PRAYER FOR REVERENCE OF LIFE

Almighty God, giver of all that is good, we thank You for the precious gift of human life:

- for life in the womb, coming from Your creative power,
- for the life of children, making us glad with their freshness and promise,
- for the life of young people, hoping for a better world,
- for the life of people who are disabled, teaching us that every life has value,
- for the life of the elderly, witnessing to the ageless values of patience and wisdom.

Like Blessed Mary, may we say "YES" to your gift. May we defend it and promote it from conception to its natural end. And bring us at last, O Father, to the fullness of eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

How can we live the ‘Reverence for Life’ prayer in our schools next year?
SEPTEMBER

**September 8**  
**Blessed Virgin’s Birthday**  
Spiritual Adoption of Unborn: hold a baby shower and donate gifts to pregnancy center

**September 10**  
**Grandparents’ Day**  
Acknowledge elders; send cards to care homes

**Other Ideas**

- Adoration: look at Jesus with love
- Welcome BBQ /pancake breakfast for new kindergarteners
- Outreach targeting all groups in prayer
- Say “yes” to your gift month → gift inventory – called & gifted program
  - At staff meeting, do gift inventory
- 40 weeks of life: each school (elementary) responsible for a different week
- Picture mural: staff takes photos over summer showing how they have shown reverence for life. Families could add to this in September
- Choose a date to host a parent retreat

OCTOBER

**October 1**  
**St. Therese**  
Write a Letter to a Missionary

**October 4**  
**St. Francis of Assisi**  
Jason Borkowski will prepare materials for a system-wide assembly

**October 9**  
**Thanksgiving Day**  
Food and Clothing Drive

**Other Ideas**

- Using the reverence for life prayer to divide the year. 2 months for each section
  - E.g. Life in the womb (Sept-Oct)
  - Have this as a focus for prayer and outreach activities
November 1  All Saints Day  
We are called to Sainthood

November 2  All Souls’ Day  
Purgatory / Eternal Soul

November 10  Remembrance Day  
Visit Veterans; Learn about Child Soldiers

November 21  Presentation of Blessed Virgin  
Dignity of the Human Person

November 24  Feast of Christ the King  
Hope for God’s Presence in tough times; Matthew 25.31-46

Other Ideas

- Winter Prayers by Joyce Rupp  
- Theme of God is with us in our Frailty  
- Celebrate Reconciliation for Indulgences during All Souls’ Week  
- Visit to Care Home, Downtown East Side, Veterans, etc…
DECEMBER

December 8  Solemnity of Immaculate Conception
Celebrate Mass

December 12  Our Lady of Guadalupe
Celebrate Mass

December 18-22  Christmas Market: Ethically-sourced goods (local and fair trade)

Other Ideas

- December 1 – 25 days of Wonder and Awe in format of Advent Calendar
- Cross-Curricular Christmas Theme: Celebrating Mary’s “Yes”
- Virtues of the Week for Advent
- Singing at Seniors’ Care Home
- Reconciliation Service (Life of Young People)
- Care Packages for new Moms
- Christmas Hampers
- Guest Speakers
- Prison Ministry
- Staff Giving to Students
- Service Project / Retreat for Staff
JANUARY

January 1  Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God  
Celebration Mass

January 6  Epiphany  
Theme of Evangelization in our School Communities

January 7  Baptism of Our Lord  
Celebration Mass

January 18-25  Week of Christian Unity

January 31  Feast of St. John Bosco  
Celebration Mass

Other Ideas

- Theme: Holy Family Month
  - Elderly – Seniors’ Tea; Visit Care homes; Help in Cold Weather
  - Human Rights – Martin Luther King Day
  - Resolution – focus on hope for the world, family, ourselves

- Recommit to school’s goals / plan for the year – use reflection journal with virtues
- Roots of Empathy – consider having a visit with a pregnant mom
- Children – highlight positives about another classmate
FEBRUARY

February 4-10 Catholic Schools’ Week
Celebrate children and young people hoping for a better world
Community building
Buddy activity
Random Acts of Kindness (student names drawn)

February 12 Family Day

February 14 Ash Wednesday / St. Valentine’s Day

Other Ideas

- Gratitude/Thanks Precious Gift of Life
- Make a secular day Family Day a Holy Day
  - Pro-Life Club > bring in things for babies
- Different images of types of families/collage
- Send Valentines to people marginalized – elderly (old age home) – homeless shelters
- Every day in Lent pray for Reverence for Life
- Tea for elderly or knitting in classroom w/elderly
- Mardi Gras/Fat Tuesday > develop virtue of gratitude
- Bulletin Board > virtuous act or a symbol -> flower? and placed on a bulletin board and watch it grow with greater acts
- Favorite moments w/each create photo album for Family Day
- Take the Prayer for Reverence for Life as a daily prayer
- February is a friendship month and Valentine’s Day so a great time to reach out to people
- Connect with Seniors Residence and bring Valentine to them
- Invite seniors to Valentines’ Day Mass
- Valentine Tea inviting Parents and Grandparents -> children can do baking or make cards for them
- Do a senior’s luncheon at school where older students serve
- Have a school fair where funds are collected for the needy, Holy Childhood, etc.
- Help at a soup kitchen
- Collect food for Food Bank and collect food at every school mass so that food is collected throughout the year
- Acknowledgement of children gifts at a monthly assembly
- Focus – Giving back love making connection with seniors, community (school and neighborhood)
## March

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 17</td>
<td>St. Patrick’s Day</td>
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<td>March 18</td>
<td>Palm Sunday</td>
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<td>March 19</td>
<td>St. Joseph’s Feast Day</td>
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<td>“For Life in the womb” activities or special prayers around this</td>
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<td>Baby Bottle Drive / Hope for Women</td>
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<td>March 25-31</td>
<td>Holy Week</td>
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<td>March 29</td>
<td>Holy Thursday</td>
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<td>March 30</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
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**Other Ideas**

- Lent: Prayer, Fasting, Almsgiving
- March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month
- Prayers of the Faithful -> include a prayer for Reverence for Life
- Solidarity with those who do without, simple lunch
- Stations of the Cross
- Rich/Poor meal
- Visit retirement home
- “The Value” project
- Reflect on how Jesus related to people he met in the Bible
- Showing pictures of those who are receiving the donations we are collecting for i.e. Fr. James’ wheelchair project
- Family group activities -> perhaps the older students teach the younger students
- Life cycles in Science
- Spring – New life


**APRIL**

- **April 1**  Easter Sunday
- **April 2**  Autism Awareness Day
- **April 8**  Feast of Divine Mercy
- **April 9**  Feast of the Annunciation
- **April 17**  St. Kateri Tekawitha
- **April 21**  St. Anselm
- **April 22**  Good Shepherd Sunday / Earth Day
- **April 25**  Feast of St. Mark
- **April 28**  Arbor Day
- **April 29**  Catherine of Sienna

**Other Ideas**

- Theme – Easter – New Life
- Virtue – Wonder and Awe (at Creation)
- Observation of Nature
  - growth from a seed to a plant (or butterfly or salmon)
  - Stewardship – nurturing a plant through to maturity
  - Connecting to nurturing our souls to spiritual perfection
  - Connecting to the Readings during Eastertide -> the birth and growth of the Church (Acts of the Apostles)
- Baby animals – search for them in nature
- Autism Awareness – posters, shared stories, attend events -> vicariously or in person
- Cultivate patience – grandparent tea
- Feast of the Annunciation – go to Mass to pray for the unborn/for expectant mothers; gather baby stuff – donate to Birthright
- Prayer cards for high school students
- Prayer cards for Covenant House
- Prayer cards for Birthright
- Prayer cards for Seniors’ homes
- Build awareness of children in other places -> children living in poverty, fear, violence
- “What are your hopes for a better world?” “How are you making this a better world” -> gr. 6 & 7 “How do I bring hope to the world?”
MAY

May 11  Crowning of Mary
May 13  Mother’s Day

Other Ideas

- Bring a flower to Mary each day (Statue) pray for same intention each day. Or bring to church each Sunday in May.
- Assign a class each week to bring fresh flowers in May.
- Pray Rosary over P.A. everyday.
- Pray for the lives of youth during sacraments.
- Knitting club – create hats for newly baptized babies.
- Visit elderly.
- Youth group from high schools visit school.
- Shoreline clean up.
- Student visit VanSpec.
- Guest speaker from Sparc BC – provide awareness of physical disabilities.
- Movie – Wonder – about physical disabilities.

JUNE

June 24  St. Jean Baptiste Day

Other Ideas

- Fruits of the garden – harvest fruits and veg from school garden for community picnic.
- First Holy Communion around the world – contact other schools to share experiences of their first Holy Communion.
- Grade 7 Graduation – Reflection activity – how/what can they give back to the school or give forward to their community.
- Sports day – create more inclusive/accessible games lessons or differently abled athletes.
- Evangelization lesson between intermediate and primary grades on St. Jean Baptiste Day.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

YouTube

- Laudato Si  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1tYdOlqvpag&feature=youtu.be
- Creation  http://saltandlighttv.org/creation/
- Creation Calls  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LwGvfdtl2c0&feature=youtu.be
- The Maker  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lH03GMmdMRI&feature=youtu.be
- Masterpieces of God’s Creation  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h62l-4Oddl0&feature=youtu.be

Catholic Social Teaching


Throw-Away Culture


Integral Ecology

- https://www.lasalette.org/reflections/1215-pope-francis-on-integral-ecology.html
- https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/faith-and-justice/integral-ecology-everything-connected#.WSdHm70id6w.twitter
Francis helps us to see that an integral ecology calls for openness to categories which transcend the language of mathematics and biology, and take us to the heart of what it is to be human. Just as happens when we fall in love with someone, whenever he would gaze at the sun, the moon or the smallest of animals, he burst into song, drawing all other creatures into his praise. He commuled with all creation, even preaching to the flowers, inviting them “to praise the Lord, just as if they were endowed with reason”. His response to the world around him was so much more than intellectual appreciation or economic calculus, for to him each and every creature was a sister united to him by bonds of affection. That is why he felt called to care for all that exists.

His disciple Saint Bonaventure tells us that, “from a reflection on the primary source of all things, filled with even more abundant piety, he would call creatures, no matter how small, by the name of ‘brother’ or ‘sister’”. Such a conviction cannot be written off as naive romanticism, for it affects the choices which determine our behaviour. If we approach nature and the environment without this openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs. By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously. The poverty and austerity of Saint Francis were no mere veneer of asceticism, but something much more radical: a refusal to turn reality into an object simply to be used and controlled.

(https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html)

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How can we turn away from the faces of the children, faces bearing hunger, faces knowing pain?

Tell me, is it you? Is it I? And when will we?

And who will plant the dreams in the minds of the children, minds so often frightened, minds that long to hope?

Who will keep their dreams alive and see that they come true?

Tell me, is it you? Is it I? And when will we?

And who will be the love in the hearts of the children?

Hearts of our tomorrow, hearts in need today? Who will give example of all that life can be?

Tell me, is it you? Is it I? And when will we?

Look into the depths of your soul. Where do you see tomorrow?

It is in the minds and hearts and faces of the children.

So let us join as one for the sake of the children; children wanting us to hope and needing us to care;

Who will make a difference in the future of the Earth?

Tell me, is it you? Is it I? And when will we?