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PARENTS4PARENTS PRESS

LENT

Official Newsletter of The Ontario Association of
Parents in Catholic Education - OAPCE

Message from OAPCE

Ephesians 3:14-19

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that he may grant you in accord with the riches of his glory to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner self, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

The busyness of our everyday lives and the ubiquitous presence of technology often pulls us in different directions and to distraction. The season of Lent permits an opportunity to slow down, to pause and reflect, and to be present in the moment for each other. As a Christian I am called to reflect on my actions, and to acknowledge with humility that there is room for me to do better. Sometimes the concept of penance is associated with guilt, shame, judgement, and maybe embarrassment. Rather as a human I am subject to err; to the influence of emotions and desires, and sometimes to the external influence of others.

The New Year that precedes Lent is a time that many of us set new intentions and resolutions. Lent grants us the space to reflect more deeply on our purpose and to let go of our regrets so that we can more effectively fulfill our intentions while being present for one another, living our lives to the fullest, and sharing our gifts with others along our travails. It is a time to model empathy and compassion for our children and loved ones, and to recognize God's great gift and infinite capacity in His love for us through Jesus. His love and example, gives us the strength we need to persevere and endure. When we follow his lead and extend our love to our neighbor, sometimes by simply lending an ear, we ease the burdens of those around us, erstwhile building the connections that support our own resilience.

So for forty days let us slow down, retreat into our shells, to reflect, recharge, and renew like the tortoise before leaping forward into the swing of things like the hare!

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Lenten Message from the Liaison Bishop ✠ Yvan Mathieu, SM



Message from the Liaison Bishop

BY ✠ YVAN MATHIEU, SM

Dear members of the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE),

From Ash Wednesday until Easter Sunday, the whole Church is living the Season of Lent. The word “Lent” translates the Latin word *Quadragesima*, which simply means forty. It is a reminder of the forty years the people travelled in the wilderness between its liberation from Egypt and its entry in the promised land. Most importantly, it reminds us that, right after his baptism, “Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights...” (Matt. 4:1-2). As followers of Jesus, forty days before Easter, we walk in his footsteps, led up by the Spirit and learn from him how to overcome temptations.

Lent is a time of penance and prayer. Most importantly it is also a time of preparation for Baptism. The Sunday Readings of Lent in Year A are oriented towards the main symbols of our Christian Baptism. Like every year, on the first Sunday we read the Temptations Gospel, then the Transfiguration Gospel on the second Sunday. The three other Sundays are oriented towards baptism. With the Samaritan woman, we contemplate Jesus as the source that brings us to eternal life: “The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life” (John 4:14). With the man born blind we are reminded that Jesus is the “light of the

world” (John 9:5). Since those two signs, water and light, were given to us at baptism, with Lazarus we confess that Jesus is “the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25).

As Catholic parents, we have a responsibility towards our children, whom we presented to Baptism. We committed ourselves to teach them the Gospel. Through our daily lives, we can show them what it means to be “baptized in Christ.” The Season of Lent is a time when we take seriously our commitment to drink from the well that is Christ, to allow his light to shine in our lives by considering ourselves “dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 6:11)

May this Lent 2023 remind us of God’s grace and allow us to take seriously our baptismal commitment. The season of Lent will thus prepare us to celebrate the Paschal Mystery. A good Lent and a Happy and Holy Easter to you all!

Assuring you of my prayer and blessing,
+ Yvan Mathieu, s.m.



ADVOCATE FROM THE REGIONS



As advocates for Catholic Education we like to ensure that we highlight the wonderful initiatives happening in our our schools across the province! OAPCE is proud to share with you OAPCE "Cool Schools"—OAPCE Halton has dedicated a space on its [webpage](#) to highlight elementary and high schools in the region that are making a difference in their school communities and beyond - and we now are doing this across the province! These “cool schools” are an example of putting faith into action and giving their time and talents to support others. We continue to invite all OAPCE representatives to connect with their regional Director or submit it at oapce@oapce.org and share their stories to be featured going forward! Stay tuned for details on how to submit your entries for an “OAPCE Cool School” Award at our 85th Conference NEXT YEAR in 2024!

ENHANCE The OAPCE Book Nook



Carlo Acutis: A Millennial in Paradise (2021) by Fr. Will Conquer



In each generation, heroes of the faith, whom the Church recognizes as saints, emerge. There are many characteristics that they have in common, but none of these individuals thus far have used cell phones, played PlayStation video games, or searched for information on Google.

This is the story of a young “computer geek” named Carlo Acutis, who created a website cataloguing every reported Eucharistic miracle in the world before dying of leukemia at the age of 15. He was beatified in October 2020 after a healing miracle was attributed to his intercession. Since then, solemn crowds have been filing past the exposed relics of the blessed youth in Assisi’s Church of Santa Maria Maggiore.

The book highlights how Carlo embraced his Catholic faith as a boy, developed the virtues necessary to live a Christ-centered life in a secular society, interacted with his teenage friends to help guide them, and how he responded to his illness and suffering with grace. It is an ideal read for parents, teens, and families to learn together about how a young person from an affluent background can be a model of goodness, beauty, and holiness.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

On behalf of the Executive Committee of CARFLEO (Catholic Association of Religious and Family Life Educators of Ontario), we would like to introduce to you Mark Siolek the Chair of CARFLEO. Presently, Mark Siolek is also the Coordinator of Religious and Family Life Education in the Ottawa Catholic School Board. CARFLEO would like to extend greetings to all of the partners in Catholic Education. Did you know that every educator in the English Catholic School System in Ontario is a member of CARFLEO? Their mission is to support personal and professional faith development and teaching practices in Catholic Schools. They have extensive resources and supports on the CARFLEO Website, which is available to all. CARFLEO offers Advent and Lenten Retreats, as well as the Annual General Meeting and Retreat. This year this will be held on March 30-31, 2023. The theme for this year's conference is "Listening with Heart" and our Keynote speaker is Dr. Josephine Lombardi. Information and registration is linked to the CARFLEO Website.



We are here to affirm, support and celebrate excellence in Religious and Family Life Education with our Philip Pocock Award for Excellence in Religious Education; the Angus McDougall Award for Excellence in Family Life Education, and our Seeds of Hope Award for New Teachers. [This is the information and nomination form.](#)



As Partners with the Institute for Catholic Education and as our Executive Director is currently the Chair of the ICE table, we are excited to be participating in the upcoming Catholic Education Symposium: On the Way/En Chemin which will take place on May 9th & May 10th, at Delta Hotels in Mississauga. Many parents from across the province will be participating as part of the teams from each of the 29 English Catholic school Boards as well as OAPCE Directors who will represent our association.

THE FAMILY ZONE

Each day starting on Ash Wednesday through Holy Saturday the Daily TV Mass presents **40 Days of Lent**. These reflections will be available on our website, our YouTube Channel, Daily TV Mass APP, and on our Podcast.

Our reflection leaders will be:

Cardinal Thomas Collins, Bishop Gerard Bergie, Fr. John Bertão, Fr. Obinna Ifeanyi, Fr. Pat Fitzpatrick, Fr. Michael Coutts, and Sr. Ann Immaculée.

Please follow the journey of Lent with these wonderful reflections that are now posted on our website: <https://www.oapce.org/40-days-of-lent>



"Knowing God and knowing yourself go together, holding you up and encouraging you along the way. God desires your healing! This is what salvation is all about.

...Surrendering our hurts and past to God can bring peace and restoration." p.8

You can use this Lectio Divina guide for the scripture passages.

Lectio Divina

Lectio: "What does the text say?"

Meditatio: "What does the text say specifically to me at this point in my life? Are there any messages?"

Oratio: "What does God say to me and what do I say to God through the text? What type of prayer is needed?"

Contemplatio: "Rest in God's presence and be open to the conversion of heart and mind." p. 129

"Experts in Humanity: A Journey of Self-Discovery and Healing", Josephine Lombardi, Novalis, 2016.