

PARENTS4PARENTS NEWSLETTER



DECEMBER 2021



Isaiah 7:14

**Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign;
Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son,
and shall call his name Immanuel.**






MESSAGE FROM OAPCE

It is almost Christmas and as we await the Birth of Our Saviour Jesus Christ, and a time to take a break from the daily craziness of our lives, we turn to prayer as a way to unify our souls and be one with God. At audience Pope Francis said that prayer draws on the presence of the Holy Spirit "In dark times of faith, those who pray are never alone".

Throughout these past months and years many of us have felt alone, far apart, and yet we have been able to come together in ways to support and love of one another. It is through the hardest times that our faith can carry us through. As parents we have truly been tested but we have been inspired to see that so many of us have not only persevered but have gotten stronger. Now, more than ever, just as Blessed Mother Mary was tested time and time again, and given the blessing of carrying our Saviour, it is our faith that carries us through.

Lord our God, strengthen our hearts today through your Word. You are our Father and we are your children, and we want to trust you in every aspect of our lives. Send Mother Mary to Protect us on all our ways, and grant that we may always watch and wait for the coming of your kingdom, for the future of our Lord Jesus Christ. Help us to remain free, that we may serve you and not be led astray, no matter what happens in the world. Grant us your Holy Spirit in everything, for without your Spirit we can do nothing. Help us, and accept our praise for the many ways you have given us help.





CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM BISHOP DABROWSKI

*The Angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary:
you have found favour with God." Luke 1:30*

*"When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife
into his home" Mt.1:24.*

These two biblical passages so beautifully describe the mystery that created the first Christmas and how Mary and Joseph were called to give life to God's plan.

Like Mary, who was comforted by the angel Gabriel not to be afraid and encouraged to put all of Her faith and trust in God, so too we are called to be intimately united with Jesus and trust in Him with all of our hearts. Let us never be afraid to give of ourselves fully; our hearts, our minds, and our prayers, to the Lord, especially in these turbulent times.

St. Joseph, in silence, expressed his complete trust in Mary and in God. And, in his silence, St. Joseph fully accepted God's plan and creatively and courageously expressed, not by words, but through deeds, the deep tenderness and care he had for Mary and her Child. This image is an imperative one, which we all need to reflect upon during this time of the pandemic.

This Christmas, I pray we all nurture the same tenderness and care that St. Joseph showed to Mary. May we also experience the creative courage in touching others with the love of God, especially those who are sick or suffering, those who are afraid, those who find themselves in difficult situations, and those forgotten by their families, friends, or even by society.

This Christmas, I also pray that we continue to grow stronger in reaffirming our Faith; that we come to the realization of how our Christian faith, the care and charity we show for each other, offers us hope, allowing us to journey through our days with serenity, rather than fear and anxiety, as we experience the current pandemic.

I pray we will allow Jesus to fill us with His joy, His hope, His fearless love and with His peace.

I wish you a Blessed, Healthy, and Hope-filled Christmas and New Year!

Most Rev. Joseph Dabrowski, C.S.M.A.

Liaison Bishop to the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education



ENGAGE

JUST IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS

OAPCE is pleased to share a pre-recorded webinar by Anthony Perrotta. [When Faith Meets Movies, Christmas Edition](#). Anthony is a Teacher, Vice Principal, as well as being a Technology and Media Specialist, To learn more about Anthony, [click here](#).



Recap of November 20, 2021 WEBINAR

Aligning with our theme, "Rebuilding our Resiliency as Parents", we had 150 participant for our November 20th live webinars that will engaged parents across the province.

Our first webinar featured Coach Miguel Martinez who shared fundamental principles and practices that will drive resiliency and rebuild stability in the home. This powerful workshop combines evidence-based studies with faith-based principals. [Click here for Miguel's presentation](#).



Our second webinar featured the team of Sara Westbrook (Emotional Resilience Strategist) and Paul Davis (Internet Safety Expert), who will share strategies that are beneficial to both you, the parent or guardian, and the child, on how to handle emotions before using a keyboard as an emotional outlet that's hurtful instead of helpful.



ADVOCATE

Students hopeful semblance of 'normal' will return

BY WENDY-ANN CLARKE, THE CATHOLIC REGISTER December 2, 2021

Catholic Principals Council of Ontario (CPCO)

CPCO is the professional association for Principals and Vice-Principals in Ontario's publicly-funded Catholic school system. Their publication Principal Connections features OAPCE in their recent edition who's theme was ADVOCATE. [Click here to read the article.](#)



ENHANCE



At OAPCE we like to share any resources that will help foster any positive and resilient for parents - as we journey on our faith path together it is paramount that we support one another during this time,

Focus on the Family is a wonderful resource that can offer many wonderful insights for you as a family of faith.

Why focus on the family?

Throughout history, family has been fundamental to society. Strong families lead to strong communities and contribute to a healthy, stable nation.

But because our families are made up of imperfect people, seeking to do right but often feeling like we're getting it wrong, many families are just struggling to survive. Knowing how to have a family that thrives is difficult. It takes effort. And it can be easy to take our families for granted. We assume they'll always be there. We assume they'll turn out fine. But this assumption can fracture families, leading to fractured communities and an unstable nation – a sad fact we witness in the brokenness of the world around us today. But that's why we're here.

At Focus on the Family Canada, we know that when families are equipped with practical advice grounded in Biblical truths, they can thrive. When families are strong, they leave a valuable imprint on society for generations to come.

That's why we're committed to helping Canadians nurture, protect and invest in their families so they can thrive – even in the messy brokenness of our world.

The Catholic Curriculum

The Catholic Curriculum provides resources to school boards and educators ensuring that our faith is taught in the curricula - their resources are important as well for parents to see and even use them in their everyday lives!

Strong Minds make for Strong Kids

Psychology Canada is committed to promoting the mental well-being of children and youth in Canada. We are dedicated to nurturing resilience in kids with the use of psychological science so they can manage, learn, and grow from the many challenges in life.



Parent Partner Spotlight

Institute for Catholic Education (ICE)

Institute for Catholic Education

Rediscover the treasure of the original insights, reflect on the work of rebuilding, restoring, and renewing and rejoice in our shared mission in Catholic education. Yes – Curriculum STILL Matters!

*[Click here](#) to see our full line-up of Foundations and Frameworks (writing Catholic curriculum).
Curriculum STILL Matters*

Adult Faith Formation Series

Ongoing Adult Faith Formation: The Key to Educating the Soul - Successful Practices

Catholic education is a gift that requires great care and loving attention on the part of all of its partners if it is to be conserved and enhanced through the new millennium. The pivotal challenge confronting the Catholic education community at the beginning of the 21st century is the compelling need for all of us to own our distinctive vocation in the Church. To aid in this ownership process continuing faith formation is imperative.


OAPCE DUFFERIN PEEL

The regional council has completed two general meetings and one board wide parent presentation.

We started off December with a meeting and virtual commissioning ceremony to review the important role of the OAPCE representative and celebrate the gift of publicly funded Catholic Education. Our meetings in the new year are scheduled for the last Wednesday of each month, January to May. We look forward to connecting with you. (email: dufferinpeel@oapce.com Twitter: @oapce_DP)

The school board's annual Distinguished Alumni Campaign is up and running. There was a special mass honoring Bishop Camilleri, as the first DPCDSB graduate to be ordained a Bishop in November.

On November 25th there was a school board wide parent webinar with Dr. Anne Jamieson, this was followed by break-out workshops for Catholic School Council Executive Role training. Regional directors from Dufferin Peel were invited to facilitate the OAPCE representative workshop. Various volunteers from OAPCE Dufferin Peel have been facilitating this annual workshop for the last 10+ years.



OAPCE HALTON

In May 2021, the HCDSB Board of Trustees approved the school name of St. Kateri Tekakwitha Catholic Secondary School in Milton Ontario. St. Kateri Tekakwitha (1656-1680) is the patroness of the environment and ecology and the first Indigenous person to be canonized as a saint. She is known as 'Lily of the Mohawks.'

OAPCE Halton held its commissioning ceremony for OAPCE school representatives at the November 3rd Council of Chair's meeting.

OAPCE Halton hosted a "New-To-Role Training" night on November 18th that was open to both new and returning OAPCE school representatives. The evening was well attended and positive feedback was received on an increased understanding of the OAPCE rep responsibilities and the importance of OAPCE as an organization to enhance parent engagement.

OAPCE Halton newsletter was sent out in October to the OAPCE representatives welcoming them and highlighting important OAPCE news/events. The newsletter also provides an opportunity for reps to connect with feedback to the Halton director on any needed topic.

OAPCE-NIAGARA

On behalf of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, we would like to thank all parents/guardians for their support of student achievement and well-being and parent engagement in your Catholic school communities.

At the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee meeting of November 4, 2021, Superintendent Lee Ann Forsyth-Sells welcomed new and returning members and thanked them for their support of parent engagement in Niagara Catholic.

Andrea Bozza, Niagara Catholic Mental Health Lead, presented on the Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy and provided information about mental health programs, services and supports for Niagara Catholic students.

Student Support Services will be presenting, on the Tier One Behaviour Resource Guide “Who do you say I am?” at the NCPIC Meeting of January 13, 2022.

The organization unlearn will make a presentation at the NCPIC Meeting of March 3, 2022. This interactive session is framed with the understanding that parents/guardians and caregivers play a vital role in education.





OAPCE TORONTO

TCDSB, we transform the world through witness, faith, innovation and action. Catholic Social Teachings and the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations are foundational to our exemplary approach to education servicing over 92,000 students in 196 schools.

The regional council OAPCE Toronto has held two meetings since the start of the school year. On Monday Nov. 29 we commissioned all our OAPCE Liaison Representatives as the new reps for their school councils. We were joined at our meeting by the new Chair of Trustees as well as the Director of Education. We have ensured that there is an OAPCE rep on every council and are able to connect with them to provide the pertinent information that we receive from OAPCE provincial.

The TCDSB has been facilitating many consultations with stakeholders on their next Multi Year Strategic Plan – OAPCE Toronto has been part of several consultations and working groups to provide input and feedback – central to OAPCE Toronto’s input is to ensure that our faith is paramount in the MYSP and that any development of straggles ensures that this is incorporated in the graphics, symbols and information used. As the Regional Council of OAPCE we always try to connect with our reps and parents in many ways through our meetings, website, communications and emails. We always strive to represent all parents and look forward to when we can meet once again in person to support one another and provide the tools and resources needed to help with their children’s Catholic Education in the TCDSB.

OAPCE-WATERLOO

The Waterloo Catholic District School Board serves over 38,000 learners and provides services to students in 50 schools (Kindergarten to Grade 12 and adult learners) across the Waterloo Region.

The following initiatives have taken place in Waterloo Region or will be occurring shortly:

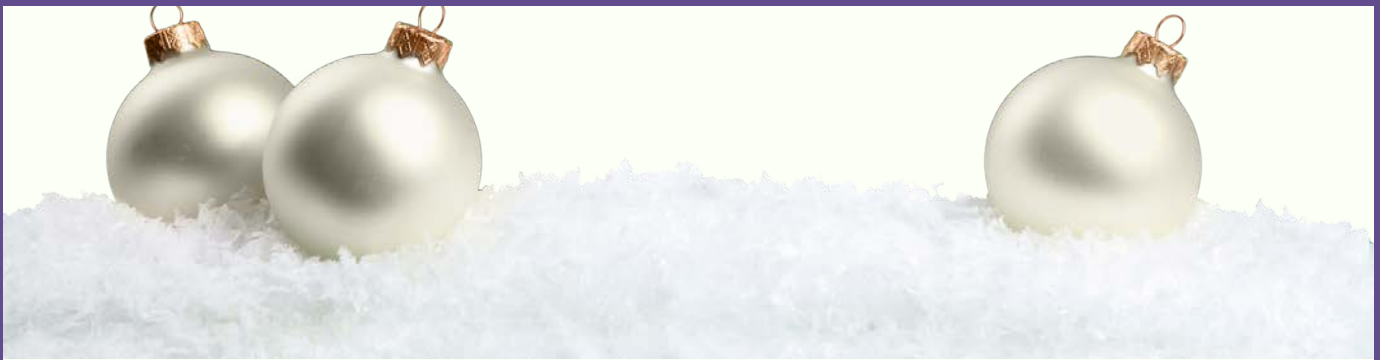
The WCDSB's 2021-22 Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan is in alignment with key elements of School Mental Health Ontario's Action Plan during the COVID 19 Recovery.

It is hopeful that The Umbrella Project will be able to be rolled out to our elementary schools at the end of April 2022.

The Catholic Community Foundation of Waterloo Region (CCFOWR) values community and has a responsibility to offer a "hand up", empowering the life journey of the marginalized and vulnerable within the Region of Waterloo, with a focus on youth. We believe in inclusion and equity and alignment with the 7 Social Teachings of the Catholic Church.

We are planning a special event with Father Joseph focusing on Mental Health and Well being. The Chaplains will be engaging students to provide recorded messages for Board Meetings.





OAPCE-YORK

York Catholic District School Board (YCDSB) has 101 schools with remote learners at the elementary level connected through hub schools. Our schools across YCDSB span the ancestral lands and waters of the Haudenosanee, Anishinaabe, and Wendat First Nations.

OAPCE York Regional Council met on Monday, December 6th from 7:00pm to bless and welcome all new and returning CSC OAPCE representatives.

The YCDSB Equity and Religious Education Advisory Council (EREAC) met on November 17th and continues its vital work of a Virtues Program Refresh at the elementary level and a Grade 11 World Religion Refresh at the secondary level to reflect our updated knowledge and understanding with a lens on equity. Together with parent volunteers included the council explores ways in which to support and engage parents so that as parents we can model and benefit from tools with which to build stronger connections to our Saints, scripture, and virtues all of which act as a guide and internal compass for our children throughout their lives. Our councils and parishes across the region have been busy with a return to the celebration of sacraments for former and current Grade 2 and Grade 7 classes.

Hope is the virtue that corresponds with the month of December. Lists of all the virtues of the month and current resources are available with some books available online to share with our children during story time as YouTube videos. With hope in our intentions during this Holy month, on December 2nd YCDSB offered a virtual “Indigenous Learning for Parents” with valuable contributions from Indigenous partners Todd Jamieson and Mim Harder.

Thank-you to all our Catholic School Councils, parent volunteers, families, staff, administration, and parishes who have tirelessly worked together towards a successful return to school throughout the region.



Prayer to Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception

*O most Holy Virgin, immaculate in body
and spirit, look kindly on me as I implore
your powerful intercession.*

*O most Holy Mother, receive my prayers
as I present them to God.*

*O Mary, Mother of Jesus and our Mother,
you intercede for us with your Son.*

*O Mary conceived without sin,
pray for us who have recourse to thee.*

Blessed Mary Madonna Pray for us.



Merry
CHRISTMAS
AND HAPPY
NEW YEAR

