

**CORNELIA'S BIRTHDAY: 15 JANUARY**  
**CANDLE PRAYER**

***Material for Junior Schools***

*We suggest that you adapt whatever you normally do to mark a birthday of one of the children, so that they understand that this is about a special birthday.*

*If you wish, you could add this reading and prayer, or something like it:*

This candle has been given to us by the Holy Child sisters to mark 200 years since Cornelia was born. We ask God to bless us in this school as we light it, today, and to bless us whenever we use it in the year ahead. We pray too for all the schools in Africa, America and Europe which exist because of Cornelia.

Let us pray  
God of love, we know you are always with us,  
Whether it is light or dark.

***Light the candle***

In the light of this candle  
May we experience your light,  
In our hearts and in our lives,  
A light that shines in darkness,  
A light the darkness can never put out.  
May the living flame of your love  
Be kindled within us  
And always burn brightly. Amen.

***Material for Senior Schools***

*We hope you may be able to mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cornelia's birth with a special assembly or some other special event. You could obviously use some of the material about Cornelia's life that you have received. You might wish to show the Cornelian dvd. In addition, we offer some prayers and readings that might be relevant to the two themes, Birthdays and Candle. Even if you do not use the*



## Birthdays

I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.  
(John 10:10)

You are precious in my eyes... and honoured, and I love you.  
(Isaiah 43:4)

Be yourself but make that self what Our Lord wants it to be.  
(Cornelia Connelly)

On his death bed Rabbi Zuscha was asked what he thought life beyond the grave would be like. The old man thought for a long time: then he replied, 'I don't really know. But one thing I do know: when I get there I am not going to be asked, "Why weren't you Moses?" or "Why weren't you David?" I am going to be asked, "Why weren't you Zuscha?"'

There is an old Christian tradition that God sends each person into this world with a special message to deliver, with a special song to sing for others, with a special act of love to bestow. No one else can speak my message, or sing my song, or offer my act of love. These are entrusted only to me. (John Powell)

Accustom yourself to the wonderful thought that God loves you with a tenderness, a generosity, and an intimacy which surpasses all your dreams. Give yourself up with joy to a loving confidence in God and have courage to believe firmly that God's action towards you is a masterpiece of partiality and love... Rejoice that you are what you are; for our Lord loves you very dearly. He loves the whole of you, just as you are.  
(Abbé de Tourville)



Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.

Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.

It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves,

'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?'

Actually, who are you not to be?

You are a child of God.

Your playing small does not serve this world.

There's nothing enlightened about shrinking  
so that people won't feel insecure around you.

We are all meant to shine as children do...

And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously  
give other people permission to do the same.

(Source unknown, though sometimes attributed to Nelson  
Mandela)

## Candle

And God said, 'Let there be light...' (Genesis 1:3)

The Lord is my light and salvation,  
Whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life,  
Of whom shall I be afraid? (Psalm 27:1)

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. (Isaiah  
9:1)

Arise, shine out, for your light has come. (Isaiah 60:1)

Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world.' (John 8:12)

Jesus said, 'You are the light of the world.' (Matthew 5:14)

Though we may have only a tiny spark or a smouldering wick within  
us, our  
task is to fan it into flame. (Elizabeth  
O'Connor)

A candle is a protest at midnight.  
It is a non-conformist.  
It says to the darkness,  
'I beg to differ.' (Indian proverb)



Let us pray for light...  
where the dark is doubly dark;  
where wrong dresses up as right  
and even saints are unsure what to believe;  
where life has gone into a tunnel  
and all that we know are confusing noises  
and stumbling blocks in the blackness;  
where faith, hope and love are in ashes,  
needing an angel to blow on them.  
God of hope,  
fill us with the light of our love,  
and grant us joy and peace in believing,  
that we may abound in hope  
in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen      (Iona Community)

May the Spirit of Jesus be born in us  
and be cradled in our hearts.  
May its presence drive away  
the darkness of fear and anxiety.  
May it bring us light –  
the light of laughter and generosity  
and kindness and joy.  
May it enlighten our imaginations.  
May it heal us and others.  
May it grow in us into wisdom and love. Amen

### Monologue for a Candle

I know it's a ridiculous way to live;  
there you are, turning into fire,  
nothing to keep for yourself,  
nothing to say for yourself.  
They blow out the flame,  
and you stand there, cooling, colourless,  
a remnant safe for a while.  
They light you again, and you go up in smoke,  
unable to see into your own flame,  
or out of it.  
Would it have been better to be something else,  
more solid, or more fluid,  
so that you knew what you were,  
or at least where you were –  
with something else for candle to see by?  
Perhaps:



