

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS LITURGY

Consider incorporating the liturgy below at a worship service to begin the new school year. Beforehand, purchase enough small crosses for all participants. Fill a basin or bowl with water and place it near the altar.

Ask students and teachers to place their backpacks, bags, or briefcases at the foot of the altar as they come in. At an appropriate time, students and teachers are invited forward to put on their backpacks or pick up their bags or briefcases.

Presider: God of all wisdom and knowledge, pour out your blessing on the schools represented here today, that they may be lively centers for sound learning and new discovery; and grant that those who learn may find you to be the source of all truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING OF THE WATER

Now sanctify this water, we pray you, by the power of your Holy Spirit, as a reminder of our baptism; and as this water is sprinkled on these students and teachers, and on their backpacks, may they be strengthened in memory, reason, and skill. And grant that these pocket crosses, carried in their backpacks, may remind them of your love and presence throughout the day as they learn. **Amen.**

Each student/teacher comes forward for an individual blessing and to receive a pocket cross.

God of all wisdom and knowledge, bless and guide *N.* in *her/his* learning/teaching. **Amen.**

The rest of the congregation is invited to stand and pray:

May Jesus, who calls us each by name to follow him, give you the courage and confidence to be his disciples wherever you may be, at school, at work, and at home. May the gifts God has given you be a source of blessing for you and for others. Amen.

