

Diocese of Leeds

Vicariate for Evangelisation



Proclaim the Glory of
God

GUIDELINES FOR DISPLAYS IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Proclaim the Glory of God: GUIDELINES FOR DISPLAYS IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

- have been prepared by the *Vicariate for Evangelisation* for use in the Diocese of Leeds.
- gives guidance regarding displays that reflect the Catholic life of the school.
- does not include Religious Education displays, although may also reflect the Catholic life of the school.
- follow on from the recent guidance on Eucharistic celebrations entitled *You Have Prepared a Banquet*.



The heavens proclaim the glory of God; and the
firmament shows forth the work of his hands.
Day unto day takes up the story;
night unto night makes known the message.
Psalm 19:1-2 (Grail translation)

Key to Sources Used

CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church (London: Geoffrey Chapman, rev ed, 1999)
GIRM	General Instruction of the Roman Missal Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (London: Catholic Truth Society, 2005)
GNLYC	General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar, SACRED CONGREGATION OF RITES, 21 March 1969 (see www.liturgyoffice.co.uk)
SC	Sacrosanctum Concilium, SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 4 December 1963 (see www.vatican.va)

Schools of Discipleship: Guidance for Leadership and Governance in Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Leeds (Vicariate for Evangelisation, 2008)

You Have Prepared a Banquet For Me: Guidelines for Celebrating School Masses (Vicariate for Evangelisation, 2010)

Please note: in these documents, reference numbers relate to paragraph not page numbers

Introduction

“The school, through its clear visual Catholic identity, will be for many people the place where Christ and his Church are encountered.” (Schools of Discipleship 2)

1. This quotation affirms the importance of items displayed in school that reflect the Catholic life of the school. The faith of the school community is communicated through signs, symbols and liturgical displays. This is an opportunity for the evangelisation and catechesis of students, staff, parents and to all people visiting the school.
2. The prayer and worship of the school community is central to the life of the school. Our Catholic worship engages all the senses as well as the mind. Displays that encourage and reflect this, communicate faith simply and effectively.
3. This document refers specifically to displays that reflect the Catholic life of the school. This is distinct from displays specifically relating to the Religious Education curriculum.



The Liturgical Year



4. Catholic Schools have a liturgical, sacramental and spiritual life. *“This is supported visually by imagery which speaks clearly of Christ and his Gospel and is enhanced where possible... by other places in the school and diocese designated for prayer and worship.” (Schools of Discipleship 3)*

5. For parishes and schools, the Liturgical Year is a cycle that unfolds the entire mystery of

Christ and keeps the anniversaries of the saints. It includes the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Eastertide and Ordinary Time. Each season has its own character and gives time for the school community to reflect on and celebrate different aspects of Catholic belief in Jesus. The seasons and feasts of the liturgical year are celebrated in schools and should be visible through displays.

6. Displays that reflect a liturgical season should include the colour of the season, an image of Christ and any signs or symbols relating to that season, a pertinent quotation from scripture, from a saint or Church teaching. See appendices A, B and C for examples.



7. *“The saints have been traditionally honoured in the Church and their authentic relics and images held in veneration. For the feasts of the saints proclaim the wonderful works of Christ in His servants, and display to the faithful fitting examples for their imitation.” (Sacrosanctum Concilium 111)*

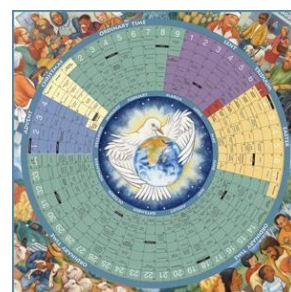


8. Most Catholic Schools have a patron saint or alternatively take a title of Christ with a corresponding feast day. These celebrations often provide a link with the parish. A display reflecting these feasts should include an image of the saint(s), a relevant quotation from scripture, from a saint, or Church teaching. It may include the colour of the vestments worn by the priest at Mass, the colour of the liturgical season, or a colour associated with the saint or feast.

9. Ordinary Time is an opportunity to make displays of saints, angels and highlight devotions such as the Sacred Heart, the Marian months of May and October and the Rosary.

10. Liturgical displays make visible links to the Universal Church, reminding the community that they are part of a larger community than themselves.

11. The liturgical calendar is found at the back of the diocesan directory and large calendars for display purposes can be purchased from Catholic bookstores.



Signs and Symbols

12. The signs and symbols used in Catholic churches are not keepsakes and mementoes, nor are they based on superstition. They are used to point people beyond themselves to another (spiritual) world. They can be actions, pictures or words, names, clothes or objects.

13. In the scriptures, God speaks through visible creation. Light and darkness, wind and fire, water and earth, the tree and its fruit speak of God and symbolise both his greatness and his nearness.

14. Signs and symbols were used by Christ to communicate the mysteries of the Kingdom of God. He performed healings and illustrated his preaching with physical signs or symbolic gestures. For example the laying on of hands.



15. *“The liturgical celebration involves signs and symbols relating to creation (candles, water, fire), human life (washing, anointing, breaking bread) and the history of salvation (the rites of the Passover). Integrated into the world of faith and taken up by the power of the Holy Spirit, these cosmic elements, human rituals, and gestures of remembrance of God become bearers of the saving and sanctifying action of Christ.” (CCC 1189)*

16. Holy images are used in homes, schools and churches. Holy images principally represent Christ who is the image of the invisible God.

“Previously God, who has neither a body nor a face, absolutely could not be represented by an image. But now that he has made himself visible in the flesh and has lived with men, I can make an image of what I have seen of God . . . and contemplate the glory of the Lord, his face unveiled.”

(St. John Damascene, De imag. 1, 16: PG 96: 1245-1248.)

17. Images of Our Lady and the Saints always point towards Christ. Their lives signpost us to Him. Therefore Christ is glorified when the images of Our Lady and the Saints are honoured.

18. Signs and symbols of the Catholic faith should be used in liturgical displays, and be prominent around the school building in every teaching and learning area, as well as in the administrative parts of the school building.



Good Practice

19. Displays that reflect the Catholic life of the school should be of a high quality. These displays are best in a clear space, prominent, attractive, uncluttered, changed regularly and presented to a high standard. Displays are to be things of beauty and their preparation can itself be an act of worship.

20. Entrance to school.

The entrance area of the school should communicate clearly the Catholic life of the school. There should be a crucifix and display of the school's patron saint or other appropriate display of the current liturgical season or feast. Other items that could be displayed in the entrance are a Lectionary or Bible, the image of Our Lady of Unfailing Help (diocesan patroness), the Pope and the Bishop, the School Prayer, School Motto/crest and photographs of how this is put into practice in school life.



21. If the entrance of the school does not have adequate space for a full display, another area close by should be used. The Assembly Hall and other public areas can also be used for religious displays.

22. Classroom

Signs of our Catholic identity should be displayed in our classrooms all year round. They should be in a place of prominence e.g. next to interactive whiteboard so that all children can see them as they work. A crucifix and image of Our Lady should be visible in the classroom.

23. There should be a focus for daily prayer that is Christ centred, including colours, objects and scriptures relating to the liturgical season. A candle and Missal/Bible may also be included. This display is to be distinct from R.E. work. It should be simple and uncluttered with one object that clearly communicates the theme of the display rather than a collection of various items brought in by the children unless they are relevant to the theme.



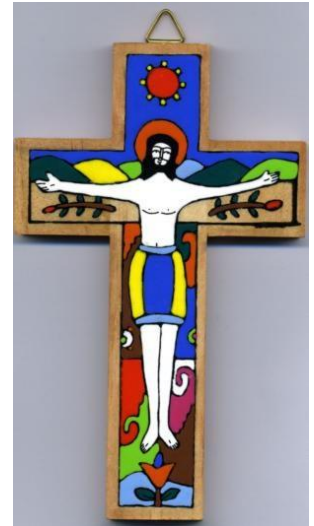
24. Crucifix

It is recommended that a crucifix is used, rather than a cross, in each room in school. A crucifix depicts Christ's body on the cross. This is different from a cross with the risen Christ shown. It may be felt that for younger children this is a sensitive issue. However, there are some colourful crucifixes available that are bright and attractive.

25. Key things to avoid

It should be noted that any texts using the Hebrew Tetragrammaton YHWH – *Yahweh* or *Jehovah* - are highly offensive to people of the Jewish Faith. The name *Yahweh* is not to be read, sung or prayed in the liturgy and any texts, songs or prayers containing this name must not be used. (*Statement on the Name of God, Department for Christian Life & Worship, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales*)¹

26. Mixing items from different religious traditions is entirely appropriate in R.E. displays, but should not be done in a prayer focus or liturgical displays. These displays should always communicate the Catholic life of the school.



APPENDIX A

Liturgical Colours

Liturgies celebrated during the different seasons of the liturgical year have distinctive music and specific readings, prayers, and rituals. All of these work together to reflect the spirit of the particular season. The colours of the vestments that the priest wears during the liturgy also help express the character of the mysteries being celebrated.



White is used in the seasons of Easter and of Christmas; also on celebrations of the Lord (other than of his Passion), of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of the Holy Angels, and of Saints who were not Martyrs; on the solemnities of Trinity Sunday, All Saints (1 November) and of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist (24 June); and on the feasts of Saint John the Evangelist (27 December), of the Chair of Saint Peter (22 February), and of the Conversion of Saint Paul (25 January). It may, in England & Wales, be used for Funerals.

¹ *You Have Prepared a Banquet For Me* – Guidelines for Celebrating School Masses (Vicariate for Evangelisation 2010) page 10



Red is used on Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion and Good Friday, on Pentecost Sunday, on celebrations of the Lord's Passion, on feasts of the Apostles and Evangelists, and on celebrations of martyred Saints.



Green is used during Ordinary Time.



Violet/Purple is used in the seasons of Advent and of Lent and for reconciliation. It may also be worn for Funerals. Black may be used, where it is the practice, for Funerals.



Rose may be used, where it is the practice, on Gaudete Sunday (Third Sunday of Advent) and on Laetare Sunday (Fourth Sunday of Lent).²

Non-liturgical colours



Blue, is not a liturgical colour but is the colour associated with Our Lady.

APPENDIX B

Signs, symbols and their meanings³

THE PRINCIPLE SACRAMENTAL SIGNS	
	<p>WATER</p> <p>Water is a principle sign of life because it is indispensable for life. Our planet is a planet of water. It cleanses, refreshes and renews. We are surrounded by it from the moment of conception. Unchecked, it can be awesome in its power sweeping everything before it.</p> <p>In Baptism, water is a sign of new life. It is a new birth. We are cleansed from sin, buried with Christ so as to rise with Him to new life.</p>
 	<p>BREAD</p> <p>Bread is the basic food of every culture and of every age in human history. Made from the toil of human hands, the many grains of wheat are transformed and become one to nourish and sustain us. A meal, in which bread is broken and shared, becomes a means of bonding human beings together. This is the sign Jesus used to describe Himself as the "Bread of Life." Following His command, in faith we take and eat this Bread, His Body, and become one with Him.</p>

² *You Have Prepared a Banquet For Me* – Guidelines for Celebrating School Masses 22

³ With grateful thanks to irondequoitcatholic.org for use of text and images.



WINE

From ancient times wine is associated with banquets, joy and celebration, a gift of God to gladden our hearts. The grapes, like the grains of wheat used for bread, are fruits of the earth and give of themselves in order that we might celebrate and be glad. This sign which Jesus used for His Blood, speaks to us of giving and of sacrifice in order that we might enjoy the benefits of His love in the banquet which is the foretaste of heavenly joy.



OIL

The history of the use of oil in religious ceremonies is an ancient one and dates back to Old Testament times. It was used in the coronation of kings, the consecration of priests and prophets. Its symbolism was seen as threefold: to make sacred, to strengthen and to heal. Oil was used to consecrate, or make sacred (holy); to take a person or object of ordinary use and place it at the service of God. Soldiers and athletes used oil to limber up their muscles before entering battle or a strenuous contest, and so is its association with strength. Physicians used oil to help in the healing of wounds. Since the oil was expensive and often mixed with precious aromatic ingredients, the pouring (or liberal use) of oil was seen to be a symbol of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the precious gift of God, upon the person. Oil used in sacred ceremonies was often perfumed so as to be pleasing and since evaporation was slow, this enhancement was long lasting. In the liturgy of the church, Holy Oil is used in the sacraments of initiation (Baptism and Confirmation) to designate the individual as



God's specially chosen one, taken out of the profane and brought into the sacred. No longer is the Baptised person ordinary, he or she is now a child of God, infused with His precious gift of life-giving grace, and dedicated to His service, "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation..." strengthened by the Holy Spirit to witness to the Lord Jesus in word and deed.

The use of oil in the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is taken directly from the New Testament letter of Saint James (5:14-15): "Are there any who are sick among you? Let them send for the priests of the Church, and let the priests pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick persons, and the Lord will raise them up; and if they have committed any sins, their sins will be forgiven them."



LAYING ON OF HANDS

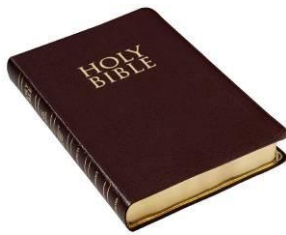
The imposition of the hands upon the head of someone is an ancient sign of blessing, empowerment and forgiveness. This sign is most clearly seen in the sacraments of Confirmation, Holy Orders (ordination of deacons, priests and bishops) and reconciliation of penitents (Penance or Confession). The power of God's grace is conferred in this basic and most human of physical gestures and signs - touch. Even in the sacrament of Reconciliation, when the penitent elects the option of anonymity by using the screen, the priest is directed to raise his hand toward the penitent in the gesture of forgiveness and acceptance.

OTHER CHRISTIAN SIGNS



ALPHA AND OMEGA

The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, signifying the Beginning and the End. In the Book of Revelation, the last book of the New Testament, Jesus calls Himself the Alpha and the Omega, "The first and the last, the beginning and the end, the one who was, who is, and who is to come." He is the Word, the First Word through whom all was created, and the Last Word by whom all will be judged.



BIBLE



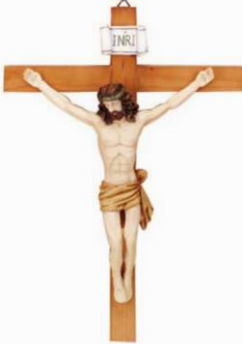

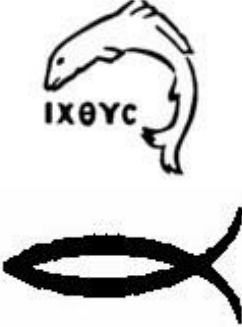

The collection of books accepted by Christian churches as the authentic, inspired record of the revelations made to mankind by God about himself and his will for men. It is divided into the Old Testament and the New Testament to distinguish between the Jewish tradition and the Christian. In the New Testament, the Old is generally spoken of as "the Scriptures" or "the sacred writings" (Matthew 21:42). Gradually the word has been used in the singular and "Scripture" has become a synonym for the Bible (Acts 8:32). "Testament" has the meaning of "covenant" with reference to the two covenants God established with his people in each period of human history.









CANDLES

Candles are used in Church to remind us of the presence of God in our midst. That is why you will see a red light next to the Tabernacle (place where the consecrated hosts are reserved). Candles are also used as symbols of prayer. It is a custom to leave candles burning in Church after a period of prayer. They are symbols of our

conversation with God in prayer, and although we have to leave the Church, our candle burns on sending out a symbolic message about our desire to stay close to God throughout our day.

	<p>CHALICE</p> <p>The cup used at Mass to contain the Precious Blood of Christ. The chalice is usually made of or covered with gold.</p>
	<p>CHI-RHO</p> <p>The letters X and P are often used as another symbol for "Christ". The first two letters of Christ's name in Greek are X and P. In the Greek alphabet X equals CH and P equals R. Also known as the CHi-RHO cross, the letters are usually inscribed one over the other sometimes enclosed within a circle becoming both a cosmic and a solar symbol.</p>
	<p>CRUCIFIX</p> <p>A cross bearing the image of Christ. It must be placed on or over an altar where Mass is offered. It is sometimes carried as a procession cross leading a line of clergy. Depicting the dead or suffering Christ, the crucifix did not come into general use until after the Reformation. The earlier ones represented Our Lord as the High Priest crowned, robed, and alive. In some images or statues, the figures of Our Lady and St John are depicted at the foot of the cross.</p>
	<p>DOVE</p> <p>Symbol of the Holy Spirit and used especially in representations of our Lord's Baptism and the Pentecost.</p>
	<p>FISH</p> <p>The fish was one of the most important symbols of Christ to the early Christians. In Greek, the phrase, "Jesus Christ, Son of God Saviour," is "Iesous Christos Theou Yios Soter." The first letters of each of these Greek words, when put together, spell "ichthys," the Greek word for "fish".</p>
	<p>GOOD SHEPHERD</p> <p>Some of the earliest depictions of Christ show Him as the Good Shepherd.</p>

	<p>ICON</p> <p>A flat painting, sacred picture of the Eastern Church. It is generally painted on wood and covered, except the face and hands, with relief of seed pearls and gold or silver. Icons of Our Lord and Our Lady are revered with great devotion, incenses, carried in processions, and normally placed on the iconostasis screen. The icons in the Eastern Church take the place of statues in the West.</p>
	<p>IHS</p> <p>The first three letters of the name Jesus in Greek.</p>
	<p>INRI</p> <p>These initials are often seen inscribed on a banner or sign on a crucifix. They indicate the first letters of the Latin words which Pilate ordered inscribed above Jesus as He hung on the cross, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews," "Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudeorum."</p>
	<p>LAMB</p> <p>Symbol of Christ as the Paschal Lamb and also a symbol for Christians (as Christ is our Shepherd and Peter was told to feed His sheep).</p> <p>An ancient symbol of Christ represented as the lamb of sacrifice whose blood redeemed all people. This symbol is seen most often at Easter time, although it is an appropriate symbol through the year. The image is taken from the Book of Revelation, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, wisdom and strength, honour and glory and praise!" (Rev. 5:12)</p>
	<p>LIGHT AND DARKNESS</p> <p>Before the advent of electricity the symbols of light and darkness were, perhaps, more readily appreciated. The Church's use of these symbols is elemental. Even the orientation of the church buliding (the altar at the east end) is significant. The one liturgy of the Church year where the use of these symbols is most dramatic is the easter Vigil, where the light of one candle representing Christ, is passed on to each one in the assembly, turning darkness into light.</p>
	<p>MISSAL</p> <p>The book containing the prayers recited by the priest at the altar during Mass. Since the Second Vatican Council the Missal includes both the sacramentary (or ritual part of the Mass) used only by the celebrant, and the lectionary (containing readings from Scripture) for celebrant and assisting ministers.</p>

	<p>RAINBOW</p> <p>Sign of the Covenant with Noah. Its 7 colours (from the top down: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet) recall the 7 Sacraments (7 is the sign of Covenant and completion).</p>
	<p>ROSARY</p> <p>Twenty events in the life of Jesus and Mary are the mysteries or happenings on which one meditates while reciting the decades of the Rosary. These twenty events form a summary of the life and work of Jesus and His mother. The Rosary is thus a school in which, by meditation, one comes to know the full story of redemption and the parts played therein by Jesus and by His mother Mary.</p>
	<p>SCALLOP SHELL</p> <p>The sea shell, especially the scallop shell, is the symbol of Baptism, and is found frequently on Baptismal fonts. The dish used by priests to pour water over the heads of catechumens in Baptism is often scallop-shaped.</p>
	<p>SHIP</p> <p>As those outside of Noah's Ark were destroyed, the ship became a perfect early symbol of the Church. In the same vein, the main part of a church's interior, the place where the people worship, is called a "nave," from the Latin "navis" -- ship.</p>
	<p>STOLE</p> <p>The stole has from earliest times been considered the distinguishing mark of those in holy orders (deacons, priests, bishops). It is worn about the neck by the priest and bishop and across the shoulder by the deacon.</p>
	<p>STATUE</p> <p>Statues are artistic representations of saints found in many churches that remind us of "the communion of saints" we believe in and recite in the Creed. Intercessory prayer to the person the statue represents is encouraged but neither the statue itself nor the person it represents is an object of worship.</p>



WHEAT AND GRAPES

Because of the bread and wine they produce, the symbols of wheat and grapes are often used to designate the Eucharist. Bread is the basic food of every culture and of every age in human history. Made from the toil of human hands, the many grains of wheat are transformed and become one to nourish and sustain us. A meal, in which bread is broken and shared, becomes a means of bonding human beings together. This is the sign Jesus used to describe Himself as the "Bread of Life." Following His command, in faith we take and eat this Bread, His Body, and become one with Him.

From ancient times wine is associated with banquets, joy and celebration, a gift of God to gladden our hearts. The grapes, like the grains of wheat used for bread, are fruits of the earth and give of themselves in order that we might celebrate and be glad. This sign which Jesus used for His Blood, speaks to us of giving and of sacrifice in order that we might enjoy the benefits of His love in the banquet which is the foretaste of heavenly joy.

APPENDIX C

Seasons of the Liturgical Year⁴

(Using the correct colours and symbols when creating focal points)

Advent:

Colours: Purple – representing Expectation, Purification, or Penance. *Bible, Candle and Advent Wreath, Jesse Tree. Could use a small plant or flowers in bud to represent waiting' for the birth of Christ.*



Christmas

Colours: White or Gold – representing Joy and Triumph. *Crib, Holy Family, shepherds, (cattle, sheep optional), wise men (kings), star, gifts. Holly to speak of Crown of Thorns to come, ivy to represent The Trinity.*

Baptism of Our Lord:

Colours: White or Gold
Bible, candle, water. Could use flowers or plant with white and yellow colours to represent innocence and kingship.

⁴ This document is currently available on the [Diocese of Leeds Education website](http://www.leedsdiocese.org.uk)

Ordinary Time: Colours: Green – a sign of Life and Growth.

Bible, candle, seeds or glass tube with growing plant in to show growth.

Or anything from nature or human life showing the promise of growth. Another focal point could show further growth and individuality by having different heights of candles set in a bowl of sand, or adding to the glass tube theme with another single plant showing the root etc.

Ash Wednesday Colours: Purple – penance

Bare rough cross draped with purple cloth.

Lent: Colours: Purple – penance

Take a theme from one of the Lenten Gospel Readings and use symbols mentioned in the reading to describe the story e.g. Lazarus.

Holy Thursday – Colours: White or Gold

Last Supper *Use the Gospel reading and have a cross, bowl of water,*

Washing of the Feet : *towel and sandals to highlight the reading with bible opened at that Gospel.*



Easter Sunday - Colours: White, Gold

Beginning of the Season: *Use symbols representing the Risen Christ, e.g. a picture of the Resurrection, white and gold cloths, Paschal Candle, bible, flowers. For children use small Easter chicks coming out of their eggs.*

Pentecost Sunday: Colours: Red, representing Royalty, Fire and Martyrdom. *Use a picture of Pentecost with flowers, cloth, representing fire.*



Ordinary Time: Colours: Green – a sign of Life and Growth

Follow the theme of 'growing' using nature objects, craftwork, pottery, unfinished needlework, schoolwork.

Holy Days: Colours: White and Gold – Joy, Triumph.

Bible, candle with display taken from the Gospel of the Day.

Feasts of Mary Colours: Blue and white.

May & October: *Icon – Mary Mother of Jesus, Rosary, flowers, candles.*

All Souls: **Colour:** Purple
Paschal Candle, purple cloth, Holy Water as a Sign of Baptism and linked with final sprinkling of the coffin.

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