**End of Year Staff Prayer - 2016**

**INTRODUCTION**

Good morning/afternoon, and welcome to our liturgy to mark the end of our school year together. The end of the school year means different things to each of us.

Some of us will be moving on to new places, others to new responsibilities.

Whether summer finds us working, resting, traveling or studying, in many ways it is a kind of late spring, signaling the end of one season, and emergence of something new.

So, we take the next few minutes to reflect on the blessings of this school year, to give thanks, and remember that our loving, healing and gracious God continues to be with us as we journey forth through the changes that summer will bring.

We begin as always by marking ourselves with the sign through which all things have been made new: In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

**OPENING SONG:** optional. (Sugg. Blest be the Lord , Glory and Praise Vol 1, No. 10)

**OPENING PRAYER:**

Lord God, as we think about the blessings and challenges of this past year, bless us with the serenity of your Spirit and openness of heart to the wonders you have done though us… the wonders You will continue to faithfully grant to us Your children. We make this prayer to you through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**LEADER:**

Let us be attentive to God’s word.

**READING: (reader)**

A reading from the prophet Isaiah (Is 43, 19-21)

See, I am doing something new!

Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

In the desert I make a way, in the wasteland, rivers.

Wild beasts honour me, jackals and ostriches,

For I put water in the desert and rivers in the wasteland

for my chosen people to drink,

The people I formed for myself,

That they might announce my praise.

(Pause)

The word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**RESPONSE: (Say together)**

When we live by faith,

Every ending is the beginning of something new.

Everything points beyond itself to a Presence without and within;

Every person becomes sacrament – the presence of Christ in the world;

Every colleague, a companion on life’s pilgrimage.

When we live by faith,

Time becomes a gift,

And seasons, rivers of grace:

Refining and re-creating us

To fullness of life.

See, I am doing something new!

Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

Our work is an icon

Of God’s tireless labours,

To build up what is just,

To strengthen the faltering spirit

To fire the imagination

With endless possibilities

For learning,

For growing,

For becoming,

For being

In love.

See, I am doing something new!

Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

See...

**GOSPEL:**

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark (Mk 6, 30-34)

The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, “Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they

hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

(Pause)

The Gospel of the Lord.

**All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**GROUP REFLECTION: (1 minute of silence or choice)**

In light of God’s word, reflect on your experience this year. Reflect and share, if you wish, something that you are grateful for having received or been part of in our school community.

**PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL:**

Please respond to each petition:

**Renew your people, Lord.**

For us as Church, that what we teach is always faithful to the vision of the Gospel entrusted to us by Jesus. We pray to the Lord...

For all educators, may they find strength and support in their teaching communities. We pray to the Lord...

For those whose hunger for knowledge and learning is constrained by war, violence or poverty, that they might find solidarity and hope in our response to their needs. We pray to the Lord...

In thanksgiving for those students and colleagues who have called forth in us a loving and merciful Gospel response in extraordinary circumstances. We pray to the Lord...

May God’s Spirit increase our appreciation of one another’s gifts in all the members of our home-school-parish and extended community and strengthen the bonds that unite us in the freedom and joy of God’s children. We pray to the Lord...

For those members in our community relationships who may be suffering in hidden ways, that our prayers and compassion might support them in their struggles. We pray to the Lord...

In thanksgiving for colleagues, friends and students who will be moving on; may God continue to bless them in the new directions they have chosen. We pray to the Lord...

Please feel free to voice any additional intentions you may have or to hold them in the silence of your heart.

(Pause)

Now we 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:

Our Father...

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

As our prayer time and our year together draw to a close, we turn to you Lord, that you would continue to bless us and the community we serve.

By the power of your Holy Spirit, may the seeds of the Gospel you have planted in hearts and called us to water in our school continue to grow. Grant us a peaceful and restful summer. May we be ready to respond with joy as you continue to call us forward in Christ, in whom you make all things new.

We make this prayer to you in Jesus holy name.

**Amen**

And may almighty God bless us, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

**CLOSING SONG: (optional)**  (Sugg. You are the Voice, CBW III, No. 576) Adapated from EOCCC: Our Language, Our Story 1.0, 2009

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