



PARENTS 4PARENTS PRESS

SEPTEMBER 2026

www.OAPCE.org

INSIDE NEWSLETTER

- Opening Prayer
- Faith Message
- Advocate
- Enhance
- Partner Spotlight
- Parent Guide
- Family & Faith
- Book Nook
- Prayer
- Support OAPCE

A Thankful Start to the School Year

Heavenly Father,

With grateful hearts, we thank You for bringing us safely and successfully to the beginning of this new school year.

Thank You for welcoming classrooms, renewed friendships, and the many blessings that have made this beginning a good one.

Give our children enthusiasm for learning, kindness toward one another, courage when they face challenges, and a growing love for You.

We place this school year into Your loving hands and give You thanks for the many blessings already received.

PRAYERS



ADVOCATE



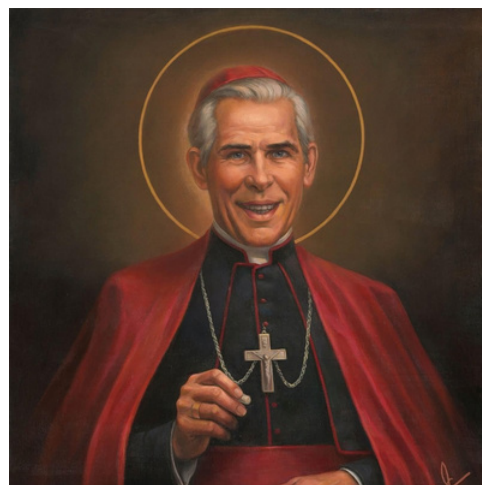
FAITH MESSAGE



THANKSGIVING

Blessed Fulton J. Sheen: Sharing the Gospel with the World

The Catholic Church celebrated Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen's beatification on September 24, 2026, in St. Louis. Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle presided on behalf of Pope Leo XIV.



A priest, teacher and evangelist, Sheen brought the Gospel into millions of homes through radio and television, especially Life Is Worth Living. His cause included a miracle attributed to his intercession: the recovery of James Fulton Engstrom, born without a pulse in 2010.

REFLECTIONS FOR FAMILY LIFE

Teach obedience first. Help children develop good habits and sound judgment.

Lead by moral example. Practise the integrity you ask of your children.

Give purpose. Guide children beyond immediate wants toward a higher goal.

Build a loving home. Nurture affection, security and trust.

Listen. Respect children's thoughts and guide them with care.

[LEARN MORE](#)



PARENT ADVOCACY: MORE THAN FUNDRAISING



Being a parent advocate for Catholic education is about more than fundraising, volunteering, or supporting school events. It means using our voice to support our children, our schools and the future of Catholic education.

As our children's first advocates, we can stay informed, ask questions, participate in school life and speak up when decisions affect their education and well-being. We are also called to advocate for one another—especially for children, families and communities whose voices may otherwise go unheard.

OAPCE brings Catholic parents together across Ontario to share perspectives, raise concerns and strengthen Catholic education. Advocacy is about engagement, informed dialogue and partnership with schools, boards, trustees and provincial partners.

Our Children. Our Schools. Our Voice.

Let us ask not only "What can I do for my child?" but also "What can I do for every child?"

VISIT OAPCE



FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION: INTRODUCING BLESSED & BELOVED

Many parents know Fully Alive, the Family Life Education program used in Ontario Catholic schools for many years. Family Life Education complements Religious Education, helping children learn about themselves, their families, relationships, growth and human dignity through our Catholic faith.

The Institute for Catholic Education (ICE), working under the direction of the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario and with Catholic education partners, has developed an updated curriculum for Grades 1–8.

As part of this renewal, Blessed & Beloved is gradually replacing Fully Alive. Its foundation remains the Catholic understanding that every child is created and loved by God, made in God’s image, and deserving of dignity and respect.

Learning develops gradually and with what ICE describes as “gentle accompaniment,” recognizing children’s developmental needs and parents’ role as their first educators.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD’S SCHOOL

Which Family Life program is being used in my child’s grade?
What units are coming up, and how will families be informed?
What resources can we use to continue these conversations at home?

Our accompanying infographic explains the Catholic foundation, Religion and Family Life, classroom learning, parent communication and assessment.

EXPLORE



CATHOLIC PARENTS ONLINE

Catholic Parents Online brings together Catholic teaching, spiritual resources, educational materials, articles and multimedia content for parents who want to take an active role in their children's faith formation.

FAITH AND CATHOLIC TEACHING

Explore resources on prayer, Scripture, Church teaching, saints, Marian devotion and the sacraments, along with lessons to help parents and children understand the faith.

PARENTING AND FAMILY LIFE

Find articles, books and videos about forming children's character and faith. Families are encouraged to make prayer, the sacraments, virtues and Catholic traditions part of everyday life at home.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Parents are their children's primary educators. The website offers information to help families reinforce Catholic teaching at home and engage with questions about Catholic education.

VIDEOS AND AUDIO

The media library includes talks, lectures and educational programs, with homilies and teaching resources from Fr. Robert Altier, including The Fundamentals of Catholicism.

For families who enjoy reading, listening or watching together, this collection offers several ways to learn, pray and grow in faith.

EXPLORE





A Parent's Guide to the Family Life Curriculum in Ontario Catholic Schools

Developed by the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE) to complement Religious Education, focusing on human development, relationships, and health through a Catholic worldview, prioritizing "gentle accompaniment" and active parent communication.

The Foundation of Learning

The 80/20 Balance



Religious Education forms 80% of programming, while Family Life covers the remaining 20%.

Developed by the Community



Curricula are coordinated by ICE with input from bishops, theologians, parents, and students.



The Catholic Foundation
Lessons emphasize that children are created in God's image and called to holiness.

Classroom Delivery & Parent Partnership



Gentle Accompaniment
Sensitive topics are introduced gradually using an age-appropriate and pastoral approach.



The "Blessed & Beloved" Program
This new program is gradually replacing "Fully Alive" to provide updated classroom resources.



Parent Communication & Exemptions
Teachers send unit letters home; parents may request exemptions for specific health lessons.

Purpose: Clarifying the distinction between learning requirements and the faith-based goals of the program.

Category	Purpose	Assessment
The Curriculum	 Defines what students are expected to learn.	 Formally evaluated skills.
The Program	 Provides the lessons, stories, and activities.	 Resources for teaching.
Hope Expectations	 Nurtures faith, attitudes, and values.	 Not formally evaluated.

© Gemini Notebook

A Faith-Filled Thanksgiving for the Whole Family

Thanksgiving is a time to slow down, pray, serve others and celebrate God's gifts. Try these activities together and make memories rooted in gratitude.

1. GRATITUDE TREE — Write blessings on paper leaves, read them aloud and thank God together.
2. PRAYER JAR — Collect intentions and thanksgivings; pray over them at dinner or bedtime.
3. SAINTS SCAVENGER HUNT — Discover St. Francis of Assisi, St. Thérèse of Lisieux, St. Teresa of Calcutta and St. John Paul II.
4. MAKE "DAILY BREAD" — Bake together, read Matthew 6:11 and bless your food.
5. ROSARY WALK — Give thanks for family, friends, creation, faith and future blessings.
6. ACTS OF KINDNESS — Write thank-you notes, call a relative, share treats or donate food.
7. "GOD'S BLESSINGS" TABLECLOTH — Add memories, Scripture, prayers and things you are grateful for.
8. GOSPEL REFLECTION — Read Luke 17:11–19, Psalm 100 or Colossians 3:15–17 and discuss gratitude.
9. FAMILY BLESSING CIRCLE — Share one blessing and one hope; end with the Our Father.
10. BIBLE CHARADES — Act out stories of Noah, the Feeding of the 5,000, the Wedding at Cana, the Ten Lepers or David.
11. BLESSINGS AROUND THE WORLD — Explore Catholic harvest traditions and pray for families in need.
12. LETTERS TO GOD — Begin "Dear God, thank You for..." and save the letters for next Thanksgiving.

Heavenly Father, we thank You for our family, our faith, and Your many blessings. Help us recognize Your goodness and share Your love. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

ACTIVITIES



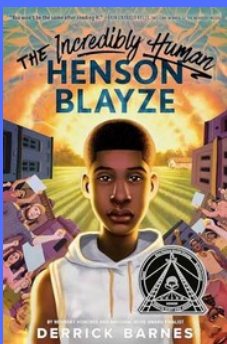
Fall & Thanksgiving Reading Recommendations



Thanksgiving Is a Blessing

Rachel Tawil Kenyon
CHILDREN · AGES 3–8

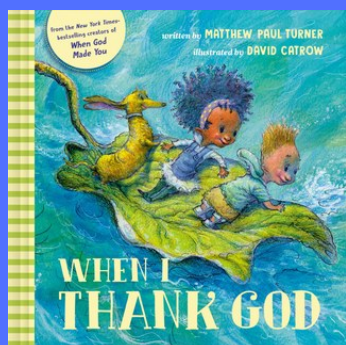
A faith-filled picture book celebrating gratitude, family and community.



The Incredibly Human Henson Blayze

Derrick Barnes
MIDDLE GRADE · AGES 8–12

A story of courage, identity and community.



When I Thank God

Matthew Paul Turner
CATHOLIC FAMILY PICK

Make time for cozy reading and conversations about gratitude. Explore the full reading list online.

BOOK NOOK



Thanksgiving Prayer



Heavenly Father,

As we gather with family and friends this Thanksgiving season, we pause to thank You for the many blessings You have bestowed upon us. We are grateful for the gift of faith, the love of our families, the support of our school communities, and the beauty of Your creation all around us.

Help us to recognize Your presence in both joyful and challenging moments. Inspire us to share our gifts generously, serve others with compassion, and reflect Christ's love in our words and actions.

May our hearts be filled with gratitude, our homes with peace, and our communities with kindness. Bless all OAPCE families and keep us united in faith, hope, and love.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;
His love endures forever." (Psalm 107:1)

PRAYERS





OUR CHILDREN. OUR SCHOOLS. OUR VOICE.

Your generosity strengthens Catholic education
and supports parents across Ontario.

Every contribution helps OAPCE advocate for our children,
connect families and build a stronger community.

SUPPORT OAPCE



STAY CONNECTED

Follow OAPCE for family resources, community news
and inspiration for your family's faith journey.



WWW.OAPCE.ORG