

# Mission Together

## Holy Souls Liturgical Prayer & Activities



**INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS:** In the global Catholic Church, November is traditionally a month when we pray for the Holy Souls. These are not only people we have known and loved, but also people who have died alone and have no one to pray for them. This month of remembrance reminds us that the love and dignity afforded to all people, continues even after death. It begins with two important feast days: The Feast of All Saints \* (Nov 1), and the Feast of the Holy Souls (Nov 2). Our Holy Souls liturgical prayer and activities can be employed on 2 November, or at any time during this special month.

\* For more information on the Feast of All Saints, please download our assembly: [missiontogether.org.uk/calendar/all-saints](http://missiontogether.org.uk/calendar/all-saints)

### LITURGY PLAN

#### Setting the scene

Please refer to our guide: *How to Pray with Children*: [missiontogether.org.uk/prayer-resources](http://missiontogether.org.uk/prayer-resources)

#### Opening hymn or recorded music

Our suggestion: *The Love I have for You, My Lord*.

#### Sign of the cross and opening prayer

Print the opening prayer on page 2 and ask a pupil to read.

#### Introduction

Print the introduction on page 2 and ask pupils to read.

#### Gospel Reading John 14:1-3 (adapted for children from the JB)

Print page 2 and ask a pupil to read.

#### Gospel Reflection

See page 3. We suggest this is delivered by a teacher / chaplain.

#### Prayers of intercession

Print the prayers on page 4 and ask pupils to read.

#### Mission Together prayer

See to the right.

#### Sign of the cross

#### Closing hymn or recorded music

Our suggestion: *Be Still for the Presence of the Lord*.

#### Follow up activities (see Appendix 1)

*A remembrance visit to your Parish Church & Holy Souls Candles*

#### Mission Together Prayer

May all children  
In the world  
Share love  
Share friendship and live  
In the peace  
Of God's love  
Now and forever. **Amen.**

Mission Together is the children's branch of Missio, the Pope's charity for world mission.

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**missio**



## Opening Prayer

**Reader:** God our loving Father,  
During November, the month of the Holy Souls,  
Help us to honour those who have died.  
Hear us as we pray for loved ones who have moved on from this world to join you in heaven.  
Through our prayers for the Holy Souls may we know that your love  
unites all your children, in heaven and on earth, now and forever. **Amen.**

## Introduction

**Reader 1:** Every year, on the first day of November, Catholic churches around the world hold a special Mass to remember and pray for all the saints in heaven. Saints are people who dedicated their lives to loving God and serving other people when they were here on earth.

**Reader 2:** There are many other people who are also treasured members of the Church and who have died. They are called the Holy Souls. They too deserve our attention and respect. And so, during the month of November, we remember and pray for the Holy Souls.

**Reader 3:** It is sad when someone dies and sometimes it is difficult to remember them. We can feel lonely and upset or even angry. But, as followers of Jesus, we know that death is not the end. Jesus tells us that God, our Father, wants us to live with him forever in a new life of happiness.

**Reader 4:** Let's hear Jesus share that message now, in a reading from the Gospel of St John. In the reading the disciples are becoming worried, as it is the night before Good Friday. The disciples know that Jesus' life is in danger, and are unsure when and where they will see their friend, Jesus, again. Listen carefully to Jesus' response.

**Reader 5:** A reading from the Gospel of John.

Jesus said to his disciples,  
'Do not let your hearts be troubled.  
Trust in God still, and trust in me.  
There are many rooms in my Father's house;  
If there were not, I would have told you.  
I am going now to prepare a place for you,  
I shall return to take you with me;  
So that where I am you may be too.'

The Gospel of the Lord

**R/ Praise to you, Lord, Jesus Christ**



## Reflection (We suggest this is delivered by a teacher / chaplain)

In the reading we've just heard, Jesus talks about his Father's house.

**Q.** Do you think Jesus is referring to a real house, made of bricks, or is he talking about another kind of place? If so, what is the special place that Jesus is speaking of?

**A.** The house with many rooms that Jesus speaks about is a metaphor for heaven.

A metaphor is a word or phrase used to describe something as if it was something else. Sometimes we use metaphors to help us understand an idea or thing that is so wonderful and mysterious that we can't fully explain it in words. Like heaven.

**Q.** When Jesus describes heaven as being like his Father's house, Jesus stresses that God's house has many rooms. Why would God need so much space?

**A.** Jesus wants his disciples, and us, to know that heaven is big enough for everyone. That's why Jesus encourages us to imagine a huge heavenly home, a house full of rooms and full of welcome.

There's another thing that Jesus says to his disciples in today's reading. It's another message that's important for us to remember, especially when someone we love dies.

**Q.** Can anyone remember what Jesus says to comfort and encourage his disciples?

**A.** 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still, and trust in me.'

When someone dies, it is very sad and our hearts can be troubled. But Jesus invites us to share our sorrow with him, and to trust that he will always be there to comfort and encourage us.

However, even though Jesus asked his disciples not to be troubled, they did remain so. That's because they didn't know what would happen three days after Jesus died on the cross.

**Q.** Can anyone here tell us what happened three days after Good Friday?

**A.** Jesus was resurrected.

Jesus rose from the dead to show the disciples, and us, that death is not the end. On Easter Sunday, Jesus showed the world that, with God, there is new life for us in heaven. There with Jesus, all the saints, and Holy Souls, we will be united in God's everlasting love.

We are part of this love here on earth too, which is why in November we make a special effort to remember in our prayers those who have moved on from this world to join God our Father in heaven.

Let's do that now as we pray together.



## Prayers of Intercession

**Reader:** The response to our prayer is: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

**Reader:** Heavenly Father, help us to learn that even after someone dies, they remain precious and worthy of our respect and love. Show us the importance of honouring their memory through our prayers, words, and actions. Lord hear us.

**Reader:** Heavenly Father, we pray for our family and friends who have moved on from this world to join you in heaven. Hear us too as we pray for those Holy Souls who have nobody on earth to pray for them. May they all find rest with you in heaven. Lord hear us.

**Reader:** Heavenly Father, we pray for those who are sad because someone they love has died. Help us to be good friends to those who grieve. May we support them in their sadness through our prayers and acts of kindness. Lord hear us.

**Reader:** Heavenly Father, today we have heard how your home in heaven is big enough to welcome all who follow your ways. Bless us with hearts that are big enough to welcome your children here on earth, so that your peace and love are known in this world too. Lord hear us.

**Reader:** Let us all now say out loud our *Mission Together* prayer.

### **Mission Together Prayer**

**May all children**

**In the world**

**Share love**

**Share friendship and live**

**In the peace**

**Of God's love**

**Now and forever. Amen.**

## Closing hymn or recorded music

# Appendix 1: Holy Souls Activities



## ACTIVITY ONE: A remembrance visit to your parish church

*The following activity is suggested to help nurture home, school, and parish links.*

If your school is fortunate to have its parish church close by, plan a visit to discover the names of past parishioners memorialised on stained glass windows, benches, statues, even chalices and patens.

This is a great activity to involve your Parish Priest, parishioners, or foundation governors. These individuals could help pupils identify artifacts dedicated to deceased parishioners. Your Parish Priest / parishioner or governor may also be able to shed some light on the memorialised individuals.

Pupils could be invited to sketch dedicated artifacts and record the names to whom they are dedicated - there may even be descendants in school (pupils or staff). Your church visit could conclude with prayers for the names recorded and for all the Holy Souls. If possible, ask your Parish Priest to light the Paschal Candle during your remembrance prayers. If your Priest can explain the significance of the Paschal Candle to the children, better still.

The Paschal (Easter) Candle is first lit during the Easter Vigil Mass (new candles are used every year). It's a symbol of Christ's light - which overcomes all darkness - and Christ's Resurrection, which wins for us the promise of eternal life. For these and other reasons, the Paschal Candle is lit during Baptisms and Funerals.

### For this activity pupils will need:

- A clipboard, pencil, sheets of paper / jotter.

## ACTIVITY TWO: Holy Soul Candles

Traditionally, November is a month when we light candles in memory of deceased loved ones. As a safe alternative, copy and cut out our Holy Souls candle templates (Appendix 2). Invite pupils to write in the designated box the names of loved ones they'd like to remember and pray for in November. Pupils who have no one in mind, could pray for the unknown Holy Souls. Once written, pupils can then decorate the rest of their candle.

When the Holy Soul Candles are complete, display near your school's prayer space or a prominent wall, as a prayer prompt. As an alternative to displaying in school, ask your Parish Priest if pupils could add their Holy Souls candles alongside the parish remembrance book. Many churches have a remembrance book displayed during the month of November, often on or near the church sanctuary. If possible, ask your Priest to light the Paschal Candle during your visit. If your Priest can explain the significance of the Paschal Candle to the children, better still. The Paschal (Easter) Candle is first lit during the Easter Vigil Mass (new candles are used every year). It's a symbol of Christ's light - which overcomes all darkness - and Christ's Resurrection, which wins for us the promise of eternal life. For these and other reasons, the Paschal Candle is lit

### For this activity pupils will need:

- A Holy Souls candle (Appendix 2)
- Pencils, pens, paint, collage paper.
- Scissors and glue (optional)

Appendix 2: Holy Souls Candles

