

# **CEIST Reflection Day for Senior Students**



**Prepared by  
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## **Introduction**

Welcome to the CEIST Reflection Day for senior students in our schools. We have designed it for 5<sup>th</sup> Year students, but it can be used for either senior group. Please feel free to adapt this day to your particular student needs.

## **Why a Day of Reflection?**

It is said that all schools paint a picture of the world. The distinctive picture a Catholic school paints is one that is infused by an understanding of the human person as a child of God. The rich diversity of the Catholic school community and the spiritual life of each person are celebrated and enhanced through reflection, prayer, liturgy and sacraments, symbols and rituals. Reflection days sit easily within this tradition. They offer participants the space and time to think deeply about themselves, their lives and the lives of others, and their relationships - with each other, within their communities, with the wider world and with God.

Student reflection days draw in a special way from the gifts of the Christian tradition to enrich the spiritual life of the students and of the school. These days act as a focal point of awareness and influence, fostering a Catholic imagination and calling schools towards what is most important in the spirit of the founding Congregations.

We welcome everyone who wishes to participate in this day of reflection, teachers and students alike, and hope it goes some way to providing sustenance and nourishment for the spiritual journey.

## **Theme**



Just as water reflects the face, so one human heart reflects another  
(Proverb 27:19).



In other words, when we come to know our own hearts, we recognise the hearts of others and the common humanity we all share. We took this Proverb as the central idea for the day of reflection, hoping to give students an opportunity to look both inward and outward.

The ministry of Pope Francis has challenged us to reach out again to the world, not least to those you are on the margins of society. He states

No one can demand that religion should be relegated to the inner sanctum of personal life, without influence on societal and national life . . . An authentic faith – which is never comfortable or completely personal – always involves a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave this earth somehow better than we found it.<sup>1</sup>

## **Aim**

The aim of this day of reflection is to create a space for students to engage in self-reflection and transition to action in response to the call of Christian life. The theme ‘just as water reflects the face, so one human heart reflects another’ weaves through all four workshops, integrating the process of self-reflection and bridging the gap between students’ self-awareness and awareness of the lives of others. The experiences throughout help students to recognize that self-reflection is not only about the self but can also help them see their place and part in the world they live in.

As Christians, we seek an inward grace that inspires us to engage actively with our communities and do God’s will in the wider world. By looking inward and recognizing the unique ways they are made in God’s image and likeness, we hope that students will consider how they might reflect the face of God to the people around them.

### **Learning Intentions:**

That students will:

- Have an opportunity for self-reflection in the Christian tradition
- Engage with one another in a safe, supportive and fun environment
- Consider their relationships within their communities
- Evaluate their perceptions of the wider world and their potential roles in it
- Have fun!

## **Structure**

The day begins and ends in a spirit of prayer using the colourful image of the rainbow to promote the idea of unity in diversity.<sup>2</sup> It continues with some icebreakers and an exploration of the

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<sup>1</sup>Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (Vatican City, 2013), #183.

<sup>2</sup> The Story of the Rainbow in the Opening Prayer is accessible on <http://www.cyc-net.org/today2000/today000330.html> last accessed July 25th 2016. For the Rainbow Prayer in the Closing Prayer see <http://www.brys.com/sites/sherrysadoptions/fuzzyrainbows.htm> last accessed July 24th 2016.

theme ‘just as water reflects the face, so one human heart reflects another’ (Proverb 27:19). This occurs through lively, interactive activities; the range of icebreakers provides opportunities for group bonding as well as plenty of fun!

Then, with the theme as the backdrop, session 2 involves small groups engaging in a series of workshops. These 3 workshops in turn focus on self- reflection/getting to know oneself (Workshop 1: The Reflective Self); a beautiful meditation on self in community (Workshop 2: Meditation); and the challenge of seeing and responding to the plight of the other (Workshop 3: Breaking Open the Beatitudes).

The afternoon session (Workshop 4: One World Many Faces) integrates and pushes the experiences of the morning. A series of arresting images invites reflection on the earlier themes of self, family, community and those on the margins (the Beatitudes). The reflection questions for each image are structured to move students from self-reflection to considering their roles in their immediate and wider worlds. This activity calls on personal appropriation and group evaluation to help students discern their potential to leave this world ‘somehow better than [they] found it.’

### **Preparation for the Day**

In advance of the day consider the following:

#### **Opening and Closing Prayers**

Prepare a sacred space to reflect the 7 rainbow colours

#### **Meet and Greet**

- Divide students into 3 groups of between 15 and 20
- Draw up lists of these groups and display in the gathering room (see Group Planner below)
- Organise hot chocolate for the gathering room: consult with appropriate staff regarding the facilities to make and distribute it eg the canteen/Home Economics Kitchen/a tea-trolley.

#### Materials needed

*Please try to support Fair Trade where possible*

- Hot Chocolate
- Biscuits (optional)
- Disposable insulated cups/spoons/napkins

#### **Morning Session A**

- A copy of the concept map for every student
- Pen or pencil for every student
- Bowl (Icebreaker A)
- Sheets of white paper
- Large poster paper
- Markers
- Stickers (Statement exercise)
- Clothes pegs (Icebreaker F)

## **Morning Session B: Revolving Workshops**

### *Workshop 1: The Reflective Self*

- White paper (class set)
- Pens and colours
- Coloured cardpaper (Thank You cards)

### *Workshop 2: Meditation*

- Music player and reflective music or download  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xv1Yx3eFnEg>

### *Workshop 3: Breaking Open the Beatitudes*

- Download explanation of Beatitudes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wxWCspyE7lg>
- Blue and pink post-its and pens for all students
- 8 Envelopes
- Print out the Beatitudes and hang on the walls (See Appendix B)

## **Afternoon Session**

### *Workshop 4: One World Many Faces*

- Download the images on PowerPoint from [www.ceist.ie](http://www.ceist.ie). Alternatively if no data projector is available print sufficient copies of the images for distribution.
- Print a copy of the reflective questions for every student.

## **Check List**

- Prepare Rooms
- Organise Groups
- Stationary
- Equipment

**WORKSHOP GROUPS**

| <b><u>Group 1</u></b>   | <b><u>Group 2</u></b>   | <b><u>Group 3</u></b>   |
|---|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="240 300 521 331">1. <i>Reflective Self</i></li><li data-bbox="240 348 451 380">2. <i>Meditation</i></li><li data-bbox="240 396 451 428">3. <i>Beatitudes</i></li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="646 300 857 331">1. <i>Meditation</i></li><li data-bbox="646 348 857 380">2. <i>Beatitudes</i></li><li data-bbox="646 396 927 428">3. <i>Reflective Self</i></li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1101 300 1312 331">1. <i>Beatitudes</i></li><li data-bbox="1101 348 1382 380">2. <i>Reflective Self</i></li><li data-bbox="1101 396 1312 428">3. <i>Meditation</i></li></ol> |

## Schedule for the Day

9.00-9.30: Meet and greet

### MORNING SESSION A: OPENING SESSION

9.30 -9.45: Introduction and Opening Prayer

9.45-10.00: Icebreakers (A & B)

10.00-10.45: Exploration of the Theme

10.45 -11.00: Icebreakers (choice of 2 from C, D, E and F)

11-11.15 Break

### MORNING SESSION B: REVOLVING WORKSHOPS

11.15-11.55 **Workshop 1** The Reflective Self: Who am I?

11.55-12.35 **Workshop 2:** Meditation

12.35-1.15 **Workshop 3:** Breaking Open the Beatitudes

1.15-2.00 Lunch

### AFTERNOON SESSION

2-2.45 **Workshop 4:** One World: Many Faces

2.45-3.00 **Closing Prayer**

## Meet and Greet (30 minutes)

### *Learning Intention:*

- *Students have the opportunity to interact with one another in a social environment.*
- *Students learn the structure of the small groups*

### Set Up:

- Have students divided into 3 small groups with their names printed out (eg Group Planner on Page 6).
- Place copies of the Group Planner in prominent positions that can be seen by students as they enter the room.

### Process (9.00- 9.20):

- As students enter the room they take note of what groups they are in for the morning workshops.
- Students are offered hot chocolate and encouraged to interact with one another.
- Leaders circulate around the room chatting to students and welcoming them.
- Teachers can facilitate circulation among the students for example by *Speed Chatting*: students sit on several rows of chairs, with chairs facing one another. They chat to the person opposite for 3 minutes. Then they move two chairs to the right, facing a different person, chat for another 3 minutes, and so on.

### Tidy up (9.20-9.30):

- Students are asked to finish, tidy up and prepare themselves for Opening Prayer.
- Assemble students for Opening Prayer.

# Opening Prayer

## Greeting and Introduction

*Greet everyone warmly. Outline briefly the theme for the day and how we will all journey together as we explore it. Highlight the sacred space which reflects the 7 colours of a rainbow.*

## Gathering Prayer

Good and merciful God, we gather here today in your presence to celebrate who we are as the 5<sup>th</sup> Year group of \_\_\_\_\_ School.

Your Proverb reminds us that 'Just as water reflects the face, so one human heart reflects another' (27:19).

When we come to know our own hearts, we recognise the hearts of others and the common humanity we all share.

Give us the grace today to look into our own hearts, to cherish what we find there, and to recognise that despite all our differences and diversity, we all share in one common humanity.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen



'Just as water reflects the face, so one human heart reflects another' (Proverbs 27:19).



# Reflection: The Story of the Rainbow

## Indian Legend- Anne Hope

*Break the students into 7 groups according to the 7 colours of a rainbow. Group by group they read out the paragraphs according to their respective colours.*

**LEADER:** Once upon a time, all the colours in the world started to quarrel; each claimed it was the best, the most important, the most useful, the favourite.

**GREEN SAID:** Clearly I am the most important. I am the sign of life and of hope. I was chosen for grass, trees, and leaves - without me all the animals would die. Look out over the countryside and you will see that I am in the majority.

**BLUE INTERRUPTED:** You only think about the earth, but consider the sky and the sea. It is water that is the basis of life and this is drawn up by the clouds from the blue sea. The sky gives space and peace and serenity. Without my peace you would all be nothing but busybodies.

**YELLOW CHUCKLED:** You are all so serious. I bring laughter, gaiety and warmth into the world. The sun is yellow, the moon is yellow, and the stars are yellow. Every time you look at a sunflower the whole world starts to smile. Without me there would be no fun.

**ORANGE STARTED NEXT TO BLOW ITS' TRUMPET:** I am the colour of health and strength. I may be scarce, but I am precious for I serve the inner needs of human life. I carry all the most important vitamins. Think of carrots and pumpkins, oranges, mangoes and papaws. I don't hang around all the time, but when I fill the sky at sunrise or sunset, my beauty is so striking that no one gives another thought to any of you.

**RED COULD STAND IT NO LONGER. IT SHOUTED OUT:** I'm the ruler of you all, blood, and life's blood. I am the colour of danger and of bravery. I am willing to fight for a cause. I bring fire in the blood. Without me the earth would be as empty as the moon. I am the colour of passion and of love; the red rose, poinsettia and poppy.

**PURPLE ROSE UP TO IT'S FULL HEIGHT AND SPOKE WITH GREAT**

**POMP**: I am the colour of royalty and power. Kings, chiefs and bishops have always chosen me for I am a sign of authority and wisdom. People do not question me - they listen and obey.

**INDIGO SPOKE MUCH MORE QUIETLY THAN ALL THE OTHERS, BUT**

**JUST AS DETERMINEDLY**: Think of me. I am the colour of silence. You hardly notice me, but without me, you all become superficial. I represent thought and reflection, twilight and deep waters. You need me for balance and contrast, for prayer and inner peace.

**LEADER**: And so the colours went on boasting, each convinced that it was the best. Their quarrelling became louder and louder. Suddenly there was a startling flash of brilliant white lightning, thunder rolled and boomed. Rain started to pour down relentlessly. The colours all crouched down in fear, drawing close to one another for comfort.

**THEN THE RAIN SPOKE**: You foolish colours, fighting among yourselves, each trying to dominate the rest. Do you not know that God made you all? Each for a special purpose, unique and different. God loves you. God wants you. Join hands with one another and come with me.

God will stretch you across the sky in a great bow of colour, as a reminder that he loves you, that you can live together in peace, - a promise that he is with you, - a sign of hope for tomorrow.



### **Concluding Prayer**

Remain with us, O Lord our God, and guide us toward the depths of our own hearts, so that in coming to know ourselves a little better, we may come to know and appreciate each other, and to know you. We praise you as our creator and the one who guides our lives. Stay with us, Spirit of God, as we make our way through this special day.

We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen



## **First Icebreakers (15 minutes)**

### **A. Eye Contact**

#### Materials needed:

- A bowl containing pieces of paper, on which each has an emotion written.

#### Process:

- Put the students into pairs.
- In their pairs they try to maintain eye contact.
- Then after about 30 seconds the leader calls for player one from each pair to go to the bowl and chose a slip of paper.
- On each piece of paper will be an emotion.
- Player one then acts out the emotion silently.
- Player two tries to guess the emotion.
- When the leader says 'change', player one puts their emotion back in the bowl and player two chooses a slip of paper from the bowl.

### **B. Crossword Game**

#### Materials needed:

- Sheets of paper (coloured/white)
- Pens/markers

#### Process:

- Give a pen and paper to each young person in your group.
- The objective of the game is that students learn the names of everyone present.
- Ask them to write their first name in capitals, in the middle of the paper.
- Each person then moves around the room, inviting others (including leaders) to attach their name, where the first letter matches a letter on the paper.
- The names are then added like a branching crossword puzzle.
- The person who is able to attach the most names in the given time is the winner.

## Exploration of the Theme (45 minutes)

### *Learning Intentions:*

- *That students develop an understanding of the theme for the day of reflection*
- *That students have an awareness of what is expected of them throughout the course of the day*
- *That students explore what it means to be self-reflective*
- *That students begin to recognise that self-reflection is not only about the self but is also a tool to help them see their place and part in the world they live in*

## Establish Ground Rules (7 minutes):

### Materials Needed:

- Large poster/chart
- Marker

### Process:

- Put the students into groups to discuss what they think should be respected during the day.
- A spokesperson reports back from each group and the leaders use large posters/charts to record the ground rules.
- Ask the students to reflect on these; invite feedback and comments.
- If time allows, the students can ‘sign up’ to the ground rules by marking their initials or first names on one of the charts.

## Introduction of the Theme:

### (a) Concept Map and Self-Reflection (13 minutes):

#### Materials needed (for every student):

- A concept map (see Appendix A)
- Pen

### Process:

- Invite students to reflect on people and events who have shaped them using the following prompts:
  - Choose a moment from primary school
  - A moment from secondary school
  - A person who has influenced you
  - An event that has influenced you
  - An aspect of community life that may have influenced you
  - An activity or hobby that you enjoy
- Give the students time to pause and reflect on each moment and insert into their concept map.
- Invite the students to share their map on with a conversation partner.

### **Statement Exercise (20 minutes):**

#### Materials needed:

- Posters with statements
- Stickers

#### Process:

- Begin with a number of statements about self-reflection. These can be read out or printed and placed at intervals around the room.
- Students could be given one sticker each (eg a star).
- Invite the students to take their time, go around to each statement, read it and place their sticker on the statement that they think best defines what they understand self-reflection to be.

#### Statements

- ❖ Self-reflection is where I have the opportunity to think seriously about me and my life.
- ❖ Self-reflection provides me with the opportunity to think about what I want from life.
- ❖ Self-reflection provides me with the opportunity to think about my place in the world.
- ❖ Self-reflection allows me to think about how I treat other people.
- ❖ Self-reflection allows me to think about how I treat the environment.

In groups no smaller than 3 persons no more than 5, students explore the theme more deeply using the following prompts:

- What do you understand self-reflection to be?
- Would you like to add your own statement to the ones on the wall?

## Second Icebreakers (15 minutes)

❖ Choose any two of the following:

### C. Guess the leader

Process:

- One person leaves the room.
- While that person is gone the rest of the group get into a circle and one person is chosen as the leader.
- This person will lead an action such as standing with their right hand in the air and everyone must copy the action.
- The person outside the room must then come in, stand in the middle of the circle and guess who led the action.
- While the person is deciding, the leader can change the action and this must be repeated by the group.
- When the person has guessed correctly they must choose someone else to wait outside while a new leader is chosen and then they too rejoin in the game.

### D. Throw me a Smile

- Place all the students in a large circle, either standing or sitting.
- All students look at each other in the eye.
- The objective of the game is not to be caught smiling or laughing.
- The students who begin to laugh/smirk/giggle or smile must remove themselves from the circle.
- The last remaining student who does not smile is the winner.
- You can repeat this ice-breaker; it can be a quick game as the smiling/laughing can be quite infectious!

## E. Beat Box

### Process:

- Divine the large group into small circular groups.
- The first group tap both hands on their laps once.
- The second group tap their chest twice with their right hands.
- The third group use their right hand to click once.
- The fourth group rub hands together (x2), tap left knee with left hand and then right knee with right hand.
- Each group should practice their sound.
- Then begin to build the sounds. Begin with group 1, followed by group 2, and so on. When group 5 have created their sound, return immediately to group 1.
- Repeat this and practice and eventually it'll sound like music!

## F. Catch me if You Can . . .

### Materials needed:

- Bag of clothes pegs
- Bollards/cones

### Process:

- Section off an area in the hall or on a lawn.
- Students stand in a circle. They decide a challenge which will be performed by the last remaining student at the end of the game eg hop on one leg, sing the alphabet, do 10 sit ups.
- Every student receives 2 clothes pegs and attaches them to their jumper/jacket.
- The objective of the game is that each student must try to attach their clothes pegs onto another student and run out of the circle without another student attaching their clothes pegs to them.
- The student who is last to remain in the circle must accept and perform the challenge.
- Repeat the game again as it can be very quick game and very loud!

• • •

### Activity 1 (22 minutes):

1. Give each student a sheet of white paper. Ensure that there are enough colours available to the students in a central location in the room.
2. Invite the students to draw a picture of themselves with their non-dominant hand. (10 minutes)
3. Follow this by thinking about each of the following questions. The leader will read each question and give the students a few moments to reflect. Also allow time to share responses. (12 minutes)
  - What do you like about your picture?
  - What are you doing in the picture?
  - What colours did you use and why?

• • •

### Activity 2: (8 minutes)

Pair work: Ask the students to sit across from another student, knees facing each other.

- Invite the students to share with each other.
  - Each student tells their partner what they like about their picture.
  - The student who is listening must pick out the positive statements that they hear and reiterate them back to the speaker.
- • •

## Workshop 1: The Reflective Self

Duration: 40 min

### *Learning Intentions:*

- *Students engage in self-reflection in a safe and supportive environment*
- *Students have the opportunity to be creative*
- *Students consider those for whom they are grateful*

### Materials needed:

- White paper (Activity 1)
- Colours (markers/colouring pencils/crayons) (Activity 1)
- Thank you cards (e.g. folded sheets of coloured paper) (Activity 3)
- Pens/ Colours (Activity 3)



### **Activity 3:** (10 minutes)

Individual work: Students will write a thank you note to a person they are grateful for (parent, teacher, sibling, friend, etc.)

- Give each student a thank you card. Ensure that pens/colours are available in a central location in the room.
- Teacher introduces as follows:

*In getting to know yourself, you also get to know each other. Having reflected on positive statements about yourself and your partner, I invite you to write a note to a person you are grateful for. Thank them for their role in your life, and for the ways they have made you who you are.*



### **Optional:**

(This is an optional song that can be played during tidy up as a transitional piece before the students leave for the next session.)

Pharrell Williams *Happy*.

Youtube link at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6Sxv-sUYtM>



### Leader reads the following passage and meditation prompts

“On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, ‘They have no wine.’ And Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.’ His mother said to servants, ‘Do whatever he tells you.’ Now standing there were six stone water jars ... each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said... ‘Fill the jars with water.’ And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, ‘Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.’ So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.”” (John 2:1-9)

*We now move from this passage into personal meditation, starting off with some deep relaxation. Whether you are sitting or lying down, check that your body is comfortably positioned and that you have enough space around you to feel comfortable. Acknowledge the fact of any sounds from inside or outside, and then let them go... Now, stating off by becoming aware of the points of contact between your body and the chair or your body and the floor... become aware of the chair or floor beneath you, and allow it to support your body. Relax any tightness of your tummy muscles on a slow out-breath... warm air breathed out, Then an in-breath, cool air breathed in, felt on your upper lip... Now imagine yourself floating into warm darkness for a moment, and allow your eyes to close.*

## Workshop 2: Meditation

Duration: 40 min

### *Learning Intentions:*

- *Students engage in self-reflection in a safe and supportive environment*
- *Students have the opportunity to be imaginative*
- *Students experience the prayer form of Christian meditation*
- *Students reflect on their own communities*
- *Students have the opportunity to explore/deepen their relationship with Jesus*

### Materials needed:

- Music player
- Music to accompany the meditation:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xv1Yx3eFnEg>

*Bring your attention down to your right foot...  
Without moving the whole leg, just gently move your right ankle up and down once or twice...then rest it again.  
Still with the right foot, begin to tighten the muscles of your right calf...  
and the muscles around your knee...  
Hold the tension a moment or two, and then release it,  
feeling that right leg relaxing and sinking.*

*Now, bringing your awareness to your left foot,  
again gently move your ankle up and down once or twice, and then rest it.  
Now just tighten the muscles of your left calf...  
and the muscles around your left knee...  
Hold the tension a moment or two, and then release it.  
Feel the heaviness and relaxation in both legs and feet,  
and check if they need to shift position at all.  
If so, do so gently, and relax.  
Now, on an out-breath, relax the tummy muscles around your waist...  
Then let your shoulders relax by slightly lifting and then letting them drop, or, if lying down,  
let them droop slightly backwards...*

*Now make a fist with your right hand.  
Feel the tightness travel up from your wrist...  
through the forearm, and upper arm, to your neck muscles...  
And relax.  
Now make a fist with your left hand,  
again feeling the tightness in your forearm,  
upper arm, neck muscles...  
Again relaxing neck, shoulders, arm, wrist and hand.*

*With eyes still closed, slowly move your head and neck slightly,  
from side to side...up and down...  
until you find the most comfortable position.*

*Now become aware once more of your breathing,  
your own ordinary breathing rhythm...  
Don't force it or try to change it, just become aware of it.  
Cool air breathed in, warm air breathed out...gently...  
felt on your upper lip...*

*Now let the warm breath move aside the warm darkness, as in your imagination, with eyes  
still closed, you allow yourself to enter the meditation.*

- 🌸 In your imagination, you find yourself at the wedding reception.  
So allow yourself to enter the scene...  
where it is happening, what time it is...  
indoors or outdoors...  
the size of the space, big or small,  
the number of people...  
do you recognise anyone . . .  
familiar faces? . . . .  
who is present with you . .
  
- 🌸 As you look around, you begin to notice those water jars...  
where they are...their size...  
their shape... what they are made of...  
Continuing to look at them...  
you now imagine yourself becoming one of them...  
your own substance changing...  
re-forming...  
taking on the dimensions and colour  
of a water jar...
  
- 🌸 As a water jar, notice the unique features of your design...  
colour, shape, beauty...  
How do you feel about this?
  
- 🌸 You may also become aware of any scratches, chips or breaks...  
How do you feel about these?
  
- 🌸 Now let your awareness move to your inner sense,  
and what you feel inside, as a jar.  
A sense of clear space?  
receptive emptiness?  
hollow emptiness?
  
- 🌸 Or alternatively  
a sense of fullness?  
already over-filled?  
cluttered?
  
- 🌸 Become aware of where you are in relation to any other jars...  
their contents changed and how you feel about this.

 Do you want anything changed?  
Maybe how you are is just as you want it.  
You just want to say thanks  
for the kind of jar you are...  
But if yes,  
you do want to be further changed in some way...  
What way?

 Jesus is there nearby,  
dressed as you imagine him to be dressed...  
looking as you imagine him to look...  
inviting you to tell him more...

 What does he say to you . . . .

 Stay with this...

*And now,  
slowly begin to withdraw from the scene...  
Begin to be aware of your human body again,  
slowly moving fingers...  
toes...  
Gently roll your head from side to side.  
Take a deep breath,  
and when you are ready,  
slowly open your eyes, but just looking with soft eyes...  
until you are ready to move out from this space, for now.*

This meditation has been adapted from Alcock, Anne. *Word Into Heart* (Dublin: Veritas)

### Activity 1 (8 minutes):

Offer the following definition of a Beatitude: according to [www.collinsdictionary.com](http://www.collinsdictionary.com) a Beatitude is defined as a “supreme blessedness or happiness”.

Invite students to reflect for a few minutes on:

- what are the blessings in their lives?
- what makes them happy?

### Activity 2: Read the Passage (3 minutes)

The Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1-10)

*When Jesus saw the crowds, he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:*

*“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.*

*“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.*

*“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.*

*“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.*

*“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.*

*“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.*

*“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”*

### Aid to complement the above passage (2 minutes 26 seconds):

Show this clip after the reading of the passage to aid understanding of the Beatitudes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wxWCspyE7lg>

## Workshop 3: Breaking Open the Beatitudes

Duration: 40 min

### *Learning Intentions:*

- *Students are introduced to the concept of ‘Beatitude’*
- *Students reflect on the Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount*
- *Students explore the relevance of the Beatitudes to their lives and today’s society*

### Materials needed: (Activity 3)

- Each *group* needs 8 Blue Post-it notes and a pen
- Every *person* needs 1 Pink Post-it note
- 8 envelopes, 1 for each Beatitude

### **Activity 3: Gallery Walk (30 minutes)**

#### Set up:

- Print the 8 Beatitude posters (see Appendix B) and tape them around the room at intervals for a gallery walk
- Divide the students into 8 groups (they will be in twos or threes)

#### Materials needed:

- Each *group* needs 8 Blue Post-it notes and a pen
- Every *person* needs 1 Pink Post-it note
- 8 envelopes, 1 for each Beatitude

#### Process: (25 minutes, with directions)

- Each group begins at an assigned station.
- There should be one group per station.
- Groups will have 2 minutes 30 seconds at their station, and then they will rotate clockwise to the next station for another 2 minutes 30 seconds. At each station students will use the **Blue Post-its** to write a question about the Beatitude and place it on or around the Beatitude.
- The rotation will continue until all groups have been to each station and reflected on all 8 Beatitudes.
- **Pink Post-it** – After all groups have been to the 8 stations, each student will write their initials on the Pink Post-it and place it on the Beatitude with which they most identify. If they would like to write a short explanation on the post-it note, they may.

#### Small Group Discussion: (5 minutes)

- Students form groups with people who identified with the same Beatitude. To form groups, teachers may ask students to return to the Beatitude where they placed their Pink Post-it. Students discuss how their chosen Beatitude is relevant to their lives in the world today using one or more of the following prompts:
  - Explain why you chose this Beatitude
  - What does it say to you?
  - How might it influence your behaviour/your relationships?

**Note to Teacher:** As students leave the room the teacher removes the Blue Post-its from each Beatitude poster and puts them into the corresponding envelopes. These will be used in the post-day of reflection follow up activity (See Appendix D).

### Set up: (5 minutes)

- Prepare to show the 7 images. These are available to print or as a PowerPoint Presentation from [www.ceist.ie/day of reflections](http://www.ceist.ie/day_of_reflections). In the event that a data projector is unavailable, images can be printed out and distributed to each group one image at a time (see Appendix C)
- Students can assemble as the large group in a large hall/gathering room or as their 3 small groups in the break-out rooms.
- Divide the students into smaller groups of not less than 3 but not more than 4 persons.
- Each group appoints a Chairperson/Leader

### Process: (28 minutes)

- Explain to students that they will have 1 minute to study each image in silence followed by 3 minutes to discuss it in their small groups. The reflective questions will form the basis of their discussion.
- If a group has any particular thoughts or questions on an image they write it into their reflective question page for the discussion that will follow at the end.
- As students are discussing the images, teachers circulate among groups, listening to but not influencing the discussion and keeping the groups on task.
- The rotation of the images continues until all 7 images have been seen and discussed.

### Discussion: (12 minutes)

- Students are invited to give feedback on the images that they have seen and discussed.
- Leaders may use the reflective questions to stimulate the discussion

## Workshop 4: One World, Many Faces

Duration: 40 min

### *Learning Intentions*

- *Students develop an awareness of the inter-connectedness of the world around them*
- *Students respond personally and communally to images of self, family, community and to strangers in need*
- *Students have an opportunity to integrate the learning experiences of the day and relate it to their own lives*
- *Students explore with one another the world in which they live and their potential roles in it*

### Materials needed:

- Each *group* requires a copy of the worksheet “Reflective Questions” (see below).
- Each *group* requires a pen.

## Image References

1. Light of the world <http://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2016/06/photos-of-the-week-618-624/488546/>
2. Boat <http://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2016/02/winners-of-the-2016-world-press-photo-contest/463431/>
3. Faces of God
4. Family Picture <http://cliparting.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Family-gallery-for-clip-art-pictures-of-families-clipartcow.jpg>
5. Baby girl <http://wimages.vr-zone.net/2013/07/sad-eyes.jpg>
6. Homeless man <http://www.returnofkings.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Homeless-Man.jpg>
7. Little girl looking into the water [https://pbs.twimg.com/media/Cj\\_GUigUoAI18bZ.jpg](https://pbs.twimg.com/media/Cj_GUigUoAI18bZ.jpg)

*Workshop 4: One World Many Faces*

**Image 1**



**Image 2**



**Image 3**



**Image 4**



**Image 5**



**Image 6**



**Image 7**



## Reflective Questions

**1. What do you see in this image?**

**2. How does this image make you feel?**

**3. Does it connect with anything you have thought about today?**

**4. How are you called to respond?**

# Closing Prayer

## **Greeting/Introduction**

*We gather at the close of our day together to reflect on all we have experienced today*

## **Gathering Prayer**

Good and merciful God, we gather here in your presence to give thanks for this time together.

Your Proverb reminded us that ‘Just as water reflects the face, so one human heart reflects another (27:19).

Thank you for your guidance and gentle presence as we looked into our own hearts and recognised there the hearts of others and the common humanity we all share.

We make this prayer this through Christ our Lord. Amen

## **Reflection: The Rainbow Prayer**

Lord of all creation,

You made the blue skies, the green grass, and the golden wheat

You made the red sunset, the purple mountains and the rainbow in the sky.

Help us to colour our world with kindness, to show our love in all colours every day.

### *Give us the Violet of Forgiveness*

Help us to be forgiving, never to hold a grudge or pre-judge any person  
Help us to ask for forgiveness and also forgiveness of each other

***Response: Lord colour our world with kindness and love***

### *Give us the Indigo of Gratitude*

Help us to be grateful people, to say thank you sincerely.  
Help us to become gracious persons.

***Response: Lord colour our world with kindness and love***

### *Give us the Blue of Patience*

Help us to be cool when things go wrong.

***Response: Lord colour our world with kindness and love***

### *Give us the Green of Hope*

Help us to have a positive attitude towards life.  
Help us to have a deep respect for all life.  
Make us ecology-minded, conscious of the fragile nature of our planet.

***Response: Lord colour our world with kindness and love***

### *Give us the Yellow of Joy*

Help us to live life fully, to laugh heartily, and to enjoy the gifts you've given.  
Help us to celebrate the memories of golden moments of sharing.

***Response: Lord colour our world with kindness and love***

***Give us the Orange of Empathy***

Help us to feel deeply with those who sorrow;  
Help us to show consideration for every person.  
Help us to be thoughtful and courteous people.

***Response: Lord colour our world with kindness and love***

***Give us the Red of Courage***

Help us to see the injustice around us.  
Help us to do something about inequity and greed.  
Help us to make a difference in this world.

***Response: Lord colour our world with kindness and love***

Help us lord to colour our world with kindness and love  
We often say we love  
Help us to show love through acts of kindness. Amen

**Closing Reflection**

This can be printed and distributed to the students as they leave (see below)



## **Our Greatest Fear**

by

**Marianne Williamson**

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.

Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.

It is our light not our darkness that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous,  
talented and fabulous?

Actually, who are you not to be?

You are a child of God.

Your playing small does not serve the world.

There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other

people won't feel insecure around you.

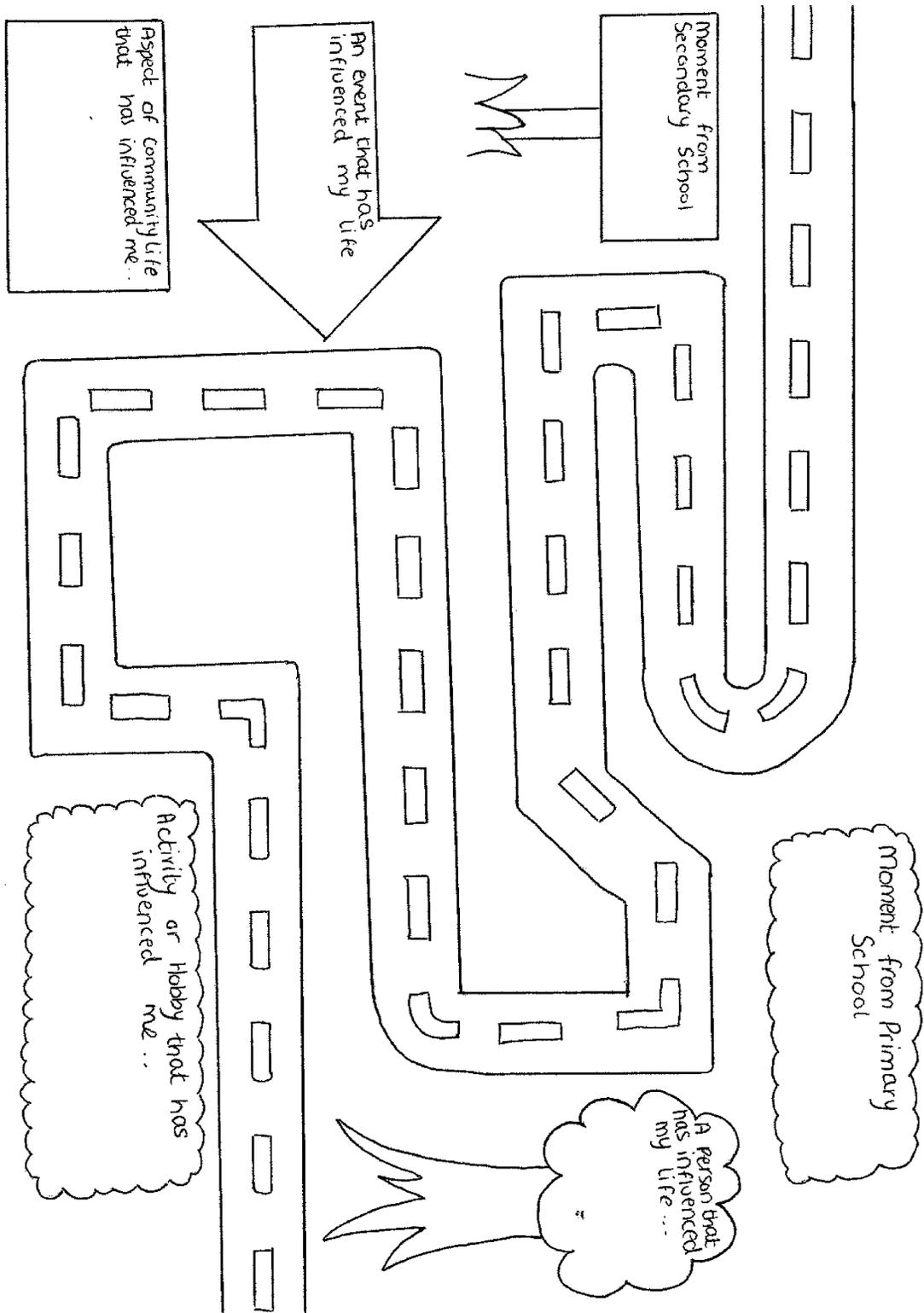
We were born to make manifest the glory of  
God that is within us.

It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone.

And as we let our own light shine,  
we unconsciously give other people  
permission to do the same.

As we are liberated from our own fear,  
Our presence automatically liberates others.

# Appendix A: Concept Map (Workshop 1)



## **Appendix B: Alternative Definitions for Happiness (Workshop 1)**

- “Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.”  
Mahatma Gandhi.
  - “There is only one happiness in this life, to love and be loved.”  
George Sand.
- “Happiness is not something ready made. It comes from your own actions.”  
Dalai Lama.
- “Happiness cannot be travelled to, owned, earned, worn or consumed. Happiness is the spiritual experience of living every minute with love, grace and gratitude.”  
Denis Waitley.
- “Remember that the happiest people are not those getting more, but those giving more.”  
H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

*Blessed are the  
poor in spirit, for  
theirs is the  
kingdom of heaven*

*Blessed are  
those who  
mourn, for they  
will be  
comforted*

*Blessed are the  
meek, for they  
will inherit the  
earth*

*Blessed are those  
who hunger and  
thirst for  
righteousness, for  
they will be filled*

*Blessed are the  
merciful, for  
they will receive  
mercy*

*Blessed are the  
pure in heart,  
for they will see  
God*

*Blessed are the  
peacemakers,  
for they will be  
called children  
of God*

*Blessed are those  
who are persecuted  
for righteousness'  
sake, for theirs is  
the kingdom of  
heaven*

## **Appendix D: Follow-up Activities**

It is highly recommended that the learning from the day of reflection is embedded as soon as possible afterwards by engaging the students in these follow-up activities.

### **Follow-Up Activity A – Using the Blue Post-its: (This Activity relates to Workshop 3)**

- Use the blue post-its that were collected after each of the three sessions of the workshop.
- Spread the post-its out on 8 different desks, 1 desk per Beatitude.
- Give the students time to read the questions on the post-its.
- Invite the students to take one post-it each that stands out to them.
- The students are then to get into groups corresponding to their chosen Beatitude. E.g. if a student takes a question from the third Beatitude then they will form Group 3 with other students who also chose a question from the third Beatitude.
- Give the students time to discuss the questions they chose and why their question stood out to them.
- Students from each of the 8 groups will then share out with the whole class group one of the questions from their Beatitude.
- The teacher will then use this to facilitate discussion about the Beatitudes.

### **Follow-up Activity B – Rewriting the Beatitudes (This Activity relates to Workshop 3)**

- Re-read the Beatitudes.
- Have the Beatitudes placed around the classroom or displayed via the over-head projector.
- Invite the students to re-write any one Beatitude of their choosing in their own words
- Students then get into groups corresponding to their chosen Beatitude and discuss what they have written, and look for similarities/differences to what others in the group have written.
- One person then reports back to the whole class group with examples of their ‘definitions’.
- The teacher uses this to facilitate discussion about the Beatitudes.

### **Follow-up Activity C – Revisiting the Images (This Activity relates to Workshop 4)**

Show each of the 7 images in rotation

Probe the discussion and deepen the learning around each one as follows:

## 1. Light of the world

<http://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2016/06/photos-of-the-week-618-624/488546/>

Self-reflection fosters in students a deeper sense of their inner worth and dignity, qualities that are shared by all. We are lights of the world – but we are not the same light (Mt 5:13-16). How are students called to use their unique gifts and talents to share God’s love with the world?

## 2. Boat

<http://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2016/02/winners-of-the-2016-world-press-photo-contest/463431/>

- This image of refugees from Syria approaching Europe on a teetering boat calls to mind any number of the Beatitudes.
- Students consider what we can learn from the experience of refugees. Why do refugees embark on their dangerous journeys? Recalling that many refugees risk much for love of others and the desire to build a safe future for their families, we consider particularly the Beatitude, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God” (Matthew 5: 1-10). What does it mean to be pure in heart? How can we see God in the people around us? How can we see God in suffering and hardship?
- How do respond to images of difficulties in the world? What are we called to do? What are our roles in the community and in the wider world?

## 3. Images of God

- This image shows Jesus’s face made up of so many others. Possible Scripture connections include, “We, though many, are one body in Christ” (Romans 12: 3-8). Gerard Manley Hopkins’ poem *As Kingfishers Catch Fire* might also be relevant, in the idea that, “Christ plays in ten thousand places... through the features of men’s faces.”
- Just as much as we are the beloved and possessed of human dignity, so too are our neighbours. How is this shared dignity a call to action? What does it mean to say we are all beloved of God? Who is our neighbour?

## 4. Family Picture

<http://cliparting.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Family-gallery-for-clip-art-pictures-of-families-clipartcow.jpg>

- This photo shows multiple generations of a family gathered together, grandparents, parents and children. How do families support each other? What are the gifts that come from a family? How are students called to serve within their families?

## 5. Baby girl

<http://wimages.vr-zone.net/2013/07/sad-eyes.jpg>

- This photo shows a baby tearing up, held safe and close by an adult. Who do they most relate to in this image? The child, who is cared for and protected? The adult, who cares and protects? At different moments we are both receivers and givers of God's love. How are the students called to love within their families and school communities? Even when images of strangers and/or world events may seem distant to us, we are all members of family, school and local communities.

## 6. Homeless man

<http://www.returnofkings.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Homeless-Man.jpg>

- This image of a homeless man is probably familiar to any student who has walked through a city. We hope the power of the image resides in its familiarity. It is easy to ignore suffering that seems commonplace. How does Jesus call us to an alternate response? How are we called to action and love in the face of poverty and loneliness? It is easy to say we wish to help. Challenge students to be concrete and realistic.
- How does this image connect to the Beatitudes? Possible connections include "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven", "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled", and perhaps most directly, "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy" (Mt 5:1-10).

## 7. Little girl looking into the water

[https://pbs.twimg.com/media/Cj\\_GUigUoAI18bZ.jpg](https://pbs.twimg.com/media/Cj_GUigUoAI18bZ.jpg)

- This image recalls the Proverb at the centre of the day of reflection "Just as water reflects the face, so one human heart reflects another" (Proverbs 27:19). In looking inwards, we learn about ourselves but also about each other. How does the journey of self-reflection prepare us to take active roles in our communities? How does it prepare us to better recognise and appreciate our potential to make a difference?

### **OPTIONAL: Follow-up Activity D – Use of Alternative Definitions for Happiness (This activity relates to Workshop 1)**

If you did not use the alternative definitions for happiness during the day of reflection (Appendix A), then they can be used to aid discussion in class.

- Divide the class into 5 groups.
- Give each group a quote.

- Allow the students time to discuss each quote, what they think it means and is it a quote about happiness that the students can connect with.
- Similar to how the jigsaw methodology works, students should then disperse so that there is 1 student from each group sitting in a new group; i.e. the 5 new groups comprise of students from the original group 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
- Allow each student the time to talk about their original quote with their new group.
- Invite the new group to choose the quote that resonates best with them.
- A spokesperson from each group is to report back to the whole class on which quote resonated best and why.
- Teacher is to facilitate discussion throughout.
- 

## **Appendix E: Options for Opening and Closing Prayer**

### ***Opening Prayer***

1. Assemble students in a circle either standing or sitting into 7 groups:  
(Violet, Indigo, Blue, Green, Yellow, Orange and Red).
2. Assign each group a reader and a colour by giving them material, T-Shirts or ribbons to identify each group.
3. In the centre of the circle place material on the ground, a candle, a bible and an image of a rainbow.
4. Ask a student to light the candle on behalf of everyone present.
5. At the end ask a student to blow out the candle however reminding them that the spirit of God will remain in each one of us.

### ***Closing Prayer***

1. Assemble students in a circle either standing or sitting into 7 groups:  
(Violet, Indigo, Blue, Green, Yellow, Orange and Red)
2. Assign each group a reader and a colour by giving them material, T-Shirts or ribbons to identify each group.
3. Ask a student to light a candle on behalf of everyone present.
4. Invite all students to read the response at the end of each verse.
5. At the end ask a student to blow out the candle however reminding them that the spirit of God will remain in each one of us.

