



A RESOURCE FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

CAIRNS FOR THE WAY

AN ACOMPANIMENT TO 'ON THE WAY'
OR AS 'STAND ALONE' CELEBRATIONS

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OR AS 'STAND ALONE' CELEBRATIONS**

ST MARYS CF10

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Introduction

Cairns for the Way

Cairns, of course, are piles or stacks of stones which have been used for a variety of purposes, from prehistoric times to the present. Their uses have included burial monuments, landmarks, ceremonial rites, to locate buried items, and to mark trails. It is the latter use to which the title of the resource refers.

This resource was written to accompany the Christian Nurture Course, 'On the Way – the journey of a lifetime' to provide a closing time of prayer for each of the sessions, and gathering together some of the themes explored.

They are stopping points and guides along the way, as young people progress along the Christian Way – perhaps in preparation for Baptism and/or confirmation.

It could be that, if you are following the On the Way Course, each session could be concluded with placing a stone somewhere in the church which, over the weeks becomes, slightly larger until a mound is made – a visual reminder of the journey being made not only to the young people but to the wider congregation.

Each stone could even be decorated/painted as part of the Session, perhaps reflecting the theme explored.

Stand Alone Resource

However, the usefulness of these resources goes beyond these sessions, and they can be used as stand alone ideas for gatherings of young people – and not so young – to be creative with prayer time.

These Prayer and Liturgical ideas could also be used within a school setting, perhaps for Class/Form Prayer Time, or even adapted as ideas for School Assemblies.

The OTW course uses the Gospel according to St Luke as a supporting structure, and so you'll notice that each of the Prayer and Liturgy Outlines here progressively make their way through that gospel.

Generally, each session doesn't provide the full text of the Bible Reading which forms the theme of the gathering apart from a few occasions for ease of reference for a particular activity, as it is better to read from 'a Bible in hand' rather than from pieces of paper.

Associated resources can be found at our website www.stmaryscf10.com and we hope that you find some of them useful in your ministry with young people.

Session 1: Have I Got News For you!

Gathering

Gather the group in a circle.

If possible, dim the lights. Have a candle, bible and cross ready.

Come to us this *night/day*, Lord.

Come to us with light

(The candle is lit)

Come to us this night, Lord.

Come to us with news

(An open bible is placed)

Come to us this night, Lord.

Come to us with love

(A cross or crucifix is placed)

Lord,

we are open to hear

the news of your love this *night/day*

and keen to share it with others. **Amen.**

Read

Luke 1:26-45

Spend some time looking at newspaper stories from different sources. (If you haven't already done so in the OTW Session) ask each person to choose one or more items which they can rip from the newspaper as material for prayer. Each young person could read a headline and summarise, in a few short sentence, what the need is.

You could use this or a similar response for each:

Help us to bring the good news of Jesus to a waiting world.

Meditation

Read the Meditation, Message for Mary' which you'll find below.

Lord's Prayer

Mary said, "Let it be to me just as you have said" and so, like her, we pray 'Thy will be done':
Our Father . . .

(If it's appropriate to your church tradition, use the Angelus as a prayer and suggest to the young people that they learn it and use it every day. This is an ancient prayer recalling the Annunciation and the Incarnation)

You will need

candle, cross or crucifix, bible, newspapers

Message for Mary

"Message for Mary, Message for Mary!"

It was an angel. Gabriel. In his hand a clutched message.

"Message for Mary, Message for Mary!"

Mary stopped. Suddenly excited. She wasn't used to having post.

Apart from junk mail. The usual. Credit Card Applications. Store Cards. Bank Cards.

Discount Vouchers for Dorothy Perkins. The usual.

She would have asked the angel in, but he had already taken the liberty of letting himself in.

"Message for Mary! Message for Mary!"

"I wish you'd stop shouting," thought Mary. "After all, I am the only one in the house."

"Message for Mary! Message for Mary!"

"Ok, I'm Mary."

"Of course you are," said Gabriel. "It's just that . . . this is a very important message.

(whispers) I don't want it to get into the wrong hands!"

"Ok, Ok, so what have you got for me?" said Mary

"I think you should sit down," said Gabriel.

"I'm ok thanks," said Mary

"No I think you should sit down."

"Really. I'm Ok."

"You're going to have a baby."

"I think I should sit down," said Mary, as she sat down.

"This is always happening," thought Gabriel.

"Well, don't be afraid," he said . . .

"There's more. You have to call him Jesus," he said. "He's gonna be a bit of a star, you see.

In fact, he's gonna be. . .this is the exciting bit. . .he's gonna be . . .a king!"

"Hang on a minute," said Mary "I'm gonna have to sit down"

"You are sitting down", said Gabriel

"Oh yes," said Mary

"Pass this by me one more time. I'm gonna have a . . . baby?"

"You got it!"

"But..."

"What?"

"Well...."

"What?"

(Whispers) "I haven't done it."

"Done what?"

"It!"

"Ohhhhhh," said Gabriel. "Don't you worry about that, The Holy Spirit has taken care of that one. The child will be holy. Son of God! So. Anything you want me to take back? Return of post, I mean? Any. . . messages?"

"Well, just one thing, really. Say that I'll do anything God wants me to do. I'll be his servant."

"Great!" said Gabriel. "Just what he wanted to hear."

"Aren't you gonna write it down"

"Tt! Easy to Remember! She. . . said. . . Yes. Message for God! Message for God!"

"I wish he'd stop shouting," thought Mary

And then she stood up.

And realised what she'd done.

The Angel left her.

The Angelus

The Memorial of the Incarnation is traditionally prayed at dawn, noon and 6pm outside of the Easter season, in honour of the Incarnation. It is a thanksgiving for, and a reminder of, the great Christian truth that God took our human flesh and lived, died and rose again. The Church bell rings to remind us it is Angelus time.

The angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary;
And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

(Luke 1:26-27)

(Luke 1:31,35)

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.

(Luke 1:42)

**Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners, now,
and at the hour of our death. Amen.**

(Request of the Church)

Behold, the handmaid of the Lord.
Be it unto me according to thy word.

(Luke 1:38)

Hail Mary...

The Word was made flesh
and dwelt among us.

(John 1:14)

Hail Mary...

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.
**That we may be made worthy
of the promises of Christ**

Let us pray.

(Collect for the Annunciation, BCP)

We beseech you, Lord, to pour your grace into our hearts;
that as we have known the Incarnation of your Son Jesus Christ
by the message of an angel so by his cross and passion +
we may be brought to the glory of his resurrection;
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Session 2: Ultimate Tunes!

Gathering

Begin by playing a song that is upbeat or happy - something that makes us feel good. Perhaps you could take a vote on what the young people's favourite song is and play that, or ask one young person to choose a song and share the reason it makes them feel good.

Then remind them of the context of the following reading. As soon as Mary receives the news that she has been chosen to be the mother of Jesus, she visits her cousin in the Hill Country of Judah. They rejoice together, and Mary's says these words which have become a favourite song of the church, said or sung each day at Evening Prayer.

Read

'My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.' (Luke 1: 46-55, NRSV)

Respond

In the OTW session outline, the young people were invited to write their own personal Magnificats. Depending on your circumstances, this could be done no

Ask them to think about what God has done or is doing in their lives, or in the world now. It could be a whole 'song' or just a one liner, beginning with the words:

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour for...."

Each can then be read here, perhaps with the response in between each:

My soul glorifies the Lord
My spirit rejoices

Perhaps you could also tell a real life story of poor, downtrodden, etc, as an example of God reversing situations. Christian Aid often has various case studies or stories of individuals and communities that can be used in this way. Check out their web site www.christianaid.org.uk

Prayer

As Mary's voice in the hill country
stirred even the unborn John the Baptist
to leap for joy,
so may her words
stir our hearts
and move us to share your love in the world
and all that you are doing now
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Mary was happy to do what God had asked of her
Let's pray together that we may be happy to try to do
what God wants on earth as in heaven:
Our Father...

End by folding the Magnificats into paper aeroplanes and fly them indoor or outdoor– as a sign of God lifting us up!

You will need

CD player and CD

Session 3: A Star is Born

Gathering

If possible, ask the young people to bring a photograph of when they were a baby. Light a large candle and get the young people to place the photographs around it.

Prayer

Jesus,
I can't believe that we used to be like that!
It's embarrassing to look back and show them to friends!
But it's amazing too!
Absolutely amazing!
So amazing I can't get my head around it:
that the baby in the picture is me!
And then, when I remember that you've been there, too...
Well, that's even more amazing!
What do you think when you look back!
You gave up glory and comfort in heaven
to become just like us.
A bit of a risk really!
But I think it was a risk worth taking!
And I know you do too!
So, thanks God.
Thanks for being like us.
Help us to be more like you.
Amen.

Read

Luke 2: 4-7

If possible, sing 'The Servant King' by Graham Kendrick or simply read the words prayerfully.

Lord's Prayer

Jesus came to show us the way to the Father, and so we say together:
Our Father...

Session 4: The Future's Bright

Gathering

Light a candle centrally and have candles available for everyone to hold.

If you had a dream sheet from the OTW Session, this should be laid on the floor with everyone gathered around it. Alternatively, if this is a stand-alone session, prepare a large white sheet, on which the young people write their dreams and visions for the future. If the young people do not have candles to hold, they could have votive (night/tea lights) to light and place on the dream sheet.

Say a Prayer of the Light as the main candle is lit. Then light individual candles.

Blessed are you, Lord God of the light.
In Jesus, we see the light of the nations.
As we welcome the light this evening (or day)
Help us to keep our eyes fixed on you
For with you the future is bright. **Amen.**

Read

Luke 2: 29 –32 (The Song of Simeon)

A prayer for the Dream Sheet

You may want to talk about or read some of the things that the young people have written.

God, sometimes the future seems dark and uncertain.
Well, here are our dreams for the future.
We hope that whatever happens to our dreams
we may always trust in you.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

You may want to incorporate some of the dreams into prayers, perhaps using the response

The future's bright.
The future's Jesus

Lord's Prayer

With Jesus the future is bright,
so let us pray for the coming of the kingdom:
Our Father...

You will need

Large candle, votive or hand held candles.

Session 5: Temple Trail

This session takes the form of a pilgrimage around the church building and/or grounds, and takes as its basis the pilgrimage of Jesus, Mary and Joseph to the Temple in Jerusalem, where he stays behind, and they return to find him 'in his Father's house.'

You could start at the font, move to the lectern and then end at the altar. Perhaps give each young person or group an area or object in the church (for example, door, pew/chair, lectern, organ, altar, kneeler, statue, votive stand, oil aumbry, etc, and ask them to write an appropriate prayer for that place.

Gathering

If this is taking place inside church, invite the young people to go to their places allocated to them and spend a little time thinking about some significance of that area or item, and write a short prayer or sentence such as:

At the door:

'As we stand at this door may we always welcome anyone who comes looking for Jesus.'

At the font:

*'Baptism is the beginning of our journey with Jesus in the church.
Help us to know that you are always with us every step of the way.'*

At the lectern, a copy of an open bible:

*'As the Temple officials and teachers sat and listened to Jesus,
so may we listen carefully to the things he has to say to us.'*

At the altar:

*Perhaps place some bread and wine or other symbols:
'Here you feed us with wonderful food and give us strength for the journey.'*

This is also an ideal way of introducing the significance and meaning of different areas and items in the church building. Draw the young people's attention to the Nave, Chancel, Sanctuary, to the font, lectern, pulpit, altar, etc.

Alternatively, you could make it more exciting and have an evening walk somewhere – either in the community, streets, in the country, or along the beach and stop to pray or reflect. Obviously, you should follow all the Safeguarding procedures and Health and Safety guidelines.

Read:

Luke 2: 41-52

A Prayer to begin the Journey

Father,
there's nothing like chilling out, sitting down, watching TV, or listening to music!
It's great to do nothing and not to have to go anywhere!
But help us to remember that, as followers of Jesus,
we are always on the go
and always on the way!
As we make our journey around this church
help us to remember that we are on a journey with you.
Give us some direction in life
that we may always be walking with you—and to you!
We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

As we journey with Christ,
let us seek to do his work as we pray:
Our Father...

Session 6: Getting Things Straight!

Gathering

Prepare a bowl of holy water. Say a prayer of thanksgiving over the water. For example:

God,
you've used water for years
to bless the world with life
and to be a sign of your holiness.
Be with us as we use this water
to remind us of our baptism
and the new life you give us in Jesus. **Amen.**

Either

Invite each one to dip their fingers into the water as a reminder of their baptism, and perhaps sign their forehead with a sign of the cross

Or

You could sign each other, with these or similar words:
'Remember that Christ gave you new birth.'

Take into consideration those who have not yet been baptised, and use different words such as

I 'look forward to being baptised into Christ'

Or:

'In baptism God will give you new life'.

Lord's Prayer

In baptism we are all made children of God,
and so we pray to him:
Our Father...

This Liturgy could also be celebrated around the font. Get the young people to help fill the font with water. You could even decorate the font. Perhaps you could end the liturgy by lighting and placing floating candles on the water to represent themselves or a prayer they wish to make. Remind them that, in Baptism, we are given a candle that is lit from the Easter (Paschal). Candle to express that we are given the light of Christ.

You will need: bowl of water, floating candles (if needed)

Session 7: Ground Force

Gathering

Place a cross, crucifix, candle or icon of Jesus in the centre of the liturgical space. Around it place various cardboard arrows (perhaps different colours) pointing in different directions, making sure that some point towards the central image. If you've painted pebbles from the activity above then place these in the area too.

Distribute similar arrows to the young people and ask them to write their name on one side and an important decision they have made or will have to make one day in their life. You may wish to play some reflective music whilst they are doing this. When they've had enough time to do this, invite them to place their arrows (with their name facing upwards and the decision downwards) pointing towards Jesus.

Prayer

God our Father,
We have to make loads of decisions in life.
We know it's difficult at times,
and sometimes we make mistakes
Guide us through life
and help us to make the right decisions.
We ask this through Jesus the Lord. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

In the wilderness Jesus didn't give into sin and temptation. So like him we pray:
Our Father...

You will need: cross or image of Jesus, cardboard arrows, pens

Session 8: Turning the World Upside Down

Gathering

Several votive candles (or nightlights) corresponding to the number of people with the following lines to say are lit around a central cross (or around a bible opened at the gospel text). As each person says their line (written on separate cards) they remove a candle from the centre and take it for themselves.

How many times have we said the words, 'If I won the Lottery' and then thought about what we would spend the money on. Here are some imagined things that some people may say.

- If I won the lottery I would buy my own private aeroplane so I could go anywhere in the world
- If I won the lottery I would give some to my family, and then spend the rest on a house and a holiday. It's boring around here.
- If I won the lottery I would buy my own football team.
- If I won the lottery I would buy a sports car, a helicopter and a yacht.
- If I won the lottery I would buy myself a TV Station

If I won the lottery I would. . . what ?

What would you do if you won the lottery?
Think about it, just for a moment.

Read

"When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.' (Luke 4: 16-19, NRSV)

Respond

How do our dreams change in light of what Jesus says? Think about this, just for a moment? If you were trying to fulfil the prophecy of Jesus in your own life, what would you do if you won the lottery?

Now return to the imagined dreams of Lottery winners. Give each young person one of these lines, or add others, or even get them to write their own from their own heart.

- If I won the lottery I'd give money to Christian Aid to help refugees, the hungry, the poor and the homeless.
- If I won the lottery I'd give some of it to Cancer Research.
- If I won the lottery I'd give some to local charities to help people in the community.
- If I won the lottery I'd give money to the Children's Hospice.
- If I won the lottery I'd give it to the Church.
- If I won the lottery I'd give some away to help young people who are homeless.

Lord's Prayer

Let us pray for the coming of the kingdom, as Jesus taught us:
Our Father...

Session 9: Mission Apostle

Gathering

Arrange various symbols of making a journey: for example passport, rucksack, train ticket, pair of trainers, map, guide book, etc around a cushion or pillow.

Explain to the young people that the symbols remind us of journeys, and specifically our Christian journey.

The cushion reminds us that sometimes we prefer to be comfortable Christians, rather than doing the tough jobs like getting up and on with proclaiming the Kingdom of God in word or deed.

Alternatively, of course, the cushion could represent kneeling and prayer at the heart of our journey.

Being a Christian doesn't just mean gathering together as the church but being sent out to share the good news of his kingdom with other people, just like the apostles.

Read

Luke 9: 1 – 2

Prayer

God, I love being a Christian.
Sometimes, I say that a bit quietly mind
'cos it's not a popular thing to say these days.
I'm not sure my friends would agree.
But it's a great life!
It's not always easy mind.
There are tough things about it.
Things I find difficult to do.
Like getting up to go to church early on Sunday morning
when I've stayed up late the night before watching a film on TV.
But there are even more difficult things than that.
How on earth am I supposed to tell people about you
without sounding wet!
Do you really expect me to share my faith with others?
Do you want me to be a laughing stock?
I know there are ways!
I just need to find out what's the right way for me.
So help me, God, to show something of the kingdom in my life. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

The Lord sends us out to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom.
Let us pray for the coming of the kingdom: **Our Father...**

Dismissal

At the end of the celebration of the Eucharist we are sent out, just like the Apostles were sent out.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Session 10: People to See

Gathering

Jesus responded to the needs of people. This liturgy gets us to think about the things we 'need' - not 'want' or 'like to have' - but what we really need.

Give the young people slips of paper. Play some quiet reflective music and ask them to write their "needs," people, places or issues they would pray about. Tell them to fold the paper so no-one else can see what they have written.

Read

"As he approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard a crowd going by, he asked what was happening. They told him, 'Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.' Then he shouted, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me! Those who were in front sternly ordered him to be quiet; but he shouted even more loudly, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!' Jesus stood still and ordered the man to be brought to him; and when he came near, he asked him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' He said, 'Lord, let me see again.' Jesus said to him, 'Receive your sight; your faith has saved you.' Immediately he regained his sight and followed him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, praised God." (Luke 18:35-43, NRSV)

Respond

*Have a large 'begging' bowl or upturned cap placed centrally
Invite them in turn to place their needs into the bowl.*

Use the following response:

These are my needs:
God, we need you.

Prayer

Loving Lord,
Jesus touched the broken hearted,
he healed the sick
and brought your life to the world.
We have just placed our needs before you.
Help us to place our trust in you
We ask this through Jesus the Lord. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Let us pray for our daily bread, as Jesus taught us:

Our Father

Depending on your circumstances, perhaps this Liturgy could incorporate Laying on of Hands or Anointing with Oil by a priest. This could take place after the young people have placed their needs in the begging bowl.

Session 11: The Big City

The 'Big City' referred to in this Sessions' title is, of course, Jerusalem. Throughout the gospel according to Luke, Jesus sets his face towards Jerusalem. It is the place of his saving death and resurrection.

Gathering

Have various symbols of Holy Week prepared, such as:

- *Palm (or other) branch*
- *purple cloak or coat*
- *whip of cords (clearing of temple)*
- *bread and wine (last supper)*
- *coins (betrayal)*
- *rope (being bound) or some toy handcuffs (the arrest)*
- *purple cloth (the garment Jesus was dressed in to mock his kingship)*
- *nails, cross a few pieces of (rough) wood,*
- *crown of thorns or a branch with thorns (or even a piece of barbed wire),*
- *dice (casting lots for Jesus clothes)*
- *material torn in two (the curtain in the temple)*
- *a white sheet (the linen sheet Jesus was wrapped in and to look forward to Resurrection), perfume or spices (for Jesus' body),*
- *rock (the tomb).*

You could spend time exploring each item, what they represent, asking for suggestions from the young people. Alternatively, place them around the church or room, and invite them to go on their own from item to item, spending a short time at each, and allowing them time for quiet contemplation.

Another powerful way of doing this would be to ask the young people to choose one item, hold it, become familiar with it, consider its significance to the story of Jesus' Passion and death, and its significance to us, now, today. They could then place their item in turn around a centrally placed cross.

Read

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land, until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' Having said this, he breathed his last. (Luke 23: 44 – 46, NRSV)

Prayer

God, do you ever get angry?
I mean, really angry?
Do you ever feel like shouting at the top of your voice?
Do you ever feel like hitting out?
Do you ever just feel like having a good scream?
Mind you, I have to admit that some of the things that make me angry
are really not worth worrying about at all!
Stupid things!
Like not being able to find my socks
or being made to do my homework!
See: stupid things!
But there are other things:
More important things.
Things that really make my blood boil.
Were you angry that day, God.
The day they killed Jesus?
Is that why you blotted out the sun?
I'd have been angry, God.
But you're different. You're really forgiving.
You love everyone!
And that's what the cross really means, isn't it?
That you love us so much!
That's amazing, God!
I guess you're a bit like my parents.
They get annoyed with me sometimes,
But I know it's just because they love me.
And I guess I am annoying at times.
Anyway, I hope you don't mind me asking all that.
I hope I haven't annoyed you!
I'll try to be a bit more patient next time I lose my socks.
Thanks for listening, God. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Jesus came to save us from all that is evil, and so together we pray:
Our Father...

Session 12: Cross-roads

Christians on pilgrimage to Jerusalem will make the Stations of the Cross, retracing the steps of Jesus along the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem, stopping to reflect on the various events of Jesus' journey. This is also done in churches throughout the world. It's a powerful devotional exercise used not just on Good Friday but also throughout the year but particularly during Lent and Holy Week.

This session provides a number of different ideas about how to prepare for and walk the stations of the Cross with your group of young people.

The Stations of the Cross

1. Jesus is condemned to death
2. Jesus accepts the Cross
3. Jesus falls for the first time
4. Jesus meets his mother
5. Jesus is helped by Simon of Cyrene
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus
7. Jesus falls a second time
8. The women of Jerusalem mourn for Jesus
9. Jesus falls a third time
10. Jesus is stripped of his garments
11. Jesus is nailed to the cross
12. Jesus dies on the cross
13. Jesus is taken down from the cross
14. Jesus is laid in the tomb
15. The Resurrection

Suggestions for Stations of the Cross

- Don't be afraid of reducing the number of Stations (e.g. representing only one fall of Jesus or combining a few stations into one)
- Use the idea of Footsteps, by placing paper footprints around the path you will take or using foot print templates on which the young people write prayers and leave as they make each Station stop.
- People who helped Jesus – choose the Stations that feature people who helped Jesus: for example, Mary, Simon of Cyrene, the women of Jerusalem, Mary Magdalene, Joseph of Arimathea, Veronica (non-biblical). Think and pray about the people who help us through life, particularly difficult times, or who support us in the Christian Way. You could make 'Helping Hands' by drawing around each other's hands on card or paper and cutting them out. Use them to write prayers for those who help us, to be used at each Station. Leave them at appropriate stations as you make the journey.

- Through the eyes of Mary or other characters – write meditations from the perspective of onlookers or imagine you were there, walking alongside Jesus.
- Make a journey outdoors. Perhaps visit various parts of the community for each station, or simply use the church grounds.
- Light tapers or candles at each stop.
- Make Station signs for each stop like the ones at Railway Stations.

Not Just a Story!

Have a selection of different images and pictures of Jesus – modern and traditional. Ask the young people to choose one image that really speaks to them. Alternatively, depending on the number in the group, place a few images around the room and ask them to stand by a picture that appeals to them. Ask the young people to explain why they chose the picture they did. Jesus means different things to all of us because of our own faith, personality, circumstances and relationship with him. Perhaps, in a few years' time (or even a few weeks) you may choose a different image.

Jesus isn't simply an historical figure, confined to the past. He is a living reality now! In the Stations of the Cross, we tell the story of Jesus' journey made to Golgotha. But it isn't just an historical narrative. We can relate the Stations to our own lives.

Now, either spread the names or images of the various stations around the room and invite the young people to pick one that appeals to them, a Station that really speaks to them and ask them to prepare something for the station: it could be a prayer, a meditation, or simply an explanation of why they chose that particular station. Give them some time to do this. Then make the journey with the young people leading each Station they have chosen.

You will need

various pictures and images of Jesus (either postcards or photocopies from books or get the USPG resource 'The Christ we Share' which has a pack of images), pictures or names of the Stations of the Cross, paper and pens.

Prayer: I Can't Work it Out!

Various Voices

1. I can't work out why I'm no good at Maths and my friend is.
2. I can't work out why I can't kick a football straight and my friend is the next Michael Owen.
3. I can't work out why people are so interested in Posh and Becks.
4. I can't work out why my father is so bad tempered.
5. I can't work out why my best friend isn't talking to me.
6. I can't work out why my great grandmother is still alive at 93 and my cousin's baby has died.
7. I can't work out why people are dying of starvation and thirst.
8. I can't work out why some people have to suffer so much.

9. I can't work out why countries have to go to war.

(Add others, as appropriate)

I can't work out a lot of things.

There are lots of things I can't work out.

Voice B (one voice only)

I know there are lots of things you can't work out.

Things confuse and frighten you.

I know you get angry and upset.

And so do I. When you can't work things out just look at the cross.

Different shapes and sizes. Some with me on, some with me off.

Some very elaborate, Or just two twigs tied together.

Some made with flowers. Some written in ash.

Whatever it looks like, when you can't work things out, look at the cross.

It will remind you that, yes, there is pain in the world.

It will remind you that, yes, there is suffering around.

It will remind you that, yes, there is confusion and things you can't work out.

But it also shows you how much I have loved you and will always love you.

There are lots of things you can't work out.

Work this one out: I love you so much that I was sent to the cross to wipe away your sins

and all that separates me from you.

I want to be close to you. And sometimes I discover you don't want to be close to me.

I can't work that one out. All the things you can't work out

We'll work out together as we go along.

We'll work them out together

The things you can't work out.

Session 13: Alive and Well

Gathering

We're returning to the symbols of Jesus' passion we used in Session 11. Lay them out on a white sheet.

The Resurrection of Jesus brings is at the heart of the Christian Faith. His death and resurrection brings life to the world and shows God's power over sin and death.

Find some symbols of life – for example, flowers, evergreen leaves or branches, potted plant, eggs, jug of water, etc. Invite the young people to place the symbols around the sheet.

Read

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, 'Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.' Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened (*Luke 24:1-12, NRSV*)

Respond

Have a bowl full of petals (or, if that's a problem, confetti). Ask the young people to think about something they would like to thank God for, something that has made them happy, or reminded them of the joy of living and the joy of being a friend of follower of Jesus.

Perhaps play some reflective music.

The young people take a handful of petals and take it in turns to scatter the petals over the sheet as a symbol of their joy and happiness.

Prayer

God,
sometimes we are surrounded by such bad news
and bad things happening
that we can be left to think that the world is just an awful place.
Help us to remember that Jesus transforms
death and destruction
into life and hope.
Help us to share his Risen Life with others
so that the whole world may be filled with his peace.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Jesus was raised from the dead to live forever, and so we are able to pray:
Our Father...

You will need

the objects from two sessions ago, symbols of new life, bowl of petals or confetti, white sheet.

Session 14: High Places

Gather

Light a candle, accompanied with the following words:

Jesus is the light of the world.
He is with us now.

Read

Luke 24: 50 – 53

Respond

Explain to the young people that Jesus' ascension into heaven reminds us of our destiny: where he has gone so we will follow. Remind them that on Ash Wednesday, many Christians have their foreheads signed with ash as a sign of penitence and sorrow for sins, and also to remind us that we are human beings who are mortal.

Then introduce 'glittering' which will do a similar thing but remind us that despite being human creatures we have a long future with Jesus that is unending. For this liturgical act you'll need some Body Glitter! Make a sign of the cross with glitter on the forehead of each young person with the words:

'Remember you are dust bound for glory.

Or you could get the young people to sit in a circle and 'glitter' each other in turn. Play some reflective music.

Prayer

(either read by one person or three different people)

Lord, sometimes things make us sad and stressed out.
Sometimes things seem hopeless.
Help us to remember that life with you
is exciting and fun!

Sometimes the world isn't all it's cracked up to be.
Sometimes we are bored with our life.
Help us to remember that life with you
is colourful and interesting.

Sometimes when things come to an end we are disappointed.

Sometimes we are upset when we have to say goodbye to people or places
Help us to remember that life with you is unending. **Amen.**

Or use a prayer such as St Patrick's Breastplate Prayer.

If you've done the 'Be Creative' Activity above you could use this here.

Lord's Prayer

Let us pray for the coming of the kingdom as Jesus taught us:
Our Father...

You will need

Body Glitter

Liturgies for the Journey

The following celebrations are designed for the beginning and end of the ON the Way Course, particularly if it is being used as a preparation for the Sacraments of Christian Initiation.

They consist of

- I am here: Liturgy of Setting off on the journey
- I can't wait: Liturgy of Anticipation
- Looking for Love: Liturgy of Reconciliation

I Am Here!

Setting off on the journey

This liturgy can be used for the first time your group gather together—or perhaps as an Inquirers' Liturgy for young people and parents for them to find out more about Baptism/Confirmation and/or for you to explain about what is expected of them if they decide to ask for the sacraments of Christian Initiation.

It can be celebrated quite informally as a prayer session or, if families and members of the congregation are present, make it a more celebratory act of worship.

Gathering

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Some brief words of welcome and explanation about the time of worship together. Tell them that they are embarking on something amazing and courageous. Some of them may not have a clear understanding of what it's all about. Some of them will have loads of questions. Some of them will not be quite sure of what they are letting themselves in for! Some of them will know more than others.

We are here for lots of different reasons (and only they will know them!) and for one reason: to learn and grow together in the Christian Faith and prepare for Confirmation and/or First Communion.

Prayer

I am here because my friend asked me.
I am here because everyone else is being confirmed and I don't want to miss out.

I am here because I had my arm twisted by someone in the parish who kept on and on at me.

I am here because my parents said I should be.

I am here because I want to be here and I've been looking forward to it.

I am here because I want to receive Holy Communion – like everyone else.

I am here because I want to be a part of the church.

For whatever reason, I am here.

Mind you,

I should be careful of my language!

In the past, when people say to you 'I am here'

you usually have something for them to do

and they are offering to do it

like Isaiah, Jeremiah and Moses.

I'm not sure that's the case for me

But anyway,

I am here

And so are you.

I am here because I promised to be with you when two or three are gathered in my name.

I am here because I am interested in you.

I am here because things aren't the same without you.

I am here because I enjoy your company and there's no better place to be.

I am here because I love you.

For lots of different reasons

I am here

And so are you.

Read

Mark 1: 4 – 11

This is a suggested reading, but you can use your own, or a combination of Readings, perhaps singing a Psalm and Gospel Acclamation

Explain

You could use this time to explain what is expected of candidates and parents, what Confirmation preparation is all about, and a little about the meaning of Confirmation.

Perhaps introduce those who will be leading the Confirmation preparation and give details of where and when you will meet.

The following rites will help us to understand a little more about Baptism and Confirmation.

Gather around Baptismal Font

(if appropriate sing a song or chorus as you walk)

Fill the font with water, or perhaps give each person a container of water to help fill it.
Explain that most, though perhaps not all of the young people, will have been baptised.
In baptism we are made members of Christ's body, the Church.
Most church buildings will have the font near the door.
Every time we come to worship in the church building, we get an instant reminder that it is through Baptism that we are brought together.

Prayer

God our Father,
in baptism we are made your children.
Help us to follow Jesus on the road he takes us;
we ask this through Jesus the Lord. **Amen.**

Respond

Either:

Light a candle each from the Easter Candle

Explain the significance of the Easter Candle.
It is a reminder of Christ's Resurrection from the dead.
When we are baptised we are given a baptismal candle which is lit from the Easter Candle. It is a powerful reminder that in baptism we have died and risen with Christ, and so share in the life he gives us.
You can light votive lights, or even floating candles which can be placed in the font.

Or:

Place a pebble in the font

Have a collection of pebbles and ask people to choose one.
Explain to them that the pebble represents them.
Just like the pebble has rough and smooth parts,
with its own unique features and textures,
it is beautiful and nice to hold, etc
so we are unique and beautiful,
with our own marks,
with our rough parts and smooth parts, et
and God, too, holds us in the palm of his hand.
Then after some silence and meditation
place the pebble in the font
It's a sign of our baptism:

we are part of God's life,
he refreshes, loves us and we all belong together in the church.

Move to chancel step

Pour some olive oil into a dish.

Explain that after Jesus himself was baptised, the Spirit descended in dove like fashion, confirming his identity: that he is the Father's Son, the Messiah who is to come.

The oil, among many other things, is a reminder of being anointed with the Spirit. When we are anointed with the Holy Spirit in Baptism and Confirmation we are made children of God.

It is here, at the chancel step, that the Bishop will lay hands on you
(and anoint you with holy oil) praying that you will be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Prayer

God,
When Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan
He was anointed with the Holy Spirit.
Help us to be strong in faith in the days ahead
so that when we are confirmed
we will be ready to receive the continued help and strength of the Holy Spirit.
We ask this through Jesus the Lord. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

As children of the same heavenly Father,
let us pray as Jesus taught us:
Our Father...

Blessing

The Lord be with you
And also with you

May God fill you with every good gift
and fill you with faith and wonder in all that he has done for you,
and the blessing of Almighty God,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in Peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

I Can't Wait!

A Liturgy of Anticipation

This kind of liturgy can be used the week before the Baptism and/or Confirmation, particularly if you don't want a Liturgy of Reconciliation.

Gathering

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

Grace and peace be with you
And keep you in the love of Christ

Tell the young people that they are probably both excited and nervous about their Baptism and/or Confirmation. During this time of worship together, you will be thinking about their it all means for them as individuals and as members of the Church, the community of Faith.

Looking Forward prayer

God,
I can't wait!
Sometimes, I'm so impatient I want things yesterday:
instead of waiting 'til tomorrow or next week or next month!
There's so much in life to look forward to,
so much that makes life exciting!
But sometimes, we just have to...wait.
To wait for the right time and the right place.
I'm looking forward to my Confirmation.
In fact, God, I can't wait.
I hope though, God, that when I am confirmed
that I'll stay excited forever!
Because, with you, there is always something to look forward to.
So, thanks God.
Thanks for making life exciting
and letting me in on your life! **Amen.**

Gospel

Luke 24: 49 – 53 ('I am sending on you the gift promised by my Father')

Here you could use a combination of Readings and Psalms, Gospel Acclamation and Gospel

Response

In an open space, place various symbols of Confirmation and First Communion – bowl of water oil, stole, bread and wine (communion), a wrapped gift (presents), balloons (party/celebration), etc. Remind and/or explain what each one represents.

Then invite the young people to light a candle at the symbol that speaks most clearly to them, or the one thing that sums up their own excitement and anticipation. Play some reflective music whilst this is happening.

Prayer for each other

Sit in a circle. Hold a ball of wool in your hand. Throw the ball of string to one of the group, calling out their name, and holding onto the other end of the wool. Invite each person then to do the same, until all are holding a stretch of wool. When they have done this, you should get a nice web where all are interconnected.

Explain to them that we are all connected, not just as human beings but as members of Christ, members of the Church. We all have a responsibility to one another, because we are all in this together. You can't be a Christian on your own!

Looking for Love!

A Liturgy of Reconciliation

If it is the tradition of the parish for the young people to make their first confession then you will have to prepare the young people the week before. They need things explained to them and a chance to reflect.

Perhaps they could write some of the things they are confessing on a piece of paper, placed in a sealed envelope with their name, then placed in the Church Safe, until the following week. These can then be burned after their confession which itself is a powerful symbol.

However, this liturgy can be used for any group who wish to have a Liturgy of Reconciliation before their Baptism and/or Confirmation, without each person making their confession individually to a priest.

Gathering

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
And also with you.

Introduction

Briefly explain to the young people what this liturgy is about, and how we can be confident of God's love, compassion and forgiveness.

Opening Prayer

God our Father,
Jesus declared the power of love and forgiveness
when he stretched out his arms and died.
Help us to continually turn to those saving arms
and receive the forgiveness we need for a new life.
We ask this through Christ the Lord. **Amen.**

Gospel Suggestions

Luke 23: 32 – 34 ('Father, forgive them...')
Luke 15: 11 – 32 (The Prodigal Son)

Perhaps preceded by other readings, Psalm and Gospel Acclamation.

Short Homily

Prayer for forgiveness

Lord Jesus, showed the depth of your love and forgiveness
by the way you related to people.
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you showed the cost of your love and forgiveness
when you died on the cross.
Christ, have mercy, **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you showed the power of your love and forgiveness
when you were raised from the dead
Lord, have mercy. Lord. **have mercy.**

Individual Confession

If the young people are making their confession individually to a priest, play some reflective music. If you have a large number of young people you may want to ask some other priests to help you.

Remember that, if the young person hasn't yet been baptised, the Prayer of Absolution used in the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) needs to be adapted, pointing forward to the moment of Baptism when all their sins will be washed away in the water of Baptism.

However, here are some alternative ideas to deal with the theme of God's forgiveness or to help draw out the significance of the Ministry of Absolution.

The following are just examples: you may have your own ideas.

Water, Water!

Use water as a symbol of being washed of our sins. Perhaps invite the young people to touch the water or sign themselves with the sign of the cross, or sprinkle them with the water.

Newspaper Cross

Give the young people a variety of newspapers and ask them to look for bad or distressing things in the world, perhaps things caused by human sin.

Then invite them to glue the paper articles to a large cardboard or wooden cross, as a symbol of bringing our sins and the sins of the world to the cross for Christ to deal with.

A Handful of Confetti!

Prepare a bowlful of confetti or petals and invite the young people to take a handful. Go outside, and when you have said a prayer affirming God's forgiveness, invite them to throw their petals into the air.

Sin is ugly, but when we say Sorry and promise to lead a new way of life we allow God to create something beautiful. Alternatively, talk about how our sins are blown away, just like the verse from Scripture, 'As far as the east is from the west, so far does the Lord remove our sins.'

Burned Up!

If the young people have written their confessions on a piece of paper then prepare a fire outside and invite them to throw them on the fire: a powerful symbol!

Prayer of Forgiveness

Use an appropriate prayer of forgiveness, perhaps from the Church in Wales Eucharist.

Blessing

The Lord be with you
And also with you

May the Lord who has set you free from sin, strengthen you to follow him in newness of life, and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. **Amen.**

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