**Guidelines for Leader**

Ideally this service should take place in the school oratory/prayer space, or in a room which has been adapted to allow a more prayerful atmosphere.

A PowerPoint presentation has been provided to accompany this prayer service for optional use and is available from <http://www.rercglasgow.org/prayer-resources1.html>.

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**Slide 1**

**Hymn – This can be changed or omitted according to local circumstances.**

Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,

naught be all else to me save that thou art;

thou my best thought in the day and night,

waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word,

I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;

thou my great Father, and I thy true son;

thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.

Be thou my breast-plate, my sword for the fight,

be thou my armour, and be thou my might,

thou my soul’s shelter, and thou my high tower,

raise thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.

Riches I need not, nor man’s empty praise,

thou mine inheritance through all my days;

thou, and thou only, the first in my heart,

high King of heaven, my treasure thou art!

High King of heaven when battle is done,

grant heaven’s joy to me, O bright heaven’s sun;

Christ of my own heart, whatever befall,

still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Be thou my vision: Words: Irish 8th century,

tr. Mary Byrne versified by Eleanor Hull. (Public Domain)

Leader: O God, come to our aid

All: O Lord, make haste to help us.

Leader: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit

All: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Amen.

Leader: Let us begin our year in prayer, giving praise to God and reflecting on this noble vocation that he has entrusted to us to form young people as the saints of the 21st century (cf Pope Benedict XVI, Homily at Bellahouston Park, 16 Sept 2010).

**Slide 2**

**Prayer – recited by all**

Lord Jesus Christ,

time and time again throughout your ministry,

You made time to be still,

to draw away from the crowds

so that in quietness you could reflect on your calling.

You needed those moments

just as we need them in our turn.

So now we have made space in our lives,

away from the daily demands,

away from the usual routine.

We are here, Lord, with time for you,

in stillness and in quietness to seek your will.

Lord Jesus Christ,

use these moments

to refresh us, to feed us,

to challenge us, to inspire us.

Fill them with your love

and so may we be filled to overflowing. Amen

(Nick Fawcett, No Ordinary Man)

**Scripture Reading – read by leader or member of staff**

Matt 16:13-20

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi he put this question to his disciples, ‘Who do people say the Son of Man is?’ and they said, ‘Some say he is John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ ‘But you,’ he said ‘who do you say I am?’ then Simon Peter spoke up, ‘You are the Christ,’ he said, ‘the Son of the living God.’ Jesus replied, ‘Simon son of Jonah, you are a happy man! Because it was not flesh and blood that revealed this to you but my father in heaven. So now I say to you: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church. And the gates of the underworld can never hold out against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.’

**Reflection**

**Slide 3: Image of St John Paul II; click to show reflection questions after reading the reflection.**

The text is included in the participant’s booklet but should be read by aloud the leader or a member of staff. You may wish to highlight the main points of the reflection in your own words before staff reflect on the questions.

“We know Peter’s frank and impetuous response: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Mt 16:16). So that we may be able to formulate it not only in abstract terms, but as an expression of a living experience, the fruit of a gift of the Father (cf. Mt 26:17), each one of us must let himself be touched personally by the question: “And you, who do you say I am? You who hear me spoken of, answer me. What do I really mean for you?” Peter’s divine illumination and response of faith came after a long period of living close to Jesus, hearing his words and observing his life and ministry (cf. Mt 16:21-24).

“In our case also, in order to make a more conscious profession of faith in Jesus Christ, we must like Peter, listen attentively and carefully. We must follow in the school of the first disciples who had become his witnesses and our teachers. At the same time we must accept the experience and testimony of no less than twenty centuries of history marked by the Master’s question and enriched by the immense chorus of responses of the faithful of all times and places.”

St John Paul II, General Audience, 7 January 1987

Reflection questions:

* Who is Jesus for me, what place does He have in my life?
* How do I engage with the ‘experience and testimony’ of the Church to help me grow in my relationship with Jesus?

Quiet music may help to maintain a prayerful atmosphere during the time of reflection.

**Slide 4**

**Prayer – recited by all**

Lord Jesus Christ,

as we gather to worship you,

help us to see you here among us,

so that we might equally see you everywhere.

Give us a clearer picture of your greatness and power,

your love and your mercy,

your purpose for us and for all.

Broaden our vision

and help us to catch a glimpse of you in all your glory,

filling us with joy, faith, hope and love,

now and always.

Amen.

**Refection**

**Slide 5: Image of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI; click to show reflection questions after reading the reflection.**

The text is included in the participant’s booklet but should be read aloud by the leader or a member of staff. You may wish to highlight the main points of the reflection in your own words before staff reflect on the questions.

“It is here that appears the dynamism of the life of a Christian, an apostle: *I chose you to go forth.* We must be enlivened by a holy restlessness: a restlessness to bring to everyone the gift of faith, of friendship with Christ. Truly, the love and friendship of God was given to us so that it might also be shared with others. We have received the faith to give it to others - we are priests in order to serve others. And we must bear fruit that will endure.

“All people desire to leave a lasting mark. But what endures? Money does not. Even buildings do not, nor books. After a certain time, longer or shorter, all these things disappear. The only thing that lasts for ever is the human soul, the human person created by God for eternity.

“The fruit that endures is therefore all that we have sown in human souls: love, knowledge, a gesture capable of touching hearts, words that open the soul to joy in the Lord. So let us go and pray to the Lord to help us bear fruit that endures. Only in this way will the earth be changed from a valley of tears to a garden of God.”

Cardinal Ratzinger, Homily 18 April 2005

Reflection questions:

* Do I consider my work to be touching human souls?
* How do I open ‘the soul (of students and colleagues) to joy in the Lord’?

Quiet music may help to maintain a prayerful atmosphere during the time of reflection.

**Slide 6**

**Intercessions**

Read by the leader of a member of staff.

Entrusting ourselves to the guidance and goodness of God, we offer our prayers to our heavenly Father.

Our Father who art in heaven: let us pray that we will always remember that we are citizens of heaven as well as earth, children of the merciful and loving Father.

Lord hear us

Hallowed be thy name: let us pray that all we do and all we say will be done in the name of the Jesus and so give glory to the eternal Father.

Thy Kingdom come: let us pray that children and young people in our care will experience school to be a place where the values of God’s Kingdom are a lived reality.

Lord hear us

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven: let us pray that we will help our students to discern the will of God and encourage them to do it through the witness of our own lives.

Lord hear us

Give us this day our daily bread: let us pray that the ‘food’ we offer our students will truly nourish them, giving them life through an encounter with the mystery of creation and human life that we explore in our classrooms.

Lord hear us

And forgive us our trespasses; let us pray that we will recognize our human weakness and frailty, entrusting ourselves to the mercy of God and the forgiveness of our colleagues and friends.

Lord hear us

As we forgive those who trespass against us: let us pray that we will tread gently in the fragility of others’ lives, raising them up when they have fallen and always offering them hope of new life.

Lord hear us.

And lead us not into temptation: let us pray at the beginning of a new year, that we will not be overcome by our own weakness and sinfulness, but always be strong in our vocation to form young people in life of faith.

Lord hear us

But deliver us from evil: let us pray that the Lord will bless all that we do and use it as a force for good, that we make known His love for the good of others and for His glory.

Lord hear us

We sum up these and all our prayers in the words our Saviour gave us: Our Father …

St Luke tells us that under Mary’s care Jesus “increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and men”; let us seek her intercession that we too may grow in wisdom and serve God and men in the year ahead: Hail Mary …

**Closing prayer – recited by all**

Lord God, your spirit of wisdom fills the earth  
and teaches us in your ways.  
Look upon us teachers.  
Let us strive to share our knowledge with gentle patience  
and endeavor always to bring the truth to eager minds.  
Grant that we may follow Jesus Christ, the way, the truth and the life,  
forever and ever.  
Amen.

Leader: Let us bless the Lord

All: Thanks be to God

**Hymn – This can be changed or omitted according to local circumstances.**

Christ be beside me, Christ be before me,

Christ be behind me, King of my heart,

Christ be within me, Christ be before me,

Christ be above me, never to part.

Christ on my right hand, Christ on my left hand,

Christ all around me, shield in the strife.

Christ in my sleeping, Christ in my sitting,

Christ in my rising, light of my life.

Christ be in all hearts thinking about me.

Christ be in all tongues telling of me.

Christ be the vision in eyes that see me,

in ears that hear me, Christ ever be.

Adapted from ‘St Patrick’s Breastplate ‘© James Quinn