

Board of Management/Governors and Staff Time Out

Prayer for the Jubilee Year 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.
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 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.

(Adapted from Pope Francis' Prayer for the Year of Mercy)

Before you begin the board or staff meeting closest to Catholic Schools Week 2016, take a moment to consider how you are the face of God's mercy in the school community. The theme of Catholic Schools Week this year is **Catholic Schools: Challenged to Proclaim God's Mercy**. The theme reflects the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy proclaimed by Pope Francis that began on 8 December 2015 and will conclude on 20 November 2016. Each day this week the staff and students of the school will reflect on how they are challenged to be the face of God's mercy to one another. Mercy is not an easy concept for children or indeed for adults. It is difficult for us to understand how God's mercy is so freely given; it cannot be earned and we do not deserve it. It is a gift of a God who loves us unconditionally and who is always waiting to forgive us. Pope Francis challenges us in this Holy Year of Mercy to be 'merciful as the Father is merciful'. As a faith school we are challenged to be places where God's mercy is experienced by all; where the face of leadership and authority is one tinged with mercy; where governance is tested by mercy; where all our interactions are tested by the way in which they show mercy. Each day this week the students and staff are being helped to discern how they can be the face of God's mercy in particular ways. The following statements might also help members of the board and staff members consider how they and the school for which they have governance and educational responsibility can be the face of God's mercy each day.

Kindness and Compassion

Is our school a place where all who work, all members of the student body, and all who visit experience kindness and compassion in their daily interactions?

Fairness and Justice

Do our school policies reflect Church teaching on social justice towards those in need, those in our employ, and the environment?

Forgiveness and Reconciliation

Is our school a place where staff, students and parents know that transgressions will be forgiven and reconciliation is always possible?

Living like Jesus

Is our school a place where all our words, decisions, policies and actions are measured by Gospel values and the way that Jesus calls us to live and love?

Staff and board members might use these questions as a basis to begin to reflect on the way the school is living up to its mission of being a community that is striving to be the face of God's mercy in all they do and say.

Prayer for Teachers

Lord Jesus,
Guide us in our work so that
the young people before us may grow to become
all that you have called them to be.
May our teaching encourage them to embrace life
in all its beauty and mystery.
May our patience with them allow them to
learn from their mistakes.
May our listening to them help them to
respect themselves and others.
Through the gift of your Spirit
inspire us to love what we do,
to be a support to one another
and to never give up on a child in our care.

Prayer for Board Members

Lord God,
We give thanks for the
opportunity to serve this school community.
May we use the gifts you have given us generously
for the good of all who are teaching and learning here.
Guide us in our work of creating a place of faith and learning
where each person feels welcome
and comes to know that they have someone to contribute
to the beautiful enterprise that is the education of the young.
We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.