**Why Liturgy?**

Liturgy provides us with opportunities to encounter a God who loves us. Good Liturgy connects life experience with the joy of the Gospel. It’s creative and can be meaningful and life giving to young people. Many do not attend mass so it might be their only experience of actively participating in church.

**The nature of Symbol**

In order to celebrate good liturgy we must understand the transformative nature of symbol. A symbol is an object that represents, stands for, or suggests an idea, visual image, belief, action, or material entity. Symbols take the form of words, sounds, gestures, or visual images and are used to convey ideas and beliefs. Symbols are at the heart of creative Liturgy........

**Symbols used in sacraments** In sacraments symbols can bring about a **change** in a person and reveal a deeper reality.

**Water** in Baptism: Symbolises new life in Christ:

*Change that happens***:** Symbolic actions and words transform the person making them a Christian.

**Annointing** with oil in Confirmation: symbol of strength hope to strengthen participant in wisdom, courage and understanding.

*Change that happens:* Receive the gift of the holy spirit

**Useful symbols**

Some symbols are useful in many liturgies. e.g Stones, leaves, feathers, Oil, Water, Soil, Flowers, candles, Material of all colours.

Symbols are used in liturgies and to decorate sacred spaces.

**A Threshold**. It can be a doorway or two trees or a created doorpost. TY, Leaving cert, Childhood to adulthood, Confirmation, Change, Graduation.

**Feathers** (get off a feather duster): air, dreams, journey, story of the geese i.e. Unity, beauty, freedom, colour, true colours.

**Stones**: Gratitude rocks, what’s weighing you down, blocking you, sin, to create a pathway at lent/ advent.

**Gifts:** Marbles/ Glass stones: childhood, gifts you’re hiding.

**Water**: forgiveness, healing, baptism, journey.

**Journey:** Boat/ lighthouse/ footprints:, being guided, God accompanying us.

**Holy Spirit/Gifts** Flames/ Candles/ tea lights/globe: Hope, light, the flame within, the Holy Spirit, God’s burning love for us.

**Love**: Hearts/ roses/ mirror/Valentines cards to self or others or from God to us; Love of God, of someone special, of oneself.

**Angels**: God’s messengers to guide and protect us, even when we’re not aware of it we are being we are being guided and protected, advent, Christmas.

**Lent** means spring

**November**: Daffodil bulbs planted in November will grow in the spring and mind students that death is not the end. It is reflected in our seasons.

**Advent**: Advent calendar; (Windows with positive quotes, challenges, justice and peace facts or challenges), waiting time in a bottle, Pregnancy and birth. Hand of God holding Baby, child. What needs to be born in me?

**Christmas**: write Christmas cards with positive Christmas quotes and give them out in a liturgy.

**November** Leaves, Dead sticks: remembrance, what is dead in me, what do I need to let go of.

**Graduation**: Dream catchers, compasses, school ties, clock for break times, rainbow, crock of Gold, butterflies, Wall of bricks, clouds.

**Transition year:** Butterflies, Jigsaws, bridge,

**Friendship bracelets**: Friendship, first year, mental health (I’ll be there for you) Identity team colours.

**Jesse tree**: advent,

**Wailing Wall**. A giant poster of a wall can be made along the idea of the wall in Jerusalem with painted bricks and the prayers of a school community can be placed on it with sticky notes over the week coming up to a special mass e.g. Opening school year or opening event and these could be brought up at the start of mass or when the last prayer of the faithful is said as peoples personal intentions are being prayed for.

**Oil**: Oil of baptism, strengthening, protection, caring for someone, nurturing someone.

**Summer**: Shells/Sand:, fun, being shaped, Footprints in the sand. Writing words in the sand. Gift.

**Why Ritual?**

 “There is no more important pastoral issue facing the catholic church in Ireland and internationally than the renewal of its ritual life” ( “Passage to Pasch” Michael Drumm p .7)

What does Pope Francis say about prayer and Ritual?

“I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day.

A Church that evangelizes must always start from prayer, from asking, like the Apostles in the Upper Room, for the fire of the Holy Spirit. Only a faithful and intense relationship with God allows us to leave our enclosures and announce the Gospel with parrhesia. (Without fear of the consequences) Without prayer our actions become empty and our proclamation soulless, it is not animated by the Spirit.

To evangelize, then, we must be open to the action of the Spirit of God, without fear of what He asks us or where He leads us. Let us entrust ourselves to Him! He enables us to live and bear witness to our faith, and enlighten the hearts of those we meet. **Evangelii Nuntiandi**

**The Nature of Ritual**

2 books used to explain Ritual “A Sacramental People” Tom Gunning and Michael Drumm and “Passage to Pasch” Michael Drumm

Arnold Van Gennep. Rites de Passage (1909) rites of separation, transition and incorporation. Victor Turner: Three-fold character of Ritual separation, liminality and reaggregation.

SEPARATION. (The space) Most important phase to get right. If the place is familiar, the ritual is familiar, the symbols are meaningless to the group then it is really hard to achieve.

“One cannot experience what happens at the threshold unless one first separates from the familiar or one journeys in some way towards the edge. Best way to leave the familiar is journey to the mountaintop, forest, wilderness. These are places of perspective and renewal. P14 Change of location, clothes, focus.”( p17)

Suggestions for school or classroom based rituals:

Remove shoes,

Enter a darkened candlelit room use bin bags to block windows and doors,

Leave the room quieten the group and go back once the desks have been stacked, candles lit incense burned.

Use a separate room to prepare the liturgy. Create a separation group, and don’t let anyone else in until they are ready, have a door guard e.g. a student who won’t let anyone in.

“Separation can be created by going to a sacred place,( e.g. Esker, Co Galway.) celebrating at a sacred time e.g. dawn and dusk. Symbolic value of light and dark (e.g. pieta house darkness into light walk.) Separation can also be created through the senses. Unfamiliar sight, sound, touch, taste or smell.” (P25 )

“To enter the ritual ambience is in some sense to separate oneself from the ordinary. They do this with the purpose of experiencing the luminal that space where awe and mystery are encountered. “A Sacramental People”

TRANSITION or liminality or the Threshold (Meaning,) songs, readings, poetry, actions e.g. crossing the threshold or symbolically moving from your place , gestures, artwork all reflecting the theme.

INCORPORATION or reaggregation (Strengthening and going back) Blessing with oil, bless each other, John O’Donaghue’s blessing. Students should bring something home with them from this stage e.g. a feather or a prayer card.

**Tips on successful Liturgy with Young People.**

Get separation right or it won’t work.

Get them to prepare and participate as much as possible. They need to own in or invest in it. They have a need to belong and feel their contribution is valuable.

Good Music: They need to be convinced of the celebration dimension of ritual and this doesn’t make sense without meaningful music. Powerpoints with Christian images put to contemporary songs, gospel music, Christian Music (Spirit Radio)

Involvement: As many as possible given a role, going back to James Fowler’s Search for Identity. At mass they don’t see young Eucharistic ministers or readers. Are young people valued and welcomed in our liturgies.

They should be encouraged to pray in their own words in some small way in every liturgy. E.g. the circle prayer. God should be presented to them as a personal friend who knows them completely. In their confusion about their identity God becomes the only constant.

Theme: Should be chosen by everyone. They should be invested in it. It should have meaning for them. Can be a quote or inspired by a story. E.g. the starfish.

Drama, dance, mime, gesture, movement or imaginative contemplation allows the message of the gospel to become real for them. It invites them to step into the shoes of another. It challenges their prejudices and broadens their horizons. According to Fowler the only way a teen’s faith will develop is if they are made to confront their prejudices and learn to think for themselves.

*“We do not bring God to the young people we work with. This would be a very condescending attitude. God is already there. What we do is create atmospheres and opportunities where young people can encounter and listen to the God that is already within them. What a privilege that is. We cannot take responsibility for what happens once we create this atmosphere. God works his magic. “ We just turn up and let God show off.” God works not just because of us but sometimes in spite of us.” L. Harrison*

**Websites:**

<http://www.irishchaplains.org/prayer> Links, newsletters, resources.

<http://education.dublindiocese.ie/category/religious-education/post-primary> Resouces for the liturgical year and a you tube channel.

[www.faithandworship.com](http://www.faithandworship.com) Resources

[www.liturgy-ireland.ie/](http://www.liturgy-ireland.ie/) Liturgical year

[www.cocorkvec.ie](http://www.cocorkvec.ie) give a role of the Chaplain

[www.cafod.org.uk/Education/Chaplains/The-liturgical-year](http://www.cafod.org.uk/Education/Chaplains/The-liturgical-year) Resources and prayers of the faithful for Sunday liturgies with simple social justice ideas.

<http://litmus.dublindiocese.ie> Dublin diocese liturgical resource centre

<http://www.schoolethos.ie> Resources on school liturgies

<http://www.pflaum.com/readings> Great for simple versions of Sunday readings.

<http://www.un.org/en/events/observances/days.shtml> A list of UN international days, handy for assemblies/ morning prayer.

[www.pray-as-you-go.org](http://www.pray-as-you-go.org) A Jesuit website that introduces us to Ignatian spirituality as a way to pray, an approach to making decisions, a point of view about God, and a practical guide to everyday life. Ignatian Spirituality sees God as actively working in the world, and aims to help us understand and identify his actions in our lives and in the world around us. There is an audio version of the Examen especially for young people.

[www.taize.fr](http://www.taize.fr) Resources from the ecumenical community in France. [www.imu.ie/index.php/mission-alive](http://www.imu.ie/index.php/mission-alive) educational resources promoting mission and missionary themes.  October is mission month and Mission Alive organizes activities for this month. [www.trocaire.org](http://www.trocaire.org) It is worth getting the resources that Trocaire produces for parishes, Primary schools and Secondary schools for school based Lenten Liturgies. [www.stcolmcilles.ie/easter-2014.html](http://www.stcolmcilles.ie/easter-2014.html) Anne Loughman as Chaplain believes in the importance of celebrating the Triduum with her students with some inspiring results.

**WHEN SHOULD WE HOLD A LITURGY?**

 

**Liturgical Year 2015**

Sunday, 30 November 2014: First Sunday of Advent

Sunday, 7 December 2014: Second Sunday of Advent

Monday 8 December 2014: The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Sunday, 14 December 2014: Third Sunday of Advent

Sunday, 21 December 2014: Fourth Sunday of Advent

Thursday, 25 December 2014: The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

Sunday, 28 December 2014: The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Thursday, 1 January 2015: Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Tuesday, 6 January 2015: The Epiphany of the Lord

Sunday, 11 January 2015: The Baptism of the Lord

Monday, 12 January 2015: First Week in Ordinary Time

Wednesday, 18 February 2015: Ash Wednesday

Sunday, 22 February 2015: First Sunday of Lent

Tuesday, 17 March 2015: St Patrick

Thursday, 19 March 2015: St Joseph

Wednesday, 25 March 2015: The Annunciation of the Lord

Sunday, 29 March 2015: Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Thursday, 2 April 2015 Holy Thursday

Friday, 3 April 2015: Good Friday

Saturday, 4 April 2015: Holy Saturday

Sunday, 5 April 2015: Easter Sunday of the Lord’s Resurrection

Sunday, 17 May 2015: The Ascension of the Lord

Sunday, 24 May 2015: Pentecost Sunday

Sunday, 1 November 2015: All Saints

Monday, 2 November 2015: The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls)

Sunday, 22 November 2015: Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

Sunday, 29 November 2015: First Sunday of Advent

**Holydays of Obligation**

All Sundays

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) – Thursday 25 December 2014

The Epiphany of the Lord –Tuesday, 6 January 2015

St Patrick –Tuesday, 17 March 2015

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary –Saturday, 15 August 2015

(All Saints –Sunday, 1 November 2015)

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary –Tuesday, 8 December 2015

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) –Friday, 25 December 2015

The Baptism of the Lord, The Ascension of the Lord, The Most Holy Trinity, The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi), Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe (Christ the King) are celebrated on Sundays.

All Saints occurs on Sunday, 1 November 2015 (replacing Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time)

**Days of Prayer**

World Day of Peace Thursday, 1 January 2015

World Day of Migrants and Refugees Sunday, 18 January 2015

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins Sunday, 18 January 2015

Catholic Schools Week begins Sunday, 25 January 2015

World Day for Consecrated Life Monday, 2 February 2015

World Day of the Sick Wednesday, 11 February 2015

Day of Prayer for Temperance Sunday, 15 February 2015

Day of Prayer for Vocations Sunday, 26 April 2015

World Communications Day Sunday, 17 May 2015

Day for Life Sunday, 4 October 2015

Mission Sunday Sunday, 18 October 2015

Prisoners’ Sunday/Restorative Justice Week begins Sunday, 15 November 2015

St Patrick’s Day (Tuesday, 17 March 2015) is a Special Day of Prayer for Emigrants

 (Sourced from [www.liturgy-ireland.ie](http://www.liturgy-ireland.ie))

**POSSIBLE SCHOOL LITURGICAL CALENDAR (2014).** (Opportunities)

September /October

Welcome to new students, teachers, staff. (Beginning of Year)

Opening of School Liturgy for staff/school/ year groups or class groups.

Celebration of Junior Certificate results – Prayer for Assembly.

September 27th St. Vincent De Paul

October 2nd Guardian Angels

October 4th St. Francis of Assisi – Care of the Earth Day/Week.

Oct 15th St. Teresa of Avila

Mission Sunday: Mission Awareness Day/Week.

November/December-

HOLY DAY Celebration of All Saints - November 1st

All Souls - November 2nd.

Liturgy for Deceased students, teachers, staff and families.

November (last Sunday) – First Sunday of Advent

Advent Reconciliation Service.

Advent Prayer Service for class or year groups.

HOLY DAY December 8th Feast of Immaculate Conception.

Advent/Christmas - Christian Action Projects such as St. Vincent de Paul

Hampers, Toys for children appeal, Kristkindle, Carol singing.

Christmas Carol Service for class or year groups.

January/February-

New Year Prayer/Reflection for Assembly

Christian Unity Week.

Catholic Schools Week.

February 1st St. Brigids Day.

Spring Prayer/Reflection for Assembly

3rd February - St. Blaise, Blessing of Throats.

14th February St. Valentine’s Day

11th February - Our Lady of Lourdes.

Ash Wednesday: Distribution of Ashes.

Lenten - Christian Action Projects such as 24 Hour Fast, Pilgrimage, Retreat

Programme, invite speakers from various organisations etc ….

Trocaire Lenten Campaign.

March/April

March 17th St Patrick.

Lenten Reconciliation Service.

Holy Week

Easter.

May

Mary- Our Lady and the Rosary

May 5th Blessed Edmund Rice

Pentecost.

Preparation for Graduation Liturgy.

Liturgy for students sitting exams.

End of school Mass/prayer service for students, teachers and staff.

[**http://www.corkandross.org**](http://www.corkandross.org)

**Other times**

On the death of a teacher/ student or friend family member of either.

A student/teacher going to have a baby..

A natural disaster/war.

Opening of a Prayer room/ new school or garden of remembrance.

School Founder’s celebration, e.g. Mary Ward week.