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STAR Catholic School Division nominates Bailey St. Jean for Excellence in Catholic Education Award

Leduc — STAR Catholic School Division is thrilled to announce the nomination of École Notre Dame School grade 6 teacher Bailey St. Jean for the 2022 Excellence in Catholic Education Award.

St. Jean, who was inspired to become a teacher after a start as a dance instructor, has spent the entirety of her eight-year career with STAR Catholic. She said her love of building relationships with others is among the most gratifying aspects of the job.

“Very quickly I began to realize that this was my vocation. Spending time with children, helping them learn and grow, and showing them love and kindness is the most rewarding career path I could ever imagine,” she explained.

St. Jean goes above and beyond to ensure her students feel loved and accepted. Each child receives a special mug at Christmastime and a t-shirt at the end of the year; both gifts are carefully chosen to represent their unique personalities. When her students are asked about their teacher, a common response is that she makes learning fun.

“Students in Bailey’s class know that they are beautifully and wonderfully made, and that they are loved by God, their family and friends, and their teacher,” wrote Principal Monique Tellier-Phillips. “She is a wonderful example of what excellence in Catholic education truly means.”

St. Jean said she believes Catholic education is about more than just curriculum, but also about sharing God’s messages with her students in everything she does. She added that, while teaching during a pandemic had its difficulties, her faith helped give her the strength needed to persevere.

“My class regularly shares intentions and prays together. Knowing that we can all be there for each other, even though sometimes we feel distance, has been a powerful tool to help us all,” she explained. “Even on the darkest days, God always provides us with light.”

Presented annually by the Council of Catholic School Superintendents of Alberta (CCSSA), the Excellence in Catholic Education Award recognizes passionate Catholic teachers in Alberta who have gone above and beyond to guide youth as they grow into exemplary Catholic citizens. You can read more about the award at www.ccssa.ca/documents.

Based in central Alberta, Saint Thomas Aquinas Roman (STAR) Catholic School Division represents 12 schools that serve the communities of Beaumont, Drayton Valley, Lacombe, Leduc, Ponoka, and Wetaskiwin. The STAR Catholic Schools team of teachers and support staff are committed to giving more than 4000 students across our division every opportunity to achieve their potential in a caring, safe and Christ-centered environment.

- 30 -

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