



A Story of Faith

Vanier Gr. 2 Edson, Living Waters
Illustrations by Superintendent Jo-Anne Lanctot



In this GrACE edition

- † Meet the ACSTA Board of Directors
- † Submissions from Elk Island Catholic Schools, Edmonton Catholic Schools, Holy Spirit Catholic Schools
- † Find links to newsletters from CTR, CCSD, Living Waters & Evergreen

Top Advocacy Tool Kit Tips

1. **Educate**
Invite Parents to come make Advent wreaths and learn more about Catholic education. Prepare a short presentation to accompany the workshop.
2. **Engage**
Ask your students why they love Catholic education. Post their responses on social media or compile in a newsletter for your district.
3. **Unite**
Arrange to make a GrACE presentation to your parish council, Knights of Columbus, CWL and other lay associations. Invite questions and conversation.
4. **Communicate**
Ensure that links to GrACE are on your school, school district and parish website.

The mission of GrACE is to inspire, invigorate and embolden the spirit of Catholic education in order to unite, engage, educate and communicate with one voice on its behalf.

GrACE Newsletter

GrACE newsletter seeks to build a provincial Catholic community by celebrating Catholic education across Alberta.

CCSSA Marked by God

Submitted by Executive Director, CCSSA, Michael Hauptman

2022 Marked by God Conference – “He Will Lift You Up”
– Stories of Courageous Catholic Leadership

On October 6 & 7 of this year, the *Marked by God* Conference saw 280 delegates from school and divisional leadership across the province come together in Red Deer. As educators, colleagues and friends, we celebrated the 5 marks of Catholic Education Leadership through the stories and works of amazing individuals and groups. This conference was the third edition of the *Marked by God* theme following the “Growing Forward” Symposium in 2014. Sessions included; *Building Catholic Community and Culture*, *Leading as Gospel Witness*, *Learning to Lead as you Grow in Your Faith Leadership*, and an expert panel sharing *New Research in Catholic Education*.

Recognizing and sharing the wonderful work of individuals, groups and divisions around the province brings inspiration to all those that serve in Catholic education and provides insights for future directions that all leaders can reflect upon within their unique roles.

Thank you to the committee who put in countless hours in the planning and implementing of this conference. Appreciation as well for the presenters, and the celebrants. Finally, sincere gratitude to Red Deer Catholic School Division whose contribution as the host city truly made this a memorable event.



Meet the Board of Directors for ACSTA



Mary Martin
Calgary Catholic
School District



Sue Ross
Catholic Education
Association of YUKON
(CEAY)



Andrew Gustafson
Christ the Redeemer
Catholic Schools



**Robert Joseph
Gratton**
East Central
Catholic Schools



Dean Sarnecki
Elk Island
Catholic Schools



Gerald Bernakevitch
Evergreen
Catholic Schools



Cathie Langmead
Fort McMurray
Catholic



Michael Ouellette
Grande Prairie
Catholic



Noreen Radford
Greater St. Albert
Catholic



John Kuran
Holy Family
Catholic Schools



Linda Ellefson
Holy Spirit
Catholic Schools



Vince MacDonald
Lakeland
Catholic Schools



Gemma Christie
Living Waters
Catholic Schools



Kathy Glasgo
Medicine Hat
Catholic Schools



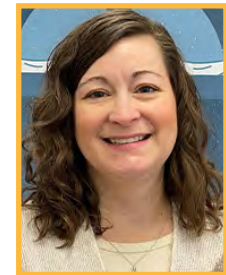
Monique LaGrange
Red Deer
Catholic Schools



Lorette Andersen
St. Paul
School Division



Dawn Miller
St. Thomas Aquinas
Catholic Schools



Susan Waddell
Yellowknife
Catholic Schools

Alberta's Francophone School Districts offer Catholic Education...



Steve Daigle
Conseil Scolaire
Centre-Nord



Geneviève Poulin
Conseil Scolaire
FrancoSud



Danielle Larsen
Conseil Scolaire
Centre-Est



Pascal Leclerc
Conseil Scolaire du
Nord-Ouest



Catholic Education News in Alberta Elk Island Catholic Schools

EICS GrACE Engagement Evening to Celebrate Catholic Education Oct. 21, 2022

Submitted by: Andrea Haston, Religious Education Consultant

“We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28)

Elk Island Catholic School’s GrACE Committee held an engagement session on October 21, 2022 to celebrate Catholic education. It was held at St. Francis Xavier Church in Camrose, Alberta, one of Elk Island Catholic’s school communities.

EICS will be opening our new high school in Camrose in 2025. In addition to celebrating and sharing the importance of Catholic education the name of this new high school was revealed.

The Parish community quickly stepped up offering a meal to begin our event which was put on by the Knights of Columbus, CWL, PPC and parishioners. About 150 people came through the Church doors and were greeted by the Faith team members of St. Patrick Catholic elementary school along with Our Lady of Mount Pleasant football team. The Church hall was filled with conversation, laughter and joy.

Our division theme this year is Better Together: One Body in Christ (Romans 12:5). This theme focuses on community and the way God calls us to live together. After being apart for a few years due to COVID, it was apparent and heart-warming to witness this sense of community.

We were blessed to have an incredible line up of speakers including Archbishop Richard Smith, Father Kris Schmidt, Honourable Justice Kevin Feehan, and Stacey MacNeil-Ayeh.

Archbishop Richard Smith spoke eloquently about the beauty and significance of Catholic education. He, however, said that we cannot become complacent. We must take every possible opportunity to advocate and never take Catholic education for granted. He cautioned that other places lost Catholic education because the people let it go. They were not able to articulate the need for Catholic education. Catholic schools put Jesus Christ at the center and that is how we are able to fulfill the calling to educate the whole person. It is our responsibility and call to bring out each child’s personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We cannot help each child to grow fully without a personal relationship with Christ. We want our students to know, love and follow Jesus as disciples. This is the reason for Catholic education.

Stacey MacNeil-Ayeh shared personal experiences from her time as a classroom teacher. She shared stories from the perspective of students and why they love Catholic education which we do not always get a chance to hear. Stacey reminded us that teachers live out a vocation that is a call from God and our significant role in Catholic education to form the whole child. What a beautiful gift and opportunity we have been given. Stacey ended by saying “There will not be a whimper, but a roar to silence those voices by those who want to take away Catholic education.”

The Honourable Justice Kevin Feehan provided history to the constitutional right to Catholic education in the province of Alberta. He went on to say how critical it is that we hold on to that constitutional right. In the constitution act of 1867 we have section 93 which states the protection of Catholic education.

Catholic Education Prayers of the Faithful for December 2022

- † For Catholic education: that during this season of Advent we may prepare our heart, minds and lives to welcome the Baby Jesus
- † For Catholic teachers: that their witness to hope in the Lord will be manifest daily, we pray to the Lord
- † For Catholic education: That each one of our Catholic school districts will seek to build Bethlehem in our schools and our hearts, we pray to the Lord
- † For Catholic education: The JOY may be manifest in our every word, action and thought, we pray to the Lord

Blog Links from ACSTA

Read and share these articles on Catholic education with YOUR stakeholders!

- † [Reflections on the Master of Religious Education Program - Beth Pecson](#)
- † [A Convert Stumbles Upon the Feast of All Saints - Brendan Cavanagh](#)
- † [Formation for Permeation: Teacher Faith Formation in Catholic Schools \(acsta.ab.ca\) - Grant Gay](#)

Catholic School District's Publications

- † [Calgary Catholic Schools](#)
- † [Redeemer Revelations](#)
- † [GrACE in Evergreen Schools](#)
- † [Living Waters](#)



That section is still there and has been protected even due to many legal battles. Feeham mentioned that there have been at least fifty challenges against Catholic education and every time, passionate advocates stood up and won. He told the audience that it is now our turn to stand up to protect Catholic education.

Father Kris Schmidt reminded us that God has given each child everything they need. We are called as Catholic educators to help bring that out. Everything we need comes from the source which is Jesus Christ and we must always allow everything to flow from that source. He went on to say that If we lose our connection to that source, we lose the purpose of Catholic education. When speaking about the important parish/school connection, he reminded us about the anchor, the classic Christian symbol for hope. This symbol reminds us that in order to move forward into the space which we currently don't know, we need to be grounded. The connection of our schools to our parishes is our continual reminder of who we are, where we come from, and where we are going. That's our hope.

This event achieved what all four speakers alluded to about Catholic education, which is, the importance of advocating, seeing the value, celebrating, and sharing the gift and blessings it brings.

Holy Spirit Catholic Schools

Connected as Pilgrims in the Body of Christ

Submitted by Caryn Swark, Associate Principal at Our Lady of the Assumption School.

On October 20, 2022, the students of Our Lady of the Assumption participated in their annual student retreat. This year, we looked to fuse our faith plan and our call to turn inwards as pilgrims of hope with the Indigenous concept of the medicine wheel, which asks us to live our lives in balance and harmony. Students had the opportunity to consider what balance looks like in their own lives as they participated in eight centers, each focused around one of the four areas of the medicine wheel: mind, body, spirit, and heart.

We began our day with a short prayer service where we learned more about the medicine wheel and heard a Blackfoot prayer from Kristen Shade, our Blackfoot educator. Ms Shade also led one of the two HEART themed centers, inviting students to dip their hands in paint based on their birth month and contribute



a hand print to a large medicine wheel we went on to hang in the school. Throughout the day, students continued to explore their hearts by considering how the circle of courage calls on us to live in balance and reflecting on their own actions. They engaged their minds with a storytelling activity based around Indigenous learning and focusing on themes prevalent in our faith plan and considered how the medicine wheel could help them improve their own mental health.

Physically, our students designed and created their own stained glass images in keeping with the central image of our faith plan and participated in a VERY active medicine wheel relay sort in the gym! They also had the opportunity to connect spiritually, designing their own crosses in the colors of the medicine wheel with shrink art and constructing small rosaries and participating in a prayer rock ceremony of gratitude.

The day was greatly enjoyed by all students and staff and truly helped us see that when we learn and work together, we are all connected as pilgrims in the Body of Christ!



Lumen Christi Catholic Education Centre

Submitted by Sandra Talarico

“You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything but is thrown out and trampled under foot. “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5. 13-16)

On Friday, September the 2 nd , with a blessing from Archbishop Richard Smith, Edmonton Catholic Schools officially christened its new Lumen Christi Catholic Education Centre. As part of the celebration, His Grace shared the passage from the gospel of Matthew and connecting the image of light, remarked about the beautiful rays of sunshine that flowed from the skylights in the atrium to the adjoining offices. At the conclusion of the liturgy, the Archbishop toured and blessed the individual spaces, including the Chapel which sits proudly at the front of the building, surrounded by beautiful stain glass windows that depict the liturgical seasons.

For us, the Lumen Christi Chapel serves as the building’s beacon, calling staff for Mass, Liturgies of the Word, for praying the Rosary and the Liturgy of the Hours, and for Adoration. On October the 4 th , the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, Archbishop Richard Smith returned to Lumen Christi Catholic Education Centre to consecrate the Altar. This was a wonderful occasion to gather again in the Chapel, to sing, pray, listen, and to share in the Eucharistic meal.

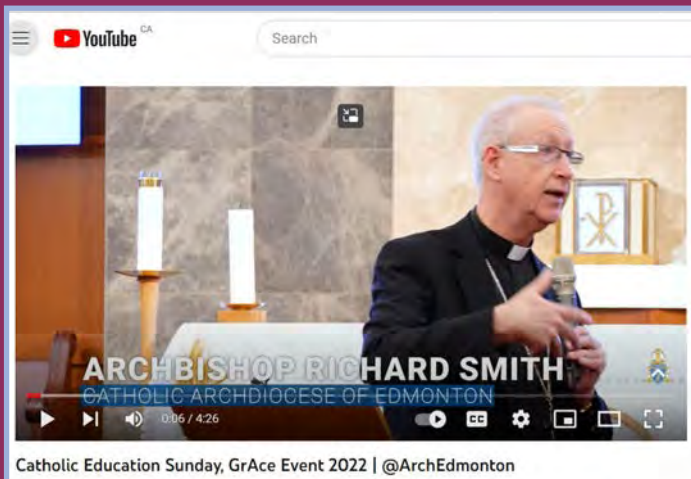
Indeed, as followers of Jesus, living the beatitudes, we matter. We have an important role to play because we are the salt of the earth. Salt preserves and helps us preserve what is good in culture. In the same way, we are called to be light to the world. Our job description is not only to maintain personal holiness, but also to touch the lives of everyone around us; to be true witnesses in Christ.



Catholic News in Alberta

Archbishop Smith and others share their insights on the gift of Catholic education

Youtube Video



Bishop McGrattan share his insights during his recent trip to Rome

[CCCB Presidency Visit to the Holy See – ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF CALGARY \(catholicycyc.ca\)](https://www.catholicycyc.ca/)



St Mary's University installs their first Female President

On October 28th, 2022, Dr. Sinda Vanderpool was formally installed as St. Mary's University's president and vice-chancellor. The ceremony and Mass took place at the beautiful St. Albert the Great Parish.

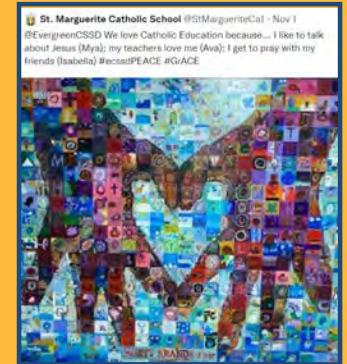
This marks the beginning of the next phase in St. Mary's University's evolution and growth. This was a historic day, as we gathered as a community and celebrated our new president, the fourth in our history and first female appointment.

A gifted and inspiring leader, we look forward to Dr. Vanderpool continuing to expand upon St. Mary's student-centered vision of growth and success, building upon our position as a leading liberal arts, sciences, and education institution rooted in the Catholic intellectual tradition that is open to all.

<https://stmu.ca/thank-you-to-everyone-who-attended-the-installation-of-dr-sinda-vanderpool-video-and-photos-from-the-ceremony-are-available-here/>



Celebrating Catholic Education Sunday in Alberta



You are invited...

In a spirit of gratitude to Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI for his years of service to retreat ministry and education in the Edmonton area, and in honor of his 50th Anniversary year of priesthood, we will celebrate his time with us:

Public Lecture "Quiet Prophecy: Another Kind of Protest for Social & Religious Transformation"

Please join us for this public lecture and celebration. Followed by cake and light desserts with tea, coffee and beverages.

Friday, December 2nd, 2022 at 7:00 pm (MT) at St. Albert Parish Hall

Lecture Only:

Online \$25 / In-Person \$30 (no tax receipt issued)

Lecture & Celebration:

\$50 (charitable tax receipt issued for donations of \$50 or more)

[Celebrate with Ron Rolheiser](#) | [Programs](#) | [Register](#) | [Star of the North Retreat Centre](#)



Fr. Ron Rolheiser is an internationally-known author, retreat leader and spiritual theologian. He writes a weekly column that is carried in over 70 newspapers around the world. He is a former professor at Newman Theological College in Edmonton, Alberta and past-president of the Oblate School of Spirituality in San Antonio, Texas.

Connect Online

We ask you to help us celebrate Catholic education in Alberta. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. 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!

† GrACE Facebook address is www.facebook.com/GrACE4cathed

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

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

† [GrACE website](https://www.grace4catholiceducation.com)

† Email: gracedirector7@gmail.com

Social Media from around the Province...

PofPCCSD @PofPccsd · Nov 2

We had many students involved with Sacrament preparation today at lunch. #IBelieveInCatholicEd @CCSD_edu



Evergreen Catholic Schools @EvergreenCSSD · Nov 6

In Devon, AB, Mrs. Rebecca Laarz, Asst Super @TLGuimond, Trustee Margaret Cargill & Pastor Fr. Luan Vu celebrated Catholic Education Sunday @ St. Maria Goretti Parish with students & staff of @HolySpiritDevon (K-9) & parishioners. #WalkingTogetherinCatholicEducation #ecssdPEACE



St. Martin de Porres School
November 1 at 3:54 PM · 📍

Today, All Saints Day, our students had an opportunity to "Encounter the Saints." Thank you to Mr Sawula, Mrs Meneen, Mrs Kelly, Mrs Miller and Mr Gamez for sharing stories about their favourite saint and teaching us how we all can encounter God through the Saints. #rdcrs #stmartinfearts #IBelieveInCatholicEd



STAR Catholic @STARCatholic · Nov 6

It's #CatholicEducationSunday! We are grateful for our Catholic schools that reveal the Glory of God in all that they do!

#IBelieveInCatholicEd



St. James CCSD @stjamesCCSD · Nov 2

To read a prayer a child has created is to take your mind and heart on a journey of innocence, faith, hope and Love. Olivia's prayer about Love was chosen to represent St. James in A Collection of Prayers made by the District (4Morrissy) #ibelieveincatholiced



Dean Sarnecki @sarneckid · Nov 12

Celebrating Catholic education at Our Lady of Perpetual Help parish with @EpkSchool @MCS_EICS @EICSCatholic #wearestrongertogether



Grace: Grateful Advocates for Catholic Education
6d · 🌐

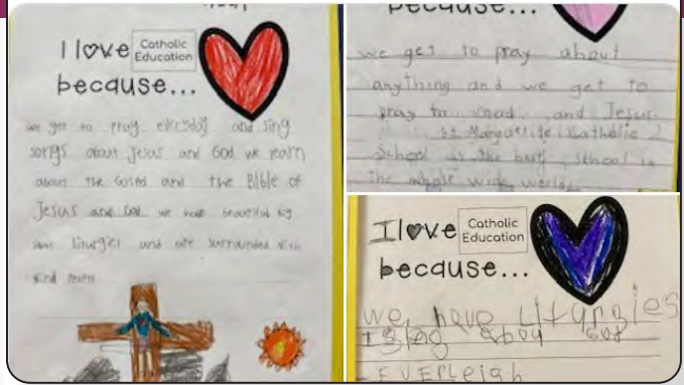


Holy Trinity Catholic School - Olds
November 5 at 5:24 PM · 🌐

On Friday, the Grade 4s received their Bibles at the Bible Celebration. They will use these all year to dig into the Word of God and grow in their faith. Please keep these special kids in your prayers! #holyltrinityolds #rcrcs #oldsab

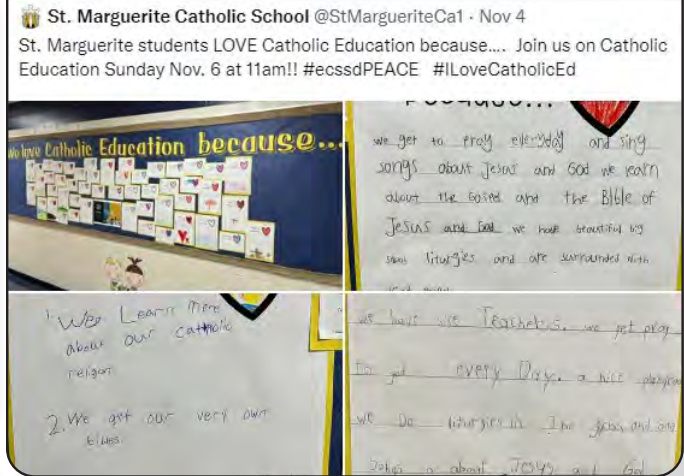
St. Marguerite Catholic School
@StMargueriteCa1

We love Catholic Education because... #ecssdPEACE



Evergreen Catholic Schools
@EvergreenCSSD

Beautiful display of gratitude and love for Catholic education at St. Marguerite K-4 Catholic School in Spruce Grove @StMargueriteCa1 (whose patron saint was a Catholic teacher, @cndsisters foundress Marguerite Bourgeoys!) @GrACE4cathed @archedmonton



St. Marguerite Catholic School @StMargueriteCa1 - Nov 4
St. Marguerite students LOVE Catholic Education because.... Join us on Catholic Education Sunday Nov. 6 at 11am!! #ecssdPEACE #ILoveCatholicEd

PofPCCSD @PofPccsd · Nov 9

JH scavenger hunt was a success! Students were given riddles about different spaces throughout the school to find a letter. Using the letters they gathered, they had to solve a final riddle: Grow in Faith Hope & Love. #IBelieveinCatholicEd @CCSD_edu



Dean Sarnecki
@sarneckid

Listening to a presentation at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish on the Catechesis of the Good Shephard - a Montessori based program for 3-6 years of age. It's awesome.



Clint Morozuk @SuperGSACRD · Nov 1

Great start to our Division Faith & Wellness with Mass at St. Albert Parish and a keynote address with Fr. Jim Corrigan. @GSACRD @gsacr_d_faith @GrACE4cathed



Grace: Grateful Advocates for Catholic Education
November 4 at 11:18 AM

St. Mary's Sexsmith
for

Today our Saint family celebrated Catholic Education at our parish home!
Eucharist means thanksgiving and we are so thankful for Catholic education and even more thankful to celebrate and receive the source and summit of our faith: the blessed sacrament! We are also thankful for our students who helped out in Mass, you did great! We are so proud of you!

After Mass we had lunch, hosted by the CWL (THANK UPU), and an art show showcasing the art work of our terrific, grade 2-5! We also displayed our whole school art project, dedicated to Catholic Education! The logo is filled with the fingerprints of our wonderful students and the little people around the edge were done by them as well!

Thank you to our fantastic staff, great students and supportive families! Thank you for walking with us in Catholic Education!

#LivingtheFaithLife #catholiceducation #BelieveInCatholicEd Grande Prairie & District Catholic Schools

Grace: Grateful Advocates for Catholic Education
November 4 at 11:18 AM

St. John Paul II Collegiate
November 4 at 8:25 AM

Yesterday every student at JP II had the opportunity to spend some quiet time in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. It is always an amazing experience for the kids to be still and silent in the presence of the Lord, especially in a world of busyness, noise, and distraction.

#BelieveInCatholicEd

Tina Madden @MrsTLMadden · Nov 2
Congratulations to Kiera B., whose prayer about agape love was selected to be featured in our district collection of prayers. We are proud of you Kiera! #BelieveInCatholicEd #Love @OLWChesterme

St. Joseph Catholic @joes4646 · Nov 10
We are so grateful for the soldiers who fought, so we may know peace and freedom. We are truly blessed! #LestWeForget 🌹 #ecssdPEACE

Lory Iovinelli @LoryIovinelli

“Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God’ Luke 18:16

Celebrating the gift and beauty of Catholic Education on Catholic Education Sunday.

sacredheart_wet

STAR Catholic School Division

Holy Family CCSD @HolyFamily_CCSD · Nov 2
 A month to remember @HolyFamily_CCSD @CCSD_edu @CCEF_Y



@Holy Child School
 @HChild_CCSD

FAITH, HOPE, and LOVE! ❤️
 We are celebrating Faith Day today through prayer, reflection, and acts of service. 🙏
 Lord God, you have made us your own and filled us with the richness of your love. Transform our hearts and minds that we might grow in faith, hope, love and holiness.



Father Doucet School
 @frdoucet_ccsd

We love to hear the prayers of our students every day.
 #talktogod #ccsd

