**World Catholic Education Day: *Pilgrims of Hope***

***Introduction***

**Welcomer** Every year, 40 days after Easter, we celebrate World Catholic Education Day. Every day in our schools, we learn, grow, and walk together in faith. Today, we remember that we are all pilgrims—travelers on a journey—carrying the flame of hope that Jesus has given us. Our theme this year is *"Catholic Education: Pilgrims of Hope."* Through our words, actions, and prayers, we can bring hope to our world.

Please join in the singing of our opening song.

***Opening Song*** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Opening Prayer***

**Leader\*** In the name + of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. ***Amen.***

Let us pray:

Loving God, you call us to walk as pilgrims of hope.
Bless our journey of learning, discovery, and friendship, and help us to see your light guiding us each day. Fill our hearts with the hope that comes from Jesus, and teach us to share that hope with one another. As we walk together, may we be signs of your love for the world.

All of this we ask in the name of Jesus, our friend and our Lord.

Amen.

***\*Or “Priest” if your pastor is celebrating with you. (In all cases, if a priest is present, the parts that are labelled as “Leader” should be his, and not assigned to a student.)***

***First Reading***

*Ephesians 1:17-23 (Lectionary for Masses with Children)*

**Reader**  A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

Brothers and sisters:

I ask the glorious Father and God of our Lord Jesus Christ to give you his Spirit. The Spirit will make you wise and let you understand what it means to know God.

My prayer is that light will flood your hearts and that you will understand the hope that was given to you when God chose you. Then you will discover the glorious blessings that will be yours together with all of God’s people.

I want you to know about the great and mighty power that God has for us followers. It is the same wonderful power he used when he raised Christ from death and let him sit at his right side in heaven. There Christ rules over all forces, authorities, powers, and rulers. He rules over all beings in this world and rule in the future world as well.

The Word of the Lord.

***Thanks be to God.***

***Responsorial Psalm*  (may be sung)**

*Psalm 25:4abc, 6, 7cd, 8-9 (Lectionary for Masses with Children)*

**Reader** Our response is: You are my God, and my hope is in you.

***You are my God, and my hope is in you.***

Show me your paths

 and teach me to follow;

 guide me by your truth and instruct me.

You keep me safe.

***You are my God, and my hope is in you.***

Please, Lord, remember,

 you have always been patient and kind.

Show how kind you truly are

 and remember me.

***You are my God, and my hope is in you.***

You are honest and merciful,

 and you teach sinners how to follow your path.

You lead humble people to do what is right

 and to stay on your path.

***We are his people, the sheep of his flock.***

***Gospel Acclamation***

*(If the Gospel Acclamation is not sung, omit it.)*

***Gospel***

*Luke 24:50-53 (Lectionary for Masses with Children)*

**Leader\*** A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

 ***Glory to you, O Lord.***

Jesus led his disciples out to Bethany, where he raised his hands and blessed them. As he was doing this, he left and was taken up to heaven.

After his disciples had worshipped him, they returned to Jerusalem and were very happy. They spent their time in the temple, praising God.

 The Gospel of the Lord.

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

***Reflection (If a priest is leading the celebration, he will use his own homily here.)***

Today, as we celebrate World Catholic Education Day, we remember that we are part of something much bigger than just our own school. We are part of a world-wide family of Catholic schools, where students like us are learning to walk with Jesus every day. We are all on a journey together — a journey of faith, of learning, and of hope.

When Jesus ascended to Heaven, he gave his friends — the disciples — a special mission. He told them to go out to the whole world and share the Good News. Jesus didn’t send them out alone. He promised to be with them always, giving them the courage they needed. Like the disciples, we are called to be pilgrims of hope — people who walk together and bring hope to everyone we meet.

Being a pilgrim of hope means keeping our eyes on Jesus and trusting that God is leading us, even when we’re not sure where the path will go. In our schools, we can live as pilgrims of hope by being kind to others, standing up for what is right, taking care of the Earth, helping someone who feels left out, and praying for peace. Every time we show love, joy, and forgiveness, we help light up the world with hope.

Today and every day, let us remember that Catholic education helps us learn not just about the world, but about who we are as God’s children. With Jesus by our side, we can keep the flame of hope burning brightly in our hearts and in our schools.

*(Pause for a few moments of silent reflection.)*

***Prayers of the Faithful***

**Leader\***We are gathered together to celebrate the many blessings we have received from our loving God, especially the gift of Catholic education. As pilgrims of hope, united by Jesus’s call to share God’s love with the world, let us now join our hearts in prayer, asking God our Father to hear and answer our prayers with His love and care.

**Reader** Our response is “Lord, hear our prayer.”

We pray for our Church: for Pope \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, the Bishops of Saskatchewan, and for all Church leaders. May they walk with hope in their hearts, and continue to lead us by the example of Jesus, bringing His light to every corner of the world. We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord, hear our prayer.*** ***(note: at the time of this writing, our new Pope has not yet been named.)***

We pray for our world: may leaders of cities and nations walk together as pilgrims of hope, united in love and working for peace and justice for all people. We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord, hear our prayer.***

We pray for our community: May all who need help, healing, or comfort find hope and strength in the kindness and love of those around them, walking together in the spirit of compassion and understanding. We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord, hear our prayer.***

We pray for our Board Trustees, our administrators, and all those called to leadership within our schools: may God’s wisdom and strength continue to inspire and guide them in their responsibilities. We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord, hear our prayer.***

We pray for our teachers and staff members, and all who serve in Catholic schools: bless them and their work as they help us to grow in love and knowledge of your Son, Jesus. We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord, hear our prayer.***

We pray for ourselves: may we be blessed with courage, wisdom, and hope as we walk together, sharing God’s love and light with the world through our actions, words, and prayer. We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord, hear our prayer.***

We pray for Catholic Education: may we walk together in faith, celebrating the rich tradition we have inherited, and joyfully answering Jesus’ call to go and make disciples of all nations, spreading hope and love wherever we go. We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord, hear our prayer.***

***The Lord’s Prayer***

**Leader\*** We are called by the Spirit to be one family and one body in God’s name, so we pray together in the words that Jesus taught us:

***Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen.***

***Closing Prayer***

**Leader\*** Let us pray:

Hope is our calling, O Lord, and the destination of our pilgrim journeys. As we mark this Jubilee Year of hope, keep our eyes focused on Jesus, and on the hope he reveals to us. May our hope lead us to love genuinely and to live generously. In the dignity of every human being, may we honour your presence. In our stewardship of creation, may we care for your creatures, large and small.

As we strive to respond to the poverties of our world, may we be bearers of your compassion. As we live as people of solidarity, may we help to heal the divisions of our world. In our lives as peacemakers, may we share the *“Shalom”* which is your gift to all people.

Hope is the flame that has been entrusted to us; may we keep it burning brightly, to enlighten the path of our pilgrim journey. Strengthen our hearts when we grow tired, and remind us that, with you, all things are possible.

All our hope is in you, O God, in the name of Jesus our Lord and companion.

***Amen.***

And may God bless each one of us, we pray, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. ***Amen.***

St.**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, *pray for us.***

***Closing Song \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_***