

The Gift of Faith

celebrating the virtues in Catholic schools series

INTRODUCTION

Good morning/afternoon, and welcome to our prayer service to celebrate the virtue of FAITH. The virtue of faith is God's gift to us at Baptism. Faith lights our way so that we can *see* as God sees and *believe* what Christ has taught us through His Gospel and Church. Let us take the next few minutes and listen to God's word, and above all, to give God our praise for this wonderful gift.

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

OPENING SONG

Please join in our opening song: (sugg: *Open My Eyes, Lord* by Jesse Manibusan)

OPENING PRAYER

Lord God, we praise you for Your gift of faith that comes to us through Baptism. Fill us now as we pray with wonder at this priceless gift of seeing and believing, that we might treasure and care for it always. We make this prayer to You through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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

READING

A reading from the Gospel of John.

(Jn 12, 44-46)

Then Jesus cried aloud: "Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION

Jesus came into the world so that we could truly live as God's children. By dying and rising, He freed us from the power of sin and evil, to walk in his light.

At our Baptism, God gave us the gift of faith through the Church. Faith opened our eyes to see ourselves as God sees us – as sharers in God's divine life, brothers and sisters united to Jesus, His Son. Faith makes it possible for us to see and believe all that God has taught us in the Bible and through His Church. By faith, then, we see and believe with the eyes and heart of Jesus: "I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness."

By faith, we see that God wants to make us saints – the kind of people who live the Gospel and spread its message of justice, truth and kindness. With eyes of faith, we see the light of Jesus

shining through the Gospel and Church teaching; we believe in Christ's Real Presence reaching out to feed and heal us in the sacraments – especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation.

By faith, we believe that God has said “Yes” to us forever in Jesus, His Son. We believe that we have received the power of the Holy Spirit, to live as one body in peace, love and joy. By faith, we know that God has wonderful plans for our lives as members of this body in the company of angels, saints, friends and relatives with us now, and those who have died in Christ.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

1. Let us pray for the Church, that God will strengthen the faith of all who share a common Baptism, that we might truly live as one body in Christ.
We pray to the Lord... Lord, hear our prayer.
2. Let us pray for the world. That the light of Christ's Gospel will come to shine on all God's children through the Christian witness of kindness, peace-making and justice everywhere.
We pray to the Lord... Lord, hear our prayer.
3. Let us pray for all who suffer without meaning in their lives. That God might send the light of faith to bring them joy and purpose as they journey.
We pray to the Lord... Lord, hear our prayer.
4. Let us pray for the members of our home-school-parish communities, that all might find new and deepened meaning in the gift of faith we share in Christ.
We pray to the Lord... Lord, hear our prayer.
5. Let us pray for ourselves. That our example of faith witnessed in love might shine brightly in all we do.
We pray to the Lord... Lord, hear our prayer.
6. For our own needs....
We pray to the Lord... Lord, hear our prayer.

With faith in God's compassionate love for all His children's needs, let us join all our prayers spoken aloud and in our hearts, with the prayer of Jesus as we say, ***Our Father...***

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, we thank You for Your gift of faith – that lets us *see* as You see, and *believe* what You have taught us through Jesus and His Church. May the light of faith continue to guide us along the way as we journey together to eternal life in You. We make this prayer to You in Jesus' name. Amen

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

CLOSING SONG

Please join in our closing song: (Sugg: *Open My Eyes, Lord*)

