**Beginning of Year Liturgy 2015/16**

*Please note the information in italic print acts purely as a guideline for the different parts of the liturgy. It is not intended to appear on the mass booklet. Instead, it provides a few additional ideas for the RE team and pays attention to the different needs of each year group as they embark on a new year in secondary school. In some cases the beginning of year liturgy will be a whole school assembly, in others it will be a gathering for each individual year group so please bear this in mind as you plan your liturgy.*

**Introduction**

*This is an opportunity for one person (principal, year head, student) to set the scene for the liturgy – to introduce the theme of the liturgy to the congregation as appropriate to each year group as they embark on the new school year together.*

*Some ideas for different year groups could include…*

*First Year – New beginnings and friendships*

*Second Year – Cementing life in secondary school, securing their roots*

*Third Year – Securing friendships, settling down, first experience of state exams*

*Transition Year – a chance to participate in school life in a different way*

*Fifth Year – An introduction to senior cycle*

*Sixth Year – A time to reflect on life in secondary school, thoughts on the Leaving Cert*

Reader: Name

In this space, the co-ordinating RE teacher should write a small paragraph outlining the theme of the beginning of year liturgy pertaining to the year group in question.

**Welcome**

*This is the formal welcome given by the presiding priest. Please make sure there has been some communication with the priest beforehand regarding mass theme/year group etc. It is optional whether or not teachers decide to include print in this section.*

**Opening Hymn**

Gather (Gather from the East) – Liam Lawton

**Opening Prayer**

Reader: Name

Lord Jesus, we ask for Your help as we begin this new school year. Allow us to experience Your presence in the many blessings You put before us. Open our eyes to the new challenges and exciting opportunities that this new school year brings. Open our heart and mind to new friends and new teachers. Give us a generous spirit to be enthusiastic with our studies and courage to accept new opportunities. Help us to be attentive to one another and let us experience Your presence in our new friends. Jesus, inspire us to do our best this year!

Response: Amen

**Liturgy of the Word**

**First Reading**

Reader: Name

A reading from a letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

This then is what I pray, kneeling before the Father: In the abundance of his glory may he, through his Spirit, enable your inner selves to grow strong, so that Christ may live in your hearts through faith, and then, planted in love and built on love, with all God's holy people you will have the strength to grasp the breadth and the length, the height and the depth: so that, knowing the love of Christ, which is beyond all knowledge, you may be filled with the utter fullness of God. Glory be to him whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or image; glory be to him from generation to generation in the Church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen.

This is the word of the Lord

Response: Thanks be to God

**Psalm**

Reader: Name

Response: Lord, teach me your ways.

The Lord guides us in the way we should go, and protects those who please him. If we fall we will not stay down because the Lord will help us up.

Response: Lord, teach me your ways.

Good people’s words are wise and are always fair. They keep the law of God in their heart and never depart from it.

Response: Lord, teach me your ways.

**Second Reading**

Reader: Name

Let the Children Come to Me (Luke 18:15-17)

Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them; and when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to him, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.

This is the word of the Lord

Response: Thanks be to God

**Gospel** Luke 6:27-35

A reading from the Gospel of St Luke

But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tuniceither. Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back.And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.

If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Response: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

**Homily**

**Prayer of the Faithful**

*Again, these prayers can be altered to the needs of the different school communities. Please add to these or change them as needs be to link in with the theme of your liturgy. If you are having a separate mass for each year group, this might be a nice opportunity to represent each form/tutor class within the year group. If it is a whole school mass, it might be a nice opportunity to represent each year group.*

Reader: Name

We pray that our school will always be a place of welcome, where all students, staff and parents feel valued and included. Lord hear us.

Response: Lord Graciously Hear Us

Reader: Name

We pray for all students here present, that they will fulfil their potential and become a witness to the message of Jesus. Lord hear us.

Response: Lord Graciously Hear Us

Reader: Name

We pray for all those who are sick. We also remember their family and friends and we ask God to give them strength and comfort at this time of need. Lord hear us.

Response: Lord Graciously Hear Us

Reader: Name

We pray for our teachers and all the office staff, caretakers and cleaning staff in our school who work to make our time in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ a happy one. Lord hear us.

Response: Lord Graciously Hear Us

Reader: Name

We remember all those in our school community who have lost loved ones. We pray that the Lord will comfort them in their loss. Lord hear us.

Response: Lord Graciously Hear Us

Reader: Name

We pray for all the members of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Community, especially the Religious, carers and community workers who strive to make our Community a better one. Lord hear us. Response: Lord Graciously Hear Us

**Liturgy of the Eucharist**

*Preparation of the Gifts - If there is an opportunity for each year group/form group to bring up a class symbol please do so here.*

**Offertory Hymn**

In Bread We Bring You Lord

*Name the two students presenting the bread and wine*

**Communion Hymns**

Críost Liom (Dagda)

**Communion Reflection**

Reader: Name

We give you praise, O God, for everything that is new and beautiful, for everything which holds promise and brings us joy. Bless us as we start this new year with our friends and teachers. Help us to make the most of every chance we have to start afresh. May we show love to one another and to all. May the new beginning of this school year remind us that you give us chances to start over again and again. Help us to forgive others as we receive your forgiveness. Help us to learn and to work together. Help us to listen when we should and to know the best words when we speak and when it is better not to speak. We thank you for our friends. Help us to be good friends this year. Help us to be patient with ourselves and with others. Bless our school and keep us safe. Be with us as we travel each day. Help us to be aware of your love shown to us in the people around us. Bless all those who care for us in school and at home. Help us show our care for them and to say sorry when we need to. May (our saint) protect us and help us to live as well as we can giving thanks and glory to God as they did.

**Concluding Rite**

*Prayer after Communion*

Reader: Name

O most loving Father, teach us to value our lives. Allow us to achieve our goals in life. Keep our families and friends safe. When we need guidance, show us the way. I ask you to be with us when we need understanding, as you are the only one who knows what is best. May your light shine for those who need it most. Father, keep us safe.

**Final Blessing**

**Recessional Hymn**

Go now in peace (Grainne Jordan)