



Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association

*Celebrate, preserve, promote and enhance Catholic education*

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## ACSTA stands in solidarity on World Catholic Education Day with those affected by Ft. McMurray fire



**May 5, 2016**

Edmonton, AB - Today on World Catholic Education Day, the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association (ACSTA) stands in solidarity with our brothers and sisters who have been impacted so greatly by the fire in Ft. McMurray. It is with heavy hearts and great concern that we have witnessed the unfolding of the unprecedented events over the last few days.

Catholic schools across the province are taking this day to showcase Catholic education in special ways. World Catholic Education Day is held 40 days after Easter on Ascension, and is a time for Catholics around the world to take a moment to pause, reflect and pray on the gift that is Catholic education, and how it has served many in Canada over the years, from primary to post-secondary education.

The ACSTA affirms its commitment to support and celebrate Catholic education in Alberta, the Northwest Territories and the Yukon. As Pope Francis commented back in February 2015 to a group of educators, *"You cannot speak of Catholic education without speaking about humanity, because the Catholic identity is precisely that God became man."*

This is why the ACSTA stands in solidarity with everyone affected by the Ft. McMurray fire, as Catholic education at its heart is about humanity, and how as God's children, it is our obligation and privilege to help those in need. Along with our continuing prayers for safety and security for all affected, we stand ready to help by supporting our local Bishops and school boards in their campaigns to raise funds for victims of this terrible tragedy. We are also working closely with our member boards, as well as the Council of Catholic School Superintendents of Alberta, to help displaced students. Please know that all of us involved in Catholic education in Alberta stand ready, able and willing to help students, staff and their families in any way we can, be it through registering at new schools, to more tangible ways, such as the procuring of school supplies.

In the meantime, the ACSTA is encouraging people to donate to their local Bishops Appeals, and the Red Cross, whose relief efforts offer immediate help to those in need. Please visit <http://www.redcross.ca/in-your-community/alberta>. Also, dioceses across the province are having special collections this weekend. Please contribute generously.

Stay tuned for further updates from the ACSTA on actions we are taking to help. For further information, contact Adriana LaGrange, ACSTA President at 403-396-9912 or Dean Sarnecki, ACSTA Executive Director at 780-484-6248. Please follow our Twitter feed [@ACSTANews](https://twitter.com/ACSTANews) to stay up to date on what's going on with our member boards. You can access the full list via this link: <http://www.acsta.ab.ca/about-us/member-boards> to see what great things are happening in Catholic education across the province. Also, be sure to visit our member boards' respective Twitter and Facebook pages for Education Week updates.