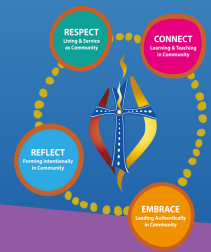


Family Prayer

Communities of faith, hope and love

by Maureen Gaul, Leader Formation: Identity and Outreach



I acknowledge the First Peoples who have an enduring connection to the land, seas, skies, and waterways of this place known as Australia; I am guest on their lands today. I recognise the wisdom of the ancestors, whose stories, traditions, and memories birthed the identity of their people, and seek to journey alongside in friendship towards justice, healing and flourishing for all.

Context

The French writer Charles Péguy at the beginning of his poem on hope, spoke of the three virtues – faith, hope and charity – as three sisters who walk together:

“Hope, the little one, walks beside her two older sisters, practically unseen. [...] Yet she, the little one, drags everything along. Because Faith only sees what exists. And Charity only loves what exists. But Hope loves what will be. [...] She is the one who makes the others keep walking; She is the one who leads them on, and makes them all walk together”



Faith, hope and love (or charity) are the distinctive elements of Catholic schools that the 312 schools across Queensland celebrated during Catholic Education Week 21-27 July 2024.

Scripture

[John 20:1-2, 11-18](#)

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Reflection

Mary of Magdala, an inspirational woman and steadfast disciple, trusted in the wisdom of Christ. The Gospels speak of her as first witness to the resurrection, who proclaimed the risen Lord and announced a vision for Christians of a hope-filled future. At the tomb, after Jesus' resurrection, Mary Magdalene recognised the face of Christ - a realisation and understanding that is an invitation for any who seek an encounter with Jesus in Catholic schools. The work of Catholic education is guided by the Church as 'Mother and teacher' to pursue excellence and educate for the fullness of life, since our youth are 'the joyful hope of the Church and of a humanity always on the move' (Pope Francis, 2023).

Prayer

With faith, hope and love, bringing our community closer to God.

With faith, hope and love, inspiring a spirited tomorrow.

For the Church, that with the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit she may grow in her endeavours to truly be a listening and open Church, enriched through dialogue with the cultural communities and First Nations Peoples of our nation.

For Pope Francis, Bishop-elect Joseph Caddy, Priests and Religious, that they embrace their trust in the Risen Jesus and respond to the needs of others with faith, hope and love.

For all government leaders and civil authorities, that the wisdom of Christ will guide their actions to respect the dignity of each person so that hatred, violence, conflict and indifference may be challenged and cease.

For those who experience a life of suffering and vulnerability, through illness, disability, inequality, marginalisation or fear, that they may be uplifted from the barriers placed upon them and feel the love of Christ through the charitable actions of others.

For our respective schools and colleges, may we be inspired to be people of unwavering courage for goodness and truth, beauty and justice, strengthened by the heroic witness and action of the shoulders we stand upon today.

We pray for the loved ones in our hearts today and for those who have gone before us, that they will find peace, joy and comfort, and lead us towards a hope-filled future.

Thank you to Koko Wilson, Mackenzie Dixon and Angel Webster and Mrs Helena Tutoe (St Mary's Catholic College) and Mark Gatti (St Andrew's Catholic College) for sharing their prayer intentions towards fullness of life through faith, hope and love. These were co-created for the 2024 Catholic Education Week Eucharistic Mass.

Call to Action

Contemplate your vision for the young people in your life and consider ways to facilitate communities of faith, hope and love in their lives, for example:

- Mark the calendar to participate in a school or parish liturgy.
- Commit to a charity or social justice cause that you can connect to.
- Discover prayers for adults and young people with the [Pray as you go](#) site or app.

Inspiration for Reflection...

- Pope Francis' [Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the XXXVIII World Youth Day 26 November 2023](#).
- Congregation for Catholic Education (2022) ["The Identity of the Catholic School for a Culture of Dialogue"](#)

