



PARENTS 4PARENTS PRESS

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www.OAPCE.org

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Welcome Back to a New School Year

As we begin a new school year, OAPCE extends a heartfelt welcome to all students, families, educators, and parish communities across Ontario's Catholic schools. The start of a new school year is filled with excitement, hope, and opportunity. As parents and guardians, you are your children's first and most important educators, and your partnership with your school community helps every child thrive academically, spiritually, socially, and emotionally. We encourage all families to become actively engaged in school life. May this school year be filled with blessings, growth, discovery, and joy. On behalf of OAPCE, we wish you and your family a successful, faith-filled, and rewarding school year.

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ENGAGE



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ENHANCE



Back-to-School Prayer

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Heavenly Father,

As we begin a new school year, we thank You for the gift of Catholic education and for the blessing of our school communities. We ask You to watch over our students as they return to their classrooms with hopes, dreams, and opportunities for learning. Fill their hearts with curiosity, kindness, courage, and joy.

Bless our parents and guardians, the first teachers of their children. Strengthen them with patience, wisdom, and faith as they guide their families throughout the year. Bless our teachers, principals, support staff, priests, and all who serve in our Catholic schools. May they be instruments of Your love, helping students grow in knowledge, character, and faith.

Help us to build communities where everyone feels welcomed, respected, and valued. Teach us to follow the example of Jesus by showing compassion, serving others, and living the Gospel each day.

May the Holy Spirit guide our decisions, inspire our learning, and deepen our relationship with You. Together, may we grow as disciples of Christ and use our gifts to make a positive difference in the world.

We entrust this school year to Your loving care and ask for the intercession of Mary, Mother of God, and all the saints. Amen.

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord.” Colossians 3:23

YOUR VOICE MATTERS! JOIN YOUR CATHOLIC SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

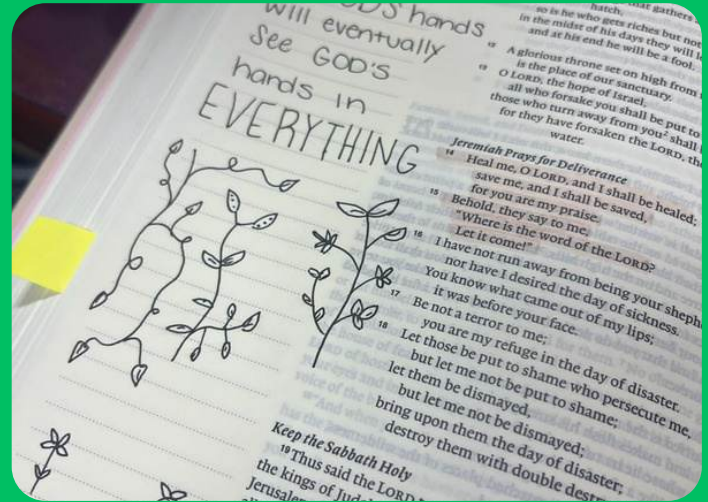
As parents and guardians, you are your child's first and most important educators. One of the best ways to support your child's Catholic education is by becoming involved with your Catholic School Parent Council. Parent Councils strengthen the partnership between home, school, parish, and community, and give parents a voice on matters that impact students and families. No special experience is required. Many councils hold elections for executive positions in late September, so watch for information from your school on nomination deadlines, election dates, and council positions. Get involved. Share your voice. Support your school.

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A GIFT OF FAITH: HELPING CHILDREN DISCOVER GOD'S WORD

Across Ontario, many Catholic schools celebrate a special milestone during Catholic Education Week as Grade 4 students receive their own Bible or Gospel for the first time. For many families it becomes the beginning of a lifelong relationship with God's Word. A priest once explained it this way: "When we pray, we speak to God. When we read the Gospel, God speaks to us." Perhaps the greatest lesson adults can teach is not simply to own a Bible, but to open it. A gift of faith has the potential to last a lifetime.



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WHERE TO BUY A BIBLE?

Families interested in purchasing a Bible may find a variety of options through local Catholic bookstores, parish gift shops, or online retailers such as Amazon. The Great Adventure Catholic Bible is a popular choice for older children, teens, and adults, while younger children may enjoy an age-appropriate Catholic children's Bible or prayer book.



Ready, Set, Grow! Helping Your Child Start the School Year with Confidence

Starting a new school year or moving to a new grade can bring excitement, but it can also bring worries and uncertainty. Your support can make a big difference. Talk about school positively, establish a routine before school starts, visit or reconnect with the school, acknowledge feelings, encourage social connections, limit stressful messages, lean on faith, and build confidence. With encouragement, routine, faith, and open communication, parents can help children start the year feeling ready, resilient, and confident.

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Back-to-School Books for All Ages

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OAPCE BACK-TO-SCHOOL READING CHALLENGE

Read together 20 minutes a day. Visit your school or public library weekly, read a faith-based book as a family, discuss what you're learning, and set a September reading goal.

KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 3

The Kissing Hand — Audrey Penn

Wemberly Worried — Kevin Henkes

The King of Kindergarten — Derrick Barnes

GRADES 4 TO 6

Wonder — R. J. Palacio

Because of Mr. Terupt — Rob Buyea

Fish in a Tree — Lynda Mullaly Hunt

GRADES 7 TO 12

The Crossover — Kwame Alexander

The Hiding Place (Young Reader's Edition) — Corrie ten Boom

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens — Sean Covey

FAITH-BASED READS

The Beginner's Bible • The Action Bible

Blessed Carlo Acutis: A Saint in Sneakers

FOR PARENTS

Parenting with Grace — Dr. Greg Popcak

The Whole-Brain Child — Daniel J. Siegel & Tina Payne Bryson

"Today a reader. Tomorrow a leader." — Margaret Fuller

Prayer for Students

We give you praise, O God, for everything that is new and beautiful, for everything which holds promise and brings us joy.

Bless our school and keep us safe. Be with us as we travel each day. Bless us as we start this new year with our friends and school staff.

May we follow in the footsteps of Mother Mary and lead with grace and integrity. May we show love to one another and to all.

May the new beginning of this school year remind us that you give us chances to start over again and again. Help us to make the most of every chance we have to start afresh.

Help us to learn and to work together. Help us to listen when we should and to know the best words when we speak. Help us to be aware of your love shown to us in the people around us.

Help us to be good friends this year. Help us to be patient with ourselves and with others.

Bless all those who care for us in our school family—our administrators, educators and all support staff.

May the Blessed Mother Mary protect us and help us to live as well as we can, giving thanks and glory to God as she did.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.



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SUPPORT OAPCE

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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