

## **SAMPLE CONCLUDING PRAYER SERVICE** **For Theology of the Body Middle School Program**

**Opening Song: O God, You Search Me and You Know Me** by Bernadette Farrell

O God, you search me, and you know me  
All my thoughts lie open to your gaze  
When I walk or lie down, you are before me  
Ever the maker and keeper of my days.

You know my resting and my rising  
You discern my purpose from afar  
And with love everlasting, you besiege me  
In ev'ry moment of life or death, you are.

Before a word is on my tongue, Lord  
You have known its meaning through and through  
You are with me beyond my understanding  
God of my present, my past and future, too.

Although your Spirit is upon me  
Still I search for shelter from your light  
There is nowhere on Earth I can escape you  
Even the darkness is radiant in your sight.

For you created me and shaped me  
Gave me life within my mother's womb  
For the wonder of who I am, I praise you  
Safe in your hands, all creation is made new

**Opening Prayer:** (Leader)

Heavenly Father, we thank you for creating us out of love in Your image and likeness and calling us to love You and one another. Having deepened our understanding of your glorious plan for human love and human life through the theology of the body, grant us the desire to live in accord with this plan from this day forward. We ask this through Christ your Son, who came to reveal through his body your immeasurable love for each of us. Amen.

**Scripture Reading:** (Reader)

(Colossians 3:1-5, 12-17)

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Colossians

If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Think of what is above, not of what is on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with him in glory. Put to death, then, the parts of you that are earthly: immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and the greed that is idolatry....

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do. And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection. And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The Word of the Lord.

**All:** Thanks be to God

**School chaplain/pastor gives a brief reflection on the reading.**

**Intercessions** (Reader)

Response: Lord, teach us to love.

In gratitude for Saint John Paul II and his theology of the body, which has helped us to deepen our understanding of God's great plan for human love and human life, we pray:

That all of us may be given the grace to grow in our vocation to love within our families and friendships right now, and so prepare for whatever vocation God calls us to in the future, we pray:

That we may, with God's help, be better able to live the virtues of charity, purity, and chastity in our own lives, and so be a witness to others of the truth, beauty, and joy of God's plan, we pray:

For a greater respect in our country for the complementarity of men and women, the vocation of marriage and the sanctity of human life from its beginning to its end, we pray:

For all those in need, that we will be Christ's hands and feet to them and bring them God's love, we pray:

## **Act of Consecration to Our Lady (Reader)**

Saint John Paul II called Mary “the Mother of Fair Love.” Listen to his beautiful words:

“I wish in particular to bring the youth of the whole world and of the whole Church closer to her, to Mary who is the Mother of fair love. She bears within her an indestructible sign of youth and beauty which never pass. I wish and pray that the young will approach her, have confidence in her, and entrust to her the life that is before them; that they will love her with a simple and warm love of the heart.” (General audience, May 2, 1979)

In response to this desire of St. John Paul II, let us ask Our Lady, the mother of fair love, to inspire us and to intercede for us as we entrust ourselves and our vocation to love to her motherly heart:

### **All:**

Mary, loving Daughter of God the Father, help me to know my worth as a child of God. Help me to always remember I am made in the image and likeness of God our Father and to treat every person with love and respect. Hail Mary...

Mary, loving Mother of God the Son, help me to love Your Son, Jesus, with all my heart. Never let me forget His mercy and love. Guide me closer to Him, especially in the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. Hail Mary...

Mary, loving Spouse of the Holy Spirit, I give my whole self to your care. Let me always remember that the Holy Spirit dwells within me, and that we are all called to the heights of holiness. Help me to proclaim the Gospel through the way I live my life. Hail Mary...

**Leader:** Now, for the next 7-8 minutes, you will have the opportunity to pray silently in God’s presence, to ponder all you have learned through the theology of the body program, and to consider signing a pledge card\* in which you make a personal commitment to live the virtue of chastity from this day forward. You will find pledge cards and pens at the end of each pew should you wish to prayerfully consider signing one and taking it with you as a keepsake. This is a private commitment and no one should feel pressured to participate.

The pledge card reads:

“From this day forward, I promise to seek God’s help to grow in purity of heart, mind, and body, so that I can be free to love. Regardless of the past, I now choose to save the gift of my sexuality for my future spouse or to make a gift of myself in the vocation to which God calls me.”

\*Pledge cards may be ordered at:

<https://shop.chastity.com/collections/commitment-cards-etc/products/commitment-card-pack-of-10>

You may choose to play some meditative music for the students during this time.

**Optional prayer prompts for students:**

God, what would you like to say to me today?  
How do you see me?  
Is there anything you want to say to encourage me?  
What do you have to say about a particular situation in my life?  
Is there anything you want me to know about you?  
Ask Jesus your own questions...

**Closing Song: Immaculate Mary**

Immaculate Mary, your praises we sing.  
You reign now in heaven with Jesus our King.

Ave, Ave, Ave, Maria!  
Ave, Ave, Maria!

In heaven the blessed your glory proclaim;  
On earth we your children invoke your fair name.

Ave, Ave, Ave, Maria!  
Ave, Ave, Maria!

We pray for our Mother, the Church upon earth,  
And bless, Holy Mary, the land of our birth.

Ave, Ave, Ave, Maria!  
Ave, Ave, Maria!