

GrACE Newsletter

April 2024

Message from the GrACE Executive Director

'Jesus, I surrender to You, take care of everything!'

Dear GrACE Apostles,

There is no doubt that we live in a world that does not always support our Catholic faith or choices.

Yet, I cannot imagine a world without our Catholic schools and education system.

As the Executive Director for GrACE, I am deeply thankful for Catholic Educators; Trustees; Parents; Students; Parishioners and the wider Catholic community for their positive and practical responses to our current challenges.

Your dedication; loyalty; hard work and commitment to the Catholic faith fills me with gratitude and confidence.

Furthermore, I am inspired by the prayers and good deeds of our local GrACE Committees, which are also led by Parents and Parishioners.

On a daily basis, I recite the Surrender prayer for my personal life and my professional role within the expansive Catholic Education Movement throughout Alberta and beyond.

It is a brief prayer, yet timely, as societal pressures and suffering threaten to engulf us and rob us of our peace.

Blessings and much love

'Jesus I Trust in Thee'

Kate

Executive Director, GrACE

gracedirector7@gmail.com



'Jesus, I surrender myself to You, take care of everything!'

'You see evil growing instead of weakening'? Jesus says in this prayer, 'Do not worry. Close your eyes and say to me with faith -Thy will be done, You take care of it - I say to you that I will take care of it, and that I will intervene as does a doctor and I will accomplish miracles when they are needed'.

'Repose in me, believing in my goodness, and I promise you by my love that if you say, - You take care of it - I will take care of it'.

[The Surrender Novena: Let Jesus Take Care of Everything_\(catholicexchange.com\)](http://catholicexchange.com)

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2024



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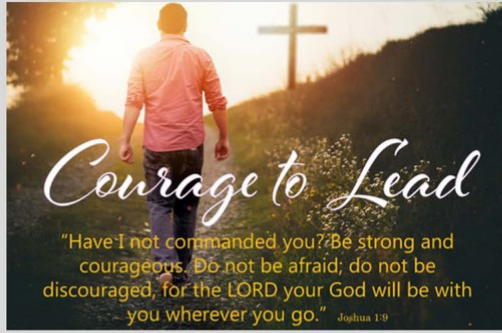
Connect with GrACE Online

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

Never Miss Out!

Subscribe to GrACE's Monthly Newsletter and more: Hit the Subscribe Link at the end of this Newsletter

Catholic Education Week



CATHOLIC EDUCATION Week

May 05-10, 2024



CELEBRATING IN
PARISHES WITH
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
AND ADVOCATES

GRATEFULLY
ADVOCATING FOR
CATHOLIC
EDUCATION

THE MISSION OF
GRACE IS TO
INSPIRE,
INVIGORATE AND
EMBOLDEN THE
SPIRIT OF CATHOLIC
EDUCATION IN
ORDER TO UNITE,
ENGAGE, EDUCATE
AND ADVOCATE
WITH ONE VOICE ON
ITS BEHALF

FOLLOW GRACE ON
SOCIAL MEDIA

Catholic Education Week May 05-10, 2024

Catholic Education Week celebrates the vital role of publicly funded Catholic schools throughout Alberta and beyond.

The event this year is set for May 5 to May 10, 2024.

Moreover, May 9, 2024 is designated as World Catholic Education Day.

May Catholic education continue to guide and inspire!

Catholic Education Week holds profound significance in an era where secularism prevails and Catholic values face challenges.

Let's explore the deeper aspects of this crucial week:-

Recognizing the Value of Catholic Education:

- Catholic Education Week is a time to acknowledge and celebrate the influence of Catholic schools.
- It's an opportunity to recognize how these institutions foster faith along with academic achievement, influencing the lives of the youth.

Building Community and Unity:

- This week brings together the Catholic community—parents, students, educators, administrators, trustees, and clergy.
- We contemplate our collective mission and the significance of publicly funded Catholic education.
- This unity bolsters our dedication to our mission.

Prayer, Reflection, and Blessings:

- Catholic Education Week serves as a period for prayer and contemplation. We seek divine guidance and blessings for the path forward.
- We are thankful for the contribution of Catholic schools in cultivating both faith and knowledge.

The privilege of faith-based education carries responsibilities:

- As Catholics, we endeavor to ensure that our educational practices reflect the Church's values and teachings, even as society evolves.

Drawing Strength from Faith:

- Our Catholic faith gives us strength. We feel God's presence with us on our path.
- We are not isolated; we have the support of each other and God as our spiritual foundation.

The Theme: 'Courage to Lead':

- This theme speaks to all Catholics, not solely those involved in education.
 - It encourages us to lead bravely, influenced by our faith, and to positively impact our communities.
-

a dozen reasons to choose Catholic Schools



How will you celebrate Catholic Education Week?

- Begin with prayer. Share Catholic education prayer intentions with your community
- Design Catholic education inserts for your Parish Bulletin and School Newsletters.
- Use pictures, statistics and quotes to paint a picture of your School District
- Contact your Local Media to do a story on Catholic education
- Distribute the Alberta; NWT and the Yukon's Bishops' letter for Catholic Education Week
- Be present at Mass and share information about your Catholic Schools
- Personally ask a 'keen' Student, Parent, Teacher, Trustee and Priest to record their perspective on 'Why I choose Catholic Education'. Post testimonies on websites and social media
- Share pictures highlighting faith in your School or District
- Gather stories of Catholic Education
- Tell the history of your Catholic School District

GrACE invites you to share these thoughts with Friends; Family and Community

As society becomes increasingly secular and religious values less prevalent, Catholic parents are in search of genuine, publicly funded Catholic education for their children.

Catholic Education Week stands as a testament to the lasting strength that faith imparts within an ever-changing cultural milieu.

This significant time in the Catholic calendar is for recognizing the importance of Catholic education, reinforcing community bonds, and seeking spiritual guidance and blessings for what lies ahead.

It's also a time for prayer, reflection, and unity within the Catholic community, including parents, students, educators, school leaders, trustees, and clergy, to jointly honor the role of Catholic schools in fostering the faith and education of the youth.

Moreover, it offers a chance for the Catholic community to unite and reaffirm the value of publicly funded Catholic education in Alberta and elsewhere, acknowledging its influence on the lives of students and the broader society.

The GrACE Summit Concludes Catholic Education Week

The GrACE Summit presents the opportunity for us to unite as a Catholic community and demonstrate our steadfast commitment to the tenets of Catholic education.

The Summit will concentrate on unity, dialogue, and renewed commitment as essential elements in advancing Catholic education.

Through collective engagement, we seek to strengthen our bonds and reaffirm our commitment to the continuous success and benefits of Catholic education, both within Alberta and beyond.

Your participation and contributions at the GrACE Summit 2024 are crucial in shaping the future of Catholic education and ensuring its role in our society and globally.



2024 SUMMIT

Date: Friday, May, 10 2024
Time: 8:15 AM - 2:00 PM
Location: Catholic Parish of Corpus Christi
2707 34 St. NW, Edmonton Alberta



SCAN ME!

TO REGISTER



*Courage
to Lead*



"Have I not commanded you?
Be strong and courageous. Do
not be afraid; do not be
discouraged, for the Lord your
God will be with you wherever
you go."

JOSHUA 1:9



WEAR BLUE TO SUPPORT CATHOLIC EDUCATION

The Gift of Publicly Funded Catholic Education

In partnership with Alberta's Bishops, Trustees, Superintendents, Educators, Clergy, Parents, Parishioners, Stakeholders, and Catholic Influencers, Catholic education weaves together faith and academic growth, inspiring students to realize their potential as beings created in God's image.

Public funds sustain Catholic schools across Alberta, enabling over 183,500 students from various backgrounds in 19 Catholic School Districts and 4 Francophone Boards to benefit from a superior education within a nurturing environment.

Our Catholic faith is the foundation of all our endeavors, promoting an atmosphere conducive to academic excellence and spiritual development, and fostering a communal commitment to preserve the mission and values of Catholic education in our society.



The Importance of Catholic Education



'First and foremost every Catholic educational institution is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals His transforming love and truth.'

Pope Benedict XVI, 2008

The gift of Catholic education offers students and their families the chance to encounter God's presence in their lives. This foundational experience at school nurtures an openness to embrace God. This openness allows Students, Staff, and Parents to engage in the Sacraments of initiation and become members of the Catholic Church. Truly, when Catholic Schools facilitate encounters with the divine, miraculous events unfold!

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 GRATEFUL ADVOCATES for CATHOLIC EDUCATION

WHY is Catholic Education Important?

Faith permeated curriculum develops the whole child by teaching and nourishing them physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually. Students learn the importance of service, commitment, dedication, and self-discipline. This helps build their character and encourages academic success. Catholic School students learn that God is present and active in their lives and in the world. They learn to recognize the "footprints of God" in their daily experiences, especially in the midst of life's challenges. They develop a sense of "sacramental awareness".

Personal Excellence is a spiritual goal. Catholic school students learn that excellence is measured by their knowledge. Academic excellence is not a goal in and of itself. The American philosopher Leo Tolstoy said, "Education must have an ethical dimension. It seeks to do good to the student, and make a difference in the world around them."

Catholic schools promote self-discipline through clarity of moral vision that is based on the Gospel. Students are challenged to be Christ-like in word and action. They are asked to examine their choices and actions in light of the Ten Commandments and the Gospel law of love. They are given a theological foundation for ethical behavior. Students are not good because they act in accord with rules and expectations. Rather, because students are good, i.e. sons and daughters of God, they are expected to act and make choices that are in keeping with this dignity.

Catholic schools promote service as an essential component of their curriculum. Many Catholic schools have service programs from soup kitchens through health care, higher education programs, and the annual Dominican Volunteer Corps promote service to the underprivileged and provide hope. Service organizations such as Catholic Family Service provide resources and help to people from all walks of life. Catholic school students learn that their responsibility is to the least of which are the most in need, only brothers and sisters in the Lord. We have a responsibility to respond to the needs of others because we are all part of God's family.

The Centrality of Arts, Ritual, Drama, Music to the life of faith. Through Catholic education, students are exposed to the richness of the religious tradition. Music, Art, Literature, Drama, and Ritual are rooted in the rich history of the Church, and find their truest glory as an expression of divine grace.

Incorporating the catholic faith in the curriculum helps students evolve into complete individuals.

"You cannot speak of Catholic education without speaking about humanity, because the Catholic identity is precisely that God became man."
 Pope Francis

We offer an education that combines Catholic faith and teachings with academic excellence

We provide a safe and welcoming environment for all

We instill in students the value of service to others

We teach children respect of self and others

We provide a balanced academic curriculum that integrates faith, culture and life

We emphasize moral development and self-discipline

We prepare students to be productive citizens and future leaders

We partner with parents in the faith formation of their children

Catholic Schools
 Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed

Resiliency Independence Courage Patience Kindness Honesty
 Formation Love Stewardship Faith Discovery Prepared Responsibility

The Value of Catholic Education

- 1. Commitment to Values:** Catholic Schools provide an education that goes beyond academic subjects and fosters character development, empathy, and compassion.
- 2. Academic Excellence:** Catholic Schools have a strong academic reputation, rigorous curricula and dedicated teachers who strive for academic excellence focusing on providing a quality education that prepares Students for future success.

3. **Faith Formation:** Catholic Schools integrate religious education into their curriculum, allowing students to deepen their understanding of the Catholic faith. Thereby providing opportunities for spiritual growth, including prayer, sacraments, and involvement in the local faith community.
 4. **Community Engagement:** Catholic Schools foster a strong sense of community and promote service to others. Students are encouraged to engage in volunteer work, community service projects, and social justice initiatives, teaching them the importance of making a positive impact on society.
 5. **Inclusivity:** Catholic Schools strive to create inclusive and welcoming environments for students from diverse backgrounds. They promote diversity, respect, and tolerance, fostering an atmosphere where all students can learn and thrive regardless of their race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status.
 6. **Holistic Education:** Catholic Schools emphasize the development of the whole person—academically, spiritually, emotionally, and physically, encouraging students to explore their talents, participate in extracurricular activities, and develop leadership skills.
 7. **Alumni Networks:** Catholic Schools have strong alumni networks that offer support, mentorship, and networking opportunities for former students. These networks are a valuable resource for career development and personal growth.
 8. **Positive School Culture:** Catholic Schools prioritize a positive and nurturing School culture that promotes respect, discipline, and a sense of belonging. The objective is to create safe and supportive environments where students can thrive academically and socially.
 9. **Partnership with Families:** Catholic Schools recognize the importance of collaboration between educators and families. Parents are actively involved in their child's education, providing opportunities for Parent-Teacher communication, involvement in School activities, and a shared commitment to the student's well-being.
 10. **Contributions to Society:** Catholic schools have a long history of making significant contributions to society. Many graduates of Catholic schools go on to become leaders, professionals, and active members of their communities, using their education and values to make a positive difference.
-

Why is Catholic public involvement in Government decision-making so important?



Catholics in Alberta play a pivotal role in governance and our involvement goes beyond symbolic acts.

Our participation is crucial for effective and inclusive decision-making.

Our Catholic schools have a unique mission to deliver education within Alberta's curriculum framework, enriched by faith.

Our Principals act as faith leaders with duties that include:

- Integrating Catholic teachings into the curriculum.

- Ensuring prayer, religious observances, and faith-driven extracurricular activities into the daily life of our Catholic Schools
- Fostering community service and social justice efforts that reflect our Catholic principles
- Nurturing a robust Catholic culture and identity in our Schools, honoring Catholicism's distinct features and exemplifying behaviors that align with our Catholic values
- Delivering a comprehensive understanding of our Catholic Teachings
- Managing all elements of our Catholic identity and ethos, including religious education, faith-based activities, liturgical services, and community projects

To support our Principals - as Catholic stakeholders - we must all contribute and actively engage in Government decision-making and use of public monies, especially to overcome obstacles in public engagement, such as tokenism and the dominance of elites.

Pray that policy makers recognize that with rights come obligations to include respect for our Catholic faith and values

Mary, the Mother of the Church is our mother to whom we turn to in our needs. Her obedience to God's will, her faith in her Son Jesus, her hope in the fulfillment of God's plan of salvation of humankind are for us to imitate as we do in our Catholic Schools and wider Education movement throughout Alberta and beyond.

God has chosen each of us, with the help of Mary, for work in our Catholic Schools and Education system.

Our loyalty and commitment is shown in our prayers and our love for all.

To Mary, we turn and pray the Rosary, asking the Mother of Jesus to intercede for us and for the success of our Catholic Education Movement.



The Popes and the Rosary - Vatican News

This May, during the month dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Pope Francis has invited the faithful to renew their love for the Most Holy Rosary, a ...

[vaticannews.va](https://www.vaticannews.va)

Pope, Saint John Paul II invited Christians who had never prayed the Rosary to consider taking it up and invited those who had set it aside to rediscover it.

In doing so he reminded everyone that the Rosary possesses a number of powerful spiritual benefits:

1. The Rosary is a Christ-centered prayer,
 2. The Rosary is a powerful way to contemplate the Face of Christ,
 3. The Rosary is a memorial by which Mary constantly sets before us the mysteries of her Son,
 4. The Rosary is an invaluable source of self-discovery and integration,
 5. The Rosary is a sublime encounter of Friendship,
 6. The Rosary unites us to the bond between Jesus and Mary,
 7. The Rosary is a supreme source of comfort and solace,
 8. The Rosary is a condensed version of the Gospels.
-

Under Mary's Mantle

It is a sign of the times that, Catholics - and especially our Clergy and Leadership - are more often criticized than supported to grow in the love of their faith and Catholic values.

The Rosary to our Blessed Mother is an avenue to storm Heaven for our ever growing success as a determined movement to defend our Catholic faith and rights enshrined in Canada's Constitution.

Our Lady of the Rosary can help transform us into the best witnesses of Christ that we can be in this world.

Catholic Families: Rights and Obligations

The Rights of Catholic Families are intrinsically linked with corresponding obligations and responsibilities

Catholic Families have rights and responsibilities, and their roles are interconnected within the larger context of society and faith.



Rights are inherent to all Catholics and Catholic Families in Canada, as outlined in the nation's Constitution and Human Rights Declarations.

These documents assert the fundamental rights and freedoms that all Canadian Catholics and Catholic Families inherently possess by virtue of their humanity, which are universally protected and enforced across all levels of Canadian government and institutions.

Conversely, obligations are the duties or responsibilities that every Canadian owes to one another and to society at large.

These arise from the recognition of rights and the need to balance individual liberties with the welfare and rights of others.

Obligations may be legal, moral, or social.

For instance, Catholics are obligated to respect the rights and dignity of others, abide by laws, contribute to community welfare, and uphold ethical standards.

Similarly, there is an equal obligation for others to respect Catholic values, traditions, and beliefs, and to adhere to the protection of the Catholic faith as enshrined in the Canadian Constitution, as well as to contribute to the welfare of the Catholic community.



‘The Catholic identity is recognized and protected both by section 93 of our Canadian Constitution – for without recognition of that identity the agreement that created Canada would not have proceeded – but also by the Education Act. Both the constitution and the Education Act make it clear that the Catholic identity of the school must be respected’.

(Cardinal Thomas Collins,
Archbishop of Toronto)



Catholics have denominational rights when it comes to Schools that trumps any Provincial or Territorial Human Rights legislation

Catholics have denominational rights when it comes to Schools that trumps and supercedes any Provincial or Territorial Human Rights legislation.



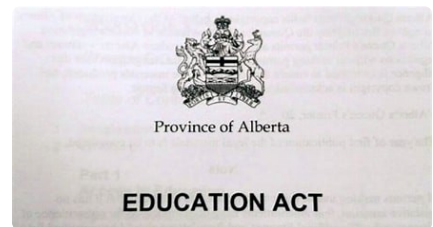
Teaching in Catholic schools is more than a profession; it's a **vocation**. All Teachers have an essential function in Catholic education as role models of the faith, both in word and deed. They participate in the saving mission of the Church and contribute to building the Body of Christ.

We must all find a way to express ourselves, especially on issues of disagreement

With rights come corresponding obligations 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 face of our society's changes and challenges.

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.



How Can We Exercise Our Rights?

Leadership: Courage to Lead

GrACE receives an increasing number of requests from Trustees for information that can be used to help attract; elect and situate potential new Trustees to include a Voter's guide that eligible voters can use as part of their candidate research.

Ideally, in partnership with ACSTA and other stakeholder organizations, GrACE is inspired to develop a body of work and a concerted response to Trustee requests to mobilize, not just these eligible voters, but also all of those Catholics in our Church pews who have Children in our Catholic Schools or who have had Children who have graduated.

In addition, that is, to those non-practicing Catholics; non-Catholics who send their Children to Catholic Schools and indeed Others who wish - for whatever reason - that our Catholic Schools remain separate.

The initiative - affirming the values, principles and spiritual foundation that Catholic Schools are built upon to ensure continued success and impact - of course, can be further developed in advance of future Municipal; Territorial and Federal elections as well.

Power and Position of Catholic School Boards

Catholic School Boards have the power to reject any Federal or Provincial law; regulation or Human Rights code directive that contradicts the content of our Catholic faith and morals

Developing standardized GrACE Parish bulletin announcements

GrACE is in the process of developing standardized GrACE Parish bulletin announcements to enrol Parishioners throughout Alberta and beyond to make a stand for Catholic education.

Unified Catholic education messaging



GrACE is currently working to progress unified Catholic education messaging with a number of other Catholic education organizations for every single School and Parish throughout Alberta and beyond.

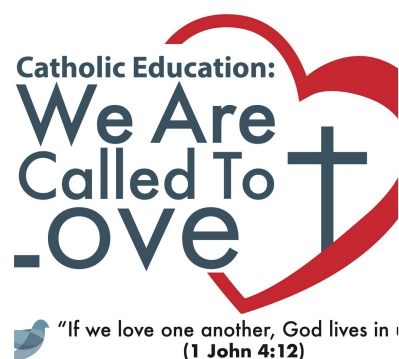
'Go, do not be afraid and serve' - Pope Francis

With the gift of our Catholic faith comes a desire for spiritual things and an ambition to do something good in life.

We celebrate how Catholic schools enrich our parishes, our communities and our province in so many ways.

Questions to consider:-

- How would your community be different without publicly-funded Catholic schools?
- How can I help Catholic education thrive throughout Alberta and beyond?



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.

There are so many positive stories about Catholic Schools and Education in Alberta.

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.

Highlight the faith of your School!

As a GrACE Advocate and Leader in our Catholic education system, celebrate; showcase; highlight the faith of your School.



GrACE Champions

SHARE SOMETHING WONDERFUL FROM YOUR SCHOOL

SELECT SCHOOL BOARDS WILL BE FEATURED BY GRACE EACH MONTH

APRIL: ELK ISLAND CATHOLIC SEPARATE SCHOOL DIVISION

FAITH & WELLNESS DAYS



Many of the schools in each of our communities celebrated Faith and Wellness Days in March by hosting a series of student- and teacher-led activities focused on spiritual, mental, and physical health.

These days are a testament to the Systemic Wellness pillar of our division's annual assurance plan and inspired by a series of Here Comes the Sun workshops that were attended by student leadership teams from each of our schools in October 2023.

Unique to EICS, Here Comes the Sun is funded through a \$440,000 grant obtained by Alberta Education's Mental Health grant in 2023. It takes a cooperative approach to staff and student holistic well-being through partnerships with parish priests, Indigenous knowledge keepers, and the PEPY approach to balancing physical, spiritual, and social health.

Through this support, students and staff have been empowered to learn new ways to care for themselves in all facets of life now and into the future.





Grande Prairie and District
Catholic Schools

inspire.
create.
believe.

A few of our JPII students helped make 700+ sandwiches to be taken to the St Lawrence Center during Sandwich Sunday!!! Thank you gentlemen





St. Gerard Catholic School
Grade 9 Band

visits the
Grande Prairie Care Center



Gift of Song...

Band members
brought joy to the
residents as they
performed and
visited during songs



GrACE Champions

SHARE SOMETHING WONDERFUL FROM YOUR SCHOOL

SELECT SCHOOL BOARDS WILL BE FEATURED BY GRACE EACH MONTH

APRIL: RED DEER CATHOLIC REGIONAL SCHOOL DIVISION

YOUTH MINISTRY



RDCRS is blessed to have three youth ministers who run a very active youth ministry program for Red Deer Catholic students. Youth Ministers play an important role in the faith formation of students, help students of all ages encounter Jesus, be nurtured in their faith, and serve the community.





GrACE Champions

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APRIL: RED DEER CATHOLIC REGIONAL SCHOOL DIVISION

NEW TEACHER FAITH FORMATION

The faith formation program for all new teachers within RDCRS is a two-year program. First year teachers meet in person five times throughout the school year to be inspired and nurtured in their faith, and are connected to mentor teachers who support them in their faith journey. Teachers in their second year of faith formation attend RDCRS faith events, and complete a course in Catholic theology. All new teachers are also connected to a parish through volunteering for a Catholic Church ministry. Through the RDCRS faith formation program beginning teachers are supported in their faith development, connected to a larger faith community, connected to a parish, and provided with resources and support to help them in the unique vocation of being a Catholic educator.



RDCRS FAITH FORMATION NIGHT AT CARNIVAL CINEMAS, WHERE NEW TEACHERS, MENTORS AND DIVISION STAFF WATCHED 'THE CASE FOR CHRIST' TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE EVIDENCE AND REASONING FOR CHRISTIAN FAITH.

TEACHERS IN FAITH FORMATION ARE EXPECTED TO VOLUNTEER FOR CATHOLIC CHURCH MINISTRIES. PICTURED ARE BEN PELLETIER (CANVILLE LEROUGE SCHOOL), KENDRA WELLY (HOLY FAMILY SCHOOLS) AND SARAH HIRSH (HOLY FAMILY SCHOOLS) LEADING CHILDREN'S LITURGY AT ST MARY'S PARISH.



FR PAUL KAVANAGH SPEAKS TO NEW TEACHERS IN YEAR 1 OF RDCRS FAITH FORMATION ABOUT THE VOCATION OF BEING A CATHOLIC TEACHER.



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GrACE Champions

SHARE SOMETHING WONDERFUL FROM YOUR SCHOOL
 SELECT SCHOOL BOARDS WILL BE FEATURED BY GRACE EACH MONTH
APRIL: RED DEER CATHOLIC REGIONAL SCHOOL DIVISION

FAITH TEAM

This year, Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools introduced a new Faith Coach model, assigning both an administrator and a teacher as Faith Coaches in each school. These teams work collaboratively to enhance faith formation by supporting staff, students, families, and parishes in developing faith-based communities. Their roles include aligning School Improvement Plan Faith Goals with division priorities, conducting professional development sessions, fostering a learning environment for Catholic teachings and prayer, and providing resources for religious education. Additionally, they coordinate with parishes and youth ministers, lead social justice activities, and facilitate school liturgies and celebrations. The efforts of the RDCRS faith team have significantly deepened the expression of faith and opportunities for spiritual encounters within the schools.

STUDENTS FROM ST ELIZABETH SCHOOL LEARN ABOUT GOD DURING GRADE-SPECIFIC FAITH RETREATS AT ST MARY'S PARISH, FACILITATED BY FAITH COACHES KEN PERNAU AND SHAWNIA FRENTZ.

STUDENTS AT MARYVEUW SCHOOL LEARN ABOUT FAITH DURING OBJECT LESSONS DELIVERED BY FAITH COACHES BRANDON NECK AND LORNA SANTILO.

Where Are They Now?

GrACE shares how Catholic education has shaped lives!

GrACE's "Where Are They Now" series highlights the impact of Catholic education on individual life paths and celebrates the profound impact of Catholic education, reminding us that learning extends beyond textbooks to shape hearts, minds, and souls.

This month features **Scott Morrison**, the Executive Director of CCSSA, as he shares his journey with GrACE, seeking to inspire others and underscore the importance of Catholic education.

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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



Scott Morrison

SCOTT WAS BORN IN TABER AND HAS LIVED IN FT. McMURRAY, OKOTOKS, HIGH RIVER, AND CALGARY. HE HAS BEEN BLESSED TO WORK IN CATHOLIC CONTEXTS HIS ENTIRE ADULT LIFE. BEGINNING HIS CAREER WITH FT. McMURRAY CATHOLIC BEFORE HE JOINED THE CHURCH. SCOTT WAS RAISED AS A LUTHERAN AND WHEN HE GOT ENGAGED STARTED WORSHIPPING IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH WHERE HE ENDED UP JOINING TWO YEARS LATER. "MY FAITH MAKES ME A PERSON OF HOPE. A LOT OF THE CONFIDENCE I'VE ALWAYS HAD IN MYSELF IS A REFLECTION OF MY BELIEF THAT GOD WOULDN'T CALL ME TO THE MANY LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES I'VE EMBRACED IF I COULDN'T HANDLE THEM. IN MY SECOND YEAR OF TEACHING, I WAS ASKED TO MENTOR NEW TEACHERS, DEVELOP WORKSHOPS, AND LECTURE TO BACHELOR OF EDUCATION STUDENTS. WHEN I WAS CALLED TO MENTOR OTHERS AT THIS EARLY STAGE OF MY CAREER, IT LED ME TO BELIEVE THAT I HAD A CALL TO LEADERSHIP." IMPRESSIVELY, SCOTT ONLY SPENT 6 YEARS AS A JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH TEACHER BEFORE BEING APPOINTED PRINCIPAL OF HOLY SPIRIT ACADEMY, A SMALL NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN HIGH RIVER. THREE YEARS LATER, HE WAS APPOINTED PRINCIPAL OF HOLY TRINITY ACADEMY, THE DIVISION'S LARGEST HIGH SCHOOL. AFTER EIGHT YEARS THERE, SCOTT MOVED INTO SENIOR ADMINISTRATION AND SPENT THE LAST DECADE OF HIS CAREER AS SUPERINTENDENT OF CHRIST THE REDEEMER CATHOLIC SCHOOLS.

SCOTT EARNED HIS BACHELOR OF EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LETHBRIDGE, HIS MASTER'S DEGREE FROM GONZAGA UNIVERSITY, AND HIS DOCTORATE FROM WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT UNIVERSITY. "MY DOCTORAL RESEARCH IS IN ORGANIZATIONAL STORYTELLING. IN SHORT, I BELIEVE LEADERS CAN COMMUNICATE MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES VIA THE USE OF INSTRUCTIVE STORIES. MY CORE INTEREST IN STORYTELLING IS BASED ON PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, BUT CHRIST'S USE OF STORIES TO TEACH IS SOMETHING THAT HAS ALWAYS GUIDED ME AS WELL." SCOTT IS RETIRED FROM CHRIST THE REDEEMER CATHOLIC SCHOOLS BUT FILLS HIS TIME WITH MANY INITIATIVES SUCH AS DEVELOPING COURSES FOR CASS, OFFERING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND TEACHING AT BOTH ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY AND THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY. "I'M AS BUSY AS I WAS WHEN WORKING FULL TIME. BUT I'M HAPPY TO REPORT THE STRESS LEVELS ARE NOWHERE NEAR WHAT I EXPERIENCED AS A SUPERINTENDENT." CURRENTLY,

SCOTT IS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE CCSSA. WITHIN THIS ROLE HE WORKS WITH THE CCSSA TEAM TO ADOPT AN APPROACH REFERRED TO AS COLLECTIVE INQUIRY. THE IDEA IS FOR MEMBERS TO IDENTIFY OUR MOST COMPLEX PROBLEMS OF PRACTICE AND THEN TO ASK INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS TO PRESENT THEORIES OF ACTION ABOUT HOW TO RESPOND TO THOSE PROBLEMS OF PRACTICE. THOSE MEMBERS THEN IMPLEMENT THEIR THEORIES OF ACTION AND RETURN BACK TO SHARE HOW THINGS WENT WITH THE GROUP. THERE ARE MANY PROBLEMS OF PRACTICE, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, RESPONDING TO DIVISION IN SOCIETY, RECRUITING AND FORMING CATHOLIC TEACHERS AND LEADERS, AND PROMOTING INCLUSION IN OUR SCHOOLS.



Reconciliation Corner - The Holy Spirit Lives Inside You



Laura Swart shares with Caij about the **STRENGTH** of a Catholic foundation

Laura Swart, a Catholic Author; Teacher, and faith-driven entrepreneur, is deeply 'in love with the Saviour'.

Her journey began in eastern Canada, where she was educated in a Catholic elementary school in Nova Scotia, laying her foundation in Catholic traditions.

However, after relocating to Calgary, her family drifted from their faith, prompting Laura to seek guidance.

Over time, she felt called to revisit her Catholic origins, which led to a transformative experience of being "saved through trauma" within the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

Laura's approach to life and faith is total commitment.

She immersed herself in ministry, prayer, scripture memorization, and all aspects of Christianity.

Yet, a significant life event eventually led her to question her beliefs.

This period of doubt turned out to be a divine intervention, as it led her to reflect on a passage from Revelation 2, which encouraged her to 'return to her first love... repent and do the things she did at first.'

Initially puzzled by these words, clarity came when she recalled a trip to Rome at the age of 22 where during a Holy Mass, she experienced an overwhelming sense of the Lord's love.



'God was so present, so powerful, so loving', recalls Laura.

She eagerly anticipated each Sunday when she could return to the Cathedral to immerse herself in the stunning architecture, the Latin, the singing—and feel the presence of God.

Although she found solace in the Protestant church at one time, she realized that her true affinity lay with Catholicism. Her spiritual journey is marked by both hope and sorrow as she navigates her path back home.

Laura's inner passion fuels a robust relationship with God and a successful career.

She earned a Bachelor of Education in English Literature and a Master of Arts in Philosophy from the University of Calgary.

After her graduation, she started teaching academic writing at the University of Calgary. In her last three years, she taught at the Native Centre, where she met many talented writers.

She warmly reflects on the indigenous perspectives she encountered while teaching and learning alongside her students.

Laura is a person of great compassion, dedicating herself to aiding in disaster relief in war-torn countries.

Her travels have taken her to Ethiopia, Ukraine, the Philippines, and India to help those in need. In the early 2000s, she co-founded I-AM ESL, a ministry that employs biblical memorization, music, and singing to assist refugees in learning English, in collaboration with Rocky Mountain Bible College.

Laura currently holds a teaching position at the Alexandra Writers Centre Society and serves as the artistic director of Totus Tuus, a verbatim theatre company with a mission to honor God and introduce positive messages on stage.

In addition to these roles, Laura has authored numerous published books, plays, and poems.

Her writing deeply reflects her connection to the land, a theme she explores extensively through months of research into the ecosystems featured in her work, a testament to her strong identity link to the land.

In this interview with Laura, it became evident how she contributes to reconciliation efforts with Indigenous peoples in Calgary.

She not only teaches academic and creative writing at the Native Centre but also invited the esteemed photography professor, Lonnie Graham, to capture and interview Indigenous students for the global exhibition, A Conversation with the World.

Graham initiated this project to celebrate the diversity of humanity and challenge stereotypes, yet he also uncovered our shared human traits.

The inclusion of Calgary's Indigenous community in this exhibition, showcased across Europe and North America, inspired Laura to pen the creative non-fiction book and play, both titled Blackbird Calling.

Laura consistently weaves the presence of the Savior into her writing, perpetuating a message of hope and love synonymous with Him.





Connect with GrACE Online

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

Follow GrACE on Facebook and Twitter. Post your pictures and tag us so we can share them and celebrate too. Thanks for being a grateful advocate in support of Catholic education!

@GrACE4cathed

GrACE Facebook address is www.facebook.com/GrACE4cathed

Grace email is gracedirector7@gmail.com

GrACE Twitter address is [@GrACE4cathed](https://twitter.com/GrACE4cathed)

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



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@grace4catholiceducation

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

GrACE Says Thank You



Michelle Collette
Volunteer GrACE Treasurer



Jolyne deMarco
*Volunteer GrACE Instagram
Administrator*



Grant Gay
*Volunteer GrACE Facebook
Administrator*



Caij Meloche
*Volunteer GrACE Community
Engagement 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 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.



Kids - FORMED

The Catholic Faith. On Demand.

watch.formed.org

Catholic Education Prayers of the Faithful for May 2024

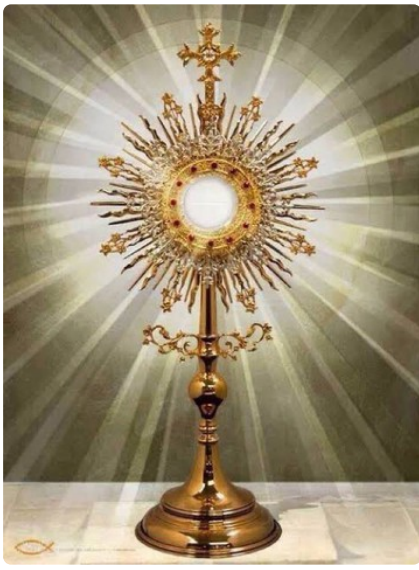
For Catholic Education:-

- For Catholic Education: That Government decisions will be made to protect Catholic education, we pray to the Lord
 - For Catholic Education: That our Blessed Mother will bring us all ever closer to her Son, we pray to the Lord
 - For Catholic Education: That during Catholic education Week we continue in unity and common vision, we pray to the Lord
 - For Catholic Education: That devotion to the Virgin Mary thrives within Catholic education we pray to the Lord
 - For Catholic education: in gratitude for the gift of publicly funded Catholic education, we pray to the Lord
-



O Sacred Heart of Jesus , I Place All My Trust in Thee!

Most holy Heart of Jesus, fountain of every blessing, I adore You, I love You, and with lively sorrow for my sins I offer You this poor heart of mine. Make me humble, patient, pure and wholly obedient to Your will. Grant, good Jesus that I may live in You and for You. Protect me in the midst of danger. Comfort me in my afflictions. Give me health of body, assistance in my temporal needs, Your blessing on all that I do, and the grace of a holy death. Amen



Upfront with the Archbishop

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.



Podcast Episode

Upfront with the Archbishop 95. What You Don't Know About St. Kateri: Extreme Penance, Perpetual Virginity and Eucharistic Fervor Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton As we near her feast day (April 17), join Archbishop Smith for a discussion about St.

buzzsprout.com



Archbishop Smith with Fr. Dean Dowle, pastor for St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church



Archbishop Smith with members of the St. Rose of Lima Junior High school social justice group



Archbishop Smith shares a time of games with students at St. Paul Elementary School

Social Media Updates



Pre-Kindergarten Opportunities

Elk Island Catholic Schools' (EICS) Pre-Kindergarten is faith infused and rooted in the foundation that every child is created in the image of God, has unique gifts, and is loved. Pre-Kindergarten is offered in Sherwood Park, Strathcona County, Fort Saskatchewan, Camrose, and Vegreville.

eics.ab.ca



New three-year capital plan to seek funding to revitalize infrastructure

A new short-term three-year capital plan approved by the Elk Island Catholic Schools (EICS) Board of Trustees at their March meeting represents a first step to obtain funding as the division seeks to plan for and gain feedback on the future in communities where we are blessed to serve students.

eics.ab.ca



ELK ISLAND CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

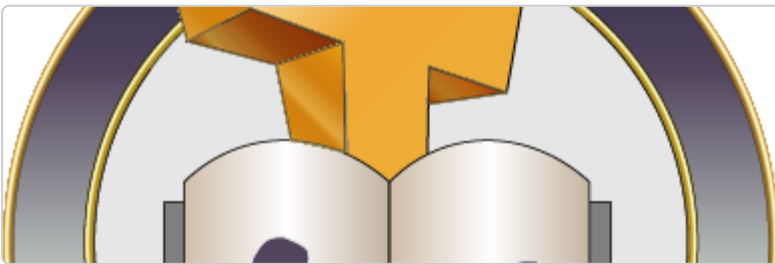
Seeing Christ in Everyone

Elk Island Catholic Schools

EICS provides faith-integrated Catholic education to Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, Elementary, Middle School, and High School students. Serving the communities of Sherwood Park, Strathcona County, Fort Saskatchewan, Camrose, and Vegreville.

eics.ab.ca

Lakeland Catholic School Division: Dr. Bernard Brosseau Middle School's Science Fair



Lakeland Catholic School Division

Christ Our Model. Children Our Focus.

lcassd.ca

Holy Spirit Catholic School Division

The Holy Spirit Catholic School Division is currently looking for families in our Holy Spirit community to become a Homestay Family for our incoming international students. We are currently in the process of recruiting hosts for European and Japanese students.

Holy Spirit Catholic School Division
International Homestay Program






Become a HOMESTAY FAMILY

The BEST thing about memories...
is making them!

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFO

Joy A. Warren
Homestay Coordinator
Holy Spirit Catholic School Division
620 128 St. N.
Lethbridge, AB, T1H 2L7
Phone: (403) 330-7382
homestay@holyspirit.ab.ca

HOST FAMILIES PROVIDE...

- Private bedroom
- 3 wholesome meals/day +snacks
- Quiet, bright study space
- Access to common areas
- Laundry
- Emotional/Academic support
- Interaction with family members
- Participation in family activities
- Internet connection

HOST FAMILY BENEFITS...

- Learn another culture's traditions and customs
- Share Canadian culture with your student
- Create lasting memories and experiences
- Spend more family time together
- Develop a new friendship with your student
- Receive \$900 monthly to cover the expenses of hosting your student
- Build an interest in culture, language and future travel opportunities for your family

<https://twitter.com/HolySpiritRCSD>

twitter.com

THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Media

https://youtu.be/dOj_ZkoCL6M This is God's work. You are not enough... but He is. It is not by your own power that your parish will transform. There are two truths happening at once: Your parish will not transform with you. Your parish can not transform without Him. Join Divine Renovation's Fr.

frjamesmallon.com

GrACE Influencer: Father James Mallon!

Father James Mallon is the pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and the founder of the Divine Renovation Ministry.

Father James is also the author of the bestselling book 'Divine Renovation: From A Maintenance To A Missional Parish,' an engaging guide for parishes seeking to cultivate vibrant and dynamic faith communities centered on missionary discipleship. In 2016, he authored the "Divine Renovation Guidebook'. a step-by-step manual for transforming a parish.

The message of Divine Renovation has resonated with tens of thousands of pastors and lay leaders worldwide, inspiring and motivating them to act and seek assistance in transforming their own faith communities. To meet their needs, the Divine Renovation Ministry was established. Father James continues to dedicate a portion of his time to serving the ministry.

In 2019, Father James co-authored 'Unlocking Your Parish' with Ron Huntley, an inspiring and practical book on using Alpha as a powerful tool for evangelization and discipleship.

In 2020, his next publication, 'Beyond the Parish', was released, offering a thought-provoking analysis of the challenges the church faces, along with practical tools to support parish and diocesan leaders in bringing about parish renewal.

'Thriving Faith', based on a series of homilies given by Father James during his first year at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, was published in 2022. In this book, Father James delves into scripture and applies the word of God to reflect on how one can grow as a disciple of Jesus, both individually and as part of a faith community.

Father James Mallon

Father James Mallon is pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia and founder of the Divine Renovation Ministry. Father James is also the author of the best selling book Divine Renovation: From A Maintenance To A Missional Parish, an engaging guide for parishes seeking to cultivate vibrant and dynamic faith communities centred on missionary discipleship.

🔗 frjamesmallon.com



Event Information

Mary's Festival – June 1, 2024

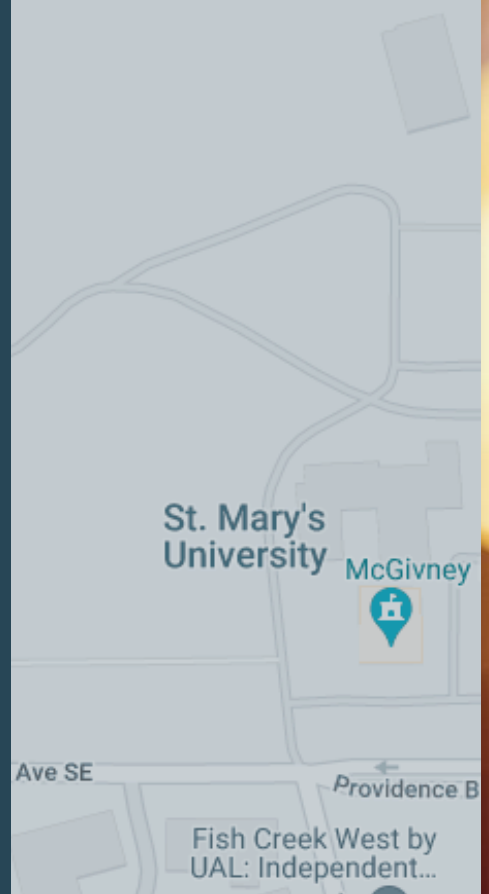
St. Mary's University is hosting our first annual Mary's Festival on June 1 from 11am – 4pm.

It is our way of opening wide our doors and welcoming everyone onto our campus. After a long winter, how does a day of fellowship, food, fun, live music, disc golf, and just community sound to you? As we advance the People First pillar of our new Strategic Plan, Expanding Minds, Inspiring Hearts we wanted to create a fun, community-oriented, and welcoming event where people of all ages could come and enjoy our campus and being together.

From food trucks to a dunk tank, a vendor marketplace to live musical entertainment, we want Mary's Festival to be a joyful celebration and invite everyone to come for what will be a whole lot of fun for the whole family!

Tickets available at stmu.ca

When?



Tuesday, Apr 23, 2024, 07:00 a.m.

Where?

St. Mary's University, Calgary, AB, Canada

r Par Investments
Parkview Village

 Open maps

gle

Map data ©2024



GrACE Executive Director

GrACE is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters

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