

A Year of Growth and Blessings

Virtue Link: Faith, Hope, Love

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

INTRODUCTION

Good afternoon, and welcome to our prayer service to celebrate a year of growth and blessing in our role as new teachers. Acknowledging God as the Source of all blessings, let us begin our prayer with God's praise in song.

Please join in singing: (Sugg: *We are Called*, by David Haas)

OPENING PRAYER

Let us begin: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Lord, as our journey through this year draws to a close, we turn our hearts in gratitude to you. Each day, you sustain us with your Holy Spirit that we might continue in the work you have given us. We ask you fill us now with the joy of your Spirit, that we might praise and glorify you through our prayer. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

Let us be attentive to God's word.

READING

A reading from the Gospel of John

(Jn 17 1-2, 21, 25-26)

[Jesus] looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. As you, Father, are in me, and I am in you, may they also be one in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.

(pause)

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION

Each of the baptized is invited to collaborate in God's work of building up our communities of faith. Catholic educators are called to do this by sharing in the Church's mission to preach the Gospel. Our most powerful witness to the Gospel is our relationships – with one another, with our students, and with our God. Supportive relationships make life not only bearable, but hope-filled and rewarding. We rely on the wisdom of seasoned colleagues who take the time to be there for us, to listen and guide us through the challenges of our first years. Our kindness and attention to struggling students can make a world of difference in their lives as they move through a trying year. Through it all, God is there, inspiring and carrying us along, using each of us to help one another through life. And as we teach and learn together in our Catholic schools, we are blessed with the freedom to turn to the Source and Destiny of our lives in prayer. In the ebb and flow of our work and prayer, our schools become places

where all of us can grow as witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus. As we teach, learn and support one another in faith and friendship, the Gospel message takes root in young hearts, who carry it out to the world. For all these blessings, we give praise and thanks to our gracious and generous God who has made us one in Christ, and has called us to be instruments of his love.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

1. For the Church, that all who share a common baptism might come to embrace their call to live without divisions, in oneness of heart and mind.

We pray... Lord, hear our prayer.

2. For the world, that all God's children might find ways to share their resources and riches to put an end to hunger and war.

We pray... Lord, hear our prayer.

3. For those who suffer around us and in places far away, that hearts everywhere might be opened to help them in any way we can.

We pray... Lord, hear our prayer.

4. For our home-school-parish communities, that we may always joyfully collaborate in nurturing the faith of our children and youth.

We pray... Lord, hear our prayer.

5. In thanksgiving for this year of growth and blessing, that God will richly reward our mentors and will continue to sustain our new teachers in their journey as Catholic educators.

We pray... Lord, hear our prayer.

6. For all our intentions...

We pray... Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us gather all our prayers, spoken and in the silence of our hearts, and join them to the prayer of Jesus as we pray: ***Our Father...***

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, we give you thanks for your gracious love that has guided us to pour out our gifts in service to one another through Catholic education. We ask you to help us continue to be a supportive presence for colleagues and students in the service of your Son's Gospel. We make this prayer to you in the name of Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

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

CLOSING SONG

Please join in singing our closing song: (Sugg, *Shine, Jesus Shine*, by Graham Kendrick)