



Moment Two: Families of Faith

Prayer Service/Assembly to Celebrate Catholic Schools Week 2018

This prayer service can be used at the beginning, during or towards the end of Catholic Schools Week 2018. It could be held in a classroom, school hall or a prayer room. Members of the local parish community could be invited, including the parish priest or school chaplain. Parents and grandparents could also be invited as part of the week's celebrations.

Prayer Space Items

- Green or white table cloth
- A candle (brought in at the beginning of the prayer service)
- A plant or vase of flowers to symbolise the beauty of our world
- A picture of Pope Francis
- A Bible to symbolise the Good News of Jesus Christ
- A family picture (home or school)

Leader: Good morning everyone, and welcome to our time of prayer together to mark Catholic Schools Week 2018. We begin our prayer in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Let us stand to welcome the light of Christ among us for our gathering this day while we sing our opening song.

Opening Song: 'Gathering Song', *Grow in Love*, Second Class/Primary 4, p. 88.

While the opening song is being sung the lighted candle is carried in and placed in the sacred space. After the opening song, invite people to be seated.

Leader: We know that, just like us, schools all over Ireland are celebrating this special week. During this week the pupils, staff, parents, grandparents, members of boards and the people of the parish will show, in lots of different ways, that they are proud of their Catholic school. It is good to celebrate who we are and what we do.

The theme of Catholic Schools Week this year is **Catholic Schools: Families of Faith**.

Every day this week, we take time to think about how we are all part of many different families.

Leader: God our Father, we thank you for our families. We belong to many families. Our families at home, in school, in our parish and the world. We pray that each of the families to which we belong are places of love, of joy and of faith. Lord watch over our families, make us glad to be together and to grow in love for you and one another.



Leader: Let us listen to a reading from the Bible.

A reading from the Gospel of St John

Reader: One day Jesus said: 'Take care of each other. This is my new rule: Love each other as much as I have loved you. If you do, people will notice and they will say. "You are like Jesus."' The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayers of Intercession

Leader: The Gospel tells us to love one another just like Jesus loved us. Let us turn to God in prayer now to help us show this love in all the families to which we belong. The response to our prayer is: 'Help us to live in love, Lord.'

Reader 1: We thank you God for our families at home. Thank you for our mummies and daddies, brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents and anyone else who loves and cares for us at home. Help us to appreciate all they do for us. They are our first teachers in love and in faith. We thank you God for our family at home.

Response

Reader 2: We thank you God for our school family. Thank you for our principal, teachers and all the staff who help us to learn how to live in love for one another. We pray that our school family will always be a place of learning, joy and happiness where everyone is welcome and cherished. We thank you God for our school family.

Response

Reader 3: We pray for our parish family. Our parish is a family of faith and of love. We pray for priests, bishops and all religious who lead our parish families and who work to spread the Good News of the Gospel. We pray our parish families will always be places of welcome to all, where love and joy are shared. We thank you God for our parish family.

Response

Reader 4: We pray for our world family. We pray especially for the members of our world family who have no home, no food or water and for people who have been forced to leave the place they live because of war, natural disasters, famine or drought. Help us to remember our role in caring for our world so it is a home for all. We thank you God for our world family.

Response



Reader 5: We pray for Pope Francis and all who will travel to Ireland for the World Meeting of Families in Dublin in August 2018. We pray that this gathering will be full of love and joy. We pray that all families will be places where love is found and that all families will grow in joy and hope. Every family is special and every family is loved by God and the World Meeting of Families helps to remember and celebrate this.

We thank you God for all families.

Response

Leader: Let us now pray the prayer that Jesus taught us:

Our Father ...

Closing Prayer

Leader: Loving God, we thank you for the wonderful gift of family, our family at home, in school, in the parish and the wider world.

Help us to love and care for each member of all our families and to live in joy and faith in the beautiful world you have created for us. We ask this through Jesus Christ, your son, and our lord. Amen.

If the priest is present you might ask him to give a blessing at this time.

If the priest is not present, conclude:

We end our prayer time as we began, by marking ourselves with the sign of our faith:
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Leader: Let us stand and join together and sing our closing song.

Closing Song

'Created by God', *Grow in Love*, Senior Infants/Primary 2, p. 80.