

Rejoice

It's different here!

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Canadian Environmentalist and Craftsman Visits Mt. Carmel for Earth Day

Students attending Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School in Dashwood spent their Earth Day soaking up all they could in lessons about Canadian history, cultural acceptance, and protecting the environment.

At a school-wide Earth Day celebration on April 21, students from Kindergarten through Grade 8 gathered to share the wisdom of Métis Canadian speaker Marcel Labelle, whose passion for environmental issues and skill as a traditional native canoe builder have earned him a variety of media appearances.

Born of Metis heritage, Labelle grew up in Northern Ontario and spent most of his childhood on the trap line. His demonstration at the school included a full size traditional birch bark canoe that was commissioned by the Ontario Arts Council, along with all the materials and tools used in the construction process.

But it was his commitment to conservation that struck a chord with many students.

"He taught us to use more and waste less," explains Parker, a Grade 7 student at Mt. Carmel. "He uses everything in the building process. He takes the wood shavings to use for the fire. He won't waste anything." Parker notes that he's recognized ways this philosophy can be used

around the school, from recycling, to using both sides of each sheet of paper.

Lauren in Grade 8 was equally enthused about the presentation. "He talked about how he spent his whole life conserving, and he explained it in a way that was very appropriate for our age group. He really promoted what a difference it makes to use our resources effectively."

Labelle returned to Mt. Carmel at the end of the week for a miniature canoe-making workshop for students in grades 5 through 8. His presentations coincided with a variety of Earth Day events at the school, including an oak sapling giveaway by Communities in Bloom and the Lights Out Canada campaign.

Labelle has scheduled visits with a number of Huron-Perth schools in April and May, including Holy Name of Mary in St. Marys and St. James in Seaforth.



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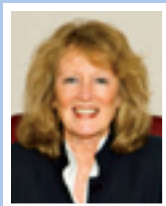
SMART Boards

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Faith and Learning... Celebrating the Journey

From The Director

In a world that is desperate for any form of good news, we in the Huron-Perth Catholic community are blessed to be able to proclaim the Good News...for all people. Good News that God has come among us, lives among us, and loves us faithfully.



In his address to Educators in Washington during the papal visit to the United States, Pope Benedict XVI used these words from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans (10:15):

“How Beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news.” In these words Paul was echoing the words of the prophet Isaiah. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news. (Isaiah 52:7)

We who are engaged in the work of Catholic education are among those who bring Good News and it is with our feet, our going out to meet people where they are, that we who are called become the ‘beautiful’ messengers of the Good News, Good News for All.

Martha Dutrizac,
Director of Education



“Pinball” Clemons Wows the Crowd at St. Anne’s

Michael “Pinball” Clemons delivered a powerful message to a packed house at St. Anne’s Catholic Secondary School in Clinton on April 17th. Clemons, a former pro football player and coach with the Toronto Argonauts, spoke of overcoming unbeatable odds, from growing up in a single parent family in the projects in Florida, to being considered too short (at 5’6”) to play the game. In spite of these challenges, Clemons went on to reach legendary status, emerging as one of the most decorated athletes in Canadian Football.

During an energetic presentation that had him standing on chairs and climbing into the bleachers, Clemons spoke about the importance of working together as a team, reminding students that what they do or say reflects on their community as a whole.

“When I tear you down, I tear myself down,” he announced. “When I build you up, I build me up too!”

The sports hero challenged his audience to give their personal best each day, using the analogy of their life as a movie: “If they made a movie about your life, could you sit at the world premiere feeling proud of every moment?” he asked. Clemons challenged listeners to make sure that every day, they gave their personal best.

The presentation filled with personal stories which took the audience on a rollercoaster ride of emotions. When Clemons invited Chris Grace to the front and stood on the stage to look him in the eye, he illustrated the challenge he had to overcome as a person of smaller stature. “Which one of us looks like we should play football?” he asked the crowd. Then he went on to talk about his mother, his personal hero, who had raised him as a single parent and had only missed one game from the time he was 8 until he was 18. She had always encouraged him to persevere and to do his best. Her



own story had been filled with sadness, but Clemons was quick to point out that she never complained. He then took off his Grey Cup ring and threw it into the crowd. He said it was one of his proudest moments as a coach to win the Canadian equivalent to the Superbowl, but the wealth and prestige didn’t mean as much as family and personal values.

Clemons’ message held the group of 1000 students for over an hour, and for many, had a profound effect.

“I thought that Pinball was an inspirational speaker who really helped to pump up school spirit,” said Scott, a Grade 12 student.

Craig in Grade 10 added, “I’m sure that what he said affected each and every person in a positive way. From the start, he made everyone feel special and welcome. I felt as if Pinball was talking directly to me.”

“I admire his love for life and aspire to emulate his contagious personality in my own life,” explained Emily, a Grade 12 student. “It made me realize that I’ve always wanted to become a published author, and although this is an ambitious goal, I know that I can do it.”

After a brief question and answer period, Clemons was surrounded on the stage by fans seeking autographs and hoping for a picture. Clemons promised his audience he would arrange for free tickets so they could attend a pre-season Argonauts football game where he continues as CEO, in recognition of their incredible spirit, enthusiasm and positive energy. Go Eagles! Go Argos!

Building Confidence, Building Friendships

The Building Club at St. Mary's School in Goderich has uncovered a wealth of untapped engineering talent! Here, Primary Junior and Intermediate students meet during their lunch hour several times each week to build with K'NEX and LEGO. For students who are kinesthetic learners – meaning they learn by doing – the club has been a place to showcase their skills, while making new friends in the process.



"Baby Steps"

Students at St. Anne's Catholic Secondary School in Clinton recently presented the one-act play, *Baby Steps*.



Written by director and drama teacher Crystal Brennan-Yeo, the production involved a cast and crew of over 50 students who had been practicing since September.

Baby Steps chronicles the emotional journey of protagonist Joleene, whose daughter was kidnapped a decade ago. As the show opens, she struggles to find meaning and happiness in her life as the instructor of her own dance studio.

Students shone in the play's many dance numbers, which included tap, Irish and ballroom performances. The cast and crew plan to reprise their roles in late April to compete in the Sears Drama Festival, held annually at Stratford Central Secondary School.



The Light of the World

Mrs. Gregory's Grade 9 Religion Class at St. Michael Catholic Secondary School in Stratford prepared to celebrate the holidays with a special Easter Candle project. Students sketched images of sacred symbols on their candles, then carefully painted in the details. "The goal was to make something they could share with their families this Easter," explained Mrs. Gregory. "All in all they had a great time, and were proud of their work."



Free the Children

The students of St. Joseph's School in Stratford made significant Lenten commitments this year, setting personal goals to raise money for the Free the Children Campaign.

Founded by Craig Kielburger in 1995, Free the Children is an organization dedicated to freeing children from poverty, exploitation and child labour, while empowering young people to affect positive change in the world. A school-wide goal was set to raise \$600.00 for this worthy cause, but the St. Joseph's community outdid itself and collected three times that amount – over \$1800.00! The top fundraisers were Mrs. Doherty's Grade 2 students, followed by Miss Dale's Grade 7 class. They won the opportunity to choose a new hair colour for their principal, Mrs. Shypula, and selected a stunning metallic gold and fluorescent orange combination.

All of the students did an amazing job in supporting the fundraiser. Special thanks go to Miss Dale and the student council, who oversaw the success of the campaign.

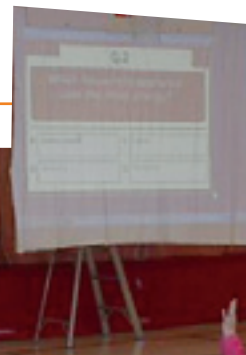


Skills Ontario Competition

Technology students from both St. Anne's and St. Michael Catholic Secondary Schools recently sized up their skills against students from across Southwestern Ontario at the Skills Canada/Ontario Technological Qualifying Competition at Fanshawe College.

Students from Huron-Perth Catholic had their best showing to date, bringing home medals in four of the six qualifying divisions entered. Six students will be moving on to the Skills Ontario Provincial Competition, while another nine will be competing in the Technological Skills Ontario Provincial Skills Competition. The categories entered include Home Building, Electrical and Industrial Wiring, and Carpentry. Both competitions will be held in early May.

- Small Powered Equipment: Shaun, St. Michael Catholic SS (3rd Place)
- TV & Video Production Team: Chris & Christian, St. Michael Catholic SS (2nd Place)
- Carpentry Individual: Nathan, St. Anne Catholic SS (2nd Place)
- 2D Character Animation Team: Garrett & Tori, St. Michael Catholic SS (1st Place)



Kicking Off Earth Week

The Eco Team at Sacred Heart School in Wingham rolled out their Earth Week celebrations with an environmentally-themed video and slideshow presentation, followed by a trivia question and answer period. Comprised of students in Grades 1 through 8, the Eco Team made the presentation under the direction of Ms. DeJong. Their goal was to teach fellow students about respecting the Earth, while raising awareness about water and energy conservation.



First Annual Director's Symposium

The First Annual Director's Symposium was held at Oakwood Inn in Grand Bend on April 16th & 17th, with the theme "Good News for All." Principals and Vice-Principals attended the Symposium, along with senior administrators, curriculum support staff and managers from the Board Office. Guest Speaker was Mayor Dan Mathieson of Stratford, while Lou Rocha from the Ontario Catholic Schools Trustees' Association (pictured) addressed the topic of "Our Catholic Schools...Leadership for Today and Tomorrow." Mass was celebrated on the Friday afternoon by Father Peter Keller.



SMART Technology for Math Classes

Math class is going high tech with the introduction of five SMART Boards into mathematics classrooms at St. Anne's Catholic Secondary School in Clinton, and four SMART Boards at St. Michael Catholic Secondary School in Stratford.

Like a white board with a touch screen, SMART Boards have the capability to project large computer images which teachers and students can use in front of the class, as they would a traditional blackboard. By grabbing items and moving them around, plotting graphs, or even writing on the screen and having their notations saved as part of the document, SMART Boards have the potential to make math classes more interactive than ever before.

The SMART Boards are being introduced this year as part of the Grade 7 to 10 Math Lesson Study project, an initiative to engage students and improve areas of weakness in mathematics as identified by grade 9 EQAO testing. Though initially proposed for students in grades 9 and 10, a recent grant from the Ministry of Education has provided for the purchase of three more SMART Boards, which in the coming weeks will be made available to students in grades 7 and 8 at St. Ambrose in Stratford, St. Joseph's in Clinton and St. Mary's in Goderich. St. Aloysius in Stratford has purchased SMART Boards for their grade 7 and 8 students as well.

"We expect to see an improvement in student engagement, as anything technological grabs their attention," says Brian Marcy, Secondary Curriculum Resource Teacher and previous head of the Math Department at St. Anne's. "With SMART Board technology, the lessons become more dynamic. Students and teachers are able to manipulate material in a way they

never could before. They can make changes to material instead of having to erase and re-create it on a blackboard. This allows them to make connections between concepts, and to recognize concepts within concepts."

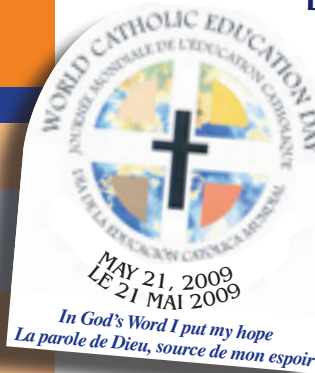
Together with a panel of six secondary and 12 elementary teachers, Marcy is looking at ways to build SMART Technology into the existing math curriculum. The team is building sets of what he calls "skeleton" lessons, which teachers can take and fill with their own classroom material.

By tracking EQAO scores over time, the study will assess ways in which SMART Technology is improving the learning experience for math students.



Upcoming Events

Apr. 30	Junior Techno Challenge - Seaforth Arena
May 3 - 9	Catholic Education Week - Good News For All
May 4	System Mass/Mother Teresa Awards - 5:30 p.m., St. Patrick's Church, Dublin
May 5	Huron Arts Festival 10:00 a.m. - St. Anne's CSS, Clinton
May 6	Perth Arts Festival 10:00 a.m. - St. Michael CSS, Stratford
May 7	Senior Techno Challenge - Seaforth Arena
May 10	Mother's Day
May 12	Stuff That Bus!
May 14	Catholic Student Trustees' Award Retreat for Students - 10:00 a.m. Mass - 4:30 p.m., St. Anne's CSS, Clinton
May 18	Victoria Day Holiday
May 21	World Catholic Education Day
May 25	Board Meeting
June 21	Father's Day
June 9	System Track & Field For All
June 15	Board Meeting
June 19	Elementary Two-Pitch
June 19	Secondary Exams Begin
June 23	Elementary Report Cards go home
June 26	PD Day



Director's Report

This report is prepared by Elaine DeCorte at the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board. To keep the system informed of the latest news within your school and community, forward details about any activities and achievements by both staff and students to Elaine for inclusion in upcoming issues of the Director's Report.

Contributions for this publication may be sent or emailed to Elaine at the Board Office. The Director's Report is distributed monthly to staff and is posted on the Board's website.

Congratulations!
 ...to Susan Dunn-VanBakel, teacher at St. Michael CSS, Stratford, on the birth of her daughter Abigail.



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Martha Dutrizac
 Director of Education



Rejoice

