

Staff Spirituality Day

A conversation with Francis & Friends

This program is modelled on the Leadership Forum of 22nd January. Its essential elements are:

- Introduction
- Panel conversation
- Small group work
- Meditation time
- Final reflections
- Commissioning and blessing

Note: Videos, Powerpoints, handouts from this day can be [viewed here](#).

Introduction

Ensure that everyone understands why we are having a day focused on Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* ('Joy of the Gospel'):

- Pope Francis is a pope who is having a remarkable impact on the church and the world with his call to missionary discipleship and his refreshing witness to simplicity and joy.
 - [Play 1st video](#) from January Forum (showing images/comment on Pope Francis)
- Catholic Schools in Broken Bay Diocese have adopted a 'renewing lens' that taps into this Francis-effect.
 - View statements and Powerpoint by John McGrath [here](#):

Panel Conversation

- Invite four guests to form a panel and invite their conversation around the Pope's document 'Joy of the Gospel'. One of the panel can be assigned to help facilitate the conversation. These guests might include: a teacher, a parent, a senior student, a priest or ministry leader from the wider parish. Their preparation will require them to [read the document](#) and share an impression or insight. Alternatively they could be assigned selected paragraphs. For example:
 - Take one chapter each;
 - Or each reflect on an image from the document (see leaflet series [Key Images](#))
 - Shepherds with the smell of the Sheep
 - A church of open doors
 - The church as a field hospital
 - A church bruised and dirty from being on the streets
 - Weeds among the wheat
 - Or each [reflect](#) on one of [seven challenges](#) from the document.
- Invite discussion and Q&A from the floor

Morning tea

Small group work

- Introduce this exercise by showing the 2nd video from the 22 Jan Forum: [‘Leaders with the joy of the gospel and the smell of the sheep’](#)

This video has students, teachers and school leaders describing inspiring examples of the joy of the gospel at work in their classrooms and schools.

- Break into small groups of four to work on the question: What is one practical application of the ‘Joy of the Gospel’ we could undertake for our school community?

This question could be tailored to specific aspects of school life; e.g.,

- Decision-making and the exercise of leadership
- Creating a joyful atmosphere in the classroom
- Deepening our personal spirituality as teaches.
- Reaching out the poor and marginalised
- Creating links and engagement with parish, families, wider community

Before breaking for lunch, invite feedback in the large group.

Assign one or two people to listen carefully and to make notes for the leadership team so that the ideas can continue to be explored beyond the day.

Lunch

Meditation

- Have one person introduce the Examen using the notes in the [booklet](#) (pp.10-12).
 - As shepherds we need to be fed ourselves. Regular practice of the Examen is an excellent source of nourishment. The Examen is an ancient practice for discerning the divine presence in our lives. The steps are simple, yet over time they have a profound impact on one’s relationship with God.
- Enter into a time of prayer: Have one person lead the Examen.
- Further resources and handouts on the Examen are [available here](#).

Final Reflections

- Invite one person to sum up the day and invite final comments, reflections, and ‘where to from here’ discussion.

Closing

- Using [Forum booklet](#) as a guide, close with a commissioning and prayer of blessing (p.13-15)

Further resources:

<http://godsmisionjoyofthegospel.weebly.com/>