

## CELEBRATING THE WORK OF A PRINCIPAL/TEACHER AS THEY RETIRE

*This resource is offered as a template for those celebrating a Mass of Thanksgiving for a Principal/Teacher as they retire. Please feel free to adapt it as you see fit.*

### WORDS OF WELCOME

Today, we gather as a school community to acknowledge all that.....has contributed to Catholic education in our school over the last .....years. We are grateful for all his/her many God given gifts that has helped our school become the place of learning, that it is today. We give thanks especially for his/her ability to..... We welcome all who are present with us at our Mass of celebration and thanksgiving for ..... And as we begin our Mass we ask you to stand and sing our Opening Song:

### ENTRANCE PROCESSION & OPENING SONG:

<i>This is the Day/Seo é an Lá</i>	<i>(Mary Amond O'Brien; Grow in Love 2<sup>nd</sup> Class)</i>
<i>Christ be our Light</i>	<i>(Bernadette Farrell; Grow in Love 4<sup>th</sup> Class)</i>
<i>Christ be beside me</i>	<i>(Traditional Irish; Grow in Love 1<sup>st</sup> Class)</i>
<i>The Summons</i>	<i>(John Bell; Grow in Love 5<sup>th</sup> Class)</i>

**PROCESSION OF SYMBOLS:** *If there are to be symbols brought representing the life, talents, giftedness and contribution to the school, this is the best place for it to happen. These gifts can be brought in procession, presented to the presider and placed in an appropriate space in the sanctuary area. A commentary may accompany this procession.*

**PRIEST:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**ALL:** Amen.

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

### PENITENTIAL ACT

**PRIEST:** You were sent to heal the contrite of heart:

Lord, have mercy.

**ALL:** Lord, have mercy

**PRIEST:** You came to call sinners:

Christ, have mercy.

**ALL:** Christ, have mercy

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

Lord, have mercy.

**ALL:** Lord, have mercy

**PRIEST:** May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to

everlasting life.  
**ALL:** Amen.

**GLORIA:** *If prayed it should be sung, where possible*

**COLLECT:**  
*Consider using the Collect of the Day which can be found using [www.universalis.com](http://www.universalis.com)*

**PRIEST:**

**LITURGY OF THE WORD**  
*Consider, initially, using the readings of the day which can be found using [www.universalis.com](http://www.universalis.com)*

**FIRST READING:**  
**Ezekiel 34:11-16**  
**2 Timothy 4:5-8**  
**3 Ecclesiastes:1-11,13-14**

**PSALM 22:1-6**      *Where possible this should be sung.*

*The Lord is my shepherd: there is nothing I shall want.*

The Lord is my shepherd;  
there is nothing I shall want.  
Fresh and green are the pastures  
where he gives me repose.  
Near restful waters he leads me,  
to revive my drooping spirit.

*The Lord is my shepherd: there is nothing I shall want.*

He guides me along the right path;  
he is true to his name.  
If I should walk in the valley of darkness  
no evil would I fear.  
You are there with your crook and your staff;  
with these you give me comfort.

*The Lord is my shepherd: there is nothing I shall want.*

You have prepared a banquet for me  
in the sight of my foes.  
My head you have anointed with oil;  
my cup is overflowing.

*The Lord is my shepherd: there is nothing I shall want.*

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me  
all the days of my life.  
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell  
for ever and ever.

*The Lord is my shepherd: there is nothing I shall want.*

## **SECOND READING**

*A second reading is not necessary at a week day Mass, but, this might be an opportunity to include a favourite piece of scripture*

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*Where possible this should be sung*

## **Gospel**

*Consider, initially, using the readings of the day which can be found using [www.universalis.com](http://www.universalis.com)*

**Luke 15:3-7**

**John 17: 1, 3-5**

**Luke 12: 22-31**

## **HOMILY**

## **PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL**

*The following are suggested Prayer of the Faithful, you can add and adapt as the situation requires*

**PRIEST:** We turn to God in our need confident that he is always listening to our prayer...

For the needs of our Church and our world today. We pray to the Lord

**Lord hear our prayer**

Lord Jesus, you are the greatest of teachers; we give thanks for the teachers in our school and in all our schools who continue your work as they kindle and strengthen the light of faith for generations of children. We pray to the Lord

**Lord hear our prayer**

May all of us engaged in the work of Catholic Education always value and nourish the wisdom and goodness of children. We pray to the Lord

**Lord hear our prayer**

For .....as she/he retires from this school. May she/he know how much their service is valued and appreciated and may she/he embrace the next stage of their journey with arms opened wide. We pray to the Lord

**Lord hear our prayer**

Spirit of God, you fan the fire of faith in all God's people and challenge us to be bearers of Good News to the world; May we continue to create the spaces in our schools where the values of the Gospel message are lived and shared, where our faith is celebrated and where everyone knows that they are loved and cherished as a child of God. We pray to the Lord

**Lord hear our prayer**

May Saints Brigid, Conleth and Laserian, the patron saints of our diocese, give us the courage and strength to share the Good News with great joy. We pray to the Lord  
**Lord hear our prayer**

**PRIEST:** Loving God, hear the prayers of this community as they gather in thanksgiving. May we always be confident of your love as we bring our prayers before you. We make our prayer through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

### PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS

*A suitable hymn may be sung, or an instrumental piece may be played at this time. Preparation of the altar which can include the placing of the altar cloth, corporal, purificator/s, chalice/s, and the Missal can take place as the offertory song is sung or played. The presentation of the gifts of bread and wine are then highlighted as they are the last items to be brought to the altar.*

*We come to your feast (Michael Joncas; Grow in Love 5<sup>th</sup> Class)*  
*We Come to You, Lord Jesus (Grow in Love 2<sup>nd</sup> Class)*  
*The Last Supper (Bernard Sexton, Grow in Love 2<sup>nd</sup> Class)*

### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

*Consider using the Prayer Over the Offerings of the Day which can be found using [www.universalis.com](http://www.universalis.com)*

### EUCHARISTIC PRAYER: **VARIOUS NEEDS IV** – *Jesus, Who Went About Doing Good*

V. The Lord be with you.

**R. And with your spirit.**

V. Lift up your hearts.

**R. We lift them up to the Lord.**

V. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**R. It is right and just.**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Father of mercies and faithful God.  
For you have given us Jesus Christ, your Son,  
as our Lord and Redeemer.  
He always showed compassion  
for children and for the poor,  
for the sick and for sinners,  
and he became a neighbour  
to the oppressed and the afflicted.  
By word and deed he announced to the world  
that you are our Father  
and that you care for all your sons and daughters.  
And so, with all the Angels and Saints,

we exalt and bless your name  
and sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...** *Where possible this should be sung*

You are indeed Holy and to be glorified, O God,  
who love the human race  
and who always walk with us on the journey of life.  
Blessed indeed is your Son, present in our midst  
when we are gathered by his love,  
and when, as once for the disciples, so now for us,  
he opens the Scriptures and breaks the bread.

Therefore, Father most merciful,  
we ask that you send forth your Holy Spirit  
to sanctify these gifts of bread and wine,  
that they may become for us the Body and Blood  
of our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the day before he was to suffer,  
on the night of the Last Supper,  
he took bread and said the blessing,  
broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT,  
FOR THIS IS MY BODY,  
WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.

In a similar way, when supper was ended,  
he took the chalice, gave you thanks  
and gave the chalice to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT,  
FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD,  
THE BLOOD OF THE NEW  
AND ETERNAL COVENANT,  
WHICH WILL BE Poured OUT FOR YOU  
AND FOR MANY FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.  
DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.

**The mystery of faith:** *Where possible this should be sung*

**We proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
and profess your Resurrection until you come again.**

*Or:*

**When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,  
we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.**

*Or:*

**Save us, Saviour of the world,  
for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.**

*Or:*

**My Lord and my God.**

Therefore, holy Father, as we celebrate the memorial  
of Christ your Son, our Saviour, whom you led  
through his Passion and Death on the Cross  
to the glory of the Resurrection,  
and whom you have seated at your right hand,  
we proclaim the work of your love until he comes again  
and we offer you the Bread of life  
and the Chalice of blessing.  
Look with favour on the oblation of your Church,  
in which we show forth the paschal Sacrifice of Christ that has been handed on to us, and  
grant that,  
by the power of the Spirit of your love,  
we may be counted now and until the day of eternity  
among the members of your Son,  
in whose Body and Blood we have communion.  
Bring your Church, O Lord,  
to perfect faith and charity,  
together with Francis our Pope and Denis our Bishop,  
with all Bishops, Priests and Deacons,  
and the entire people you have made your own.  
Open our eyes to the needs of our brothers and sisters;  
inspire in us words and actions  
to comfort those who labour and are burdened.  
Make us serve them truly,  
after the example of Christ and at his command.  
And may your Church stand as a living witness  
to truth and freedom, to peace and justice,  
that all people may be raised up to a new hope.

Remember our brothers and sisters  
who have fallen asleep in the peace of your Christ,  
and all the dead, whose faith you alone have known.  
Admit them to rejoice in the light of your face,  
and in the resurrection give them the fullness of life.  
Grant also to us, when our earthly pilgrimage is done,  
that we may come to an eternal dwelling place  
and live with you for ever;  
there, in communion with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, with the Apostles and  
Martyrs,  
with Saints Brigid, Conleth, Laserian and with all the Saints,  
we shall praise and exalt you

through Jesus Christ, your Son.

Through him, and with him, and in him,  
O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all glory and honour is yours, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**        *Where possible this should be sung*

## THE COMMUNION RITE

### OUR FATHER

### SIGN OF PEACE

**LAMB OF GOD:**                      *Where possible this should be sung*

**COMMUNION SONGS:**    *Eat this Bread:*                      *(Grow in Love 2<sup>nd</sup> Class)*  
                                  *Céad Míle Fáilte Romhat*        *(Traditional; Grow in Love 3<sup>rd</sup> Class)*  
                                  *The Last Supper*                *(Bernard Sexton, Grow in Love 2<sup>nd</sup> Class)*  
                                  *Without Seeing You*        *(David Haas; Grow in Love 5<sup>th</sup> Class)*

**POST COMMUNION REFLECTION:**        *A period of quiet reflection during which a song could be sung, a piece of music played, or a suitable reflection be read. The Prayer of the World Meeting of Families might be prayed at this time*

*The Servant Song*        *(Richard Gillard; Grow in Love 5<sup>th</sup> Class)*  
                                  *Eat this Bread:*                      *(Grow in Love 2<sup>nd</sup> Class)*  
                                  *We Come to You, Lord Jesus*    *(Grow in Love, 1<sup>st</sup> Class)*

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

*Consider using the Prayer After Communion of the Day which can be found using [www.universalis.com](http://www.universalis.com)*

### THE CONCLUDING RITES

*If a presentation is taking place or words of thanks are to be offered, it is appropriate to do this before the Final Blessing*

### REFLECTION

*This reflection from John O'Donohue might be used.*

This is where your life has arrived,  
After all the years of effort and toil;  
Look back with graciousness and thanks on all  
your great and quiet achievements.

You stand on the shore of new invitation  
To open your life to what is left undone;  
Let your heart enjoy a different rhythm

When drawn to the wonder of other horizons.

Have the courage for a new approach to time;  
Allow it to slow until you find freedom  
To draw alongside the mystery you hold  
And befriend your own beauty of soul.

Now is the time to enjoy your heart's desire,  
To live the dreams you've waited for,  
To awaken the depths beyond your work  
And enter into your infinite source.

*John O'Donohue*

*or*

Blessed are those who lead today,  
for they are impacting tomorrow.  
Blessed are those who live what they say;  
their words will be heard.  
Blessed are those whose lesson is the Gospel;  
they are being formed by the Teacher of teachers.  
Blessed are those who do not fear questions;  
they are pursuing truth.  
Blessed are those who manage with compassion;  
they are shaping souls.  
Blessed are those who do not count the cost;  
they are purchasing hidden treasures.  
Blessed are those who 'teach others in justice;  
they will shine like stars  
for all eternity.'

*Dr Kathleen Cepelka*

#### **FINAL BLESSING & CONCLUDING SONG**

*Consider using the song; The Spirit of God is Upon Us; Grow in Love 1<sup>st</sup> Class. Invite the children and all those present to extend their hands in blessing over the retiring teacher/principal.*