AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED

#REDWEDNESDAY

**Assembly Presentation in Preparation for #RedWednesday**

(to be shown before #RedWednesday – up to a month before)

This assembly/presentation is the first of two. In this presentation, students will find out what #RedWednesday is about and why it is significant. The second assembly/presentation is about how ACN helps those who are suffering religious persecution and shows how funds raised will be used.

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**AIM:** To show why #RedWednesday is vitally important and to encourage students to respond personally to the invitation to contribute and participate in #RedWednesday 2023.

**TIME**: This can be shortened or lengthened – between 15 and 30 minutes.

**OBJECTIVES:** By the end of this presentation, students will:

1. Understand why religious freedom and #RedWednesday are important.
2. Consider how they might take part.
3. Be able to empathise with Margaret Attah.

**YOU WILL NEED:**

* The presentation
* To know what your school/parish is planning for #RedWednesday so it can be explained (SLIDE 17 is a ‘filler’ slide which will allow you to do so).
* A relevant prayer to include at the beginning/end.

**PLANNING THIS PRESENTATION IF STUDENT-LED (INSTRUCTIONS FOR STAFF):**

1. Assemble your group of students (chaplaincy group, liturgy reps, student leadership team, sixth form etc)
2. Explain that they are going to lead the assembly/presentation and that they should focus on trying to inspire the viewers to see its importance and make a personal commitment to #RedWednesday.
3. Explain that the notes below are a guide and that they should make them their own.
4. Ensure they know how long they have for the presentation and adequate time to practise (preferably on the stage/in the hall where it will be presented).
5. Run through the presentation with them ensuring they understand the point of each slide.
6. Be available for final rehearsal.

**PLANNING THIS PRESENTATION IF STUDENT-LED**

**(INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENTS):**

Once you have looked at the presentation and notes with your teacher:

1. Take 10-15 minutes to discuss your reactions.
2. Ask yourselves: How best can we present this material? Your aim is to avoid reading from the slides and reading out the notes below.
3. Once you know exactly how long you have got, work out which explanations from the notes below you want to emphasise.
4. Consider whether there are any other stories, information or facts you would like to add.
5. Check that the objectives above are clear.
6. Decide the following roles:
* liaising with the staff
* technology and microphones etc
* one or two students for the ‘director’ role – this person will not be presenting, but will oversee the rehearsals, remind people to come and ensure the presentation flows, is clear etc
* finding and leading the prayer
1. Decide who is leading which part. Once you have done this, each student should take their part and rehearse it independently. Remember that the slides should assist what is being said – not the other way round. Each person should be so familiar with their section that they could lead it independently of the slides.
2. Arrange a practice.
3. Come together for a practice. Each presenter needs to be willing to take direction. Directors need to be willing to give direction about where to stand, emphasis and volume.
4. Now invite the teacher back and practise once more with the sound/presentation live.

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**SLIDE 1:**

Title slide – may be on as students enter.

**SLIDE 2:**

This is a personal invitation from ACN to each person first. Consider the issues being presented and how you personally would like to respond. The school/parish community will respond, but an individual ‘yes’ is important too.

 **SLIDE 3:**

Explain that your school/parish will be taking part in #RedWednesday (22nd November 2023). It is a special day, organised by the charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN).

OPTIONAL: This could be introduced by focusing on the colour red. Ask:

* What is the first thing you think of when you see the colour red?
* What sayings refer to red? What are the sayings about?

Answers may include anger, love, danger and caution, all of which are relevant; and sayings such as ‘seeing red’ (anger), ‘red alert’ (danger), ‘red carpet’ (importance and welcome), ‘red herring’ (a trick that diverts from the truth).

Possible themes to bring out:

* traditionally red was the colour of martyrs; that there are more Christian martyrs now than in the Early Church
* Christianity is the most persecuted religion in the world

Point out the hand raised on the right-hand side of the slide. Say that the open-palmed hand is a symbol of ‘stop’ which is relevant because #RedWednesday is about bringing an end to all religiously-motivated discrimination, persecution and violence and promoting a world where people of all faiths and none are respected.

**SLIDE 4:**

The next slide is the true story of one such Christian from Nigeria.

**SLIDE 5:**

Margaret Attah’s story.

**SLIDE 6:**

Those who carried out the Pentecost Sunday attacks have not been brought to justice and the atrocities taking place in Africa are not given the prominence they deserve in the media. This is why we are asked to ‘Break the Silence’.

 **SLIDE 7:**Would you say you take for granted your right to choose your religion/change your religion or to decide that you do not want to believe? What would it mean to have this right taken away? Would this school/parish exist? What if getting children baptised in Church or read the bible openly were banned? What if marking Ramadan, Lent and Diwali were illegal? #RedWednesday is about making sure every person has this right.

**SLIDE 8:**
The Catholic Church teaches that people of all faiths deserve admiration and respect and that all people should engage in dialogue and collaboration. We notice in the life of Jesus that he never forced anyone to believe in him and this is true of Christianity today.

This respect, tolerance and understanding is vital in these days of war across the world and the fact that religious intolerance still exists, e.g., in North Korea.

**SLIDE 9:**#RedWednesday is an international campaign to Break the Silence on Christian persecution. As previously mentioned, ACN, with the Catholic Church, stands against all forms of persecution and defends the rights of all people of faith to live in peace and freedom. However, given that Christianity is the most persecuted religion in the world, it is important to tell the stories of people like Margaret.

**SLIDE 10:**

Why Africa?

**SLIDE 11:**

The situation: Christians in Africa has worsened recently.

**Slide 12:**

The bishop in the middle is with all the widows from his village. Their husbands have been killed by terrorists.

**SLIDES 13 & 14:**

Reasons why #RedWednesday is important.

SLIDE 13: solidarity and unity, belief in human rights for all and love of neighbour

SLIDE 14: reiterating that we must be the instruments of change.

You could mention that Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights wanted to guarantee freedom of religion after the atrocities inflicted on the Jews in the Second World War.

**SLIDE 15:**

Every ‘£’ raised will be matched by generous donors. If a class raises £100 pounds, then it will become £200.

**SLIDE 16:**

Examples of how the money will be spent. This is a matter of life or death for many of our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world.

**Slide 17:**

TeamRed slide. This is so you can explain what your school/parish will be doing and give any instructions.

The livestream for secondary schools will take place on 22nd November 2023 from 11.00-12.00.

**SLIDE 18:**

Footage of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Nigeria.

NOTE: The video does not show any violence but does mention killing. Staff will want to preview and use their judgment if Year 7 students are present.

**SLIDE 19:**

Video – quotes about breaking the silence.

**SLIDE 20:**

ACN logo