

## Liturgy Worship Summer 2016

Week beginning 11th April 2016

Liturgy Theme: Forgive and start again

Reflection Diary Theme: Forgiveness 1

Colossians 3:12-17

The title given for this chapter in the Bible is 'Living the New Life'. At the beginning of a calendar year most people see this as a new beginning when they set themselves new objectives and targets. The forgiveness may be a need to forgive ourselves so that we can have a clean start, forgiveness from God (always) or maybe we need to forgive someone else in order to move on. What impresses me is not that people make resolutions but the fact that they stick to them. It's the 'living' that makes it impressive. When we commit ourselves to the Lord Jesus it's not enough just to say it but to live it. You could suggest that they involve God in their New Year's resolutions to ask what He would like them change and work on this year and ask for His help.

The Bible passage also says, 'And the most important piece of clothing you must wear is love.' You could talk about parties and the fact that we usually wear something special to parties. Link this with the Bible passage and how real love should affect our relationships. The difference with this piece of clothing is that it never wears out but improves the more it's worn.

<b>General</b>	<b>Religious</b>
Collecting past hurts and negative memories builds up bitterness and resentment. When we let these things go it frees us to grow and develop while allowing our lives to be more positive in its outlook and more productive.	Dear Lord, at the beginning of this new year we ask that you show us those areas of our lives you want us to change. Help us to live a new life full of your Spirit and wearing your garment of love, in Jesus' name. Amen.

*Opportunities for reflection.....*

- I need to let go of.....
- I need to forgive .....
- Lord, help me to.....
- This year I am going to.....

**Week beginning 18th April 2016****Liturgy Theme: Parenting****Reflection Diary Theme: Prodigal**

Ex 1:22 – 2: 10; Luke 15: 11-32; Luke 13:34

It was Mothering Sunday at the weekend but this week I not only want us to look at mothers but fathers as well. God is described as Father, but Jesus describes himself as a hen gathering her chicks (Luke 13:34). In Genesis 1:27 humanity is created in God's image, male and female. We know therefore that God has both male and female characteristics in some measure. Thankfully we now live in a society where it is accepted that men should play an equal and complementary role in bringing up their children. As we read the bible we see God's parental character displayed in the way he interacts with his 'children'. A caring, nurturing, loving God – a God who disciplines and corrects. This week I'd like to see the pupils think about God on a much broader level encompassing mother and father – parenting. As we look at God as parent we need to look at what that means in terms of relationship, and who our brothers and sisters are.

Please remember that families, parents, relations take all shapes and sizes nowadays. It is probably sensible and more sensitive to use the word 'carer' at intervals so that we don't exclude people.

<b>Citizenship</b>	<b>Religious</b>
<p>There can be nothing quite so irritating and annoying as a parent/carers who won't let us do what we want or fails to understand how we feel, but do we always give them credit for the large part they play in our lives? Do we say thank you enough? Lend a hand, etc. I'm sure we've got plenty of stories to share about our parents/carers perhaps funny, sad, angry. Perhaps we can do something to make their life easier today.</p>	<p>Almighty God, thank you that as our heavenly mother and father you understand us completely. Help us to respond to your word that we can live our lives in your will and grow to be obedient, loving children. Amen.</p> <p>We release into your hands, O Lord, our homes Those whom we love and care for Any who are dependent on us who may feel vulnerable. Lord you love those whom we love.</p> <p>We release into your hands, O Lord, Those who have responsibilities to us The pressures that weary them The problems that pursue them. Lord, you care for all those who care for us.</p>

*Opportunities for reflection...*

- What I really appreciate about my family is...
- I can help my parents/carers by...
- God, I see you as parent because...
- Lord, help my family to...

Week beginning 25th April 2016Liturgy Theme: Have faith and trustReflection Diary Theme: The Lord's My Shepherd

Luke 2: 22-40

The Bible passage tells the story of Simeon and Anna who, in their old age, were waiting to see the promised Messiah. God had told them that they would not die before seeing him. The purification of Jesus at the temple is the fulfilment of God's promise to them. I wonder if they ever doubted God's word to them, after all, God was leaving it a bit late, they were both very old. How wonderful to be praying for something over so long a time and finally to see your prayers answered. Are we persistent with our prayer or do we stop if they haven't been answered within the week? As human beings we form such a small picture of the big plan but sometimes because our perspective is so small we very often get impatient or angry with God. The Bible is full of God's promises to us. We are asked to have faith and trust in the God who is creator and redeemer of us all.

You may like to use some of the trust games used in drama as an illustration.

<b>General</b>	<b>Religious</b>
<p>As human beings we find ourselves living in a world where relationships with other people form our lives and provide us with our experience. How much richer is that experience when we learn to trust our friends and feel able to rely on other people. You may know of stories where trusting in another person has saved someone's life.</p> <p>There are a large number of people in our society whose role is to care for other people – people who are terminally ill or disabled.</p>	<p>Almighty God, we lift up your name and praise you for your mighty power and great love. Thank you that we can trust you with our very lives. Help us to trust you more, and so grow in confidence knowing that your promises are true and you never let us down. Amen.</p>

*Opportunities for reflection.....*

- I can develop trust in someone by.....
- I know that I can trust in.....
- I need to have more faith in.....
- I am a trustworthy person because.....

**Week beginning 3rd May 2016****Liturgy Theme: Are you listening****Reflection Diary Theme: Footprints in the Sand**

Ezekiel 2: 1- 3: 3

God speaks to us in different ways. Perhaps we've been told the same thing by a number of different people; read something in the bible that particularly strikes us or by having avenues blocked off leading us in another direction. Sometimes it can be a small 'voice' that niggles saying we should have done something or encouraging us to in some way.

Most people find prayer difficult. When we consider prayer we should not only think about speaking to God but listening as well. You might want to consider using some of these ideas for prayer:

Lighting a candle as you pray.

Using the Lord's Prayer like headings of prayer.

Keep a prayer notebook to pray for different people each day of the week

Spread out the newspaper and 'pray' the news.

Have photos of those you pray for.

Include penitence, praise, thanks, intercession and adoration

Finding time to listen to people is also important. It makes someone feel valued and cared for. Instead of thinking about what you want to say, really listen to the person and respond. A problem shared is a problem halved.

Lord, help me to listen properly so that I hear your voice, your will for me, your comfort and your challenges. Help me to speak out your Good News so others may hear your voice, your will for them, your comfort and your challenges. Amen.

**Week beginning 9th May 2016****Liturgy Theme: Getting Angry****Reflection Diary Theme: It's not fair**

John 2: 13-22; Psalm 19: 7-11; Nehemiah 5

The stories in Nehemiah and John show God's people breaking his laws and how Nehemiah and Jesus, respectively acted in those situations. If we go through that chapter of Nehemiah we can see more closely how he dealt with that particular situation and how we can react:

***Be sure (5:6,7)***

Nehemiah was incensed by what he heard, but he didn't leap straight into action; he pondered on it and decided how best to act.

***Be open (5:7)***

Nehemiah didn't bear a silent grudge or plot secretly, he stated openly what the problem was.

***Be positive (5:9)***

Nehemiah didn't just say what was wrong, he set out the way the nobles and official should be walking.

***Be thorough (5: 12,13)***

Nehemiah did everything he could to make sure the problem was dealt with and would not occur again.

***Be thankful (5:13)***

Nehemiah's stand against the things that made God angry led to the people praising God; whenever people uphold God's view of things, it will ultimately lead to honour being given to his name.

*(CPAS material)*

When someone treats you unfairly or acts very negatively, you have a choice about how upset you will feel and act. You can choose to be furious, angry, or annoyed.

<b>Citizenship</b>	<b>Religious</b>
What sort of things make you angry? How do you react? You might want to do some role play and give some scenarios in which people get angry --do a right and wrong response or ask the form how they think the individuals should have acted.	Lord God, help us to direct our anger in an appropriate way so that we don't hurt the people we're angry with and we don't hurt ourselves. Help us to use our anger to change things for the better. Amen.

***Opportunities for reflection...***

- I get angry when...
- I can give myself chance to cool down by....
- I need to sort out....

**Week beginning 16th May 2016****Liturgy Theme: Empowerment****Reflection Diary Theme: Encouragement**

Acts 2: 1-21; Roms 8: 14-17

After the Ascension of Jesus the Christian Church celebrates the festival of Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit to the followers of Jesus and the birth of the Church (Acts 2: 1-21). It is God's Holy Spirit in each one of us as Christians that gives us the ability, courage and strength to live out the Gospel. 2 Timothy 1:7 says: "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline." In those situations that we find difficult; to love the unlovely and to share our faith, even prayer perhaps.

The Acts passage (v41) explains that through Peter's speech about three thousand became followers of Jesus that day and believed. From this point on the followers meet together daily to prayer, break bread together and are able to perform many wonders and miracles. The Church was born. It may be worth looking at your own church where you worship and see what similarities there are between the early church and yours. To look at how the Spirit helps you in your daily life and worship. You may want to look at how the Spirit empowers Christians through the gifts he gives. These can be found in 1 Corinthians 12: 1-11. The fruits of the Spirit can be found in Galatians 5: 22-23.

The Romans passage explains that through the Spirit we are all baptised into one family, adopted by God to be his children. It is through this process that we can call God, Father and can enjoy that personal relationship with him.

<i>General</i>	<b>Religious</b>
<p>People can be empowered by many means. Through education, better health care, love and support from other people. Very often it is through a justice issue such as liberation from discrimination, e.g. Apartheid. Often it is the opportunity to give an opinion on the outcome of decisions that affect our lives. This week is the General Election. How do our democratic rights empower us?</p>	<p>Father, we thank you that through your Holy Spirit we have the power to demonstrate your love. We pray that by your Spirit you give us the confidence to use our gifts and the opportunities to share our faith with others.</p> <p>Thank you for the support of our churches who teach and nurture us. We pray for those who lead us and ask that you uphold them in their calling. In Jesus' name. Amen.</p>

*Opportunities for reflection....*

- Empowerment for me means.....
- My church helps me to.....
- God's Spirit enables me to.....
- Democracy gives us the right to expect.....

**Week beginning 23rd May 2016**

**Liturgy Theme: Ask for Forgiveness**

**Reflection Diary Theme: Forgiveness 2**

Gal 2: 15-21; Luke 7: 36- 50

The Galatians passage is talking to Jews who chose to follow Jesus. The problem was that they were still trying to obey the Jewish Laws as a means of salvation. Their salvation was secure because they had asked Jesus to forgive them. It's so easy and yet so hard. There was nothing the Jews could do. No work, no rule, they were saved by grace – God's undeserved love. The passage is quite difficult but in Luke we have the story of the sinful woman and Jesus's explanation of his actions towards her. If you have done greater wrong you have more need of forgiveness but you also receive greater relief from having been forgiven.

The Lord's prayer says, 'forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us' This is not easy and we may need to ask God to help us forgive someone but it is the way relationships are built and continued. None of us are perfect and we all need to ask forgiveness of someone from time to time. It's often pride that stands in the way. Be big by being small – say sorry and ask for forgiveness.

<b>General</b>	<b>Religious</b>
<p>What stops you from asking for forgiveness from your friends or colleagues? Is there an atmosphere whenever you're together? At what point is it necessary for someone to 'give in'? What happens if no-one is prepared to step down? Relationships are lost and broken if arguments have happened and no attempt is made to rebuild them. Is the cost of losing that relationship greater than that needed to say sorry and ask for forgiveness?</p>	<p>Father, thank you for sending your son Jesus to die so that our sins might be forgiven. We celebrate in the knowledge that we will spend eternity with you. Help us to forgive others quickly who have hurt us and learn to live together peaceably. Amen.</p>

*Opportunities for reflection...*

- I need to forgive.....
- Lord, help me to forgive....
- I value my relationship with....
- God loved the world so much that....

**Week beginning 6th June 2016****Liturgy Theme: Hoping****Reflection Diary Theme: Success 1**

Psalm 25:1-10; Luke 21:25 – 36

Faith is defined as: "...the confident assurance that what we hope for is going to happen. It is the evidence of things we cannot yet see." (Hebrews 11: 1) The hope that Christians have is the return of Jesus and the security that when He does return those who have died in the faith and those still alive will spend eternity with God. This is the theme for the first Sunday in Advent. The Luke passage of scripture can appear quite frightening but it's important to concentrate on Jesus returning as great and powerful and that we need to watch and be prepared that the things we have been asked to do by Jesus (our way of life, faithfulness) we are doing. If Jesus came back today in all his glory how would you feel? Embarrassed, nervous, curious, excited, amazed, thrilled, guilty, etc. One way of illustrating this is a fitness gym – athletes training to get ready for their race.

<b>General</b>	<b>Religious</b>
It is important that everyone has hopes and things that they look forward to. We may be looking forward to an event in the future for which we have expectations. How important are those expectations and do they involve the cooperation of other people? Perhaps our hopes are more like dreams – ambitions. How hard are you prepared to work towards those hopes and ambitions? Not only do we have hopes and expectations but our parents also have hopes for us. How do we feel about those?	O God, who has given us the sure promise that Christ will come to judge the earth: make us ready, we pray, for his royal coming, that we may consider daily what kind of people we ought to be, and as faithful servants wait and work for our Master's return; for his name's sake. Amen.

*Opportunities for reflection...*

- I hope for.....
- Jesus' returns means .....to me.
- In need to.....in order to see my ambitions realised.
- I hope that.....
- Knowing that Jesus will return makes me feel.....
- I would like.....to be involved in my hopes.

**Week beginning 13th June 2016****Liturgy Theme: No Pain No Gain****Reflection Diary Theme: Calming the Storm**

Genesis 7; Ps 23; 1 Pet 2: 19-end

This is an extremely difficult topic to think about, particularly in view of the bible passages. The theme title also suggests a flippant tone but that is not the intention. The phrase came from a keep-fit video in the 80's where we were told that in order to lose weight we had to suffer through exercise. The phrase that goes with this is 'going through the pain barrier'.

There are not many of us who are born with a gift that requires no practise or effort. I'm particularly thinking of some autistic people who have great mathematical or artistic abilities. Therefore, it is an uncomfortable fact that in order for the majority of us to achieve, we need to put in lots of effort. We struggle through with the effort because we know that at the end we will have achieved something great.

As followers of Christ this philosophy extends not only to Christian discipline but also to periods of 'darkness', doubt, persecution, and suffering of all types. Many Christians have told how through their times of trouble they have had to trust and lean on God all the more and have emerged through it as stronger and more faithful. This isn't to say that we have to go through times of suffering but through our experiences we can often learn more about ourselves and God.

<b>Citizenship</b>	<b>Religious</b>
<p>When we're going through a difficult time it can be very difficult to be positive and there is always the possibility that it can have the opposite effect. There's a good film called 'Jack and Sarah' with Richard E Grant who is left to look after his newborn daughter after his wife has died (I know it sounds morbid – but it's very funny)</p> <p>Questions you might want to ask are:</p> <p>What issues or concerns are worth struggling for?</p> <p>How often do we put ourselves out for the benefit of someone else? Does the gain only have to be for ourselves?</p> <p>How much pain are we willing to endure?</p> <p>You might want to discuss Terry Waite's experience.</p>	<p>God, our Sustainer, you call us to many situations which take us outside of our experience and comfortable zone. We ask that you help us to learn from the difficult times; to grow through our suffering and give us the strength to struggle on and persevere in all circumstances. Increase our faith to believe that you will not abandon us and the ability to trust in your unfailing love. Amen.</p>

*Opportunities for reflection....*

- I have grown through.....experience
- I need to put more effort into.....
- I am struggling with.....
- I need to find help with.....

Week beginning 20th June 2016

Liturgy Theme: Careless Talk

Reflection Diary Theme: Keep Calm and Carry On

James 3: 1-12

The tongue is a powerful muscle because it can do such damage. On the other hand it only takes a small word of encouragement and the person who hears those words will walk on air. We have the ability to affect people by what we say. You might want to comment on the effectiveness and destructive nature of gossip.

“Don’t use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them,” Ephesians 4: 29

<b>Citizenship</b>	<b>Religious</b>
<p>The tongue is such a small part of our body and yet so powerful. In the heat of our discussions do we remember to think first and speak second or do we blunder our way not thinking about the effects of what we say. When was the last time we said a kind word or encouraged someone? How often do we resort to using foul language? Let’s celebrate the richness of our language and the principle of effective communication. Remember that where possible to build up the person we are speaking to rather than cause them hurt.</p>	<p>Heavenly Father, thank you for giving us the gift of language and the means by which to express ourselves effectively. We’re sorry for those times when we haven’t said what we ought or have spoken out of turn, please forgive us and help us to be constructive in our comments rather than critical.</p>

*Opportunities for reflection.....*

- I can be of more help by saying.....
- I can encourage someone by saying.....
- I wish I hadn’t said that.....
- Help me Lord to say only positive things today....

**Week beginning 27th June 2016****Liturgy Theme: Is someone calling?****Reflection Diary Theme: Change of Heart**

Is 6: 1-8 (9-13); Luke 5: 1-11

The Bible passages remark on Isaiah and Simon Peter and how they were called by God to a particular task. Isaiah chose to be a messenger for God while Peter chose initially to follow Jesus then as an evangelist to spread the word of God. The men in both situations, after meeting with and seeing the glory of God, fell on their knees as they realised their sinful nature in the presence of a divine God. As Christians we are also called to spread the word of God and to live a life of calling and to follow Jesus. This calling is not to 'special' people but to everyone. Very often our self esteem doesn't allow us to think that we could be called by God. We say, "but I'm not a good enough person." "I can't possibly do that". God values you, value yourself. It's not our 'ability' that God wants it's our 'availability'.

Having confidence in yourself is not being arrogant or proud. It's an important part of our development where we learn from experience and realise that we have a part to play in the society we belong to. There shouldn't be a difference between 'spiritual' and 'secular'. We are called in the context of the community we live in and we all have a part to play in that.

<b>General</b>	<b>Religious</b>
What contribution can I make to the community I live in? Do I have a part to play? I hope the answer to that last question is yes. We all have natural abilities and talents and we should all feel a responsibility to give back to a community that benefits us. We ought to feel privileged by the position we find ourselves in and count it as an honour to give back.	Dear Lord, you call us to different tasks in our community and church life. Thank you that in your kingdom there is no unemployment but that you have a job for everyone. Help us to understand what it is you want us to do and give us the strength and security to know that you will equip us for the tasks ahead. Amen.

*Opportunities for reflection.....*

- I can help more in school by.....
- God has chosen me...wow!
- God is calling me to .....
- I have a responsibility to.....

Week beginning 4th July 2016

Liturgy Theme: Are you a Saint?

Reflection Diary Theme: St Aldhelm

Hebrews 12: 14-29; Psalm 24

This week (Wednesday) celebrates ‘All Saints Day’; a day that remembers all those who have died in the faith. However, the Bible describes all those who believe and trust in Jesus as saints; look at the beginning of some of Paul’s letters (e.g. Romans 1:7, “To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints....”)

To receive sainthood and therefore eternal life we need to live a holy life. Christians live in a paradigm. As people who have been saved by the death and resurrection of Jesus we are holy but we also live in a process whereby we are being refined and made holy. Just as gold is heated to remove impurities we need to be refining our lifestyle, removing impurities, in order to become more like Christ.

The theme this week can take two strands: our own sainthood with God and being made pure or looking at those people who were considered to have lived such a holy life that they were specially remembered and ‘sainted’. Look at why they have been remembered and what they did.

<b>Citizenship</b>	<b>Religious</b>
<p>There are many people who have been remembered for their act of kindness or selflessness in certain situations. Lisa Potts is a woman who springs to mind immediately but there are many others. We need to celebrate these people and look at our own lives and ask if we can’t have some positive contribution to make to society or an act of kindness. What makes these people special? Is there anything we can learn from them? (role models)</p>	<p>Almighty God, we thank you for the examples of people who have shown their holiness through great acts of giving and selflessness. We ask that you show us those areas of our lives where impurities have crept in and help us to remove them. Help us to put aside our own selfish ambitions in order to put others first.</p>

*Opportunities for reflection...*

- I can make a positive contribution to this school by.....
- Lord, show me how I can live a pure life.....
- I want to be more like.....because.....
- Being holy means.....
- I could be more holy if.....
- I could help others by.....

**Week beginning 11th July 2016****Liturgy Theme: Well Done****Reflection Diary Theme: What does Success look Like?**

Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22

This week we look at Jesus' Baptism. The theme this week comes from verse 22 when God says, "You are my beloved Son, and I am fully pleased with you." You may want to look at what baptism meant for Jesus. He didn't need to repent but he wanted to be seen to stand alongside people and to mark it as the beginning of his ministry. God was pleased because Jesus was obedient and fully consented to his calling. You may wish to use water as a visual aid – link with dying (drowning) and new life; washing, becoming clean, water giving life, etc. In relation to our own lives could we say that we were being obedient to our calling? Do we know what that is? Does God look at us and say, 'Well done'? What do we need to be doing in order for God to say 'well done'?

Continuing with the theme of being a new year and a fresh start you may want pupils to think about their work and ask if more effort is needed in order for teachers, parents or friends to say 'well done'.

<b>General</b>	<b>Religious</b>
We choose how much energy and effort we put into all our tasks. Do we attempt them with the minimum amount of effort or do we take some pride in what we do? Very often it's not the outcome so much as the effort that's put into the task. Do we try to do our best in what we do?	Lord, thank you that in Jesus we have a perfect role model. We're sorry that sometimes we don't put in as much effort as we should and are content with second best. Help us to do everything to the best of our ability and to your glory. Amen.

*Opportunities for reflection....*

- I can do better by.....
- Living to the best of my ability means.....
- As I look at you Jesus, I remember.....
- The water of baptism for me means.....

Week beginning 18th July 2016  
Liturgy Theme: Challenges and Rewards  
Reflection Diary Theme: Celebration

Luke 6: 17-26; Psalm 1

The idea this week is to introduce the beatitudes and to look at the challenges and rewards of living by faith. The beatitudes are not the normal rules for living that the media portrays as being important. Following the passage from Luke you might want to use some of the following sentences to start some discussion ( I know there's not a lot of time but you could use them as sentences for reflection):

- If following God means having my friends laugh at me, I'd rather stick with my friends and give God up!
- It would be stupid to give up a well paid job to spend more time with people.
- It's important to have a freezer and a microwave and a dishwasher and a video, everybody does (or some relevant items for young people)
- Money and possessions are great. They give you a nice comfortable life.
- Just because other people are poor does not mean I have to give away hard-earned money!

The following list could be used as a starting point to decide what order of importance they ought to be in:

- Happiness
- Having my own way
- A job with power
- Lots of money
- Pleasing God
- Good friends
- Helping other people
- Having children

<b>General</b>	<b>Religious</b>
What things in life are of importance to you? What motivates you/challenges you to go out and achieve something? Most people, in order to achieve something worthwhile, have to put in a lot of effort. We feel as though it's a 'job well done' if we've struggled a bit. Challenges in life either put us off and deter us from going further or they inspire us to go on do better. Challenges often give purpose.	Heavenly Father, you call us to be part of a world where the values are very different from your own. Show us those areas of our lives where we live by the world's standards and not your own. Give us the strength to stand up for your values and to demonstrate a better way of living. Amen.

*Opportunities for reflection.....*

- I need to be challenged more in .....area of my life.
- God's values are different in that they.....
- My priorities in life are.....
- My ambition in life is to.....