

A New School Year Prayer Service for re-entry during the Pandemic



***“Dear Lord, as the students and staff begin this new School Year,
we gather as your community of believers to pray for them, their safety
and protection...”***

Introduction:

As members of the Catholic Women’s League, we are called to pray for our communal well-being. Education is a life-long experience that will lead the students from where they are to where God wants them to be. We ask for God’s protection. This year, re-entry is filled with apprehension. In this time of uncertainty, they need acceptance of their new reality and hope. Together we pray that the Lord will be with them, guiding their journey with all the changes.

Leader:

As we begin all things, let us begin:

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

Opening Prayer:

God of faithfulness, God ever present, as this year brings new projects and possibilities, we need energy and renewed hope. With the changes in our world we wonder about our future. We need Your grace to guide us. We need the power of Your Son to sustain our passion. We need the wisdom of your Spirit to overcome our challenges and grow. Give us eyes of faith that we might see the wonders in our midst, that we might have courage to hope. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 43. 1,3a

Reader:

But now thus says the Lord:

He who created you, O Jacob,

He who formed you, O Israel:

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;

I have called you by name, you are mine.

*For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your
Savior.*

All: Thanks be to God:

Reflection

Leader:

The words of Isaiah are familiar to all. Most of the song “Be Not Afraid” is based on Chapter 43. God calls us, his disciples, to go forth in our communities. School staff and students will be filled with intrepidation as they do not know what is coming. They will doubt. What does the Lord want of them? He wants them to be His children - not afraid, filled with His love and hope. We pray to God for them to receive the courage and energy they will need on this journey.

Communal Prayer:

Leader: Let us pray together,

All: Loving God,
Make the doors of the schools be wide enough
to receive all who need human love and fellowship,
narrow enough to shut out all envy, pride, and strife.
Make it a threshold smooth enough to be no stumbling
block for learners, nor for straying feet, but rugged and
strong enough to turn back the tempter’s power.
God, make the door of the schools the way to Your
eternal reign.
Amen
*(Based on an inscription on St. Stephen’s Church,
Fallbrook, London)*

Prayer of Thanksgiving: In Praise of Learning

Reader: For Reading:

Those peculiar marks on a page are so able to inform us, to entertain and move us to laughter and tears.

All: We thank you, God.

Reader: For Handwriting, Grammar, and Spelling:

Which as tools that will enable the students to capture thoughts and communicate them clearly to others.

All: We thank you, God.

Reader: For Mathematics:

With its dependable patterns and principles which reassure that the world is not so inconstant as we might be.

All: We thank you, God.

Reader: For Science:

Which challenges exploration of the world and reveals it to be more wonderful the more we understand it.

All: We thank you, God.

Reader: For Social Studies:

Which teaches us to know ourselves and to know each other.

All: We thank you, God.

Reader:

God, for all truth, and for hearts and minds to know the truth, we thank you.

Intercessions:

Response: Lord, give the staff and students the courage to enter in.

Reader:

Give them Lord, the courage to enter into this moment in time as they gather as your disciples. **R**

Reader:

Give them Lord, the courage to enter into the possibilities that lie before them,
Like shells on the seashore.
Waiting to be discovered. **R**

Reader:

Give them Lord, the courage to enter into the tasks and challenges before them,
In spirit of exploration and generosity,
In the Spirit of Your Son. **R**

Reader:

Give them, Lord the courage to enter into the ideas and suggestions voiced today,
And keep them in their hearts,
Examining them in the light of your Wisdom. **R**

Reader:

His Holiness, Pope Francis requests that we pray that our schools be a safe place for all. **R**

Concluding Prayer

Leader:

O God, who created us,
Fill our minds with knowledge
and appreciation of the dream
With which and for which
You created us.
O God, who created us,
Fill the hearts of the staff and students with
courage
As they enter into the new school year.
O God, who created us,
Breathe life, hope, and energy into their hands,
May You always guide their hearts.

All: Amen

Leader: Together we pray the League Prayer

All: We humbly pray You,
O God our Father, to bless
The Catholic Women's League of Canada.
Bless our beloved country,
Our homes and families.
Send your Holy Spirit upon us
To give light to our minds
And strength to our wills
That we may know and fulfill
Your great law of charity.
Teach us to share with others
At home and abroad,
The good things You have given us.
This we ask through our Lord Jesus Christ
And the intercession of our patroness,
Our Lady of Good Counsel. Amen

Resources Used:

1. Inscription from St. Stephen's Church, Fallbrook, London
2. Daniel Harrington and Julie Kavanagh, *Prayers for Parish Groups*, page 153
3. Les Miller and Melinda Rapello, York Catholic District School Board
4. Catholic Youth Bible
5. Christ- Our Pascha, *Catechism of the Ukrainian Catholic Church*

Pope Francis' Prayer

O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope.

We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick.

At the foot of the Cross you participated in Jesus' pain, with steadfast faith.

You, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need.

We are certain that you will provide, so that, as you did at Cana of Galilee,

joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love,

to conform ourselves to the Father's will

and to do what Jesus tells us:

He who took our sufferings upon Himself,

and bore our sorrows to bring us,

through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection.

Amen.

We seek refuge under your protection, O Holy Mother of God.

Do not despise our pleas – we who are put to the test

– and deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed

Virgin.