For all of us gathered here as a people of resurrection:
That we might always be grateful for all the gifts with which our good and gracious God has blessed us, as we celebrate the gift of Catholic Education, the gift of our family and friends, the gift of our students, the gift of each other and the gift of today ... we pray. 😊

Concluding Prayer:
God of mercy and peace,
You gave us your Son Jesus,
to open our hearts and renew us in hope.
His dying on a cross made from a tree
was the seed of new life
that freed us to grow in faith and
serve You in His name.
Hear these petitions we bring before You,
trusting in Your love,
through Jesus Christ,
our Risen Lord.
+Amen.

LORD’S PRAYER
Leader:
Let us pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us.
ALL: Our Father ...

CLOSING PRAYER
Leader: Gathered together in prayer, we remember each student in our schools as we strive to prepare them for a faith-filled future in the unique place God has created for them in the Church and society. We celebrate and affirm our renewed hope as a Catholic educational community growing together in a faith that is NURTURED.

Reader A: We grow with mercy to forgive those who have hurt us or hurt others.
Reader B: We grow with willingness to help those who may be on rocky soil and need our care and compassion.
Reader C: We grow with a sense of kinship for those with whom we work.
Reader D: We grow with respect as others mentor us to cultivate our skills and enrich our vision.
Reader E: We grow with desire for continued transformation.

ALL: Christ behind us. Christ before us. Christ above us. Christ below us. Christ beside us. Christ within us. That by deepening our faith and growing together, we may know the beauty and glory of the One who has said: “I am with you always.”

Leader: Dearest God ever new, at Baptism You gave us a common calling to grow in faith.
Help us to go forth with confidence and humility in the love and peace of Christ.
to sow the seeds of a faith that is NURTURED
in our Catholic schools.
We ask You this in Jesus’ name.
And may Almighty God bless us ... +In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace;
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon; where there is
doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.
St. Francis of Assisi

Matthew 13:3
OPENING SONG (SUGGESTIONS)
- Growing Together in Faith
  Catholic Education Week 2013 Theme Song
- Look What’s Growing
  #8, We Belong to God (Grade 1 CD)
- The Sower
  #9, Come and See (Grade 4 CD)

Optional Songs:
I Have Loved You #504, Gather; #710, Glory&Praise 2nd
Be Light For Our Eyes #511, Gather; #305, CBW III
Gather Us In
  #743, Gather; #587, CBW III
Seed, Scattered and Sown
  #830, Gather; #516 G&P 2nd
A Sower’s Seed Fell on a Path
  #6.38, Celebrate Son
Faith and Truth and Life Bestowing
  #6.40, Celebrate Song

CALL TO PRAYER

Leader: Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path.
Matthew 13:3

In this place, gathered in Jesus’ name, let us become quiet and still in His presence to reflect on our faith that is nurtured.
Let us begin our prayer ...

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. +Amen.

OPENING PRAYER

God our Creator, gathered as a community of faith to celebrate Catholic Education Week, we pray for the courage to build Your kingdom by our words, actions and prayers.

For growth and transformation, give us ears of faith ... that we might listen and be rooted in Your word; hands of faith ... that we might serve generously and be nurtured in Your light.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. +Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING
Matthew 13:3-9

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

And he told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went out to sow.
And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path and the birds came and ate them up.
Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil.
But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away.
Other seeds fell among thorns and the thorns grew up and choked them.
Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.
Let anyone with ears listen!”

The Gospel of the Lord.
ALL: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION

As we reflect upon the words of Scripture, the words of Jean Vanier may serve to inspire us:

“Everything that is human needs nourishment; the body, the mind, the memory, the imagination and particularly, the heart. They must be nourished by encounters with other hearts that can lead us into other gardens of life, into a new and deeper vulnerability and into a new understanding of the universe, of God, of history and of the beauty and depth of each and every human being.”

Who has sown the seeds of faith in your life?
Why were they able to take root and grow?
How do you sow God’s word in your fields of influence – at home, at work, at school, in the community, in the world?

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Invitation: Ever-living and ever-loving God, joining together in prayer, we entrust to You the needs of the Church, our community and our world, humbly imploring Your mercy and blessings.

The response to the petitions is: Help us grow together in faith, rooted and grounded in Christ’s love.

For the Church and her mission:
That the leadership of our Pope and bishops, the ministry of our priests, the apostolate of our religious and laity might be rooted in God’s love and our common baptismal call to grow in faith ... we pray. ၏

For the leaders at all levels of our communities, province, country and nations of our world:
That they might see past their difficulties and adversity to appreciate the tiny shoots of hope and strength pushing up towards the open sky, and nurture a peace that yields the fruits of righteousness and justice ... we pray. ၏

For those suffering from injustice in our world and those in our midst who are experiencing illness, pain, loneliness, or despair:
That through our response to God’s call to serve their needs, they might be strengthened in faith, and experience the consolation of a community of love and compassion ... we pray. ၏

For our Catholic schools (especially N.):
That staff and students might learn to see God’s hand cultivating the soil of the classrooms, halls and grounds in these sacred places of learning, so that all might bear witness to God’s love, embodying Christ’s word and example ... we pray. ၏