



THE CATHOLIC DIMENSION

*Speaking of Catholic Education in
Alberta, Northwest Territories and Yukon*

Published by the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association

December 2018



Serena Shaw, President



Cheryl Low, Vice-President

Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association ***Elects New President and Vice-President***

The Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association (ACSTA), during its Annual General Meeting in November, elected Serena Shaw from Greater St. Albert Catholic School District as ACSTA President, and Cheryl Low who serves with the Calgary Catholic School District as ACSTA Vice-President.

Serena Shaw served as a Director with ACSTA for three years prior to taking on the role of Interim President in June 2018. Shaw was first elected as a Trustee in St. Albert in 2013, and held the position of Board Chair with the district from 2016 – 2018.

Shaw was humbled to be re-elected by her peers following her role as interim President since June 2018. Having experienced this leadership role for the past five months she commented, *"the collaboration among all districts is outstanding and our shared mission to celebrate, and advocate for Catholic education provides us with clarity in all that we do. I am looking forward to building on the great work of the Association and its members to elevate the importance of choice for families. We are blessed to have many supporters of publicly funded Catholic education who know that we are part of the provincial education success story. The opportunity for our Association going forward is to share our story and strengthen this support."*

Cheryl Low has served Calgary Catholic Schools since 2013 as Trustee and passionately represented wards in Calgary, Chestermere and the surrounding rural communities. Cheryl has served as Board Chair with the district from 2015 to present. Having an abundance of experience, Cheryl shares, *"God calls each of us to serve. This call for me now is to serve the ACSTA in its mission to celebrate, preserve, promote and enhance publicly funded Catholic education, work that is more important now than ever."*

We wish both Trustee Shaw and Trustee Low every success as they begin their new journey within their respective roles as President and Vice-President of ACSTA.

The Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association represents Catholic trustees in Alberta, Northwest Territories and Yukon.

We Believe...

Catholic education recognizes that parents have the primary right to educate their children in conformity with the family's moral and religious conviction. Catholic schools are an extension of the home and work in cooperation with the Catholic church to provide an integrated approach to faith and learning.

Catholic education is Christ centered education. The development of the child is rooted within the context of a deepening relationship with Jesus Christ. Within the Catholic school students learn Jesus' message of love, faith, and hope. Jesus Christ, as role model for all members of the school community, inspires relationships rooted in tenants of the faith.



Serena Shaw, President



Cheryl Low, Vice-President

Mission

Celebrate, preserve, promote and enhance Catholic education.

Vision

That all have access to a publicly funded Catholic education.

Core Purpose

We are committed to a unified voice providing spiritual and political leadership for publicly-funded Catholic education.

Join ACSTA on Facebook & Twitter
Follow us at @ACSTANews
www.acsta.ab.ca



Did you know?

ACSTA has **24** member boards

There are **483** Catholic Schools in Alberta, NWT and Yukon

There are over **181,000** students receiving a Catholic Education in Alberta, NWT and Yukon

Catholic schools have been **operating in Alberta since the 1840's** - well before Alberta became a province

ACSTA was formed in 1966 to support **Separate School Trustees** and to provide opportunities for Trustees to discuss issues important to Catholic education.

Catholic schools are all-inclusive, welcoming school communities where all students are unique creations of God and are cherished as gifts from God.

Taking a Closer Look

Catholic schools are distinct because they integrate faith and learning in a fully permeated Catholic culture. Catholic schools cultivate a culture where growth in faith formation is a communal journey.

Catholic schools work collaboratively with stakeholders and partners as prudent stewards of resources. Through a variety of partnerships such as co-operative school financing, joint purchasing, transportation, energy management, and other shared services, taxpayers save millions of dollars.

Catholic schools celebrate diversity and inclusion rooted in tenants of hospitality, tradition, justice, sacramentality, and spirituality. Catholic education contributes to celebrating Canada's mosaic of citizens. Non - Catholic parents have the opportunity to choose a faith based education for their children. Choice remains an important distinguishing attribute of a democratic society.

Catholic schools cultivate a welcoming, safe, caring, and respectful learning environments where love of the Father, faith in Jesus Christ, and hope from the Holy Spirit give witness to the faith.

Catholic schools are authentically "Catholic" based on the teachings of the Church. This permeation of faith is recognized by the courts, the Charter, and the Constitution.

Catholic education gives witness of the faith through its' Catholic educators. The Catholic worldview permeates all aspects of the curriculum and culture of a Catholic school. Thus teachers understand their role to be ministry in the service of others and vocation in the answering to God's call.

Catholic education is rooted in the unwavering understanding that all children are God's children, created in his likeness and image, deserving of unconditional love and inherent dignity. The student is seen as a person whose intellectual growth is harmonized with spiritual, religious, emotional, physical, and social well-being.



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The Wisdom of God

*“For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”
1 Cor. 1:18*

I feel that our lives are like a ship in rough seas and though we hold strong to the rudder, the seas toss and turn us endlessly. And just when we feel we are in control, another wave blindsides us and we struggle to regain a sense of direction and control. For those of us who believe in the power of God, it is that power that maintains our lives, anchors us to something solid, and provides respite from the stormy seas.

At mass last weekend, I found myself reflecting on the experience of living in a world that seems in turmoil. People pitted against each other in a world of confusion, clashing agendas, diverse beliefs, and incompatible virtues. Those of us who trust in transcendent realities – God – who believe that there is something more than meets the eye, that of a divine, eternal love that guides and heals (saves) us to fullness, seem to live in a world that greets our reality and beliefs as foolishness.

“For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to



Submitted by:
Dean Sarnecki, Executive Director
ACSTA

*those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.”
1 Cor. 21-24*

We begin mass with the penitential rite; a reminder that in a world of individualism, relativism and selfishness, that we are sinners. “I confess to almighty God, and to you my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned.” I, we, are broken, imperfect creations that come to fullness of human flourishing only with the help of God and the community. “Through, my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault” I call and reach out to God and my brothers and sisters for help, for healing, for wholeness - the wisdom of God.

In a world devoted to ideals such as rugged individualism, the quest for riches, authoritative titles, where “he who dies with the most toys wins” are the true measures of success – a reflection on my own sinfulness is futile, wrong, and self-destructive – the wisdom of the world.

“For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength.” 1 Cor. 25

Later, through the words, actions and prayers of the priest gathered in community turn ordinary bread and wine in the flesh and blood, a solemn divine spirit lifts and enlivens the gathered community, transforms them into a people of strength and love and mission. This is the power of God. Foolishness says the wise – bread is bread, wine is wine, it can be no more. Believing in angels, and resurrection, and spirits is illogical and ridiculous. Believing spoken words of prayer are dry and empty as the tomb you will rot in is worthless and a waste of time says the world – all those worthless Sundays spent in church that could have been spent – sleeping, running, playing, working - the wisdom of the world.

“God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are...” 1 Cor. 27-28

Catholic schools, scoff the critics, are archaic and not in keeping with the times as they indoctrinate children into our own delusions of “bloody” wine and “fleshy” bread, of sin and self-reflection. Catholic schools present radical ideas like the dignity of all life from conception to natural death, that economic injustice is sinful, that we must love our enemies, relationships are sacred, and care for our neighbours – not because it is “nice” but because we have a divine calling to heal the world – the wisdom of God.

This foolishness is difficult. To be a Christian, to publicly profess faith in God, is foolish in the eyes of many and opens us up to ridicule and hate – and Catholic schools and health care become lightning rods for the attacks.

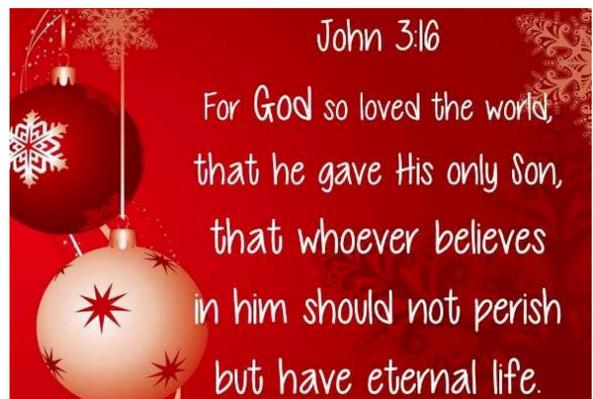
However, even the dead float with the current; it is hard to go against the current, the popular, the “nice” when you find a truth bigger than you, greater than the world, and you would rather not (see Jeremiah 20:7-9) continue but you persist because the Good News is even greater than your fear.

“He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption” 1 Cor. 30

In the secular world Catholic schools and the education provided there is foolishness to the world. However we believe that the foolishness of God is greater than the greatest wisdom of the world. And this Wisdom is found incarnate in Christ Jesus. It is on this wisdom that Catholic schools persist and thrive; in showing the world another way, a view of world with an eternal mission. While Paul may have been writing to the “saints” in Corinth close to 2000 years ago, Chapter 1 of his letter could easily have been written to the people of Alberta, Yukon and Northwest Territories today. I would encourage everyone to read the chapter and reflect on it in light of our contemporary struggles.

Oh, and by the way, because God is love, God wins in the end.

(Special thanks to Fr. Dan Horan who led our AGM Retreat and inspired the message reflected on here.)





WHO do You Say that I am?

Eugenia Kowalczyk, Ph.D.
ACSTA, Director of Advocacy

Identity is complex. Many of us would describe ourselves based on our personal, social, professional, or cultural characteristics. I might describe myself as being Italian, or that I am a wife,

daughter, or sister. Further I share that I am an educator. Ultimately, I could articulate that I am Catholic and a person of faith. While these labels appear simple, the totality of their parts creates a kaleidoscope of what it means to be human.

Catholic identity is at the heart of Catholic education. Who we are as people of God within our educational communities, our family, and our church is shaped and influenced by our life experiences and our social interactions. Catholic schools serve as the fertile soil where seeds of faith are sowed and nurtured. How blessed we are knowing that when we send our children to a Catholic school we can rest assured that their social, academic, physical, emotional, and spiritual needs are looked after. What a precious gift we have in Catholic education.

The great philosopher Thomas Groome (2002) explained how, “we need a sense of identity to live humanly, without it we literally feel lost. From the Latin *identitas*, meaning “the same, repeatedly,” identity is that which holds together a continuous sense of our human “being” as a person or a community. It is the metaphorical glue that binds who we are as individuals and who we are in community. It is who we are and how we live...identity is the center that holds...otherwise... things fall apart.”

Catholic identity provides each of us to view the world using a Catholic lens. Together we strive to understand and develop a deeper relationship with Christ.

According to another great philosopher Walter Feinberg (2006), religious identity is constructed systematically and formally across many landscapes; school, church, and home. It is in these different places “where students learn the practices, rituals, beliefs, and commitments that distinguish their religion from others, and where they take on the identity of a specific faith community.”

Realizing that the faith formation of our children is central to their education, we collaborate to understand the shared responsibility between parents, educators, clergy, and community. Together we work in mutual cooperation and understanding towards a common vision of what comprises faith formation of children within the broader landscape of personal identity.

Inspired by the late Sr. Annata Brockman to love tenderly, act justly, and walk humbly with our Lord, let us remain faithful to the commitment of Catholic education. Might we never forget the most precious gift of all; our students each one created in the likeness and image of God. Their Catholic identity, inspired by the Holy Spirit, calls us all to give witness to our faith and remember that Christ is the reason for Catholic schools. In answering the question, “who do you say I am?” the response, “a child of God” paves the understanding of how together, in communion, we nurture our Catholic identity.



Update on The Theodore Case: Good Spirit v. Christ the Redeemer



Submitted by: Anna Loparco, Partner, Dentons Canada LLP

The decision of the Saskatchewan Court of Queen's Bench, *Good Spirit School Division No. 204 ("GSSD") v. Christ the Teacher Roman Catholic Separate School Division ("CTT")*, a case also known as *Theodore*, interprets constitutional guarantees for publicly funded Catholic schools in Saskatchewan. For a complete summary of the decision, please see the previous Legally Speaking Article published in the Catholic Dimension, November 2016 (https://www.acsta.ab.ca/images/pdfs/legally_speaking/winter_2017_-_government_funding_.pdf)

Trial Decision

A number of ancillary questions and issues are dealt with in the decision; however, the core of the Court ruling is that separate school boards are not constitutionally guaranteed to receive public funding for non-Catholic students in Saskatchewan.

In 2003, Yorkdale School Division closed its community K-Grade 8 School in Theodore, Saskatchewan. Its 42 students would have to be bussed to the neighbouring school in Springside, 17 km away. A group of Roman Catholics successfully petitioned the Minister of Education to form the Theodore Roman Catholic School Division.

In 2005, Yorkdale School Division (now GSSD) commenced an action against what is now Christ the Teacher Roman Catholic School Division #212 and the Government of Saskatchewan. GSSD alleged that per student grants paid to a Catholic school division for non-Catholic students is discriminatory against public schools under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The essence of the decision turns on the question of whether government funding of non-minority faith students in Saskatchewan's separate schools is constitutionally protected.

The trial judge recognized that the constitutional guarantee that operates in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario, entitling Roman Catholics and Protestants to petition the provincial government to create a separate denominational school is an immutably cast constitutional right

under s. 93 of the Constitution. However, Justice Layh held that the extension of that right to *funding of all students* is not constitutionally guaranteed; he then ruled that this exposed the claim to scrutiny under the *Charter*. Without the protection of the Constitution, Justice Layh found that funding of non-Catholic students in Catholic schools automatically infringed both the freedom of religion and freedom of equality guarantees in the Charter.

In response to the decision, Education Minister David Eggen affirmed that it has no impact on the Alberta education system. Nevertheless, it may have potential negative impact on future jurisprudence in Alberta given the similarity of the *Alberta Act* and the *Saskatchewan Act*.

Appeal

The decision is under appeal. The Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association (ACSTA) is in the process of seeking intervenor status. There are a number of other potential intervenors, including the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta ("PSBAA"), the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association ("OECTA"), the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association ("OCSTA"), and the Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques ("AFOCSC"). On December 10, 2018, the Court of Appeal heard submissions on whether to grant the intervenor applications and if it decides to do so, it will also rule on the scope of each intervenor's permitted submissions. At the time of publication the decision has not yet been rendered. If ACSTA is granted intervenor status, it will be allowed to file a 20 page factum and make oral argument (limited to 15 minutes) at the Appeal hearing to be held on March 12-14th in Regina.

Although the decision is not binding law in Alberta or Ontario, ACSTA is concerned about the impact on future jurisprudence applicable to Alberta separate schools. It therefore believes it is important to intervene in the Court of Appeal case in order to assist the Court in interpreting the constitutional guarantees, particularly in light of Alberta's similarity with Saskatchewan's history and evolution as it relates to Catholic schools.

Although the Appeal hearing will occur March 12-14, the decision will likely not issue until several months later.

Your Taxes... For Your Catholic Schools

Why It Matters

1. It recognizes and affirms the constitutional right of Catholic separate school boards to requisition municipalities for education taxes.

2. Taxation is a vital connection between school boards and their electors. It serves as a means of accountability for school trustees to provide quality education to those in their local communities, including those without school aged children.

3. It provides a stable source of funding for public education and allows for a public declaration of support by electors for Catholic education.



No Room *for* BEIGE

Submitted by:
Bonnie Annicchiarico, Ph.D
GrACE, Executive Director

In my journey as a Catholic,

I have had many significant faith-moments, but none as dramatic as my personal experience working to establish the first Catholic school in one of Alberta's rural communities. The formation of my town's first Catholic school was a trial by fire and forced me (and many in my parish) to get off the faith-fence and stand up for our beliefs. We could no longer be what Bishop Barron refers to as "beige Catholics", those who allow the prevailing culture to dominate our Catholic beliefs. Beige Catholics are too accommodating and excessively apologetic. In my own defining faith moments I had to ask myself: *What am I willing to sacrifice for the sake of my faith? Am I ready to risk my friends and reputation? Do I have the courage to ensure that my children and others have access to faith-based education?*

We are in a battle for Catholic education and there is no room for beige. God calls each of us to action and he infuses our souls with the will and ability to do so. **He is always at our side and he whispers in our ear, "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you" (Isaiah 41:10).**

Grateful Advocates for Catholic Education (GrACE) is a new initiative supported by the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association (ACSTA), the Bishops of Alberta & NWT and the Council of Catholic School Superintendents of Alberta (CCSSA). Through uniting, educating, and communicating with one voice on issues of Catholic education, GrACE will seek to animate the faithful in each school, parish and district across the province and equip them for advocacy. GrACE will provide a forum and engagement opportunities to

inspire and invigorate our communities. Each of you invested in Catholic education is invited to join the conversation and raise your voice for the future.

Catholic education in Alberta is flourishing and when things are going well we can often become complacent. Those entrusted with the care and preservation of Catholic education across our province, however, know that constant attention and vigilance are essential. It would be naïve to ignore the "one-system" activists and the frequent undermining and challenging of Catholic values from a variety of sources. As one of only three provinces with publicly-funded Catholic education, Alberta celebrates an impressive history of Catholic schooling. For more than 150 years Catholic educators have been providing distinct Catholic education to generations of young people. Today, Catholic schools educate more than 180,000 students in 483 Catholic schools. 10,700 teachers instruct and witness daily to those young people. Our Catholic schools gather in faith and share a Catholic worldview that embraces the dignity of the human person and permeates faith in each and every aspect of education. We are truly blessed. We are rightly grateful.

In this mission for Catholic education, there is no room for beige. GrACE looks forward to hearing your story, celebrating your school and emboldening you as an advocate for Catholic education.

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
be with you all. Amen**

Romans 16:24

ACSTA @ACSTANews

Thank you @davideggenAB for stating, "Catholic school boards wrote their policies from the perspective of faith and from the perspective of teaching through the Catholic faith and they did a great job" #ableg #abed

Education Minister warns 28 private schools defying GSA 1. Watch Education Minister warns 28 private schools defying GSA laws risk public funding Video Online. on GlobalNews.ca



5:56 PM - 15 Nov 2018

ACSTA @ACSTANews · Nov 18

@ACSTANews joins the world in praying for the poor. In Canada, 1.9 M families struggle to make ends meet. On this World Day of the Poor let us unite as a human family committed to eliminating all forms of poverty, by restoring human dignity and prosperity to all. #acstaagm



Robert Twerdoclib @VPRobertATA

Following

@albertateachers @ACSTANews @atalocal44

Alberta Teachers Association @albertateachers

In Alberta, public education includes schools in Alberta's public, Catholic and Francophone school boards. Pledge your support for public education at iBelieveinPublicEd.ca #iBelieveinPublicEd #ableg

THE FACE OF EDUCATION

I believe in public education

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

"...man cried, and the Lord heard him" (Ps 34:6)

...listen to the cry of the poor, but responds. ...act that heals wounds of body and ...new in dignity. ...protects

ACSTA @ACSTANews

@ACSTANews thanks @davideggenAB for his unwavering support of publicly funded Catholic education. Catholic schools achieve exemplary results and there is no doubt Catholic schools are safe and caring. Other systems have imitated and that is the greatest form of flattery #acstaagm

Grandin Media @grandinmedia

Publicly funded #Catholic #education not negotiable for #abndp govt. 'You have an ally', @davideggenAB tells @ACSTANews #acstaagm #yeg #ableg #abpoli



ACSTA @ACSTANews

Thank you @davideggenAB for your strong words of support for Catholic education @ACSTANews AGM. We have an exemplary education system in Alberta. Together we work to serve the needs of students as top priority. #ableg #abed #acstaagm

ACSTA @ACSTANews

Thanks to VPs Jenny Regal and Jason Schilling for their participation in our Convention! The @albertateachers is a vital partner to Catholic education in Alberta!

jason schilling @schill_dawg

Thanks @ACSTANews for your hospitality last night. Was a pleasure to meet @albertateachers. Good luck with the rest of your meetings this weekend

ACSTA on Social Media

ACSTA @ACSTANews

"That's not negotiable. You can take that to the bank. We're not going to change our commitment to public Catholic education. I believe that diversity of choice is one of the strengths we have in the province of Alberta." Thank you @davideggenAB and @grandinmedia #abed #ableg

Grandin Media @grandinmedia

Alberta education minister @davideggenAB assures trustees publicly funded #CatholicEducation is 'not negotiable'. #abed #ableg...



9:07 PM - 21 Nov 2018

ACSTA @ACSTANews

A message from @ACSTANews Vice President Paul Bourassa (P) ... Je suis a Ottawa pour les rencontre. Je représente les Catholiques et Francophones! @CCSTAconnect @CSFrancoSud

Translate Tweet



ACSTA @ACSTANews

Thanks for the reminder! Alberta has one publicly funded system that supports Catholic, public and Francophone schools all served by the Alberta Teachers Association!!

Robert Twerdoclib @VPRobertATA

@albertateachers @ACSTANews @atalocal44 twitter.com/albertateacher...

ACSTA @ACSTANews

Thank you @ab_teacher for the reminder that Alberta's Public, Catholic and Francophone school boards comprise Public Education in Alberta. The message clearly articulates that we fully support ALL these publicly funded choices. #ibelieveinPublicEd

ACSTA
@ACSTANews

@ACSTANews thank @albertateachers president Greg Jeffery @ab_teacher for his strong message of support for publicly funded Catholic education. By continuing to work together, we will ensure education in the province of Alberta is world class! #abled #abed

Alberta Teachers Association @albertateachers
Happy Catholic Education Sunday! Watch this message from president Greg Jeffery. #abed

ACSTA
@ACSTANews

Dean Sarnecki @sarneckid and Justice Kevin Feehan presenting the Justice Kevin Feehan Award for Catholic Education to Cheyenne Kopinsky of @SJCUofA on behalf of @DentonsCanada and @Loparco
Congratulations Cheyenne!



ACSTA
@ACSTANews

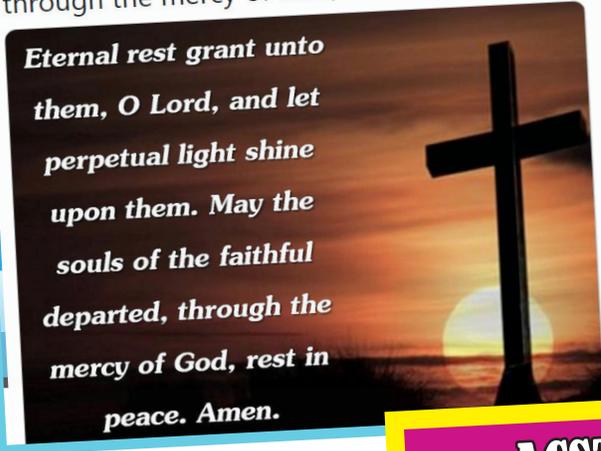
Official ribbon cutting of Sr. Alphonse Academy including representatives of the Sisters of Charity (Grey Nuns). Sr. Alphonse, a Grey Nun, was the first teacher in the St. Albert area.



ACSTA
@ACSTANews

@ACSTANews joins in prayer for all of the Faithful Departed. As we celebrate All Souls Day, we pray that all those who have died, through the mercy of God, will rest in peace.

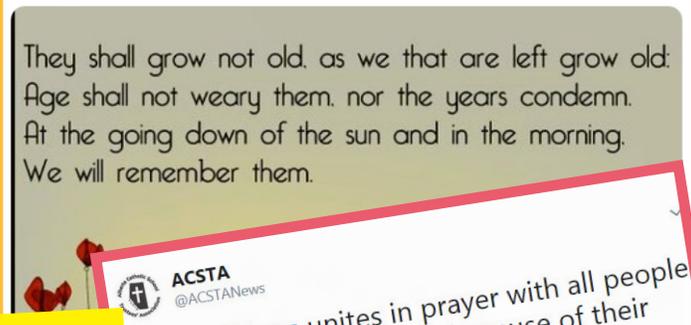
Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



ACSTA
@ACSTANews

@ACSTANews joins in remembering those who paid the price for freedom with their life. May they share in the banquet of Heaven in the peace of Christ. We will remember!

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old. Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, We will remember them.



ACSTA
@ACSTANews

Catholic education in Alberta dates back 1842 with the arrival of the Oblate and first school created by Grey Nuns at Lac St. Anne 1859! Congratulations to Edmonton Catholic for 130 years of education in "faith, hope and love"!

ECSD @EdmCathSchools
On Friday our schools will celebrate #ECSD's 130 Catholic education in #yeg has a proud tradition before Alberta was a province. #ECSDfaithinspiration

6:43 PM - 30 Oct 2018

**ACSTA
on
Social Media**

ACSTA
@ACSTANews

Justice Kevin Feehan, Chancellor, and Past President, Kevin Carr, of @NTCEdmonton presenting the Kevin Carr Christian Leadership Award to Evergreen Catholic Schools Deputy Superintendent Mike Paonessa @EvergreenMike @SuperECSR



ACSTA
@ACSTANews

@ACSTANews unites in prayer with all people who have suffered simply because of their ethnicity, their faith, the colour of their skin, or the land that they live on. Remembering #Holodomor

ACSTA
@ACSTANews

Vice President Paul Bourassa representing @ACSTANews @SkCSBA at their Fall AGM: Sowing in Fertile Ground - Reaching the Spiritually Indifferent. Who knew VP Paul would see his Grade 5 teacher. Life is full of surprises!



ACSTA
@ACSTANews

@ACSTANews Vice President Paul Bourassa brings greeting at the official opening of Ecole St. Paul II. Congratulations and blessings as you begin your journey serving Catholic education in Medicine Hat.

Ecole St. John Paul II School Grand Opening

Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education



**Sister
Alphonse
Academy**



Continuing the 150+ Year Legacy of Catholic Education in St. Albert

Submitted by: [Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools](#)

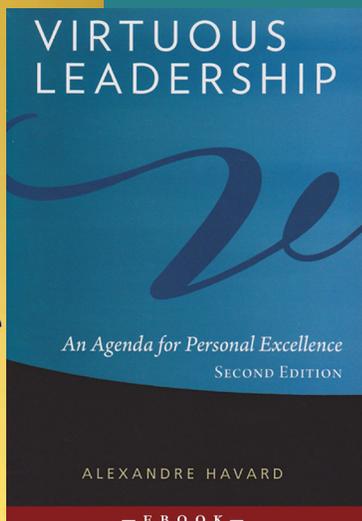
was to develop in the children a moral and religious outlook. Foundational to the philosophy was also a commitment to excellence and that education be a building block to community. Therefore, it was very fitting that the district honoured this 150+ legacy and the pioneering work of the Grey Nuns with the opening of Sister Alphonse Academy, a new elementary school in St. Albert this past September. The school is centrally located within a new development and will serve not only as a school but as a gathering place for the community. On October 23, 2018, the district was honoured to have His Grace, Archbishop Smith and a number of the Grey Nuns in attendance for the Official Opening. To continue the story of this important legacy, the district is commissioning an artist(s) to create some original art that will highlight the significance of Catholic education. The Sister Alphonse Academy school community will not only be blessed with such a rich heritage they will soon have a 21st Century interpretation of this 150+ legacy!

Many landmarks in the Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools service area reflect a rich tradition of Catholic education that dates back more than 150 years. A legacy of teaching began in the district when the Sisters of Charity (founded by Ste. Marguerite d'Youville in 1737 and more commonly known as the Grey Nuns) arrived in St. Albert from Lac Ste. Anne in 1863. Sister Marie Jacques Alphonse was the first teacher in the district. Although classes began in 1863, the first school building opened in 1864. Like many buildings at the time, it was used as a school, hospital and a convent. Grey Nuns philosophy guided education in the early years and what was most important to them

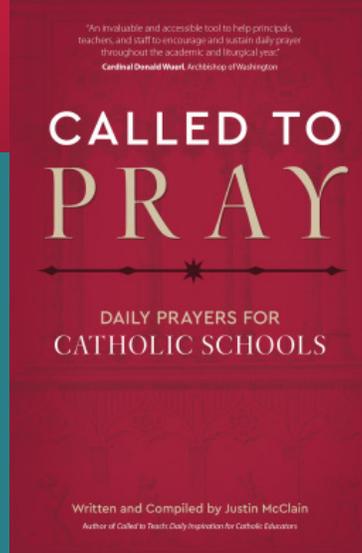
Book Reviews

Compiled by Eugenia Kowalczyk, Ph.D.

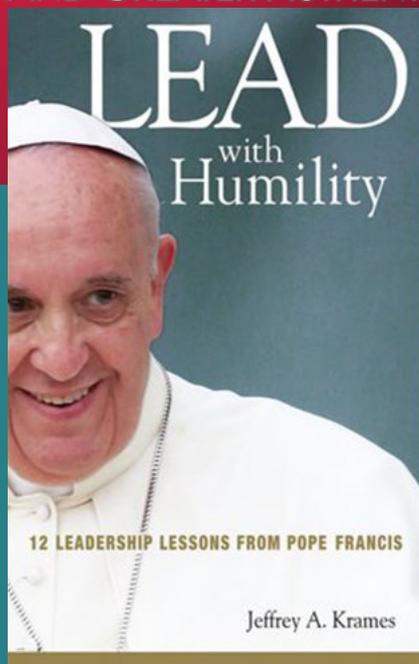
“Leadership consists of more than just “thinking big.” A leader is always a servant of those in his professional, familial, and social circle and indeed the whole of humanity. The essence of service is humility. Leaders who practice humility respect the innate dignity of other people, and especially of fellow participants in a joint mission.”



“This book is intended to help students pray to God throughout the day so as to foster a prayerful, lifelong, personal relationship with Jesus Christ. This is the greatest gift any Catholic school can give its students.”



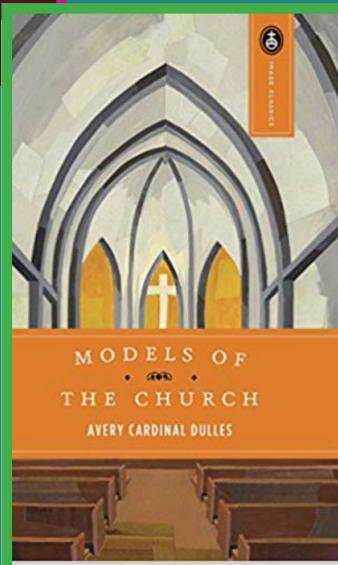
“POPE FRANCIS'S ABILITY TO INSPIRE THE WORLD IS UNPRECEDENTED IN MODERN TIMES. IN THIS BOOK HE REVEALS THE POWER OF HIS METHODS, AND HELPS ANYONE LEAD WITH GRACE AND GREATER AUTHENTICITY.”



Creating an Authentic Catholic School

Richard Rymarz

“Catholic education has been one of the most important ministries of the Church since its arrival in Canada. It has shaped generations of women and men and formed the very foundation of faith. However, the social, cultural and political changes of the last 30 years have challenged educators to define the value and purpose of Catholic education. Leading educator and theologian Richard Rymarz explores the vision of Catholic education in light of these recent cultural changes and proposes a way forward for creating authentic Catholic schools.”

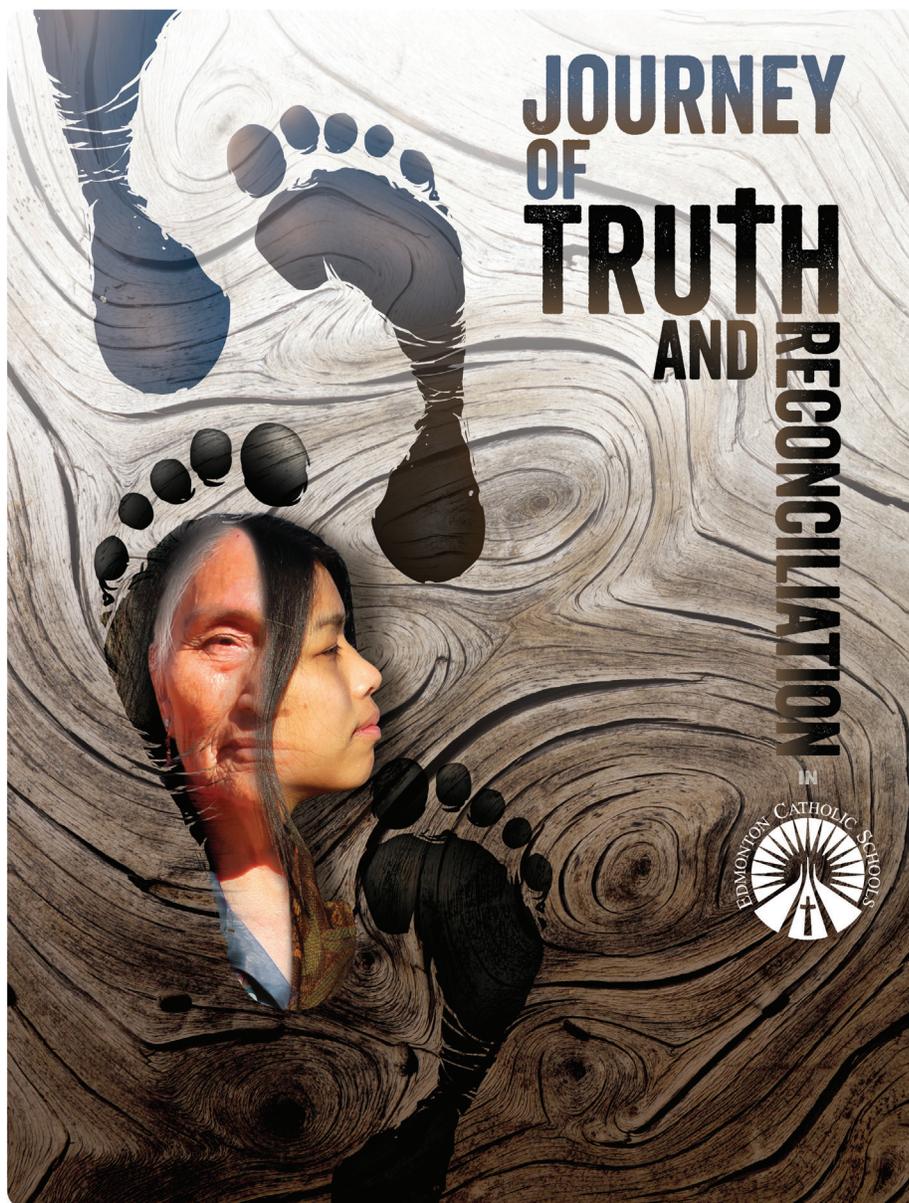


“Catholics are commonly thought to be committed to the thesis that the Church is most aptly conceived as a single, unified “perfect society”...I hold that Catholics today should not wish to defend a primarily institutional view of the Church. Rather, Dulles outlines six models; *Church as Institution*, *Church as Mystical Communion*, *Church as Sacrament*, *Church as Community of Disciples*, *Church as Herald*, and *Church as Servant*. While each model outlines varied nuances, Dulles asserts that they can have great value in helping people to get beyond the limitations of their own particular outlook, and to enter into fruitful conversations with others having a fundamentally different mentality.”

Edmonton Catholic Schools

The Elders tell us that the longest journey is from the head to the heart. Historically, the programs of Edmonton Catholic Schools (ECSD) have been grounded in showing respect, kindness, and heart to the Indigenous peoples of Edmonton. *The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action* did not mark the beginning of ECSD support for our Indigenous community. We have a long history of working towards building stronger relationships in our community rooted in sharing the truth of Canada's historical treatment of Indigenous peoples. Foundations such as the Council of Elders, Indigenous Learning Services, and the Nehiyaw Pimatisiwin Cree Language and Culture Programs were well established long before the District's participation in the formal work of the TRC in March 2014. Since that time, each of our schools and departments have participated in activities designed to create an emotional connection between the truth of Canada's history and the desire to foster reconciliation with our Indigenous brothers and sisters and build stronger and healthier communities; in other words, taking action to connect the head (what we know) with the heart (what we feel).

Edmonton Catholic Schools'



success in meeting the needs of Indigenous students is undeniable. Our service has grown from a small program at St. Pius X School 37 years ago to a single track school (Ben Calf Robe School), then to five District sites offering a Nehiyaw Pimatisiwin Cree Language and Culture program, and finally evolving to every school permeating Indigenous culture and supporting transitions to meet the needs of our students from Kindergarten right through to Grade 12. This work happens because of the commitment to serving students and

families that exists at all levels of our District.

We see the positive results of our work in the area of Truth and Reconciliation. Our schools are welcoming, respectful places where success can be found. As an example, our award winning FNMI Graduation Coach program provides a holistic mentoring model to our Indigenous students in order to equip them with the best cultural and academic supports to ensure that they complete high school. We consistently outperform the province in our FNMI High School Completion and Drop Out rates.

Our new publication, *The Journey of Truth and Reconciliation*

in Edmonton Catholic Schools, provides a snapshot of the great work that is going on at all levels of our District to bring the spirit of the *TRC Calls to Action* to life in our communities. Visit www.ecsd.net and click on the graphic *Journey of Truth and Reconciliation* under "What's New in the District" to read these wonderful stories!

Submitted by: Edmonton Catholic Schools



Catholic Trusteeship:
embracing
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Calgary RCSSD



An interview with Father Rob Galea



Submitted by: Calgary Catholic Schools

The Calgary Catholic School District and their more than 5,000 staff celebrated Faith Day on Nov. 1, 2018. The annual event brings staff together in fellowship to reconnect, celebrate the gift of Catholic education and deepen their faith. The keynote speech was delivered by Father Rob Galea, a Maltese priest who ministers to more than 400,000 youth around the world through music and his powerful life story.

CCSD sat down with Father Rob Galea after Faith Day to further understand how to become Champions for their students and gain purpose from the Catholic faith.

Q: In your address, you said that people can sometimes let their hearts harden and they stop being vulnerable. When people are in those moments, what can they do to soften their hearts and lift the despair?

A: “Hardness of heart comes about through fear. Vulnerability is a result of love,” said Father Rob. He points to 1 John 4:18: “There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears has not been perfected in love.”

“Love is impossible without a relationship with Jesus,” he said. “Spending time with Jesus, falling in love and holding nothing back until others get to experience the love you experienced. Our priority should be to fall in love with Jesus and then [get] the microphone and point it to our hearts; let others hear our heart beat with love...There is no quick fix. It is a result of love.”

In his keynote address, Father Rob also pointed out that the greatest influencers in the world are those who can be vulnerable. “Sometimes we are messed up and broken, but when we surrender to love, it becomes a beautiful piece of art,” he said. The Eucharist can also carry people when they don’t know how to believe, he recommended. It nourishes them when they don’t know how to face God.

[Continued...](#)

Q: Your life story showed the importance of being persistent to reach youth. How do you approach this with the youth you minister?

A: “I think it needs to start with listening. Asking the WHY, whilst also understanding that people are intrinsically good and want to be good; some circumstances cause [children] to act this way.” We can reach those hard-to-reach kids when we “spend time with love personified,” he said, “and remember God’s constant mercy towards us.”

Q: How do you give others hope that there is a future?

A: He said to look at 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 for guidance: “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices in the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always preserves. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; when there is knowledge, it will pass away.”

Q: How can Catholic educators build their own support system of champions so they can help students?

A: “A healthy champion does not give from what is within their jar, but from what is overflowing. Love, patience, kindness. If our jar is empty, we will end up broken, dry and give of our brokenness as opposed to the overflow of love. We need to find support in prayer, support groups, mentors and spiritual directors,” he said. “Don’t be a hero. Don’t be a saviour. You don’t have all the solutions and answers; learn to point...point to Jesus; the hero, the saviour...He is the answer, and the solution.”

In his address, he also shared that people can become Champions when they share their faith. People need to see and experience their faith and understand their relationship with God. “Faith isn’t taught, it’s caught!”

Honouring Spirit: Indigenous Student Awards



In May, the Calgary Catholic School district celebrated the unique cultural identities and exemplary attitudes, actions and values of 19 of their First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

The Honouring Spirit: Indigenous Student Awards are an opportunity to celebrate students who embrace their gifts, strengths and potential while they celebrate the ways of their people. The award was given to 12 students across the province, including Grade 2 student Mihko Crowchild from St. Cyril on May 30. Crowchild

was wrapped in a special star blanket that combines elements of the FNMI cultures—one of the highest honours in Alberta’s Indigenous communities.

Those who know Crowchild describe her as a thoughtful person who values and tends to her relationships with kindness. She is proud of her heritage and captivates fellow students with her enthusiastic and intricate Jingle Dance, which she performed at Aboriginal Day in 2017.

Calgary Catholic celebrated Crowchild along with 18 nominees from the district with special guests Her Honour, the Honourable Lois E. Mitchell and Elders Virginia Crowchild, Bruce Starlight and Hal Eagletail.

Student's winning T-shirt design honours residential survivors



Submitted by: Calgary Catholic Schools

The orange shirt recognizes the harm done to residential school students and wearing it in September shows a commitment to the principle that every child matters. This year, The Society for Safe and Caring Schools & Communities ran a contest to find the design for their 2018 shirt.

A panel of judges which included Elders, teachers, community members and the Society's Board met to evaluate more than 650 entries from across the province. The design from Sophie St. Cyr was chosen as the winner. The Grade 5 student attends Calgary Catholic School District's Monsignor Neville Anderson school.

The design features a series of feathers with the words "for those who survived and for those who didn't." St. Cyr was honoured at her school on September 27 with a special Indigenous performance from Hal Eagletail and his family, which included a Prairie Chicken Dance and Honour Song. St. Cyr and her winning design were also recognized by the Society and Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi at a special ceremony at City Hall. For more on CCSD's Orange Shirt Day's events, visit their Twitter moment (@CCSD_edu).

Orange Shirt Day is recognized in September because children were often taken from their homes to residential schools; it also sets the stage for anti-racism and anti-bullying policies for the coming school year. The day allows First Nations, local governments, schools and communities to come together in the spirit of reconciliation and hope for generations of children to come.



Roy Petitfils

May 2 - 5, 2019



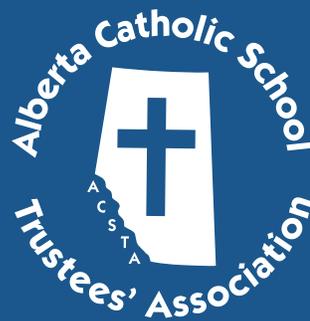
Mike Patin

May 7 - 10, 2019

S.P.I.C.E. Retreat

Blueprints Retreat

Pomeroy Kananaskis Mountain Lodge



Book David Wells

<https://www.acsta.ab.ca/events>

Here is Your Opportunity to Book Renowned Catholic Speaker David Wells for Speaking Engagements and Events in 2020

David Wells is a champion of Catholic education and has led many conferences and faith days in Canada and around the world. He has always been interested to serve exclusively as a speaker and consultant and earlier this year was fortunate enough to make the independent move and establish *David Wells Live*. This shift provided the opportunity for ACSTA to hire David to work exclusively with its members and the wider Catholic community across Alberta, Northwest Territories and Yukon for a four month period in 2020, February 1 – May 31.

David will be housed in Edmonton for the contracted period and will be available for a variety of speaking engagements from large groups to working directly in Catholic schools, parishes, and Catholic organizations with leadership, staff and members of the wider Catholic community. ACSTA is accepting bookings for David for **February 1 – May 31, 2020**. You can find the fillable Booking Agreement on the ACSTA website <https://www.acsta.ab.ca/events>

This is a tremendous opportunity to further develop our Catholic identity both personally and professionally. David Wells is both a wealth of knowledge and inspiration truly committed to serving the Catholic faith and Catholic educational community.

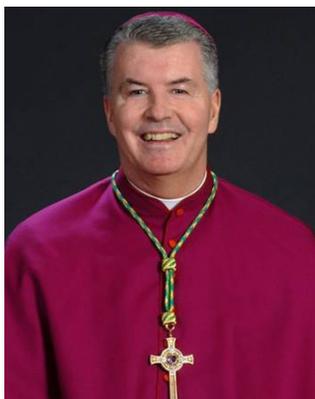
If you have any questions at all, please contact Michelle Collett at michelle@acsta.ab.ca or 780-484-6209.

Keynote Speakers

May 30 - June 1, 2019



**Archbishop Emeritus
Sylvain Lavoie**



**Bishop
William McGrattan**



Fr. Stefano Penna



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**Kathleen
Ladouceur**



**Anna
Loparco**



**Jennifer
Woo**



**Archbishop
E. Sylvain
Lavoie**



**Dr. Troy
Davies**



**Sandy
Prather**



**Dr. Dave
Khatib**



But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.”

Luke: 2:10-11

*On behalf of the
Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association
wishing you and your family
many wonderful blessings
this Christmas and throughout the new year.*

Serena Shaw, President



Dean Sarnecki, Executive Director