**Liturgy for School Staff in a Time of Bereavement (loss of a pupil)**

This can be held in school or in your local parish. You may wish to play some quiet instrumental music as staff members gather for this prayer service.

**What you will need:**

Sacred space: altar table, white altar cloth, candles (matches), perhaps an image of Jesus or Our Lady as a focal point, crucifix

Quiet music (optional)

Flower or tealight for each member of staff (optional)

Microphone (if required for large group)

**Opening Hymn:** (optional)

Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;

the darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide:

when other helpers fail and comforts flee,

help of the helpless, O abide with me.

I need thy presence every passing hour;

what but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?

Who, like thyself, my guide and stay can be?

Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.

I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;

ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.

Where is death's dark sting? where, grave, thy victory?

I triumph still, if thou abide with me.

Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes;

shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;

heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;

in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

**Opening prayer:**

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

**Leader:** Lord, almighty and eternal God, hear our prayers for your servant (...name...), whom you have summoned out of this world. Accept (...Name...) into your safekeeping and raise him/her up with all the saints to inherit your eternal kingdom. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**R. Amen**

**Scripture Reading:** 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14, 18 (*We shall be with the Lord forever.)*

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians

We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters,

 about those who have fallen asleep,

 so that you may not grieve like the rest, who have no hope.

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose,

 so too will God, through Jesus,

 bring with him those who have fallen asleep.

Therefore, console one another with these words.

The word of the Lord.

**Allow some time for quiet reflection.**

**Intercessions**

Response: to Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer

For (...Name...)and all the departed whom we have known and loved, that they may live for ever in their Father’s house. Lord in your mercy. R/

For the family of (…Name…) that they may be comforted in this time of grief. Lord in your mercy. R/

For all of us gathered here, that our faith may be stronger than our grief, and that our regrets may not be without hope. Lord in your mercy. R/

For all who suffer, that they may never feel God has abandoned them. Lord in your mercy. R/

For the church, that she may faithfully reveal to the world Christ who is Lord of the living and the dead. Lord in your mercy. R/

**Leader:** We bring these and all our prayers before God Our Heavenly Father as we say:

**All:**Our Father...

You may wish to play some quiet music while members of staff have the opportunity to light a candle, place a flower or offer prayers in silence for the deceased.

Alternatively, staff could offer one another the sign of peace before moving to the concluding prayer.

**All join in praying:** Eternal rest grant unto him/her, O Lord.
And let perpetual light shine upon him/her.
May he/she rest in peace.
Amen.
May his/her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God,
rest in peace.
Amen.

**Concluding prayer:**

Lord God,

from whom human sadness is never hidden,

you know the burden of grief

that we feel at the loss of - - - - - - - - .

As we mourn his/her passing from this life,

comfort us with the knowledge

that - - - - - - - . now lives in your loving embrace.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

**Invocation of God’s blessings**

May the love of God and the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ bless and console us and gently wipe every tear from our eyes: in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

**Recessional Hymn:** (optional)

Awake from your slumber

Arise from your sleep

A new day is dawning

For all those who weep

The people in darkness

Have seen a great light

The lord of our longing

Has conquered the night

*Let us build the city of God*

*May our tears*

*Be turned into dancing*

*For the lord*

*Our light and our love*

*Has turned the night into day*

We are sons of the morning,

We are children of day.

The one who has loved us

Has brightened our way.

The lord of all kindness

Has called us to be

A light for his people

To set their hearts free.