



Ontario Catholic School
Trustees' Association

P.O. Box 2064, Suite 1804
20 Eglinton Avenue West
Toronto, Ontario M4R 1K8
T. 416.932.9460 F. 416.932.9459
ocsta@ocsta.on.ca www.ocsta.on.ca

Patrick Daly, *President*
Beverley Eckensweiler, *Vice President*
Nick Milanetti, *Executive Director*

February 17, 2017

TO: Chairpersons and Directors of Education
- All Catholic District School Boards

FROM: Dr. Brian O'Sullivan, MA, Ed. D., Director of Catholic Education

SUBJECT: **Catholic Education Week – April 30 – May 5, 2017**
Catholic Education: *Walking Forward Together*

As we approach Catholic Education Week, we are reminded that publicly-funded Catholic education is a call to service. Regardless of our position or our responsibilities within Catholic education, our role is a call, birthed in our baptism to bring the saving message of Jesus Christ into the lives of those students whom it is our privilege to serve. This year's Catholic Education Week theme is, "*Walking Forward Together*."

The 2017 CEW theme and its five sub-themes are drawn from three contemporary Catholic documents that address the need for reconciliation and renewal – in our lives, with our families, in our relationships with others and in our relationship with our environment and our common global future.

The first is the 2016 response of the Canadian Catholic Bishops to the Truth & Reconciliation Commission, that we need to heal past injustices by "*Walking Forward Together*." The second is the 2015 encyclical, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home* by Pope Francis, that emphasizes the cultural roots of our ecological problems, and advocates an urgent world collaboration for the care of our global common home. The third document, *Amoris Laetitia: The Joy of Love* is a 2016 Apostolic Exhortation by Pope Francis, which applauds our dedication and concern shown to children, families, migrants, the poor, the elderly and to persons with special needs, as a sign of the Spirit. These supportive relationships are a test of our commitment to show mercy in welcoming others and to help the vulnerable, to be fully a part of our communities.

Our CEW biblical quote "*Do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God*" (Micah 6:8), acknowledges the important role of justice and solidarity with our Indigenous peoples, our environment, the poor and marginalized, and all those who work to protect our common global future.

...2

I would like to highlight several issues leading up to CEW 2017:

- We invite all schools to send in video clips to Ashlee Cabral (acabral@ocsta.on.ca) answering the questions on Catholic faith and education. The deadline for these submissions is **March 6, 2017** and is being organized by our Catholic student trustees (OSTA-AECO).
- Our Ontario Bishops will produce video greetings for CEW in their Dioceses. These videos will be posted on the OCSTA website in late March and you can download the local message to be shown at your local CEW mass.
- Based on feedback from our school boards, the date for your CEW mass will be determined by each local Board of Education – within the week of CEW. Boards requested this change, to provide them more flexibility in planning CEW events. The mass resource package is included in the 2017 CEW Resource Kit. All Catholic schools across Ontario are asked to pray as one group at the opening of the school prayers on **Tuesday, May 2**. The provincial prayer is included in the 2017 CEW Resource Kit.
- Our CEW theme song will be posted on the OCSTA website by early March. Schools and boards can download this copy for their CEW activities.
- Our Social Justice Activity Package has been developed in collaboration with our provincial Catholic student trustees' organization (OSTA-AECO) and Catholic Development & Peace. Your board office will receive mustard seeds for each school, to support small-scale farming world-wide as a solution to world hunger and climate change. These mustard seeds, along with your 2017 CEW posters and prayer cards will arrive next week via Canada Post.
- Please note that our 2017 CEW posters are produced in both English and French in acknowledgement of the collaboration between our English and French Catholic school boards. We believe these posters will be very popular with French programs offered in your school boards.
- All Catholic Education Week materials are posted on our website at: www.goodnewsforall.ca.

I would like to conclude by wishing all of you a wonderful 2017 Catholic Education Week. Please do not hesitate to contact me at: bosullivan@ocsta.on.ca if you have further questions.

Sincerely in Catholic Education,



Brian O'Sullivan, MA, Ed., D.
Director of Catholic Education, OCSTA