing. But because you say so, we will start again." Suddenly all the things that didn't go your way before begin to work! In fact, people who work at the school/shop/factory next door have to come and lend a hand!

*Picture the scene: what happens? What is the reaction of your workmates now? (PAUSE)*

Then one of your friends falls to their knees and says, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful person!" Jesus replies: "Don't be afraid; from now on you will be working for me."

*What is your friend's response? What is your response? (PAUSE)*

**Step 3:** Read the following prayer:

Loving God,

Help us to welcome you into our place of work without feeling embarrassed.

"Do not be afraid!" says the Lord.

Help us to invite you into every situation, especially when we can no longer cope ... when we feel stressed out or inadequate; when our best no longer seems good enough.

"Do not be afraid!" says the Lord.

Help us to cast all our worries and burdens onto you and listen for your guidance in the things we do day by day.

"Do not be afraid!" says the Lord.

We pray that we might become bold enough to obey your call and 'put out into the deep' - trusting that you will bless us generously and, through us, bless those around us.

Help us to hear and answer your call to us.

Amen

Lord, by Your Holy Spirit, we ask You to empower and energise each and every Christian teacher in their calling to serve You. Strengthen and protect them; bless and enable them so they might be "salt" and "light" to the communities they serve.

Amen

Printed from: <http://www.christian-teachers.org.uk/>

## **STOP PRESS**

The First Head teacher of Bishop Justus School will be Kathy Griffith.

Kathy is currently Deputy Head at Hayes school  
and she will be an outstanding head teacher.

She has a lot of hard work ahead but she has boundless energy  
and enthusiasm; a passion for education and a firm  
commitment to the Christian ethos of our school.

She will do a good job