

Fostering a Eucharistic Life

Virtue Link: Faith, Hope, Love

Catholic Character Themes: Community, Discipleship, Reverence, Solidarity, Stewardship

INTRODUCTION

As we begin this evening's gathering, let us take a few moments to reflect on our role as supporters of Renfrew County's Catholic educational faith communities, to ask God's blessing on our presenter and on our discussions.

Please join in our opening song: (Sugg: *Peace Prayer*, Verses 1-3)

OPENING PRAYER

Let us begin our prayer in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord, as we come together this evening, we ask you to bless our guest speaker with the wisdom and courage of your Spirit. May our sharing and discussions be marked by oneness of heart and mind in the service of your Son's Gospel. We make this prayer to you through Christ our Lord. Amen

Let us be attentive to God's word.

READING

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 4, 32-35)

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

(pause)

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION

All that we do for Catholic education draws sustenance from Eucharist. For the believing community, Eucharist is more than something we do on Sundays; it is a way of life. Our Sunday encounter with Christ in the praying assembly, in the person of the minister, the Gospel and sacramental elements under the appearance of bread and wine provides us with the strength to live out our call to be the *body of Christ* in our homes, in the marketplace and in our schools, giving a place of honour to persons in greatest need.

We may not often see the fruits of seeds we sow in the lives of our students and children. However, the harvest is the Lord's, and we are the labourers. We stand grateful and proud that the distinctive Catholic programs we provide are helping prepare minds, hearts and souls for meaningful lives that go on forever. In faith, we draw strength from our baptismal union with Christ; we nurture it as members of a Eucharistic community. We trust that with the Spirit's guidance, our labours to support Catholic schools' efforts to educate in the light of faith are contributing to the oneness of heart and mind that can transform the world in Christ.

(Adapted from CARFLEO's *A Place of Honour. Reaching out to Students at Risk in Ontario Catholic Schools*. 2007)

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

For the Church, that all who share a common baptism might work together to bring the light of Christ's Gospel to a world hungering for God's word. We pray... *Lord, hear our prayer.*

For the world, that leaders of nations will look for ways to build peace among all God's children.
We pray... *Lord, hear our prayer.*

For those who suffer in our communities and homes, that they may find comfort in our show of
compassion and care for their needs. We pray... *Lord, hear our prayer.*

For ourselves, that we might find ways to support one another as we seek to live Christ's
Gospel message and support our Catholic schools' efforts spread its light. We pray... *Lord,
hear our prayer.*

For our personal intentions,... We pray... *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Let us unite our prayers with one voice using the words that Jesus gave us: ***Our Father...***

CLOSING PRAYER

Please join in our closing prayer:

God our Father,
You inspire us through a heritage that is rich in blessings,
You challenge us to grow, as we remember the struggles of our past,
You call us as partners in the Catholic educational community
To be inclusive of all who seek to learn in the light of faith.

Grant that your Holy Spirit might continue to guide us
So that by the power of Your grace,
Our share in the Church's mission
To spread the Good News of Jesus
May be relevant in the world today,
And point to a future that is filled with hope.

We ask you to bless our work,
That it may serve to protect, nurture and rightly guide
In the Catholic faith
Those children You have entrusted to our care,
To the glory of Your name.

We make this prayer
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen

(RCCDSB Prayer For Our Vision)

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

CLOSING SONG

Please join in our closing song: (Sugg: *Peace Prayer* Verses 3-5)

