NOVEMBER LITURGIES

Post Primary Schools – Diocese of Kerry

Included are suggestions and ideas for Remembrance for November, All Souls ,
All Saints and ideas for creating a Sacred Space.
These resources are suitable for Junior and Senior Cycle RE Classes

Ailish Walsh - Pastoral Centre | Diocese of Kerry
ailishwalsh@dioceseofkerry.ie

Remembering Our Dead.

Preparation

Students/Chaplain/Teacher may prepare a sacred space within the classroom prayer room with the names of those whom they would like to remember. This could be done during the service or beforehand using:

- Remembrance Book
- Wall display with the names of those we wish to remember
- A branch of a tree with the names of those we are remembering
- Stones with the names of those we wish to remember on them.

You could play instrumental music softly in the background as people enter the space or you could ask a student to play gently as well.

You may also like to ask students to bring a memento of a person they would especially like to remember e.g. a rosary beads they got from someone they loved who has passed, a chain or watch they received for Confirmation, a photo, a mortuary card. They could keep this with them and use it to help them focus during a meditation or a reflective moment in your service.

You may also like to include the following to help create an atmosphere of calm and reflection:

- A candle(s)
- A bible
- A cross
- Seating in a semicircle with the display on the floor in the middle of the space.
- Colours – green. This is the colour of the liturgical season, but you could also include the colours found in the falling leaves at this time of the year.

November Mass/Prayer Service of Remembrance

The following are suggestions that you can use to create a Remembrance Mass or Prayer Service

Music

There Are Many Rooms – Liam Lawton

In the Quiet – Liam Lawton

Voice of An Angel – Liam Lawton

Always There – Marie Cox

Sé an Tiarna M'Aoire – Padraig Ó Fiarachta and Fintan O'Carroll

The Lord is My Shepherd

Da Pacem – Taize

Healer of My Soul – Michael Talbot

On Eagle's Wings – Michael Joncas

Shepherd Me, O God - Marty Haugen

The Lord Will Heal the Broken Hearted – Liam Lawton

The Cloud's Veil – Liam Lawton

The Deer's Cry – Shaun Davey

May God Bless You and Keep You – Christopher Walker

Opening Prayers

Option 1

We have come together today to remember those from our school community and families who have died. We remember them with love, glad that they have touched our lives and sad that they are no longer with us. We remember them too with the hope that we will one day be reunited with them in heaven. We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen

Option 2

Lord we ask you to be with us as we gather today to remember our loved ones. We thank you for the gift of their lives and we place them safely in your care. We pray that they are at peace and we ask for the same peace in our own hearts. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

Option 3

The month of November is set aside by the Church as a time when we remember our dead in a special way in our prayers and visiting cemeteries. Today we gather to remember, to give thanks and to pray for our relatives and friends who have died. Whose we remember never die, they continue to be with us in the ways they have influenced our lives. Lord, we ask you to give consolation in our grief and hope in eternal life as you promised us, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Appropriate Readings

Isiah 49:13-16

Romans 8:35,37-39

John 14:1-7

Luke 7: 11-17

John 20:1-2, 11-18

Psalm 24

Prayers of Intercession/Prayers of the Faithful

A selection of 5 or 6 of these prayers could be used in a service. Following these prayers with some music, a ritual to remember the dead and then reciting the Our Father can be effective.

- We pray for those who are mourning their loved ones. Lord carry them lovingly in the palm of your hand. Lord hear us.
- We pray for the lonely, the weak and the sick that they can find hope and courage from your spirit. Lord hear us.
- We pray for all who help those who are grieving, may they be blessed with strength and gentleness. Lord hear us.
- We pray for all the people we know and love who have died, that they may live forever in the light and love of God. Lord hear us
- We pray for all those who are sad because someone they love has died, that they receive the help and support they need. Lord hear us.
- We pray for all of us who have come together to pray, that we may live well and fully in this life, having hope in the life to come. Lord hear us.
- We pray for all young people who have died as a result of addiction or an accident, that God will receive them into his everlasting love and care. Lord hear us.
- We pray for all people who suffer because of old age or illness, that they may the peace that comes from loving God. Lord hear us.

Reflections

Death is nothing at all.
I have only slipped away into the next room.
Nothing has happened.
Everything remains exactly as it was.
I am I and you are you.
Whatever we were to each other, that we are still.
Call me by my old familiar name.
Speak of me in the easy way which you always used.
Put no difference into your tone.
Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.
Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes that we enjoyed together.
Play, smile, think of me, pray for me.
Let my name be ever the household word that it always was.
Let it be spoken without an effort, without the ghost of a shadow upon it.
Life means all that it ever meant.
It is the same as it ever was.
There is absolute and unbroken continuity.
What is this death but a negligible accident?
Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight?
I am but waiting for you, for an interval, somewhere very near, just around the corner.
All is well.
Nothing is hurt; nothing is lost.
One brief moment and all will be as it was before.
How we shall laugh at the trouble of parting when we meet again!

Remember Me

When I come home at the end of the road,

And the sun has set for me,

I want no rites in a gloom-filled room;

Why cry for a soul set free.

Miss me a little but not too long,

And not with your heads bent low,

Remember the love that we once share,

Miss me but let me go.

For this is a journey we all must take,

And each must go alone,

It's all a part of the Master's plan,

A step on the road to home.

There is no night without dawning,

No winter without a spring,

And beyond death's dark horizon,

Our hearts once more will sing –

For those who leave us for a while,

Have only gone away,

Out of restless careworn world,

Into a brighter day.

A Prayer for November

Grant, O Lord, that my own heart may be touched, as your is, at the passing of all souls into eternal life.

In great confidence, I pray for all my friends and loved ones who are no longer here on this journey of faith

When I am sad at the death of those who were close to me, may my sadness be firmly supported by my faith that life is merely changed not ended, that those I love are still with me though unseen.

May You, Lord Jesus Christ, welcome me and all those for whom I pray, into eternal life. Amen.

The End of the Road is but a Bend in the Road

When we feel we have nothing left to give and we are sure that the song has ended.

When our day seems over and shadows fall and the darkness of night has descended.

Where can we go to find the strength to valiantly keep on trying?

Where can we find the hand that will dry the tears that the heart is crying?

There is one place to go and that is to God and dropping all pretence and pride we can pour out our problems without restraint and gain strength with Him at our side.

And together we stand at life's crossroads and view what we think is the end.

But God had a much bigger vision and he tells us it's only a bend.

So rest and relax and grow stronger, let go and let God share your load.

Your work is not finished or ended, You've just come to a bend in the road –

For the road goes on and is smoother and the 'pause' in the song is a 'rest' –

And the part that's unsung and unfinished is the sweetest and richest and best.

Concluding Prayers

Option1

Lord, we thank you for this time we have shared today to remember our loved ones. We thank you for the gift of their lives and we place them safely in your care. We pray that they are a peace and we ask for the same peace in our own hearts. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Option 2

Lord give us the certainty that beyond death there is a life where there is rest for the weary and joy for the sad and where all that we have loved wait for us until we meet again. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Option 3

Merciful God, You are the Lord of the living and the dead. You give to each one of us the precious gift of memory. When we remember those who have died, they live again in our hearts. Send you Holy Spirit to give us consolation in our loneliness and hope in the eternal life that you promised us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sample Prayer Service

What you will need:

- 5 candles
- A branch to hang the names of those to remembered on.
- Prepared pieces of paper in the shape of leaves or on purple card with names of those to be remembered *or* alternatively a Remembrance Book with the names of those to be remembered written in it previously.
- Students may also be invited in advance to bring a memento of one person they would like to remember in a special way during the service e.g. mortuary card

Remembering our Dead



As the group gathers quiet reflective music is played

Opening Prayer

Lord we ask you to be with us as we gather today to remember our loved ones. We thank you for the gift of their lives and we place them safely in your care. We pray that they are at peace and we ask for the same peace in our own hearts. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn: There Are Many Rooms in My Father's House

Reading

A reading from the Gospel of St. Luke

Jesus wen to a town called Nain accompanied by his disciples. Just as he arrived at the gate of the town a funeral procession was coming too. The dead man was the only son of a woman who was a widow, and a large crowd from the town was with her. When Jesus saw her, her heart was filled with pity for her, and he said to her, 'Don't cry'. Then he walked over and touched the coffin and the men carrying it stopped. Jesus said, ' Young man get up I tell you!' The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother. They were all filled with wonder and praised God. 'A great prophet has appeared among us,' they said, 'God has come to save his people.' The news about Jesus went out through all the country and the surrounding territory.

The word of the Lord.

Psalm (sung): Sé an Tiarna M'Aoire

Ritual of Light

Before the candles are lit each person should be asked to hold the memento of the person they especially want to remember in their hand.

Five candles are lit, Grief, Courage, Memory, Love and Hope – each one as the commentary is read.

Grief – Tn our sorrow, the light of courage helps us to comfort each other and change our lives.

Courage – In our sorrow, the light of courage helps us to comfort each other and change our lives.

Memory – This light is our memory, all of those other candles we lit when you were with us – the candle of Baptism, the birthday candles on your cake, the candles at Christmas and other special times. We remember the fun, the tears, the times when we were cross at each other, the silly things you said, the care and joy you gave us.

Love – Your light will always shine. There is a cherished place for you always in our hearts. We thank you for the gift that you living brought.

Hope – This is the light of hope, hope in the resurrection and hope that our lights will shine brighter than ever when we are together again.

Hymn: In the Quiet

Intercessions

We pray for all who help those who are grieving, may they be blessed with strength and gentleness. Lord hear us.

We pray for all the people we know and love who have died, that they may live forever in the light and love of God. Lord hear us

We pray for all those who are sad because someone they love has died, that they receive the help and support they need. Lord hear us.

We pray for all of us who have come together to pray, that we may live well and fully in this life, having hope in the life to come. Lord hear us.

Together we pray Our Father….

Closing Prayer

Lord, we thank you for this time we have shared today to remember our loved ones. We thank you for the gift of their lives and we place them safely in your care. We pray that they are a peace and we ask for the same peace in our own hearts. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Closing Hymn: Eagles Wings

The Feast of All Souls – Resources

- Date: November 2
- Type of Feast: Commemoration

The History of All Souls Day

The importance of All Souls Day was made clear by Pope Benedict XV (1914-22) when he granted all priests the privilege of celebrating three Masses on All Souls Day: one for the faithful departed; one for the priest's intentions; and one for the intentions of the Holy Father. On only a handful of other very important feast days are priests allowed to celebrate more than two Masses.

Pope Benedict XV

While All Souls Day is now paired with All Saints Day (November 1), which celebrates all of the faithful who are in Heaven, it originally was celebrated in the Easter season, around Pentecost Sunday (and still is in the Eastern Catholic Churches). By the tenth century, the celebration had been moved to October; and sometime between 998 and 1030, St. Odilo of Cluny decreed that it should be celebrated on November 2 in all of the monasteries of his Benedictine congregation. Over the next two centuries, other Benedictines and the Carthusians began to celebrate it in their monasteries as well, and soon the commemoration of all the Holy Souls in Purgatory spread to the entire Church.

Offering Our Efforts on Behalf of the Holy Souls

On All Souls Day, we not only remember the dead, but we apply our efforts, through prayer, almsgiving, and the Mass, to their release from Purgatory. There are two plenary indulgences attached to All Souls Day, one for visiting a church and another for visiting a cemetery. (The plenary indulgence for visiting a cemetery can also be obtained every day from November 1-8, and, as a partial indulgence, on any day of the year.) While the actions are performed by the living, the merits of the indulgences are applicable only to the souls in Purgatory. Since a plenary indulgence removes all of the temporal punishment for sin, which is the reason why souls are in Purgatory in the first place, applying a plenary indulgence to one of the Holy Souls in Purgatory means that the Holy Soul is released from Purgatory and enters Heaven.

Praying for the dead is a Christian obligation. In the modern world, when many have come to doubt the Church's teaching on Purgatory, the need for such prayers has only increased. The Church devotes the month of November to prayer for the Holy Souls in Purgatory, and participation in the Mass of All Souls Day is a good way to begin the month.

Feast of All Saints – Teacher Notes/Reading Comprehension

All Saints' Day is a solemn holy day of the Catholic Church celebrated annually on November 1. The day is dedicated to the saints of the Church, that is, all those who have attained heaven..

Generally, All Saints' Day is a Catholic Holy Day of Obligation, meaning all Catholics are required to attend Mass on that day.

All Saints' Day was formally started by Pope Boniface IV, who consecrated the Pantheon at Rome to the Virgin Mary and all the Martyrs on May 13 in 609 AD. Boniface IV also established All Souls' Day, which follows All Saints.

The choice of the day may have been intended to co-opt the pagan holiday "Feast of the Lamures," a day which pagans used to placate the restless spirits of the dead.

The holy day was eventually established on November 1 by Pope Gregory III in the mid-eighth century as a day dedicated to the saints and their relics. The May 13 celebration was subsequently abandoned.

In Ireland, the Church celebrated All Saints' Day on April 20, to avoid associating the day with the traditional harvest festivals and pagan feasts associated with Samhain, celebrated at the same time.

Following the establishment of the Frankish Empire, and following the reign of Charlemagne, the holy day, which was already celebrated on November 1, became a holy day of obligation by decree of Pope Gregory IV and Louis the Pious, who was king over a portion of Charlemagne's former empire.

Following the Protestant Reformation, many Protestants retained the holy day, although they dismissed the need to pray for the dead. Instead, the day has been used to commemorate those who have recently died, usually in the past year, and to remember the examples of those who lived holy lives.

The Catholic practice however, celebrates all those who have entered heaven, including saints who are recognized by the Church and those who are not.

Holy day customs vary around the world. In the United States, the day before is Halloween and is usually celebrated by dressing in costumes with themes of death commonly associated. Children go door-to-door in costume, trick-or-treating, that is soliciting candy from their neighbors. The holiday has lost much of its connection to its religious origins.

Although nearly everyone celebrates Halloween for the fun of the secular holiday, the following religious solemnity, is not widely practiced or acknowledged by most Americans unless they are Catholic.

In other countries, such as Portugal, Spain and Mexico, traditional practices include performance of the play, "Don Juan Tenorio" and offerings made to the dead. All Saints'

Say occurs on the same day as the Mexican "Dide los Innocentes" a day dedicated to deceased children.

Across much of Europe, the day is commemorated with offerings of flowers left on the graves of the dead. In Eastern Europe, candles are lit on graves instead of offerings of flowers.

In some places, such as the Philippines, graves can be painted and repaired by family members. Many of these practices blur the distinction between All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day.

✨ All Saints' Day – Religious Education Lesson Plan (Ages 12–18)

🧭 Lesson Plan

Topic: All Saints' Day – "Called to Holiness"
Duration: 45–60 minutes
Feast Date: November 1
Theme Scripture: *"Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy."* — Leviticus 19:2

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explain the origin and meaning of All Saints' Day in the Catholic tradition.
2. Understand the Communion of Saints and what it means for the Church today.
3. Distinguish between All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day.
4. Reflect on how they are personally called to holiness and service in daily life.

Materials Needed

- Bibles (for reflection verse)
- Copies of student worksheet (below)
- Whiteboard or projector
- World map or globe
- Art materials (for creative project)

Lesson Plan

1. Opening Prayer & Reflection (5 minutes)

Invite students to pray:

"Lord, you call us all to be saints. Help us to live with love and courage so that we may grow closer to You. Amen."

Then ask:

"When you hear the word *saint*, what kind of person comes to mind?"

Write student responses on the board.

---

2. Scripture Connection (5–10 minutes)

Read together:

- *Matthew 5:1–12* (The Beatitudes) or
- *Hebrews 12:1* ("Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses...")

Briefly discuss:

- What do the Beatitudes teach us about holiness?
- Who are the "cloud of witnesses"?

---

3. Teaching & Discussion (15–20 minutes)

Comprehension Summary (from original information sheet):

- All Saints' Day honours all who are in heaven, known and unknown.
- Began with Pope Boniface IV in 609 AD when he dedicated the Pantheon to Mary and all martyrs.
- Moved to November 1 by Pope Gregory III in the 8th century.
- Declared a Holy Day of Obligation by Pope Gregory IV and Louis the Pious.
- Distinct from All Souls' Day (Nov 2), which prays for those still being purified.
- Customs vary worldwide: Mass attendance, lighting candles, visiting graves, decorating cemeteries, or remembering saints in prayer.

Discussion Prompts:

- Why does the Church honour *all* saints, not just famous ones?
- How does the Communion of Saints connect the Church on earth, in heaven, and in purgatory?
- How can young people today live "saintly" lives?

---

4. Activity Options (Choose one or two – 15–20 minutes)

A. Faith in Action Map

Students mark countries on a world map and write or draw one All Saints' Day custom practiced there (e.g., lighting candles in Poland, grave cleaning in the Philippines). Discuss what these customs say about faith and remembrance.

B. “Called to Be Saints” Reflection

Students write a short paragraph:

“If I were to become a saint, what would I be the patron of — and why?”

Encourage creative but faith-based responses (e.g., patron of students, musicians, or kindness).

C. Saint Inspiration Cards

Each student selects a saint (canonized or not) and creates a mini-card. This could be based on the saints name they took for Confirmation:

- Saint’s name & symbol
- Feast day
- A short quote or prayer
- How that saint inspires them personally

---

5. Closing (5 minutes)

- **Review key points (origin, meaning, celebration, call to holiness).**



Student Worksheet: All Saints' Day

Name: _____ **Class:** _____ **Date:** _____

Part A: Understanding the Feast

1. What is celebrated on All Saints' Day?
2. Who began this feast and why?
3. How is it different from All Souls' Day?
4. Why is it called a *Holy Day of Obligation*?
5. List two ways people celebrate All Saints' Day around the world.

Part B: Faith and Reflection

1. What does it mean that we are "called to be saints"?
2. Name one saint or holy person who inspires you. What do you admire about them?
3. Complete the sentence:

"I can live like a saint today by _____."

Part C: Scripture Focus (Matthew 5:1–12 or Hebrews 12:1)

- What part of this scripture reminds you most of what it means to be a saint?
- How can you live that message this week?

Part D: Extension (Optional)

Design a "Saint Shield" that represents the values or virtues you want to live by (e.g., faith, service, humility, courage).

Project Ideas for RE Classes

1. "Living Saints" Interview Project

Students interview a family member, teacher, or parish volunteer who models holiness. Create a short written or video profile titled *"A Modern Saint in My Life."*

---

2. Saint Biography Exhibit

Each student chooses a saint and presents:

- Short biography
- Patronage & feast day
- One virtue or miracle
- Personal reflection: "What can I learn from this saint?"
  Option: Hold an *All Saints' Fair* in class.

---

3. Creative Reflection: "Path to Sainthood"

Students write a poem, prayer, or song about holiness, service, or following Christ's example.

---

4. Cultural Connections Display

In groups, research how All Saints' or All Souls' Day is celebrated in one country. Include visuals, music, or traditional prayers — highlight the connection between faith and culture.
