



Catholic Schools Educating the Soul

Renfrew County Catholic School Board
School Council Gathering September 24th, 2009

INTRODUCTION

Good evening. A warm welcome to all of you who serve the Catholic educational community as members of our board's school councils. As we begin this evening of sharing and reflection on our mission, it is fitting that we start with prayer.

Let us begin with the sign of our faith: In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

OPENING SONG

Please join in our opening song,
(Sugg: *Children of the Light*, by Fr. Eugene O'Reilly)

OPENING PRAYER

Lord, by our Baptism, you have made us heirs to Christ's gift of abundant and everlasting life. We ask You to inflame our hearts with love for this wondrous gift, as we work to educate the soul of young people in homes, parishes and schools. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen

And now, let us be attentive to God's word.

READING

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew (Mt 5, 14-17)

'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

REFLECTION

Imagine how people felt to hear Jesus tell them, "You are the light of the world." Their lives were not easy. Most were poor and powerless in society's eyes. They were living in a land occupied by an outside empire that barely tolerated their religion and way of life. Jesus' words awakened hope in their hearts as they struggled to live as God's people.

Let us be mindful that Christ Himself is truly present in his Gospel, speaking His words of hope to us. We are the crowd seated on the side of the hill. And like that crowd, we too need to hear his message again and again: *You are the light of the world. You are the light of the world* – we who have chosen to follow *Him*, and work to see that our children can grow as His disciples. As we labour for the sake of His Gospel, we shine with His light – a light that illumines the world of our children, families and communities.

We, like Jesus' hearers on the side of the hill, have heard His Good News and want to see it take root in the lives of those we love. This is why we strive to educate the soul of young people in our Catholic homes, parishes and schools. In so doing, we are helping transform the world with Christ's light, one life

at a time. Let us never doubt the confidence Jesus has in choosing to shine through us and be *light of the world!*

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Let us pray for the Church. That all who are joined to Christ through Baptism might embrace their call to be light for the world.

We pray to the Lord. *Lord, hear out prayer.*

Let us pray for the world. That all human hearts might look beyond the uncertainties of our times and embrace God's universal call to peace, love and unity.

We pray to the Lord. *Lord, hear out prayer.*

Let us pray for those who suffer without hope or meaning, especially in our families, parishes and schools. That they might find in our witness reasons to believe in a God who cares.

We pray to the Lord. *Lord, hear out prayer.*

Let us pray for ourselves, that the Holy Spirit might awaken in us an ever deepening commitment to being educators of souls.

We pray to the Lord. *Lord, hear out prayer.*

Let us pray for our presenter this evening. That he might be inspired by the Holy Spirit with words to comfort and strengthen us in our share in the Church's evangelizing mission.

We pray to the Lord. *Lord, hear out prayer.*

For all our intentions... We pray to the Lord. *Lord, hear out prayer.*

Let us join our prayers, spoken aloud and those in the silence of our heart, to the constant prayer of Jesus before the Father on our behalf, using the words he gave us... ***Our Father...***

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, your love for us is unchanging and everlasting. Increase our trust in your abiding presence as we live out your call to educate souls in the light of the Catholic faith. May all that we do in our Catholic schools shine with the light of your Son's Gospel. We make this prayer to you in the name of Christ, our Lord. Amen

And may Almighty God bless us: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

CLOSING SONG

Sugg: Last verse of *Children of the Light*