



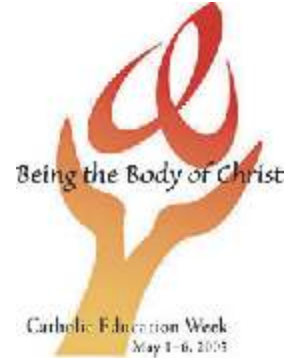
Huron-Perth Catholic Schools Community Newsletter

SPRING 2005

Catholic Education Week



St. Teresa of Avila illustrates the meaning of "Being the Body of Christ," this year's theme for Catholic Education Week.



Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands but yours,
No feet but yours.
Yours are the eyes through which
Christ's compassion must look out on the world.
Yours are the feet with which
He is to go about doing good.
Yours are the hands with which
He is to bless us now.

Catholic Education week, May 1-6, 2005, recognizes the distinct contribution that Catholic schools make to students, the community and society.

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Highlights of Events

- Each school community will celebrate the gift of Catholic Education through this year's theme, "Being the Body of Christ."
- All staff will share in a special Mass Thursday, May 5th, 5:00 p.m. at St. Patrick's Church in Dublin.
- On Friday May 6th, former and present-day staff, students and administration will give thanks to three different Religious Orders – Loretto Sisters, Sisters of St. Joseph, and Ursuline Sisters – who provided teachers to Huron-Perth Catholic Schools from as early as 1873 until 1998. A number of Sisters will attend the celebration.

Professional Catholic Learning Communities: The Journey Ahead

A major initiative of this past year has been to introduce our school communities to the concept of "Professional Catholic Learning Communities".

We have embarked on a number of professional development experiences that will help our staff and system leaders understand the intent and the goal of this important initiative. Research has shown that adopting the concept of "professional learning communities" creates effective schools and impacts positively on student success.

The professional learning community model supports the mission of our schools: that is, to ensure improved student learning for all. Collaborative learning cultures in our schools increase the skills and expertise of all staff - this is critical to support all student learning.

The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board is reflecting on the following questions as we embark on this journey:

- What school characteristics and practices have been most successful in helping all of our students achieve at higher levels?
- How can we adopt those characteristics in our schools?
- What commitments will the system and staff have to make to create such schools?
- How will we monitor and assess our progress?

One of the most promising ways for sustained school improvement is to invite all staff and



community partners to learn together and to share their expertise across grades, divisions, subject areas and among schools. We know that supporting student improvement is more successful when the whole school community – administrators, teachers, parents and students – work together to assist in making learning an engaging and rich activity. Over the past year each of our school communities have been involved in setting goals and developing school improvement plans that identify the actions the community will take to support student learning.

Catholic Education Week helps us celebrate what Catholic education means to our students, our community and our province. The core spirituality of Catholic education is richly conveyed in this year's theme, "Being the Body of Christ". The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board promotes a life-long journey of learning that is both spiritual and academic in nature. We believe that Professional Catholic Learning Communities enhance the pursuit of all learning, which is not only focused on knowledge and skills, but also on body, mind, and spirit that includes values, attitudes and actions. Together as a Catholic community we embrace "Faith and Learning... Celebrating the Journey."

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "L. Langan".

God bless,
Director of Education
Larry Langan

Education Foundation Program

THE literacy and numeracy program is a support for Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6 teachers to help elementary students achieve high levels in reading, writing, mathematics and comprehension.

What are the program components?

1. Teacher Supports: this is a Literacy/Numeracy initiative which builds on the work of the Early Reading and Early Math strategy, and will provide teachers with resources and early assessment tools for reading, writing and math.

2. Student Supports: these include new funding for textbooks, leveled reading books and other resources, as well as an intense daily focus on literacy and numeracy.

3. School Supports: these include training for principals, focused on capacity building at the school level and school improvement planning.

4. Class Size Reduction: in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3, every attempt has been made to monitor



The government's goal for literacy and numeracy: 75% of 12-year-olds will reach the provincial standard on province-wide testing by 2008.

class size in order to enhance students' literacy and numeracy skills.

5. Teacher Training: The primary and junior grades will participate in a regular training schedule.

For primary grades the topics covered are:

Literacy

Linking Assessment to Instruction,
Kindergarten – Grade 3

Literacy

Writing,
Kindergarten – Grade 3

Numeracy

Geometry,
Kindergarten – Grade 3

For junior grades the topics covered are:

Literacy

Reading and Writing,
Grades 4 – 6

Numeracy

Number Sense
and Numeration, Grades 4 – 6

How can you help?

Parents are critical to the improvement of student learning. You can become involved in your school council, engage business and community members to further support student achievement goals and work closely with your school to support literacy, library and reading programs.

Check the HPCDSB website for more information. In addition to our resources, you can access www.edu.gov.on.ca, the Ministry website, for recent publications and an update of information.



Huron-Perth Catholic Schools Community Newsletter

This newsletter is distributed free of charge to the families of all students in Huron-Perth Catholic Schools, and all Catholic ratepayers in the area. Occasionally we distribute additional copies of this newsletter to select Catholic households in Huron-Perth. We hope you have enjoyed this complimentary edition.

Check to be sure – if your taxes are not directed to the Catholic school system, you can't vote for Catholic trustees in the next election.

Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board

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Tsunami Relief

Jeanne Sauvé School raised \$5,385 for tsunami relief in South and Southeast Asia. The school began fundraising the first week of January through spirit days, bake sales, food booths, no-homework days and an event in which students could pay to sit with a friend in class.

The school sent \$600 to be distributed by Development and Peace through the Catholic Diocese of London and the remaining \$4,785.61 went to the Canadian Red Cross.

A note about St. Michael's

A new instrumental music room has been created at St. Michael Secondary School.

Instrumental music classes are enjoying the addition of 26 new band and percussion instruments. All grade nine integrated arts students now have the opportu-

nity to learn a band instrument as well as learn to play the guitar.

The new room will also accommodate weekly band and jazz combo rehearsals.

Pro-Life Activities

In early February students from St. Michael Secondary School raised money to support Teen Pro-Life initiatives through a Pro-Life-Prayer-A-Thon.

Students also volunteered at the local House of Blessings crisis pregnancy centre and made "Window to the Womb" presentations to all Grade 8 classes. This introduced students to Teen Pro-Life and invited them to the "Radical for Life" conference hosted at St. Joseph's Church, Stratford in April.

Students from both St. Michael's and St. Anne's plan to join thousands in May to protest in Ottawa at the "March for Life."



St. Columban's "Playing With Shakespeare"

Students at St. Columban had a wonderful time reworking some classic Shakespearean theatre.

Through the guidance of grade 5/6 teacher, Emily O'Connor, the students wrote, staged and performed a play entitled "Playing with Shakespeare". The play was performed in March on two occasions to a full house.



A new instrumental music room has been created at St. Michael Secondary School which will also allow weekly band and jazz combo rehearsals.

Dominican Republic

For the past ten years, staff and students from St. Michael Secondary School have travelled to the Dominican Republic to experience life in a developing country.

This year 22 students – under the direction of teachers, Carolyn Wilson, Andrew Damen and Tim O'Connor – were billeted for one week with families in the town of Consuelo. The participants had the opportunity to visit poor barrios, sugar cane fields and free-zone factories.

Much of the time was spent

with the local people. Third World experiences can help individuals develop a personal response to Christian social teaching and social action. People exposed to the realities of life in the Third World are often motivated, upon their return, to address justice issues in their own community and beyond.

The Writer's Craft

Prolific Canadian author Eric Walters spoke to students at St. Mary's School in Hesson about the craft of writing.

Mr. Walters presented short workshops on how to write a story and also shared excerpts from his historic-fiction novels. This was a great opportunity for students to see first-hand how a

professional author works with words.

Lenten Project at St. Anne's Secondary School

During lent, students at St. Anne's participated in a fast-a-thon. It provided almost 300 food items to each of the five Huron County food banks along with a cash donation of \$200 per food bank.

Precious Blood School Celebrates Education

Students and staff at Precious Blood have built school spirit and enriched learning opportunities throughout the year.

Various activities included: a French carnival, a building club, sports teams, the choir, a dance

club, the NHL (Noodle Hockey League), to name just a few.

During Education week, there will be a "Pathway to Learning," celebration that will feature student work from across the curriculum.

Peace at Sacred Heart, Wingham

The students, parents and staff of Sacred Heart were honoured to welcome Mike Neuts to their school in February. Mr. Neuts spoke about his son Myles, who died at age 11 as a result of bullying in 1998.

Mr. Neuts believes in the value of every child and has spread his message of peace to many thousands of Ontario school children.



Mike Neuts with Kindergarten B class, their teacher, Mrs. Linda McKay and grade 7 student, Kayla D'Aoust at Sacred Heart School, Wingham. Students intend to use the lessons learned from Mr. Neuts and make Sacred Heart a safer, more compassionate place.

What is Peace?

To me peace is love instead of hate.
Peace is truth instead of lies.
Peace is nature and a clean world.
Peace is comments instead of complaints.
So share instead of greed.
Tell the truth instead of lies.
Tell comments instead of complaints
Be kinder to others.
Do whatever you can do to be more peaceful
if it means praying to God more.
Or read more of the Bible.
don't swear or fight.
Just be more peaceful.
To yourself, and to others.
I hope my poem has made you more peaceful,
for our world.

*By Myles Neuts
1997, 03, 25*

St. Aloysius



ST. Aloysius School in Stratford is dedicated to creating a caring family environment. Programs and regular activities at the school foster a 'faith in action' approach to daily interactions amongst students. Love and respect is practiced daily and helps students feel that they are a part of an extended family.

The Circle of Friends program

Students from all grades spend time with a particular student to ensure no one is left alone. A continual rotation of schedules ensures many students get an opportunity to belong to a Circle of Friends. As part of the program, some students are asked to be official greeters who meet and welcome students as they arrive and then notify staff that the students have arrived safely.

Peer Mediators

Students in Grades 5 – 8 receive special training from the Perth District Health Unit in co-operative game playing and problem solving. Each recess two teams of students walk the yard paying attention to students who may be having some difficulty and offer to help them resolve their issues. The Mediators

complete paperwork each day based on their interactions.

Student Helpers & Monitors

Students in Grades 7 and 8 help in classrooms with younger students on inclement weather days during recesses and lunch hours. The task for the older students is to engage the younger students in a safe activity. As a result the older students demonstrate their leadership qualities and their willingness to accept responsibility.

Daily Student led Prayers

Students lead the school in prayer each day at St. Aloysius. All grades participate over the course of the year – announcements of daily birthdays are a favourite part of the job.

Monthly led Student Masses

Throughout the year, individual classes prepare and lead the school in a liturgical celebration or Mass. Students in the lead class are involved through reading, prayer, song, greeting or ushering.

Older students buddy with younger students as they walk to church and then sit with them to demonstrate model behaviour.

St. James



St. James School participated in an anti-bullying presentation called "Stand Up For Bullying" by Bruce Langford, a teacher from St. Thomas. Mr. Langford has made it his mission to educate students about bullying by using music, role play, video and by encouraging participation.

A school wide anti-bullying campaign has been underway this year at St. James School in Seaforth. The focus is on reminding students to treat one another with kindness, respect and love at all times.

Anti-bullying campaign

In November a copy of the "Bullying Pledge" was sent home to all St. James families and shared in classrooms as part of Bullying Awareness Week.

This initiative was sponsored in part by The Family Channel, in an effort to deliver the message that children have the power to do something about bullying.

Classrooms stamp out bullying

The grade 5 students have been participants in a sharing circle. Each student received a star, put his/her name on it and then passed it around the class so others could write something special about them on the star.

The stars are posted in the classroom to remind

everyone that each person is a "star" in God's eyes.

Students in grade 1 are learning how to manage their anger in ways that are not harmful to others. "Marshmallow" stories, which focus on kindness and positive interactions, are read daily to students and teach them about the importance of giving "warm fuzzies" (through good deeds) instead of "cold pricklies" (through bullying or unkind behaviour).

The grade 8 class was divided into six research groups. Topics assigned included: Are you a bully? What is bullying? Are you being bullied? Who's a target? Bully-free zones and Can you help?

Each group created a poster and presented a short skit to demonstrate their learning to their classmates. Visit www.family.ca to view the anti-bullying pledge, read tips and stories, find resources and complete a quiz.

Young people across Canada are also invited to join the Peer Power Network when they visit www.bullying.org.

Christuraj Nursery and Primary School



Please help rebuild this school.

CHURISTURAJAPURAM is a village of 1,300 people and is located five kilometres inland from the southern coast of India. The 120 students who attended Christuraj Nursery and Primary School lost their entire school. The children are presently attending a temporary shelter working with very few supplies.

The estimate to build a new facility is \$45,000. Schools across Huron-Perth Catholic are finding ways to raise money for this project. For example, St. Joseph's School in Kingsbridge sold building bricks to students, staff, parents and to members of the

community to build a symbolic model of a schoolhouse. Each building brick was labeled with the name of a student or family member, living or deceased. The block donations ranged from \$1 to \$5. Students' Council members helped to erect the model in the front hallway of the school – \$202.82 was raised.

Father Francis from the cluster parishes of St. Boniface, Zurich; Immaculate Heart of Mary, Grand Bend; and St. Peter's Church in St. Joseph will be traveling to India in April and will make the cheque presentation to the Bishop on behalf of Huron-Perth Catholic.

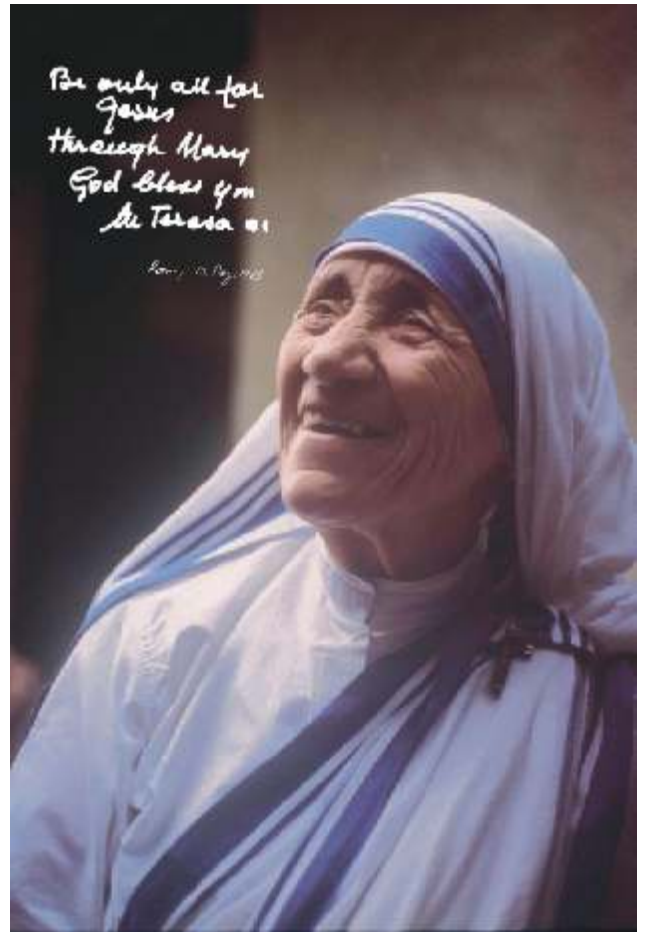


Mother Teresa Faith in Action Award

THE Mother Teresa Faith in Action Award, established by the Catholic Education Team of the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board, recognizes individuals who:

- ◊ Witness their faith
- ◊ Create nurturing, Christ centred learning environments
- ◊ Promote social justice, awareness and action
- ◊ Nurture and celebrate the gifts, self-worth and potential of each student

Awards will be presented during the special Education Week mass on Thursday, May 5, 2005. This year's recipients are:



Julianne Ryan
Heidi Elliott
Laurie Donnelly
St. Mary's, Goderich

Maureen Lang
Joan Flanagan
St. Aloysius, Stratford

Joan Schnell
St. Ambrose, Stratford

Margaret Rowland
Former Consultant

Liz McLaughlin
St. Patrick's, Kinkora

Helen VanBakel
St. Anne's CSS, Clinton

Sally Campeau
Sacred Heart, Wingham

Clarice Dalton
St. Joseph's, Kingsbridge

John Lima
St. Mary's, Hesson

Father Maurice Charbonneau
Former Pastor
St. Patrick's Church, Dublin

Deb Tate
St. Michael CSS, Stratford

Doreen Nogalo
St. Joseph's, Clinton

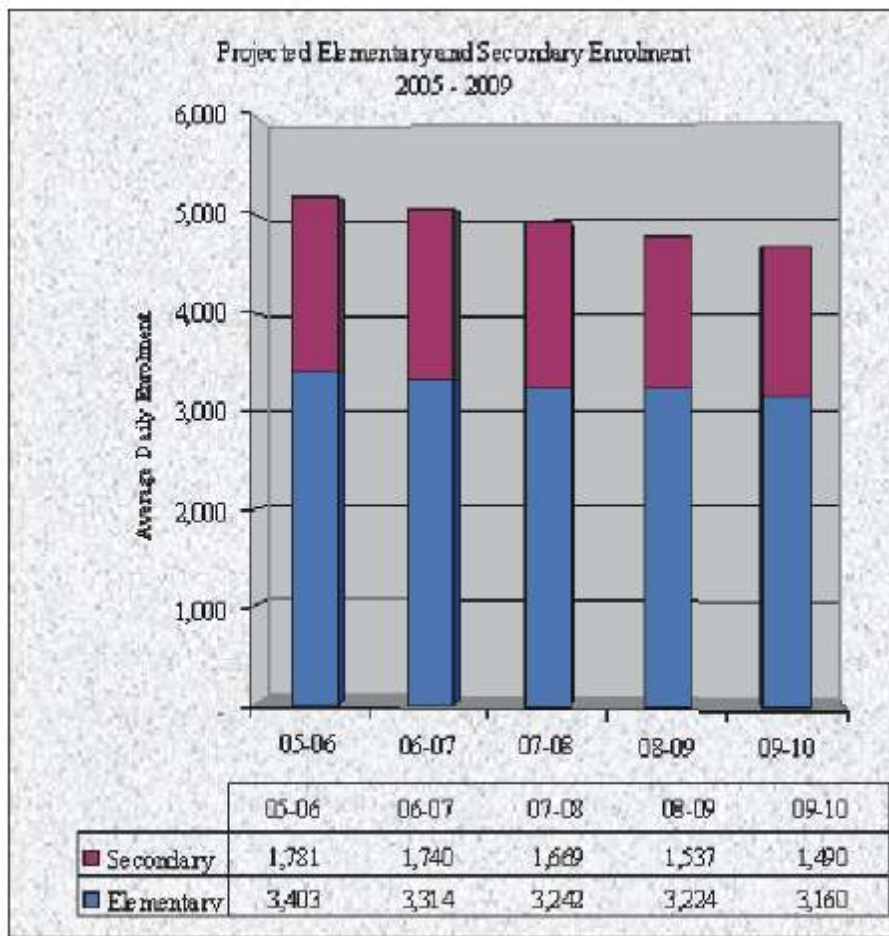
Jim McDade
Coordinator
Huron-Perth CDSB

Kathy Regier
Our Lady of Mount Carmel
School, Mt. Carmel

John Devlin
Volunteer and former trustee

Lynda Verwer
Holy Name of Mary, St. Marys

School Enrolment Trends



THE Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board is experiencing a steady decline in its school-aged population. This trend is similar to enrolment patterns in other rural areas of Ontario.

At individual schools, there are lower junior kindergarten registrations. In September 2005, it is projected that the system will have 267 junior kindergarten registrants.

This combined with a grade 8 graduating class of approximately 399 students, results in a net loss of 132 students or 3.7%. The prediction is that this trend will continue for the next 5-7 years.

Some of the reasons that may be contributing to this decline are the following:

- a) smaller families
- b) larger agricultural operations
- c) some communities are very attractive to retirees and seasonal residents
- d) a migration of graduates out of the area to larger centers for employment

Secondary schools are currently maintaining their enrolment but they also will experience the decline in future years. This decline will have significant financial implications for the future of the Huron-Perth Catholic school system. The chart shows the projected enrolment patterns for both the Elementary and Secondary schools of the Board for the next five years.

Celebrating Two New Schools



ON March 21, 2005 St. Mary's Catholic School, Listowel opened its doors for the first time to elementary students of North Perth. Approximately 150 students and staff gathered in the school's gymnasium and joined with the principal Mr. John McCarroll in prayer and thanksgiving for the new school.

The Board received funding from the Ministry of Education to replace the existing school in Hesson. This direction reflected the fact that the cost to repair the existing facility would be greater than the cost to build a new school.

The new school is located on approximately 11 acres in the southwest part of the Town of Listowel.

The school is approximately 19,000 square feet and has 7 classrooms, a library and a full gymnasium. The Board, in its design of the new school, attempted to incorporate a number of features important to the community.

These features included an entrance and gathering area that reflects the strong tradition of Catholic education evident in the culture established in Hesson, a large playground that includes ample space for all types of outdoor activity, and modern up-to-date facilities. Striking features of the new school are the spacious library and kindergarten areas.

The Most Reverend Bishop Ronald Fabbro will officially open the school on April 23, 2005.



St. Joseph's School in Clinton celebrated the Official opening of their new school on February 24, 2005.

The Most Reverend Bishop Ronald P. Fabbro, Bishop of London, presided over the Mass.

A Team Approach to Education

THE contribution of many partners within a school community is important. Although teachers make up the largest group of employees within a school system, it takes more than faculty to create a strong, caring educational community that supports student achievement. Teachers, custodians, administrative staff, support staff, community partners and volunteers all make up the successful team who are dedicated to educating youth.

Across Huron-Perth Catholic the involvement of volunteers varies from school to school and from project to project but their dedication is invaluable. Volunteers give of their time, expertise and talent to enhance the learning environment at all schools.

At St. Joseph's School in Stratford, for example, volunteer reading programs have been a huge success. Volunteers share their love of reading through three volunteer programs: Reading for 15, Homework Helpers and Reading One-on-One.

The "Reading for 15" program takes place at lunch from 11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. each day. Adult volunteers visit all classrooms and read to students during their lunchtime. This special program offers students an opportunity to participate in many exciting book adventures while the volunteers model and reinforce the impor-



The "Reading for 15" program at St. Joseph School in Stratford is just one of the regular activities led by volunteers.

tance of becoming lifelong learners.

The "Homework Helpers" program takes place at lunch on Wednesdays and Fridays from 12:00 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. Students receive additional assistance with their schoolwork and they are inspired to feel confident about their learning.

The "Reading One-on-One" program takes place throughout the school day. Students receive one-on-one reading time with an adult volunteer.

At Jeanne Sauvé School two local counselors have made a tremendous impact on the school community. The school is participating in a program called the "3 R's: Respect, Responsibility and Relationships." The program enhances student understanding

for the need to create a positive and caring school environment. Dee Leifso, Child and Youth Counselor and Virtues Project Counselor; and Karen Goldthorp, teacher, Child Education Workshop Leader and Virtues Project Counselor created a program to meet the specific needs of Jeanne Sauvé School.

Students will continue to participate in programs that address such issues as bullying, self-esteem, and anger management. There is a focus on incorporating a Christian approach to interacting with others through the virtues project.

The school council (made up of parent and community volunteers) has also supported the endeavor by donating \$1,500 to the program.