



You Are the Light of the World Opening Prayer

INTRODUCTION

Good evening, as we begin this evening of reflection on our role in Catholic education, it is only fitting that we begin with prayer. Please join in our opening song. (Sugg: *God is Alive*, verses 1-2)

OPENING PRAYER

Let us begin marked by the sign of our faith: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. And let us pray:

We praise you O God, for the light of Christ's Resurrection, which shines all the more brightly in our lives during this Easter season. May it illumine our hearts and minds this evening as we ponder our call to be light for the world in Jesus, your Son. We make this prayer to you in his name. Amen.

And now, let us listen to God's word:

READING

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew (Mt 5: 14-16)

'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 Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION

How lovely is this mission to give light to the world! It is a mission that we possess. It is beautiful! It is also beautiful to keep the light that we have received from Jesus, to guard and care for it. The Christian should be a luminous person, who brings light, who always gives light! A light that is not one's own, but is a gift from God; it is the gift of Jesus. And we carry this light. If the Christian puts out this light, their life has no meaning: they are Christian in name only, without light, a life without meaning. But I would like to ask you now, how do you wish to live? As a lamp switched on or turned off? Switched on or turned off? (the people respond: *switched on!*) A lamp switched on! It is God who gives you this light and we in turn pass it on to others. A lamp switched on! This is the Christian vocation.

(Pope Francis I, Angelus Message Sunday February 9, 2014 [Translated from the Italian])

LORD'S PRAYER

And now, let us pause for a moment to place all our needs, those of our families, colleagues, friends and parish communities before God. Let us ask in a special way for God to bless this gathering, and our guest speaker with all the gifts needed to help us continue shining brightly for Christ and his Gospel, using the words Jesus taught us: *Our Father...*

CLOSING PRAYER

We thank you, Lord, for the light of Christ's love that burns in our hearts. Help us to guard it well and share it with joy. We make this prayer in the name of Jesus, your Risen Son. Amen

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

CLOSING SONG

Please join in our closing song: (Sugg: *God is Alive*, vv 2-4)