

13 January 2012, Memorial of St Hilary of Poitiers

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On Sunday 5 February, along with other Christian churches in England and Wales, we mark Education Sunday. As the Bishop with special responsibility for Education I am grateful for this opportunity to write to you.

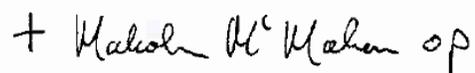
In the Gospel appointed for this Sunday we hear that all the people of the city are searching for Jesus. This is a truth which many in our society have forgotten. Jesus Christ is 'the way, the truth and the life' and to accept this is to know true freedom and fullness of life. Our schools and colleges play an important role in the life of the Church, sharing in the mission to make Christ known to all peoples.

The Gospel shows Jesus healing the sick and casting out demons, reminding us that our Christian faith moves us to love our neighbours and to seek the common good. Our schools are a very significant way in which the Catholic community in England and Wales places itself at the service of society.

We are mindful that our educational institutions, many of which are among the very best in the country, depend on us for their success and their faithfulness to the evangelical commission to make disciples of all people. They depend first of all upon the support and cooperation of Catholic parents, who are the first teachers of their children. They depend on local parishes in whose mission and witness they share, and they depend on a great number of committed staff who reflect in their own lives the joy that knowing Christ brings.

Our Catholic schools and colleges are a great treasure. This treasure has been given to us and we must ensure that we hand it on to future generations. Education is in a time of great change. For some schools, this may mean working in new ways and in new relationships. Whatever the challenges that we face, now or in the future, let us remain focussed upon Christ in all that we do.

May God bless you,



Rt Rev Malcolm McMahon OP