

FIGHT CLUB

"This is how I fight my battles.

It may look like I'm surrounded

But I'm surrounded by YOU."

'Surrounded', Michael W. Smith

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBI84oZxnJ4>

My father is a historian, a rugby fan and a lifelong teacher. As a kid I watched him chalk out tank trajectories and military strategy on a blackboard the width of the classroom. His pupils joked about the ease with which he could be drawn into a red herring, but those red herrings had a habit of sticking. In my teens, he laid a book in my hands and said, 'Read this'.

The book was 'Gates of Fire' by Steven Pressfield. It's about 'The Three Hundred' – the Spartan warriors who defended Greece against the invading armies of King Xerxes I of Persia in 480 BC. It was one of those books, you know, the kind that when you finish it you have to take a moment. Several moments, lying on a narrow bed in a student flat, sensing something shift within.

It's a story of courage in the face of overwhelming odds; terminal odds in fact. King Leonidas of Sparta led 300 Spartan warriors and others in a last stand at the Hot Gates of Thermopylae. In doing so they bought the retreating Greek army some time, and were annihilated to the last man.

What does it take to give that much? To fight for two days straight, no rest, knowing that your life will be forfeit? To fight on, despite the betrayal of a fellow countryman that brought the Persians behind the Greek lines? To fight on, right up close to the mess of human existence, caked in dust and sweat and tears and blood, yours and your friends'?

The 300 weren't fighting for their future. They were fighting for THE future. In the clashing of bronze, they knew some things were worse than death. Ideas, the values of their people, meant more than the individual bodies that clothed them. Stripped naked they strode screaming into the Persian darkness, inspiring Greece to fight on and eventually defeat Xerxes' army. The 300 had one eye on eternity, and marched straight towards it.

Now I'm not about to join up. But the language of battle and grit and endurance matter right now. The other day my husband, who lived in Japan (and still breathes Japan), declared we had found our family motto: "Nana korobi, ya oki" - 'fall down seven times, stand up eight'. I think it's going to stick. We all need the stories that inspire us and turn our minds to the greater meaning behind the sacrifice. The stories gift us with courage and that little bit of belligerent determination to keep moving forward.

Today will be peppered with moments that call for courage. Your own unique battles, Persians at the narrow pass, leering and calling for surrender. In this I pray you will know the presence of another King who is right in the thick of it with you, caked in dust and sweat and tears and blood, yours and his. No sitting astride a charger on a hill for Christ our King, watching as his people fall and die in the valley below. Jesus lays aside his crown and slides from the horse. He hoists the shield of Faith and tightens his grip round the sword of the Spirit. And then he leads us into the fight.

God bless you all



Friday
19th June
2020

Vanessa O'Dea

DIOCESAN NEWS

Heads Huddles W/C 22nd June

Wednesday 24th June 2020 @3.30pm

Invitations and notes from the previous meeting will be sent next week
Any queries or if you would like to receive the notes from any previous 'huddle' contact
education@carlisle-diocese.org.uk

Partnership Agreement

We have received a number of queries this week about the Partnership Agreement and whether schools have missed their renewal invitation. We are currently working on our offering for the enhanced package, in the light of the current situation and will use this year to bring the enhanced package in line with the academic year rather than the financial year. Watch this space!

CONTACT INFORMATION

A reminder that all our officers are working from home, and are available to support you. However, some changes have been made to our contact details and working patterns may vary while responding to demand

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education@carlisle-diocese.org.uk

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@CarlisleDBE

For advice and support

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

National Professional Qualification for Middle Leadership and Professional Certificate for Middle Leaders in Church Schools

These qualifications consist of a 5-day programme together with an online element. They will be delivered by the five North West Dioceses, Liverpool Hope University and School Improvement Liverpool.

Accredited by the Department for Education (DfE), the National Professional Qualification for Middle Leadership (NPQML) involves leading a bespoke project aiming to improve pupil progress and team capability. This can be tailored to be in line with the school development plan or a stand-alone project.

Once again, DfE funding has been achieved for this course, which enables delegates to gain two substantial awards for just £300. The course comes out of a unique partnership between all 5 NW Dioceses and Liverpool Hope University and explores the distinctive nature of Christian leadership within church schools. It forms part of the NW Christian Leadership Pathway, which aims to ensure the quality as well as the quantity of future leaders in our church schools.

For further information [click here](#) and/or to register please contact:

The CPD Team

Faculty of Education
Liverpool Hope University
Hope Park Liverpool, L16 9JD.

T: 0151 291 3061/3029



Join the Tes SEN Show's expert speakers for a month of **free webinars**, dedicated to preparing you for returning to school in the 'new normal'.

The [SEN Show Series](#) is for educational staff of all levels, parents and carers, covering vital topics including **mental health** and **resilience**, **co-production**, **bereavement** and **assistive tech**.

You'll come away with top tips and strategies to return to school ready to bring learning alive for pupils with SEN.

For more details and the full list of webinars [click here](#).

Home working activities: Suggestions for school staff

Earlier this term the diocese put together a document to help signpost some training opportunities and activities which can be completed at home.

Please [click here](#) for further details

SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR WORRIED LITTLE ONES



Our friends at Heartsmart have teamed up with trauma expert Heather Forbes, to create a free transitional resource for teachers and children, supporting the journey back into the classroom. The resource provides:

- ♦ **Children** - with reflective and practical exercises, processing the emotional impact of Covid-19 and home-schooling.
- ♦ **Teachers** - with a toolkit of classroom based activities, facilitating children's reintegration and preparing them for a return to academic learning.

It's free for all schools to access at

<https://www.heartsmart.family/back-to-school>

Following on from the "[There's a Knot Inside my Tummy](#)" Video the creator, Jennifer Notman has produced a resource pack to share with all Cumbrian Primary Schools at no cost. We are extremely grateful to Jennifer for allowing us to share this resource pack [here](#).

Thank you to Helen Harrison at St Matthews's CE School, Westnewton for sharing this great little video to help younger ones with social distancing.

<https://www.facebook.com/113162570107145/posts/242866403803427/?vh=e>

Springs Dance Company

The Parables of The Good Samaritan & The Lost Coin and A Christmas Story: Refugee workshops.

Booking for next academic year. Dates can be pencilled in and date adjusted as required due to the current COVID-19 outbreak.

Springs Dance Company delivers RE, PSHE and Citizenship through dance, creative exploration and discussion. The *Parable of The Good Samaritan* workshops focus on the importance of helping others. Children will consider the relevance of parables, think about what is important and ask moral questions, going deeper into RE. Alongside the workshops you can treat the whole school with a fun-filled interactive assembly performance on the *Parable of The Lost Coin*.

A Christmas Story: Refugee workshops are inspired by Anne Booth's Christmas story Refuge. The workshops will guide pupils on a journey of dance, drama and discussion, looking at the nativity and beyond at the wider story of Christmas.

Springs workshops are a great way to bring children back together when the schools reopen, through fun, energetic and creative sessions.

Further details on ***The Parables of The Good Samaritan & The Lost Coin*** can be found at https://springsdancecompany.org.uk/images/downloads/Parables_of_the_Good_Samaritan_and_The_Lost_Coin.pdf

Further details on ***A Christmas Story: Refugee*** can be found at <https://springsdancecompany.org.uk/images/images/Workshops/Christmas-Story-Refugee.pdf>

To book and to find out more please email touring@springsdancecompany.org.uk or call **07876 752 910** to find out more.

GOVERNANCE UPDATE

DfE School Governance Update

The DfE finally published their governance update on 4th June along with a message from the Secretary of State, Gavin Williamson. It is worth signing up these updates which will automatically be sent to governors with details registered on the GIAS system. If you have not already received this [click here](#).

NGA updates

The NGA continue to provide regular updates and informative webinars on all matters relating to governing boards responsibilities during coronavirus. There is a subscription charge for enhanced membership but all coronavirus updates are freely available.

[The Role of Governing Board in the safe re-opening of schools.](#)

[Reducing the impact of school closures on disadvantaged children.](#)

Foundation Governor Appointments

The first round of letters offering a 6 month extension of term to Foundation Governors has been sent. It is hoped that governors of all descriptions can be encouraged to extend their term, temporarily, to support the school and senior leaders during this difficult time.

A 3 month extension has also been agreed for Foundation Governors whose term is due to end Sept/Oct/Nov and these will be e-mailed and copied to the clerk before the end of the academic year, which should also help planning for September.


Any queries, please contact education@carlisle-diocese.org.uk

Admissions Policy Variation—*VA/Foundation Schools & Stand Alone Academies*

We recently contacted clerks to compile a list of schools in the *categories above who have retained faith criterion as a part of their oversubscription policy. Work is ongoing at a national level to formulate guidance to cover the period of church closures, both during this pandemic and the ongoing possibility of further lockdown/closures.

If your school uses faith criteria in its admissions policy and you have not already contacted us please contact

charlotte.tudway@carlisle-diocese.org.uk



“For I know the plans I have for you,”
declares the Lord. “Plans to prosper
you and not to harm you. Plans to
give you hope and a future.”

Jeremiah 29:11

SCHOOL AT HOME—REVD BECKY GIBBS

On March 25th I wrote my first blog post entitled “Teach me the way I should go”. In this little article I explained how, despite being a teacher before I was a priest, I felt entirely unqualified to supervise my son’s education at home. Three months have past since I wrote that blog and I am now even more certain that this is the case.

Both my husband and I are deemed to be key workers, my husband is a police officer and presently works day shifts but I can work from home so we chose to keep our son with me. From day one of “school at home” I joined thousands of others trying to do their job whilst helping a twelve year old to simplify fractions. You may not be surprised to hear, that I quickly discovered, it is impossible to do both these things well at the same time.

I have friends who home school their children and they are quick to point out that what us thousands of parents have been asked to do is not home-schooling. Real home-schooling involves huge amounts of time outside or out and about. At museums, in forests, socialising with other home-ed families. Parents who home-school are not finding this easier than those of us who usually send our kids to school.

What parents with kids at home all day are doing is actually some extreme form of parenting. And, in my opinion, if you have an only child it’s even more extreme. Because not only are you their “education supervisor” you are also their sole companion, day in day out, at least five days a week.

I came to the conclusion back in March that I wouldn’t be able to teach my son much but that he would learn *something*. I strongly suspected that when he looks back at this time, when he’s an adult with his own family, he won’t remember so much what *he* did as what *my husband and I did*. I still hope as I did back in March that he’d learn from us that it’s OK to be scared but not to be scary and that challenging times present us with the opportunity to learn something new. Three months on I am scared deep down that this time away from school has slowed his intellectual development. I feel sad that my decision to prioritise work sometimes has meant that I haven’t given his education the time it needed. But on the other hand these challenging times have presented us all with the opportunity to learn new things. I can now make videos and he can mow the grass. There’s more to life than simplifying fractions.

All of us can keep on learning and these times have much to teach us. If our children are to learn kindness, calmness and openness of mind, then we will need to show them how.

“I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.”
Psalm 32:8 New Revised Version (NRSV)

Becky has also shared with us some of the activities that she and her colleagues have been sharing with schools families in their parishes. Below is a link to a video made of an All Age Service for Pentecost.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIrD5t5nX3Q&t=2066s>

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