

# **Graduation Liturgies**

**January 2010**

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## **Graduation Mass Liturgy**

Graduation is always a time of looking back and remembering the stages that have brought the students to this point. Each year will have its own memory and each class will have its memory of that year.

In preparing the liturgical space it would be good if the students could display something of each year in the school. Out of these could come eight or so significant symbols that can be brought to the altar in procession before the opening hymn. This is a good way of setting the atmosphere as people can see the symbols which often get lost in the main procession.

### **Welcome**

Instrumental music during which the symbols described above would be brought to the altar.

All invited to stand for the opening hymn.

#### *The Labyrinth – Liam Lawton*

Step into the circle, step onto your path  
Find your place of journey, where your life is mapped  
Step into the circle, if the way is clear  
You can start your journey, encircle all your fears.

#### *Chorus*

Labyrinth, labyrinth  
As you make your journey, the centre calls you in  
Labyrinth, labyrinth  
Where your heart is calling, your destiny begins.

Find your stepping stones, reflecting in the light  
As you travel on, beware of falling night  
As you journey on, you are not alone  
You will find the courage, to lead you safely home.

#### *Chorus*

And though you know your future not  
And the roads that lead elsewhere  
The way of love will guide your heart  
Beyond the world's despair  
To find your future there

*Chorus*

Priest begins the mass and introduces the Penitential Rite.

The Penitential Rite focuses on God's love and faithfulness to us rather than on the ways that we have failed God. Its purpose is that despite our turning away from God, like a true friend, God is there when we turn back.

Lord Jesus, you forgave those who had turned away from you. Lord have mercy.  
Lord Jesus, you gave time to those who were lost and hurt. Christ have mercy.  
Lord Jesus, you call us to friendship with you. Lord have mercy.

If possible the Gloria may be sung at this stage.

Let us pray,

God our Father, you are the giver of all good gifts.

You surround us in this world with the beauty of creation

And invite us to walk in your presence each day.

As we come to the end of our time together in this school

Let us be thankful for all we have achieved through you.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

### **Liturgy of the Word**

#### ***Isaiah 43:1-3 'Do no be afraid'***

But now, thus says Yahweh, who created you Jacob, and who formed you Israel. 'Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name, you are mine. Should you pass through the sea, I shall be with you, or through the rivers, they shall not swallow you up. Should you walk through fire you will not be scorched and the

flames will not burn you. You are precious in my eyes and I love you. Do not be afraid for I am not with you.'

This is the world of the Lord.

**Psalm:** *This is the Day*

**Second Reading:**

***A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Philippians***

Every time I pray for you all of you, I pray with joy remembering how you have helped spread the Good News from the day you first heard it right up to the present. I am quite certain that the one who began this good work in you will see that it is finished when the Day of Christ Jesus comes. My prayer is that your love for each other may increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognise what is best. This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm: *This is the Day*

Sing the Pilgrim Alleluia

***A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke 8:4-8***

With a large crowd gathering, as people from every town find their way to him, he used this parable: 'A sower went out to sow his seed. As he sowed some seeds fell on the edge of the path and were trampled on; and the birds of the air ate up. Some seeds fell on rock, and when it came up it withered away, having no moisture. Some seed fell amongst thorns and the thorns grew with it and choked it. And some seed fell into rich soil and it grew and produced its crop a hundredfold. Saying this he cried, 'Listen, anyone who has ears to hear!'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

## **Prayers of the Faithful**

- ❖ Lord, we thank you for the support of our parents throughout the years.  
We hope that they know how much we appreciate them. Although sometimes we might have difficulty showing it, we pray they know how important they are to us.  
Lord hear us.
  
- ❖ Lord we pray for the staff of .....
- ❖ We would like to thank them for their guidance and support throughout these memorable years. We also pray for the students, may they be ambitious in their work, happy in everything they do and always have hope in their futures.  
Lord hear us.
  
- ❖ Tonight we think of all the friends we have made during our years in .....
- ❖ We remember our laughter and our tears. Lord, as we reach this stage of our life's journey may we be blessed with good friends. May we always carry with us, good memories of our school friends.  
Lord hear us.
  
- ❖ There are people already in your keeping Lord, with whom we would have like to have shared this special evening. Our lives are better for having known them and we are grateful for that. We pray that they may know how much they are loved and missed.  
Lord hear us.
  
- ❖ Lord, as we leave this stage of our lives, may we always keep the light of hope in our hearts. With each new day that comes and every step that we take, may we always remember the true essence of the human spirit, that is hope.  
Lord hear us.
  
- ❖ Lord, tonight we remember all places where peace does not prevail. We ask you to help world leaders to choose paths to peace.  
Lord hear us.

- ❖ As we reach this crossroads, may we be guided and helped to choose the right road and to make the best of the gifts we have been given. Guide us to remain true to ourselves, as we step tentatively into the future.

Lord hear us.

In preparing students for the Mass, you could talk with them about their hopes and ambitions for the future. These could be put together in the form of a creed, an example of which follows:

We believe in God, our Protector and guide.

We put our trust in God for the future.

We believe in friends and everlasting friendship.

We believe in Jesus Christ, who came to encourage and heal us.

We believe in the Holy Spirit who will guide us through life.

We believe that loving ourselves gives us confidence to believe in ourselves and to achieve our goals.

We hope to be happy and successful in the future.

We hope through God's protection to be safe.

We hope that we will live to see peace in the world.

We hope that our class of 2010 will be successful in our exams.

We love our parents, guardians and friends, living and departed,

Who have helped us through many difficult situations.

They were there to support us when we needed a shoulder to cry on or someone to talk to.

We love and treasure all the wonderful memories we have been given by our families, friends and teachers.

We love God and with God by our side,

We believe we can achieve anything.

Amen.

## **Liturgy of the Eucharist**

The offertory procession consists only of bread, wine and water.

Prayer over the Gifts:

Gracious God, may our prayer together increase our faith in your companionship, our hope in your love, our love for your people. As we offer this bread and wine, may we be strengthened in our friendship with you, now and forever.

We ask this through Jesus the Lord.

Amen.

Eucharistic Prayer

Eucharistic Prayer Acclamations: Liam Lawton's Mass of the Celtic Saints or Molaise

Communion

### **Concluding Prayer**

As we end one journey and begin another, let us go forth into the world as people of faith, hope and vision. Hold fast that which is good, and render to no one any harm. Strengthen the faint hearted, support the weak and vulnerable. Help the afflicted, give dignity and respect to all. Love and serve the Lord Jesus rejoicing in the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. We ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord.

Amen.



## **Graduation Reflection**

*This reflection might be used as inspiration for 6th Year Graduation.*

### **I believe...**

That our background and circumstances may have influenced who we are, but we are responsible for who we become.

That no matter how good a friend is, they're going to hurt you every once in a while and you must forgive them for that.

That just because someone doesn't love you the way you want them to doesn't mean that they don't love you with all they have.

That true friendship continues to grow even over the longest distance, same goes for true love.

That it's taking me a long time to become the person I want to be.

That you should always leave loved ones with loving words. It may be the last time you see them.

That you can keep going long after you think you can't.

That we are responsible for what we do, no matter how we feel.

That either you control your attitude or it controls you.

That heroes are the people who do what has to be done, when it needs to be done, regardless of the consequences.

That money is a lousy way of keeping score.

That my best friend and I can do anything or nothing and still have the best time.

That sometimes the people you expect to kick you when you are down will be the ones to help you get back up.

That sometimes when I'm angry I have the right to be angry but that doesn't give me the right to be cruel.

That maturity has more to do with what types of experiences you've had and what you've learned from them and less to do with how many birthdays you've celebrated.

That it isn't always enough to be forgiven by others. Sometimes you have to learn to forgive yourself.

That no matter how bad your heart is broken the world doesn't stop for your grief.

That just because two people argue it doesn't mean they don't love each other and just because they don't doesn't mean they do.

That you shouldn't be so eager to find out a secret, it may change your life forever.

That two people can look at the exact same thing and see something totally different.

That your life can be changed in a matter of hours by people who don't even know you.

That even when you think you have no more to give, when a friend cries out to you, you will find the strength to help.

That credentials on the wall do not make you a decent human being.

That the people you care about in life are taken from you much too soon.

That life is more precious than money ever will be.

## **Prayer on Leaving School**

*God our Father*

*We can look back over the last few years  
and recall the friendships that have formed  
and the good relationships that we have developed.*

*We give thanks for all who have enriched our lives in various ways:  
At home, in school, in church, and in the local community.*

*We are conscious too, Father, of mistakes that have been made and relationships  
that have gone sour.*

*We ask for healing of what has been negative in the past, as we place ourselves  
into your hands.*

*Inspire us in the years ahead to live in such a way that we readily apologise when  
things go wrong, as well as expressing thanks and encouragement to those who are  
a part of our lives.*

*We give thanks, Father, for the gifts, talents and skills that you have given to each  
one of us. We think of people who may have received less than others but have  
made much of themselves. We remember, too, those who have overcome great  
difficulties, and all who have inspired us because they have given of their best.*

*In giving thanks for what has been in the past, we ask for your blessing on our  
present and future. We pray for wisdom in setting our priorities and in making our  
choices that we may live fully and make our part of the world a better place  
because of the care and compassion that we bring into it.*

*Amen*

## Celebrating the End of Transition Year



### **A Prayer of Gathering**

As we come together to celebrate and give thanks for the students and their work over this last year, we pause for a few moments with our thoughts to allow the spirit of God and the blessings of life to enter our hearts and minds.....**(Pause)**

**Leader:** Our help is in the name of the Lord

**All: Who made heaven and earth and gave it life.**

**Leader:** Spirit of the Living God,

**All: Fill us with appreciation and wonder.**

**Leader:** Protector of all that is good and sacred.

**All: Bless our celebrations this night.**

### **A Time Spent Together**

**Leader:**

Transition Year brings together students from across third year and often from outside this school. It is a year when people work closely together on various projects and activities and get to know each other well. New styles of learning are explored. Students learn to cooperate closely with each other and with teachers. Lest we forget the time spent together and the lessons learnt, we share in the following reflection....

**Reflection:**

Our lives are marked forever by those we meet;  
the friendships we make and the love we experience,  
the reconciliations and the quarrels,  
the works we have tried to do together  
for each other and those less fortunate.  
All this has given us something that will last.

Long after we have forgotten the marks of our assignments, we'll remember the friendships, the times of growth, the fun, the quarrels, the laughter, the jokes.

We'll remember how we helped each other grow, in faith, in hope and in love.

May what we have done over the last year be given to many others  
in our lives.

In the words of a Buddhist prayer we say;

May all living beings be well, happy, peaceful and prosperous. May no harm come to them; may no difficulty come to them; may no problem come to them; may they always meet with success.

May they also have the patience, courage, understanding and determination to meet and overcome inevitable difficulties, problems and failures in life.

Amen.

## **Remembering and Blessing the Work of the Year**

A reading from the book of Sirach.

*God is aware of our works and takes delight in them.*

Our ways are always under God's eye,

Nothing can be hidden from his sight.

All our works are as the sun to him,

Our alms giving is like a signet ring to him,

He cherishes our acts of generosity like the pupil of his eye.

One day he will arise and bless us for our good works.

This is the Word of the Lord.

## **A Collage of Memories**

*"...and everything we're going through will be our memories. I'm going to make them worth remembering for years" (Memories. Beverly Craven)*

**Leader:** Together let us pray blessing over these young people, their memories and their work during the year.

### **The Blessing**

Lord, you are the source of all creation,

You watch over it and bless it with your love.

We ask you to bless, the work of our hands,

The work presented here tonight,

And the work and effort that has made up this past school year.

Help us to grow in wisdom from this work.

We make this prayer through Christ Our Lord.

Amen.

## **A Time for Thanksgiving**

### ***Reflection***

I am thankful, Lord, For the support of a friend's hand,

For the hug of sympathy and friendly warmth

For the embrace of love and care.

I am thankful for the people whose lives touch mine with friendship.

I recall, Lord, the love that has helped me to grow from childhood to this day:

The care of parents and friends that meant security and love

The presence of the friend who cheered me when I was sad

The words of encouragement when I was afraid

The offer of sympathy when I was unhappy.

I thank you, Lord, for this gift; you have been there for me through the goodness of others. And because I know that time is always time

And place is always and only place

And what is actual is actual only for one time

And only for one place, I rejoice that things are as they are...

## **A Prayer of Gratitude**

**Leader:** As in every experience, Transition Year has its highs and lows. We may feel it has been useful or that we should have got more out of it. Whatever our experience has been, lessons have been learned and effort has gone into it. For this we now give thanks.

**Reader 1:** We are grateful for the friendships made and the time we spent together. We have grown as individuals and we give thanks for all those who have supported this growth.

**Reader 2:** We are grateful for being able to realize our gifts, for being able to use all our talents in a meaningful way. This has filled our lives with purpose and joy.

**Reader 3:** We are grateful for all those that supported us in our lives so far. For everyone that helped us this year. From them we have learned the meaning of respect and understanding.

**Reader 4:** We are grateful for the journey shared. The highs and lows that led us to grow in wisdom. From this, we have gained hope. Lord we have gained hope. Lord we are grateful, bless this gratitude.

### ***Together we say***

God of life, show me the way to repay the blessings you have given me.

Help me to give generously of what I have.

Help me to do so with gratitude in my heart,

And may my giving always bless those who receive it.

Amen.

### **A Prayer for Each Other**

**Leader:** We look to the future and pray for everyone here and in particular for the students who have just completed Transition Year.

**Response: Lord in your faithfulness, hear our prayer.**

1. We pray for our families, teachers and friends who supported us, especially when we were struggling or just getting by. Response.
2. We pray for all those who are anxious about what lies ahead. Give us peace of mind and of heart. Response.
3. We pray for anyone that we have hurt or let down this year. Response.
4. We pray that we may continually recognise all our gifts and talents as we prepare for the new challenges ahead. May we always give thanks to you and trust that you will be guiding us. Response.
5. We pray now in silence.....

**Leader:** Lord, we give you thanks for your faithfulness. Help us to never stop bringing our concerns to you.

Amen.

### **Concluding Rite**

We call on the God of Life to bless these young people as they leave Transition Year.

**Leader:** May God bless them with the wisdom to seek the truth and learn from the experience of others.

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:** May God bless them with the love to share their gifts and talents with others.

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:** May God bless them with the courage to act for justice.

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:** In the name of God the Father, who created all people to enjoy the fullness of love; In the name of Jesus the Son, who has shown Christians the way to the fullness of life; And of the Holy Spirit who encourages all.

Go in peace and joy.

