



**TITLE: A PRAYER SERVICE
FOR THE CELEBRATION OF
THE CLOSING OF THE
SCHOOLS YEAR**



**LITURGICAL SEASON:
ORDINARY TIME**



**INTENDED AUDIENCE:
CATHOLIC SECONDARY
SCHOOL STAFF**



**CONTEXT:
LITURGY OF PRAISE
AND THANKSGIVING**

ELEMENTS OF PRAYER SERVICE

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School Motto:

"Cursum Consumavi Fidem Survavi";

"I have finished the race, I have kept the faith"

Structure of Prayer Service

1. Introductory Rite

- Commence with song embedded in Powerpoint or click the following: "Blest be the Lord"
- Welcome and Introduction:

Leader (Chaplain): Good afternoon and welcome to our end of year staff celebration of our collective dedicated efforts to develop a safe, caring, Catholic culture for our school community. As the end of the school year approaches, it is nice to reflect on how we have positively impacted our students, staff, and our community. The end of the year also offers an opportune time to reflect and personally assess our growth on the goals we set out for ourselves at the commencement of the school year. It also offers a time to look at areas of personal need so we may be able to continue to develop professionally to collectively contribute to the building and maturation of our institution which serves students, parents, staff, and the community. I now invite you to sign ourselves by making the sign of the cross through which all things have been made new: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

- Clear Invocation

Lord God, as we ponder the blessings and challenges of this past year, grant us the serenity of your Spirit and openness of heart to the wonders you have done in us and will continue to do in faithfulness to us, your children. We make this prayer to you through Christ our Lord. Amen. (Consentino, 2009)

2. Scripture (Reading by Staff Member A)

NRSV: Romans 12:6-8

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans.

So, we are to use our different gifts in accordance with the grace that God has given us.

If our gift is to speak God's message, we should do it according to the faith that we have;

If it is to serve, we should serve;

If it is to teach, we should teach;

If it is to encourage others, we should do so. Whoever shares with others should do it generously;

Whoever has authority should work hard;

Whoever shows kindness to others should do it cheerfully.

Symbols of Catholic Faith present in Service



The word of the Lord.

Response (All): Thanks be to God.

- Properly introduced: **yes** / no
- Properly concluded: **yes** / no
- Suitable pause for reflection: **yes** / no
- Appropriate response: **yes** / no

3. Other Reading, Litanies, Rituals

Prayers for the Faithful (Staff member B) (4 staff members are invited to light a candle for each prayer recited)

May our gift to teach continue to be according to our Catholic faith so we may continue to build a community which serves, reveres and glorifies God.

We pray to the Lord.

Response (All): Lord hear our prayer.

Thank you God for giving us the strength to guide the students of our school to be the future light of your holy Word, May they be moved to rejoice and spread your message through their interactions with others as your disciples in Christ.

We pray to the Lord.

Response (All): Lord hear our prayer.

In the year of family, we pray for the gift of each other. At times we repel each other, and at times we are attracted to each other. But at the end of the day we all need a witness whom can attest to our strengths and weakness to assist in becoming more in the image of God.

We pray to the Lord.

Response (All): Lord hear our prayer.

Lastly, God, we thank you for colleagues who have left us, and those which have chosen a different path to take, and those you have been called to courageously confront other challenges of life. Continue to await their “asking, searching, and knocking” to help them in their journey to live in our image.

We pray to the Lord.

Response (All): Lord hear our prayer.

Leader (Chaplain): At this time please feel free to express additional intentions you may have or privately take a moment to talk to God.

Leader (Chaplain): Let us gather our prayers - those spoken and those remaining in the quiet of our hearts, and unite them with the prayer of Jesus, using the words he gave us, let us hold hands and say: Our Father...(Consentino, 2009). Commence with “Our Father” embedded in Powerpoint or link following link [“Our Father”](#).

- Supports scripture: **yes** / no
- Audience appropriate: **yes** / no

4. Symbols (candle light, holding hands, crucifix, crossing, singing)

- Supports scripture: **yes** / no
- Audience appropriate: **yes** / no
- Focal Point: **yes** / no

5. Music (opening: Blest be the Lord, Perfect Prayer: Our Father, closing: On Eagle’s Wings)

- Supports scripture: **yes** / no
- Audience appropriate: **yes** / no
- As part of:
 - opening rite **yes** / no
 - reflective time **yes** / no
 - concluding rite **yes** / no

6. Concluding Rite

- **Leader (Chaplain):** I invite everyone to join in our closing prayer.

You must bring him everything!

Your dreams, your successes, your rejoicing.

And if you have little to rejoice over, bring him that little.

And if your life seems only like a heap of fragments.

And if you have only empty hands, bring him your empty hands.

Shattered hopes are his material;

In his hands all is made good.

-M. Eckhart

- *Clear Invocation*

Leader (Chaplain): Thank you dear Lord our God for providing us with the gift to teach and spread your good word to our students, colleagues, and our community. May your will which you have embedded in us continue to grow and be spread by the power of your Holy Spirit, through the teachings and sacrifice of your Son and by your grace. May we go forward to grow in loving relationship with God, our students, colleagues, friends and family members.

Response (All): Amen.

7. Closing Music: On Eagles Wings. Song embedded in Powerpoint. Also click the following [“On Eagle’s Wings”](#).

General Considerations:

1. Were participants appropriately engaged?

I anticipate opportunity for engagement to be shared during the prayer service through the following:

- a) songs selected were vocally easy to sing, staff is familiar with the song, words were displayed via projector
- b) holding hands during the Lord’s prayer, although a small gesture, it demonstrates togetherness, accepting, belonging. In the year of the family for our school board it is an especially nice gesture to demonstrate solidarity
- c) Prayer of the Faithful provides members of the church community to personally connect to prayer.
- d) Selected readings and responses are projected for everyone to follow
- e) Symbolic lighting of candles during prayers of the faithful increases number of active participants in the prayer services (candle is lit as each prayer of the faithful is read)

2. Did the order of service provide just what was essential to engage the participant?

It is my feeling that the prayer service went beyond the essential to engage the participants. Words of familiar church songs were projected so staff could participate in the singing of the opening and closing songs. Additionally staff were invited to light candles during the prayers of the faithful as well as hold hands during the reciting of Our Father.

3. Was a complete presider’s version made available?

Yes, a brochure and power point was made to aide the presider and the staff in celebrating the prayer service.

4. Could my colleagues be able to duplicate this prayer service with what they have been given?

Yes, a colleague would be able to duplicate this prayer service with this document, in addition to the power point file and the brochure.

5. Was the language: inclusive and age appropriate?

Yes, I feel the language was inclusive and age appropriate for a Catholic Secondary School staff.

6. What understanding of the Paschal Mystery was conveyed?

The passion of Jesus' teaching on earth, his death and resurrection have been addressed through the selected reading, prayer for the faithful and in the opening and closing rites.

7. Additional Comments:

This prayer service with all associated mp3, ppt, pdf files, has been placed in the teacher's public community folder on our school hard drive. It can be used and modified to best fit our community's needs.

References

Consentino, T. (2009). End of Year Staff Prayer. Retrieved from <http://religiouseducation.rccdsb.edu.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/26/2010/06/endyearstaffprayer/pdf>

Rapallo, L.M. (n.d.). A Prayer Service for a New School Year. Retrieved from http://www.ycdsb.ca/departments/instructionalservices/religioused/documents/giftsoflove/01_new_beginning.pdf