



A Fresh Start

Scripture

Luke 14: 1, 7 – 14

One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully watched. When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honour at the table, he told them this parable: "When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honour, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited, so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, "Give this person you seat". Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, "Friend, move up to a better place". Then you will be honoured in the presence of all the other guests. For all those who exalt they will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted".

Then Jesus said to his host, "When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbours; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous"

Reflect:

Here we are at the start of a brand new academic year. Hopefully everyone is feeling refreshed after a period of time to rest and rejuvenate. The long holiday is perfect for us all to spend quality time with family and friends: it's also time to rest our minds and bodies whilst having time to find new and interesting ways to spend our time and challenge ourselves. Now were back we have no excuse – were ready to give ourselves fully to this new year and embrace all that it offers to us. If you are new to our community – staff or student – you may find yourselves feeling a little daunted this week but we are a loving and welcoming community and you will soon feel at home. Everyone here was new at some point and knows exactly how you feel.

Whether new or returning this is a brand new year for all of us. It offers us new and exciting opportunities, it offers us a chance to begin again, to bring a new attitude and outlook that will help us all to reach. Let us all work together to make this year the best one EVER! Have a happy start to this new year and make every day count.

St Julie Billiart our Patron Saint:

Julie Billiart was a woman who was completely immersed in the love of God. Julie has a special place in the life of the Catholic Church, not only as a saint but also as a visionary woman who responded to the needs of the suffering world around her.

Her life was a very common one, with perhaps more personal suffering than many would ever guess. She survived numerous hardships, including the loss of several siblings to illness.

She went to work at the age of 16 to help support her family, and at the age of 23 was paralysed by the trauma of nearly being shot in her father's store. She spent more than 20 years confined to her bed and unable to care for even her most basic needs.

Julie knew what it was like to live not only as an invalid but also as a refugee, to suffer religious persecution, to be shunned as an outcast, and to be the subject of mean-spirited rumours. In spite of her suffering, she clung to God and at the age of 53 she founded the Sisters of Notre Dame.

Julie reached out to the poor and forgotten; she brought comfort and hope to those around her; she brought faith to the seeking and the lost, and more than anything else, she was a witness to the deep loving goodness of God.

The impact that Julie had on the world continues to live on in the sisters who claim her heritage.

Prayer

Lord, we are thankful for all the experiences of the summer break; the joyful ones lifted our spirits and made us smile, the challenging ones have taught us how to be strong and persevere. We ask you to be with us all as we begin this new year in College, help us to make it a happy and successful one for ourselves and for others. Amen

Focus on one each day

Pray for:

- All those who are new to our community, that they will soon feel settled and happy here.
- A happy and successful start to this year for us all
- Comfort and consolation for those who have suffered loss or sadness
- Those who are unwell and unable to return to college at this time
- Friends who will soon start new schools, colleges or universities.

Prayer in action this week:

Be welcoming to all new members of our community

Show all that is good about our community through your actions this week and every week

Be humble, act for the right reasons, not to be rewarded.

Be positive and determined to be successful.

What are your favourite moments from your summer break? Take a minute to remember... maybe even share them with your Form...say thank you to God for all the happy times you experienced...

Lord God, thank you for all the happy moments you have given to each of us.
Be with us as we try to create many more happy moments throughout this year.
Amen

Today Lord, we begin a new day with you. Help us to learn and move forward with you,
remembering always to encourage others and never hold them back.
Thank you for the new opportunities that you send each of us this day.
Amen

Lord, we know you are always with us, standing by our side.
Be with us this year as we start afresh, learning from previous mistakes and trying hard to be more like the people you want us to be.
We ask this in your name,
Amen

Father, at the start of the new term we remember the love of our families and the companionship of friends. We are thankful for all that we have shared with them over the last few weeks and we rejoice in the new experiences you gave to us.
Help us to bring all we have learned back into College and to use these to show how we have grown and matured.
We ask this in your name,
Amen

What are your aims and ambitions for this year?

- Share these as a form – maybe even make a display of them for your Form Base.
- Remember to offer these to God in prayer, asking him to help you to achieve all that you would like to this year. You could write your own prayer for this or use one similar to this...

*Lord, there is so much I would like to achieve this year and I know that it won' t always be easy. Be with me as I work to make it all happen because I know that things are easier when I can call on you.
Thank you Lord. Amen*

Father, we ask you to bless us as we take a new step in our lives today.
Keep in us a sense of wonder at the marvels of life.
Help us to be keen to explore the world of knowledge.
Lead us to make good use of our talents and work well with others.
Bless us that we may grow strong in your love, and in concern for the good of all people.
May we learn from each other and grow in friendship with Jesus your Son and our Brother.
Amen