The Virtue of Love
A Prayer Service for Catholic Schools

INTRODUCTION
Good morning/afternoon and welcome to our prayer service to celebrate the virtue of love. Love draws us together as friends, families, communities, and most importantly, as God's people. Let us take a few minutes to reflect on the virtue of love as members of this Catholic school community.

OPENING SONG
Please join in singing our opening song:
Sugg: *You are the Voice* (CBWIII 576), *Make Me a Channel of Your Peace, Peace Prayer, Children of the Light*

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

Let us pray…   God our Father, we praise You for the love You have poured out on us in Jesus. May our prayer today help us grow in His love so that all who see us come to believe in You more fully. We make this prayer to You in the name of Jesus, Your Son and our Lord. Amen.

READING
A reading from the Gospel of John (Jn 13, 34-35)
Jesus said to His disciples, "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION
Jesus gave us the gift of His love at Baptism so that we could love one another as He commanded.   This gift makes it possible for us to truly love God and each other. Jesus continues to reach out to help us become persons of love. He hears us when we pray and answers with what we need; He heals us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation; He guides us with the words of His Gospel and the teaching of His Church; He feeds us with His Body and Blood at Holy Communion; He gives us the gift of His Spirit to help walk in His ways.

Jesus reaches out to us in love through our family, teachers, pastors and friends. Their love for us, and our love for each other are a living sign that tells everyone: *Jesus is alive! He is with us every moment of the day!*

By living Jesus' Great Commandment to love, we can become everything God wants us to be. This is what Jesus wants most for us: to be all that we were created to be – here on earth, and together in heaven for eternity.   And so, we are never alone in our call to love one another. We

are one body, held together in Jesus' love: a love that was with us before we were born, that walks with us today, and invites us to be with Him forever. Every act of kindness we do is one more step forward in this great journey of love.

OPTIONAL SONG OR PRESENTATION
Suggestion: Slide show with photos of love in action: in the school, community and world, photos of classroom prayer corners, school prayer services/Masses can be included.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL
1.   Let us pray for the Church, that Christ's Law of love might rule in the hearts of all
         who call Him Saviour. We pray… *Make us witnesses of Your love.*

2.   Let us pray for the world, that all God's children will learn to live as one family in
         love. We pray… *Make us witnesses of Your love.*

3.   Let us pray for all who suffer. That hands and hearts moved by love might
         reach out to them in their need. We pray… *Make us witnesses of Your love.*

4.   Let us pray for our home-school-parish family. That the love of Jesus might shine
         in all we are and do. We pray… *Make us witnesses of Your love.*

5.   Let us pray for our own needs. We pray… *Make us witnesses of Your love.*

Let us gather all our prayers and bring them before God the Father, using the words that Jesus gave us: ***Our Father…***

CLOSING PRAYER:
Lord, we thank You for the love You have poured into our hearts at Baptism. Help us to live Christ's Great Commandment by worshipping You and showing one another kindness. May our love for one another be a bright sign of His presence in our midst. We make this prayer to You in Jesus' name. Amen.

CLOSING SONG:
Please join us in singing our closing song:
Sugg: *You are the Voice* (CBWIII 576), *Make Me a Channel of Your Peace, Peace Prayer, Children of the Light*