**Staff Meeting - Opening Prayer (Meeting 1: Academic Year 2021/2022)**

**Reader 1:** We begin our Prayer, together, “In the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.” And we light this candle as a sign and symbol of God’s loving presence with us as we begin our first meeting of this academic year.



**Principal:** You might speak some words ofwelcome here in the context of a second September living with the reality of Covid, acknowledging that while things have moved on in terms of the vaccination roll out, we’re dealing with a new variant. In this challenging context, from where do we take our consolation? What will energise us for the year ahead.

**Reader 1:** Peter Barnes a teacher in the US with over 20 years’ experience wrote an article recently for Edutopia.org on ‘why I stayed in teaching’. He suggests these as his type five reasons, and you’ll excuse some of the Americanisms! We can all remember why we started teaching, for many of us, the bigger question is the question Barnes answers, why am I still here?

1. **Searching for Mastery:** knowing deep down that I can do better and better and better for my students.
2. **Valuable Colleagues:** knowing that there are people you can turn to, a community to which you belong that you are connected to helps keep the energy up particularly when times are difficult.
3. **A Summer Reset:** knowing that no matter how hard the work is or how challenging the context, I have a reset time over the Summer
4. **Permission to nerd out:** loving my subject, knowing I can learn more and more about it.
5. **Work that matters:** He says, “On difficult teaching days, I sometimes dream about an office job where I sit in a cubicle, drink my coffee, and do work all by myself. Then I remember, even the worst teaching days are impactful and important.”

**Reader 2:** As we begin another year together, it’s good to pause to reflect on what will sustain us individually and collectively this year. Which of these five things matter to you? Which of these don’t matter so much? Are there other things that will keep you going?

**Reader 3: A reading from the Book of Joshua**

As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. **6**Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

The word of the Lord.

**Reader 4:**



**Reader 5:**

We pray a blessing on our students. God bless them in all of their giftedness, and vulnerabilities. Bless us with a continuing sense of their humanity and the needs that come from that humanity. Lord hear us.

We pray a blessing on our colleagues. Each of us is here because we care deeply about the work we do. We thank God for whatever rest we were able to get over the Summer. Lord hear us.

We pray a blessing on the work we will do this year. May we grow in mastery of our profession and grow in love for the subjects that we teach. Sustain us always with a deep sense of the importance of our work here in (School name). Lord hear us.

We pray a blessing on those who are sick. Through our care for them, help them know your Love. Lord hear us.

(You can add your own prayers here depending on the needs of the school and students).

We pause to pray for our own intentions or to take a moment of silence to just rest.

AMEN.

**Principal:** Concluding words from you might include words of encouragement for the year ahead.