

**New Student Orientation, Fall 2005**  
**Opening Dinner**  
**Baseball Field**

**Prayer: D'Esta Love, University Chaplain**

Gracious God, loving Father, Creator and Sustainer of all life, we thank you for the gifts of family, of friendships, of new beginnings, and of significant and memorable times in our lives. We thank you for the gift of this evening and for the significant moment that it marks in the life of this university and in the lives of these families that have assembled here. This is indeed a special time in the life of our university as we welcome new students to our campus and into our community – yea, into our lives and we are grateful that they have arrived safely. For the families represented here it is a time of fulfillment and promise and love and devotion. It is particularly a significant time – and we pray – a memorable time for the students who stand at the door, anticipating the days and months that lie ahead with great hope and expectation. Bless this time and touch it with your grace.

To that end, O Lord, we ask a blessing on this evening and this week. We receive and welcome these students as sacred trust and we embrace the hopes and dreams of their families. We invite your presence with us in the events of this week. Bless the friendships that are begun, the decisions that are made, the conversations that take place, and may each day be joyous as students, parents, administration, faculty, and staff and connect in helpful and meaningful ways.

We also acknowledge the gift of this meal, O Lord. We receive it with gratitude as a gift from your hand and may our lives of service to others express our thankfulness for all we receive from your bounteous care.

In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen