

A Prayer at the Start of the 2020 School Year

Loving God,
your gentle hand guides us from one season to the next,
and blesses each of our new beginnings with promise and hope.

This September, our hearts are burdened with worry and uncertainty, as we look to educate our children in the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic. As we open our classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, and schoolyards with the greatest of care, we beg your loving protection. Give us wisdom, patience, and strength. Guide the decision-making of administrators and principals, so that our children and young people, our teachers and families, can resume the all-important project of learning with hearts that are free and unafraid.

Whether our children study at school, or from home, or a combination of both, take each one by the hand and shepherd them through the months ahead. Keep them healthy and safe, O Lord, and restore to them the *joy* of learning. Bless our dedicated teachers, parents, and staff with untroubled hearts, and an unshakable trust that you stand beside them as they go about their mission.

As always, give our little ones strength to handle any challenges or disappointments they may have to face. Help them to be patient with themselves when studying is hard. And at year's end, let them look back with pride, and a sure sense of their own special gifts.

We entrust ourselves and those we love to you, O Lord! Remove the shadows that have darkened our path these many months, making us fearful of stepping into a future that only you can know. As we teach our children and teens as best we can, teach *us* how to trust one another, to care for one another, and to put our lives in your strong and gentle hands.

You are the Master Teacher, Lord Jesus. Guide us, young and old,
into a future brimming with wisdom, health, and lasting peace.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Rev. Brian J. Ingram
September, 2020