

GrACE Newsletter

February 2024

Message from GrACE's Executive Director: Courage to Lead and Unity of Purpose

Dear GrACE Apostles,

Whether we are Trustees; Educators; Parents; Students; members of the Clergy or Parishioners, we are all called, as Catholics, to come together in a spirit of unity and shared purpose, acknowledging the importance of Catholic education and the impact of Catholic Schools in the lives of Students and wider society.



We all have a role to play and a contribution to make rooted in our Catholic beliefs and safe and secure in God's love and the Catholic Faith.

Every effort counts in supporting and promoting our Catholic education system and Schools, not just as places of learning, but also places where our young people can grow in their faith and understanding of Catholic values.

As Catholics, we are invited to ensure that our faith-based education aligns with the values of the Catholic Church even in face of society's challenges and changes.

We are not alone in our journey to press forward in our Catholic values and beliefs since we have our Catholic faith; confidence and the backing of God Himself.

Our hope and reassurance comes from the enduring strength that our faith provides in the face of life's challenges and from God Himself who provides us all with inner strength to persevere in His love.

As Catholics, we summon our courage, as a community of faithful, assured that God is with us wherever we go.



We have a collective responsibility as Catholics to unite in a spirit of shared purpose to uphold Catholic values in the face of societal change.

Each and every one of us counts in supporting and promoting Catholic education.

Catholic Schools are not just places of learning but environments but also where young people can best grow in their faith and understanding of Catholic values.

Aligning faith-based education with the values of the Catholic Church, even amidst challenge and change, resonates with the idea of unwavering commitment to our Catholic faith.

The reassurance that comes from our faith; confidence and the backing of God Himself provides a strong foundation for our journey together.

As Catholics we summon our courage, as a community of faithful, assured that God is with us wherever we go.

We are not alone in our journey, we have our Catholic faith and God's reassurance, as our Father and our spiritual source of support.





'For from the immense and unshakable tranquility of the celestial realms, the Son of God has deigned to enter our tumultuous and fragile world, not so much to repair *it*, but to redeem!'



Father Martin Hansen, a priest from Philadelphia writing under a pseudonym

I am indebted to God's grace and loving providence which finds special expression in your loyalty and commitment.

Blessings and much love
'Jesus I Trust in Thee!'

Kate

Executive Director, GrACE
gracedirector7@gmail.com



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The Catholic Crisis and How To Respond | Ep. 90



GRATEFUL ADVOCATES for CATHOLIC EDUCATION: inspire; invigorate; embolden

It could be Catholic education that His Grace is talking about! in 'Stand Up And Defend'!

We all have a part to play in building up Catholic education.

Catholic education performs a great service to the Body of Christ and all society.

Let's stand up and defend the gift of Catholic education.

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2024



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Celebrate; Showcase and Highlight the faith of your Schools: St. Gabriel the Archangel School in Chestermere, Alberta

Champion your Schools and secure your School District slot in the Monthly GrACE Newsletter

Special Thanks to **Scott Morrision, CCSSA**; to **GrACE's Local CTR Committee** for insight and support and to **GrACE's Caij Meloche** for making this schedule happen!

Creating opportunities to reach more people

GrACE recognizes the need to create additional opportunities in an effort to reach more people while also addressing present challenges to Catholic education on a larger scale.

Advocacy and Outreach: Building Unity 2.0

GrACE Dialogue and Storytelling: Leaving a legacy to the future

GrACE Dialogue and Storytelling: Leaving a Legacy to the future!

It's good to talk!

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How can we - as more than 1 million Catholics - throughout Alberta; NWT and the Yukon - exercise our Rights and express ourselves, especially on issues of disagreement?

Let's Celebrate Catholic Schools and Education!

Publicly funded Catholic Education in Alberta is a unique and cherished historical gift for which we are all grateful. It is an invaluable offering to both the Catholic Community and wider society, carrying growing responsibility in an increasingly secular world.

SAVE THE DATE: GrACE Summit 2024

GrACE is excited to announce that ECSD will host **GrACE's 2024 Summit on Catholic Education Day, May 10, 2024** at [Corpus Christi Parish Hall - 2707 34 St NW, Edmonton, AB T6T](#). Further details to follow in the coming months.

Stay Connected

Follow; repost; share; support and cheer for publicly funded Catholic education throughout Alberta and beyond.

Never Miss Out!

Do you know someone who is not receiving news from GrACE? Invite them to subscribe to GrACE's Monthly Newsletter and more: It's free and easy, just hit the Subscribe Link at the end of this Newsletter

Submit your event to feature in GrACE's Monthly Newsletter

Submit your event to gracedirector7@gmail.com and please include an image for promoting your event by 10th of each month

Let's celebrate Catholic Schools and Education!

Publicly funded Catholic Education throughout Alberta and beyond is a unique and cherished historical gift for which we are all grateful. It is an invaluable offering to both the Catholic Community and wider society, carrying growing responsibility in an increasingly secular world.

There are so many positive stories about Catholic Schools and education

GrACE's Newsletter seeks to build a provincial Catholic community by celebrating Catholic education throughout Alberta and beyond

Catholic education refers to educational institutions and programmes run by the Catholic faith which includes Schools; Colleges and Universities and all of whom are known for their commitment to delivering academic excellence while emphasizing the values and teachings of the Catholic Church.

- How else might we explore opportunities to cooperate with other organizations, religious institutions, and educational institutions that share the mission and values of Catholic education?
 - What can we do to work even more closely others to include local Parishes, religious organizations, and other faith-based communities to garner support and promote Catholic education?
-

Showcase and Highlight the faith of your Schools

As a GrACE Advocate and Leader in our Catholic education system, ensure that you are celebrating, showcasing and highlighting the faith of your Schools.

Staff and Students at St. Benedict School in Leduc celebrate Shrove Tuesday

Staff and students in Leduc at St. Benedict school gathered as a community to celebrate Shrove Tuesday.

A big thank you to the Knights of Columbus from the local Parish for volunteering their time and donating the pancakes to our school community.

Over 1000 pancakes were made!

Our grade 6 liturgical teams volunteered their time to serve our school community, set up and cut the pancakes for our younger students!

Kindergarten Teacher and REC coordinator, Rebecca Boorse says that 'we are looking forward to fasting, and preparing our hearts for LENT, and our LENTEN service project'!



St. Gabriel the Archangel (SGA) School in Chestermere, Alberta

LINKages

Cori Brandt, school counsellor at SGA, started the LINKages club. Cori brings a group of students once a week to a seniors home to volunteer with residents.

Cori spoke about the program with GrACE:

'As a Catholic School Counsellor I found that encouraging students to partake in a community network helped to foster a faithful rendering of our Catholic values and virtues, to love one another as God loves us. That students have the opportunity of an intergenerational program such as LINKages, now a school club, is salient for well-being across the lifespan!



Students learn to protect those who are vulnerable, to share their gifts and talents, to uplift the lives of others and to promote ontogeny within themselves. Their efforts develop into a love of work, which in turn protects, cherishes, and esteems human dignity. Such an accord “determines the order” (1) of our Catholic school institution in society.

The seniors themselves by way of storytelling and expectation of a commitment to a reciprocal relationship between senior and students teach respect for others and awareness of self as a servant of God'.

Depicted in the photo above is SGA student Balen and senior Hartley.

Balen and Hartley developed a bond over public service through the army; Hartley's stories of being a paratrooper protecting human life in the Korean war contributed to Balen's sense of responsibility in his role as 2nd in command of a cadet troop and helps him to focus on his education to be able to pursue a career in the RMC. Sharing one's strengths lessens stress and creates inner peace by giving to others!

Linkages Society Alberta, with many dedicated members, serve as an integral part of youth mentorship in Alberta, and will continue to live on in spirit through the commitment of enthusiastic youth at St. Gabriel the Archangel School with Calgary Catholic School District.

1(2024, Retrieved from: <https://catholicconscience.org/principles-values-virtues-of-catholic-social-thought/>).



A first hand account of being a Catholic on and off the court by Caij Meloche

With Catholic education, comes Catholic morals and traditions into every aspect of a Student's life.

When students play for a Calgary Catholic School District sports team they sign off on a code of conduct that states that players will conduct themselves with honour and dignity, on the court, off the court, in school and online.

The players vow to work for the good of the team and honestly and wholeheartedly applaud the efforts of their teammates and their opponents.

The focus of the code of conduct is to show our Catholic values through respecting the dignity and worth of the individual in sport.

Players have the opportunity to live their faith in a variety of ways on and off the court including through prayer, service to others, working together and communicating with kindness.

God presents opportunities for His children to learn and grow together in their faith in a variety of ways.

Sport allows students to have experience communicating on and off the court with other athletes. Our media in our society gives an image of sportsmanship that does not always align with our Catholic values.

When a student plays in Calgary Catholic they are given the chance to learn how to win with humility, lose with grace and grow together.

There are more lessons in losses than wins.

During a Junior High girls basketball game this season I was able to see God working through sport first hand.

Our girls were playing a team that had plenty of potential but unfortunately were falling short.

There was an opponent that was frustrated by the results of the quarter and was starting to use profanity to express these feelings.

Being apart of a Catholic school system, the players came to the coach to express their concerns.

This gave a wonderful opportunity to have a coaches meeting where we politely discussed the use of profanity, giving that player a learning opportunity for emotional regulation and how our words can effect others.

The opponent coaches found out that their player did not realize that using that language was not allowed during the game.

In the media that our students are exposed to they are seeing athletes taunting, harassing and using profanity during sport.

Not only had this player heard those words used in medias depiction of sport but they also thought that when they are upset it is okay to express those feelings through these words.

Being able to work together to ensure a safe space for our athletes to play is a gift that Catholic educators are given.



Volley for a Cure by Trina Smith SGA's Diverse Learning CT & Coach

Volley for a Cure was started in 2014 and has been gaining momentum ever since.

The goal was to start a volleyball tournament that runs every year to raise money for Women's Health, specifically Breast Cancer, thus the name 'Volley For a Cure'.

The fun tournament runs on a Friday, usually after Volleyball season has ended, and is open to all students in grades 7 to 12.

This year we had an all time high of 18 student teams and 2 teacher teams competing for the coveted cup.

All teams are encouraged to create and wear their best pink outfits as there is a spirit award to a junior high team and high school team.

This year we raised \$350 for breast cancer.



SGA Cup: Chestermere Food Bank Initiative by Trina Smith

The SGA Cup was founded in 2011 by an SGA Teacher and her group of leadership students.

It was conceived as a day to play ball hockey and have some fun competition within the School.

The entrance requirement is to build a team, get a fun uniform ready, and to bring an item for the Chestermere Food Bank.

The tournament has had a halt since Covid, but plans are in the making to resurrect it for a Friday in May 2024.

This has been a well-received event with many participants eager to raise our homemade SGA Stanley Cup. In recent years, we have renamed it the Markus Lavallee in honor of one of our very special SGA students who sadly passed away.

We look forward to another day of fellowship and fun competition with the goal of collecting food for the food bank with the inclusion of anyone in grade 7-12 who is interested in participating.



3 on 3 Pajda Basketball Tournament by Athletic Director Darrell van Paridon

The 3 on 3 Pajda Play-in Basketball tournament celebrates Alex Pajda's ability to bring people together.

Alex was a student at SGA who made friends easily and was known for building community among his peers.

This 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament was developed to honour Alex and celebrate community built at the school through sport.

Students sign up as pairs, and the 3 sets of pairs are put together to make a team of 6. The focus is to get to know people you otherwise wouldn't necessarily interact with, under the pretense that at least they had a love of basketball in common.

The gift of publicly funded Catholic education

The gift of Catholic education is a reminder to all Catholics of the enduring strength that our Faith provides us in an ever- changing cultural landscape.

Making A Difference

Providing exceptional educational opportunities that integrate faith; academic excellence and service to the community, you, as Teachers, create an enriching transformative experience for Students within the Catholic Education System.

Dedicated to nurturing the spiritual; intellectual and social growth of all Students in Catholic Schools contributes to the continued growth and success of Catholic education, preparing students to become compassionate and capable individuals who positively impact society.

Benefits To Wider Society

In response to questions raised by a number of you about how we might collate and profile the so many positive stories about Catholic Schools and education throughout Alberta and beyond, I share the following blueprint to both save time in your busy schedules and allow for a constant celebration of the wonderful accomplishments and values of Catholic Schools and education.

Unifying the Catholic Community

Unifying the Catholic community and advocating for the future of Catholic education requires a concerted effort, but with a collective and passionate approach, it is possible to protect and advance the mission of Catholic Schools throughout Alberta and beyond.

The gift of Catholic education

- What's your story?
- Why do you support Catholic education?
- What good news story can you share?

Champion your School and secure your slot in the Monthly GrACE Newsletter



GrACE's Monthly Spotlight - 26 Districts share their Virtues!

Every School District has an opportunity to highlight their School successes in GrACE's Monthly Newsletter.

In response to a number of requests for GrACE to assist the current process for monthly submissions, as well as, to provide equal opportunities for all, GrACE has developed a standard template to showcase each School District with an invitation for - ideally - 2 to 3 School stories per School District in any given month.

Please find here a draft blueprint accommodating 3 images and a text box to adapt to any School story in the School District profiled in any given month.

Please scan the QR code in the attached poster or use the following link to access the google drive folder to submit your profile.

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1q2n9ibi4F4i7tRR_8_unoahgWUosoXj6

Please also consider contributing 6 social media posts so that we can all utilize social media and online platforms to reach a wider audience.

GrACE's Proposed Monthly Schedule

Additionally, please find here GrACE's proposed monthly schedule (and also attached here in poster form) for District submissions as promised.

- **February - Calgary Catholic School District**
- **March - St. Thomas Aquinas RCSSD, Medicine Hat CSSD**
- **April - Red Deer CSSD, Grande Prairie RCSSD**
- **May - Edmonton CSSD, St. Paul SD, Conseil Scolaire FrancoSud**
- **June - Evergreen CSSD, Holy Family CSSD**
- **September - St. Paul SD, Lakeland CSSD, Living Waters CSSD**
- **October - Holy Spirit RCSSD, Yukon Catholic Schools**
- **November - FrancoSud, East Central Alberta CSSD**
- **December - Christ the Redeemer CSSD, Fort McMurray RCSSD**
- **January - Conseil Scolaire du Nord-Ouest, Evergreen CSSD, Greater St. Albert RCSSD**
- **February - Lloydminster RCSSD, Elk Island CSSD, Yellowknife Catholic Schools**

Please note that these suggestions are offered simply to save time and effort with feedback most welcome in these early stages of completion.

Special Thanks to **Scott Morrision, CCSSA**; to **GrACE's Local CTR Committee** for insight and support and to **GrACE's Caij Meloche** for making it happen!



EVERY SCHOOL BOARD AFFILIATED WITH GRACE WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO HIGHLIGHT THE CHRIST-FOCUSED INITIATIVES THEY ARE DOING WITHIN OUR NEWSLETTER. WE ASK THAT YOU SEND AT LEAST 3 PHOTOS WITH TEXT TO OUR GOOGLE DRIVE FOLDER. SCAN THE QR CODE IN THIS POSTER OR USE THIS LINK TO ACCESS THE GOOGLE DRIVE FOLDER TO SUBMIT.

FEBRUARY
Calgary CSSD

MARCH

St. Thomas Aquinas RCSSD,
Medicine Hat CSSD

APRIL

Red Deer CSSD,
Grande Prairie RCSSD

MAY

Edmonton CSSD,
St. Paul SD,
Conseil Scolaire FrancoSud

JUNE

Evergreen CSSD,
Holy Family CSSD

SEPTEMBER

St. Paul SD,
Lakeland CSSD,
Living Waters CSSD

OCTOBER

Holy Spirit RCSSD,
Yukon Catholic Schools

DECEMBER

Christ the Redeemer CSSD,
Fort McMurray RCSSD

NOVEMBER

FrancoSud,
East Central Alberta CSSD

JANUARY

Conseil Scolaire du Nord-Ouest,
Evergreen CSSD,
Greater St. Albert RCSSD

FEBRUARY

Lloydminster RCSSD,
Elk Island CSSD,
Yellowknife Catholic Schools



Creating opportunities to reach more people

Creating opportunities to reach more people while addressing challenges to Catholic education

GrACE recognizes the need to create additional opportunities in an effort to reach more people while also addressing present challenges to Catholic education on a larger scale.

Strategically expanding current GrACE initiatives also provides further resources and guidance in support of not only individual Student success but also the broader success of Catholic education throughout Alberta and beyond.

Advocacy Leadership and Outreach: Building Unity: GrACE 2.0

GrACE's Communication; Advocacy and Outreach activities

There are many levels and dimensions to communication and advocacy.

In addition to the new face of GrACE's Monthly Newsletter to include interactive links to templates and blueprints for Schools and Parishes to respond and upload information, GrACE envisages a new Dialogue and Storytelling project as an outreach tool for unite the Catholic Education Movement, as well as, leaving a legacy to the future.

Our initial focus in this early stage is to collect experiences from Catholics throughout Alberta and beyond.

The activities include Trustees; Superintendents; Catholic educators and Clergy, but especially Parents; Parishioners; Stakeholders and Catholic influencers regardless of their perspectives in an effort to amplify the voices of the Catholic Education Family.

GrACE Dialogue and Storytelling: Leaving a legacy to the future!

Storytelling and dialogue is a powerful medium that is present in many different societies and cultures.

In Ireland, in particular, it has a long pedigree and is seen in many forms, including both oral and written.

Storytelling is important both for the storyteller and for the listener reader. It gives the storyteller a sense of being heard, that their story has value, while it informs the listener reader.

Dialogue is part of the way that the Irish recorded and remembered its past and alongside storytelling has been increasingly recognized as an integral part of the research material for historians.

Both storytelling and dialogue are positive forces for reconciliation, helping in the healing and peace-building processes with positive benefits for wider society.

Your Stories Matter: It's Good to Talk!

Your stories matter to help ensure Catholic education throughout Alberta and beyond not only survives but thrives!

While GrACE's initially focuses on the Catholic community throughout Alberta and beyond, from this early stage, there are also efforts to collect 'the Catholic education experience' from people from other faiths and communities.

Afterall, in 2022, we noted an increase of 11.3% of non-Catholics choosing to send their Children to Alberta's Catholic Schools.

With the passage of time, there will be no doubt more opportunities for GrACE to work in partnership with Others.

In the meantime, GrACE has designed a model for gathering interviews to include creating spaces for discussions and conversations about our shared history and, perhaps more importantly, our future to inspire discussion with a view to shaping a more shared future for Canadian Catholics than presently exists.

The depth and richness that Catholic education provides



LeeAnn Gervais chats with Caij to articulate the unique blessing that is Catholic education

LeeAnn Gervais is a Metis Catholic educator who feels passionate about anti-polarization.

She has a world view that is built on a foundation of harmony.

During an interview I had with LeeAnn, she spoke about the unity, she lives and has grown up in, within her French, Metis, Catholic culture.

LeeAnn's father is Metis, and her mother is French.

This allowed for the French culture to be explored within both sides of her family lines. Her Metis heritage is made up of Cree and French customs and language that have all been woven together in her Catholic upbringing.

'My French and Metis culture naturally weaved in and out together as they have a shared culture.'

LeeAnn shared with me that she has Scottish Metis within her lineage as well but she is primarily French Metis and that is a prominent part of her identify.

LeeAnn does not divide her Catholic faith with her Indigenous spirituality.



She spoke about how she does not see herself as divided within her culture and faith because the parallels between her indigenous ways of knowing and deep Catholic faith complement and cross over so perfectly.

Braiding together her Catholic and Indigenous culture is a way of life for LeeAnn.

The French immersion community that she was raised in was rich with Metis, French and First Nations culture.

She attended Mass regularly and went on pilgrimages to the historic Metis community of St. Laurent shrine. Connecting to the land is in her blood. She grew up fishing, camping, berry picking, gardening, swimming, and hiking.



LeeAnn said 'It is an honour to pass my culture down to my three beautiful child and share it with my husband;

Traditionally LeeAnn's family is from Red River, Batoche and Northern Saskatchewan. LeeAnn was born in Prince Albert Saskatchewan living there until she was 12.

She later moved to Saskatoon where she finished High School and went to university.

During university LeeAnn attended St. Thomas More College and Gabriel Dumont College where she studied World Religions, French and Metis Education.

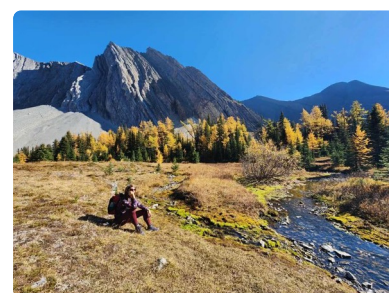
'I was immersed in Metis and Cree culture, learnt the history of my people and the First Nations people of Treaty 6 in Saskatchewan.

I had faith formation and personal relationships with my professors.

My experience was rich and well-rounded. 'LeeAnn learned how to teach using Indigenous and Western pedagogy.

'I was taught to honour my ancestors. I was taught to learn from their strength and resiliency, to not take for granted the freedom that they fought for in the battles of Batoche and Frog Lake, to be proud of who I am and to tell the truth about Canadian History.'

During our interview it was lovely to see LeeAnn light up when she went to her bookshelf to show me that her ancestor Joseph Ouellette was referred to in the book *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada Metis* in the Battle of Batoche section. Her roots run deep in Saskatchewan history.



LeeAnn spoke in-depth about how the Catholic Social Teachings and the lessons from her elders beautifully aligned and complement each other.

'I honour and follow the teaching of reciprocity. It's in my blood memory. I learned through watching and listening to my elders, through connection to the land and to one another'.

LeeAnn warmed my heart when she shared about balance and honouring the dignity of the human person.

'Through honoring and respecting the life cycle, that through birth, to death all stages of life, depend on one another.

If we don't honour each stage of life, then we, as a society, will become unbalanced. It is equally important to give as it is to receive.

Above all honouring the dignity of the human person, through every life cycle, conception to death. That belief has shaped me to respect all life and to practice agape love to the best of my ability."

LeeAnn has not only worked in various sectors of Catholic education but also grew up from kindergarten to grade 12 in Catholic schools.

She spoke about the importance of parent, student, and parish collaboration within the Catholic school system.

LeeAnn fondly shared about her career journey where she was an Education Assistant, Teacher, Addictions Counsellor, Grad Coach, Family Support Worker and Indigenous Consultant.

LeeAnn has many years of experience within Catholic education through working for the Saskatoon, Edmonton, and Calgary Catholic School Boards.

She is currently working as the Indigenous Relations and Initiatives Specialist at St. Mary's University in Calgary. LeeAnn would like to continue to do God's work by taking her many years of experience helping others through a Catholic Indigenous lens and provide a safe place for others to heal.

'My passion lies in walking alongside others, supporting them in their life journey. Guiding people in their relationship with God, connecting to land while healing the mind and body. My dream is to have a retreat center, where people can heal in mind, body, and spirit'.



Where Are They Now? Become a GrACE Influencer!

Inspire with your Family Stories!

- As a Parishioner; a Parent or Grandparent, let us all know where the Catholic Students in your Family are now!
- Let's also express our gratitude to Parishioners; Parents and Grandparents for their invaluable support, essential to the success of Catholic education
- Personal narratives are powerful tools to demonstrate the real-world impact of Catholic Education
- Highlight stories of individuals whose lives have been positively transformed through the Catholic education system
- Join with GrACE and bring the message of Catholic education throughout Alberta and beyond

Invitation to Parents and Parishioners to get further involved

GrACE call to action and invitation to Parents and Parishioners to spread the word



- Appeal to our shared values and beliefs and explain how supporting Catholic Education aligns with the principles of our Catholic faith, knowledge, and social responsibility
- Encourage Students in your Families to share their testimonials
- Hearten the wider Catholic Community to share their experiences and reasons for supporting Catholic education

GrACE Where Are They Now?

GRACE WOULD LIKE TO SEE HOW CATHOLIC EDUCATION HAS SHAPED YOUR LIFE!

THE "WHERE ARE THEY NOW" SERIES ALLOWS OUR AUDIENCE TO SHARE WITH US PEOPLE WHO HAVE GROWN UP IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION. WE WANT TO KNOW WHERE THESE CATHOLIC EDUCATED PEOPLE ENDED UP. HOW HAS YOUR FAITH SHAPED YOUR LIFE?

IF YOU, OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW WENT TO CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND ARE NOW DOING GOD'S WORK. PLEASE SHARE WITH GRACE.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO SHARE

- **AT LEAST ONE IMAGE**
- **TWO PARAGRAPHS**

Sweet Heart of Mary, pray for our Catholic education cause

Let us pray the Rosary, alongside the following Unity prayer for harmony and unity in our work together to advance Catholic education throughout Alberta and beyond:

My adorable Jesus, May our feet journey together. May our hands gather in unity. May our hearts beat in unison. May our souls be in harmony. May our thoughts be as one. May our ears listen to the silence together. May our glances profoundly penetrate each other. May our lips pray together to gain mercy from the Eternal Father.



The Gift of public funded Catholic Education

I love the Catholic Church!



I believe in One Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church!

In unity with the Bishops of Alberta, Trustees, Superintendents, Educators, Clergy, Parents, Parishioners, Stakeholders and Catholic Influencers, Catholic education integrates faith and academic development, encouraging Students to reach their full potential as individuals created in the image of God.

Thanks to public funding of Catholic schools throughout Alberta and beyond more than 183,500 Students at more than 450 Catholic Schools from diverse backgrounds in 19 Catholic School Districts and 4 Francophone Boards receive an excellent education in a supportive environment.

Our Catholic Faith is at the centre of all our efforts, fostering an environment that nurtures both academic excellence; spiritual growth and a sense of collective responsibility in upholding the mission and values of Catholic education in our shared society.

The importance of Catholic Education

- Providing free access to Catholic Education removes barriers and makes learning accessible to individuals from diverse backgrounds and circumstance
 - Catholic education empowers Students not only academically but also spiritually and morally, equipping them to make positive contributions to society and live in accordance with their faith
 - Publicly funded Catholic Education makes a difference and benefits wider society
-



Established Catholic Schools Districts: The Facts

Catholics in Alberta have a constitutionally-recognized right to form Catholic school districts whose operations are 100% publicly-funded by taxes paid by Catholic ratepayers. This right is recognized in: Section 17 of the [1905 Alberta Act](#), Sections 41-45 of the [1901 NWT School Ordinance](#), and Section 93 of the [1867 Constitution Act](#).

The formation of Catholic school districts is a critical process for accessing our denominational minority right. Outside of formed Catholic districts, Catholics cannot vote in Catholic school trustee elections, nor can they run for the office of Catholic school trustee. Furthermore, access to Catholic education is rendered more difficult for those who reside outside of formed areas.

The administrative process that facilitates the formation of Catholic school districts is governed by Part 5, Division 2 of Alberta's [Education Act](#) ('Establishment and Disestablishment of Separate School Districts'), and the [Establishment of Separate School Districts Regulation](#). A detailed description of the current process can be found in [Establishing a Separate School District](#), an information package that was published in January 2021 by the Government of Alberta.

Separate Catholic Schools

The establishment of separate School District and the formation process is a necessary prerequisite to Canadian Catholics enjoying our Constitutional rights

Prior to his appointment to the Alberta Court of King's Bench, now-Justice Kevin Feehan published an article titled 'Catholic school 4x4s died in 1913, why do they remain an administrative requirement?'

While specifically addressing the geographic restrictions on formations – for example, . that districts be 4x4 square miles in area – Justice Feehan argues that Alberta must maintain the facilitative purpose of the formation process if it is to respect the intent of the constitution.

Further, that by imposing arbitrary geographic restrictions on Catholics trying to form new districts has an obstructive effect that is contrary to the nature of the minority right; the constitutional purpose of the formation process is to enable the establishment of separate school jurisdictions.

By contrast, Justice Feehan noted that public districts are not subject to these kinds of geographic restrictions and, additionally, that the Minister of Education holds considerable unilateral authority on the issue.

Therefore, while the government of Alberta is responsible for administering this process, there is the *potential* for this to be done in an unfair, counterproductive, and ultimately unconstitutional manner.

In Summary:-

- The right to Catholic education has strong legal protections with the right to Catholic education is enshrined in Canada's Constitution and foundational documents
- The Provincial Government has a clear mandate to provide for Catholic education
- The Provincial Government is responsible for facilitating the formation process
- The establishment of separate School District and the formation process is a necessary prerequisite to our enjoying our Constitutional rights

It is our responsibility to advocate and vote for our separate Catholic Schools

To ensure that this duty and obligation is both taken seriously and also properly fulfilled by our Government and Elected Officials, it is our responsibility to advocate for our Schools and vote for those who champion the Separate School District establishment process in their elected role with the assistance of current legislation; regulation and enforcement.

Courage to Lead: Building Unity

How can we - as more than 1 million Catholics - throughout Alberta; NWT and the Yukon - exercise our Rights and express ourselves, especially on issues of disagreement?

Affirming the values, principles and spiritual foundation that Catholic Schools are built upon to ensure continued success and impact, we all - those in our Church pews who have Children in our Catholic Schools but those who have Children who have graduated, in addition, to non-practicing Catholics; non-Catholics who send their Children to Catholic Schools and indeed any Others who wish – for whatever reason – that our Catholic Schools remain separate - express ourselves and be heard?

With rights come corresponding obligations and with this opportunity – and as Catholics – we are all called to ensure that our faith-based education aligns with the values and beliefs of the Catholic Church even in the face of our society’s challenges; changes and controversies.

Connect with GrACE Online

Follow GrACE on Facebook and Twitter. Post your pictures and tag us so we can share them and celebrate too.

Thank you for being a grateful advocate in support of Catholic education! @GrACE4cathed!



Facebook

www.facebook.com/GrACE4cathed



Instagram

[@grace4catholiceducation](https://www.instagram.com/grace4catholiceducation)



Twitter

[@GrACE4cathed](https://twitter.com/GrACE4cathed)

We ask you to help us celebrate Catholic education throughout Alberta and beyond

Assist GrACE-:

- Sign up for GrACE’s Monthly Newsletter
- Share GrACE’s Monthly Newsletter
- Celebrate Catholic Schools and education
- Provide information to share in GrACE’s Monthly Newsletter
- Tell your positive stories and benefits from your Catholic School and Education
- Subscribe to GrACE’s Facebook; Twitter and social media pages
- Enrol Parents to become more actively involved in GrACE
- Support local GrACE groups in your Parish
- Ensure the GrACE Database has your correct contact information
- Encourage a sense of collective responsibility in upholding the mission and values of Catholic education in our shared society
- Make a stand for Catholic Schools and Education in Alberta and beyond

- Assert your choice in favour of Catholic Schools and Education and its values
 - Champion the benefits of Catholic Schools and Education, alongside its broader implications for the spiritual, intellectual, and social development of individuals and society as a whole
 - Action a movement
 - Provide information to share in GrACE's Monthly Newsletter
 - Subscribe to GrACE's Facebook; Twitter and social media pages
 - Share your positive stories and benefits from your Catholic School and Education
 - Post your pictures and tag us so we can share them and celebrate too
-

Follow; repost; share; support and cheer for publicly funded Catholic education!

Read; listen; follow; repost; share; support and cheer for publicly funded Catholic education throughout Alberta and beyond!

SAVE THE DATE!

Change to date and venue for GrACE's 2024 Summit

GrACE Summit 2024: May 10, 2024 at Corpus Christi Parish Hall

GrACE Summit 2024

GrACE is excited to announce that ECSD will host GrACE's 2024 Summit on Catholic Education Day, **May 10, 2024** at [Corpus Christi Parish Hall - 2707 34 St NW, Edmonton, AB T6T](#).

The GrACE Family looks forward to a wonderful day of strengthening the Catholic education community; making new connections and sharing the gift of Catholic education. We aim to celebrate Catholic education's rich past while we set the stage for its future. We come together to collectively celebrate Catholic education and to ensure for future Families this choice.

We give thanks for Catholic education, which from the earliest days of Alberta, has been an integral part of the educational system and unite Parents, Parishioners, Educators and Others in the shared goal of preserving and enhancing Catholic education throughout Alberta and beyond.

Further details to follow in the coming months.

GrACE Says Thank You



Michelle Collette
Volunteer GrACE Treasurer



Jolyne deMarco
*Volunteer GrACE Instagram
Administrator*



Grant Gay
*Volunteer GrACE Facebook
Administrator*



Caij Meloche
Vounteer GrACE
Communications Officer

Further Opportunities to Volunteer

Student Volunteers are warmly invited to represent their School in GrACE's social media campaign; GrACE's new outreach and GrACE's database development.

All thoughts on how we can we better utilize technology platforms to ensure even more timely communication channels between and within the wider Catholic Education Family and beyond gratefully received.

Please email gracedirector7@gmail.com to express interest and suggestions.

Catholic Education Prayer of the Faithful for March 2024

For Catholic Education:-

- That our Catholic schools may make known God's plan for all creation, we pray to the Lord
 - That the leaders of our Catholic schools may be encouraged and comforted in the love of God, we pray to the Lord
 - That our Catholic schools may always receive their identity from the teachings of Christ Jesus, we pray to the Lord
 - That our Catholic schools may be a place of healing and safety in a hurting world, we pray to the Lord
-

Upfront with Archbishop Smith

Upfront with Archbishop Smith is a weekly podcast where we seek to bridge the gap between the hierarchy and the faithful by discussing the beauty, truth, and challenges of our Catholic faith.



Archbishop's Message for National Catholic Healthcare Week | 2024



National Catholic Health Care Week February 4-10, 2024

Recognizing the important work of Catholic health care organizations throughout Alberta and across Canada, we mark National Catholic Health Care Week.

Nationally, Catholic health care serves over five million Canadians each year and employs over 88,000 people. Our footprint is big. Our hearts are even bigger.

Join GrACE in celebrating Catholic Healthcare in Alberta

Introducing Catholic Works in Alberta: Catholic Healthcare: Covenant Health

Covenant Health is one of Canada's largest Catholic healthcare providers.

Founding Sisters provided the building blocks for Covenant Health's 150-year history of delivering quality, innovative Catholic health services to Albertans.

The mission of Covenant Health is to continue the healing ministry of Jesus by serving with compassion, upholding the sacredness of life in all stages and caring for the whole person—body, mind and soul.

As a Catholic organization, Covenant Health is committed to serving people of all faiths, cultures and circumstances according to values of compassion, respect, collaboration, social justice, integrity and stewardship.



Home

We provide quality health care for the whole person - body, mind and soul.

[🔗 covenanthealth.ca](https://covenanthealth.ca)



Throughout Alberta and beyond

Mother Mary Greene on Twitter: "Brrr... it's cold up in the Arctic! Mrs.Wik's students made an arctic scene and cute little penguins! Way to go ! 🐼 pic.twitter.com/Ko6VRDy9ZV / Twitter"

Brrr... it's cold up in the Arctic! Mrs.Wik's students made an arctic scene and cute little penguins!
Way to go ! 🐼 pic.twitter.com/Ko6VRDy9ZV

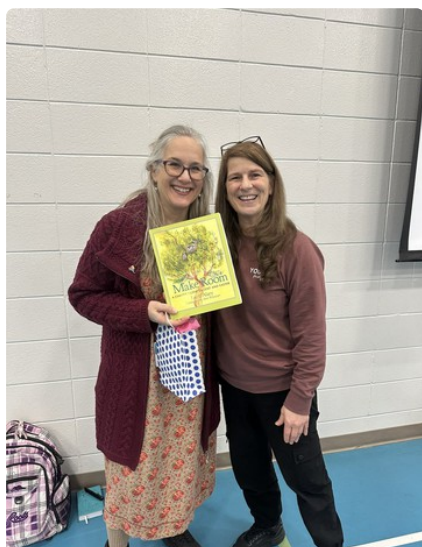
🔗 x.com



StMark_cssd on Twitter: "Thank you @CCSD_edu Religion consultant Ms. Lili for joining us and sharing such a beautiful Lenten story! We appreciate your guidance as we begin our Lenten journey. ❤️ pic.twitter.com/YW3oCxLARv / Twitter"

Thank you @CCSD_edu Religion consultant Ms. Lili for joining us and sharing such a beautiful Lenten story! We appreciate your guidance as we begin our Lenten journey. ❤️ pic.twitter.com/YW3oCxLARv

[x.com](#)



<https://x.com/HolySpiritRCSd/status/1750269744635117768?s=20>

<https://x.com/HolySpiritRCSD/status/1750269744635117768?s=20>

Holy Spirit Catholic School Division on Twitter: "If you have a moment today, take some time to check out this great story put together by @GlobalLeth's @JaclynKucey on the growth we're seeing in the Division at @HolySpiritRCSD ahead of our new student registration opening up!#IBelieveInCatholicEd #hs4 <https://t.co/SKCbGMarKW> / Twitter"

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x.com



February: Month of the Holy Family



February is the month dedicated to the Holy Family



Dear Sweet Jesus, Bless Our Families!

The family belongs to God's 'dream' and that of his Church, for the salvation of humanity' says Pope /Francis.

But the challenges are great and so young people need wise and sober guidance in order to be able to fulfill God's 'dream' in their lives.

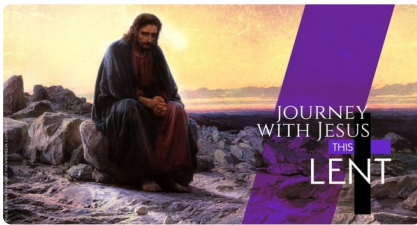
Liturgical Season of Lent

EWTN Vatican on Twitter: "♥📖 What is Lent?Lent is the liturgical season marked by the Church in preparation for Easter. It emphasizes the practice of prayer, almsgiving, and fasting, along with meditating on the Word of God, conversion, and reconciliation.Saint Leo the Great asserts that the... pic.twitter.com/BfrAAvVtRg / Twitter"

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pic.twitter.com/BfrAAvVtRg

🔗 twitter.com



The

What are you doing for Lent?

10 IDEAS FOR A MORE MEANINGFUL LENTEN SEASON

1. Give up sin Show your love for God by keeping His commandments. Turn away from sins.	2. Fast An empty stomach can lead to more attentive prayer. Give the money you saved on food to others in alms.	3. Pray Be in constant prayer. Pray for your family and friends, for those who suffer, and for the Church and the world.	4. Do good works Help those in need. Pray for them and be ready to serve them in their time of need.
5. Give alms Help the poor and support the good works of the Church. Give cheerfully to God who has given us everything we have.	6. Abstain Give up meat or other desirable foods during Lent, especially on Friday, the day of Christ's saving death on the cross.	9. Control desire for entertainment Too much entertainment and other distractions can lead to less or no time for the works of the Lord.	10. Carry out duties in life Serve God by living out your vocation in love each day. God is calling each of us to be a living sacrifice. Offer your daily life through Christ!
7. Do meditative reading Nourish your faith by spending time in quiet reading and reflection. Prayerful reading of God's word each day will open your heart to the Spirit, and let God's thoughts and ways influence yours.	8. Control desire for possessions Build up treasures in heaven rather than on earth. Cut down on material possessions, eliminate frills, lessen wants, share yourself - your time and your talents - with others.	Text from Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Living Lent"	

www.archdioceseoftoronto.org

What is Lent?

Lent is a **liturgical season** that marks the preparation of the Church for Easter. It emphasizes the practices of **prayer, almsgiving and fasting**, alongside meditation on the Word of God, conversion and reconciliation.

4 keys

Begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on the evening of Holy Thursday .	On Ash Wednesday and Good Friday we practice fasting and abstinence .
The 3 Lenten practices are prayer, penance and charity .	The liturgical color of this season is purple , which symbolizes penitence .

EWTN Vatican on Twitter: "❤️🙏 What is Lent? Lent is the liturgical season marked by the Church in preparation for Easter. It emphasizes the practice of prayer, almsgiving, and fasting, along with meditating on the Word of God, conversion, and reconciliation. Saint Leo the Great asserts that the... pic.twitter.com/BfrAAvVtRg / Twitter"

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twitter.com

Private Revelation, Marian Apparitions and Prophecy | Ep. 89



Sachin Jose on Twitter: "Inspired by the example of Catholic men in Ireland, men in Canada's Ontario are planning to launch monthly Rosary rallies starting in May. pic.twitter.com/HayfqkaqK / Twitter"

Inspired by the example of Catholic men in Ireland, men in Canada's Ontario are planning to launch monthly Rosary rallies starting in May. pic.twitter.com/HayfqkaqK

x.com



Mother Catherine, Cloistered Carmelites | Episode 1 | Be Not Afraid Vocation Series



Highlighted Events

St. Joseph's College on Twitter: "Crunch on Curiosity: Go deeper in your faith! From 5-6 pm in the Newman Centre, there is a talk, small group discussion, and large group discussion. We also provide snacks! Register here: <https://t.co/p7EOwDQ0V8> pic.twitter.com/5PGMsCG781 / Twitter"

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[x.com](#)

CRUNCH ON CURIOSITY

Go deeper in your faith

DISCERNING RELATIONSHIPS:
Discerning friendships and romantic relationships
Fr. Glenn McDonald, CSB
Jan 31

SCIENCE AND RELIGION:
Exploring the question of evolution
Dr. Denis Lamoureux
Feb 7th

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL
Why do bad things happen to good people
Fr. Jim Stenberg, csb
Feb 28th

PSYCHOLOGISTS FROM MERCY COUNSELLING
How can Spirituality Help our Mental Health
March 27th

INTEGRATING FAITH AND WORK
Panel of professionals
March 13th

G

GrACE Executive Director

GrACE is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters

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