

GRADUATION PRAYER SERVICE

Virtue Link: Faith, Hope, Love

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

INTRODUCTION

Good morning/afternoon and welcome to our graduation prayer service. We are a Catholic School and so, it is fitting that we celebrate this special moment in our students' lives with prayer in the spirit of our Catholic faith.

Please stand as we begin our prayer.

Presider: Let us begin in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

LIGHTING OF PASCHAL CANDLE AND TAPERS

Presider:

At our Baptism, we received the light of Christ. Our parents promised to keep it burning brightly. Now, we will light the Christ Candle and our graduates' candles. In doing this, we remember our baptism, and the share it gives us in the life of Christ, who is our light. As we nurture our life in Christ, and use our gifts in service to others, we too become light for the world.

(Paschal candle is lit. One boy and one girl representative of graduating class light their candles from the Paschal candle, and pass light on to rest of class. *Children of the Light*, *Light a Little Candle* or *Shine, Jesus Shine* can be sung or played at this time.)

OPENING PRAYER:

God our Father, we thank you for calling us in Christ to be salt for the earth and light for the world! Grant that this time of prayer and reflection might strengthen our desire to shine brightly in Jesus' name, and to use the gifts you have given us to serve others in love. We make this prayer to you through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Leader:

Let us now listen to God's Word, as St. Paul tells us how to use the gifts God has given us. (Please sit)

Reading:

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans. (Romans 12: 4-13).

For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in

cheerfulness.

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

(pause)

The Word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God

Response (Psalm 139):

The response for the psalm is: *We praise you, Lord, for you have wonderfully made us.*

O Lord, you have searched me and known me.
 You know when I sit down and when I rise up.
 You discern my thoughts from far away.
 You search out my path, and know all of my ways. R...

Even before a word is on my tongue,
 O Lord, you know it completely.
 You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.
 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; R...

For it was you who formed my inward parts;
 You knit me together in my mother's womb.
 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
 Wonderful are your works; *that* I know very well. R...

My frame was not hidden from you when I was being made in secret,
 Intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
 Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.
 In your book were written all the days that were formed for me,
 When none of them as yet existed. R...

Gospel:

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew. (Matthew 5: 13-16.)

Jesus said to his disciples: "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled underfoot.

"You are the light of the world. A city build on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under a 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."

(pause)

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Leader invites students to extinguish candles.

Reflection on gifts/service to others:

(Presider/Principal/Teacher...)

Leader: We will now invite our graduating class to recite the Youth Credo.

YOUTH CREDO

We believe in the greatness of our vocation to be salt and light for God's Kingdom.

We believe that God has called us into this world for a purpose, which we can discover only in prayer and in loving service to others.

We believe in the gift of parents and in giving thanks for all they have done through happy and difficult times to bring us to this day.

We believe our teachers, educational assistants, principal and support staff have been given the wisdom, knowledge and patience to guide us through our school years to graduation.

We believe that we are a sacramental people, called to fullness of life through Baptism, to be strengthened, nourished and renewed through Confirmation, Eucharist, and all the sacraments.

We believe in the gift of being a community of faith, led by our Pastors, parents and educators.

We believe in the gift of joyful living through play, laughter and sharing in our school.

We believe in practicing social justice as witnesses to God's Kingdom, preached by Jesus our Lord.

Finally, we believe in God the Father, in Jesus Christ His Son and in the Holy Spirit. We believe that God loves us and will continue to bless us as we move on to the next stage of our education.

Prayer of the Faithful

Leader: Jesus taught us that when we pray in His name, God our Father will respond. The response to our petitions is *Lord, hear our prayer.*

1. For the Church, that the desire of its youth to see the Gospel message take hold in our world might help renew the faith of God's people everywhere. We pray to the Lord. R
 2. For young people throughout the world. That their search for knowledge and truth through study, prayer and work will help bring about the truth and peace of God's Kingdom. We pray to the Lord. R
 3. For young people who cannot go to school because of poverty or war. For greater opportunities to learn in a safe and secure environment. We pray to the Lord. R
 4. In thanksgiving for the gifts of friendship and community we have found here at _____ Catholic School . We pray to the Lord. R
 5. In thanksgiving for the acts of kindness shown to us during this past school year by our parents and Pastors, our Principal, teachers and EAs, our secretaries and support staff, and all members of the school community. We pray to the Lord. R
- Optional:
- In thanksgiving for all we have learned this year that has made us become better persons. We pray to the Lord. R
6. For all students and staff who will be leaving us at the end of this school year. That they may continue to be the light of Christ for others. We pray to the Lord. R

Presider: As we remember the blessings of this school year and look forward to the summer and fall, let us unite our prayers spoken and those in our hearts with the prayer of Jesus, using the words he gave us:

All: *Our Father...*

CLOSING PRAYER:

Presider: God our Father, we give you thanks for bringing these young people to this special moment in their lives. We ask you to accompany them as they face new adventures and challenges. May the paths they take always lead to you and to the eternal joy that is their inheritance through Baptism. We make this prayer to you in the name of Jesus your Son. Amen.

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

Let us go now in peace of Christ, to use the gifts God has given us to love and serve one another in the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

CLOSING SONG:

Please join in our closing song: _____

(Suggested: *Here I am Lord; City of God; Shine, Jesus Shine; All the Ends of the Earth; Lord, I Lift your Name on High; The Summons [Will you Come and Follow Me]; They'll Know we are Christians; You are the Voice*)