



News Release

RDCRS celebrates Linda Downey as 2025 CCSSA Excellence in Catholic Education Award recipient

For immediate release – March 28, 2025

Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools (RDCRS) is delighted to announce that Linda Downey, a Grade 3 teacher and Faith Coach at Holy Family School, has been awarded the prestigious Council of Catholic School Superintendents of Alberta (CCSSA) Excellence in Catholic Education Award.

The CCSSA Excellence in Catholic Education Award is presented annually to teachers who exemplify a deep commitment to nurturing the faith of Alberta's youth and guiding them to become exemplary Catholic citizens. This recognition highlights those educators who go above and beyond in their efforts to foster spiritual growth and moral development in their students.

Linda Downey's passion for teaching and faith shine through in every aspect of her work. With joy and warmth, she creates a learning environment where students eagerly engage in both academics and prayer. This year, with our division youth ministers, she is leading a school-wide faith retreat filled with music, games, and worship, fostering a deeper spiritual connection among students, staff, and families. She also coordinates school masses, liturgies, and faith-based assemblies, while guiding her colleagues in their spiritual growth through faith-based professional development.

Beyond the school, Linda has served as a proclaimer and eucharistic minister at St. Mary's Parish and, alongside her husband, supports The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. Her selfless devotion to others, always rooted in kindness and humility, is a testament to her unwavering faith.

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“I am very humbled to receive this award,” said Linda Downey. “It is a privilege to teach in a school division where I am able to share and grow in my faith alongside my students, colleagues, and parents. Having my faith embedded throughout my workday is a blessing beyond measure; one that I give thanks for every day. It is an honour to serve in this role and I am grateful for all who have supported, and continue to support me on this journey.”

“Linda embodies the heart of Catholic education. Her unwavering commitment to fostering a faith-filled environment is evident in everything she does. She leads with joy and humility, inspiring both students and staff to live their faith authentically. We are incredibly fortunate to have her as part of our Holy Family family,” said Stacey Martz, Vice Principal of Holy Family School, expressing her admiration for Linda’s dedication.

“Linda’s dedication to her students and her faith is truly remarkable. She exemplifies the qualities we strive to instill in our students: kindness, compassion, and a deep commitment to serving others. Her work in both the school and the wider community is a testament to her unwavering faith and her dedication to living out the Gospel values. We are immensely proud to recognize her with this well-deserved award,” added RDCRS Board Chair Murray Hollman.

Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools serves over 9,600 students in 21 schools in Red Deer, Blackfalds, Sylvan Lake, Rocky Mountain House, Innisfail, and Olds. It also supports the learning of over 950 students in a Home Education Program. The Division is committed to serving children and parents with a complete offering of learning opportunities delivered within the context of Catholic teachings and within the means of the Division.

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