

Spirit of the Season

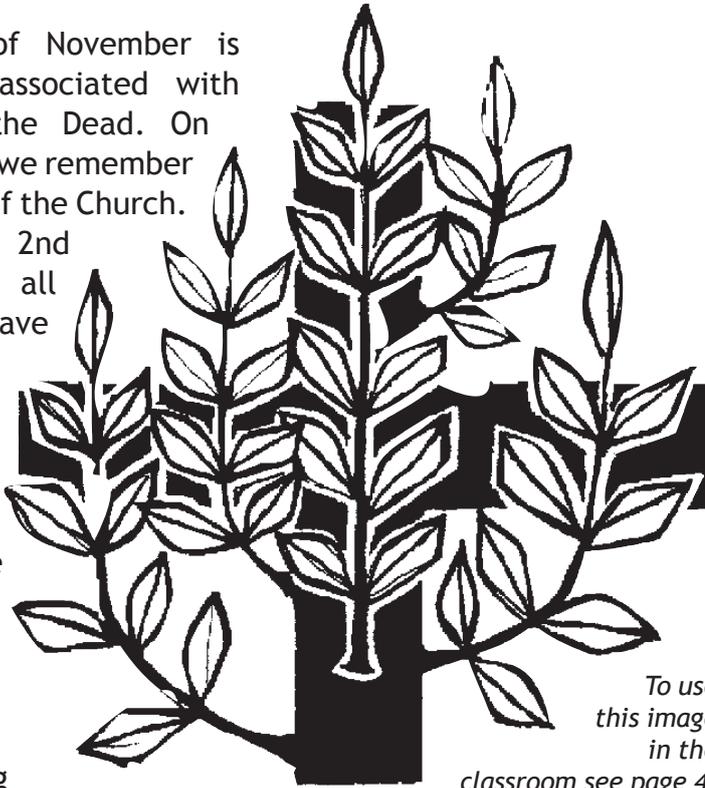
Autumn 2003

www.liturgyoffice.org.uk

Gone before us

The month of November is traditionally associated with prayers for the Dead. On November 1st we remember all the saints of the Church. On November 2nd we pray for all those who have died. But all through the month the Church prays that the dead will be safe with God.

Finding time this month for simple rituals such as writing out the names of dead members of our families, praying and lighting a candle for them, singing the Song of Farewell (see page 2), helps us remember the dead and pray for them. It also helps us gain a sense of who we ourselves are – who 'our people' are, what is the shape and history of our family.



To use this image in the classroom see page 4.

Often people find it difficult to talk with children about death, especially about the death of people close to them. Bringing the subject to prayer and worship during this month can provide a starting point for dealing with the subject at other times in the year.

Welcome into your kingdom our departed brothers and sisters,



and all who have left this world in your friendship.

There we hope to share in your glory when every tear will be wiped away.

Insert for Eucharistic Prayer III at Masses for the Dead

The main seasons of the Church's year find their focus in different aspects of the life of Jesus. Each year the seasons draw us into contemplation of Jesus' conception and birth (Advent and Christmas); his ministry (Ordinary Time); and the events of his passion, death and resurrection (Lent and Easter). These different themes will be explored on this page throughout the coming school year. Sharing in his life in this way helps us to understand how he shares in ours.

Kyrie



Meaning: Lord

From: This is a Greek word. Following the spread of the Christian Faith outside the borders of the Holy Land, Greek was the next most common language besides Latin. Using this word is a link with the Orthodox Church.

Usage: Often used in the Penitential Rite, as part of the Introductory Rites of the Mass, as *Kyrie, eleison; Christe, eleison*: Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.

Word colour: Violet

Singing: Russian Kyrie (*Laudate*), Kyrie I (*Taizé*) either as a Penitential Rite or as a response to prayers.



During World War II the House of Commons was bombed. As parliamentarians started to consider how it was to be rebuilt Winston Churchill insisted it retained its traditional shape, two sets of benches facing each other. The

form suited the confrontational style which had become a traditional feature of British politics. To change the shape of the building would be to change how people behaved.

Over recent years the shape of many of our churches and the layout of their furnishings has changed because of the recognition that what they were inviting people to do was not true to what is the authentic heart of the liturgy. At Mass rather than the priest 'doing things' and the people looking on more or less as spectators, there is the need to find alternative arrangements of space which gives the sense that in truth the liturgy is something that the whole gathered assembly is involved in celebrating.

- *Do you arrange your classroom differently for different lessons?*
- *When you gather for liturgy in school do you try different arrangements?*
- *When might you have a different arrangement?*

The psalms offer us a whole resource for prayer which can be used in any situation. In them the psalmist addresses God with a whole range of emotional responses to life experiences: from anger to joy; petition to thanksgiving. They were the prayers that Jesus himself used. In using the psalms we learn what prayer is about; our honest response before to God to our life experience – joy and anger; petition and thanksgiving. To pray the psalms is to pray with Jesus and the Church. They can be prayed by just using a short phrase; by singing part of the psalm or in many other ways which we will explore this year.



Psalm 26 (27) *The Lord is my light and my help* is a psalm about trusting in God. The Taizé response can be used as a refrain to prayers or a reading of the psalms or it could accompany the lighting of candles. The verses of Chris Walker's setting of the psalm (Celtic Mass) could be sung by a small group or by the whole school.

Page 2 in 2003-4

On this page you will find through the year 4 sections. A common word we use in the liturgy that comes from an ancient language. A psalm for the season and different ways of using psalms. Some thoughts about space for liturgy and a liturgical action related to page 1.

Songs of Farewell

Towards the end of a funeral after the coffin is blessed with holy water, as a reminder of baptism, and honoured with incense the song of farewell is sung. We sing at funerals because music can help us express emotions where words alone are not enough. Though in schools, cradles of life and growth, we do not expect to encounter death; if it does happen we need to find the songs to express our common prayer. This may a song we already know or it may be something specific. *Go before us* by Bernadette Farrell (from collection of the same name) was written for a school in response to a teacher who died and speaks of Jesus, our companion, who leads us to our home in heaven.



It's my turn for assembly

So its Sunday afternoon planning over, bag packed, tv on, mind wandering through the coming week: mon, tue, wed, WED—Oh NO!—class assembly! Got to find 33 things to say...!

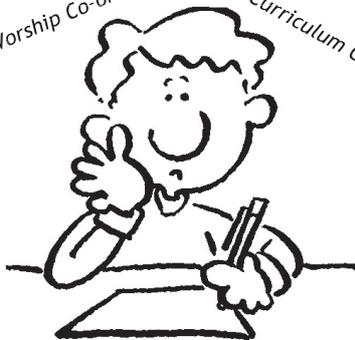
Most primary teachers are asked to take on a class led assembly a number of times a year. Many enjoy the creative experience of planning the event – but many also search quite desperately for ideas and choose to rely on 'ready made' assembly scripts.

In the next six editions of *Spirit of the Season* (one full academic year) we be defining 'Collective Worship,' presenting principles and helping teachers to prepare good acts of Collective Worship.

As this publication is accessible to educators in a wide variety of settings, we recognise that the language and practice in each place will be distinct. You'll need to read what follows with your own situation in mind.

There are two distinct co-ordinator roles in a Catholic primary school: Collective Worship Co-ordinator and RE Curriculum Co-ordinator. In some schools both roles are carried out by *one* person whereas other schools choose to allocate the responsibility to two people.

Collective Worship Co-ordinator
RE Curriculum Co-ordinator



or



Collective Worship
Co-ordinator



RE Curriculum
Co-ordinator

What happens in your school?

There are two distinct policy requirements in a Catholic primary school: Collective Worship and RE Curriculum. In some schools both policies are included within one document, whereas other schools choose to two separate policies.

What co-ordinator roles do you have in your school?

Do all members of staff know who the co-ordinators are?

Jargon Busting

Collective Worship (CW) is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is our response to God's invitation.

Assembly A gathering of people. In school terms it is an umbrella term for many activities including CW, award ceremonies, school housekeeping and special events. An assembly can include one or many of the above

Mass The celebration of the Eucharist with some or all of the school community. Ideally reserved to highlight special occasions.

Prayer is the way in which we engage in communication with God. It consists of listening, speaking, reflecting and resting. Prayer can have a variety of forms and styles, and express different things.

Liturgy It is the praise and worship of God using the language and rituals of the Church. It includes prayer, silence, word, action.

Distinctions

All liturgies also involve the praise, thanksgiving and adoration of God and are, therefore, acts of worship. However, not all worship will be liturgy and it may or may not include symbol, action and the rites of the church.

Are you clear about the distinctions?

Does your school/classroom practice allow for a variety of experiences?

In the next edition of SoS the principles of CW drawing on the *Directory for Masses with Children* (for the text visit www.liturgyoffice.org.uk),

Ministry of the Assembly

Often when preparing for a celebration of Mass, particularly with children, so much effort has to go into, for example, helping the readers prepare their reading, and the musicians and singers prepare their music. It is not surprising then sometimes we all but forget about the rest of those who have responsibility for the celebration, i.e. the whole assembly.

This back page, over the next year, will be looking at various forms of ministry at Mass. We start by looking at the ministry of the whole assembly.

This ministry is about two things. It is about our worship of God – giving thanks for his love. And it is about our ministry to each other.

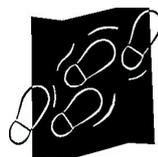
At Mass we worship God, and much that happens at Mass, happens to remind us of God's presence and God's love for us. We come together to experience his abiding presence. We hear the word that is Christ with us, talking with us, and wanting us to talk with him. We offer prayer and praise, joining with Christ's offering of himself to the Father. We receive Christ in the form of bread and wine: he gives us himself as food and drink. Again and again in the Mass we have the opportunity in word and song and in silence to offer our prayer and worship to God. This is our first ministry.

Our second is to each other. This might be called the ministry of good example – how we take part in the Mass serves as

example for others. When we see prayerfulness and friendliness in others it helps us to enter into that spirit of prayerfulness and unity which is proper to the Mass. Our second ministry – helping each other.

Coming together for prayer makes demands on us all. It's tricky knowing how to keep good discipline at Mass. Bad behaviour is going to be disruptive, but so too can be imposing 'classroom discipline'.

Pupils and teachers we may be, but first and foremost at mass we are invited to be together as worshippers. Prayer cannot be demanded of anyone, pupils or staff, it has always to be our free response. Our gift to God and our gift to each other.



Action: Find out the connections between symbols used at baptisms and funerals. White garment – pall; Easter candle; Holy Water.

HIA: Signs, Symbols

We believe that Jesus died and is risen to live a new life, for ever. Jesus has promised that when we die we shall live again, a new life, like he does.

So don't be sad about people who die... they will all live again with God.

*God's Story 2, p. 89
based on 1 Thessalonians 4.*

Never be upset or worried.



God your Father knows all your needs and will take care of you.
*God's Story 2, pg 69
based on Luke 12*

Calendar

Sunday Cycle B/Weekday Cycle II

September

14 Triumph of the Cross

November

2 All Saints

3 All Souls

9 Dedication of the Lateran Basilica/Remembrance day

23 Christ the King

30 1st Sunday of Advent

Using the **Tree of Life** image on page 1 in the classroom environment.



Make an outline of the image. Use the leaves to record the names of those who have died, have gone before us.

Another idea would be use the image to make family trees. HIA Homes & Families

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