Prayer Service for a Member of our School Community Who Has Died

INTRODUCTION
Let us begin this time of prayer for our departed friend ________________ with the sign of the cross, through which we have received Jesus’ gift of eternal life:
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

OPTIONAL: OPENING SONG
Please join in our opening song…
Suggested: Be Not Afraid (B. Dufford); Blest Are They (D. Haas); Here I Am, Lord (D. Schutte); How Great Thou Art (Traditional); On Eagle’s Wings (M. Joncas); Like a Shepherd (B. Dufford); Shelter Me O God (B. Hurd); Lord of All Hopefulness (Traditional); I am the Bread of Life (JM. Talbott); Prayer of St. Francis (S. Temple)

OPENING PRAYER
Lord, we come together today as followers of Jesus your Risen Son, to pray for our friend ________________ who has passed away. We ask you to hear our prayer and to open our hearts to your holy word as we turn to you in faith, hope and love. We make this prayer in the name of Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

And now, let us listen to God’s word.

READING
A Reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans (Rom 8:31b-32, 33b, 38-39)
If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yet, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

OPTIONAL:
PAUSE FOR MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION, SONG, VIDEO, POWERPOINT OR INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGE

REFLECTION
We are all God’s children, and we are all on our way to our heavenly home. Some of us leave earlier than others, and we wonder why. One day, we will know all the answers to our questions. For now, we take comfort in knowing that Jesus has prepared a beautiful place for us in heaven. We believe that nothing – not even death – can separate us from Jesus’ love.

Jesus rose from the dead so that we could all rise to new life with him, to be with him forever. This is the source of our hope as followers of Jesus. This is our great and sure hope for _________________. He/she was joined to Jesus in Baptism – he/she belongs to Jesus. So let us put our trust in the great love and mercy of Jesus. Let us ask him to open his arms wide

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to welcome our friend _______________________ into his Kingdom, and to give us the strength and faith to comfort one another with our prayers, acts of kindness, friendship and love.

“Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” As we remember ________________________, let these words be our comfort in the days to come.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION
Let us pray for the Church. That Christians everywhere will be always ready to reach out and comfort one another with the hope of Christ’s resurrection.
We pray to the Lord… Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for the world. For increased love, compassion and peace among all God’s children.
We pray to the Lord… Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for all who struggle with illness and their own mortality. For their healing and peace.
We pray to the Lord… Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for all who grieve the loss of a friend or loved one. That God will send them the comfort they need.
We pray to the Lord… Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for ___________________________. That Jesus will welcome him/her into the joy of heaven.
We pray to the Lord… Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for ourselves. That our Christian hope might be strengthened, our faith deepened, and love renewed by the Risen Christ’s gift of the Holy Spirit.
We pray to the Lord… Lord, hear our prayer.

Optional: For our own intentions (can be voiced)…
We pray to the Lord… Lord, hear our prayer.

And let us unite all our prayers to the constant prayer of Jesus before the Father on our behalf, using the words he gave us: Our Father...

CLOSING PRAYER
Into your hands, Gentle Father, we place our prayers for our departed friend, ________________. In your mercy, forgive his/her sins, and bring him/her into the joy of your heavenly kingdom, where the sorrows and pain of this life are no more, and the fullness of your joy reigns forever. Pour out your Holy Spirit’s comfort upon all who grieve his/her passing, and fill them with Christ’s peace, to sustain them through these difficult days. Strengthen the hope you have planted in our hearts, that we might be salt and light for one another and for all who struggle along this pilgrim way to our heavenly home.

OPTIONAL:
And for all our departed friends and loved ones, we pray:
Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord
And let perpetual light shine upon them.
May the souls of the faithful departed
Through the mercy of God, Rest in peace.
We make this prayer to you in the name of Jesus your Risen Son, who is Lord
Forever and ever.
Amen.

OPTIONAL:
SIGN OF PEACE And now, let us exchange a sign of peace.

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

OPTIONAL: CLOSING SONG (See opening song suggestions, above)