

'The Lord is my light and my Help' Psalm 26

Order of the Mass and Liturgy Plan for Beginning of School Year Mass

The following guide is a sample of a Beginning of the School Year Liturgy. You may choose to use your own hymns or add or change the Liturgy to make it your own.



Opening Hymn; 'Down to the River to Pray' or 'Christ be Our Light'

Words of Welcome

This Mass is to begin our school year. In it we pray for each other, and for the whole school. We are asking God to let his Light Shine through us this school year in everything we do and undertake. We'll also be asking for God's help with our learning, our friendships, our sport, our hobbies, and with everything that is part of our school.

We might feel a bit afraid of the coming year, especially if it's an exam year, or if we feel we don't get on too well in the class. Or we can feel very confident and glad to start again. No matter what, we put ourselves before God and ask his help in the coming year. (Second level only)

And we start by being grateful. There are many things to be grateful for in this group. Pause for a moment now and think of something you are thankful for just now. And then think of what else in your life you say thanks for. Be thankful for your interest in and your enjoyment of sport, or art, or writing, or dancing, or whatever. Be grateful for your health, your intelligence, your body, your mind. Be grateful for your friends; for your teachers; and for being part of this school community.



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The Introductory Rite.

'Let your Light Shine' Procession

I now invite our children to come forward to present their symbols and (name of child) will read a short reflection.

First, we bring forward a **candle** representing Jesus, the light of the world. The candle reminds us that in baptism we are called to follow Jesus and that we are challenged to see God in all things. May we always carry the light of Christ with us in our hearts and let our light shine out in the world bringing it to everyone we meet.

Next, we bring forward the **bible**. As we listen to your word Lord, help us to grow to be more like you.

We bring forward a **crucifix**, representing the prayer life of the school. Lord bless the time we spend in prayer. May we always know your love for us and help us Lord to grow in faith, hope and love.

We now bring up a **book, a football and a piece of art**, representing our learning, play and creativity in school. Lord, help us grow in knowledge, skill, and imagination using our talents always for the good of others.

We bring forward an **image of the Last Supper** where Jesus is surrounded by his friends, representing our friendships. Help us to grow in peace and harmony with everyone in our class and around us. May we always treasure the gift of friendship and always give thanks to our greatest friend, Jesus.

We bring forward a **globe**. This is a reminder that as members of the Body of Christ we are part of a much wider community. Led by the Holy Spirit we should always be aware of the needs of others and be prepared to use our gifts and talents to help and support them.

Finally, we bring forward a **statue (or a picture) of St Francis of Assisi**, the patron saint of ecology, to remind us that this is the season of creation. St Francis is a gentle saint who is our example and our inspiration, as to how we should respect and act for Creation. He is a reminder that each decision we make and each small thing we do for creation helps and contributes to the renewal of the earth.



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We ask the Lord Jesus, as we begin our new school year, that his love will join us, his wisdom will guide us, his light will shine through us, and his care will protect us throughout the year, AMEN

The Penitential Act

The Confiteor

As we begin our Mass, we ask God's forgiveness for our faults and failings, and particularly for ways in which we needlessly hurt each other.

Opening Prayer

God of All Light, we pray that your light will shine ever more brightly in our lives. Help us, Lord, at the beginning of our school year. Help us in our work and in our friendships. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen

The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

We look ahead to another year. Our first reading is a prayer of St Paul for people he taught. He prays that we grow strong in different areas of our lives. We make this prayer our own today.

A reading from a letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

3:14-21

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.

The word of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 36

℟. Be our light, Lord God, in the Days to come.



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1. If you trust in the Lord and do good
Then you will live in the land and be secure.
If you find your delight in the Lord,
He will grant your heart's desire. R.
2. Commit your life to the Lord,
Trust in him and he will act,
So that your justice breaks forth like the light,
And your cause like the noon day sun. R.

OR

Psalm 23 sung: 'My Shepherd is My Lord'

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the light of the world says the Lord.
Whoever follows me with never walk in darkness
but will have the light of life.

Alleluia!

Gospel

When we look to another year, we don't know what's in store, will it be a happy year, a difficult one? The gospel is a story of trusting in the presence of Jesus as he was present in the apostles' rough times, so he is present with us.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

4:35-41

With the coming of evening that same day, Jesus said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind they took him, just as he was, in the boat; and there were other boats with him. Then it began to blow a gale, and the waves were breaking into the boat so that it was almost swamped.

But he was in the stern, his head on a cushion, asleep. They woke him and said to him, "Master, do you not care? We are going down!" And he woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Quiet now! Be calm!" And the wind dropped, and all was calm again. Then he said to them, "Why are you so frightened? How is it that you have no faith?" They



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were filled with awe and said to one another: "Who can this be? Even the wind and sea obey him".

The Gospel of the Lord

Homily

Prayers of the Faithful

Let us make our prayers to God, as we pray at the beginning of our school year.

1. Lord, may we share our light generously with those in our world who live in poverty. Help us to find ways to share the good things in our lives with them and to share our concern by praying for them. Lord, hear us.
2. We pray for all those children in our world today who, because of poverty, cannot attend school. May we never take for granted the gift of an education. Lord, hear us.
3. For all who work in our school, that they may share their knowledge in a spirit of gentleness and patience. May this school community, rooted by our faith in God, be filled with acts of kindness and gentleness, Lord, hear us.
4. For anyone that is new to our school (especially our Junior infants or First Years) who are beginning their new journey with us in our school community. We hope they will be happy here and find lots of new friends. Lord, hear us.
5. As we begin this school year, we pray that we will always listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit, which is a powerful guide in all the decisions we make. Lord, hear us.
6. For all at home, that their trust and love may always be an example to us, Lord help us to spread happiness at home, by our pleasant words and happy faces and by helping whenever we can. Lord, hear us.
7. During this the season of creation we pray that that we will learn to 'Hope and Act' for God's creation. We pray as individuals and as a school community that we may make sustainable choices and marvel at the wonder and beauty of Creation. Lord, hear us.
8. We pray for those in our school and parish community who have died. Teach us to share our light with those who need comforting. Lord, hear us.



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Celebrant: Lord, help us to use the talents you have given each of us. Help us bring them to our schoolwork so that we can perform to the best of our ability. May all in this school feel valued, and may all we do and learn, be in your service, and in the service of love, both now and in the future.

We ask this in the name of Jesus our Lord. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

Offertory Procession

Offertory Hymn: "One Bread One Body", or 'O Come to the Altar'

Communion Hymns

Hymn 1: 'All things Bright and Beautiful'

Hymn 2: 'He's got the Whole World in his Hands'

Communion Reflection

What will this year bring?

We do not know;

It will bring its usual times of work and play,

Experiences of success and failure,

All the things that are part of school life.

It is a new beginning;

The planting of a seed that will grow for a year,

The seed of fruit that will blossom in times to come.

It is new hope;

Hope for good work, for successful results,

For friendships, for fun, for learning.

In this coming year, may there be learning, prayer and fun.

May there be hard work, faith and friendship.

May no one in this school be lonely;



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May no one be left out in class;
May no one suffer through the others here.
As we begin this year in hope, in prayer and in friendship,
May the Lord begin it with us, be with us during it,
And successfully bring it to its conclusion.
AMEN

OR

Give Me

by Cassie Koberts

Dear God, give me the strength to love others and to be loved.
Guide me through each day with your helping hand.
Give me the knowledge that you are already there,
Especially when I need you the most.
Give me the courage to live each moment as if the next will never come.
Show me how to be strong when I am feeling weak.
Give me the strength to live as you intended me to.
AMEN

Concluding Prayer

Lord our God, bless us as we begin this school year together. Let our light shine in this coming year and help us share the love, kindness and compassion of God in our school.
We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.
AMEN

The Concluding Rites

Final Hymn. 'This Little Light of Mine' or 'Shine Jesus Shine'

