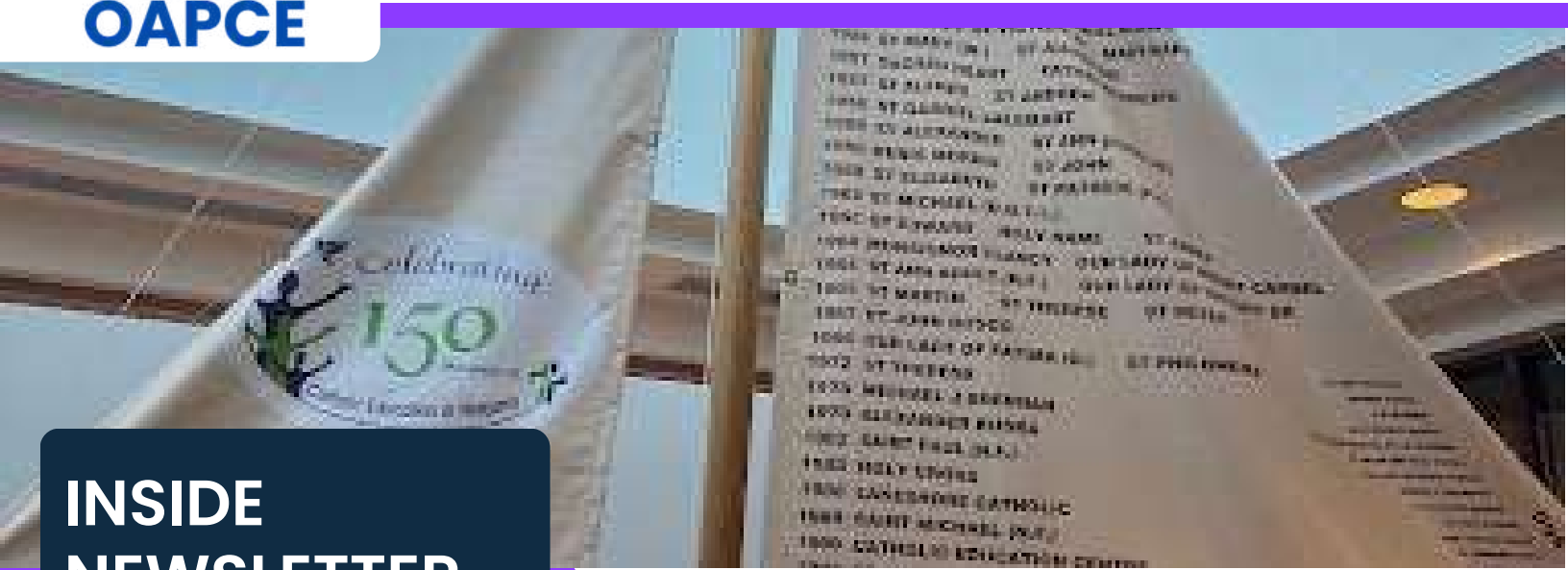




PARENTS 4PARENTS PRESS



- ## INSIDE NEWSLETTER
- OAPCE Opening Message
 - Engage
 - Advocate
 - Enhance
 - Parent Partner Spotlight
 - Family & Faith Zone
 - OAPCE Book Nook

CELEBRATE CATHOLIC EDUCATION!

**Good and gracious God,
Be with us as we journey together as Pilgrims of Hope and builders of peace.**

**Sowing seeds of faith, hope and love along the way.
Be with us as we journey.
Bless the path on which we travel and be our guiding light from above.**

**Help us treat each other as your beloved.
Let us honour human dignity as we welcome everyone into our communities with open hearts of love and kindness.
We ask this in Jesus' name.
Amen.**



ENGAGE



ADVOCATE



ENHANCE

Remembering Pope Francis

"Education is not about knowing things or taking lessons but about being able to use three lingos: those of the head, the heart, and the hands... learning so that you can think about what you feel and do, can feel what you think and do, and can do what you feel and think. Unity within a person." — Pope Francis

Pope Francis, born Jorge Mario Bergoglio in Buenos Aires, Argentina, passed away on April 21, 2025—Easter Monday—at 88. He was the first Latin American pope and a powerful voice for compassion, inclusion, and reform. Pope Francis leaves a legacy of hope and transformation after 12 years of service to the Catholic Church, Catholics, and so many others who were fortunate enough to be touched by his words and actions worldwide.



A dedicated Catholic, Pope Francis strongly supported the Church's need to grow and evolve. He believed that "The Church must be a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven, and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel." Hope was of importance to him, and he never stopped believing that goodness and positivity was waiting for us to embrace: "Let us be lights of hope! Let us maintain a positive outlook on reality."

He was the first to take the name Francis, in honor of Francis of Assisi, the Italian saint known for his love of nature and the poor. Pope Francis was humble; he opted to stay in the simple apartments at Casa Santa Marta instead of moving into the Papal apartments at the Vatican, for example. And at the center of his messaging were the poor and the marginalized: "Openness to God makes us open towards the marginalized of this world, and gives us the courage to leave the confines of our own security and comfort to become bruised, hurting and dirty as we joyfully approach the suffering other in a spirit of solidarity." In addition to redefining the role of the Church on the importance of social justice, his views on the environment and of our responsibility as stewards to protect it were also of significance: "As stewards of God's creation, we are called to make the earth a beautiful garden for the human family. When we destroy our forests, ravage our soil, and pollute our seas, we betray that noble calling."

Pope Francis consistently emphasized the irreplaceable role of parents as the primary educators of their children. He reminded us that "children are the most precious gift you have received," urging parents to approach their educational mission with commitment and generosity. In his address to the Italian Parents Association, he highlighted the importance of collaboration between families and schools, stating that "communication and collaboration... must never be lacking" to build a strong educational community. ([Pope Francis "Dear parents, children are the most precious gift you have received." to Families FULL TEXT, Pope to Parents: Work together with schools - Vatican News](#))

As we honor Pope Francis' legacy, let us renew our commitment to the educational mission he so passionately supported. May we continue to work together—parents, educators, and communities—to create environments where children can grow in faith, wisdom, and love. In doing so, we fulfill our shared calling to raise a generation that reflects the light and hope of Christ in the world. ([Pope to Parents: Work together with schools - Vatican News](#))

As we remember and give thanks for the life of Pope Francis, may we follow in his example to advocate for issues like poverty and environmental protection, engage with people of different faiths and perspectives, reject discriminatory language, and foster a spirit of reconciliation within our country.

Let us pray for the repose of Pope Francis' soul and for the strength and guidance to carry forward his vision for Catholic education. May his example inspire us to live lives of service, compassion, and unwavering faith.

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

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✨ Exclusive Hotel Offer: We've partnered with the Old Stone Inn to provide free parking and a special discount for conference attendees. To book your stay, call +1 (905) 357-1234 and provide the booking ID "137575" to reserve your room.

OAPCE 86TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

"COMING TOGETHER AS ONE"

MAY 24, 2025

† LOCATION: SAINT MICHAEL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, NIAGARA FALLS, ON

📍 ADDRESS: 8699 MCLEOD RD, NIAGARA FALLS, ON L2E 6S5



In Partnership With:



- CONFERENCE & MASS 9-4
- RESOURCE EXHIBITOR FAIR

OUR INSPIRING SPEAKERS:



JOE FERRI
OAPCE Co-Executive Director

Presentation:
"The Power of One"



TERESA HARTNETT
Director Family Ministry
Office Diocese of Hamilton

Presentation:
"Pilgrims of Hope
Live in Families"



ANTHONY PERROTTA
Educator, Storyteller &
Digital Learning Advocate

Presentation:
"AI in Education"

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SCAN ME

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Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education

Conference Presentations & Speaker Lineup

Join us at the OAPCE 86th Annual Conference 2025 for an enriching day filled with insightful presentations, engaging discussions, and faith-filled inspiration. This year's theme centers on strengthening the partnership between parents, educators, and the Catholic community.

 **Date: Saturday, May 24, 2025**

 **Location: Saint Michael Catholic High School**

 **Address: 8699 McLeod Rd, Niagara Falls, ON L2E 6S5**

 **In Partnership With: Niagara Catholic District School Board**

 **Sponsors: Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee**

Special Discounted Hotel Rate ends May 9th!

Speaker Lineup



JOE PERRI

OAPCE Co-Executive
Director

Presentation:

“The Power of One”



TERESA HARTNETT

Director Family Ministry
Office Diocese of Hamilton

Presentation:

“Pilgrims of Hope
Live in Families”



ANTHONY PERROTTA

Educator, Storyteller &
Digital Learning Advocate

Presentation:

“AI in Education”

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 OAPCE IS HAPPY TO SHARE OUR SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT!

Thank you to all our wonderful sponsors who have contributed to our 86th Annual Conference! By partnering with OAPCE we are able to share with everyone the wonderful organizations that support all that we do in Catholic Education across the province!

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Winnny French

WINNY FRENCH - Winnny French is an online tutoring service for elementary students and high school students. We offer our classes at just \$25 and started with the goal of helping lower-income families obtain the tools they need for their children to succeed in the classroom. Our classes are fully remote, making them convenient and accessible to families across the country, and we now have almost 100 students in total!

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**University of
Niagara Falls
Canada**

UNIVERSITY OF NIAGARA FALLS - The University of Niagara Falls Canada (UNF) is a new model of innovation, knowledge, and transformation in the world of higher education.

Situated in the heart of Niagara Falls, the University of Niagara Falls Canada takes pride in delivering a distinctive academic journey that readies prospective graduates for success in their chosen fields. UNF fosters an environment that nurtures innovation, encourages collaboration, and values diversity.

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STANDARD SPONSOR



LITTLE MEDICAL SCHOOL (LMS) Little Medical School is a STEM-enrichment organization that introduces children (typically ages 4–16) to careers in medicine, health, and science through fun, hands-on programs. With role-playing, real tools, and engaging activities, kids learn about the human body, medical procedures, and the scientific world in a playful and educational environment.

[VISIT WEBSITE](#)



SCIENTIST IN THE SCHOOL – Scientists in School is a leading national science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education charity that annually inspires over 700,000 children and youth in Canada to be confident in STEM, build critical thinking skills, heighten their interest in STEM careers, and dream of a future they perhaps never thought possible – until they became scientists during one of our workshops.

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www.**The Shalalas**.com

THE SHALALA'S - J.P. and Deanna Shalala are a dynamic husband-and-wife duo from Niagara Falls, Canada, captivating audiences since 2007. Their rich harmonies, versatile musicianship, and vast song list make them the perfect choice for weddings, special events, wineries, and fine dining venues.

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Ontario Catholic School
Trustees' Association

Ontario Catholic School Trustee Association (OCSTA) Inspired by the Gospel, the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association provides the provincial voice, leadership and service for elected Catholic school trustees to promote and protect publicly funded Catholic education in Ontario. OCSTA is a valued Catholic Education partner with OAPCE!

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The Grow Build Learn Mars Farming Program brings hands-on learning to schools through hydroponics, sustainability, and real-world innovation. Students explore how space farming tech can grow nutritious food anywhere, while learning to build off-grid systems and tackle poverty and food insecurity here at home.



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JOURNEY HOME Journey Home Mentorship is a dedicated program committed to supporting individuals at all stages of their journey to and through the medical profession. For high school students and pre-medical students exploring a future in medicine, we offer structured mentorship, real-world exposure, and personalized guidance to help them make informed decisions about their academic and professional paths.



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Angel Gear Founded in 2024

Angel Gear is a small Catholic business located in the Niagara Region serving the community. We sell Catholic sacramentals, Gifts & novelty.



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ADVOCATE



This year's Catholic Education Week theme is "Pilgrims of Hope."

The theme for Catholic Education Week 2025 draws inspiration from several key considerations:

- **In February 2022, Pope Francis announced that the theme for the 2025 holy year would be "Pilgrims of Hope." He emphasized the importance of nurturing hope and encouraging everyone to look to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart, and a far-sighted vision.**
- **A pilgrimage is a spiritual journey towards a goal, often undertaken with others, which aptly describes Catholic education. Hope, one of the three theological virtues, is rooted in our Easter faith in Jesus' resurrection and renewal. This faith empowers us to be builders, dreamers, and leaders in Jesus' name. Pope Francis encouraged us to continue moving forward in faith, joy, and hope, as part of a pilgrim people, keeping our eyes on the future even in challenging times.**

There are five sub-themes for each day of Catholic Education Week:

Day 1: By honouring human dignity

Day 2: By caring for creation

Day 3: By responding to the poverties in our world

Day 4: By serving in solidarity

Day 5: By living as peacemakers

For more info and resources please go to the OCSTA website:

VISIT WEBSITE



FAITH RESOURCES

Our Lady of Fátima is a Catholic title for the Virgin Mary, based on a series of apparitions reported by three shepherd children in Fátima, Portugal, in 1917. These apparitions led to the construction of the Sanctuary of Fátima, a major pilgrimage site for Catholics worldwide.

Key aspects of the Fátima apparitions:

The Children:

Lúcia dos Santos and her cousins Francisco and Jacinta Marto, who were tending sheep near the village of Fátima, reported seeing the Virgin Mary.

Apparitions:

The children claimed to have seen the Virgin Mary appear on the 13th day of each month from May to October 1917, with the final apparition on October 13th being accompanied by what was called the "Miracle of the Sun".

Messages and Secrets:

The Virgin Mary, known as Our Lady of the Holy Rosary of Fátima, entrusted the children with three secrets, two of which were later revealed. The third secret, initially sealed until 1960, was officially released by Pope John Paul II in 2000.



READ MORE



PRAYERS

MONTH OF MAY MARIAN PRAYERS

In the month of May, we show our gratitude to mothers for all that they mean to us. For mothers who have gone to be with the Lord, we pray for their souls and thank God for their influence on our lives.

The Catholic Church also gives special attention to Mary - Mother of God and Mother of the Church. The entire month is dedicated to her who considered herself the "servant of the Lord" (Lk 1: 38). Mary is the New Eve whom God had chosen for a singular role in the salvation of the Church. Because of her close relationship with Jesus as the woman without equal, she is to be our model and guide especially when it comes to obeying Our Lord.



Holy Mary,
help those in need,
give strength to the weak,
comfort the sorrowful,
pray for God's people,
assist the clergy,
intercede for religious.
Mary all who seek your help
experience your unfailing protection.
Amen.

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Your generous donations help us continue our mission to advocate for Catholic education and support parents in Ontario. Every contribution, big or small, makes a difference in enriching the educational experience for our children. Join us in making a positive impact!

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