

## Praying with the living: Praying for the dead.

Catholic liturgies help believers mark every stage of life's journey. Teachers and parents might be most familiar with the early stages of life, but need to help children face endings, too. Unexpected bereavement is particularly traumatic and, when grieving, it is not the right time to begin learning new liturgical material. However, the Church provides time every year to remember the dead, to familiarise ourselves with readings, prayers and music suitable for use in memorials at other times of year. November begins with the celebration of the feast of All Saints (1 November), a Holy Day of Obligation which can occur on a school-day. At the All Saints' Mass, unlike many other week-day Masses, you'll need to sing a Gloria and recite the Creed. You could sing a Litany of Saints. All Souls is celebrated on 2 November, and throughout the month, the school may open a Book of Remembrance to which children and staff add the names and pictures of relatives and friends who have died. This is an opportunity to learn the traditional Catholic prayer for the dead: *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.* In commemorative activities for the war dead, Catholics not only remember the dead, but continue to pray for them

When a member of a Catholic school community dies, liturgies for those remaining help them pray for the deceased, express their feelings, and contain their grief. The liturgical colours are white and purple. Sung psalms, Bible readings, sharing memories, silence – all are part of the liturgical process which acknowledges loss and offers hopeful faith in the resurrection. Songs which convey this hope in the face of grief are ideal:

Suitable traditional hymns: *O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder* and *Sweet Saviour, bless us ere we go*

Relevant well-known songs: *Do not be afraid* and *We come to share our story*

Simple chants: Martin Foster's *Requiem Aeternam* and *Bless the Lord, my soul* from Taizé

*Into your hands: Planning a Catholic funeral, readings and prayers* (Decani Music) provides useful information for staff responsible for leading prayers at school following the death of a child, parent or teacher.

*When somebody dies* – a CD from Rainbows Bereavement Support GB

*Beyond our tears* and *Out of the depths* downloadable resources produced by the Joint Liturgical Group of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

## Finding the Texts for Mass – 2

A question which teachers, chaplains etc. often ask is, 'How do I know what readings and prayers are given for a particular day?' 'And can I change them?' Though the guidance is found in the liturgical books, it is not conveniently gathered in one place. Before looking at the texts, one has to know what day it is.

### The Readings

The readings for use at Mass and other Celebrations are found in the Lectionary. In England and Wales we have a 3-volume Lectionary which is divided as follows:

**Volume 1** includes the readings for the Seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, Triduum and Easter – Sundays and Weekdays; Sundays in Ordinary Time; Solemnities and Feasts of the Lord (which can replace Sundays)

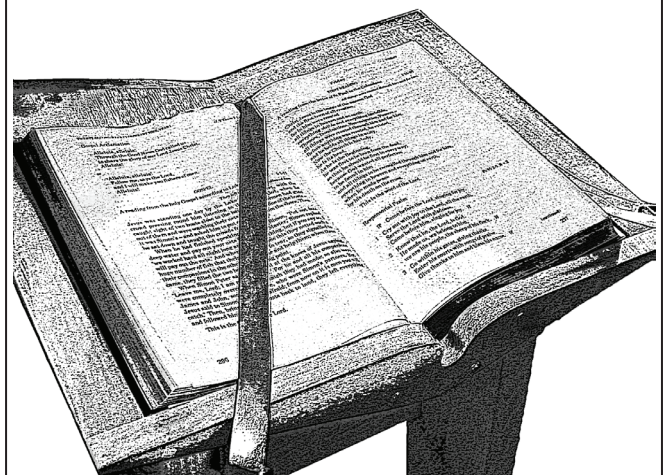
**Volume 2** includes the readings for the Weekdays of Ordinary Time; Proper of Saints; and the Commons (eg the Common of Saints)

**Volume 3** includes the readings for Ritual Masses – Sacraments; Various Needs and Occasions; Votive Masses and Masses for the Dead

The Lectionary comes in two sizes: an Ambo-size edition and a Study edition. People's Missal come in 3 selections: Sunday (drawing on volume 1), Weekday (drawing on volumes 1 and 2) and Daily (from volumes 1 and 2). They may include some material from volume 3.

**Sundays** follow a three-year Cycle: Year A – Matthew and John, Year B – Mark and John, Year C – Luke and John. The first Gospel, particularly in Ordinary Time, is read chronologically through the year; the Gospel of John does not have a year to itself but is significant in each year particularly in Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter.

*Continued overleaf*



This resource can be freely photocopied. In fact we hope you will copy it and distribute it widely. Please think of doing so as a form of ministry to the liturgy!

Other editions of Spirit of the Season - this is the second edition - are available on the Society of Saint Gregory website, [www.ssg.org.uk](http://www.ssg.org.uk)

Content is written by Frances Bibey, Caroline Dollard, Martin Foster, Frances Novillo and Teresa O'Sullivan.

## Tips for singing the Mass with children

- Lots of music for the Mass stays the same each time. Learn one version of the *Holy, Memorial Acclamation, Great Amen, Alleluia*, and use repeatedly
- Use websites with backing tracks and demonstration tracks to help you *learn* new music. But try hard to make sure that you learn it well enough not to rely on pre-recorded music during celebration. Keep your worship live! You can learn simple Psalms at [mikeanderson.net](http://mikeanderson.net) and new songs and hymns from [worshipworkshop.co.uk](http://worshipworkshop.co.uk)
- New Mass settings proving popular and useful with children and young people include C J Olding: Freedom Liturgy ([www.wheatsheafmusic.co.uk](http://www.wheatsheafmusic.co.uk)) and Edwin Fawcett: Mass of Blessed John Paul II ([edwinfawcett.bandcamp.com/album/mass-of-blessed-john-paul-ii](http://edwinfawcett.bandcamp.com/album/mass-of-blessed-john-paul-ii))
- Talk through the Mass with your priest and use your own Missal or Mass card so you recognise the spoken or visual cues for each piece of music. For example, the priest always says: '... we acclaim...' before you sing *Holy, Holy*.

## Finding the Texts for Mass – 2 *concluded*

**Weekdays in Ordinary Time** follow a two-year Cycle: I and II. Year I is in odd-number years (eg 2015), Year II in even numbered years. The gospel is common to both years but the first reading and psalm are different.

**Weekdays in Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter** follow a single year cycle.

On Sundays and Solemnities there are 2 readings and a psalm before the Gospel. In other celebrations there is, normally, only 1 reading and a psalm.

To find the readings you should first check the date in a liturgical calendar. If it is a Sunday, you will need to know what year it is (A, B or C); if it is a weekday, in Ordinary Time, which cycle (I or II). For a weekday the week will be named from the preceding Sunday, eg the 23rd week follows the 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time. The readings given for a particular day are described as 'proper'.

On a weekday you may have a choice of celebrations. For example, Tuesday 9 September is either Tuesday in Week 23 of Ordinary Time (Year I) or the optional memorial of St Peter Claver. Both celebrations will have readings assigned to them but only one set of readings will be read at Mass. As a rule, the documents encourage that the readings of the weekday are given priority over those of either an obligatory or optional memorial. This is for two reasons: as way of connecting with the wider Church, and for continuity from day to day. The exception to this rule is when the reading for a memorial is 'proper': this usually occurs when it is a New Testament Saint and they are mentioned in the reading; in this case the readings of the saint would take precedence.

## Questions to connect liturgy, school, families & priest!

### School to Family

- How's life?
- Would you like to join us for our next school liturgy? Come early and find out a little more about the liturgy before we start.
- Would you like to ask your child about today's liturgy when you get home.
- Do you find the prayer material/Wednesday Word we send home useful?
- We are having a training session for ..... Would you like to join us?

### Family to School

- What do you expect of us / me as a parent? Can you help and support me?
- What RE topics are you covering this term? Can you help and support me?
- What is the link between what you are doing in school and what happens in the parish?
- Why does the parish feel so different?
- Critical voice: how do you nurture the Catholicity of your staff?

### Family to Priest

- I need help ... Can you help me?
- I am worried about... Have you time to listen?
- We are doing our best to get to Mass ....
- How do I explain ..... to my child?
- Do I have to use the 'Crying Chapel'? Why?

### School to Priest

- Would you be prepared to lead a time of reflection / retreat for staff?
- Would you be available on Parents' Evenings to chat to parents?
- Would it be appropriate sometimes for the class teacher to lead a reflection on the Gospel at a class Mass? (As per DMC)
- Would you like to work with us as we prepare a school liturgy you will be leading?
- Would you come in to school to work with the children to prepare a liturgy? (Staff sit in)

### Priest to School

- How can I be involved in the preparation of school liturgies?
- What can we do together to help parents participate in liturgies rather than just being spectators?
- Can we share our ways of praying in school?
- How can we share our ways of praying in school with families? Eg Start of the day/ Grace at mealtimes.
- What can you take from the Sunday celebration into school? / What can we bring from school to the Sunday celebration?

### Priest to Family

- It is very good to see you here How are things? [Getting to know you.] Remembering names / life events.
- I can't imagine the difficulties you have getting here.
- Which school do the children go to?
- I would love to visit you at home. Would you like me to bless your home and family?

## Use Scripture with confidence – 2

### Scripture in the Liturgy flowing into the life in the church

Ask any Catholic what is most important to them in their tradition, and the most likely answer will be 'The Mass, of course'. The celebration of the Eucharist, and wholeheartedly taking part, is central to who we are as Catholic Christians (CTM 1). In the Vatican II document on the Liturgy, the bishops called the rest of the Church to a more full, active and conscious participation in the liturgy of the Church, for the very reason that Christ is always present in the Church, 'especially in the liturgy'. Our 'liturgical life' promotes a deeper experience of Christ, as we are drawn into a 'living communion' with Him, who shows us the love of the Father in the Holy Spirit. We are nourished by the presence of Christ, through every word and action in the liturgy, at the table of the word of God and the table of the Body of Christ (DV21). The *General Directory for Catechesis* (GDC) confirms the aim as being 'to put people in touch, in communion, indeed, in intimacy with Jesus Christ (GDC in Plain English (80), Bill Huebsch, 23rd Publications 2003). At the end of the liturgy, we are 'sent out' to give expression to what we believe and pray in the Liturgy, connecting it with the words and actions of our daily lives. ('Be doers of the Word and not hearers only'. *James* 1:22)

**The reform of the lectionary:** Post Vatican II, the *Order of Readings*, compiled by a great many experts (in biblical interpretation, pastoral studies, catechetics, and liturgy) from all over the world, seek to provide not only an introduction to the whole of God's word, but also to give an ever-deepening experience of the history of salvation being present and lived out through the Eucharist. The

same readings are proclaimed in the Liturgy all over the world, and people can reflect on the application of these readings to their own circumstances. You hear the Gospel differently when you are hungry, for example.

When, in celebrating the liturgy, the Church proclaims both the Old and New Testament, many facets of the same mystery of Christ are expressed. The New Testament lies hidden in the Old; the Old Testament comes fully to light in the New (DV16). Christ himself is the centre and fullness of all of Scripture as he is of the entire liturgy.

Each Sunday the Gospel reading has a distinctive 'vertical' theme, relating to the first reading. There is also a 'horizontal' relationship of continuity, linking each Sunday to those before and after. For Sundays in Ordinary Time (ie before and after the great 'mysteries' of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost and their preparatory and celebratory seasons) the second reading follows its own path, but with no explicit relationship to the Gospel and first Reading, but nonetheless, being 'in Christ' will share a natural connection.

Our liturgical life leads us to a sense of purpose as disciples of Christ: to be that authentic witness to what we believe and pray, in the way we respond in everyday life at work, school, home, and in cultural and social settings. It also deepens the sense of vocation, in promoting what Jesus did: to seek out the lost, to heal, to accept rejection and persecution, to trust firmly in God, and expect the support of the Holy Spirit.

**Exercise:** How does the nourishment we receive in the Liturgy of the Word affect the way we live our lives, and 'witness' to our Christian faith? What is the 'invitation' in the Sunday Gospel this week?

## Criteria for evaluating collective worship in schools – 2

Each Diocese produces some guidelines for schools preparing SEF responses concerning Collective Worship. Regular and ongoing evaluation is more effective than a last-minute attempt when an inspection is imminent. The Church describes as mystagogy that process of reflection and exploration of what has happened in liturgy and how it has affected our lives. The term is used particularly for new Catholics developing their understanding of faith and it is usually very valuable for our children and young people as their emergent faith evolves. For staff, it is a process which can inform future liturgical preparation.

What mystagogy does is 'break open'. This time of thinking back and forth is a natural response to a communal experience, a life skill that needs to be developed in all of us. In a brief time of reflection we go deeper into our encounter and get insights of understanding from others who were there too.

It is after liturgy that we realise that what we have been taught in RE lessons or what we know of church teachings is true because we have experienced it in liturgy. We have been given a glimpse of the Kingdom, an insight into heaven.

pp 30-31 *Spiritual Garments* © 2006 Julie McCann. ISBN 10-1-900314-17-7

## Lead Prayer with Confidence – 2

### Be Prepared

- Read the text out loud. Get used to speaking clearly and at a pace that people will hear and engage with – neither too fast nor too slow.
- If you need to move as part of the prayer – think this through. For a larger celebration in an unfamiliar place you may wish to walk the liturgy through. Consider whether you will be visible to the majority of participants. In a large building it may be worth looking at what you will wear so that you can be seen.
- Check that there is somewhere for you to sit during the readings etc.
- How will you see your text? Will you hold it or have it on a stand? Have you a (worthy) folder it could be placed in?
- Are there parts of the prayer where you will need to co-ordinate with the musicians? Can you 'catch the eye' of ministers without being awkward?
- Identify the parts of the prayer where there might be a time of silence. Try to be aware of the overall flow of the liturgy.
- Take time before the liturgy to spend some moments in prayer. Fundamental to good liturgy and prayer is being prepared and trusting that God is at work.



# Introductions and Codas: singing beginnings and endings

It is common to pray at the beginnings and ending of the school day; and at the beginning and ending of the school lunch-time. In this way the school community is included in the Church's tradition of marking beginnings and endings in prayer; for example, the Liturgy of the Hours includes prayer upon waking and before sleeping, and the Bible encourages us to pray before starting any project and to give thanks to God on completion. The Church marks beginnings and endings in life with communal prayer at Baptism and funerals. At any point in Christian life, these beginnings and endings can be celebrated in song. Various suggestions are offered in the lists below.

Prayers at the beginning and end of the day could take place in the staff-room, or in class including teachers and children together, and the suggestions are simple repetitive chants, plus one hymn: *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty* which is included in most hymnals or you can access it for free on [www.worshipworkshop.com.uk](http://www.worshipworkshop.com.uk) where you'll find sheet music, and a recording and backing track participants can use to sing along.

## Day

### Morning

- *All that I think and say* – C. Walker - Cn 188
- *Ever on my lips* – D. Schutte – Cn 94
- *This day was made by the Lord* – [www.cjmmusic.co.uk](http://www.cjmmusic.co.uk)
- *Listen to Jesus* – B. Farrell – *Share the Light* - OCP
- *Holy, Holy, Holy* – R. Heber – [www.worshipworkshop.co.uk](http://www.worshipworkshop.co.uk)

### Afternoon

- *Night has fallen* – Cn 208
- *Give thanks, worship & praise* – J. L. Bell – *There is one among us* -WG
- *Sizohamba naye/ We will walk with God* – Cn 198
- *Share the Light* – B. Farrell – *Share the Light* - OCP
- *May God bless and keep you* – C. Walker – Ld 653

The opening hymn of Mass may be a general song of praise, or it can introduce the season, feast, subject of the readings, or reason for the celebration. It is not necessary to sing a final hymn at Mass, although it can be useful to help children leave the hall in a prayerful manner, singing as they go. The following suggestions speak of gathering together as a community to praise God, then going forth to take his Word to others. Resound Worship is a useful website where you can listen freely to contemporary worship songs and project the lyrics onto a whiteboard for everyone to sing along.

## Mass

### Opening

- *There is a time for praying* – J. McCann - Ld 995
- *We come to share our story* – D. Haas - Ld 473
- *Our God is here* – C. Muglia – [www.ocp.org](http://www.ocp.org)
- *Come, you thankful people* – S. Hargreaves - [www.resoundworship.org](http://www.resoundworship.org)
- *If you believe* – Zimb – Cn 70

### Closing

- *Now go in peace* – Cn 197
- *Take the word of God* – C. Walker – Ld 856

- *Sent by the Lord* – Ld 855
- *Thuma mina* – Cn 80
- *You shall go out with joy* – S. Dauermann – Ld 878

Baptism is a topic in many RE syllabuses, and many school-children will attend baptisms of younger family members and friends, so it's good to resource them with suitable songs for such occasions. We hope children will have to go to fewer funerals, but the period immediately following a death affecting the school community is not the right time to begin learning funeral songs; it is better to include a few in the regular repertoire of school songs (perhaps learning them in November, when we pray more generally for the dead) in order to have them available if they are ever needed to help children and staff grieve a particular loss.

## Birth & Death

### Baptism

- *Up from the waters* – M. Haugen - Ld 396
- *Like a child rests* – C. Walker - Ld 453
- *With joy you will draw water* – B. Hurd – Ld 399
- *We belong to God's family* – O. Alstott – *Rise up and sing* - 3rd edit 254
- *I will be with you* – D. Haas - Ld 776

### Funeral

- Requiem – M. Foster Cn 208
- *Receive his/her soul* – N. Donnelly – *Celebration Hymnal for Everyone* 622
- *Go before us, Jesus Saviour* – B. Farrell - *Go before us* - OCP
- *Bless the Lord* – Taize – Ld 813
- *Live on my love* – Psallite A85 / C88

The beginning and ending of each day, each Mass, and each Christian life is contained within the story of the universe, beginning with creation and concluding at the end of time. Both are realities of the Catholic faith with which our children should be familiar. Creation is the focus of our prayer particularly at Harvest services in the Autumn term, and the end of time features in the readings for Mass heard towards the end of the Church's year (in November, before Advent starts).

## Creation and Eschatology

### Beginning

- *You are Holy* – B. Farrell - Cn 90
- *The wonders I see* – B. Farrell - *Share the Light* - OCP
- *All you works of God* – M. Haugen - OCP
- *All creatures of our God and King* – Ld 694
- *Send out your Spirit* - B. Farrell – *Love Goes On* - OCP

### Ending

- *Jesus Christ, yesterday, today and forever* – S. Toolan – Ld 1000
- *In the day of the Lord* – M.D. Ridge – Ld 986
- *Lo, I am with* – J.L. Bell – *There is one among us* – Iona
- *Soon and very soon* – traditional spiritual
- *Take hold of eternal life* - Psallite

Ld = Laudate (2012 edition)  
Cn = Cantate