

#RedWednesday Assembly: Notes for Teachers



ACN

WHAT IS THE ASSEMBLY ABOUT?

Aid to the Church in Need's #RedWednesday Campaign on 24th November 2021

AIM:

To explain what #RedWednesday is about and to invite pupils to take part by:

1. Wearing red clothing (possibly school red mufti day)
2. Praying the Angelus at 12 midday for those who are suffering
3. Standing together in silence for one minute after the Angelus to show solidarity with those who are persecuted for their faith
4. Raising funds for the people helped by Aid to the Church in Need through school charity events
5. Going to one extra Mass or time of Adoration to pray for one Christian who is suffering elsewhere (or, for those of other faiths, visiting their place of worship to pray for all people being persecuted for their faith).

RESOURCES

1. Powerpoint/Google presentation:
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Aty4xkFfyg0Hyz1FkTON4tK5Wme0wV8SHkXKlwxXFBs/e/dit#slide=id.g6ad3295f43_2_45
2. Sound
3. Volunteers (approx 10-15 pupils or staff for slides 6-21)
4. Details about how your school can help make #RedWednesday 2021 a huge success

THEME: STANDING TOGETHER

(1 MINUTE'S SILENCE): Standing with/standing up for/standing for/making a stand for faith and freedom

SLIDE	INSTRUCTIONS
1	This slide should be on as pupils enter. Once they are seated and quiet ask them all to stand up. As you go through the statements on the next slide, groups of pupils will sit down.
2	Read each of the statements until fewer and fewer are standing. Change the statements if needed, to better suit your school.
3	Once everyone is seated again, ask: How did it feel when everyone was standing together? How did you feel when you had to sit down? If you were left standing up longer than your friends, did you feel uncomfortable? Why is it that we don't want to be singled out? If you were the very last person standing up, how would you have felt?
4	This is a special assembly, to tell you about a very important day for all of us and for freedom, democracy and tolerance across the world.
5	The day is called #RedWednesday and is organised by the charity, Aid to the Church in Need (ACN). All of us here at (school _____) are going to be joining with millions of others to stand up for faith and freedom. During this assembly we will tell you about why we are doing this, what it's all about, how you can help and how your decision to 'make a stand' can help your brothers and sisters in extreme hardship in other parts of the world. Firstly we are going to be standing with those who need us:
6	AT THIS POINT A PRE-ARRANGED PUPIL OR MEMBER OF STAFF SHOULD STAND UP AND READ LOUDLY: Stand together with women in Syria on #RedWednesday (and stay standing)
7	Either another pupil or the same one says: Will we stand with women in Syria who have had to leave their homes because of the war and who rely on the Church for food packages, hygiene kits, nappies for their children?

	Repeat this for slides: with different pupils or staff (they may need to stand at the side (or could stand at the back/on stage when they have said their part, so the view of the screen is not obscured)
8	Stand together with orphans from Sierra Leone on #RedWednesday
9	Orphans and refugees like this man. He was helped by Father Maurizio Boa who arrived in Sierra Leone during the war and began to take care of refugees gathered in the camps in nearby Freetown. Fr Maurizio looks after orphans of war and amputees - both adults and children.
10	Stand together with Christians and Muslims in the Philippines on #RedWednesday
11	We stand with the Christians and Muslims in the Philippines working together to build a rehabilitation centre for people held captive by terrorists and the young people of both faiths who are helping Muslim and Christians together alongside families in need. We stand with the Muslims and Christians who belong to the Dialogue Movement which promotes understanding, bears witness to their faiths, helps the underprivileged and promotes a just, humane and ecologically sound society.
12	Stand together with children in Syria on #RedWednesday
13	We stand for peace for children like Jad Abed who lived through the civil war and felt they had their childhood robbed from them. Many of the children have lost family members and have suffered from severe psychological trauma.
14	Stand together with schoolgirls in Nigeria on #RedWednesday
15	Will you stand up for freedom for Leah Sharibu? Leah and over 100 of her classmates were abducted on 19th February, 2018 by Boko Haram. The others were released within a month, but Leah, the only Christian, remains in captivity because she has refused to deny her faith in Jesus.
16	Stand in solidarity with the victims of the Sri Lankan Church attacks on #RedWednesday
17	We stand for tolerance and in solidarity with those Sri Lankans who were injured or who died in the attacks last Easter and with their families and the community of Sri Lankans. Many are now too scared to go to church.
18	Let's stand up for the sick in Eritrea on #RedWednesday
19	The sick and elderly in Eritrea were forced from their hospital beds when the military occupied and closed hospitals. Thousands of sick people across Eritrea are being deprived of vital medical care after the government seized three hospitals, two health centres and 16 clinics. Government soldiers forced patients from their beds and out of the clinics, and seized religious houses as they confiscated the 21 health institutes run by the Catholic Church, serving at least 170,000 people every year. Sources close to the Catholic Church told Aid to the Church in Need that – unless the services were quickly resumed – people could die, with some walking up to 16 miles to access one of the clinics.
20	Stand up for children in the Democratic Republic of Congo on #RedWednesday
21	With no government in the Central African Republic, and people fighting to take power, Christians and others are in danger of attack. Even children live in fear that they might be hurt - like these children who are being helped by ACN.
22	On #RedWednesday we will say a prayer called the Angelus at 12 midday, with the whole Church around the world.
23	After we have prayed the Angelus, we will stand in silence for one minute.
24	The Charity Aid to the Church in Need is asking you to stand up for our brothers and sisters across the world who are suffering as a result of religious persecution, displacement, poverty, and injustice. We are asking you to:

25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand together for: peace, equality, justice, tolerance, solidarity • Stand in solidarity with: the people we have just seen and millions of others being treated badly simply because of their faith • Take a stand for every person who is willing to be a voice for those who have none.
26	We are going to: (you can go through slides 27-30 swiftly)
27	Take a stand <i>for</i> justice on #RedWednesday
28	Take a stand <i>for</i> peace on #RedWednesday
29	Take a stand <i>for</i> freedom on #RedWednesday
30	Take a stand <i>for</i> truth on #RedWednesday
31	So who else will be standing with us on #RedWednesday?
32	Pope Francis donated the proceeds from the auction of the Lamborghini given to him last year to Aid to the Church in Need. The £185,000 from the sale funded two new projects to benefit Christian families and other minorities who have returned to their homes on the Nineveh Plains in Iraq.
33	On Easter Monday 2018 - the day after hundreds of Christians were killed in a series of terror attacks on churches in Sri Lanka - and just weeks after the mass shooting at a mosque in New Zealand, Archbishop Angaelos, Coptic Orthodox Archbishop of London, issued a powerful appeal urging all faiths to stand together.
34	(Leave this slide on quietly so it can be read)
35	Aid to the Church in Need is asking you to 'Make a Stand for Faith and Freedom'.
36	By wearing red clothing to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make a visible statement • show our solidarity, to stand up for Religious Freedom for people of all faiths and none, as described in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
37	By praying the Angelus at midday to join your prayers to those of millions of Christians across the world and to ask Jesus, through the prayers of Our Lady, to help every person we have just heard about and to bring peace and unity to our world
38	This is to show our solidarity with those who are suffering and to make a stand for faith and freedom.
39	By raising money through your (red) mufti, cake sales, sponsored and charity events. Decide how you, your form group, year, group of friends, family, parish etc will raise funds for those who are suffering. Your fundraising could make a huge difference to people like these:
40	Every day 300 refugee families are fed at the St John the Merciful Table in Zahlé, Lebanon. Thanks to ACN, Syrian refugees including the elderly and children receive one hot meal each day through this project. Your kind gift could help provide the next hot meal for a needy family in any of our relief kitchens in the Middle East.
41	In a country suffering from armed conflicts, extreme poverty and the total failure of the state – the Church has an important role to play in Central African Republic (CAR). Sisters of Charity of Jesus and Mary are helping the Archdiocese of Bangui, by providing education for girls. The Sisters felt a need to reach out to their community, as many girls were becoming mothers at a young age due to lack of education and future prospects. Within a short time, the Sisters were making a wonderful difference but they did not have sufficient income to sustain themselves and their work. They turned to ACN to help them start a poultry farm so they could support themselves and their local community. Sr Bernadette said: “To reveal that God is love by relieving the sufferings of the poor, the sick, the children and youth. We are especially moved by the plight of the young girls...” Your kind gift could provide

	chickens, pigs and cows to help support religious Sisters and brothers, as they minister to the poor and helpless.
42	For Christians in Pakistan, persecution and oppression are daily realities. Therefore, building bridges with other faiths in the country is vital for the survival of the Church and local community. In response to this, ACN is funding a Church-organised football tournament to tackle religious intolerance by bringing together people from all over Pakistan to play “the beautiful game”. The organiser, Father Emmanuel Parvez, said: “To our surprise and joy, the response has been wonderful and every year, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christian young people stay with us – walking, talking and playing together.” As Christians, we are called to be peacemakers – your generous gift could help fund the running costs of this bridge-building project and others like them around the world.
43	In Syria, ACN is providing displaced children, whose lives have been turned upside down by war, with Christmas parcels so they too can celebrate Our Lord’s birth. Your kind gift could help provide wonderful Christmas parcels filled with warm clothes, shoes, sweets, toys, devotional items and other essentials.
44	Although the conflict has ceased in most parts of Syria, ACN is also supporting displaced Christians there with essential food baskets to help them survive after many years of war. Could you help provide a basket of one month’s food including milk, rice and canned goods for displaced families?
45	Prayer is the most powerful thing in the world and can make a real difference. Go to Mass or Adoration for Someone who Can’t
46	Play video
47	Announce what your school will be doing or invite suggestions.



Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN UNITED KINGDOM