



# ST LOUIS SCHOOLS NETWORK

Partnerships and  
Development Education

Volume 1, Issue 1  
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## WHY DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION?

Welcome to the first St Louis Schools Network Newsletter. In these few pages, we want to give you a flavour of how the Network is being formed. In one sense, the Network already exists, through the shared history and ethos of the St Louis schools in Ireland, North and South. At this time, however, as we celebrate 150 years of St Louis presence in Ireland and 60 years of St Louis presence in West Africa, and as we try to live *Sint Unum – May They Be One* in a global world, we want to build on the links that already exist in our Irish and international St Louis family.

We also want to contribute, in our generation, and through our education, to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Our St Louis Founder, Louis Bautain, wanted

us to work for “*a world healed, unified and transformed by the saving wisdom of Christianity*”. We know that our world has developed in a way that certainly does not match that vision, and that indeed our way of life in the “developed” world is not sustainable. Development Education is therefore part of our agenda. In a crowded curriculum, it is not always easy to see how to fit in more topics and projects. We believe that the partnerships between the St Louis Schools in Ireland and the St Louis Schools in Ghana and Nigeria will be a great way of involving us all in Development Education.

Some schools have already begun their partnerships, some are beginning this year, some are preparing to establish links; some are still exploring the possibilities and implications of hav-

ing a partner school in Ghana or Nigeria. We hope this small Newsletter will be a help to all of you in continuing this story. You will have a great resource in each other, as you share your stories and resources.

Some of you would prefer to use a website than to develop a Newsletter. We are open to supporting and resourcing the Network in whatever way is most helpful, so please let us know what works best for you.

We hope to have another Workshop in spring, using the same format that we used on 20<sup>th</sup> October. We will be in touch about that in January. Meantime, we wish you all the blessings of Advent and Christmas.

*(from the St Louis Network Team, Anne Jordan, Ann Matthews and Anne Murray)*

### WorldWise at Croke Park

On Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008, 200 students and 20 teachers from all over Ireland converged on Croke Park for the first Worldwise Student Conference. A global village market was set up and students shared learning experiences through infor-

mation, song, dance, performance, IT and art. Mrs Mannette Ramaili, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Lesotho, delivered the keynote address. Each school was presented with a certificate to acknowledge participation in the event. St. Louis Secondary School Chaplain, Ms Louise Mulligan, and five Transition

Year students – Sorcha Clark, Rosemary Holland, Dearbhla Mc Caughey, Maeve O’Neill, Ruth O’Neill – presented a project on their link school – Louisville High School in Lagos, Nigeria. **WorldWise Day at Croke Park in 2010 is on 22<sup>nd</sup> January.**



Our St Louis Family Tree is rooted in Europe, but has spread afar.



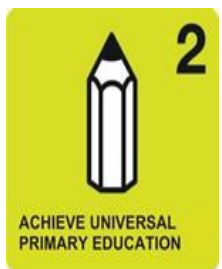
HUMAN RIGHTS DAY  
DECEMBER 10



## Louisville Visits Louisville



In February 2009, four teachers from St Louis, Monaghan – Principal Ms V O'Brien, Chaplain Ms Louise Mulligan, Mr Jim Gannon, Mr Adrian Fitzgerald – visited Nigeria to get the Leargas Project established. On arrival in Lagos Sr Rita Akin -Otiko, principal of Louisville High School, greeted them. Lagos has a population of 9 –10 million people, some of who are extremely wealthy while some live in squalid shantytowns. The students of Louisville High School extended a warm welcome to their visitors from Ireland – it is normal practice for students to curtsy. A strong work ethic evident throughout the school was coupled with a caring attitude to the less well off. Teachers from Louisville High School give of their free time to assist students from two local primary schools with reading, and a meeting with Sr Rita to discuss the link project was followed by a meeting with the entire staff who asked Ms V O'Brien searching questions about St Louis, Monaghan and the educational system in Ireland.



On Thursday, September 24<sup>th</sup> 2009, St Louis Secondary School, Monaghan welcomed to Ireland four members of staff from Louisville Girls High School in Nigeria.

The Louisville staff – Sr Stella Akinwotu (Learning Resource Centre), Mr Lekan Amos (Deputy Principal), Mr Muchael Awopeju (Registrar), Ms Bukola Jeboda (school secretary) – left Lagos on a flight to Amsterdam and from there to Dublin where they were met by Ms O' Brien and Mr Fitzgerald. For the next week they were treated to some genuine Irish and Monaghan hospitality by their hosts, who endeavoured to make their stay a memorable one. A visit to the Giant's Causeway on Saturday and a trip to Dublin on Sunday were among the highlights of their visit. During the school day they visited classes, attended assemblies and exchanged ideas with their respective counterparts on the staff. It was a great honour for St Louis, Monaghan that, as their visit coincided with the transfer of the trusteeship of the school to the Le Cheile Catholic Schools Trust, they were in attendance at the ceremony, which took place during Mass on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September. A visit from WorldWise Education Officer, Mary McCarthy, while the Nigerian teachers were in the school, was very helpful in finalizing the Partnership Agreement.

### MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS



St Louis, Monaghan has already pledged itself to assist the Louisville students with their Bridge of Care project as part of the Partnership Agreement. Under this project both schools are supporting a number of primary schools in Nigeria. St Louis students have collected schoolbooks and other reading materials for these schools and it is hoped to have them transported to Nigeria in the near future. Sr Rita Akin-Otiko, Principal of Louisville Girls High School and Miss Vera O'Brien, Principal of St Louis, Monaghan deserve great credit for promoting the link between the schools. It is hoped that the friendship between the schools will flourish in the future. Another exciting step will be the visit by students and teachers from Monaghan to Ijebu-I tele in May/June 2010. For an Ijebu perspective on the project, see [www.stlouismonaghan.com](http://www.stlouismonaghan.com)



## Websites with classroom resources for Development Education

There is so much on the web-sites that we do not want to duplicate it here. But we invite you to help each other out by sharing what you find when it is particularly useful in the classroom. For example, if you want to introduce work on Fair Trade, the Trocaire web site had excellent resources in the Secondary School section, particularly the worksheets on the world food crisis, A Divided World, with teacher notes and student activities ready to use. The efforts of students from St Louis secondary school in Monaghan Town have been recognised by Trocaire and the youth magazine "Face Up" for their campaign to raise awareness of the importance of supporting Fair Trade.

The Monaghan students decided to focus on the issue of Fairtrade goods and how a simple choice to buy Fairtrade products makes a big difference to less fortunate people in the world. They found out how many local shops were selling Fair-trade products: "We had to go to all the big shops in Monaghan town and investigate whether or not they stocked Fairtrade products and if they did, find out how much they cost. All the shops did stock them but the prices varied. We found out that you can actually buy cheap Fairtrade products. Some were the same price as regular products but there were only a few that were more expensive."

Also try the Unesco web-site for school resources on climate change, excellent as preparation for the Copenhagen Summit. St Louis High School Rathmines features very well in the Ecounesco magazine, a great source of ideas from schools.

The website [www.developmenteducation.ie](http://www.developmenteducation.ie) is excellent.

St Genevieve's High School, Belfast (sent in by Brendan Magee)

Following on from the Workshop on 20th October, I reported back to our SLT and outlined some immediate actions we felt would initiate a process of engagement with our sister schools in Ireland and Africa. To raise awareness of the Louis Schools Network to our wider school community, we have posted the Irish schools' web addresses on our school website. It was felt that a 'triangular relationship' between St Genevieve's and a Louis School in the Republic, that had already established links with a Louis School in Africa, would be an effective way to inform ourselves about the way forward. Following discussions with Adrian Fitzgerald, we have identified a designated teacher to develop contacts with St. Louis, Monaghan. To raise awareness of the work of St. Louis schools in Africa, all members of staff were invited to browse the web site of Louisville Girls High School, Nigeria. To investigate how to embed Development Education into our Key Stage 3 curriculum, and make the best use of the St Louis heritage as a learning resource, a series of meetings have been held with relevant departments with the school. Our intention is to develop a whole school 'learning experience' based upon the work of the St Louis sisters and as part of our response to the Revised Curriculum that is relevant to our pupils and sustainable over time. We have also recently initiated a new 'One Voice' newsletter produced by the school and this could become a possible link document.



**TARGET DATE**

**2015**





## Partnerships and Development Education



Sr. Anne with Principal of St. Louis Demonstration School Kumasi.

Principal, Sr. Catherine with Sr. Anne Murray in Kano



Monaghan Staff, Nigerian style, with Sr. Rita in Ijebu Itele.



Sr. Mercy and Sr. Anne at Jubilee School Kumasi, partner school of Carrickmacross.

Ms Morgan and Sr. Catherine of Kano in Rathmines. Students at St. Louis Gwagwalada, partner school of Ramsgrange.

Mampong School, hoping to partner with Ballymena Sr. Anne Murray with Principal and students at St Louis Akure, hoping to partner with St Genevieve's,



Patsy Toland, Development Education Officer with Self Help Africa, led the workshop. Patsy challenged us to be aware that we can't deal with global issues if we are not dealing with our local reality, if we are not dealing with the links between the local and the global. Our Network should be open, not a narrow series of links. Students and teachers will need to be exposed to communities and issues outside St Louis schools. If we are not taking action, we are

not learning/teaching how to be part of the solution, e.g. there is no point in talking about issues like fair trade or sustainable development if there is no action in the school or community to change the way we buy and consume products like tea and coffee, or if we are not reducing and recycling and raising awareness in the school and community.

**(Notes from our First Development Education Workshop on 20th October in Drogheda)**

