**To           :              Headteachers; Chairs of Governors; Foundation Governors; Ex-officio clergy; Deputy Headteachers; RE CoOrdinators                           (and please forward widely)**

**From     :               Jeff Williams**

**Date      :               12th May 2021**

**Re           :              Fortnightly email and resources from the Diocesan Education Team (including follow-up information from the recent Area Briefings & the 2021-22 Diocesan Project)**

Dear colleagues

There’s a likelihood that a significant number of recipients of this email were counted among the record 13 million people who watched the season finalé of **Line of Duty** last week, and were duly appraised of the identity of **‘H’**. Apparently the number is growing, with Binge watchers and Catch Up figures being added. What has been the captivating fascination with the six seasons of this programme, and particularly the identification of ‘H’ in what might be the last episode, I wonder?

As one of the 13  million, having watched every season, I don’t think the reason is ***accurate plot*** (in the final episode voices from our lounge echoed ‘really?!’ on more than one occasion); or is the reason the joy of working out all the ***acronyms***used (and there are plenty); or is the reason the ***comedy factor*** (the incorrect spelling *definitely* which was a major clue in determining the identity of ‘H’ caused roars of laughter on our sofa!). I wonder however, if the real reason so many watched was, apart from the entertainment and discussion possibilities afterwards, our genuine desire, as fundamentally moral people, to see **Justice** achieved?

This programme focusing on Justice (albeit not totally achieved, with senior police still apparently beyond Justice, which may purely be an opportunity for another season, who knows) aired days after some important matters of Justice filled our media. **The Royal Courts of Justice** declared the innocence of the **36 sub-postmasters/mistresses** who had been wrongly accused of theft, resulting in wrongful imprisonment; but equally 700 more who were successfully prosecuted while not imprisoned, for theft, fraud and false accounting; and the 2,000 who were never prosecuted but were financially, reputationally and emotionally ruined by it. Sadly, in some cases, suicide and premature death through stress and illness means that they missed this important judgment and their exoneration.

We also witnessed the **Minneapolis** jury unanimously convict **Derek Chauvin** of the murder of **George Floyd**. The police officer had repeatedly, despite the video evidence, denied charges of second-degree murder, third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter. But after ten and a half hours of deliberation, the jury convicted him on all counts. Justice, and a massive message sent to the whole of the USA.

And for many black and minority ethnic former and current Anglican Christians, who have seen the publication of the Church of England report **‘From Lament to Action’** the process of Justice begins for them.

Justice for many is about achieving something that subsequently leads to punitive action, and at worst, vengeance and other associated consequences. Justice from a Christian perspective of course, is much more. Whether it relates to Racial Justice, Social Justice, Survivor Justice or a myriad of other matters, Justice, as a sibling to **Truth** in Christian values, is fundamentally focused on **restorative** outcomes and to learn lessons so that the future may be better. The cousin of course to Justice and Truth for Christians in terms of Biblical Values, is **Forgiveness.**  All three therefore are essential to restoration and subsequent wholeness and healing.

Having stood silently next to walls impregnated with bullet holes and blood stains in **Rwanda**, such records of history are shocking but vital if we are to be proactive in preventing repetitions of such horrors. Experiencing such places however, can be inspiring and transformative. In Rwanda, after the formal court and national trials, the traditional community court system called **‘Gacaca’** also served to promote reconciliation by providing a means for victims to learn the truth about the death of their family members, while giving perpetrators the opportunity to confess their crimes, show remorse and ask for forgiveness in front of their community. Different measures have been taken by the Rwandan government towards achieving the goal of perpetrators and victims living side by side in peace, including laws to combat discrimination and divisive genocide ideology. Primary responsibility for reconciliation efforts in Rwanda post-genocide rests with the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, with much of its efforts being focused on **education, counselling and training.**

Similar efforts were made in **South Africa** after the abolition of **apartheid** with the work of the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission**. Examples of such futures-focused and preventative approaches occur in many societies and countries – but of course, are not based on ‘letting people off’ where crimes and wrongdoings are committed. Such approaches to Justice are now commonplace in our **prisons**. Many **schools** find this approach helpful with children and families – and I commend this to you, with an offer of two online information sessions for you to see if this might be something to adopt in your own context. Details below.

I couldn’t help but ponder on a now historic occasion, albeit 2,000 years ago, when a similar question was asked like the razor-sharp one-liner from Superintendent Ted Hastings in his rich Northern Irish brogue : ‘So tell me then, what is the truth?’

Thank you for all you are, and what you do

**Jeff**

**Restorative Justice in Schools** : a one hour **online initial information session** outlining the Christian basis for this as a toolkit for schools in approaches to dealing with conflict resolution with children and families. Training by Richard Wharton for all staff or key individuals can be booked subsequently. To book a place on these Zoom information sessions on **Thursday 17th June 1.30 p.m. or Tuesday 22nd June 10.00 a.m.** please contact Sam.powell@portsmouth.anglican.org who will give you the Zoom ID and Passcode.

**Classroom reflection resources :** attached are some reflections for class teachers to use which we hope you find useful.

**Area Briefings follow-up:** Thank you to the 192 colleagues who attended one of the six virtual Area Briefings we ran over the past two weeks. Only 25 schools had no representation. While the documents and details below are useful, they do not cover the context and discussion from the Briefings. I’m planning on a **mixed mode of Area Briefings** in the future, particularly given the closure of Old Alresford Place where in the past our two Briefings there generated large numbers of attendees, in addition to the regional gatherings.  We will probably therefore offer virtual Area Briefings with a morning, afternoon and usefully requested, particularly by working governors, an evening Briefing, and one Area Briefing in person. The following represent the agenda from the sessions:

**Ten Ten #*flourishing*** : we outlined this year’s related-mini project **‘Irises of Hope’** and the full **Ten Ten #*flourishing*** project, which we have held over for next academic year, with a full ten months available for schools to engage, from **September 2021** when we officially launch the project with a **video worship** that will be sent shortly.  As mentioned, the **Art Installation** details will be shared separately, as well as the **Wellbeing and Walking event**. Can I encourage recipients of this email to forward directly to teachers, parishes and more widely. This year there are versions for **EYFS, Primary and Secondary.**

**SIAMS :** we updated colleagues on timeframes, **SEF expectations** and related matters, including proactivity for post-pandemic planning in anticipation of **delayed stress** and other potential ramifications for children and staff. We shared ideas for continuing to focus on **Mental Health & Wellbeing of children and staff** – some documents mentioned are attached.

**Education Team Ways of Working :** we outlined our interim and intended ways of working as a result of lessons learned from the Pandemic, but also aligned to the **economic and environmental** agendas we are embracing.

**Education Website / Resources :**  We took colleagues through our **website pages**, highlighting all the new sections, particularly the way our many **resources** are now filed, including the **support documents for governors and senior leaders**. Attached are screen shots to assist navigating directly to our pages. We also outlined our Resources provision for **2021-22**, focusing on a **Christian Value each half term**. The **year overview and further details** are attached.

**Good practice sharing :** we shared ideas that we have gleaned over the past 15 months of how schools have **creatively approached worship and praying.** Heads at each Briefing gave overviews from their schools. These are collated and attached, as there are superb ideas for you to use. We will be sending you a booklet during June with ways of **Worshipping and Praying outdoors** – well worth adopting even in non-pandemic times! We also shared ideas for **Governor Monitoring** a range of areas – documents attached.

**Mental Health Awareness Week** – a reminder that there are fully funded online mental health courses available via The AIM Group  details at <https://theaimgroup.co.uk/courses/level-2?postcode=&sector_id=13#search>

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