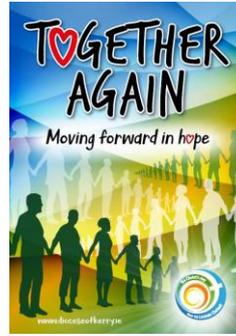


Together Again

Liturgy Resource - Autumn 2021



Prior to Sunday Oct 31st

- Invite children/ adults/ schools to write poetry/draw pictures/ photos to decorate a space in the church – these give us a flavour of who we are as we come together again. These images can be put up from now on. **Theme: Together again...**
- Parish newsletters carry the guidelines of gathering again. Add a note of welcome to all who are coming back to Sunday Mass for the first time – as guidelines change, offer clarity that may comfort the fearful.
- Outdoor signs/ posters letting people know that parish life is resuming in all its fulness.

Focal Space

As we come to celebrate, it can be helpful to create a focal space or image to enhance our attention. The past 18 months have been different and difficult for people in many ways. Our focal space is a way of holding all the experiences of life that have been part of our lives.

Creating a space

Create a path/road.....using a dark cloth, make some bends on the road ...at the beginning of the road, put March 2020.....towards the end of the road, put October 2021.

Here are some symbols you might like to add e.g.

- 1. Sanitiser, facemask, 2 metre distance sign*
- 2. Image of a mobile or webcam, tablet, laptop*
- 3. Basket of worries....a couple of stones with words like fear, anxiety, loneliness, worry, illness, on them*
- 4. Some pinecones or conkers, autumn leaves....gifts of nature, beauty*
- 5. Candle – reminds us that the light of Christ has been guiding us all along the road.*

The focal space can be placed wherever is most suitable in the church. Perhaps it would work better for your space to create a poster with a road on it, marking the different elements on it.

30th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Sunday Oct 31st

Celebration of Vigil and Sunday Mass

- Ushers welcome people into the church.
- Prolonged ringing of bells as the Entrance Procession, accompanied by a joyful hymn, makes its way to the Sanctuary.

Gathering Rite

- Celebrant welcomes everyone and invites them to be seated for the Welcome Prayer
Welcome Prayer – Read by an Usher

Loving God, you are always with us.

We gather here in our church, together again.

We come with great hope.

We welcome you who are young, welcome to you who are older,

We welcome you who are fearful, welcome to you who feel bolder

Welcome to you who are carrying the pain of loss – we will carry your loss with you.

Welcome to you who have had a new baby – we welcome your child among us.

Welcome to you who have married - we thank you for your witness to love.

Welcome to all the young people

who received their first communion or been confirmed over the past 18 months

- you are flames of hope and faith for our community.

We are gathered by our brother Jesus Christ,

and we come to give thanks..

the Spirit has kept the flame of faith flickering within us and through us,

through kindness, love, gentleness and service,

through frontline workers and background supporters,

through small and bigger gestures in our homes, in our communities,

bringing light and hope to our parish at this difficult time in our world.

Liturgy of the Word

- **Homily Notes**

It is good to be physically together again. Over the past 18 months, personally and as a community we have been moving forward with hope, but at times it has felt like our hope, our resilience, had been stretched to the limit...While it feels like we have been paused and stopped in some ways, our lives – our stories – keep going. And we know suffering, uncertainty and heartache are all yet to be encountered – or encountered again – as our lives march on.

Over the next couple of weeks, we need to take time to catch up with each other....much has happened, some people have lost dearly loved members of their families, relatives, friends...there have been moments of great joy as families welcomed a new baby, as children received the sacraments, as younger children started school for the first time and older children moved into post-primary schools, as young people moved on to college and as couples married... there are also less known stories of a job that has been lost, a relationship that has fallen apart....Each of us carries within us a mixture of emotions and experiences from the past year. As we come together again, we will listen to each other's stories.....we draw back the veil on what has sustained us, what has nurtured us, what has given us a new sense of gratitude....what has been happening in our lives..

As a parish community, we wish to gather the stories of our parish over the past while....this is not just a passing Instagram moment. Life encompasses joy and sorrow, suffering and celebration. And life ultimately gives way to death, and death to life everlasting. As Christians, we are invited to take a long, loving view at the whole of life. That which is hard and heart wrenching doesn't negate that which is good and wonderful. All of it is life; all of it is what it means to be human. And we trust that God is there through it all, saying nothing of a happy or sad ending, but promising love and compassion and a life story beyond our wildest imaginings.

- **Renewal of Baptismal Promises, instead of the Creed** – Presider sprinkles people from the sanctuary. Bottles of holy water will be available at the doors of the church to bring home.

- **Prayer of the Faithful**

The presider introduces the prayer and a member of the congregation, e.g. Minister of the Word, leads the petitions.

Presider: Loving God, your love and your word sustain us.
Hear the needs of your community,
gathered together again after so long apart.

Reader: For all Church and world leaders, that they may put the common good above national needs. *Lord hear us*

Reader: For all the parish communities of our diocese, that they may extend a hand of welcome and encouragement to all who seek hope. *Lord hear us*

Reader: For all who have worked on the frontlines during the pandemic, risking their safety for the good of others, and all who give of themselves to serve others. *Lord hear us*

Reader: For all families, especially those who are in difficulty. *Lord hear us*

Reader: For all who care for the sick and the dying. *Lord hear us*

Reader: For all who have died. *Lord hear us*

Presider Lord, you said where two or three gather in your name,
you are in their midst.
We make this prayer through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

All Amen

Liturgy of the Eucharist

The gifts of bread and wine are brought to the altar by members of the congregation.

- **Eucharistic Prayer for Various Needs IV – Jesus who went about doing good**

Concluding Rite

- Let people know that there are bottles of water available at the doors of the church
- **Final Blessing – Ordinary Time IV p554**

Prolonged ringing of bells as the Procession, accompanied by a joyful hymn, leaves the Sanctuary.

- **Hospitality after Mass**