Teaching: Celebrating Our Profession
(By: Paul Sarlo & Lonnie Bolton)

Invitation To Worship:
Loving God, daily we need to be reminded of the awesome responsibility that we as teachers possess. Teaching is a sacred task. A Catholic teaching vocation carries with it an obligation to live out the Gospel by example and to lead all those entrusted to our care, to your son, Jesus. James in his letter reminds us of the seriousness of this undertaking.

"My friends, not many of you should become teachers. As you know, we teachers will be judged with greater strictness than others"-(James 3:1)

With the help of your grace and the indwelling presence of your Holy Spirit, may our vocation remain fresh and vibrant, as we live out the daily challenges and hopes that the Gospel brings.

Opening Prayer:
Jesus, The Teacher
He never taught a lesson in a classroom...
He had no tools to work with, no blackboards, maps or charts...
He used no subject outlines, kept no records, gave no grades, and His only text was ancient and well worn.
His students were the poor, the lame, the deaf, the blind, the outcast...
And His method was the same with all who came to hear and learn...
He opened eyes to faith...
He opened ears with simple truth...
And opened hearts with love, a love born of forgiveness...
A gentle man, a humble man,
He asked and won no honours, no gold awards of tribute to His expertise or wisdom...
And yet this quiet teacher from the hills of Galilee has fed the needs, fulfilled the hopes, and changed the lives of many millions...
For what He taught, brought heaven to earth and God’s heart to mankind.

Reading: (A paraphrase, for teachers, of 1 Corinthians 13-by Rev. Derwyn D. Jones)

Reader #1: Though I teach in ways that are pleasing to both principals and superintendents, but do not have love towards the children, I am no better than a loudspeaker.

Reader #2: And though I am proficient in the science of pedagogy, and hold verification in all advanced courses, but do not love my pupils, all my specialist papers are worthless.

Reader #3: And even though I have studied child psychology and know about the Id and the environmental conditions; yet if I do not actively love my children, it profits me very little.
Reader #4: And though I know the new math inside and out, and have a very good blackboard manner, if I have not love in my heart, I achieve precisely nothing.

Reader #5: Love makes a teacher have infinite patience - love searches out every avenue, during class or in my own time, to be helpful to a backward child.

Reader #6: Love does not try to manipulate children - does not talk down to them, not try to turn them into fan clubs who will idolize their teacher.

Reader #7: Love does not insist that every child progress at a uniform rate pleasing to the teacher, but makes allowances for individual endowments and differences.

Reader #8: Love has good manners, and respects even a child as a whole person in the sight of God and humankind.

Reader #9: Love is not touchy or temperamental, and does not take out the frustrations of the home on children in the class.

Reader #10: Love teaches children to be forgiving by showing that we, as teachers, do not hold grudges against them.

Reader #11: Love does not point out or ridicule the slow learners, but rejoices exceedingly when they make progress.

Reader #12: Love knows no limit to its patience, no end to its hopes, no fading of its encouragement. It is the only quality that denotes a real teacher-and a real person.

Invitation To Prayer:

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ,

Left: We belong to you; all our schools belong to you. You are our light, our hope, and our strength. You have called us by name. You have known each of us, intimately, from before time began. Deeply, unfathomable, you know and cherish each of us here.

All: You stand with us. We stand together because of you.

Right: You have given us a sacred mission to carry out in this world; you have called us your friends. You have poured light into our darkness, empowering us to bring light to others. You have opened our minds to receive your truth; now we have a truth to proclaim. You have loved us with a real and undying love; you ask us now to radiate your love in all its
power and glory; this sacred task you have entrusted to us.

**All:** Lord, help us to remember that you are the centre and source of our lives, that anything we do will be successful whenever we remain faithful to you.

**Left:** Stay close to us in our work: at the photocopier, on yard duty, at meeting, in the classroom. Stay close to us in our dreaming and our hoping, in struggle and victory. Open our eyes to see our students and our colleagues as children of your light, as people who need your love and strength as deeply as we do. All of us, even if in secret, are searching for the same Love, the same Peace, the same Strength.

**Right:** Set us on fire with an ever deeper and evermore passionate faith, with hearts ready to love and to forgive, so that the light we kindle in our school will radiate to the ends of the earth.

**Left:** I touch the face of humanity each day in my school, for I reach the ambitious and the indolent, the brilliant and the slow, the mature and the immature. I gaze at a quiet classroom, heads bent, minds intent on the lesson...I catch the enthusiasm of the eager search of a bright-eyed young scholar for an answer to her question... I study the prospective dropout, the disinterested "Clock-watcher," and the bitter delinquent - master of wisecracks and rebellion.

**Right:** I contemplate the endless quest of my young philosophers in their determination to know the core of life. I listen to a twelve year old lay her soul bare before me in a few moments of counseling. These daily scenes emphasize that no human endeavour requires more wisdom, more humanity, more labour, or dedication than education.

**All:** God, our father, you have made us your co-workers in the task of building your kingdom on earth. Help us to fulfill that responsibility as Catholic Educators. Give us wisdom and understanding to see the issues clearly and to make the right decisions. Fill us with your Spirit that we may act only under that Spirit’s inspiration. Give us hearts to love those on whose behalf we meet: our parents, our young people, our teachers and administrators. Keep us always mindful that we are privileged to be your co-workers, accomplishing only what you will. Help us to follow that will after the model of your son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you forever and ever. AMEN