

RITE OF INDUCTION OF A HEADTEACHER

- *Several Dioceses (including Southwark) encourage the practice of formally inducting a new Headteacher during a liturgical celebration as a way of affirming the role of the Headteacher and the important link between family, school and parish. The following liturgy is offered as a **model for optional use only**, to be adapted to suit the needs of each circumstance.*
- *The induction of a Headteacher should take place as soon as convenient after he or she has taken up the new appointment.*
- *It may take place on a Sunday so that the wider parish community may take part. It may also be celebrated in the school, either during Mass or during a Liturgy of the Word.*
- *The liturgy may be celebrated by a Bishop, by the Parish Priest or by another priest with close connections with the school. The parish, the school community, parents and the governing body should be invited to take part along with new Headteacher and his/her family along with, if appropriate, a representative of the local authority.*
- *The Mass of the Day should be used with its readings. However, if the norms allow, a suitable Votive Mass of the school's patron or of St John Baptist de la Salle, the patron saint of teachers, may be celebrated.*
- *The homily may be used to mention the place of Catholic schools in the overall mission of the Church and the personal relationship between the Headteacher and the Bishop of the Diocese in this capacity as a prime teacher of his flock. The various other Diocesan bodies with which the Headteacher will work closely, such as the Commission for Schools and Colleges, and the Christian Education Centre, may also be mentioned.*
- *The rite of induction takes place after the homily.*
- *The Bishop stands at the Presidential Chair, wearing the mitre and holding his crozier.*
- *The School Governors stand on either side of him. The new Headteacher comes forward and stands before the Bishop. He/she may be introduced to the Bishop and the people by the Chairman of the School Governors.*

Bishop [N..], you have been appointed as Headteacher of [X..] School by the Governors and now have the responsibility for ensuring that it is centred on Christ and that every child in the school is valued as an individual who is loved and gifted uniquely by God. We look to you to provide the best possible learning environment so that each pupil can develop knowledge and skills for life as a Christian.

Will you accept this responsibility?

Headteacher I will, with God's help.

Bishop Dear teachers and staff of the school, will you now support [N..], your new Headteacher in his/her responsibilities and help him/her maintain the ethos of the school?

Teachers/Staff We will, with God's help.

Bishop Dear parents, you are the first educators of your children. You have entrusted them to the Headteacher and staff of [X..] School. Will you support and work with [N..] and the staff in providing an education which is truly Christ-centred?

Parents We will, with God's help.

Bishop Dear children, will you do your best in every way to help [N..] in his/her work as your Headteacher?

Children We will, with God's help.

Bishop Dear people of the parish of [Z.],
[X.] School is entrusted with the task
of educating the next generation of Christians
in your area.
Will you support the school community
under its new Headteacher
by your prayers and active encouragement?

Parishioners We will, with God's help.

Bishop Christian leadership is a solemn trust.
I therefore call on you all to pray for [N.],
that God may give him/her the grace
to be faithful to all his/her responsibilities.

- *The Bishop lays aside the crozier and takes off the mitre.*
- *He extends his hands over the Headteacher.*

Bishop Lord, pour out your Spirit on your servant.

All Give him/her your gifts of grace.

Bishop Guide him/her with the Spirit of wisdom.

All Direct him/her with the Spirit of understanding.

Bishop Endow him/her with the Spirit of counsel.

All Strengthen him/her with the Spirit of power.

Bishop Fill him/her with the Spirit of knowledge.

All Gladden him/her with love, joy and peace
which the Spirit brings.

Bishop God our Father,
your Son told us to pray
that we might receive the Holy Spirit.
We now ask that this same Holy Spirit
will strengthen, protect and guide [N..].

May he/she worthily fulfil the responsibilities
given to him/her.
Grant [N..] ability in teaching,
tolerance in relationships,
patience in listening,
skill in managing,
wisdom and vision in all things.
May he/she lead his/her school community each day
in the ways of truth, love and justice.
We ask this through Christ the Lord.

All Amen.

- *The Bishop puts on the mitre. The Chairman of the School Governors comes forward to present the new headteacher with the school register/log book/mission statement/keys or other symbol of office.*

**Chairman of
Governors**

On behalf of the governing body
I present you with the
school register/log book/mission statement/keys
as a sign of your appointment as Headteacher.

- *The Parish Priest presents the Headteacher with a Bible.*

Parish Priest Receive the Book of God's Word,
the foundation of all learning and wisdom.

- *The Headteacher may now give a brief address.*
- *The Mass continues with the Profession of Faith (if a Sunday or Solemnity) and the Bidding Prayer. Intentions could be included for staff, parents, family and pupils and the Headteacher's family.*
- *In the case of the induction of the Headteacher of a Secondary School the words 'pupils' or 'children' may be changed to 'students' and 'Parish Priest' to 'Dean'.*