

# HRH Duke of Edinburgh

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## A life well-lived

Collective Worship for use following the death  
of HRH Duke of Edinburgh on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2021

**Collective Worship** provided by Rachel Boxer & Jane Whittington, Diocese of Guildford

**Age range:** Primary

**Theme: the death of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh – honouring his memory, commitment and companionship**

**Resources:**

- Pictures of Prince Philip's life (in the accompanying PowerPoint) Use as many of these as you feel is appropriate for the occasion.
- **Personalising the presentation:** if the Duke of Edinburgh has visited your school, or you have children participating (or have done so) in the DofE awards scheme, you might have some photos and experiences of your own that would mean more to you as a school than those included here. It may also be the case that your school values link in with the key skills that the DofE programme aims to develop (Volunteering, Physical & Skills), so check out how on the DofE website:  
<http://www.dofe.org/levels-and-timescales>

**Gathering:** Use whatever welcoming liturgy is familiar to your children



**Engaging:**

- **Slide 1: 'A life well-lived'** – what do we mean by this? Who would say that it's important to try to do this, to live your life well? We often talk about this during our assemblies, thinking about ways to create a better, more loving school community. 'A life well-lived' is also about making the most of every moment, every opportunity that's before us, living not just for ourselves, but for others.
- **Slide 2:** Today we gather together to mourn the loss of an important member of our Royal family – the Queen's husband, Prince Phillip, the Duke of Edinburgh, who has died. We give thanks to God for his extraordinary life of dedicated service. We are going to use some photos to help us as we remember. He was often by the Queen's side, and like all of us who mourn the loss of a loved one, the Queen and Royal Family will be feeling sadness and pain at this time and so we will pray for them.
- **Slide 3:** The Queen referred to him as her 'strength and stay'. As you'll see and hear, the Duke of Edinburgh lived a long life, working beside the Queen until he was well into his nineties, and he did much good for the benefit of others. He was....



**..the constant companion: (Each new bullet denotes a new photo in the PowerPoint)**

- **Slide 4:** The Duke of Edinburgh was royal even before he married the Queen: he was born the only son of Prince Andrew of Greece, and Princess Alice of Battenberg (in Denmark), so held the title 'Prince of Greece and Denmark'.
- **Slide 5:** He gave up his own royal title to marry the Queen in 1947.
- **Slide 6:** At eighteen, Prince Philip joined the Royal Navy and served with distinction throughout the Second World War. He also gave up his career in the Royal Navy to be by her side.
- **Slide 7:** They had a long marriage and celebrated their Platinum wedding anniversary (70 years) in 2017.

- **Slide 8:** With the Queen, he had four children, eight grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.
- **Slide 9:** He was best-known for setting up the Duke of Edinburgh awards scheme which will be his legacy for many years to come. He set the scheme up in 1956, so it's been going for over 60 years. This inspirational scheme has shaped millions of young peoples' lives over the years, encouraging them to challenge themselves physically and change their local community by volunteering. In September 2016, the Countess of Wessex, the Duke's daughter-in-law, took part in a 445 cycle ride from Edinburgh to London to celebrate DofE awards' 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- **Slide 10:** He was an ambassador for the science and technology industries and sporting organisations and a patron or president of 785 different organisations, including Lord's Cricket Ground and Wimbledon (All England Lawn and Tennis Club). In the 1970's he set up the Royal Academy of Engineering which changed the face of the engineering profession and created opportunities for new types of engineering as technology changed.
- **Slide 11:** In 2009, he became the longest-serving consort (companion) to a reigning monarch, and was at her side as she celebrated her Diamond (60<sup>th</sup>) Jubilee in June 2012 and her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in June 2016.
- **Slide 12:** From 1952, when the Queen became the Queen, until he officially retired (aged 95!!), the Duke of Edinburgh had attended 22,191 solo engagements – and thousands more by the Queen's side, to places all over the world and up and down Great Britain.
- **Slide 13:** A few other things you might not know about Prince Philip:
  - With his love of engineering, he modernised Buckingham Palace
  - He was Ranger of Windsor Great Park and was instrumental in ensuring the upkeep of vast parklands, from designing gardens to introducing deer
  - He was a keen oil painter, and painted a portrait of his wife eating breakfast in Buckingham Palace
  - He was the first member of the Royal family to fly out of Buckingham Palace Gardens in a helicopter
- **Slide 14:** During his lifetime, he was famous for his quick wit. On the day of his retirement in August 2017, aged 96, he attended a ceremony at St. James' Palace. A guest at the reception said to him 'I'm sorry to hear that you're standing down.' to which he replied 'Well, I can't stand up for much longer!'
- **Slide 15:** Losing someone is hard – there's no doubt about that. Although the Duke of Edinburgh was a very great man, who lived a full and fulfilled life, we also need to remember that he was also a husband, father, uncle, grandfather and great-grandfather, who will be missed by the family who loved him.
- **Slide 16:** But it's also good to remember that because the Queen is a Christian, she will be drawing strength from God whom she has faithfully served during her long reign and holding tight to the promise that Jesus makes to all his followers: 'I will be with you always – until the very end of time.' (Matthew 28:20) And we can pray for her and her family, as many Christians all over the world will also be doing at this sad time.

### Responding (and words for worship):

Let's be still and quiet together now....

...We've taken time today to reflect on Prince Philip's life – a life well-lived....

.....we also use this opportunity to ask questions about our own lives.....

....what can we learn from the many contributions to our nation made by the Duke of Edinburgh?...

.....how can we make sure that **we** are also living our lives well?....

....And at this time of great sadness for us as a nation, we also think about the family that he has left behind....

.....

Now I'm going to pray, for ourselves and for the Royal family. Make the prayer your own if you'd like to...or if you'd prefer not to pray, then just sit quietly with your own thoughts.

**Dear God**

**Thank you for our Royal family and for the very great contribution that they make in our nation and in the world. We pray for the Royal family in their sadness, that you would be very close to them at this most difficult time. We ask especially for our Queen, that you would be with her as you promised: be her strength and her companion today, and in all the days that lie ahead. Help us to follow their example and serve you, through serving others. We ask this in the name of Jesus.**

**Amen**

**Sending:** Slide 17 'The Lord's My Shepherd' is one of the Queen's favourite hymns.

Play it as children go out, drawing their attention before they do to the words of the 3rd verse.



**Prayer resources from the Church of England:**

God of our lives,  
we give thanks for the life of Prince Philip,  
for the love he shared among us,  
and for his devotion to duty.  
We entrust him now to your love and mercy,  
through our Redeemer Jesus Christ. Amen.

Eternal God, our heavenly Father, we bless your holy name for all that you have given us in and through the life of Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.  
We give you thanks: for his long and full life; for his strength of character; and for his devotion and service to family, nation and Commonwealth.  
We praise you for: his generosity; the many contributions he made to our national life; and the encouragement he gave to so many, especially to the young.  
Accept our thanks and praise, we pray, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Merciful God, be close to all who mourn,  
especially at this time,  
to the Queen and all members of the Royal Family.  
May they know the hope of your promises  
and the comfort of your love,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

**Resources from the Church of England, including an online book of condolence:**

<https://www.churchofengland.org/remembering-his-royal-highness-prince-philip>