



Start of Year Prayer Service for Faculty & Staff

This prayer service is designed to take place in an appropriate room in a school. The prayer service can be shortened by omitting the time for meditation and small group faith sharing or by omitting time for participants to offer personal prayers of petition.

Supplies

- Copies of the "Order of Prayer" to handout
- A Bible for the scripture reading
- A computer or similar device with internet access to play streaming music for meditation (optional)
- A crucifix to place in the prayer service room

Order of Prayer

Opening Rite

Welcome

(Prayer Leader) Welcome! As we prepare to begin a new school year, we join together to ask for God's help and blessings upon all our efforts.

Sign of the Cross

(Prayer Leader) In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
(All Gathered) Amen.

Opening Prayer

(Prayer Leader) Heavenly Father, we turn to you and ask for your help and blessings upon our new school year. Give to each of us the graces and blessings that we need to begin this new school year with grace and energy. Bless our students and their families and give them the graces and blessings they need so we can all work together to realize new growth and learning in both academics and faith.

We ask all of this through Christ our Lord.
(All Gathered) Amen.

Liturgy of the Word

Scripture Reading

(Designated Faculty or Staff Member) A reading from Saint Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians.

1 Corinthians Chapter 12 verses 12-27 (Note. The Scripture is to be read from a Bible by the designated faculty or staff member.)

Reflection on Scripture

(The Prayer Leader or a Designated Faculty or Staff Member) Note. Share a brief reflection based on the theme of starting the year with energy and unity. Integrate the key idea from Saint Paul's Letter that although we each have different roles in the school and different God-given gifts, we are all called to work together for the evangelization of all our students and families. Explain that evangelization begins with an invitation to encounter Jesus through listening to and discussing the Good News of Jesus.

Quiet Meditation

(Prayer Leader) Friends, now we will take some time to deepen our reflection on the Scripture reading. I invite you to reflect on the two faith-sharing prompts to prepare for small group sharing.

(Note. The prayer service leader may play some quiet music during this time. Instrumental music is suggested.)

Faith-Sharing Prompts

1. What gifts has God given me to minister to the children and families in this school?
2. What practical steps could we take as a group to enhance our unity and efforts to reach a common goal?

Small Group Faith Sharing

(Prayer Leader) Friends, I invite you to form a circle of chairs with the five people sitting near you. (pause until sharing circles are formed) Now, I invite each group to choose a faith-sharing leader. The leader will ensure that everyone has an opportunity to share, at a minimum, on the first faith-sharing prompt. The leader will also encourage the group to move to the second faith-sharing prompt when I signal there are 10 minutes remaining. We have 20 minutes for this sharing time.

Petitionary Prayers

(Prayer Leader) Friends, now that we have completed our small group faith sharing, I invite you to move your chairs back into their original places. (pause) Now we turn to our Heavenly Father to ask him in a specific way for some of the graces and blessings we need.

(Prayer Leader) We pray for each of us gathered here today. Bless us Heavenly Father with a desire to work together for the good of our students and families. We pray to the Lord.

(All Together) Lord, hear our prayer.

(Prayer Leader) Heavenly Father, we pray for those we know who are sick and in need of our prayers for health and healing. We pray to the Lord.

(All Together) Lord, hear our prayer.

(Prayer Leader) Heavenly Father, we pray for our civil leaders, that they may pass laws that support the value-based education of children and youth. We pray to the Lord.

(All Together) Lord, hear our prayer.

(Prayer Leader) If there are prayers that you would like to offer, please do so now. (*Note.* At this time, individuals may offer prayers using the format above.)

Our Father

(Prayer Leader) Please join me now in praying the Our Father.

(All Together) Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Closing Rite

Closing Prayer

(Prayer Leader) Heavenly Father, we offer our thanks for this time of prayer and ask again that you energize us to work together and begin this school year with hope and a positive vision for the future. Bless each one of us so that we can fully share the gifts you have given to us with our students and families.

(All Together) Amen.

Sending Forth

(All together while also making the sign of the cross) May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

(Prayer Leader) Announcements (*Note.* The group may want to build on ideas shared in small groups for enhancing how faculty and staff can work together towards the common mission and vision of the school.)