

Mater Dei Centre for Catholic Education

“Researchers at the Mater Dei Centre for Catholic Education (MDCCE) at Dublin City University are embarking on an exciting three-year project which aims to explore the nature, scope and potential of religious education and faith development for adults in Ireland. The principal investigator is Dr. Gareth Byrne and the post-doctoral researcher for this project is Dr. Bernadette Sweetman.

It is hoped that the project will enhance public awareness of the great work already happening in communities, parishes and groups. Adult religious education and faith development in Ireland has traditionally been conceived of as a process whereby faith communities / parishes provide talks or workshops often delivered by outside experts. Such input is often more focused on those already committed, and are actively involved in ministry. A range of possibilities which encourage adults generally to explore and deepen their faith experience and grow more fully into their faith community is needed.

Emerging forms of spirituality and popular piety continue to capture the adult imagination. A spiritual sensibility remains but there can be a deficit of religious language through which people engage with each other in deepening their experience within a faith community.

The AREFD project will focus on all these issues and seek to facilitate a re-energising of adult religious education and faith development in Ireland.

We, the researchers, are hoping that as many people take part in this project as possible. We are inviting all adults in Ireland to complete an online survey that will help us understand what Irish adults think and feel about religious education and how we might best develop this in the future. The survey can be accessed at www.dcu.ie/adultre and will be open until Sunday 30th June 2019. This link will also guide you to a short video clip and a podcast. Please feel free to encourage your friends and colleagues to participate, and to share these materials amongst your networks. Thank you.”

Please note that all enquiries about the AREFD project should be forwarded directly to Dr. Bernadette Sweetman at: bernadette.sweetman@dcu.ie

Please pass on this information to colleagues and friends.