Year of Grace Assembly – June 2012

***Music – Amazing Grace***

**WELCOME/INTRO**

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Leader: The Catholic Bishops of Australia have invited the whole Church on a spiritual journey known as the Year of Grace. It began at Pentecost, May 27, and continues until Pentecost next year. This Year of Grace is an invitation to start afresh with Christ. Most deeply, we desire for the light of Christ to burn more brightly in the heart of each Australian.

**OPENING PRAYER**

Student: Oh God, You bless us all with your grace and love. Pour out the gifts of the Holy Spirit across the face of the earth and, fill our hearts with the light of Christ. Help us to understand and embrace Your gift of grace in our lives. Amen

**READING - John 1:14-18**

Reader: A reading from the Gospel according to John

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, “This is the one I spoke about when I said, ‘He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’”) Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

**REFLECTION**

Student: What is grace? We’ll look at three different images which help to understand God’s grace in our lives.

Student: Grace is like an unexpected gift! Sometimes we take for granted things like water, food and family. But these are blessings from God. God loves us so much that He blesses us freely!  ***(Person hands a gift to another person)***

Student: Grace is like someone who lifts your burdens. Sometimes we get weighed down by worries, busyness and sadness. If we let Him, God can help us out during these tough times. ***(Person is walking with a load, then another person carries it for them)***

Student: Grace is like water that washes away sin and brings new life. Sometimes we make mistakes and do bad things. But God reminds us that we can always turn back and say sorry. And when we do, He forgives us and gives us the strength that we need to start afresh. ***(Person uses jug and pours ‘water’ over other persons hands)***

**PRAYERS of THE FAITHFUL**

Leader: All grace flows from God. Let us now turn to God with our needs and the needs of the world, confident that our prayers will be answered.

Student: We pray that in all we do we may start afresh with Christ, contemplating the face of Jesus.

Lord, hear us.

Student: We pray for our nation that all Australians may become more deeply aware of the grace of God in their lives.

Lord, hear us.

Student: We pray for a recommitment to prayer, that we may be of one mind and heart in

Jesus Christ.

Lord, hear us.

Student: We pray for the ability to feel sorry for the areas in which we have failed, seeking healing and renewal through the grace of Christ’s forgiveness.

Lord, hear us.

***Multimedia (optional – if time permits) – Year of Grace Promo video***

**CLOSING PRAYER**

Student: Gracious God,

You have blessed this ancient land with many gifts, especially its people.

We thank you for the Year of Grace, a time to start afresh from Christ.

You invite us to contemplate the face of Jesus your Son, that we may experience a new wave of grace, and that the light of Christ may burn more brightly in our lives.

Attune our hearts and minds to the presence of your Holy Spirit, that our Church may be transformed, our relationships be healed,

and our nation grow in compassion and justice.

With the intercession of St Mary MacKillop,

who showed us new ways of living the Gospel,

we make our prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen.