



November 2022: The Month of the Holy Souls

The theme for Catholic Schools Week 2023 is 'Catholic Schools: Walking Together in Faith and Love'. As we look forward to celebrating Catholic Schools Week 2023, in November we remember those who have gone before us in the hope of the resurrection. This resource aims to assist and support schools with activities and lesson ideas for the Month of the Holy Souls. The November Moment reminds us to journey through life with faith in God and love for others, and to remember all those who have completed that journey.

'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.'

(2 Tm 4:7)

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 as well as praying for those who have no one to pray for them. 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	Level 2
<p>Strand: Christian Faith Strand Unit: Eternal Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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) <p>Strand: Liturgy and Prayer Strand Unit: Additional Prayers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prayer for the dead/for those who are sick and dying	<p>Strand: Christian Faith Strand Unit: Eternal Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 and the angels and saints in heaven (CCC, 1024) <p>Strand: Liturgy and Prayer Strand Unit: Liturgical Year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On the feast of All Souls the Church remembers those who have died and prays for them.
Level 3	Level 4
<p>Strand: Christian Faith Strand Unit: Eternal Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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)	<p>Strand: Christian Faith Strand Unit: Eternal Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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. CCC, 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 November Moment focuses on how we, as followers of Jesus, are a community 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 (1 November) and the feast of All Souls (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 about St Patrick and St Brigid. Who are the saints of today? Who are the people who show us what the kingdom of God looks like (e.g. Br Kevin Crowley, Sr Stan, Fr Peter McVerry, 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 explains the origins of Halloween and All Hallows' Eve:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oy66_pgeORA



Consider

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

1. **What is 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, offer to write a hint on the board. Write 'All Hallows' Eve'.





Explore

Explain the reason for celebrating the feast of All Saints: The first of November is a special day in the Church called the feast of All Saints. It is the day the Church prays for all those 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. Some of these people were so much like Jesus that after they died, the Church said they were definitely in heaven. Do you know the names of some of these saints? (Answers will vary.)

Help the children understand that we are all saints-in-the-making. Saints are people who love Jesus and share his love with others. We can all live like the saints even while we are still on earth. Who can think of one way to live like a saint (a) at home; (b) at school; (c) in your community/village/town?

When the children have given examples, say: God calls each of us to be saints. We become saints by doing the kinds of things we just mentioned. That is what God wants for all of us.

Activity

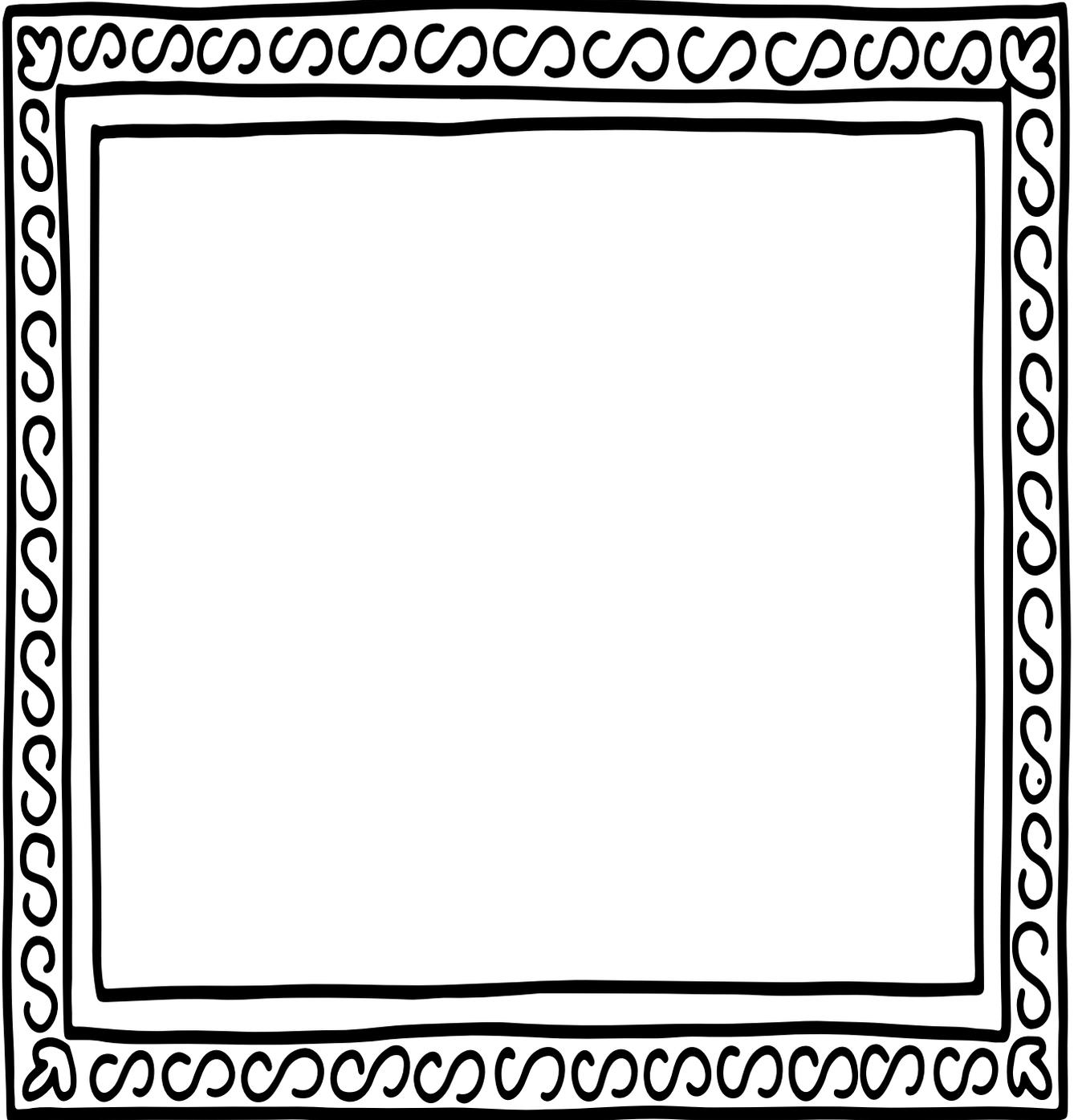
In November, we remember the people we love who have gone before us. To help us remember those we love who have died, and brighten our hope that they are now in heaven with God, we will write the name or draw a picture of someone we love who has died on the sheet on the Junior Activity Page. This could be a family member, a friend, a neighbour 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.





The November Moment

Junior Activity Page





Senior Lesson

Third Class–Sixth Class/P5–P7

Consider:

Ask the children: How many of you are looking forward to Christmas? ... to your birthday? ... to summer holidays? (Allow the children to respond by raising their hands.)

Say: We all look forward to these exciting times of the year. When we have the promise of something good in the future, it makes us excited right now. Jesus teaches that we have the promise of eternal life when we follow his teaching and example.

Explore

When Jesus heard that his friend Lazarus had died, he travelled to Bethany, the home of Lazarus. Martha, the sister of Lazarus, greeted Jesus. She said she was sorry Jesus had not come sooner, but she believed Lazarus would be raised on the last day and live with God forever. Jesus told Martha that he himself was the resurrection and the life and that those who believed in him would live forever. Then he called out to Lazarus, who walked out of the tomb, alive.

Tell the children that the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead is about the promise of eternal life. Jesus is the resurrection and the life for all of us. Say: We pray for those who have died because we have hope that they will live with God forever and that we will be reunited with them.

This YouTube video shows the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dca8SSxXCmM

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.





Prayer Service

This prayer service could be held in a classroom, school hall or a prayer room. The prayer service could also be live-streamed from one classroom to the rest of the school or each class could host their own prayer service.



Prayer Space Items

- A remembrance tree/book/box.
- Completed drawings (Junior Activity Page)
- A green table cloth
- A candle
- Holy water
- A crucifix

Leader: Good morning, everyone. Today we are gathered to pray for family, friends, relations and neighbours who have died. We also pray for those who have no one to pray for them. We remember these people especially during the month of November as we remember Jesus' promise of eternal life in God's Kingdom. We know that God's love is greater than death, and pray that those who have died are now with God in heaven.

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

Opening Song: The Clouds' Veil (or another appropriate hymn)

Leader: Today we remember those who have passed away, and place prayer leaves with their names or their pictures and hang them on our remembrance tree. (Alternatively, these could be in a remembrance box or written in a book of remembrance.) Jesus teaches us that God's love is greater than death. We now listen to God's Word.

Reading: A Reading from the Book of the Apocalypse (14:13)

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.

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 1: For all our family members and friends who have died. *(Response)*

Reader 2: For all past teachers and staff of this school who have died. *(Response)*

Reader 3: For all those in our parish and community who have died during the past year. *(Response)*

Reader 4: For those who have died and have no one to remember them. *(Response)*

Reader 5: For all those we miss and think of each day. *(Response)*

Reader 6: For all those whose names are included on our remembrance tree/in our remembrance book/box. *(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 nAthair

Leader: Loving God, we thank you for the lives of our loved ones who have died. We remember with happiness the love and joy they brought to our lives. We ask you to care for those who are missing them at this time. May we one day be reunited with them in heaven, where every tear will be wiped away. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Reader 7: 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, and a holy rest, and peace at the last.

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

All: Amen.

Closing Song: I Watched the Sunrise (or another appropriate hymn)

