

End of Year Staff Prayer

Virtue Link: Faith, Hope, Love, Temperance, Fortitude
Catholic Character Themes: Community, Discipleship, Reverence, Solidarity

INTRODUCTION

Good morning/afternoon, and welcome to our staff prayer service to mark the end of the school year. The end of the school year means different things to each of us. Some of us will be moving on to new places, others to new responsibilities. Whether summer finds us working, resting, traveling or studying, in many ways it is a kind of late spring, signaling the end of one season, and emergence of something new. Let us take the next few minutes to reflect on the blessings of this school year, to give thanks, and to invite our gracious God to continue with us as we journey forth through the changes that summer will bring. Let us begin, marking ourselves with the sign through which all things have been made new: In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

OPENING SONG: (Sugg. *Blest be the Lord*, Glory and Praise Vol 1, No. 10)

OPENING PRAYER:

Lord God, as we ponder the blessings and challenges of this past year, grant us the serenity of your Spirit and openness of heart to the wonders you have done in us and will continue do in faithfulness to us, your children. We make this prayer to you through Christ our Lord. Amen.

LEADER: Let us be attentive to God's word.

READING : A reading from the prophet Isaiah
(Is 43, 19-21)

See, I am doing something new!
Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
In the desert I make a way, in the wasteland, rivers.
Wild beasts honour me, jackals and ostriches,
For I put water in the desert and rivers in the wasteland
for my chosen people to drink,
The people I formed for myself,
That they might announce my praise.
(Pause)
The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSE:

When we live by faith,
Every ending is the beginning of something new.
Every *thing* points beyond itself
to a Presence without and within;
Every person becomes sacrament;
Every colleague, a companion on life's pilgrimage.

When we live by faith,
Time becomes a gift,
And seasons, rivers of grace:
Refining and re-creating us
To fullness of life.

See, God is doing something new!
Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
Your work is an icon
Of God's tireless labours,
To build up what is just,
To strengthen the faltering spirit
To fire the imagination
With endless possibilities
For learning,
For growing,
For becoming,
For being
In love.

See, I am doing something new!
Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

See...

GOSPEL READING :

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark

(Mk 6, 30-34)

The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

(Pause)

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

GROUP REFLECTION:

Please take a moment and in light of God's word and your experience this year, to reflect and share, if you wish, something that you are grateful for having received or been part of in our school community.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL:

Please respond to each petition: *Renew your people, Lord.*

For the Church, that as it teaches, it might always be faithful to the vision of the Gospel entrusted to her by Jesus. We pray to the Lord...

For all those entrusted with the mission to educate in the light of faith, that they might find strength and support in their teaching communities. We pray to the Lord...

For persons whose hunger for knowledge and learning are constrained by war, violence or poverty, that they might find solidarity and hope in our response to their needs. We pray to the Lord...

In thanksgiving for those students and colleagues who have called forth in us a Gospel response in extraordinary circumstances. We pray to the Lord...

For all the members of our home-school-parish and extended community, that God's Spirit might increase our appreciation for one another's gifts, and strengthen the bonds that unite us in the freedom and joy of God's children. We pray to the Lord...

For the members of our educational community who may be suffering in hidden ways, that our prayers and compassion might support them in their struggles. We pray to the Lord...

In thanksgiving for colleagues, friends and students who will be moving on; that God continue to bless them in the new directions they have chosen. We pray to the Lord...

Please feel free to voice any additional intentions you may have.

Let us gather our prayers –those spoken and those remaining in the quiet of our hearts, and unite them with the prayer of Jesus, using the words he gave us: ***Our Father...***

CLOSING PRAYER:

Lord, we give you thanks for calling us to serve this Catholic school community. By the power of your Holy Spirit, may the seeds of the Gospel you have planted in hearts and called us to water in our school continue to grow. Grant us a peaceful and restful summer, that we might be ready to respond with joy to your ongoing call to serve one another in Christ, in whom you make all things new. We make this prayer to you in his name. Amen

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

CLOSING SONG: (Sugg. *You are the Voice*, CBW III, No. 576)