



## November 2019: The Month of the Holy Souls

The theme for Catholic Schools Week 2020 is 'Catholic Schools: Living in Harmony with God's Creation'. As we look forward to and begin our preparations for celebrating CSW 2020, it is important for each of us to remember those who have gone before us by celebrating our faith in the resurrection. This resource aims to assist schools with their 'The Month of the Holy Souls' celebrations as they look forward toward their CSW 2020 celebrations beginning on 26 January 2020.

**The Moment of November** recalls to us Jesus' promise that those who believe will never die but be born into new life in Christ. We are reminded of Jesus' promise to Lazarus' sister Martha.

Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?' (Jn 11:25-26).

Our faith as Christians is that God's love is greater than death. Our hope is that when we die, we are raised to eternal life with God.

Pope Francis' Easter Monday Regina Coeli address in St Peter's Square in 2015 challenges us to proclaim the Good News of the Resurrection – the most beautiful thing that the Christian can give to others. The sadness of death gives way to the bright promise of eternal life with God. We are raised to new life with Jesus.

'This, therefore, is the proclamation that the Church repeats from the first day: "Christ is risen!". And, in him, through Baptism, we too are risen; we have passed from death to life, from the slavery of sin to the freedom of love. Behold the Good News that we are called to take to others and to every place, inspired by the Holy Spirit. Faith in the Resurrection of Jesus and the hope that he brought us is the most beautiful gift that the Christian can and must give to his brothers. To all and to each, therefore, let us not tire of saying: Christ is risen! Let us repeat it all together, today here in the

Square: Christ is risen! Let us repeat it with words, but above all with the witness of our lives. The happy news of the Resurrection should shine on our faces, in our feelings and attitudes, in the way we treat others.

'We proclaim the Resurrection of Christ when his light illuminates the dark moments of our life and we can share that with others: when we know how to smile with those who smile and weep with those who weep; when we walk beside those who are sad and in danger of losing hope; when we recount our experience of faith with those who are searching for meaning and for happiness. With our attitude, with our witness, with our life, we say: Jesus is risen! Let us say it with all our soul.'

### 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

**The Moment of November** 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 Saints and Feast of All Souls (1 and 2 November), we remember family and friends who have returned home to heaven.

Saints are people just like us. They lived good lives, cared for others, prayed and tried to make the world a better place. We know St Patrick and St Brigid. What about saints today who help people and show us how to live as God wants us to (e.g. Brother Kevin Crowley, Sr Stan, etc.)?

**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.

This YouTube video of Lego characters explains the origins of Halloween and All Hallows Eve.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oy66\\_pgeORA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oy66_pgeORA)

#### Consider

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

1. What's a saint?
2. Do we know any saints?
3. Does anyone know why we celebrate Halloween on 31 October?

*It is the day before All Saints Day. If the children are not sure, say: 'I will write a hint on the board.' Write 'All Hallow's Eve'.*

#### Explore

November is a special month. 1 November is a special day called the Feast of All Saints. It is the day the Church celebrates with all the people who have died and are now with God in heaven. We go to Mass and remember that all these holy people are happy with God.

Everyone who has lived and died in Jesus' love is a saint. Some of these people are members of our family, our friends, and our neighbours. We do not know the names of all the saints. Do you know the names of some of these saints?

#### Activity

In November, we remember the people we love who have gone before us. To help us remember those we love who have died and illuminate our hope that they are now in heaven with God, we will write the name or draw a picture of someone we love who has died on the sheet on the Junior Activity Page. This could be a family member, a friend, a neighbor or a pet. It can also be for those people who have no one to pray for them.

Display these sheets in the class prayer space.





# Junior Activity Page





## Senior Lesson

### Third Class–Sixth Class (P5–P7)

#### Teacher's Notes

**The Moment of November** 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. It is completely normal to feel sad, angry, lonely or confused after we lose someone.

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 (11:1-44).



Jesus had three very close friends who lived in Bethany. They were Lazarus and his two sisters, Mary and Martha. One day, while Jesus was on the other side of the Jordan, Mary and Martha sent him an urgent message: 'Lazarus is very sick. Please come quickly!' But Jesus did not go right away. He waited for two more days and then said to his disciples: 'Let's go to Bethany. Lazarus is sleeping, and I am going to wake him up.' The apostles said: 'If Lazarus is asleep, that will help him to get well.' So Jesus told them clearly: 'Lazarus has died.'

When Jesus arrived at Bethany, Lazarus had already been buried for four days. Crowds of people had come to comfort Martha and Mary. When Martha heard that Jesus had come, she rushed to meet him. She said: 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' Jesus told her: 'Your brother will live again. Do you believe this, Martha?' She said: 'I believe that he will rise in the resurrection.' Jesus said to her: 'I am the resurrection and the life.'

Then Martha went to Mary and told her: 'Jesus is here.' Mary ran to Jesus, and the crowd followed. She fell down at his feet, and she could not stop crying. She said: 'Lord, if you had been here, our brother would still be alive!' Jesus saw how much she was suffering, and he also began to cry. When the crowd saw his tears, they said: 'See how Jesus loved Lazarus.' But some wondered: 'Why didn't he save his friend?' What would Jesus do next?

Jesus went to the tomb, where a large stone covered the entrance. He commanded: 'Roll the stone away.' Martha said: 'But it has been four days! His body will smell.' Still, they rolled the stone away, and Jesus prayed: 'Father, thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me, but I speak aloud so that these people may know that you sent me.' Then he called out in a loud voice: 'Lazarus, come out!' Something amazing happened: Lazarus came out of the tomb, still wrapped in linen cloths. Jesus said: 'Free him and let him go.'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dca8SSxXCmM>

YouTube clip of the story of the raising of Lazarus

### Activity

Write an account of the miracle as if you were present or report the miracle for *The Galilee Gazette* 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. The children can design a picture or write the name of someone they want to remember. Place the sheets in a box at the sacred space in the classroom.

If there is an opportunity, bring the class to Mass during a school day in November. Ask the priest if the class can place the box of names at the foot of the altar during the Mass.





# Senior Activity Page

## The Galilee Gazette

Man raised  
from dead!



Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple horizontal blue lines for writing.





## 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/box
- ★ 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 neighbors who have died. We remember them especially during the month of November as we remember Christ's promise of eternal life. 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:** I Watch the Sunrise

**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 remembrance box 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 book of the Apocalypse

Happy are those who die in the Lord I, John, heard a voice from heaven say to me, 'Write down: Happy are those who die in the Lord! Happy indeed, the Spirit says; now they can rest for ever after their work, since their good deeds go with them.' The word of the Lord

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:** May the Lord support us all the day long; till the shades lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over and our work is done. Then in his mercy, may he give us a safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at last.

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

**All:** Amen.

**Closing Song:** May the Road Rise to Meet You

