

Ground-breaking for a New School Prayer Service

INTRODUCTION

Good afternoon, and welcome to our prayer service to celebrate the ground-breaking for our new Catholic school. We come together today in prayer to ask God's blessing on this land and on all who will work in the coming months to build a new school for our learning community.

OPENING SONG

Let us begin with a song of joy for the wonders that God is doing in our midst. Please join in singing, (sugg: *Children of the Light*, By Fr. Eugene O'Reilly, CSSR).

OPENING PRAYER

And now, let us mark ourselves with the sign of our faith: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord, we turn to You at the beginning of this project to build a new Catholic school. For in vain do we labour without Your guiding presence in our lives. Open our hearts to Your goodness as we bring before You in prayer our hopes and dreams for this new school. Trusting in Your merciful love, we make this prayer to You through Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

LEADER

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

READING

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians

(Eph 2: 13-14a, 17-22)

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace. So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him both of us have access in the one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION

Jesus is the true foundation of everything that we build in our lives. Without Him, our plans come to nothing. This is why we are here today – to ask in Jesus' name for God the Father's blessing on this building site for our new school. We ask God to send His Spirit to bring light to the minds of those who are working with our new school's plans. May that same Holy Spirit give strength and wisdom to the hands and hearts of all who take

part in its construction. And most importantly, we ask that the students and teachers in its classrooms and halls be filled with the knowledge, understanding, peace, joy and kindness that only God can give, as they learn and work as disciples of Jesus.

Many people are here today from different places. Together, we share the same desire: that this new school be the best possible place for our young people to study and grow. We, like the Ephesians in our reading realize that what we are building here goes far deeper than foundations of cement and gravel. We too know that our lives are joined together in Jesus, who died, rose and sent us His Spirit to make us one body. We know that our faith is built on the preaching of the Apostles. And finally, we know that Christ's gift of holiness through Baptism makes us members of the household of God – living stones on which will be built future generations of disciples like ourselves.

So today is a wonderful day. By asking God to bless our project to begin a new Catholic school, we have opened ourselves to infinite possibilities for what He will do in the lives of everyone who passes through its doors. Let us turn now in prayer to ask God's blessing on this ground that will be a home for our new school:

Blessing of Land for a New School

Let us pray,
Lord, Yours is the earth and all that is in it.
And in Your goodness, You have entrusted it to our care –
To provide us with food and places to dwell together as Your people.
We ask You to bless this land today. +
May it be a place where Your designs for our children's lives
Are wisely discerned and nurtured.
We ask Your blessing and safety for all who will take part
In building at this site.
May they be filled with Your strength and peace
As they labour to bring to fruition
The plans that You inspire for our new Catholic school.
May all who pass through its doors
Be filled with the joy of Your abiding presence
As they work and learn in the light of our Catholic faith.
We make this prayer to You,
In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord
Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,
One God, forever and ever.
Amen.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

And now let us bring our prayers and needs as a believing community before our good and gracious God. The response to our petitions is: ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

Let us pray for the Church. That all who share a common Baptism may radiate Christ's light to a world that seeks lasting peace, truth and joy. We pray...

Let us pray for our world. That the seeds of God's love, planted in every human heart might bear fruit in peace between peoples and nations. We pray...

Let us pray for those who suffer without schools or places to call home. That God will open the hearts of persons in governments and communities who can make their education and shelter possible. We pray...

Let us pray for ourselves here today. That God will bless our efforts to make this future school a fitting place where young people can learn and grow in knowledge and love as disciples of Christ. We pray...

Let us pray for all who will work and study at this site. May the light and kindness of Christ and His Gospel be present in all they do. We pray...

For all our intentions, spoken aloud and in the silence of our hearts, we pray...

Let us unite all our prayers with the prayer of Jesus, using the words He gave us:

Our Father...

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray. Lord, we praise You for Your gift of land and the ability to use it wisely. We place our plans for this building site and school in Your hands, trusting that with Your guidance, they will bear much fruit. We make this prayer to You in the name of Jesus, our Lord.

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

CLOSING SONG:

Please join us in our closing song: (Suggestion: *City of God* CBW III No. 345)