

Graduation Mass Resource 2022



A selection of prayers, scripture readings, and music

Graduation Mass (Secondary School)

Creating a Prayerful Space

Preparation for a Graduation Mass is an ideal opportunity for chaplains, RE teams, teachers and students to work collaboratively in selecting an overall theme (if appropriate), readings, prayers of the faithful, symbols, music, reflections, and encouraging active participation among the student body.

As students graduate, it is important to acknowledge with gratitude staff, parents, fellow-students, achievements, and challenges.

In preparing the liturgical space a tableau (display) of artwork or symbols could reflect aspects of student life in the school. These symbols should be brought to the altar in procession at the beginning of the Mass, ideally before the opening hymn. This is an ideal way of creating a prayerful space for the celebration of Eucharist.

Themed Tableau Suggestions

- 1) Symbols representing each year of the students' time in the school.
- 2) Symbols representing the nationalities/cultures that make up the year group.
- 3) Symbols representing the various academic, sporting, extra-curricular activities undertaken by students in a particular year-group.
- 4) Symbols representing the key national/international events that shaped their graduation year.
- 5) Symbols of social outreach projects undertaken by each class group of the graduating year group.
- 6) Symbols representing their hopes for the future.

(Please note: these are only suggestions. Those preparing the liturgy can prepare a short commentary on each of the symbols selected.)

Welcome: Principal and a student

Instrumental music during which the symbols described above would be brought to the altar, and the commentary read.

All are invited to stand for the opening hymn.

Opening Hymn – (See section on music)

The Priest begins the Mass.

Penitential Rite.

The Penitential Rite focuses on God’s love and faithfulness to us rather than on the ways that we have failed God. Despite our turning away from God, God is a loving, merciful and forgiving God, inviting us to come back to Him with all our hearts.

Lord Jesus, you forgave those who had turned away from you. Lord, have mercy.
Lord Jesus, you gave time to those who were lost and hurt. Christ, have mercy.
Lord Jesus, you call us to friendship with you. Lord, have mercy.

The Gloria may be recited or sung.

Opening Prayer

Let us pray,

God our Father, you are the giver of all good gifts.

You surround us in this world with the beauty of creation and invite us to walk in your presence each day.

As we come to the end of our time together in this school let us be thankful for all we have achieved through you.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

A reading from the book of Sirach

(Sirach 2:1-6)

My child, if you aspire to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for an ordeal. Be sincere of heart, be steadfast, and do not be alarmed when disaster comes. Cling to him and do not leave him, so that you may be honoured at the end of your days. Whatever happens to you, accept it, and in the uncertainties of your humble state, be patient, since gold is tested in the fire, and the chosen in the furnace of humiliation. Trust him and he will uphold you, follow a straight path and hope in him.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Or

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 29: 11- 14

The word of the Lord was addressed to me saying, I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the LORD, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Or

A Reading from the prophet Isaiah

(Isaiah 43:1-3)

But now, says Yahweh, who created you Jacob, and who formed you Israel.
'Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name,
you are mine. Should you pass through the sea, I shall be with you, or through
the rivers, they shall not swallow you up. Should you walk through fire you
will not be scorched and the flames will not burn you. You are precious in my
eyes and I love you. Do not be afraid for I am not with you.'

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Or

A reading from the book of Proverbs

(Proverbs 8:32-35)

The Wisdom of God cries aloud:
'And now, my children, listen to me:
happy are those who keep my ways.
Hear instruction and be wise,
and do not neglect it.
Happy is the one who listens to me,
watching daily at my gates,
waiting beside my doors.
For whoever finds me finds life
and obtains favour from the LORD

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Or

A reading from the book of Numbers

(Numbers: 6:24-26)

The Lord spoke to Moses and said, ‘Say this to Aaron and his sons:
“This is how you are to bless the sons of Israel. You shall say to them:
May the Lord bless you and keep you.
May the Lord let his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
May the Lord uncover his face to you and bring you peace.”
This is how they are to call down my name on the people of Israel, and I will
bless them.’

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm
(The psalm should be sung)



Second Reading:

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Philippians

Every time I pray for you all of you, I pray with joy remembering how you have helped spread the Good news from the day you first heard it right up to the present. I am quite certain that the one who began this good work in you will see that it is finished when the Day of Christ Jesus comes. My prayer is that your love for each other may increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognise what is best.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Or

A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Thessalonians (1 Thess 2:13-17)

But we must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the first fruits for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and through belief in the truth. For this purpose he called you through our proclamation of the good news, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brothers and sisters stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by our letter.

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and through grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope, comfort your hearts and strengthen them in every good work and word.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Or

A reading from the first letter of John

(1 John 4:7-12)

My dear friends, we must love each other.

Love comes from God, and when we love each other, it shows that we have been given new life.

We are now God's children, and we know him.

God is love, and anyone who doesn't love others has never known him.

God showed his love for us when he sent his only Son into the world to give us life.

Real love is not our love for God, but his love for us.

God sent his Son to be the sacrifice by which our sins are forgiven.

Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**Gospel Acclamation:
Alleluia**



A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke.

(Lk. 8:4-8)

With a large crowd gathering, as people from every town find their way to him, he used this parable: ‘A sower went out to sow his seed. As he sowed some seeds fell on the edge of the path and were trampled on; and the birds of the air ate up. Some seeds fell on rock, and when it came up it withered away, having no moisture. Some seed fell amongst thorns and the thorns grew with it and choked it. And some seed fell into rich soil and it grew and produced its crop a hundredfold. Saying this he cried, ‘Listen, anyone who has ears to hear!’

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Or

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew

(Mt. 6:25-34)

Jesus said to his disciples:

“Don’t worry about having something to eat, drink, or wear.

Isn’t life more than food or clothing?

Look at the birds in the sky! They don’t plant or harvest.

They don’t even store grain in barns.

Yet your Father in heaven takes care of them.

Aren’t you worth more than birds?

“Can worry make you live longer?

Why worry about clothes?

Look how the wild flowers grow.

They don’t work hard to make their clothes.

But I tell you that Solomon with all his wealth was not as well clothed as one of them.

God gives such beauty to everything that grows in the fields, even though it is here today and thrown into a fire tomorrow.

He will surely do even more for you!

Why do you have such little faith?

“Don’t worry and ask yourselves,

‘Will we have anything to eat?

Will we have anything to drink?

Will we have clothes to wear?’

Only people who don’t know God are always worrying about such things.

Your Father in heaven knows that you need all of these.

But more than anything else, put God’s work first and do what he wants.

Then all the other things will be yours as well.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Or

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew

(Mt. 22:34-40)

After Jesus had made the Sadducees look foolish, the Pharisees heard about it and got together.

One of them was an expert in the Jewish Law.

So he tried to test Jesus by asking,

"Teacher, what is the most important commandment in the Law?"

Jesus answered: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind.'

This is the first and most important commandment.

The second most important commandment is like this one.

And it is, 'Love others as much as you love yourself.'

All the Law of Moses and the Books of the Prophets are based on these two commandments."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily

Prayer of the Faithful

(Prayers of the Faithful are an ideal opportunity for collaborative preparation among the school chaplain, teachers and students.)

1. God, our loving father, who gives us comfort and hope, we pray for all who graduate this year and make decisions on further studies, apprenticeships, employment opportunities, and continuing discernment. Watch over us and protect us in all we do. We trust that in your love you will hear our prayers and guide us by your wisdom. **Lord, hear us.**
2. God of Wisdom, we pray for the principal, teachers and staff who have helped us to grow in many ways during our time in “____*name of school*____”. We pray especially for those retiring and those who are leaving. We ask God’s continued blessing on all their endeavours. **Lord, hear us.**
3. God of Love, we pray for our parents, that they continue to guide and nurture us as we grow and may they know how much we love and appreciate them. **Lord, hear us.**
4. God of Hope, we pray that we, the graduating class of 2022, may have the courage to share our gifts with those who need them. May we be free to shape a future of peace and justice for all. **Lord, hear us.**
5. Gentle God, we pray for our friends who have shared with us, over these many years, laughter, disappointments, happiness, hopes and dreams: may they know how much we value the gift of friendship. **Lord, hear us.**
6. Healing God, we pray for the sick of our parish and for all our friends and relatives who are ill. Help them to feel your healing presence, comfort and solace. **Lord, hear us.**
7. God of Compassion, we pray for those in our families and in our school and parish community who have died and are now in God’s presence forever. Teach us to be comforters of one another. **Lord, hear us.**

Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Offertory Procession

The offertory procession consists only of bread, wine, and water. All other gifts, symbols, commentaries should take place at the beginning of the Graduation Mass.

Offertory Hymn: (See section on music)

Prayer over the Gifts

God, our Father,
we bring our gifts before your altar,
offering them in faith, hope and love.
Accept this sacrifice which we offer you in thanksgiving
that the faith of your people may make these gifts pleasing to you.
Through Christ our Lord.

Holy Holy



Memorial Acclamations



The Lord's Prayer



Lamb of God



Communion Hymns (See section on music)

Post-Communion Reflection

A suitable reflection, selection of poetry, or piece of music may be chosen in thanksgiving after Communion.

Concluding Rite

Prayer after Communion

God our Father,
You have gathered us around this table and fed us.
As we leave this place,
may all that we have shared together
be the foundations of our lives.
Protect us always, that we may live in peace with you
and with one another.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen

Final Blessing

Invite those gathered to bow their heads and pray for God's blessing.

O God of wisdom,
grant to these graduates the gift of your wisdom
as they graduate and prepare for a new step in their lives.
Help them to know
not only the things that will help them earn a living,
but the things that will lead them to eternal life.
Give them the courage and the love to put this wisdom into action
for the good of other people,
for the welfare of the less fortunate,
and for the building up of your Kingdom on earth.
May their studies and their worship serve as a lasting foundation
as they strive to live a Christian life in the world.

And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, ✠ the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come down upon you, and remain with you always. **Amen**

The Mass is ended; go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Recessional Hymn (See section on music)

Music at Graduation Masses

Graduation Masses are opportunities to bring all the musical gifts of the school community together in Music Ministry to serve the sung prayer of the wider school family.

The music and sung prayer in these Masses will ideally reflect and honour this preparation and commitment by the extended school community to the occasion. This means Graduation Masses need to be consultatively planned, carefully prepared, and thoroughly rehearsed over time. Music on these occasions can offer a fitting tribute to the character of a community, while also staying true to Catholic Identity, and to the liturgy itself.

All people need to feel welcome to join in the sacred song at different points at a Graduation Mass. There also needs to be clear consideration of the cultures represented, and the singing abilities of the people who will come. People also need to be able to see and hear what is going on, and to know when they are being clearly invited to participate in the music. This allows the range of people present to experience hospitality and inclusion as they participate through sound, silence, word, posture, and gesture in the Mass. Ideally, people will be able to easily follow a booklet, a hymnal, or a clear PowerPoint so they can maximise their participation.

(Ref. Fiona Dyball)

While there are opportunities for a selection of contemporary music during the presentation of symbols and at the end of the Mass, music chosen should reflect the sacredness of the Mass, while also expressing the sentiments of gratitude, joy, hope, and faith of those gathered for worship.

The websites below may prove useful:

<https://www.scribd.com/document/403294286/Songs-for-Graduation-Mass>

<https://www.godtube.com/news/christian-graduation-songs-my-top-10-list.html>

Below are suggestions which may assist in planning music for a Graduation Mass. All are available on Youtube.

Entrance Songs

Come, Now is the Time to Worship	Doerkson
Gather Us In	Haugen
Gather Your People	Hurd
Glory and Praise to Our God	Schutte
He is Exalted	Paris
Hosanna	Tuttle

Lift Up Your Hearts	O'Connor
Open Up the Heavens	Meredith Andrews
Our God	Tomlin
Salvation Belongs to Our God	Howard and Turner
Unto the House of the Lord	Bagniewski

Offertory Songs

All Who Are Thirsty	Brown, Robertson
Come Into My Heart	Cowan
Hosea	Norbet
I Have Loved You	Joncas
I Give You My Heart	Morgan
Open My Eyes	Manibusan
Open the Eyes of My Heart	Baloche
Prayer of St. Francis	Temple
Take, Lord, Receive	Foley
The Word is a Lamp	Smith

Communion

Be Exalted O God	Chambers
Be Not Afraid	Dufford
Blest Are They	Haas
Christ, Be Our Light	Farrell
Come to the Water	Foley
For You Are My God	Foley
Gift of Finest Wheat	Westendorf
Here I Am, Lord	Schutte
I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light	Thomerson
On Eagle's Wings	Joncas
Once Again	Redman
One Bread, One Body	Foley
Singing Hallelujah	Cowan
Table of Plenty	Schutte
Taste and See	Moore
The Cry of the Poor	Foley
The Summons	Fisher
This is Jesus	Cowan
You Are My All in All	Jernigan
You Are Near	Schutte

Recessional

Blessed Be Your Name

Forever

Go Make a Difference

How Can I Keep From Singing

I Will Call Upon the Lord

Our God Reigns

Shout to the Lord

That Where I Am

You Never Let Go

Redman

Tomlin

Angrisano

Lowry

O'Shields

Smith

Zschech

Mullins

Redman

(Source: Mother of God School: MD 20879)