

*Rejoice in the Lord  
Always*



**A HANDBOOK OF PRAYERS  
FOR USE IN SCHOOL COMMUNITIES**

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## **Notes on Using these Prayers**

**Begin with the Sign of Our Faith:**

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

**Suggested conclusion to call upon our Patron Saint -  
St. Thomas More, saint of politicians and lawyers:**

**“St. Thomas More, pray for us..”**

# Meal Prayers





*Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.”*

*So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, “Who are you?” because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish.*

John 21:10-13

## Gathering in Communion

Lord as we gather to eat this meal,  
Let us remember how you gathered in communion with  
your disciples and gave thanks. Let us trust in your presence;  
let us recognize that you are with us we join together in  
conversation and gratitude.

We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of  
the Holy Spirit, Amen.

*I give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart;  
before the gods I sing your praise;  
I bow down toward your holy temple  
and give thanks to your name  
for your steadfast love and your faithfulness;  
for you have exalted your name and your word above everything.  
On the day I called, you answered me,  
you increased my strength of soul.*

Psalm 138: 1-3



## **Giving Thanks**

Let us call on the Lord to bless the food  
that we are about to eat,  
those who made it, and all of us gathered here today.  
We experience your grace and love in many ways, Lord,  
including through the gift of sustenance. Help us to  
remember the many forms in which you sustain us and  
to celebrate those blessings. We pray this in the name  
of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,  
Amen.

*O Lord, my heart is not lifted up,  
my eyes are not raised too high;  
I do not occupy myself with things  
too great and too marvelous for me.  
But I have calmed and quieted my soul*

Psalm 131: 1-2

## Finding Magnificence in the Simple

Jesus, you have taught us to find God's magnificence in the simple things: the petal of a flower, a smile from a stranger, a pebble on the beach, a hug from a friend. The meal that we have before us is not elaborate, yet we ask that you help us rejoice in its bountifulness. As it was created in love, let us praise that love as we sit down to eat. We pray this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen



*Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.*

Genesis 2:1-3

## A Multitude of Blessings

Lord,

You have given us so many blessings; this meal is just one of these graces. May we find your spirit in the people around us and in the food we are about to eat. Join with us as we celebrate all of your creation and give thanks for the glories that you have given us. We pray this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

*When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.” Jesus said to them, “They need not go away; you give them something to eat.” They replied, “We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.” And he said, “Bring them here to me.” Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full.*

Matthew 14:15-20

## Trusting In You

God,

As we sit to eat this meal help us to remember that when we trust in you we are never left wanting; you fill us up and present us with gifts in excess. Let us give thanks for the gift of this meal and the gifts that we have received in you our God. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.



# Meeting Prayers



*Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters, since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ.*

Colossians 3: 23-24

## **Open Our Hearts and Minds**

Be with us during this meeting God. Help us to open our hearts and our minds to you, so that we may hear your Word and feel your desire for our work. Let us not be daunted by the challenges we face, but rather let us search out your meaning and your purpose for our work. Guide us in our recognition and respect of the many talents and gifts that are present here today. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.



*In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.*

Matthew 5:16

## **Working for Justice and Compassion**

Father,

As we begin our meeting together, help us to work in common purpose that emphasizes your justice and compassion. Let our work be deemed beneficial to all and let your love come through our actions. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.



*Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.*

1Corinthians 15: 58

## **Steadfast to Your Way**

Lord,

Unite us together in a sense of shared purpose as we embark on your work today. Be with us as we discuss and debate, but encourage us to remain steadfast to your way. Encourage us during the difficult times to know that our work is made purposeful when we work in your name. We pray this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

*Do the work of an evangelist; carry out your ministry fully.*  
2 Timothy 4:5

## **Carrying out Your Ministry**

Lord,

Thank you for being with us during this meeting and for having guided our thoughts, words, and actions. Stay with us now as we leave this meeting and return to our respective lives. Help us to keep you, as you are now, in our thoughts, words, and actions. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.



*But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith.*

James 2:18

## **Show Your Faith in Your Works**

In you Lord we have worked and will continue to work. Be with us as we remain active in our communities, keep our faith vibrant and let it strengthen us. Help us to understand that through our work in you, we will be successful. Lord hear our prayer,  
Amen

*For we are God's servants, working together;  
you are God's field, God's building.*

1 Corinthians 3: 9

## We Are God's Servants

God,

You have brought us together as a community united in faith. As we leave this meeting, encourage us to maintain the strength that we have when we work in faith and remind us how vibrant and fulfilling our faith community is. Let us carry on in your work, doing your will. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.



# Celebration Prayers



## **Advent Prayer**

Lord,

Be with us in our school community as we prepare for your arrival.

As we journey together over this Advent season, ready our hearts and minds to celebrate the coming of Our Savior.

Grant us the patience that you gave to Mary and Joseph who also eagerly awaited your coming. Bestow on us the awareness that you gave to the shepherds to recognize your magnificence. And let us have the fortitude of the wise men, as we journey with you in faith.

Be with us as we wait and then rejoice in your coming. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.



## **Christmas Prayer**

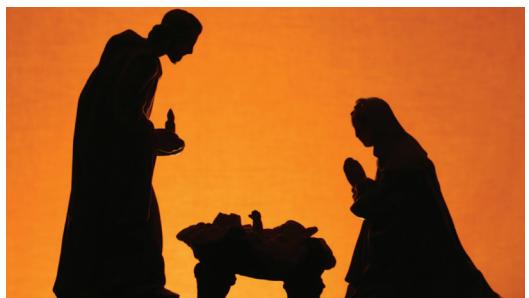
Today we rejoice with all the angels of Heaven and earth to celebrate your birth, Lord Jesus.

Let our hearts and voices announce your arrival, as we share with the world your glorious grace.

May we never stray far from remembering the grace and beauty of the occasion of your birth.

We celebrate with you Lord,

Amen



## **Lent Prayer**

Often times our lives can be a struggle.  
Yet out of the trials of our journeys comes  
a replenishing and strengthening of our faith.  
As we begin our Lenten journey Lord, help us  
to remember what you endured for our sake.  
Be with us as we look to our faith  
communities for nourishment and  
love. Remind us that we travel  
together in faith. We ask this in the  
name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.



## **Easter Prayer**

With the birth of spring, we exult  
in your life after death, Jesus.  
Hope springs in us as we triumph  
at your life.  
Let us rejoice in faith as we give thanks  
for the promise of new life.  
Amen

## **Graduation**

As we gather here on this special occasion, we give thanks for the opportunity that we have to learn and work in our faith community. We ask you Lord to bless these graduates as they set out into the world. Help them to keep your message and faith in their minds and hearts as they move on to new adventures and new communities of faith. Grant them the wisdom to remember the lessons they have learned in their years in a Catholic school and the courage to keep this faith in them. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.



## **School Openings**

Lord,

We have been blessed with the opportunity to work and educate our children in our Catholic faith. Let us take this moment to thank you for this new school and this potential to expand our faith community. We ask that you bless this school and all who learn and work within it. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.



## Prayer for an Awards Presentation

*Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.  
(1 Peter 4:10)*

We are blessed to be in a room full of people with so many unique and varied talents. As we come together to celebrate their achievements, let us give thanks for each of their gifts. Also let us continue to remember to use each of our talents in ways that honor and serve the Lord. We are in a gifted and blessed community. We thank you Lord,  
Amen.

# Prayers for Members of Our Community



## **Prayer for Students**

Students, you are the life of our schools and our reason for being.

In each of you we experience the living Christ. He is alive in your talents, your personalities, your achievements and your struggles.

We pray that, as your leaders, we are able to help you recognize Christ in your life and to show you the beauty of a faith-filled life.

Lord, be with our students as they encounter new opportunities and challenges in their lives. Help them to be guided by your desires for them. And lead them to come to recognize your presence in themselves and all those they meet.

We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.



## **Prayer for Parents**

Lord,

Thank you for the blessings of our parents. Their dedication to Catholic education and their commitment to maintaining a faith life in the home, which compliments the faith life of the school, is remarkable.

Help us to support our parents in the valuable work that they are doing and to celebrate with them the successes that we share in our Catholic schools. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.



## **Prayer for School Trustees**

God, I have been put in a unique leadership position and I thank you for this recognition of my skills and for the opportunities that it affords me. Guide my work and direct my talents to do your will. Be with me during the challenges that I face, and help me to seek your counsel, but also be with me in my celebrations of faith.

I ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.



## **Prayer for School Staff (teachers, administrators, support staff)**

Dear God,

Our school communities are blessed with the talented work of all our staff members.

Continue to guide the important work of our valued teachers as they work daily with our children and infuse faith into their lives.

Continue to remain in the dedicated work of our support staff as they faithfully work to ensure that our school communities are filled with love and care.

Continue to lead our tireless administrators as they work to provide faith-filled direction for our school communities.

Lord, be with us in our school communities as we continue to work in faith with you.

We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

## **Prayer for School Council Meeting - Opening**

Father,

You have called us together as servants to do your will.

Grant us the light of your Spirit to guide us in our responsibilities as a School Council.

May we work together in harmony for the common good.

May we listen to one another in a spirit of genuine respect.

May we encourage and have reverence for one another's unique talents.

May we use the gifts of the Spirit in creative Christian leadership.

May we approach our decision making through discernment and prayer.

May we respond effectively to the needs of the children in our care.

We ask this through Christ our Lord,

Amen

## **Prayer for School Council Meetings - Opening**

God, the source of every good gift.

Let us pray that all of us will experience a sense of warmth and welcome, and that there will be a rich sharing of ideas, talents and enthusiasm as together we go about our work of helping our children to grow and learn.

Help us recognize your presence in one another. Inspire us to listen with attention and patience, to share with courage and generosity, and to welcome the ideas of all.

May this meeting of ours strengthen our friendships, build our communities and increase our confidence in ourselves and our schools.

Amen



## **Prayer for School Council Meetings - Closing**

God of Love,  
You give us the gifts of the Holy Spirit.  
For the common good may your blessings radiate from us to others.  
In a spirit of service and compassion may our school council  
be leaders in our school, parish and communities of faith, service and  
kindness.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord, the Light of the World.

Amen

# Prayers for Occasions



*As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea – for they were fishermen. And he said to them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.” Immediately they left their nets and followed him.*

(Mt. 4: 18-20)

## Prayer for Beginning of the Year

Let us come together in faith once again as we begin a new school year. Let our rejuvenated faith shine through our work in our school communities. Let us remember the work of the disciples, as they worked in faith to evangelize we work to fulfill your purpose for us. Guide us, Lord, as we work diligently in your name. Help us to see you in all whom we encounter in our school communities and to honor this in our work.

We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.



*Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*

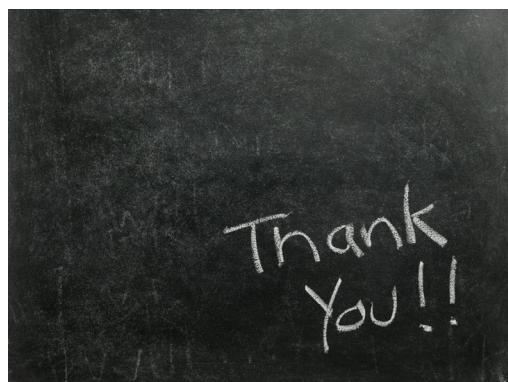
(Mt. 28: 16-20)

## Prayer for End of the Year

As our school year draws to a close, we give you thanks Lord for the blessings that we have received this year. We have had many successes this year for which we are grateful.

As we leave our school communities for holidays, let us still be guided by your desires for us, Lord. Watch over us and keep us safe as we have many new adventures this summer. Be with us as we join together with both new and old friends. And when we return in the fall, let us be refreshed and ready to continue to embark on our faith journey together.

Amen



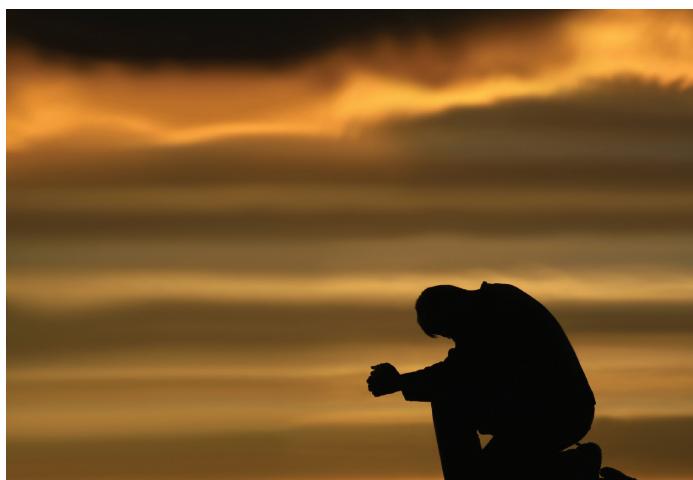
*Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have called you by name, you are mine.  
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;  
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;  
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,  
and the flame shall not consume you.*  
(Isaiah 43: 1-2)

## Prayer for Difficult Times

Jesus,

We ask that you be with us now in our time of need. Hear the petitions of our hearts and calm our minds with your presence. Guide us to look to our communities for support and love. Strengthen our faith, with your undying faith, as we gather together and uphold one another.

We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.



# Pope Francis' Prayers



## **Prayer to the Holy Family**

Jesus, Mary and Joseph,  
in you we contemplate  
the splendour of true love;  
to you we turn with trust.

Holy Family of Nazareth,  
grant that our families too  
may be places of communion and prayer,  
authentic schools of the Gospel  
and small domestic churches.

Holy Family of Nazareth,  
may families never again experience  
violence, rejection and division;  
may all who have been hurt or scandalized  
find ready comfort and healing.

Holy Family of Nazareth,  
make us once more mindful  
of the sacredness and inviolability of the family,  
and its beauty in God's plan.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph,  
Graciously hear our prayer.

Amen.





## Prayer for Our Earth

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe  
and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.  
Pour out upon us the power of your love,  
that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with peace, that we may live  
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor,  
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,  
so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives,  
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,  
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain  
at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,  
to be filled with awe and contemplation,  
to recognize that we are profoundly united  
with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day.  
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle  
for justice, love and peace.

Amen

## **Christian Prayer in Union with Creation**

Father, we praise you with all your creatures.  
They came forth from your all-powerful hand;  
they are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love.  
Praise be to you!

Son of God, Jesus,  
through you all things were made.  
You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother,  
you became part of this earth,  
and you gazed upon this world with human eyes.  
Today you are alive in every creature in your risen glory.  
Praise be to you!

Holy Spirit, by your light you guide this world towards  
the Father's love and accompany creation as it groans in travail.  
You also dwell in our hearts and you inspire us to do what is good.  
Praise be to you!

Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love,  
teach us to contemplate you in the beauty of the universe,  
for all things speak of you.

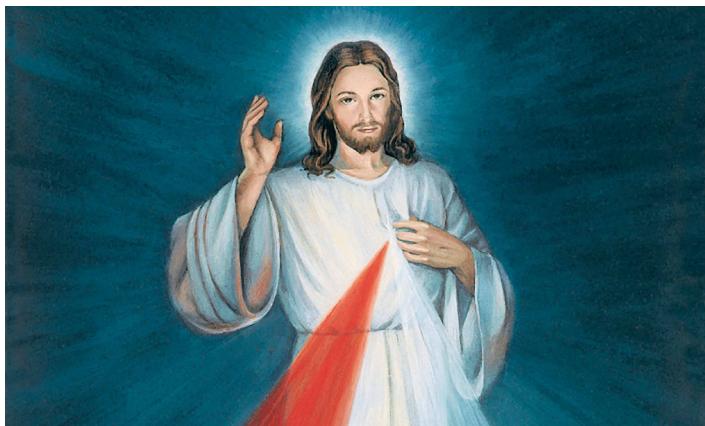
Awaken our praise and thankfulness for every being that you have made.  
Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined to everything that is.

God of love, show us our place in this world  
as channels of your love for all the creatures of this earth,  
for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.  
Enlighten those who possess power and money  
that they may avoid the sin of indifference,  
that they may love the common good, advance the weak,  
and care for this world in which we live.

The poor and the earth are crying out.  
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,  
help us to protect all life,  
to prepare for a better future,  
for the coming of your Kingdom  
of justice, peace, love and beauty.  
Praise be to you!

Amen.





## Prayer for the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father,  
and have told us that whoever sees you sees him.  
Show us your face and we will be saved.  
Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by money;  
the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness only in created things;  
made Peter weep after his betrayal,  
and assured Paradise to the repentant thief.  
Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us, the words that you spoke to the  
Samaritan woman:  
“If you knew the gift of God!”

You are the visible face of the invisible Father,  
of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy:  
let the Church be your visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified.  
You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness  
in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error:  
let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God.

Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing,  
so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord,  
and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor,  
proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed,  
and restore sight to the blind.

We ask this of you, Lord Jesus, through the intercession of Mary, Mother of  
Mercy; you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and  
ever. Amen.

## **Prayer to Mary, Mother of the Church and Mother of our faith**

Mother, help our faith!

Open our ears to hear God's word and to recognize his voice and call.

Awaken in us a desire to follow in his footsteps, to go forth from our own land and to receive his promise.

Help us to be touched by his love, that we may touch him in faith.

Help us to entrust ourselves fully to him and to believe in his love, especially at times of trial, beneath the shadow of the cross, when our faith is called to mature.

Sow in our faith the joy of the Risen One.

Remind us that those who believe are never alone.

Teach us to see all things with the eyes of Jesus, that he may be light for our path. And may this light of faith always increase in us, until the dawn of that undying day which is Christ himself, your Son, our Lord! Amen





**ACSTA**

Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association