

Catholic School News

Celebrating the Good News about Catholic Education



Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board

June 2010

Catholic education in Ontario – a proven success for nearly 170 years

As we come to the end of another school year, it is an appropriate time to reflect on the tremendous gift of publicly funded Catholic education. For nearly 170 years, Catholic schools in Ontario have served millions of students and their families. Through the Christian witness and dedication of teachers, principals, administrators and support staff, and in partnership with parents and parishes, Catholic schools have helped students develop to their full spiritual, academic, physical and social potential. Catholic education has, is and will remain an integral part of publicly funded education in Ontario.



Patrick J. Daly
Chairperson

The outstanding academic and co-curricular achievements and great success of our students and schools is cause for celebration. The Christian service and goodness of our staff and students in areas such as concern for the disadvantaged/social justice, promoting a culture of life and stewardship of creation, is a source of inspiration and hope. We give thanks to God and those who sacrificed so much to ensure we have publicly funded Catholic schools today. While enjoying that right, we have the responsibility to ensure we never take their wonderful gift for granted, and we do all we can to ensure it remains faithful to its Christ-centred mission and thrives in the future.

Below is information we share with you about Catholic education in Ontario:

A history of success

Ontario's Catholic schools go back as far as the 1600s. A formal system was established in 1841, and the *Scott Act* of 1863 gave the Catholic community the right to establish and operate publicly funded Catholic schools. Since then, Catholic schools have made a tremendous contribution to the vitality and success of Ontario's education system, which ranks among the best in the world. Today, Ontario's Catholic education system consistently produces high levels of student achievement. Graduates are taught the virtues of the Catholic faith – including community, responsibility, accountability, collaboration, caring and family – making them not just good students, but good citizens.

Distinctly different

Ontario's Catholic education system is not a duplication of other school systems. While it adheres to Ministry of Education requirements, it does so from a Catholic perspective. At the heart of Catho-

lic education is the person of Jesus. Faith development is integral to every part of Catholic education, as students are called to respect the dignity of all human persons in a caring community.

In the Catholic education system, home, school and parish form a vital partnership. Through participation in the community and involvement with the parish, students are guided by the Gospel values, principles and standards that reach into every facet of school life.

The system works

Directly supported by 2.4 million ratepayers, Ontario's English and French Catholic schools annually educate 670,000 students – a third of all students in the province. Catholic education is built on a strong foundation supported by parents, students, teachers, administrators, support staff, religious sisters and brothers, the clergy and the community. It is a proven success. There is simply no good reason to destroy a system that is working so well.

In closing, I encourage you to continue to give thanks for, celebrate and promote Catholic education in our community and province.



Christian Brennan, a Grade 9 student at **St. Mary Catholic Secondary School** is a three time gold medalist after setting records at this year's OFSAA Track and Field championships in London, June 3-5. The 14-year old took golds in the 100m, 200m and 400m and set new provincial records in the latter two events. The Olympic hopeful is shown here with, from left to right, **Principal Emidio Piccioni**, **Chairperson Patrick J. Daly**, **Coach Steven Scime**, **Superintendent of Education Mary Cipolla**, and **Coach Kathryn Newberry**.

Catholic Education Week: Rejoicing in Hope

“Rejoice in the Lord always ... and the God of peace will be with you.” Phil 4: 4-9

Thousands of students and staff “rejoiced in hope” as schools throughout the system celebrated Catholic Education Week, May 2 to May 7, 2010. “Rejoicing in Hope” was the theme for this year’s celebration, “a beautiful theme which captures what we have to celebrate,” said **Chairperson Patrick J. Daly**, “that we can rejoice in hope in the future of Catholic education.”

It is a fitting theme, added **Superintendent of Education Nancy DiGregorio**, as “Catholic schools were born of hope, were founded on hope and, from their foundation to this day, have been keeping hope alive in many hearts.”

“We rejoice in this hope that, from the beginning, has been there to sustain us and keep us going.”

Catholic Education Week is coordinated by the Ontario Catholic School Trustees’ Association (OCSTA) to raise awareness about the unique dimension of Catholic education in Ontario. “It provides a unique opportunity to celebrate the excellent work of our Catholic schools which instil Gospel values and integrate them into every facet of curriculum and our lives,” said **Catholic Education Week Planning Committee Co-chair Loretta Ferro**.

Catholic Education Week was launched in Hamilton-Wentworth with a system-wide Mass at Cathedral High School on Monday, May 3rd, attended by 1,700 students and staff from across the system.

Principal celebrant, **Bishop Anthony Tonnos**, commented on the reason for our hope: our Lord, Jesus Christ.

“We are called to love him in return for the love he has shown us. ‘The ones who love me are the ones who keep my commandments and obey me,’ said Jesus. First and foremost, love your God with your whole heart, whole mind and whole being. Second, love your neighbour. We do that when we do works of goodness and charity.”

“He gave the example and we try to follow it,” said the bishop. “Your Catholic education has taught you and gives you the basis for leading a good life. It will keep you on the right path, the path that leads to our Lord and leads us to good acts.”

Those good acts were acknowledged by **Director of Education Patricia Amos**. “I am extremely proud of our school community.

You have responded to God’s call and opened your hearts in so many different ways – from the outstanding support for suffering children in Haiti, to the overwhelming support of the United Way.”

Added **Co-chair Vince Tortis**, “We are undoubtedly forming people of faith, a community of collaborative benefactors, caring family members, responsible citizens and self-directed life-long learners.”



Student awards celebrate “Excellence in Catholic Education”

They were honoured for their achievements in several areas – academics, sports, Catholicity, music, environmentalism and the arts. On June 7th, 84 students from the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board were invited to a special ceremony at Bishop Tonnos Catholic Secondary School where their talents and efforts were recognized with an award of excellence.

“Awards and scholarships motivate and encourage students to bring their energy, enthusiasm and generosity to the task of building a Catholic community,” said **Chairperson Patrick J. Daly**. “We welcome this opportunity to publicly acknowledge the many and significant accomplishments of our students over the past year.”

This year’s awards ceremony included the newly created “Stewardship of Creation” award, established in recognition of the 10th anniversary of the board’s Social and Ecological Responsibility in Education (SERE) Committee.

“The committee felt that a good way to celebrate those ten years would be to honour a student in each high school who exemplifies stewardship of creation within their school community,” said Daly.



The Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board congratulates the following students on their achievements:

Sister Maria Cordis Music Awards

Sarah Barham
Alyssa Giannotti
Nicole Pellizzari
David Bowman
Jasmine Dzerounian

St. Thomas Aquinas Centre for the Arts Foundation Scholarship

Alexandria Di Fazio

Presidents’ Council Bursary

Paul Taylor

James L. Daly Award of Excellence

DéLenn Burrows
Natasha Valconi

Jim Hansen Spirit of Community Award

Jericko Avila
Kevin Gyimadu

Tom Leon Charitable Foundation Bursary

Michael Turner
Brittany Lyne-Carriere

Living the Spirit Awards

Christie Condron
Hilary Hanaka
Nico Stepan
Mikaila Nederveen
Leslee Coutinho
Nickolas Klingender
Sean Appleyard
Ariana Romo Cortes
Clayton Herron
Melissa Campbell
Charles Ballarano
Ana Maria Alfonso Riveria
Stephanie Pataracchia
Natalie DiGiandomenico
Jessica Maltese
Alyssa Giannotti
Cody Mazza-Anthony
Jumoke Alafe
Keith Afas
Adam Bardati
Natalie Pecyna
Kayla Coates
Alexis Meyers
Jobelle Alonzo
Rebecca Lacharity

Paige Capra
Anthony Bruno
Melanie McSweeney
Breanne Flood
Cody Galez
Victoria Verrecchia
Kevin Accomando
Clairene Robyn Aguila
Abigail Flaminio
Julie Alexandra Hesson
Daniel Arauz
Emily O’Rourke
Mark Bradica
Sienna Cusimano
Cassandra Calzonetti
Jordan Lupo
Michael Jobity
Alyssa Niblock
Jenna Mazza-Anthony
Alexandra Piccoli
Claudia Continenza
David Alexandre
Annamaria Skrtic
Renee Richardson
Riley Ormond
Connor MacInnis
Ashley Adile
Julia Agostino
Julia Lentle

Siera Stampone
Carly Guenard
Elise Dunn

Stewardship of Creation Awards

Eric Choi
Christian Bozzo
Erica Belforte
Chandal Kilgour
Barbara Karpinski
Alessandra Distefano
Santiago Gil

BASEF – Canada Wide Science Fair Trip Awards

Patrick Chong
Olivia Newport
Andy Reid

GHAC Wrestling Gold Medals

Chris Garneau
Kyle Rose
Leah Tatti

OFSAA Track & Field Gold Medals

Christian Brennan

Students and staff inspiration behind St. Matthew ‘green’ school

“Today is a tribute to Catholic education in all of its splendour,” said **Flora Nordoff, Principal** of **St. Matthew Catholic Elementary School** at the school’s official opening and blessing ceremony on Sunday, June 13th.

St. Matthew School in Brinbrook is the board’s newest and first ‘green’ designed school. Built at a cost of \$12-million, it is the first school in Hamilton – and one of only a few in the province – to employ a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).

“This is a historic and happy day not only for St. Matthew Catholic Elementary School, but indeed for our entire Catholic school system,” said **Chairperson Patrick J. Daly**. “The opening of this beautiful new building, but more importantly the coming together of this exciting new Catholic-Christian school community, is cause for celebration.”



Photo, top: Accompanied by Trustee Mary Nardini, Rev. Jim Petrie, Chairperson Patrick J. Daly and Principal Flora Nordoff, Bishop Tonnos blesses the various classrooms and administrative offices at St. Matthew Catholic Elementary School. Photo, below: A ribbon cutting ceremony marked the official opening of St. Matthew School. Pictured are, from left to right, Trustee Ray Bartolotti, Bishop Tonnos, students, Chairperson Patrick J. Daly, Superintendent Gus Hubbard, Director of Education Patricia Amos, and Principal Flora Nordoff.

Crediting the Social and Ecological Responsibility in Education (SERE) committee for inspiring the school’s energy efficient design, Daly said that purpose of LEED “is to build a school that is environmentally friendlier and occupationally healthier for its users.”

“The construction of this beautiful school is an authentic response to our call to be stewards of God’s Creation,” said **Director of Education Patricia Amos**. “Everything in and around the school – from building to cleaning materials – has been selected to promote environmental awareness.”

“As a Catholic school community, we are guided by the teachings of our faith,” she said. “We teach our students to follow the commandments, to live the beatitudes, and to do God’s work in the world. They understand the creation story and know that God’s gift of creation must be preserved and respected.”

Describing it as a school-wide effort, Nordoff thanked her students and staff for bringing the school’s Mission and Vision to life on a daily basis. “Thank you for always doing it with a smile on your face and a song in your heart,” she joyfully added.

Count yourself in!

Every time you move to a new home, you must re-designate your school support, otherwise the education portion of your property taxes will automatically default to the public school system. And that may impact your right to vote for Catholic trustee representation in this October’s municipal election.

For more information, please call 905 525-2930, ext. 2188, or email webmaster@hwcdsb.ca.

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