



ADVISORY FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS MASSES

With the re-opening of our Catholic Schools across the Diocese of Saginaw – both before and immediately after Labor Day – there will be many new procedures put into place to safeguard the health and security of our students, faculty and administration.

With regard to Catholic School Masses, it has been determined that:

- All will be scheduled according to the parish and school schedules. There are to be Masses in the parish church or an appropriately designated (created) worship space. Because of the stringent state and local health department regulations, they cannot be “public” in nature; that is open to anyone who may desire to come. To keep a school grade or cohort free from contamination, only a designated grade (or grouping of grades called cohorts) and their respective teachers, classroom aides and/or school administrators may attend. This means even parents of school students are not allowed to be present as they (or any other outsiders from the school community) will break the chain of the state and local health department restrictions (necessary for tracking the COVID-19 virus should it be identified).
- All Masses celebrated with students from our Catholic Schools should be scheduled but non-published (such as in parish or school bulletins). Moreover, it will be incumbent upon all school administrators and parish priests (pastors and parochial vicars) and/or sacramental ministers from our Catholic school communities to meet and to coordinate: (1) when and how often these school Masses will be scheduled; (2) how they will be celebrated according to all diocesan guidelines and protocols, in addition to all of the new procedures related to the opening and operating of our Catholic schools; and (3) an evaluation of the process and procedures once implemented and make the necessary adjustments and/or changes.
- They may not be live-streamed; rather all Masses must be scheduled to accommodate the appropriate grade or cohort level to attend with a regular rotation.
- This may result in the scheduling of more weekday Masses at the parish than in years past given all the restrictions and irregularities of the situation we presently confront at this unprecedented time.

The Offices of Faith Formation and Liturgy have collaborated to determine “best practices” and resources for classroom prayer when grades or cohorts are unable to attend Mass given parish and school conflicting schedules (e.g. a Funeral Mass, unavailability of a priest-president, etc.). See the attached listing.

Prayer and Spiritual Resources for Classrooms for Children

(When Unable to Attend Mass)

1. *Lectio Divina* for children – This blog post with free downloads provides a step-by-step on how to pray *Lectio Divina* with kids.

<https://www.looktohimandberadiant.com/2020/02/lectio-divina-with-kids-printable.html>

2. *Children's Daily Prayer 2020-2021*, Liturgy Training Publications. Cost - \$15
This is a resource which utilizes an adapted form of "morning prayer" for children with simple instructions for those who lead prayer with children

<https://ltp.org/products/details/CDP21/childrens-daily-prayer-2020-2021>

3. 3-minute Retreats (from Loyola Press) – These short visual reflections are self-paced and have music background if desired. In addition, there is a short written reflection for each one. There is an archive of many 3-minute retreats by topic.

<https://www.loyolapress.com/retreats/remember-gods-love-for-you/>

4. A. Divine Mercy Chaplet (in Music) – This video takes the Divine Mercy Chaplet and sets it to music with the words to the prayer appearing in the video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSVvBQtSqFM>

B. Divine Mercy Chaplet (Coloring Sheets) - <https://www.catholicicing.com/celebrating-divine-mercy-sunday-with-kids/>

5. Prayer Partners

This could be done in a classroom or between grades (older with younger) if that is preferred. This is a good how-to article:

<https://www.thereligionteacher.com/student-prayer-partners/>

6. Prayer Table (which usually includes a box for intentions) -

<https://www.thereligionteacher.com/prayer-table-ideas/>

7. Rosary Journal (This is described as a graded interdisciplinary activity with English but doesn't need to be.) <https://www.thereligionteacher.com/rosary-journals-for-meditation-on-the-mysteries-of-the-rosary/>

For further information or questions please contact Peg McEvoy at (989) 797-6608 or pmcevoy@dioceseofsaginaw.org.

Prayer and Spiritual Resources for Classrooms for Youth

(When Unable to Attend Mass)

Rosary

This devotional may be familiar with most students. However, there is always the opportunity to grow in depth of the understanding of a Marian intercession and meditating on the Gospel Mysteries of the Rosary. Sharing the story of Fatima or Lourdes would also be time well spent. It would be helpful to find materials and have the students make their own rosaries. The cords and beads can be found easily or there are ways to make them by simply tying knots. I have found that students of all ages loved doing this. It can even be done successfully with high school seniors. If it goes over well, this is an easy activity to have students make rosaries and find ways to give them to shut-ins or assisted living facilities, letting them know they are being prayed for.

Stations of the Cross

This prayer is mostly done in a Church, however students could easily create the artwork for each station. The art could be hung in the classroom and used to help focus this spiritual pilgrimage. There are many forms that can be found to suit the age of the class.

Lectio Divina

This form of prayer can be done as a class or individually. This prayer is focused around the Divine Reading of Sacred Scripture. This gives us a disciplined way to pray so that we are free to hear the Word of Scripture speak to us. The steps are as follows:

1. Lectio – Reading
2. Meditatio- Meditation
3. Oratio - Prayer
4. Contemplatio – Contemplation

More information can be made available to explain this further. If you would like a demonstration to students or teachers, please contact Mark Graveline at the Diocese of Saginaw. 989-797-6639.

Scripture Reading and Reflection

This works well with older students. The student is given a Scripture passage a week or two in advance. They are asked to pray and think about the passage to prepare a 1-2 page reflection. They are to give context, help explain the meaning of the passage and learn how to articulate it back to their classmates by reading it aloud.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament [NB: Only if the School has a “designated” Chapel (that is with no “outsiders” from the cohort and/or school community) and can be COVID-19 cleaned and sanitized according to guidelines]

This time of prayer can be led by a priest or deacon (or a delegated Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion by the Pastor) with the Blessed Sacrament exposed in a monstrance. It may also be done by simply sitting in front of the Tabernacle - and also with a Leader of Prayer guiding meditations. Many devotionals and prayers can be said during the time of adoration. However, time should always be allowed for silent presence.

Divine Office/ Liturgy of the Hours

The celebration of the Mass is constantly being offered somewhere in the world. However, the Church also has another prayer called the Divine Office that has been prayed unceasingly for centuries. Priests, Deacons and Religious pray the Divine Office in union with Jesus Christ to the Father for the salvation of the world. However, the laity are invited and encouraged to pray along also. A suggested way to teach this prayer is to invite a priest, deacon or religious or commissioned Lay Minister to come in to the school or join virtually. They will be able to explain the prayers and the times of day they pray. There is an app called iBreviary. It updates daily the prayers and guides a person through each step.

For further information or questions, please contact Mark Graveline (989) 797-6639 or mgraveline@dioceseofsaginaw.org