



Moment One: Families of Hope

November 2017



Moment One: Families of Hope is rooted in our belief in the promise that Jesus made when he said, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me will live, even though they die' (Jn 11:25–6). Our hope as Christians is that death is not the end but that at the end of our time here on earth we will be reunited eternally with Jesus in heaven:

We are reminded of this hope in Pope Francis' document *Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love)*, which teaches us about love in the family. Hope is an essential part of this love.

Here hope comes most fully into its own, for it embraces the certainty of life after death. Each person, with all his or her failings, is called to the fullness of life in heaven. There, fully transformed by Christ's resurrection, every weakness, darkness and infirmity will pass away. There the person's true being will shine forth in all its goodness and beauty. This realisation helps us, amid the aggravations of this present life, to see each person from a supernatural perspective, in the light of hope, and await the fullness that he or she will receive in the heavenly kingdom, even if it is not yet visible. (117)

For Parishes

This moment can be situated within the liturgical themes of November and the Masses/liturgies around the Feast of All Souls and remembering our loved ones who have died. The prayer service could be used in a parish setting with children or young adults.

Resources:

- Relevant content from the *Catholic Preschool and Primary Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland*
- Junior Lesson (Junior Infants–Second Class/P1–P4)
- Senior Lesson (Third Class–Sixth Class/P5–P7)
- Prayer Service of Remembrance





The Catholic Preschool and Primary Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland

From the Curriculum ...

Level 1

Strand: Christian Faith

Strand Unit: Eternal Life

- God wants all people to be happy with him forever in heaven (1 Jn 3:2; 1 Cor 13:12; CCC 1023)
- When we die we go home to God (CCC 1020)

Strand: Liturgy and Prayer

Strand Unit: Additional Prayers

- Prayer for the dead/for those who are sick and dying

Level 2

Strand: Christian Faith

Strand Unit: Eternal Life

- Jesus promised new life here on earth and after we die
- We believe that: when we die, God calls us to heaven (CCC 1011)
- God's plan is that when we die we will live on with God, Jesus, Mary, the angels and saints in heaven (CCC 1024)

Strand: Liturgy and Prayer

Strand Unit: Liturgical Year

- On the Feast of All Souls the Church remembers those who have died and prays for them.

Level 3

Strand: Christian Faith

Strand Unit: Eternal Life

- God wants all people to live happily with him in heaven forever, through the salvation brought by Jesus (GS 18; CCC 1026)

- Jesus rose from the dead in his own body and entered heaven so we might join him one day and share in eternal life (CCC 666–7)
- The Lord Jesus said, 'Whoever believes in me shall have eternal life and I shall raise him up on the Last Day.' Christians believe and hope that they too will rise to new life with the risen Jesus. This is called eternal life (1 Cor 15:23–4)
- Just as Christ is risen and lives forever, so all of us will rise at the last day (CCC 1016; 1 Cor 15:54–7)
- Christians believe that when they die they shall be with Christ, and they shall see God (1 Cor 13:12)

Level 4

Strand: Christian Faith

Strand Unit: Eternal Life

- All that is good in our present world will survive in the Kingdom of Heaven
- Every act of kindness, generosity and service contributes to the building of the Kingdom
- The happiness of heaven consists of living with God and with all the blessed forever in a relationship of knowledge and love (CCC 1024, cf. 1026–7)
- The body will die but will rise again (in a renewed form) at the end of time (Resurrection of the Body; cf. LG 48; CCC 988–90, 1020)
- By God's grace and mercy, Christians have the secure hope that all those who loved God and others have found true life with God in heaven (GS 18)
- The Church prays for the salvation of everyone (CCC 1058)
- Catholics pray for the souls in purgatory on All Souls' Day and all through the year
- The Church commends the dead to God's mercy and offers her prayers, especially the Eucharist



Junior Lesson

Junior Infants–Second Class (P1–P4)

Teacher's Notes

Moment One: Families of Hope focuses on how we as followers of Jesus are families and people of hope. We live in the hope that Jesus' promise will be fulfilled for us and all those we know and love.

Jesus promises that all who believe in him will return home to him in heaven when they die. Those we love who have died are now in heaven with Jesus and we can pray for them and to them. Throughout the month of November and on the Feast of All Souls (2 November), we remember family and friends who have returned home to heaven.

In many ways our lives are like the seasons of the beautiful world God created for us. We are young and growing in the spring of our lives, blossoming in the summer and growing older and maturing in the autumn. The Bible tells us, 'For everything, there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven' (Eccl 3:1).

Note: Teachers should use their own discretion when covering this material as the content may be difficult for some children, especially if they have been recently bereaved.

Consider

Begin by revising with the children the four seasons of the year: spring, summer, autumn, winter.

Explore with the class some of the features of each of the seasons using some of these key questions:

- What season is it now?
- What do we know about this season?
- What other seasons are there?
- What do we know about spring, winter ...?
- What in the world around us helps us to know what season it is?
- What is the weather like?
- What happens to the trees/leaves on the trees in that season?





Explore

Our year has four seasons and different things happen in each. Let's look particularly at autumn:

- In autumn, the leaves change colour from greens to shades of gold, red and brown, and fall from the trees. Some animals go into hibernation. The weather starts to get colder and our world is starting to rest and become bare for winter.
- In autumn, and in the month of November, we remember people we love who have died. They may be gone from the world we see but they will start a new life in heaven with God, just as the leaves that fall from the trees and disappear into the ground grow again on the trees when the spring comes.
- As followers of Jesus, we know that when someone we love dies, even though we cannot see them anymore, they live on in heaven with Jesus. Just as the leaves will grow again after falling from the trees, people who have died will grow again with Jesus in heaven. They will have new life with God.

Activity

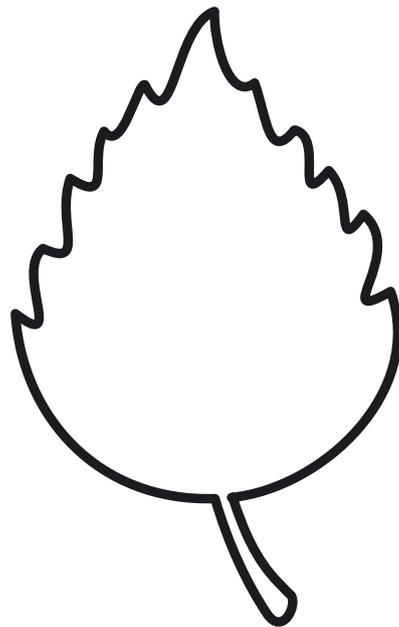
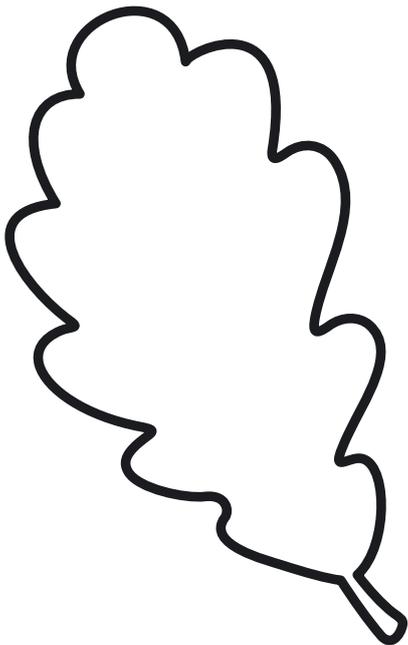
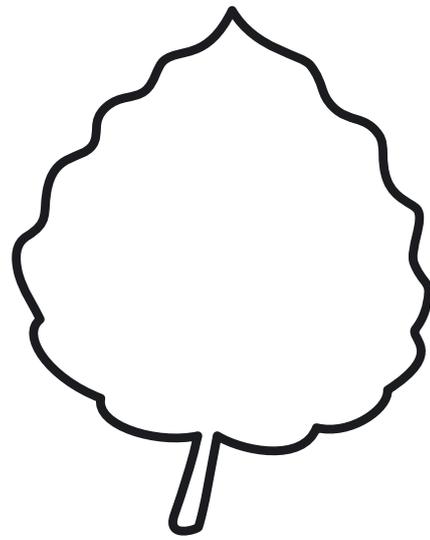
In November, we remember the people we love who have died. In particular, on the Feast of All Souls the Church remembers those who have died and prays for them. To help us remember those we love who have died, and illuminate our hope that they are now in heaven with God where life has no end, we will write the name or draw a picture of someone we love who has died on the leaves on the Junior Activity Page. This could be a family member, a friend, a neighbour or a pet.

Display these leaves in the class prayer space. They could be hung from a potted tree or placed around a picture of a tree.



Moment One: Families of Hope

Junior Activity Page





Senior Lesson (Third Class–Sixth Class) (P5–P7)

Teacher's Notes

Moment One: Families of Hope focuses on how we as followers of Jesus are families and people of hope. We live in the hope that Jesus' promise will be fulfilled for us and all those we know and love.

Jesus promises that all who believe in him will return home to him in heaven when they die. Those we love who have died are now in heaven with Jesus and we can pray for them and to them. Throughout the month of November and on the Feast of All Souls (2 November), we remember family and friends who have returned home to heaven.

Sometimes it can be difficult to live in the hope of the promise of Jesus, especially if someone we love has died. As Christians, we can see the truth of the promise in the miracle of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. As well as examining this miracle, this lesson will focus on how we can remember loved ones who have died, especially in the month of November.

In many ways our lives are like the seasons of the beautiful world God created for us. We are young and growing in the spring of our lives, blossoming in the summer and growing older and maturing in the autumn. The Bible tells us, 'For everything, there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven' (Eccl 3:1).

Note: Teachers should use their own discretion when covering this material as the content may be difficult for some children, especially if they have been recently bereaved.

Consider

Begin the class with a brief discussion around what we as Christians believe happens after we die or someone we love dies. Where do we go? What happens at a funeral?

Note: 'We believe that: when we die, God calls us to heaven' (CCC 1011); 'God's plan is that when we die we will live on with God, Jesus, Mary, the angels and saints in heaven' (CCC 1024).

Whether it is a member of our family, a friend or even a pet, it can be very difficult when someone we love dies.

Jesus promises that all who believe in him will return home to him in heaven when they die. Those we love who have died are now in heaven with Jesus and we can pray for them and to them. Throughout the month of November and on the Feast of All Souls (2 November), we remember family and friends who have returned home to heaven.

Explore

We can learn a lot about Jesus' promise from the miracle of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead, which is told in the Gospel of John.

Read the miracle in John 11:1–44 or the adapted version below.



Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead!

Lazarus and his two sisters, Mary and Martha, were friends of Jesus. When Lazarus fell ill, his sisters sent a message to Jesus, 'Lord, the one you love is sick.' When Jesus heard the news, he waited two more days before going to Lazarus' hometown of Bethany.

When Jesus arrived in Bethany, Lazarus had already been dead and in the tomb for four days. When Martha discovered that Jesus was on his way, she went out to meet him. 'Lord,' she said, 'if you had been here, my brother would not have died.'

Jesus told Martha, 'Your brother will rise again.' But Martha was not sure what Jesus was talking about.

Then Jesus said these important words, 'I am the resurrection* and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.'

Jesus then went to the tomb of Lazarus with Mary, Martha and the rest of the mourners. There he asked them to remove the stone that covered the hillside burial place. Jesus looked up to heaven and prayed to his father, closing with these words, 'Lazarus, come out!' When Lazarus came out of the tomb, Jesus told the people to remove his grave clothes.

As a result of this incredible miracle, many people put their faith in Jesus.

**Resurrection: New life after death*

Activity

Write an account of the miracle as if you were present or report the miracle for *The Christian Chronicle* on the Senior Activity Page.

Additional Activity

Take some time to think/talk about people you love who have died. This could be a family member, a friend or even a pet.

Use the leaf templates on the Junior Activity Page to write the names/draw these people. Display these leaves in the class prayer space. They could be hung from a potted tree or places around a picture of a tree.



Moment One: Families of Hope

Prayer Service

This prayer service could be held in a classroom, school hall or a prayer room. Members of the local parish community could be invited, including the parish priest or school chaplain. Parents and grandparents could also be invited.

Prayer Space Items

- A Remembrance Tree/book/basket.
- Completed leaf templates (Junior Activity Page)
- A green table cloth
- A candle
- Holy Water
- Crucifix



Leader: Good morning, everyone. Today we are gathered to pray for family, friends, relations and neighbours who have died. We remember them especially during the month of November as we remember that we are families of hope. We live in the hope that all those who have died will live happily forever in heaven.

We begin our prayer in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Opening Song: 'Gathering Song', *Grow in Love*, Second Class/P4, p. 88.

Leader: While it is sad for us to think about people who have died, we remember them today by writing their names or drawing their pictures on prayer leaves and these now hang on our Remembrance Tree. (*Alternatively, these could be in a basket or written in a book of remembrance.*)

We know that Jesus brought us hope and Good News. Let us now listen to that Good News.

Reader 1: A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians.

We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and that it will be the same for all those who love Jesus. When they die, God will bring them with him. When we die we will meet the Lord in heaven, and stay with him forever.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Leader: Together, we pray for those who have died. The response to each prayer is 'May the light of Christ shine on them'.

All: May the light of Christ shine on them.

Reader 2: For all grandparents who have died. (*Response*)

Reader 3: For all parents who have died. (*Response*)



Reader 4: For all past teachers and staff of this school who have died. (*Response*)

Reader 5: For all past priests and members of our parish who have died. (*Response*)

Reader 6: For those who have died and have no one to remember them. (*Response*)

Reader 7: For all those whose names are included on our Remembrance Tree. (*Response*)

Leader: We know that Jesus prayed constantly to his father in heaven. He asked us to pray to God the Father too. And so, as Jesus asked us we dare to say:

All: Our Father ... / *Ár* ...

Leader: Loving God, we thank you for the lives of our loved ones who have died. We ask you to care for those who are missing them at this time. May we always remember your promise that one day we will all be together in heaven. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Reader 8: Poem/Resurrection

The autumn leaves were laid to rest
But now the trees are green,
And signs that God brings all to life
Throughout the world are seen.
And Jesus is alive, they say,
And death is not the end.
We rise again in heaven's light
With Jesus as our friend.

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

All: Amen.

Closing Song: 'Remember Them', *Grow in Love*, Senior Infants/P2, p. 268.