



The following liturgy, reflecting the Spanish tradition of Posada, could be used for this service or you could use the format to develop ideas of your own appropriate for your context and tradition.

A Service of Welcome

Words of welcome can be used when the 'Held Together' carving is brought to your school and/or church

Givers and receivers are representatives from your parish.

Givers hand over the box containing the sculpture, this is then opened and the figure of Christ taken out and held for all to see.

Givers: Today we bring before you this figure of our Lord Jesus Christ

Will you take this figure into your school and Church?

Receivers: We will. (*The figure is handed over*)

Givers: May this be a symbol to you of God's presence in this place.

All: Amen.

A prayer of thanks

Father God, we thank you that you love us so much that you sent your Son to help us and to journey with us.

Lord Jesus, we thank you that you lived a life as one of us so that you could help us, that you were born as a baby in a poor family, that you taught us how to live, and that you were willing to die for us.

Holy Spirit, we thank you that you delight to live in us and to make us more like Jesus. We thank you that you remain with us as we travel the path of life.

Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, give us humble and thankful hearts now as we share together today with all on this pilgrimage and always. Amen

Reading: John 10:27-30 (King James Version)

- My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:
- And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.
- My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.
- I and my Father are one.

Jesus spoke of his followers as being his sheep. Now that Jesus is back in heaven we do not see him like we see our parents or our family members. Jesus loves you so much he wants you to live forever with him. He wants you to trust him like you trust your father and mother. You are in good hands with your parents because they love you very much. But someone loves you even more than that... Jesus! You are in God's hand when you trust Jesus as your Saviour. God's hands are steady and sure, safe and sound. Jesus will always hold on to you and will never let anyone or anything separate you from his love. He is always watching over you.

Prayers

Use a selection of any of the following prayers:

Prayers of hope

Leader: Jesus, born in a stable.

All: Bring hope to the homeless.

L: Jesus, child of Mary and Joseph.

All: Bring hope to all families.

L: Jesus, light of the world.

All: Bring hope to this world's dark places.

L: Jesus, bearer of peace

All: Bring hope where there is war.

L: Jesus, who fled to another country

All: Bring hope to all refugees.

L: Jesus, who was hungry in the desert

All: Bring hope to all who are poor and starving.

L: Jesus, who showed us how to live
All: Bring hope to the church that bears your name.

L: Jesus, who loved everyone
All: Bring love into our hearts that we may love too

L: Jesus, who reached out to hold us
All: Bring healing and love to all in need

L: Jesus, who died for us
All: Bring hope to a broken world.

L: Jesus, Son of God, Messiah
All: Bring hope now and always. Amen.

A prayer for families

We pray for the family of school within this Diocese
For Church families
For School families
For our own families
For those with no family.

We pray, that Jesus will be at the centre of all we do together,
That we may unite and share with each other
And look forward with confidence, showing true love for one another.

Prayers about travelling

For those who travel

Father, we pray for all those who will travel today to school or work or play,
for those who will travel home to visit families far away, and for those who
are seeking God's will for their lives.

As we all travel through life, unite us in your love and help us to draw
comfort and strength from one another and to grow in love and grace.

The Christian journey

Lord, be a bright flame before me
Lord, be a guiding star above me
Lord, be a smooth path below me
Lord, be a kindly shepherd behind me
Today, tonight and forever

When the journey is hard

Circle us and hold us together

Holy Trinity

When the path we travel daily becomes hard to tread

Patient all-loving Father

Christ who is the promised way

Sustaining Spirit, provider of help

Circle us and hold us together

Today as you did the Holy Family

As they travelled the path to Bethlehem,

Towards the coming Saviour.

The hope of arrival

In the name of the Father: We are welcomed

We welcome one another

We welcome the Christ child

With the coming of the Son: We are accepted

We continue the journey

We welcome the Christ child

In the joy of the Spirit:

We rejoice and sing

We welcome the Christ child

We welcome the coming Lord

A Candle Prayer

Lord Jesus, we thank you that you were born as a baby in Bethlehem,
that you left the glory of heaven and came to live among us,
like the light of a candle shining in the darkness.

Teach us to shine like lights with your love.

Amen.

Song

Together As One (actions on separate sheet)