

UPCOMING EVENTS:

• **May 2-6, 2016**

Catholic Education
Week

• **May 7, 2014**

Province-wide
Simultaneous
Mass: HCDSB
Secondary Schools

• **May 5 2016**

Walk With Jesus

• **June 1, 2016**

Labyrinth Walk—
final AFF session

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**Crosby's Letter -
Extraordinary
Jubilee of Mercy**

Focus on Faith Update

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1

MAY 2016

"Who do you say that I am?" in

EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE OF MERCY

DEC. 8, 2015 - NOV. 20, 2016



"IT WILL BE A HOLY YEAR OF MERCY."
POPE FRANCIS

"Since his election, Pope Francis has inspired millions and challenged the world with his message of mercy, solidarity, and service. For Pope Francis, the unending mercy of God, and the personal requirement for mercy to be given and received has been a constant thread throughout his ministry. As Cardinal of Buenos Aires, he said that: Only someone who has encountered mercy, who has been caressed by the tenderness of mercy, is happy and comfortable with the Lord.

He wrote in **The Joy of the Gospel** God shows the poor "his first mercy". This is why I want a Church that is poor and for the poor. His encyclical, "Laudato Si—On Care for Our Common Home", Pope Francis calls on us to treat our world with merciful care as being ...'among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor.' Pope Francis suggests using Five-Finger Prayer: thumb (pray for those who close to you), index finger (for those who teach and heal you), middle finger (for leaders), ring finger (for the sick and marginalized) and little finger (for yourself).

Walk With Jesus

May 5th, 2016

This year's Walk With Jesus explored a new venue: starting at Jean Vanier Catholic Secondary School, students walked to the Mattamy National Cycling Centre, known as the Velodrome, where they ate lunch and then participated in a celebration of Mass with Bishop Miehm. Although only a few students from each school could join the Walk, others were able to connect through media in their school.



CCCRT Videos

The Compassionate Care and Crisis Response Team has been busy over the past year in the production of short video clips on various issues concerning support for people experiencing grief and crisis situations. The initial clip has been completed; however, others are still being edited. The ultimate intention is to post these on YouTube and on the Board web site where they can be accessed by any student, staff member or parent looking for such support.





Be merciful like the Father...

"The quality of mercy is not strained. It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed: it blesseth him that gives and him that takes. 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest. It becomes the throned monarch better than his crown. His sceptre shows the force of temporal power, the attribute to awe and majesty wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings, but mercy is above this sceptred sway. It is enthroned in the hearts of kings. It is an attribute to God himself. And earthly power doth then

show likest God's when mercy seasons justice."

Portia's words in Shakespeare's *"The Merchant of Venice"* offer us a poetic message of the attributes of mercy. As we pursue our Theological Theme, Jesus asks us, "Who do you say I that I am?" We can respond, "You are the Lord who is merciful." We are called by our Holy Father Francis, in this Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, to be merciful as God is merciful. There are many ways in which we can show how we are made in God's image; perhaps the best guide is to follow the Corporal Works of Mercy: to feed

the hungry; to give drink to the thirsty; to clothe the naked; to shelter the homeless; to visit the sick; to visit the imprisoned; to bury the dead. We are also called to pray for the living and the dead.

Jesus told us "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." (Matt 25:40) We don't have to look far to find opportunities to live this teaching of the Gospel in our schools and communities; our schools are living examples of this outreach. Let's keep on letting our light shine!

Catholic Education Week

CATHOLIC EDUCATION
OPENING DOORS OF MERCY



L'ÉDUCATION CATHOLIQUE
OUVRIER DES PORTES DE MISÉRICORDIE

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy."

- Matthew 5:7

CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK
MAY 1 - 6, 2016
WWW.GOODNEWSFORALL.CA



"Heureux les miséricordieux, car ils obtiendront miséricorde."

- Matthieu 5,7

SEMAINE DE L'ÉDUCATION CATHOLIQUE
1^{ER} AU 6 MAI, 2016
WWW.GOODNEWSFORALL.CA



Catholic Education Week took place from May 1st to 6th, 2016. This year's Theme was "Opening Doors of Mercy." A different aspect of Mercy was considered each day. This week also coincided with Mental Health Awareness Week. We enjoyed the celebration of this week all across our School Board, as all the partners in Catholic Education shared in highlighting the work being done to achieve, believe and belong!

MONDAY MAY 2: MERCY THAT WELCOMES

"In this Holy Year, we want to open our hearts to those living on the outermost fringes of society. We need to open our eyes and see the misery of the world and the wounds of our brothers and sisters who are denied their dignity. We need to recognize that we must heed their cry for help! We should reach out to them and support them so they can feel the warmth of our presence, our friendship, and our solidarity with them as brothers and sisters!"

TUESDAY MAY 3: MERCY THAT LOVES

"The mercy of God is His loving concern for each one of us. He feels responsible for us; He desires our wellbeing and He wants

to see us happy, full of joy, and peaceful. This is the path which the merciful love of Christians must also travel. As the Father loves, so do His children. Just as He is merciful, so we are called to be merciful to each other."

WEDNESDAY MAY 4: MERCY THAT FORGIVES

"Jesus affirms that mercy is not only an action of the Father, it is a sign of who His true children are. In short, we are called to show mercy because mercy has first been shown to us. Pardoning offences becomes the clearest expression of merciful love, and for us Christians, it is an imperative from which we cannot excuse ourselves. At times how hard it seems to forgive! And yet pardoning others enables us to attain peace in our heart. To let go of anger, wrath, violence, and revenge are necessary conditions to living joyfully. Jesus made mercy an ideal of life and a necessary part of being Christian when He said, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (Mt 5:7): the beatitude to which we should particularly aspire in this Holy Year."

THURSDAY MAY 5: MERCY THAT LIVES THE GOSPEL

"Pope Francis has called on the church, during the Jubilee Year of

Mercy, to reflect on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Let us rediscover these corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. And let us not forget the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences, bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead."

FRIDAY MAY 6: MERCY THAT REJOICES

"In the parables devoted to mercy, Jesus reveals that God is a Father who never gives up until He has forgiven the wrong and overcome rejection with compassion and mercy. We know these parables well, three in particular: the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the father with two sons (cf. Lk 15:1-32). In these parables, God is always presented as full of joy, especially when He pardons. In them we find the core of the Gospel and of our faith, because mercy is presented as a force that overcomes everything, filling the heart with love and bringing consolation through pardon."

-sourced from **OCSTA 2016 CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK RESOURCE KIT**

Snippets of Interest

Laudato Si'

In May 2015, Pope Francis released his Encyclical Letter on Care for our Common Home, *Laudato Si'*. This beautifully written document comments on our call to care for creation. One of its most striking features is that it links the misuse of our gifts of the earth to many of the social injustices that occur for the peoples of our world. Consider this quote from the document; "Today, however, we have to realize that a true ecological approach *always* becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear *both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.*" In linking Stewardship of Creation with so many other of our Catholic Social Teachings, Pope Francis provides us with rich fodder to apply to the practice and teaching of our Focus on Faith themes. It is well worth a read if you haven't yet had an opportunity. Certainly it provides a solid foundation through which to incorporate our Catholic lens into our curriculum!



Image courtesy of Dan at FreeDigitalPhotos.net

Canadian Forum on Theology and Education

HCDSB staff were also in attendance at this conference, held on April 1 and 2, 2016. **Joan Chittister, OSB** and **Diarmuid O'Murchu, MSC** were the guest speakers at this conference, whose theme was *Evolution and the Spiritual Life: Exploring Changing Images of God and the Implications for Daily Life and Spirituality*.

The Catholic Association of Religious and Family Life Educators of Ontario held their annual conference on April 14 and 15, 2016. Its theme was *Mercy that Transforms: Creating Spaces of Hope*. A number of staff from HCDSB were in attendance. The keynote speaker was Mary Jo Leddy, a Canadian writer, speaker, theologian and social activist, who is widely recognized for her work with refugees at Toronto's Romero House. At the Conference, the new and updated Carfleo website was also highlighted. This website contains a plethora of resources to support Religion and Family Life. The URL address of the new site is <https://carfleo.com>. Check it out!

Carfleo

Eco-Café:

This program has now concluded for the school year after a very inspiring series of discussions led very ably by Sister Mary Heather at the SSND Convent in Waterdown. We look forward to another series in the 2016-2017 school year when the focus will be *Laudato Si'*.

As news of the disaster in Fort McMurray continues to flow in, our Board is responding in many ways to the call for help. Schools and the CEC are fund-raising to show that we live what we believe: to "Be merciful as your Father in Heaven is merciful".



Doors from Holy Trinity

When Faith Meets Pedagogy

The
Catholic
Curriculum
Corporation
presents



When Faith Meets Pedagogy 2015 Conference

"Embraced, Centred and Gathered as God's Family"

October 22, 23, 24, 2015
International Plaza Hotel Toronto Airport

In October 2015, the annual *When Faith Meets Pedagogy Conference*, "Embraced, Centred and Gathered as God's Family", addressed the Holy Father's Year of the Family. The conference was well-attended by HCDSB staff, many of whom commented on how much they enjoyed the Keynote Speaker, David Wells.

A featured speaker was Michael Pautler, current Executive Director for the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE) and former Director of Education for HCDSB., who spoke on Creating a Culture of Belonging in Catholic Schools.

Congratulations to workshop presenters Katherine Stevenson, Sonia Ellison, Terri Durham, Kristen Davison, Lisa Raposo, Dann Crandal and

Jolanta Oko who shared their talents in a wide spectrum of topics with their fellow educators.

Mass was celebrated by His Excellency Most Revered Bishop William McGrattan from the Diocese of Peterborough.

The Committee has answered the call of many of the attendees all across Ontario, to have David Wells return to us for the October 2016 conference! This upcoming event will feature David speaking on the 2016 Conference Theme: Mercy: Wellspring of Joy, Serenity and Peace.

We look forward to *When Faith Meets Pedagogy 2016 "Mercy: Wellspring of Joy, Serenity and Peace"* to be held at the International Plaza Hotel Toronto on October 27th, 28th and 29th 2016.

Catholic Education Week



Students in our schools take very seriously the call to be "Be merciful as the Father is merciful". Here are some examples of how our secondary schools observed Catholic Education Week.

MERCY THAT WELCOMES

MERCY THAT LOVES

MERCY THAT FORGIVES

MERCY THAT LIVES THE GOSPEL

MERCY THAT REJOICES

-headings from **OCSTA 2016 CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK RESOURCE KIT**

"For Catholic Education Week, we had prayer every morning based on the theme for the day. We also prayed the Our Father in a different language every morning, to show our diversity and unity as well. This was so popular we are continuing it for another couple weeks – to fit in a few more languages."

"Mentorship Camp (Grade 11 and 12 leaders work with Grade 10 aspiring leaders on theme of Servant Leadership. Includes student run prayer services and commissioning service"

"Each day's theme was announced during morning exercises, and morning prayer reflected the theme each day. "

"On Tuesday we prayed the Mercy that Loves prayer Wednesday, we celebrated the Catholic Education Week Mass: Opening Doors of Mercy. Thursday, we participated in the Walk with Jesus. And Friday, we prayed the Mercy that Rejoices prayer and ended the day off with the movie: The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe in the lecture hall."

"Monday – Mercy That Welcomes: Gr 12 students went to Good Shepherd Food/ Clothing Bank & Meal Program.

Tuesday – Mercy That Loves: Whole school attended Province Wide Mass Blessed 'Doors of Mercy'.

Wednesday – Mercy That Forgives: Whole school Forgiveness activity: Students wrote their intention who they needed to forgive. Students walked through the 'Doors of Mercy' (in atrium) and placed their intention in a coffer.

Thursday – Mercy That Lives The Gospel: Volunteer students participated in Walk With Jesus. Friday – Mercy That Rejoices: Whole School Gotcha" "

"Mercy that Welcomes: A Prayer service was held during both lunches based on the theme "A little bit of mercy makes the world less cold and more just." (Pope Francis)

Mercy that Loves: Our school community gathered for Mass to celebrate the province wide Education Week Mass.

Mercy that Forgives: A Chapel session was held during both lunches to look at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report: the need to work to build reconciliation with our First Nations, Métis and Inuit people because of the wrong directed toward them.

Mercy that Lives the Gospel: As a response to the Holy Father's Intentions for the Month of May 2016 under

"Evangelization: **that families, communities, and groups may pray the Holy Rosary for evangelization and peace,**" **classes signed up to pray the rosary in the school Chapel.**

Mercy that Rejoices: Interested students and staff walked to St. Matthew's Parish during lunch or after school to attend an 'Adoration. Everyone was invited to spend quiet time with our Lord.

Opening Doors of Mercy Project



The Student Senate worked hard to create a video celebrating the Jubilee Year of Mercy and the themes of Catholic Education Week. This video was inserted into a compilation video produced by the Ontario Catholic School Trustees to be shown in all Catholic School Boards, Secondary Panel, in Ontario during Catholic Education week. Schools were asked to submit pictures portraying the living out of mercy in their schools.

All schools were challenged also to produce artwork reflecting the themes of Catholic Education Week in their schools.



Diocesan Prayer for Mercy



Almighty God,
 you reveal your love for us
 in your Son, Jesus Christ,
 who is the face of your mercy.
 Pour out your mercy upon us
 that we may bring to every person
 your goodness and tenderness —
 signs of your Kingdom,
 present among us.
 May we become merciful
 like you, Father, are merciful.
 Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
 who lives and reigns with you
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Inspired by *Misericordiae Vultus*

Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ

The Grade One Religious Education Resource *Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ* has been well received by the HCDSB teachers, students, parents and parishes. Students in Grade One at St. Matthew's school informed the Religion Consultant, and the Board of Trustees, that they liked the stories, the parables and the activities. They loved the songs and wanted to sing them again and again! They enjoyed hearing about Pope Francis and all the saints. Their teachers confirmed this and added that the students loved to ask questions and so enjoyed the inquiry portions of the Resource. Some feedback comments passed on by other Gr.1 teachers in the system include:

"I like all the scripture passages in the resource. The students can really talk about Jesus' life through the timeline that is provided and compare their timeline of when they were born and baptized."

Gr.1 Teacher, Loyola Family of Schools

"I like everything about the resource. Everything is right there where you need it."

Gr.1 Teacher, Loyola Family of Schools

"The teachers use it and love it...they specifically love the big book and the student books are used by the kids even during their self-selected reading time....the kids really like them. The teachers also like how it follows the liturgical year, so they don't have to flip around. Giant thumbs up!!!!"

Gr. 1 Teacher consultation, Christ the King Family of Schools

"The new program is fantastic on so many levels. It is simply laid out and user friendly. Students have thoroughly enjoyed the new resources and activities that are provided. The wording and illustrations in the big books, student books and posters are appropriate and easily enjoyed by the students. The teacher resource is absolutely amazing. It is so well planned and provides the teacher with so many resources. The online and smartboard component is a huge bonus and allows centers to be created for the students, creating self-directed learning. The discussions that have come from the students dialogue using the new resources

is refreshing and shows how engaged our students can be in their faith. It will be nice to see this new program be offered for the other grades. It is a must to continue to revamping our curriculum."

Gr. 1 teacher, St. Thomas Aquinas Family of Schools

"I like the new resource a lot better than the old one. It is much more kid friendly and pleasant to use. Do you know if there will be a Grade 2 one?"

Gr. 1 teacher, St. Thomas Aquinas Family of Schools

In answer to this last question, the HCDSB is thrilled to say 'yes!' The Board of Trustees has approved the purchase of the Grade Two and Three *Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ* Religious Education Resource. It will be purchased this spring for implementation in September 2016. Stay tuned for more details later this year!

An Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy



On Thursday, April 7th, Holy Trinity Titans for Life hosted their annual Baby Shower for Shifra Home.

We had 3 moms and new babies in attendance.

A good time and great food was had by all.

All gifts and money collected go to help expecting and new moms.



**A Baby Shower
At Holy Trinity
To support
Shifra Home**

Living our Theological Theme in The Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy

The Grand Room was decorated to the max. The food and drink table was set up. The music of the 20's and 30's and 40's was blaring through the speakers. The young men were in their suits and the ladies in their dresses. The swing routines practiced and the waltzes were ready to go...in came the amazing residents of Tansley Woods Retirement Home for their annual **Valentine's Day Dance**.

On February 12th, 2016 forty grade twelve students from Notre Dame High School had an awesome experience with the residents of Tansley Woods Retirement Home in Burlington. With several lunch hours of preparation under their belts, the young men and women showed up first thing in the morning ready to decorate and make corsages for all the residents.



There was a great excitement in the room before they came. Some were a little anxious about who they'd be talking and dancing with. Suddenly, the room filled up there was nothing to worry about. As Nat King Cole and the Andrew Sisters played, some of the female residents were up on their feet and dancing with some of the young men.

Conversations were happening all over that great hall. Some were telling stories from years past and other stories were of the here and now. Laughter bellowed. Tears flowed. Hands were held.

The young people were blown away by the stories and the lives shared with them by the residents. Some were able to speak in their native Portuguese or Italian tongues. Some were elders from their church. Some were just beautiful souls sharing a moment in time.

As the residents were being brought back to their rooms, one young man's hand was clasped. He was pulled in for a kiss on the cheek and a hug and he was told, "You are so very lovable! Thank you for today!" Tears welled up for both the student and resident.

Everyone walked away from that afternoon richer for the time they all spent together!



People of Life

Since the launch of the People of Life vision helping our students understand their various involvements with justice-oriented campaigns as part of the broader work of creating a culture of life, our students have been attending an annual retreat with the aim of broadening their awareness on what is happening in our world. This past November, students from our Catholic secondary schools travelled to the SSND convent in Waterdown to hear Sr. Arlene Flaherty, OP, speak on the issue of Human Trafficking. She is the Director of the Shalom Office of Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation with the School Sisters of Notre Dame of the Atlantic Midwest Province.

The first part of the day the group heard about facts, stories and the various reasons why humans are trafficked. The second half of the day, students were given time to be in their school groups to come up with an action plan that they would bring back to their schools. Sr. Arlene suggested an easy project for the students to do around Valentine's Day and the dark side of chocolate (did you know: much of the chocolate we consume is manufactured with slave labour?).



Despite the fact that the content of the day was intense and heavy, the students left empowered and prepared to do their part in becoming a part of the solution. Sr. Arlene was impressed with the passion and offered her resources as a way to help the staff and students continue this most vital work in building God's kingdom on earth.

From Bishop Crosby's Pastoral Letter *Year of Mercy*



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

Dear Friends in Christ:

Throughout this Jubilee Year, we are called to contemplate divine mercy so that we may become *"merciful like the Father."* Mercy is both an attribute of God and the clearest indicator of those who are his children. Having encountered God's steadfast love, it is our mission to bear His mercy to others.

Mercy is a theme that has long been close to Pope Francis' heart, as his motto reveals. The words *"By having mercy and by choosing him"* refer to the call of Matthew the tax collector. Although Matthew was a sinner, the Lord looked upon him with loving mercy and called him to be a disciple. Sacred Scripture is filled with reminders of God's mercy, parables of forgiveness, stories of sinners reconciled. In this Holy Year, let us listen to God's word with hearts more deeply attuned to the wonders of His love and kindness.

We live in a world often sorely lacking in forgiveness, understanding and compassion. Wars and civil strife have led to a refugee crisis on a scale not seen for many years. Acts of terrorism and violence deprive individuals and whole communities of a sense of peace and security. Families are often beset with anger and division. More than ever we need to hear the call of our Lord in the beatitudes, *"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God."* (MT 5.3ff.) More than ever the Church must be steadfast in proclaiming mercy as *"the beating heart of the Gospel."* (Misericordiae Vultus)

From the beginning of his papacy, Pope Francis has shown great concern for the poor and the marginalized. In this Holy Year, he calls us to practice the corporal and spiritual works of mercy with renewed devotion: to attend to people's physical and spiritual needs with compassion. Let us look once again to the Gospels where the poor so often have a special experience of the mercy of God.

It is my hope that the ***Jubilee Year of Mercy*** may be experienced in a vibrant way by individuals, groups and parish communities in the Diocese of Hamilton. As a local Church, let us take up the invitation of Pope Francis to be credible witnesses of God's mercy, professing, living and celebrating it in all that we do.

Within the Diocese of Hamilton we can look forward to many blessings and graces in the coming year – a time to encounter God's mercy and to extend His loving compassion to others. May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy and patroness of our diocese, be our constant companion in this Jubilee Year. United in faith, confident in hope, fervent in charity, let us journey together throughout this Holy Year, rejoicing in the inexhaustible riches of God's mercy.

Yours sincerely in Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate,

+ Most Rev. Douglas Crosby,
OMI Bishop of Hamilton