



Loreto Ember Newsletter



Loreto Ember Ignite

We were delighted to begin Ember Ignite in Loreto schools this year. Many thanks to our Ember Teams who, in the middle of the coronavirus pandemic, creatively adapted their roles of service to contribute much to their schools in a spirit of faith, hope and love.

Thanks to the generosity of principals, teachers and students, training days for the Ember Ignite groups were arranged in each school over Zoom in October.

Since then, the Ember Teams have contributed much to the life of the school, helping first years settle into their new environment, informing the school community about the Ember Team, organising and developing the school prayer space, designing the religion notice board, preparing and taking part in Remembrance services in November and most recently, organising celebrations for Advent, Christmas Hampers and preparations for Carol Services.

It has been a delight to meet the teachers and students involved in the programme and inspiring to see all sharing their talents, vision and creativity for the good of their school communities.

They are certainly living out the values expressed in the Commissioning Ceremony we had in October:

“You are part of a Loreto tradition whose founder Mary Ward used her gifts and talents generously and creatively wherever she saw that they were needed.

Today we ask God to bless abundantly, these young women, as they begin their year of ministry as Ember Leaders.”

Special thanks to Lily Barry, Diocesan Advisor who oversees and supports the Ember Programme in Dublin Diocese and is always a joy to work with.





Loreto Ember Team, Balbriggan

“In November we Remember”

On the 17th November our Loreto Balbriggan Ember Ignite team took part in a Remembrance Service to remember our loved ones who have passed on.

Every year we hold a Remembrance Evening in the school hall, but this year we adapted to the current situation as we felt it was especially important to support members of the school community who have lost loved ones. This year, more than ever, our school community needed the opportunity to join together in prayer to remember loved ones who have died.

The theme of our remembrance service this year was “A Light In The Darkness” and we portrayed this theme through music, prayer and poetry. We worked with the music department and members of the religion department to organise the day. A videographer filmed and produced the service for us and we were able to upload the video to the website so that extended members of the school community such as parents, guardians, past pupils and members of the Loreto Order could easily access it. The video was played for students in their religion class as well. The quote below was taken from one of the reflections that was read.

'Light cannot see inside things.

That is what the dark is for:

Minding the interior,

Nurturing the draw of growth

Through places where death

In its own way turns into life' (John O'Donohue)

Now, that we are in the Season of Advent we are busily preparing for the yearly Carol Service. Like the Remembrance service, this too will be recorded. We will be recording this on Tuesday 8th December and it will be shown to the entire school community. The theme of our Carol service this year is 'A Star of Hope'. The Ember Ignite Team will be responsible for the advent wreath and we have already put up our school crib. We decorated the backdrop of the crib using the symbol of the star as a reminder of the theme of our Carol Service.

As an Ember Ignite Team we are really enjoying being Faith Leaders in our school. Next term we hope to focus on particular year groups and visit them in their class groups.



Loreto, Balbriggan



Remembrance Service 2020
'A Light in the Darkness'





Loreto, Balbriggan

Preparing for
Advent and Christmas





Loreto Ember Team, Crumlin

“November is a time for remembering loved ones that have gone before us. This has always been an important part of our school’s yearly traditions.

We organised a remembrance service, that would allow for a socially distanced gathering for students in our school.

The students attended class group by class group, meaning, we held this service of reflection and prayer over eighteen separate times. This required us to delegate our team members with many different tasks.

The first role for some Ember members was to sanitise the room as class groups arrived, cleaning down chairs and resetting the room for the ceremony to begin afresh every time.

Some of us acted as guides going from class to class. We would collect the groups and bring them to the service.

“I was one of the two guides. I was to collect the class groups and welcome them to the ceremony. This job really showcased my organisation and time management abilities. It was a pleasure to take on this role.”

As they were welcomed, we asked participants to take a candle and remember someone in prayer.

Once inside we had other members guide the participants into creating the shape of a heart with the candles to help focus them in prayer.

“My job was to help the students place their candle in the right spot. We as the Ember team had an idea to form the shape of a heart with the candles the students brought in, and I felt happy to see all our ideas and thoughts come to life. This ceremony was really good for the students because it gave them the chance to reflect and focus on a loved one that had passed away and the beautiful memories they left behind.”

We selected the background music that was playing as students entered the space for the ceremony. This was to create a prayerful and calm atmosphere as people were getting settled.

Once our participants were all settled, we had selected members to lead them in prayers and reflections. This allowed students quiet time in our busy school year to stop and remember people they have loved.

“My job was to read the introduction to the service. I felt great meaning in this, as I hoped to set the tone for the service. The service was serene, and all the students were comfortable. I hope to do more services like these to remind students that school is not just a place of academic growth, and we support them in their beliefs and religious growth as well.”

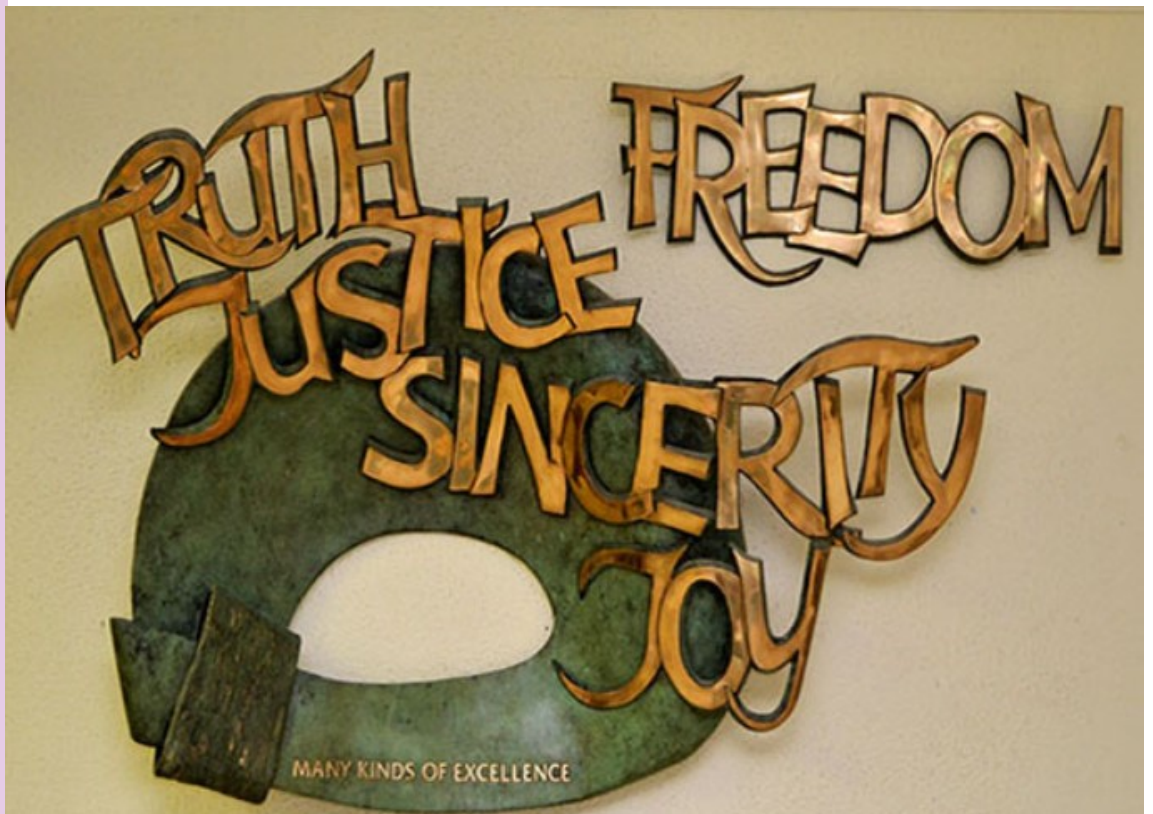
We are all so grateful for the success of our “November We Remember” celebration.



Loreto, Crumlin



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Our November Celebration at Loreto College Crumlin

“Once our participants were all settled, we had selected members to lead them in prayers and reflections. This allowed students quiet time in our busy school year to stop and remember people they have loved...”





Loreto Ember Team, Dalkey



Since joining, our school Ember team we have been able to do so much thanks to the amazing support and guidance that we have been given from both our teacher and the Ember Faith Leadership Programme. So far we have focused on the first years adapting to their new environment and encouraging them to make friends and expand their social groups.

Moreover, we have contributed to organising and developing the prayer space by the student entrance to our school. Similarly, we redecorated the religion notice board, we did this so that we could show students in the school who we are and what we stand for.

The most recent project that we completed is 'In November, We Remember', a time when we as a school community remember those who have gone before us. This is something our school marks every year. Usually there would be a Book of Remembrance outside the office where students and staff could right down the names of the people they would like to remember. However due to Covid-19 we could no longer do this. We asked the staff and students to email us the names of the people they would like to remember so that we could write their names in the Book of Remembrance for them. The Book of Remembrance was used in our 'In November, We Remember' prayer service which took place online.



'In November, We Remember' Loreto Abbey, Dalkey





Loreto Abbey, Dalkey

We are currently working on our Christmas Hampers. Every class in the school makes up a food hamper which will be given to St. Francis Hospice Raheny.



We have really enjoyed working on these various projects and it is so nice to see how much these acts have helped other members of our school community. We look forward to many more experiences like these.





Loreto College, Foxrock

The Ember Team in Foxrock continues its tradition of organising and supporting faith initiatives in the school. The Ember tradition at Loreto, Foxrock extends beyond the bounds of student life as exemplified by this account by past pupil



Kate Gaskin, who now teaches in Catholic University School and leads the Ember Team there.

During my time in Loreto Foxrock school, I was always interested in Religious Education. I enjoyed Religious Education classes. The option of being a religious prefect in the school came up when I was in fifth year. My teacher Ms Browne encouraged me to go for it. Throughout the year I worked with the Religion department in the school. I wanted to continue this in sixth year so when the opportunity of becoming a member of the Ember team came up, I applied.

Four students were selected to be Ember members. On a sunny Monday in June, the four of us packed our bags and headed to Ovoca Manor with our teacher Ms Campbell. We loved participating in the different activities and getting to know different people from different areas and different schools. We learned a lot different skills during this training such as communication skills, listening skills and leadership skills. All the skills we learned during our training have stood to us all as we transitioned through college. One of the schools on the training with us was Catholic University School. We quickly became friends with the boys from the CUS Ember team and we have been friends now for many years.



Loreto College, Foxrock

My Ember training really allowed me to explore my own faith. One aspect of the training that I have always remembered is when we discussed where we can see God in nature. This was a concept I had never been aware of previously. I was fascinated and therefore began to see God in my day to day life.

During my time as an Ember leader, I felt that I became much surer of myself as a faithful



person. Knowing I loved Religious Education and working with people I decided to study Religious education with English in DCU. Throughout college I was encouraged to learn more about both my own faith and more about different religions.

Although my faith was challenged at times in college, I always look back on my Ember training and remember the lessons I learnt.



Loreto College, Foxrock

When I joined the Catholic University School on Lesson street, Dublin 2 in September 2020 I was delighted to see the Ember programme was still being run by Ms Maloney who I had met during my own training in Ovoca manor.

Although we were unable to go to Ovoca manor this year it is great to see how the Ember programme has adapted to the challenging times, we are living in.

Ms Maloney and I are leading a team of fifteen enthusiastic, kind, and motivated students. As a teacher watching these young men grow and become active Faith Leaders in CUS has already been extremely rewarding. We have already been involved in and ran numerous different projects, prayer services and events within the school. For example, a new beginnings prayer service for Mr Martin and the month of remembrance. As the year continues, I look forward to continuing my journey as a Faith Leader, aiding Ms Maloney with the Leadership team and working with the fantastic CUS students.

I would like to thank everyone involved in the Ember Faith Leadership programme for helping me explore my own faith and grow as a person. I also would like to thank them for encouraging and motivating me to become a Religious Education teacher. I would not be where I am today without the Ember programme.

The Ember Prayer

Help me to fan into flame the Gift of God
That is within me,
Because God did not make me timid;
He gave me a Spirit of Power,
He gave me a Spirit of Love,
And He gave me a Spirit of Self-Discipline.
We ask God's blessing on us, both as leaders
and as servants to all those in need.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

An adaption of 2 Timothy 1:6



Christmas 2020

A Christmas Message



Dear Friends,

It has been such a busy term in an extraordinary year of pandemic and I wish you all time for rest and relaxation during the Christmas holidays.

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we also remember the children who, like Jesus, are born into situations of homelessness. We pray for all who are ill, those who have been seriously impacted by the coronavirus pandemic and all who are suffering in any way.

At this time of year, your concern for and generosity towards others are reflected in a multitude of ways such as countless hampers in Loreto schools, carol services and other activities to raise funds for hospices and centres for those who are homeless, and many other expressions of your goodness and care.



Luke 2: 7

... And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

May the blessing of joy abide
WITHIN you...

May the blessing of peace rest UPON you...

May the blessing of love flow out THROUGH you...

May all the blessings of the Lord be yours at Christmas and in the new year.

Kind regards

Kathleen Fitzpatrick ibvm

