

PRAYER
in
PRIMARY
and
SECONDARY
SCHOOLS



with
Perspectives on prayer
by
Bishop Thomas McMahon



Foreword



Catholic schools exist so that children and young people come to a personal knowledge and relationship with God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Part of Catholic education is to teach prayers and to teach how to pray. But how we teach prayer will depend on how we understand it ourselves.

The most basic feature about prayer is that it is an attempt to meet God who wants to meet us. The Catechism of the Catholic Church has 65 pages about prayer and begins with a description of prayer taken from St Thérèse of Lisieux;

“For me prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look towards heaven; it is a cry of recognition and love, embracing both trial and joy.” (CCC 2558)

It is therefore saying that any prayer needs to reflect on this statement – prayer is to cultivate our relationship with God.

Mgr George Stokes records: “ It is the Bishops’ Conference’s intention that each school day should incorporate a period of time for prayer: whole school; year group; classroom and form. Primary schools, RE departments and Chaplaincies in Secondary schools should develop pupils’ experience and understanding of the centrality of prayer in Catholic life. All comes from prayer and all is directed to prayer – our life in the presence of God”.

We are indebted to Bishop Thomas McMahon for all his teaching on prayer during his many school visits and presentations to teachers over the years. We are also extremely grateful to him for allowing us to incorporate some of his perspectives on prayer in this “Year of Faith” diocesan prayer guidelines to schools.

“Prayer is the breath of the soul and of life”.

Benedict XVI, 25.04.2012

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“All who undertake to teach must be endowed with deep love, the greatest patience, and most of all, profound humility” *St Joseph Calasanz*

Prayer: Sharing a Vision

The talk is geared very much to yourselves. We need to be people of prayer before we can communicate that to those to whom we are responsible.

I intend to speak about

- Different definitions of prayer
- Then the importance of prayer
- The value of silence

Definitions of prayer:

My favourite definitions of prayer:

Mother Teresa said that someone asked her how do you pray?

She said “I do not say anything to him and he does not say anything to me.”

The first thing that I would want to say is that prayer concerns a person - a person of God, a person of Jesus. Remember it not just teaching them prayers or how to pray. It is a relationship – our relationship with God and God’s relationship with us. That is the key thing. Remember first and foremost our faith is not built around teachings and doctrines and moral precepts it is **about the person of Jesus and all of the teaching flows from that**. So Jesus in the very centre.

My own favourite which I think comes from a book by medieval mystic called the Cloud of Unknowing is that prayer means making ourselves present to the presence of God. I like it because it can be just for a moment as you suddenly praise God the Creator it is just making yourself present to the presence of the Creator. Mother Teresa’s definition was to think of God with love. Prayer enlarges the heart. Time spent with the Lord enlarges the heart. Saint Benedict says something similar as you advance in the spiritual life your heart becomes enlarged. Prayer is rather like sitting in the sun. When you sit in the sun you cannot help but be changed by it. You won’t notice but other people will and you are being changed. You may feel that it is not very profitable as you are just there in the presence of God as you are in the sun but you cannot help but be changed by it. I would certainly say after years of trying to pray the emphasis is on trying to pray because it is not always easy but over years of trying you find that your insights are different, your values are different your priorities are different by spending consistent times in prayer. A person comes to resemble that which they continually contemplate and it is so true our faces betray the influences under which we live. It was Abraham Lincoln who said that after the age of forty we are all responsible for our own faces. You recognise a happy face, or a sad face, or a cruel face. There is a great deal of truth in that. The rector of the Beda College, Monsignor Roderick Strange wrote a marvellous for book for priests and he speaks in the third chapter on prayer. And he says in prayer there is no posturing, he said in our public lives there is a lot of posturing but before God there is no posturing he knows us better than we know ourselves. In prayer there is no shielding we are unprotected. There is no posturing. Prayer does not depend on how we feel, or, making us feel good, or, I feel like praying, or, I don’t feel like praying today. It is just being there. Wasn’t it fascinating that when Mother Teresa died her diaries revealed that for the last 15 years of her life she had no consolation in prayer what so ever? But she was just there faithful to the Lord each day.

Ruth Burrows in her latest book says how little consolation she received in prayer but it is not about feelings it is about being there and being faithful. In life we are called to be faithful we are not called to be successful. Another of my favourite definitions is from Cardinal Hume. He said: “God’s thirst is meeting our thirst, God’s silence is meeting our silence, no need for thoughts and words get in the way.” Isn’t that beautiful? It is all about being there. Julian of Norwich said that prayer makes the soul one with God through just being there in time with God, we become attuned to the will of God for us. Julian of Norwich only had two windows in her cell, one window looking out onto the church and the other window on to the lake. So she was anchored in God and what she learns from her prayer and the services which go on in the church, she brings to her counselling. Rowan Williams describes prayer as putting down an anchor and in that sense we are deeply rooted in God. Those are some thoughts on defining prayer and what it is.

The importance of prayer.

If we are not convinced of the importance of prayer then we will not give it priority in our lives otherwise it will just not happen. In fact it was Saint Frances de Sales, that famous quotation of his “I have so much to do today that I must find two hours prayer.” The more he had to do the more essential he knew that his prayer life was to inform the rest of the day. So he said, “I have such a busy day that I have to find two hours to pray”. It is terribly easy for priests, religious and yourselves to develop a **professional** relationship with God as opposed to a **personal** relationship with God and as you stand in front of your pupils won’t they know immediately whether you inhabit what you say? If we ourselves are prayerful people it will just show and they will pick it up so easily. As I say to our priests, it is very easy to be busy about the things of God but not necessarily about God himself. If we don’t have a hidden life with God it will be difficult for our public life with God to bear fruit. Monsignor Roderick Strange tells a beautiful story about his going through London and he was jolly tired. He called in on a friend and arranged to meet him for lunch. He met him for lunch and as Roderick Strange was leaving he said, “I feel that I have to apologise I have not been very good company.” Do you know what his friend said? “What matters is that we wanted to meet.” Isn’t that real friendship? He was tired and it was end of term. Doesn’t that go back to what I said about feelings? It is the being there that matters and that is the prayer itself and it is the wanting to pray that is a prayer in itself. How do you think that the disciples learnt to pray? Their proximity to Jesus and that it the only way that we will learn to pray. Come near to him so that we may make him near and real to others. The less we pray the less we will want to pray. The more we pray the more we will want to pray. It was Rowan Williams who said “The less you pray the worse it gets. The more you pray the more the desire is there. What about the example from Jesus. He would spend the night in prayer. Before choosing his disciples Jesus would be found in prayer. The story of Martha and Mary it is not all the doing and the business which keeps us from ourselves. Mary had chosen the better part. There is no substitute for finding a fixed time for deciding where and when and making it a priority and to try and see that it is not moved around and eroded away. It is too important to leave to chance otherwise it won’t happen.

CS Lewis: Screwtape letters. He says how noise is one of the greatest menaces of modern life. He said all this noise and busyness will no doubt please the devil. He said and I quote “he would make the whole universe a noise in the end. Noise which defends us from the qualms and despairing thoughts within ” Very often one of the reasons that we fill our lives with noise and movement is because we do not want to face ourselves. One of the difficulties with prayer and perhaps one of the reasons which people do not want to stick with it is because when you sit there in silence you have to face yourself to a certain extent. I think a lot of today is a drowning out of self through noise and busyness so that we do not have to face ourselves

and yet we have to work through all those things whatever it is that is surfacing otherwise you bury then like steam in a kettle which has to find itself out in some kind of way. Have you heard mention of Meister Eckhart a medieval philosopher and mystic “nothing in the whole of creation so resembles God as stillness”? Saint John of the Cross said, “silence is the way that God speaks to us.” So in our lives, we need what Basil Hume calls “desert and marketplace”. Coming back to definitions on prayer someone said to Mother Teresa “What do you say when you pray?” She replied; “I don’t say anything I just listen”. What does God say? “He doesn’t say anything he just listens”. Rather good isn’t it? Again doesn’t that powerfully emphasise the being there.

Pathways to prayer:

I am taking for granted the Prayer of the Church Morning and Evening prayer. But when it comes to ways of praying people always quote some very wise words from an abbot of Downside. His wise words were “pray in the way that you can and don’t try and pray in the way that you can’t.”

I am going to sketch out a few ways to pray, but don’t take this as the best way or the only way. Whatever is good for you in that relationship, remember it is a relationship with the Lord. “Pray in the way that you can and don’t pray in the way that you can’t.” Having said all of that I think that over the years of trying to pray there should be a progression in our prayer. When it comes to vocal prayer not to be too discursive. Remember Mother Teresa. We must be careful not to fill our prayers with words. When you just want little nuggets of gold look at the psalms. Whatever your mood the psalmist has been there before you. You can be up, you can be down, you can be full of praise, you can be full of thanksgiving, you can be full of contrition, you can be in the depths of depression, the psalmist has been there before you. So something from the 150 psalms - I just find them tremendous.

Four kinds of prayer and three ways of praying.

The four kinds of prayer are:

Praise and Thanksgiving. It is important to emphasise that because we can get so caught up in the prayer of intercession because we know our needs and those of other people but what about the prayer of praise? It is the highest form of prayer. There is no self interest there. What about the prayer of thanksgiving and to have an attitude of thanksgiving? We are such discontented creatures this side of heaven because of our fallen nature and instead of counting our blessings we can be very well aware of what is going wrong in our lives. What about the blessings with which you are absolutely showered with each day? So include an attitude of thanksgiving.

Repentance and Petition. We all fall short of the gospel ideals and therefore it is very healthy in this time of Lent to have a prayer of repentance. Prayer of petition: for our needs and those around us when you look at Syria and the world not to make it so introspective about my needs. It is about the wider world.

The three ways of praying which I am going to touch on are vocal prayer or prayer with the lips, that long word meditation – [it just means with the mind] and contemplation -[it just means with the heart].

Coming back to those four kinds of prayer.

Prayer of praise because there is no self interest there just praising God for being God. Saint Augustine said prayer of praise should be the object of our meditation in this life because in the life to come it will be forever the object for our rejoicing. We are made to give praise and glory to God.

Prayer of thanksgiving the medieval mystic Meister Eckhart said that the older he got he had only one prayer: “thank you Lord – it is enough”. So to have an attitude of thanksgiving. I mentioned prayer of repentance as we fall short of the gospel ideals and there are several among the 150 psalms and beautiful phrases from the New Testament. “Lord be merciful to me a sinner”.

Intercessory prayer. I love this story of Aaron the High Priest to Moses and as he went before the Lord in prayer he used to put on a breastplate of 12 jewels representing the twelve tribes of Israel for whom he had responsibility. When he went before the Lord in prayer he carried the people with him on his heart. That is how we come to the Lord in prayer thinking of others and our world.

I said three ways of praying with our lips - vocal prayer, with our mind meditation and with our hearts, contemplation.

Vocal prayer would be our set prayers which is good. More formal prayers Evening prayer, Morning prayer. All of that is excellent and I have seen the programme that you have set out for primaries, the formal prayers and the teaching of the children prayers – very very important. But if we stop at that kind of prayer it is too discursive. We are filling it with words all the time. We want to give ourselves a chance to listen to God or for God to speak to us. So perhaps we move on to that long word meditation, which means prayer of the mind. By that we take a scene or a parable and you just reflect, meditate on it. A starting point and ask yourself where you are in that particular scene? Meditation - prayer of the mind. Do try and move on to prayer of the heart – contemplation because that goes beyond meditation, beyond words really. It requires stillness and the advice is usually, a mantra phrase. Choose a word from Scripture or a word from the psalms something that could be a phrase or it could be one word. An ordinary word “grace”. It means God’s favour, God’s love. Just choosing a phrase “be thankful to the Lord for his goodness for his love is never ending”. That mantra phrase which helps to still the mind and when you come to stillness, let it go and when you come to distractions, which inevitably we do you can just pluck it back and say it once again very slowly and it brings you back to stillness once again. Say it very slowly until you are just still in the presence of the Lord.

I am going to finish by leaving the final word to Julian of Norwich. There are lovely quotations from her about prayer. She said “Our prayers will be waiting for us as part of our delight.” And then the other thing she said which is very encouraging for us she said “All believing prayer is precious”. Once again emphasising that it doesn’t go according to our feelings or how we are. She used to find prayer so difficult. She had to pray for an hour as a Carmelite. There was an hour glass standing there and she would look at it. She wouldn’t believe that it had gone down so little. She would lift it and shake it to try and make it go down quicker.

Thank you very much. It is lovely to come and share with you because you have such a responsibility teaching RE in the schools and in these days. The climate goes against us so much and in the society in which we are living and yet what could be more important? Nothing. There is that thirst within the human

person and you are actually responding to that person. As Basil Hume used to say there is a religious instinct within every person whether they recognise it or not. Just watch Songs of Praise and a whole crowd of people singing a hymn; it touches the heart. It touches something deep within them. It is the deep religious instinct which God has put in each and every person because we are made by him and for him. So thank you for the responsibility and task which you have undertaken.

Bishop Thomas McMahon – March 2012



“Education is something from the heart, and God alone is its master; we cannot succeed in anything unless God gives us the key to these [children’s] hearts” . St John Bosco

What is Prayer?

- St Therese of Lisieux:** "For me **prayer** is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy."
- St Teresa of Avila:** "**Prayer** is a close sharing between friends."
- St Teresa of Avila:** "In **prayer**, we listen, we speak, we gaze.
- St Theophane the Recluse:** "**Prayer** is the spiritual barometer which allows us to know ourselves."
- St John Chrysostom:** "**Prayer** is
A *port* in a storm
The *anchor* of the shipwrecked
A *stick* for the staggering
A *treasure* for the poor
Our *refuge* in evil
The *mother* of philosophy
The *light* of the soul
Water protecting the Church
As *indispensable* for *monks* as water
for fish."
- Bishop Thomas' favourite definition of prayer is:**
"making ourselves present to the
presence of God."
- Cardinal Basil Hume:** "The task of handing on the faith to future generations is both the privilege and responsibility of the local Church. Its primary purpose is to bring young people to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ."

St John Vianney: "When we **pray** we should open our hearts to God, like a fish that sees a wave coming."

Fr C. O'Donnell: "All **prayer** - liturgical, personal, or vocal - reaches out to God."

Prayer defined by children:

- Talking to God / Jesus.
- Thinking about God.
- When you sit still and do not talk.
- Prayer is when you take to God in your heart and he shows you how to pray.



Categories of Prayer

- **Praise**
- **Thanksgiving**
- **Repentance**
- **Intercession**



- *Prayer in Early Years is essentially about saying to God*
- *I love You*
- *Thank You*
- *I am sorry*
- *Please*

Traditional Prayer

KEY STAGE ONE



SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

OUR FATHER

Our Father, who art in heaven,

Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

MORNING PRAYERS

1. Good morning dear Jesus, this day is for you, I ask you to bless all I say think and do.

2. Father in heaven, you love me.

You're with me night and day.

I want to love you always in all I do and say.

I'll try to please you, Father.

Bless me through the day. Amen.



NIGHT PRAYER

God our Father, I come to say

thank you for your love today.

Thank you for my family,

and all the friends you give to me.

Guard me in the dark of night,

and in the morning send your light. Amen.



HAIL MARY

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.



GRACE BEFORE MEALS

Bless us, O God, as we sit together. Bless the food we eat today. Bless the hands that made the food. Bless us, O God. Amen.

GRACE AFTER MEALS

Thank you, God, for the food we have eaten.

Thank you, God, for all our friends.

Thank you, God, for everything.

Thank you, God. Amen.

ACT OF SORROW (1)

O my God, because you are so good, I am very sorry that I have sinned against you and by the help of your grace I will try not to sin again.

ACT OF SORROW (2)

O my God, I thank you for loving me. I am sorry for all my sins, for not loving others and for not loving you. Help me to live like Jesus and not sin again. Amen.

GLORY BE TO THE FATHER

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Prayer to your Guardian Angel

O Angel of God,
my guardian dear,
to whom God's love commits me here,
ever this day be at my side,
to light, to guard, to rule and guide.

The invocation of the holy name of Jesus is the simplest way of praying always.

(Catechism of the Catholic Church,#2668)

KEY STAGE TWO

All prayers cited in Key Stage 1 and:

HAIL, HOLY QUEEN

Hail, Holy Queen, mother of mercy;
Hail our life, our sweetness, and our hope!
To you we cry, poor banished children of Eve;
To you we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.
Turn then, most gracious advocate,
Your eyes of mercy towards us;
And after this our exile, show to us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.
O Clement, O sweet Virgin Mary.
Pray for us, O holy Mother of God,
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

THE MEMORARE

Remember,
O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known,
that anyone, who fled to your protection,
Implored your help,
Or sought your intercession, was left unaided,
Inspired with this confidence, I fly to you, my Mother
O Virgin of Virgins,
Before you I stand
Sinful and sorrowful.
O mother of the word incarnate,
Do not reject my petitions,
But graciously hear and answer my prayer. Amen

THE MAGNIFICAT

My soul glorifies the Lord,
My spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her lowliness;
Henceforth all ages will call me blessed.



The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy his name!
His mercy is from age to age,
On those who fear him.

He puts his arm in strength and scatters the proud-hearted.
he casts the mighty from their thrones and raises the lowly.

He fills the starving with good things,
Sends the rich away empty.

He protects Israel, his servant,
Remembering his mercy,
the mercy promised to our fathers,
To Abraham and his sons for ever.



The Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.
God the Father of Heaven,
have mercy on us.
God the Son,
Redeemer of the world,
have mercy on us.
God the Holy Spirit,
have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God,
have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, *pray for us*
Holy Mother of God,
Holy Virgin of Virgins,
Mother of Christ,

Mother of divine grace,
Mother of the Church,
Mother most pure,
Mother most chaste,
Mother inviolate,
Mother undefiled,
Mother most amiable,
Mother most admirable,
Mother of good counsel,
Mother of our Creator,
Mother of our Saviour,
Virgin most prudent,
Virgin most venerable,
Virgin most renowned,
Virgin most powerful,
Virgin most merciful,
Virgin most faithful,
Mirror of Justice, *pray for us.*
Seat of Wisdom,
Cause of our joy,
Spiritual vessel,
Vessel of honour,
Singular vessel of devotion,
Mystical Rose,

Tower of Ivory,
House of Gold,
Ark of the Covenant,
Gate of Heaven,
Morning Star, *pray for us*
Health of the sick,
Refuge of sinners,
Comforter of the afflicted,
Help of Christians,
Queen of Angels,
Queen of Patriarchs,
Queen of prophets,
Queen of Apostles,
Queen of Martyrs,
Queen of Confessors,
Queen of Virgins,
Queen of All Saints,
Queen conceived without
original sin,
Queen assumed into Heaven,
Queen of the most holy
Rosary,
Queen of the Family,
Queen of Peace.

Lamb of God, who takes
away the sins of the world,
Spare us of Lord.
Lamb of God, who takes
away the sins of the world,
Graciously hear us O Lord.
Lamb of God, who takes
away the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother
of God,
*R. That we may be made
worthy of the promises of
Christ.*

LET US PRAY

Grant we beseech Thee, O Lord,
that we Your servants may
rejoice in continual health of
mind and body and that through
the glorious intercession of the
Blessed Mary ever Virgin, she
may free us from our sorrows in
this life and obtain for us eternal
happiness in the next, through
Christ our Lord Amen.

Regina Caeli [said between Easter & Pentecost]

Queen of Heaven rejoice, Alleluia!

The Son whom it was your privilege to bear... Alleluia!

Has risen as he said. Alleluia!

Pray for us to God. Alleluia!

Rejoice and be glad O Virgin Mary . Alleluia!

For the Lord is truly risen. Alleluia!

Let us pray

O God you were pleased to give joy to the world through the resurrection of your Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Grant, we beseech you, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, his Mother that we may attain to the joys of eternal life, through Christ Our Lord.

Amen



Twelfth Century Antiphon

The *Regina Coeli* comes from an unknown author of the twelfth century and celebrates the joy of the Easter season. From the sixteenth or following century we find it in the evening offices of the Church's *Liturgy of the Hours* and in place of the *Angelus* during Paschal time. It is a simple prayer of remarkable theological density.

It addresses Mary: "Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia." The title "queen" is very ancient. It can be said to have a biblical basis. If the apostles, and indeed all the true followers of Jesus, are to sit on thrones (see Matthew 19:28; Luke 22:28-30; Revelation 3:20-21), surely Mary, who perfectly fulfils all the demands of her Son's teaching, must also surely reign.

The antiphon unites the Incarnation and the Paschal event: "For he whom you merited to bear, alleluia. Has risen as he said, alleluia." It is the fullness of joy announced by Gabriel at the Annunciation. It continues with a plea for Mary's intercession, "Pray for us to God, alleluia." It then enters into her paschal joy. Instead of letting the feast of the resurrection happen and pass is by, we are to follow Mary in constantly pondering: "Be glad and rejoice, O Virgin Mary, alleluia. For the Lord has truly risen, alleluia." there is a modern hymn which says, "We are an Easter people, and alleluia is our song."

The prayer which follows is modelled the liturgy which remembers Mary, but then prays to the Father: "O God who gave joy to your family through the resurrection of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ; grant we ask you that through his Mother, the Virgin Mary, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life; through the same Christ our Lord. Amen."

In this prayer we are again concerned with the greatest and ultimate issue of our Christian lives, salvation, which means sharing the joy of the resurrection of Jesus. This prayer to the Father is made through the one mediator, "through the same Christ our Lord" (see *Timothy 2:4-5*), but it is also "through his Mother, the Virgin Mary," that is a subordinate mediation that involves her intercession.

It is in prayer that we can most easily experience the truths of the faith about Mary; in the *Regina Coeli* we can find an invitation to, and a model for, Paschal joy.

C. O'Donnell, O.Carm.

The Angelus

V. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary;

R. **And she conceived by the Holy Spirit**

Hail Mary...

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord;

R. **Be it done unto me according to your word.**

Hail Mary...

V. And the Word was made Flesh;

R. **And dwelt among us.**

Hail Mary...

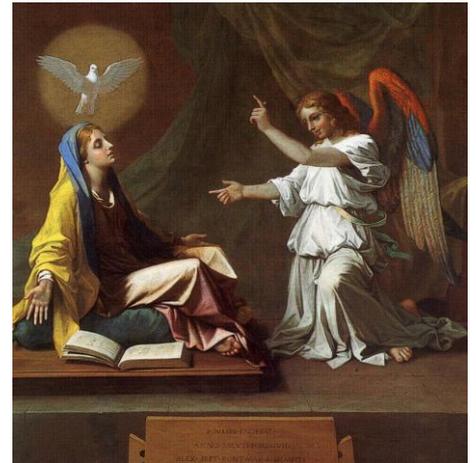
V. Pray for us. O holy Mother of God:

R. **That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.**

Let us pray.

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ, your son, was made known by the message of an angel, may, by his Passion and Cross, be brought to the glory of his Resurrection, through the same Christ our Lord. AMEN.

The custom of saying the 'Hail Mary' three times when the bell rang in the evening goes back to the thirteenth century, and there are bells of that period inscribed with the angelic salutation. The prayer was formerly the postcommunion for Masses of Our Lady in Advent and is now the opening prayer for the Fourth Sunday of Advent. The prayer, formulated in honour of the Incarnation, commemorates the angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary that Jesus was to be born of her. The prayer is recited three times a day at approximately 6 a.m., noon, and 6 p.m. when the Angelus bell is rung. Where its practice exists the ringing of the bells commonly follows a certain pattern: there are three strokes at each invocation, each followed by a pause, and then nine strokes in succession during the recitation of the final prayer. The Angelus is replaced by the Marian antiphon *Regina Coeli* at Eastertime.



MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY

[May and October are months of The Rosary]

Joyful Mysteries

1. The Annunciation
2. The Visitation
3. The Birth of Our Lord
4. The Presentation
5. The Finding of the child Jesus in the Temple



Sorrowful Mysteries

1. The Agony in the Garden
2. The Scourging at the Pillar
3. The Crowning with Thorns
4. The Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion

The Mysteries of Light

1. The Baptism in the Jordan
2. The Wedding at Cana
3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God and the call to conversion
4. The Transfiguration
5. The Institution of the Eucharist

The Glorious Mysteries

1. The Resurrection
2. The Ascension
3. The Crowning with Thorns
4. The Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crowning of Our Lady as Queen of Heaven.

Order of daily praying of the Rosary

Monday	Joyful
Tuesday	Sorrowful
Wednesday	Glorious
Thursday	Mysteries of Light
Friday	Sorrowful
Saturday	Joyful
Sunday	Glorious

“I invite people to pray the Rosary individually, in the family and in the community, placing themselves in the school of Mary who leads us to Christ, the living centre of our faith”. *Benedict XVI*

Act of Faith

O my God, I believe in you
And in all that your Holy Church teaches.
Because you have said it and your word is true.
You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.
You are my Lord and my God.
Lord, I believe, increase my faith.

Act of Hope

O my God, I put my hope in you
Because I am sure of your promises.
Deliver us, Lord, from every evil and grant us peace in our day
As we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our saviour, Jesus Christ.

Act of Charity

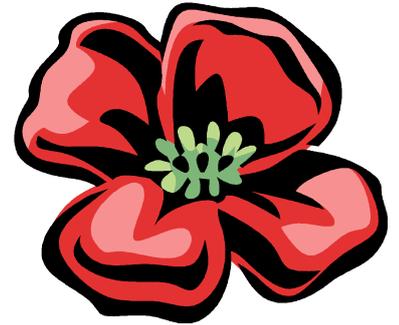
O my God, I love you with all my heart,
With all my soul, and with all my strength.
Lord, increase our love.
Help us to love one another.



NOVEMBER, traditionally, is the month for remembering the dead

FOR THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord,
And let perpetual light shine upon them.
May they rest in peace. Amen



For the Dead Psalm 129

Out of the depths I cry to you O Lord, Lord hear my voice!
O let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleading.
If you O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord who would survive?
But with you is found forgiveness: for this we revere You.
My soul is waiting for the Lord, I count on his word.
My soul is longing for the Lord more than watchman for daybreak.
Let the watchman count on daybreak and Israel on the Lord.
Because with the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption; Israel indeed He will
redeem from all its iniquity.

Let us pray:

O God, the creator and redeemer of all the faithful, grant to the souls of your servants departed, the remission of all their sins that through our loving supplication they may obtain the pardon which they have always desired: through Christ our Lord . Amen

Act of Remembrance

They shall not grow old as we who are left grow old
Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

Prayer of St John Henry Newman

May God support us all day long, 'til the shades lengthen, and the evening comes and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done! Then in his mercy may he give us a safe lodging, and a holy rest and peace at the last!

"Let us be like the swan. When it is dying it gathers all its inner forces and sings with more harmony than ever before in its life. That is how the saints die. It is the purest act of their life, the one most burning with love, the most perfect." *St Madeleine Sophie Barat*

CONFITEOR

I confess to almighty God,
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,
through my fault, through my fault, through my most
grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary, ever-Virgin,
all the angels and saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.



Act of Sorrow

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy on me a sinner.

Stational Prayer

I love you Jesus my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always then do with me what you will.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

1. Jesus is condemned to death.
2. Jesus carries his cross.
3. Jesus falls the first time.
4. Jesus meets his mother.
5. Simon helps Jesus carry his cross.
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.
7. Jesus falls the second time.
8. Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem.
9. Jesus falls the third time.
10. Jesus is stripped of his garments.
11. Jesus is nailed to the cross.
12. Jesus dies on the cross.
13. Jesus is taken down from the cross.
14. Jesus is laid in the tomb.



SERENITY PRAYER

God, grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change,
The courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.

Divine Mercy -Three o'clock Prayer

You expired, Jesus, but the source of life gushed forth for souls
and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world.

O Fount of Life unfathomable divine mercy,
envelope the whole world and empty yourself out upon us.

O blood and water which gusted forth from the heart of Jesus, as a fount of mercy for us ,
I trust in you

Divine Mercy Prayer - three o'clock [prayed every day in Trinity High School]

It is now the hour of Christ's death. Let us pause and reflect.

We adore you o Christ and we praise you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

For the sake of his sorrowful passion have mercy on us and on the whole world.

We ask this through Christ O Lord Amen

“It is not sufficient to forgive others: we must forgive them with humility and compassion. If we forgive them without humility, our forgiveness is a mockery: it presupposes that we are better than they.”

Thomas Merton, weekly reflection April 23rd 2012

A Way of the Cross with Children

✝ First Station

Jesus Is Condemned To Death

Pontius Pilate told Jesus he was going to be crucified even though he was innocent. Jesus didn't say anything.



Pause

Sometimes we are accused of things we didn't do.

How do we feel on such occasions?

How did Jesus feel?

Prayer

Teacher: We adore you, O Christ and we praise you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

✚ Second Station

Jesus Takes up His Cross

The soldiers gave Jesus a heavy wooden Cross to carry through the streets.



Pause

Sometimes we may have big worries or problems and people may say that we have a cross to carry.

Can we think of someone who has a cross to carry at this time and ask Jesus to help them.

Prayer

Teacher: We adore you, O Christ and we praise you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world

✝ Third Station

Jesus Falls The First Time

Jesus walked along the streets with his Cross, many people gathered to look at him. The Cross was very heavy and he fell for the **first** time.

Pause



Imagine we are in the crowd and see Jesus fall.

What thought comes to mind?

Prayer

Teacher: We adore you, O Christ and we praise you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

✦ Fourth Station

Jesus Meets His Mother

Jesus' mother was there, too. She came out of the crowd and went up to him.



Pause

How did Mary feel seeing her Son suffer like this?

In the quiet of our hearts ask Mary to walk with us and all people.

Prayer

Teacher: We adore you, O Christ and we praise you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

✚ Fifth Station

Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross

The soldiers could see that Jesus was getting tired. They asked a man named Simon to help Jesus carry the Cross.



Pause

If you were in the crowd maybe, you would have been asked to help...

What would you have done?

How can we help others today?

Prayer

Teacher: We adore you, O Christ and we praise you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

✝ Sixth Station

Veronica Wipes The Face Of Jesus

A good woman named Veronica came up to Jesus and wiped his face. A picture of his face remained on the cloth.

Pause

How can we be courageous in showing
concern for others?

Can we reach out in love
to others today?



Prayer

Teacher: We adore you, O Christ and we praise you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

✦ Seventh Station

Jesus Falls The Second Time

Now Jesus was very tired, and he fell a **second** time.



Pause

Think of how exhausted Jesus felt.

What would have made this moment more bearable?

Can I make someone's burden lighter in some way?

Prayer

Teacher: We adore you, O Christ and we praise you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

✝ Eighth Station

Jesus Meets Some Women

Some women were standing along the street. They were friends of Jesus and loved him very much.



Pause

How does it feel to watch, someone we love suffer?

Think of someone we love who is hurting at this time and speak to Jesus about them.

Prayer

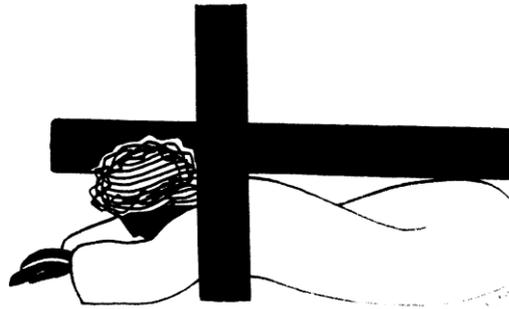
Teacher: We adore you, O Christ and we praise you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

✚ Ninth Station

Jesus Falls A third Time

Jesus could hardly walk any further and fell a **third** time.



Pause

We can imagine that Jesus felt unable to carry on any more.

Think of a time when you felt that way.

Did you ask Jesus for help?

Prayer

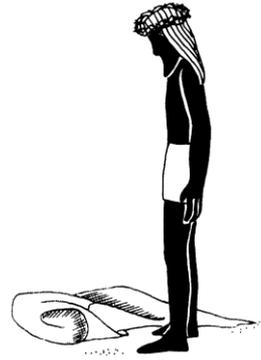
Teacher: We adore you, O Christ and we praise you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

✝ Tenth Station

Jesus Is Stripped Of His Clothes

The soldiers stripped Jesus of his outer robe.



Pause

What an unkind way to treat the King of Heaven and Earth.

Ask Jesus to strip us of any unkindness we carry in our hearts.

Prayer

Teacher: We adore you, O Christ and we praise you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

✝ Eleventh Station

Jesus Is Nailed To The Cross

The soldiers nailed Jesus to the wooden Cross.

From the Cross of Suffering, Jesus prayed to His Father:

“Father, forgive them for they know not what they are doing.”



Pause

Is there someone we need to forgive?

Can we say in the quiet of our hearts: Jesus, I forgive

Prayer

Teacher: We adore you, O Christ and we praise you.

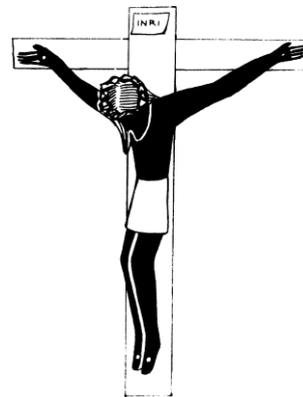
All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

✝ Twelfth Station

Jesus Dies On The Cross

Jesus died after three hours on the Cross.

This was a very sad day which we call Good Friday.



Pause

Why is Good Friday a good day for us?

Lord, you died on the Cross for love of me.

What selfishness can I let go of for love of you?

Prayer

Teacher: We adore you, O Christ and we praise you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

✝ Thirteenth Station

Jesus Is Taken Down From The Cross

The Body of Jesus is taken down from the Cross. Mary, his mother, held him in her caring arms.



Pause

Think of how painful this moment was for Mary.

Mary must have recalled holding him in her arms as a baby.

We think of all mothers who have lost their children and ask Jesus to comfort them.

Prayer

Teacher: We adore you, O Christ and we praise you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

✚ Fourteenth Station

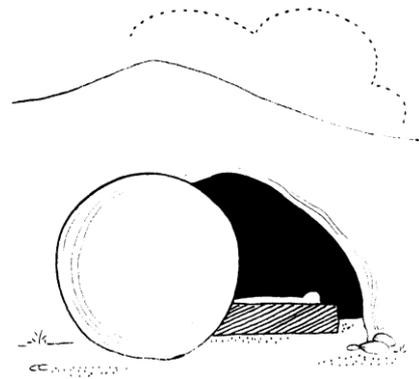
Jesus Is Buried

The Body of Jesus was washed and carefully wrapped in a clean sheet. Then he was buried.

A large stone blocked the entrance to his tomb and a soldier was told to stand guard.

Pause

What happens now?



Prayer

Teacher: We adore you, O Christ and we praise you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

✚ Fifteenth Station

Jesus Is Raised From The Dead

Life and death are the two most important events for everybody. Jesus, who died on the Cross for us, rose up again **alive** on Easter Day

Pause

We think about and give thanks for this central mystery of our Christian Faith, **that Jesus**

rose from the dead and lives among us through his Holy Spirit.



Prayer

Teacher: We adore you, O Christ and we praise you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.



(Source unknown)

May the Risen Lord bless us.

May he fill us with the wonder of his loving presence.

May we help to bring love, joy, and peace to others. Amen.

**Stations of the Cross for KS2/Secondary [taken from Lord Alton's writings]
available in Powerpoint from BRES**

Some Traditional aspirations

- Sacred Heart of Jesus I place all my trust in you. (**Month of June**)
- Lord I believe help my unbelief. (**Gospel Prayer**)
- Eternal rest grant to them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen. ..(**November**)
- Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy on me a sinner.
- **Advent:** Come Lord Jesus, Come and save us
- **Lent:** Lord have mercy on us
- **Easter:** My Lord and my God
- **Pentecost:** Come Holy Spirit or Holy Spirit of God, guide and enlighten me.

Who do you say I am?

Who is God for you? Some images of God.

Good Shepherd	Giver of all gifts	Father of mercies
Light of the World	God of surprises	Source of all being
God of Compassion	God of Love	Creator God
Ruler of nations	Merciful Saviour	
Prince of peace	Son of God	
Rising Star	God of wonders	
Breath of Life	Spirit of Love	



Key Stage 3

“Going deeper”

All cited in previous Key Stages:

Morning Offering

Eternal Father, I offer you everything I do this day – my thoughts, works, joys and sufferings. Grant that, enlivened by the Holy Spirit and united to Jesus in the Eucharist, my life this day may be of service to you and to others. And with Mary and the whole Church I pray especially for the Pope’s mission intention this month.... Amen.

Our Father

Praying the ‘Our Father’

We come into a relationship with God. We need him, we long for him – OUR FATHER

We give God our thanks and praise – HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME

We seek God’s will – YOUR KINGDOM COME- YOUR WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

We bring God our needs – GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD

We express our need of forgiveness and desire to be forgiving – FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES....

We ask for strength and protection – LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL

THE APOSTLE’S CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right
hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of
sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers before/ during tests/examinations

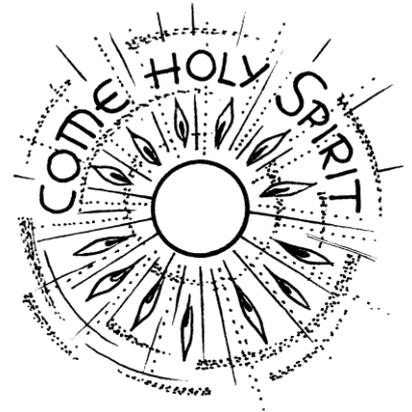
Direct, we beseech you O Lord, all our actions and carry them on by your gracious assistance
that every prayer and work of ours may begin always from you and by you be happily ended.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.
And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
And you shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray:

O God, you have taught the hearts of the faithful
By the light of the Holy Spirit
grant that, by the light of the same Spirit,
we may be always truly wise and ever rejoice
in His consolation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



A LITANY TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Your Spirit, Lord is kindness

Response: *Come to us Spirit of the Lord.*

Your Spirit, Lord is gentleness. **R.**

Your Spirit, Lord is patience. **R.**

Your Spirit, Lord is love. **R.**

Your Spirit, Lord is forgiveness. **R.**

Your Spirit, Lord is peace **R.**

Your Spirit, Lord is thanksgiving **R.**

Your Spirit, Lord wisdom. **R.**

Glory be to the Father.....

Prayer before a Test

*My God, enable me to trust in the good outcome
of the test I am about to take;
help me to contribute my own share
of optimism and confidence.*

*With your grace, my God,
I hope to crown my efforts with success.*

*Keep far from me at this moment
any presumption that it all depends
exclusively on me.*

*You are next to me, my God,
the necessary and welcome presence
in all the moments of my life.*

I will take this test, my God,

*because it is important
for my personal development.
My God, be the source of my inspiration
in my doubts and uncertainties,
supporting me with your blessing.*

Amen. <http://www.ithaca.edu/sacl/catholic/prayers/test/>

An exam Prayer

Lord, thank you that you are with me now. Your love surpasses all fear. I give you the anxiety that I feel. I surrender all my worries to you. Clear my mind, calm my heart, still my spirit, relax my being that I may always glorify you in everything I write, speak and do.

http://www.lords-prayer-words.com/prayers_before/prayer_before_exam.html

PRAYER FOR EXAMINATIONS

O God, help me at my examinations to remember the things which I have learned and studied. Help me to remember well, and to think clearly. Help me not to be so nervous and excited that I will not do myself justice, and keep me calm and clear-headed. Help me to try my hardest and to do my best. This I ask for Jesus' sake. Amen. www.carmelites.ie

PRAYER FOR SELF-ACCEPTANCE

Dear Lord, you have given us all talents and skills to use as best we can. But the sad thing is that we are dissatisfied with them. We want to be more successful, more wealthy, more popular than we are. We bemoan the fact that we are not as clever or as good-looking as other people, and we over-look the good points about ourselves. Help us Lord, to make the best use of the talents we have and help us to stop envying other people and be satisfied with ourselves as we are. Amen. www.carmelites.ie

PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS (*Prayer of Pope John XXIII*)

O Jesus, send labourers into your fields, which are awaiting holy apostles, saintly priests, heroic missionaries and dedicated brothers and sisters. Enkindle in the hearts of men and women the spark of a vocation. Grant that Christian families may desire to give your Church helpers in the work of tomorrow. Amen. – www.carmelites.ie

A STUDENT'S PRAYER

O God, it is good to be alive and here – though it's hard to wait to do all the things I want to do. You have made the world so rich, so great, so crammed full of possibilities. You have made it so beautiful. I thank you for all who have given me this chance to learn, and to get ready for life – www.carmelites.ie

PRAYER TO BE LIKE THE HOLY FAMILY

God, Our Father, in the Holy Family of Nazareth you have given us the true model of a Christian home. Grant that by following Jesus, Mary and Joseph in their love for each other and in the example of their family life we may have peace and happiness in our home and come to your home of peace and joy. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen. – www.carmelites.ie

Intercession of Saints

Saints are friends and companions that accompany us. They are models for our lives described by the German theologian, Hans Urs Von Baltasar, as 'living commentaries on the Gospel'. If children are keen on animals they may be drawn to Francis of Assisi. St Therese of Lisieux shows how the Gospel can be lived in a bourgeois middle class home and in an austere Carmelite Convent.

The Saints are our guides, intercessors and friends and it is good to have a relationship with them.

Prayer of **St Teresa of Avila**

Christ has no body now on earth but yours;

No hands but yours;

No feet but yours:

Yours are the eyes through which he looks with compassion on the world.

Yours are the feet through which he is to go about doing good.

Yours are the hands with which he is to bless all people now.

St Patrick's Breastplate

Christ be with me,

Christ be beside me,

Christ be before me,

Christ be behind me,

Christ be at my right hand,

Christ be at my left hand.

Christ be with me everywhere I go.

Christ be my friend, for ever end ever. Amen.



Prayer of **St Francis of Assisi**.

Make me and instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;
 Where there is despair, hope;
 Where there is doubt, faith;
 Where there is darkness, light;
 And where there is sadness, joy.
 O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
 To be consoled as to console;
 To be understood as to understand;
 To be loved as to love;
 For it is in giving that we receive;
 It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
 And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.



Simplified Prayer of St Francis

Lord make me a messenger of your love.
 Where people hate, help me bring love.
 Where people are sad, help me bring joy.
 Where people are hurt, let me bring comfort.
 Where people are lonely, help me bring friendship.
 Help me to be the kind of neighbour who helps everyone -
 Even those who don't help me. Amen.



St Jude

Most holy apostle, St Jude, faithful servant and friend of Jesus, the name of the traitor who delivered your beloved Master into the hands of His enemies has caused you to be forgotten by many, but the Church honours and invokes you universally as the patron of hopeless cases, of things almost despaired of. Pray for me, I am so helpless and alone. Make use I implore you, of that particular privilege given to you, to bring visible and speedy help where help is almost despaired of. Come to my assistance in this great need that I may receive the consolation and help of heaven in all my necessities, tribulations and sufferings, particularly (*here make your request*) and that I may praise God with you and all elect forever, I promise, O blessed St Jude, to be ever mindful of this great favour, to always honour you as my special and powerful patron, and to gratefully encourage devotion to you. Amen.

St Peregrine [Patron of the sick]

O great St Peregrine, you who have been called "The Mighty", "The Wonder-Worker" because of the numerous miracles which you have obtained from God for those who have had recourse to you, you who for so many years bore in your own flesh this cancerous disease that destroys the very fibre of our being, and who had recourse to the source of all grace when the power of man could do no more; you who were favoured with the vision of Jesus coming down from His Cross to heal your affliction, ask of God and Our Lady, the cure of these sick persons who we entrust to you. *(pause here and silently recall the names of the sick persons for whom you are praying)*

Aided in this way by your powerful intercession, we shall sing to God, now and for all eternity, a song of gratitude for His great goodness and mercy. Amen

St Joseph [month of March] (supplied by St Joseph's Primary School, Canvey Island)

St Joseph, chosen by God to be the husband of Mary, the protector of the Holy Family, the guardian of the Church, protect all families in their work and recreation, and guard us on our journey through life. Amen.

St Thomas More (supplied from St Thomas More Secondary School, Westcliff on Sea)

O Lord, give us a mind that is humble, quiet, peaceable, patient and charitable, and a taste of your Holy spirit in all our thoughts, words, and deeds. O Lord, give us a lively faith, a firm hope, a fervent charity, a love of you. Take from us all lukewarmness in meditation and all dullness in prayer. Give us fervour and delight in thinking of you, your grace, and your tender compassion toward us. Give us, good Lord, the grace to work for the things we pray for. Amen

St Thomas Aquinas

Grant me, O Lord my God, a mind to know you, a heart to seek you, wisdom to find you, conduct pleasing to you, faithful perseverance in waiting for you, and a hope of finally embracing you. Amen

Bl. John Henry Newman

Lord support us all day long, 'til the shades lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then in his mercy may he give us a safe lodging, and a holy rest and peace at the last.

St Ignatius of Loyola

Teach us, good Lord, to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labour and not to ask for any reward, save that of knowing that we do your will. Amen.

St Richard of Chichester

Most Merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother, may we know you more clearly, love you more dearly and follow you more nearly day by day. Amen.

St Antony of Padua (for lost items)

St. Anthony, perfect imitator of Jesus, who received from God the special power of restoring lost things, grant that I may find (*name the lost item*) which has been lost.

At least restore to me peace and tranquillity of mind, the loss of which has afflicted me even more than my material loss. To this favour, I ask another of you: that I may always remain in possession of the true good that is God. Let me rather lose all things than lose God, my supreme good. Let me never suffer the loss of my greatest treasure, eternal life with God. Amen

St Angela Merici [prayed at Brentwood Ursuline High School]

Gracious God, let us remain in harmony, united together, all of one heart and one will. Let us be bound to one another by the bond of love, respecting each other, caring for each other and bearing with each other in Jesus Christ. For if we try to be like this, without doubt, you Lord, will be in our midst. Amen.

"The best prayer is to rest in the goodness of God" Bl. Julian of Norwich

MEDITATION



Christian Meditation is part of the ancient but on-going contemplative prayer.

When we are talking about teaching children as young as 6-7 to meditate we are teaching them how to seek God and open themselves to his love and his plans.

Meditation is to help me to meet the living God hence it has many forms. It needs some preparation some stilling, quietening so that I am aware of myself and aware of God. This is prayer. Therefore relaxing, breathing, exercising, lying on the floor can indeed be **a preparation** for prayer if it calms me, draws me together, the image of somebody praying and trying to meditate **is a crab with its claws down into its body, or octopus** with legs curled up. It is for this stillness, this greater calm that I can look at God and find a bridge – the bridge can be a **scene in Gospel** a **phrase in Scripture** or something that allows me to look into God.

It is then that I can begin to think about God and me or to think about me and God and as I begin to think about God and me **and me and God** I am already in the **process of meditation.**

How do we meditate?

We need to experience meditation to start to understand it. The recommended time for children is one minute per year of chronological age.

- If you find it comfortable remove your shoes. (This grounds you)
- Take a comfortable, upright seating position. Place your hands on your lap. Silently repeat a single word/mantra e.g. **“Jesus I love you”**. or **“Do not be afraid”**.
- ‘Maranatha’ is an Aramaic word from the language Jesus spoke. It means ‘Come Lord’. Maranatha can be found in the Bible – it concludes 1 Corinthians and ends the Book of Revelation.
- Close your eyes. Sit relaxed but alert.
- Find your inner room, your heart, and let God be with you. Silently say your mantra.
- Listen to the mantra as you say it, gently and continuously. If distractions come, gently return to your mantra.

Year Group	Mantra	Recommended time for Meditation
Reception	Jesus I love you	2 minutes
Year 1	“	3 minutes
Year 2	“	4 minutes
Year 3	“	5 minutes

Year 4	“	6 minutes
Year 5	“	7 minutes
Year 6	“	10 minutes

The invocation of the holy name of Jesus is the simplest way of praying always.

(Catechism of the Catholic Church,#2668)

Some Scriptural Mantras

Ps. 46:10	“Be still and know that I am God”
Luke 5:27	“Follow me”
Luke 4:41	“You are the Son of God”
Luke 4:25	“Listen to me”
Matt 28:9	“Peace be with you”
Matt 28:10	“Do not be afraid”
Matt 11:29	“I am gentle and humble in spirit”
Matt 11:28	“Come to me”
Matt 10:12	“Peace be with you”
Matt 9:9	“Follow me”
Matt 8:25	“Save us, Lord”
Matt 6:9	“May your name be holy”
Matt 6:31	“Do not worry”
Matt 7:	“Do not judge”
Matt 5:	“Love your enemies”
Jn.14:6	“I am the way the truth and the life”
Jn.13:34	“Love one another”
Jn. 10:11	“I am the good shepherd”
Jn.20:28	“My Lord and my God”

“Jesus tells us to become simple, to become childlike. Meditation is the way of rediscovering our innate, childlike sense of wonder: Christian prayer is a state of innocence... The first thing you must learn when you set out on the pilgrimage of meditation is to listen to the message with the simplicity of a child.”

(John Main, The Way of Unknowing, p.38)

Key Resource: Teaching Children to Meditate, Kathy Day & Ernie Christie

“Interior silence, the inner stillness to which meditation leads, is where the spirit secretly anoints the soul and heals our deepest wounds” St John of the Cross

Prayer for Stillness

God of stillness and creative action, help us to find space for quietness today that we may live creatively, discover the inner meaning of silence, and learn the wisdom that heals the world. Send peace and joy to each quiet place, to all who are waiting and listening. May your still small voice be heard through Christ, in the love of the Spirit. Amen.

**“Prayer gives joy to the spirit,
peace to the heart.
I speak of prayer, not words.
It is the longing for God,
love too deep for words.”**

St John Chrysostom

LECTIO DIVINA

“*Lectio Divina*” a Latin term meaning “divine reading” describes a way of praying Scripture. It was introduced in the 12th Century by a Carthusian monk called Guigo II (d.c.a. 1180) to help young people who joined the Order to pray Scripture. It follows 4 stages or 4 stepping stones:

- First stage *Lectio* (reading)
- Second stage *Meditatio* (reflection)
- Third stage *Oratio* (response)
- Fourth stage *Contemplatio* (rest)

The following has been developed for individual group or class context:

LECTIO DIVINA - “Divine Reading”



1. Reading

Read the text and ask, what is going on?

Details? Actions?

2. Reflection

What does it mean for us?

Read the text again. What phrase do you like in the text and why? What word attracts you? How does the text speak to you in the various places and situations you find yourself?

3. Response

Make some prayers.

Read the text again

We have heard God’s word and tries to see what it means. We can talk to Jesus about his message. It can be a prayer you know or one you make up.

4. Rest

Enjoy the text.

Read the text again.

Pause - a minute or two of silence with the text. Invite pupils to take away a few words from this time of reflection,

prayer or meditation as a message for today.

A Concluding Prayer

**“There is nothing more beautiful than to be surprised by the Gospel,
by the encounter with Christ.”** *Benedict XVI*

Key Resource: With the Word of God: Lectio Divina a guide for school, home and parish.

“If prayer and the Word of God do not nourish our spiritual life, we run the risk being suffocated by the many cares and concerns of daily existence.

Prayer makes us see reality with new eyes and helps us to find our way in the midst of adversity.”

Pope Benedict XVI (Papal Audience, 25th April, 2012)

PRAYERS OF THE MASS

The Order of Mass

The Introductory Rites

The Introductory Rites help the faithful come together as one, establish communion and prepare themselves to listen to the Word of God and to celebrate the Eucharist worthily.

All stand. The Priest approaches the altar with the ministers and venerates it while the Entrance Song is sung.

Sign of the Cross

All make the Sign of the Cross as the Priest says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Or:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Or:

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

Penitential Act

The Priest invites the faithful to the Penitential Act.

Then one of the Penitential Acts follows:

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,

and, striking their breast, they say:

through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

For we have sinned against you.

Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

And grant us your salvation.

You were sent to heal the contrite of heart:

Lord, have mercy. Or: Kyrie, eleison.

Lord, have mercy. Or: Kyrie, eleison.

You came to call sinners:

Christ, have mercy. Or: Christe, eleison.

Christ, have mercy. Or: Christe, eleison.

You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us:

Lord, have mercy. Or: Kyrie, eleison.

Lord, have mercy. Or: Kyrie, eleison.

The absolution by the Priest follows:

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

Amen.

The Kyrie, eleison (Lord, have mercy) may follow.

Lord, have mercy. Or: Kyrie, eleison.

Lord, have mercy. Or: Kyrie, eleison.

Christ, have mercy. Or: Christe, eleison.

Christ, have mercy. Or: Christe, eleison.

Lord, have mercy. Or: Kyrie, eleison.

Lord, have mercy. Or: Kyrie, eleison.

The Gloria

When indicated this hymn is either sung or said:

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.

The Communion Rite

The Lord's Prayer all stand

At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil...and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.

Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles...Who live and reign for ever and ever.

Amen.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And with your spirit.

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

All offer one another the customary sign of peace.

Breaking of the Bread

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. **Lamb of God, you take away the sins** of the world, have mercy on us. **Lamb of God, you take away the sins** of the world, grant us peace.

Invitation to Communion all kneel

After his private prayers of preparation the Priest genuflects, takes the host and, holding it slightly raised above the paten or above the chalice says aloud:

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion

The communicants come forward in reverent procession, and make a preparatory act of reverence by bowing their head in honour of Christ's presence in the Sacrament.

The Body (Blood) of Christ.

Amen.

After the distribution of Communion, if appropriate, a sacred silence may be observed for a while, or a psalm or other canticle of praise or a hymn may be sung.

Prayer after Communion all stand

Let us pray.

All pray in silence. Then the Priest says the Prayer after Communion, at the end of which the people acclaim:

Amen.

The Concluding Rites

The Concluding Rites send the people forth to put into effect in their lives what they have received.

Blessing

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Dismissal

Then the Deacon, or the Priest says:

Go forth, the Mass is ended. Or:

Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord. Or:

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life. Or:

Go in peace.

Thanks be to God.

www.liturgyoffice.org.uk

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord Jesus, I love and adore you,
You're a special friend to me.
Welcome, Lord Jesus, O welcome!
Thank you for coming to me.

Thank you, Lord Jesus, O thank you
For giving yourself to me.
Make me strong to show your love
Wherever I may be.



I'm ready now, Lord Jesus,
To show how much I care.
I'm ready now to give your love
At home and everywhere.

Prayer of St Thomas: "My Lord and my God".

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

THE DIVINE PRAISES

Blessed be God.
Blessed be his holy name.
Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true man.
Blessed be the name of Jesus.
Blessed be his most Sacred Heart.
Blessed be his most Precious Blood.
Blessed be Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.
Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.
Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy.
Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception.
Blessed be her glorious Assumption.
Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.
Blessed be St Joseph, her most chaste spouse.
Blessed be God in his angels and in his saints.

Morning Prayer

Music

Ant. O Lord, you are my rock

Psalm 121

If I look to the mountains,
will they come to my aid?
My help is the Lord,
who made earth and the heavens.

May God, ever wakeful,
keep you from stumbling;
the guardian of Israel
neither rests nor sleeps.

God shields you,
a protector by your side.
The sun shall not harm you by day
nor the moon at night.

God shelters you from evil,
securing your life.
God watches over you near and far,
now and always.

Glory be ...

Ant. O Lord, you are my rock



Scripture Reading *Matt 16 13:16*

Jesus went to the territory near the town of Caesarea Philippi, where he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

"Some say John the Baptist," they answered. "Others say Elijah, while others say Jeremiah or some other prophet."

"What about you?" he asked them. "Who do you say I am?"

Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

Intercessions

We turn to our heavenly Father and give thanks for the gift of this day as we pray.

We pray for our Church particularly Pope Benedict

R/. Jesus you are our teacher

We pray for our Bishop, Thomas

R/. Jesus you are our teacher

We pray for our school family

R/. Jesus you are our teacher

We pray for our family and friends

R/. Jesus you are our teacher

Pause [we pray for the special intentions we carry in our hearts today]

With Jesus our teacher we pray the prayer he taught us: **Our Father**

Prayer

God of wonder bless us this day and help us to open our eyes to your presence in the faces of all whom we meet in our school and in our family. Amen

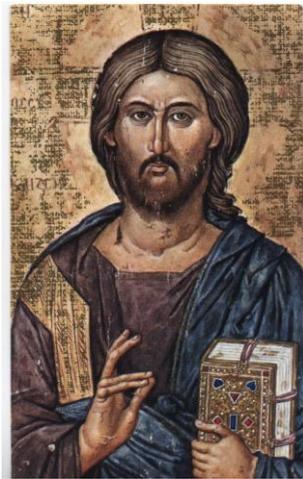
Blessing

May Jesus our friend bless us. May his love surround us and may we take his message to all.

Praying with ICONS

“Give me an icon and a candle and I will teach children to be contemplative”

Cardinal Basil Hume



Icons are windows
on to eternity.

Before an Icon

The unbeliever is challenged
The intellectual is lost for words
The theologian feels small
The artist's heart is filled with joy
The contemplative finds fresh inspiration
Those who are distressed find peace
Those who thought they were strong are disarmed
The wounded find healing
The fainthearted find confidence
The thirsty are refreshed
The poor listen and understand
The child throws wide its arms, and smiles. *Anon*

Praying with Icons

An icon is a "meeting place" between the holy person (depicted) and the person. When an iconographer creates an icon they are said to "write an icon", not paint it. This is because the creating of icons is a prayerful exercise in humility before God.

Icons are highly symbolic using shapes, colours and forms to symbolise different spiritual realities. Eyes tend to dominate iconic subjects. The best iconographers are not artists but saints.

Praying with icons is an ancient prayer practice that involves keeping our eyes wide open, allowing into our heart what the image visually communicates. We focus not on what is seen in the icon, but rather what is seen through it- the love of God. Icons lift up our minds from earthly things to heavenly. They are not simply art but a way into contemplative prayer and can be one way to allow God speak to us. They are a very real means of connecting us with God and his love.

Praying with icons is a form of prayer without words with a focus of being in God's presence, rather than, performing in God's presence. Icons are doorways into stillness, into closeness with God and have a way of teaching the heart spiritual truths that the mind cannot. We are naturally attracted to a person's eyes, so this helps focus our heart's connection with Christ or other holy person.

We need to take time to gaze at the icon and allow our sense of sight as well as the longings of our heart to interact with whatever the icon presents in a particular moment.

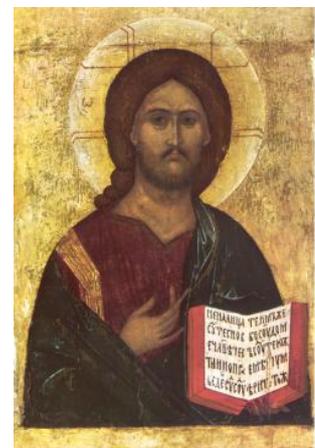
Fr Simon Ckuj

1. Begin prayer (you may light a candle near Icon as a flame is a metaphor for prayer inviting us into the presence of God).

2. Look or gaze at the Icon with quiet attention

3. Speak to God in our own words

4. Listen- let God speak to us



ASSEMBLIES

Practical guidance for assembly preparation

Assemblies require careful planning if they are to be meaningful events. We cannot, however, ensure that these occasions will be religious experiences, that is the work of the Holy Spirit, but we can create the conditions and bring children to the threshold of worship.

TEN TIPS:

1. Favour a holistic approach (cross-curricular, and take account of the cultural richness of participants).
2. Decide on the appropriate strategies to present the assembly; prepare the venue creating a sense of occasion.
3. What will the focus be: artefact, candle, drape, poster, art display, symbol etc?
4. Maximise pupil involvement and ensure staff presence and participation.
5. Content should be Scripture based, to ensure good doctrine and sound teaching (use a translation appropriate for participants).
6. Include some intercessions that reflect current situations, the reality of pupils' lives. Such prayers can be educational in teaching us how to pray in a way that fosters extended love of neighbour.
7. Use various forms of prayer: formal, personal, reflective, liturgical.
8. Choose hymns that are God-centred and balance the participative and reflective.
9. Build into assembly a quiet moment/silence to allow God to speak, teach, draw and love us. It is a time as Cardinal Hume cites when two silences meet: the silence of God and the silence of the individual.
10. The assembly should last ten to twelve minutes.



The Seasons of the Church's Year

The Church's liturgical year is divided up into times and seasons and each has a particular focus. These different times celebrate different aspects of the life of Christ and our salvation.

The Season of Advent: The Church's year begins during the month of November with the Season of Advent. This is a time of preparation for the celebration of the Lord's birth at Christmas. It covers the four Sundays before Christmas Day and all the weekdays between the first Sunday of Advent and Christmas Day, therefore it can vary in length from year to year. In the Church, the priest wears purple vestments which signify that we are preparing for a great event.

The Christmas Season: The First Mass of Christmas marks the end of Advent and beginning of the joyous Christmas Season when we celebrate the Mystery of the Incarnation, the moment when God took human flesh and was born of the Virgin Mary. The first Sunday after Christmas Day is set aside for the celebration of the Holy Family. January 6 is the Solemnity of the Epiphany when our Saviour was made known to the world at the visit of the three wise men. The Sunday after the Epiphany celebrates the Baptism of the Lord and also marks the close of the Christmas Season. This time of particular celebration, therefore, goes into the month of January and can, again, vary in length. In the Church, the priest wears white vestments which signify rejoicing and resurrection.

The Season of Lent: The Season of Lent is one of intense preparation for the death and Resurrection of our Lord. It is a time of conversion from sin to the values of the Gospel. The season a period of forty days (not including Sundays) which begins with Ash Wednesday, so called because on this day ashes are blessed and distributed to the faithful. This custom goes back to Old Testament times when the people would lay aside their expensive garments and instead put on sackcloth and ashes to symbolise their atonement for sin or in times of great intercession before God. From Ash Wednesday, the Season of Lent covers the next six Sundays - the last being Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday) which marks the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem - and the first three days of Holy Week. The season is forty days because Christ himself spent forty days in the wilderness fasting and praying, and the Jewish spent forty years

wandering in the desert when they fled from Egypt. The theme of this season is one of reconciliation with God, of turning away from sin and being faithful to the Gospel. The faithful are asked to do something in particular during this season to help make them more aware of the great gift that Christ gave us by dying for our sins. They may decide to give up something for Lent - some luxury they enjoy such as sweets, etc. - or they may decide to take up something such as visiting the Church every day or donating time or money to a charity, etc. Ash Wednesday is also a day of fast (eating less than usual to remind us of the poor and those who go without food) and abstinence (meat is not consumed on this day). In the Church, the priest wears purple vestments to signify repentance.

The Easter Triduum: This very short time begins immediately after Lent ends on the Wednesday of Holy Week. The first day is **Holy Thursday** which commemorates the Last Supper. This commemoration takes place in the evening so as to coincide as closely as possible with the time when Christ celebrated the Passover Feast with his disciples in the upper room. This is also the night when the Eucharist was Instituted by our Lord - during this Passover Feast he took bread and wine and gave it to his disciples as his body and blood with the instruction that we should do this again in his memory. After the Passover Feast, Christ went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray and it was here that he was arrested. This is symbolised in the Church by the emptying of the tabernacles and stripping the altars bare, and they shall remain in this way until the Resurrection on Holy Saturday night. On Holy Thursday night the priest wears white vestments.

The second day is **Good Friday** and is a particularly sombre day and one of great meditation and prayer because it is the day on which Christ was crucified for us. The priest wears red vestments symbolising the blood that was shed for us. During the afternoon there is a celebration of the Lord's Passion which recounts his trial and death. During the service a cross is carried in procession and then venerated by the faithful as it symbolises our instrument of death and also the instrument of our salvation. The Eucharist is not celebrated today though Holy Communion is given to the faithful.

The third day is **Holy Saturday** during which there are no celebrations of the Eucharist and Holy Communion is not given in Church. It is a day of reflection and

prayer. In the evening time and preferably closer to midnight, the Easter Vigil is celebrated.

This triumphant ceremony celebrates the fact that Christ has risen from the death and has destroyed the power of sin and death. The priest wears white or gold vestments to signify this. The ceremony begins with the lighting of the Easter Fire and the procession with candles carried by the faithful. The readings trace the history of the people of Israel from creation, through Exodus, and up to the time of Christ. As the Israelites were freed from slavery in Egypt with the Passover lamb, so we are freed from slavery to sin with the Paschal Lamb – Jesus Christ. During the celebration, the baptised renew their baptismal promises.

The Easter Season: The Easter Season commences with the celebration of the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night and continues until the Solemnity of Pentecost which is fifty days later. It is a time of particular joy and celebration in the Church and throughout the season the priest wears white vestments. On the Solemnity of Pentecost however, he wears red vestments which also signify the Holy Spirit, which was given to the disciples on that day.

Ordinary Time: The remaining thirty-four weeks of the year are called “Ordinary Time” and throughout this time the Church celebrates the life of Christ and the salvation he won for us. The season is not celebrated in the same way as the other seasons though that does not mean it is any less important than the other seasons. Ordinary time begins the day after the Baptism of the Lord and continues until Ash Wednesday. It then resumes the day after Pentecost and continues until the day before the First Sunday of Advent. The final Sunday of Ordinary time is of particular solemnity because it celebrates Jesus Christ as universal King.

Throughout the year there are also other celebrations which take place. These celebrate the lives of the saints which are set before the faithful as examples of Christian living. Some of the saints, such as the apostles, are celebrated throughout the Church, while others are only celebrated locally. There are also other solemnities of our Lord and of the Blessed Virgin.

WEBSITES

www.hundredprayers.org.uk

www.sacredspace.ie

www.carmelites.ie

www.mcrimmons.com

www.stpaulsmedia.co.uk

www.loyolapress.co.uk

www.liturgyoffice.org.uk

www.vatican.

www.veritas.

www.catholicfaith.org.uk

www.prayasyougo.org

www.nottingham-diocesan-centre

(Angelus Project Primary & Secondary)

www.prayingechday.org

www.assemblies.org.uk

www.barnabasinschools.org.

www.cafod.org

www.childschapel.org

www.catholicdoors.com

www.drawingsofjesus.com

www.4gatherings.com

www.comepraytherosary.org

www.ebible.com

Resources :

Assemblies

Assemblies Vol. 1 Liturgical and School Occasions [McCrimmon 01702 218956]

Assemblies Vol. 2 Feasts of Mary and The Saints [McCrimmon 01702 218956]

St Paul: Teacher, Pupil, Lover [St Pauls 0207 828 5582]

Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina: Home, School and Parish [McCrimmon 01702 218956]

Masses

Masses with Young People [McCrimmon 01702 218956]

Meditation

Teaching Children to Meditate by E. Christie & C Day.

Icons

Available from St Pauls [0207 828 5582]

APPENDICES:

1. Educators' Prayer

Jesus, Teacher
Who kindled the light of truth
In the hearts of all
You have chosen us for the mission
Of teaching others
Even as You taught,
And have given to us,
This community of educators,
The ministry of celebrating life
And of consecrating the earth,
Give us new hearts:
Open, understanding, committed
To all that is true, good, lovable;
Make us docile – to learn to serve
Even from those we seek to serve.
Infuse in us the spirit of collaboration
To enable us graciously to give
Even as we gratefully receive.
Pour forth your spirit into this,
Your community of educators,
So that our zeal of our
Personal commitment to you
And to the ministry of teaching
Be rekindled in our hearts.
Praise and thanks to You, Lord Jesus, Master
For calling us to be educators
And for all others who teach - In Your Name. Amen.

2. A Teacher's Prayer

I want to *teach* my students more than lessons in a book,
I want to *teach* them deeper things that people overlook.
The value of a rose in bloom, its use and beauty too,
A sense of curiosity to discover what is true,
How to think and how to choose the right above the wrong,
How to live and learn each day and grow up to be strong,
To *teach* them always how to gain in wisdom and in grace,
So they will someday make the world a brighter, better place.
Lord, let me be a friend and guide to give these minds a start
Upon their way down life's long road,
Then I'll have done my part.

Jill Wolf.

3. Prayer for Artists

Bless the creators, O God of creation,
who by their gifts make the world
a more joyful and beautiful realm.
Through their labours
they teach us to see more clearly
the truth around us.
In their inspiration
they call forth wonder and awe
in our own living.
In their hope and vision
they remind us
that life is holy.
Bless all who create in your image,
O God of creation.
Pour your Spirit upon them
that their hearts may sing
and their works be fulfilling.
Amen.

4. Prayer for the Year of Faith

Eternal God, everlasting Father,
we lift to you adoring love and praise
for the gift of faith
by which we open ourselves
to the fiery Love of your Spirit,
poured out through the pierced
Heart of your Son, Jesus Christ.
Stir up that faith anew in us,
O Father!
Deepen our trust,
illumine our minds,
enkindle our hearts
and make worthy servants
of the reconciliation
Christ won for us,
that we may come to know
the peace of the Kingdom
where you live forever and ever.
Amen.



This logo for the Year of Faith displays the image of a ship, symbolizing the Church. The mast of the vessel is a cross with full-blown sails which form the monogram of Christ (IHS) and in the background is a sun representing the Eucharist.

5. Staff Meeting Prayer

BEFORE MEETING

We begin in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

St Paul teaches that the Christian Community is made up of people with different gifts – as we give thanks for the individual gifts of all of us here we listen to St Paul: *1 Cor.12:20-22,25-27.*

As it is, there are many parts but one body. So then, the eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" Nor can the head say to the feet "Well, I don't need you!" On the contrary, we cannot do without the parts of the body that seem to be weaker.

And so there is no division in the body, but all its different parts have the same concern to one another. If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it; if one part is praised, all the other parts share its happiness. All of you are Christ's body, and each one is a part of it.

We invite the Holy Spirit to come upon our meeting as we say:

"Come Holy Spirit fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created."



6. AFTER MEETING

As we bring our meeting to a close we remember our frailty and the encouragement that St Paul gave to the Colossians – an ideal for our school.

You are the people of God; he loved you and chose you for his own. So then, you must clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Be tolerant with one another and forgive one another whenever any of you has a complaint against someone else. You must forgive one another just as the Lord has forgiven you.

And to all these qualities add love, which binds all things together in perfect unity. The peace that Christ gives is to guide you in the decisions you make; for it is to this peace that God has called you together in the one body. And be thankful.

(Col. 3:12-15)

And so we sum up our deliberations and commit them to God as we say together.

Our Father...

7. Prayer before Governor/Interview Meetings

We stand before you, *HOLY SPIRIT*
conscious of our sinfulness,
but aware that we gather in your name.

Come to us, remain with us,
and enlighten our hearts.

Give us light and strength to know your will,
to make it our own,
and to live it in our lives.

Guide us by your wisdom,
support us by your power, for you are God,
sharing glory of Father and Son.

You desire justice for all:
enable us to uphold the rights of others;
do not allow us to be misled by ignorance
or corrupted by fear or favour.

Unite us to yourself in the bond of love
and keep us faithful to all that is true.

As we gather in your name
may we temper justice with love,
so that all our decisions may be pleasing to you,
and earn the reward
promised to good and faithful servants.

You live and reign with the Father and the Son,
one God, forever and ever. Amen

(Prayer used at Vat II)

8. TEACHING CHILDREN TO PRAY

Why Pray?

We pray to **know** God – “The surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus” (Phil.3:8).

We pray that we may meet the Living God. We pray that we may know ourselves.

Through **prayer** children are enabled to come to know our Trinitarian God who is:

Our Father and Creator

Our Saviour and Brother

Our Friend and Guide.

We are children of the Father

Brothers and Sisters of the Son

Temples of the Holy Spirit.

At the **Heart** of prayer is **Relationship**. There is no true Christian prayer unless we are seeking the Christian God who is FATHER, SON and HOLY SPIRIT.

To teach children how to pray is, Cardinal Hume reminded teachers, ‘**profoundly educational**’.

Prayer is not a discipline to be taught but rather a journey of accompanying children.

Children are natural and spontaneous pray-ers. They have an innate sense of awe and wonder and beauty. For them “the world is ablaze with the glory of God”.

Language in Prayer

It is important to use language which relates to the child’s actual experience rather than a language which relates to formal religious experience.

Remember a call to pray must not be coded – e.g. Children join your hands for prayer.

This must not be a call to discipline and order.

Prayer Focus

In classrooms it is expected that there is a **PRAYER FOCUS** with a suitable artefact, e.g.

Crucifix/Statue. This may change to reflect the Liturgical Year, or, the current Topic being taught.

Simplicity – Start with something that draws everyone together e.g. Greeting – Sign of the Cross – Hymn – Prayer.

Atmosphere – Create an atmosphere conducive to prayer – Focus – Music.

Various Experiences

Include a variety of opportunities and approaches, and be alert to experiences of children.

Pray With:

We pray *with* children and not *at* them.

Enabling children to pray demands wholehearted involvement with them not in teacher/pupil way but in a relationship of learning, and discovering together.

Widen Our Gaze

Through prayer we look to the wider needs of those we love and the needs of our Church and our world. Our hearts are enlarged and we move from selfishness to selflessness.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember when considering praying with children is to:

“Take off your shoes, for the place on which you stand is Holy ground

‘Pray always – (1 Thess 5:17)



GOD AND PRAYER



A man who afterwards became a prominent Christian said that his idea of God was revolutionised when, as a little boy, he was taken to visit an old lady. The old lady pointed out to him a text on her wall – ‘Thou, God, seest me’ – and she said to him, ‘You watch those words. They do not mean God is always watching you to see what you are doing wrong, they mean he loves you so much that he cannot take his eyes off you’.

A very precious way to pray is just through silence. No thoughts or words, just wanting to be silent in the presence of God. Perhaps one of the high points in prayer is where two silences meet: God’s silence and our silence. No need for thoughts – and words get in the way.

Cardinal Basil Hume

