

Every year Catholics across the globe, through the celebration of Catholic Education Week, give thanks for the gift of Catholic education which has served nations for centuries through teaching students in their faith. This year, the theme of Catholic Education Week in Alberta is United in Prayer and Grateful for Catholic Schools. In the province of Alberta, we acknowledge with deep gratitude and embrace with unwavering resolve the gift of publically funded Catholic education. We are grateful for the opportunity to provide faith-based education to more than 180,000 students in Alberta and for the teachers, administrators, parents, students, priests, and parishioners who are committed to Catholic education. The Alberta Bishops' commitment to Catholic education is resolute as they actively work to ensure the future of Catholic education. Still, everyone has a role to play in sustaining the future of Catholic education. Religion and the Catholic faith are integral values in the education and formation of students. Just as the Christian community at Colossae was advised by Paul to, "devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful" (Colossians 4:2), we too, live in gratitude for our Catholic schools and are called to vigilance and prayer.

**GREETING** ...... We begin in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (+). **Amen.** 

**OPENING PRAYER.....** Loving God, teach us your ways, make them known to us, and help us to live according to your truth. Direct our hearts and minds to pray for our Catholic schools, that they may lead in faithfulness, wisdom and charity. Help us to remain informed about our faith, commit to the vital work of prayer, dialogue and action and create welcoming and inclusive schools that inspire and sustain us to make love our way of life. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

**READING** ...... Colossians 4: 1-6 – A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Colossians,

Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, for you know that you also have a Master in heaven. Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving. At the same time pray for us as well that God will open to us a door for the word, that we may declare the mystery of Christ, for which I am in prison, so that I may reveal it clearly, as I should. Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer everyone.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

**CLOSING PRAYER.....** Loving God, as we give thanks for your Word, help us to be faithful to you and your Church and give us the strength to live as joyful disciples, following in the footsteps of your Son. Through Christ Jesus our Lord. . Amen.



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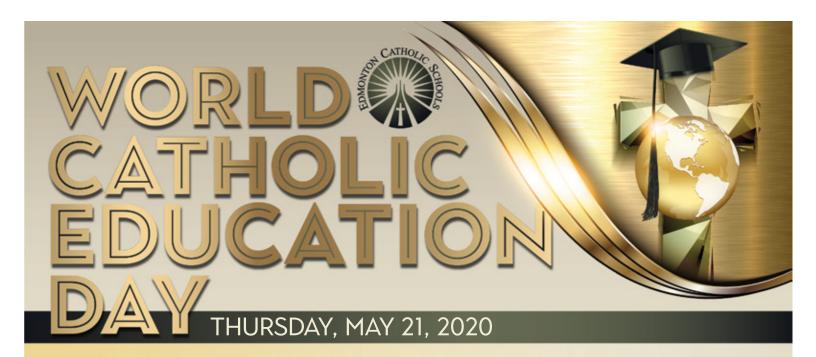
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**READING** ...... Colossians 1: 3-8 – A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Colossians,

In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

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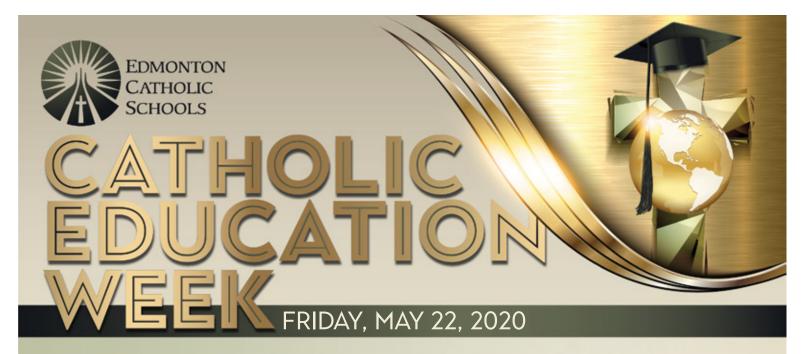
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So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

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Colossians 3: 12-17 – A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Colossians,

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

**CLOSING PRAYER.....** 

Loving God, as we give thanks for your Word, help us to be faithful to you and your Church and give us the strength to live as joyful disciples, following in the footsteps of your Son. Through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.