



The **Catholic Bishops**
of **Alberta** and the
Northwest Territories

Les **évêques catholiques**
de l'**Alberta** et des
Territoires du Nord-Ouest

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*'I will restore you to health and heal your wounds,
declares the Lord.'* Jeremiah 30:17



November 2021

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The fourth wave of this pandemic continues to challenge us. In the midst of illness, uncertainty and insecurity, these prophetic words of Jeremiah resonate deeply: “I will heal your wounds,” says the Lord. “I will restore you to health.” These words offer comfort and hope to our Catholic school communities here in Alberta as they celebrate Catholic Education Sunday on November 7, 2021. In solidarity with our fellow Ontario Catholic educators, we embrace the theme: **Catholic Education: Rebuild, Restore, Renew Together.**

The difficult circumstances of these past two years have placed upon our families the heavy burden of worry and uncertainty as they strove to support the educational learning of their children. Our Catholic schools worked closely with parents through the dedicated efforts of trustees, superintendents, teachers and staff, all deeply committed to fulfilling the vision of Catholic education for more than 183,500 students in 450 schools across the province of Alberta. The many acts of sacrificial love made for the sake of our students give witness to our faith, and serve to rebuild, restore and renew Catholic education. Together, our parish and school communities encourage parents to continue to choose a Catholic school for their children. We are grateful for the treasure that is Catholic education, and are eager to share it.

Catholic Education Sunday is an annual event that serves to celebrate the important and critical role that our Catholic schools play in the province of Alberta. It provides us with an opportunity to recognize the vibrant faith that is the foundation of our Catholic schools, and encourages us to reflect with gratitude on the countless blessings to be found within the Catholic educational community. Catholic Education Sunday also serves to challenge each of us to step forward as advocates, inspired and emboldened to ensure the future of Catholic education as an essential dimension of the mission of the Church.

We, the Bishops of Alberta, recognize the vital role of Catholic education in the life and future of the Church and society. We are deeply committed to ensuring the integrity of our Catholic schools and the gift of faith offered to our students and their families. With hope and boldness, we must rebuild, restore and renew together the wonderful legacy of Catholic education.

As the pandemic continues to challenge us, we encourage all who have worked tirelessly to promote Catholic education to stay strong, continue your good work, pray for inspiration and guidance, and be strengthened in the promise offered to all believers: “And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast”. (1Peter 5:10)

In this Year of St Joseph, during May’s Catholic Education Week, we consecrated all of Alberta’s Catholic schools to the loving care of St Joseph. As we continue to ask for the intercession of our patron saint, we call all the faithful across our province to unite in a novena prayer for our Catholic Schools.

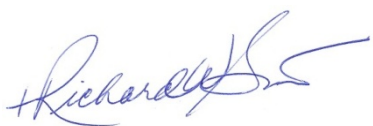
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Publicly funded Catholic education is a gift which must not be taken for granted. Our commitment to Catholic education is steadfast. Together with the Alberta Catholic School Trustees’ Association (ACSTA), the Council of Catholic School Superintendents of Alberta (CCSSA) and Grateful Advocates for Catholic Education (GrACE), we shall continue our efforts to ensure the future of Catholic education in our province.

United in prayer, let us humbly and confidently ask our loving God to rebuild, restore and renew all of our Catholic schools through His providential care.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Catholic Bishops of Alberta and NWT



Most Reverend Richard W. Smith
Archbishop of Edmonton



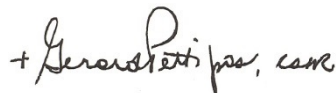
Most Reverend David Motiuk
Bishop of the Ukrainian Eparchy of Edmonton



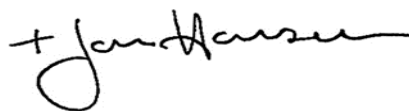
Most Reverend Paul Terrio
Bishop of St. Paul



Most Reverend William T. McGrattan
Bishop of Calgary



Most Reverend Gerard Pettipas CSsR
Archbishop Grouard-McLennan



Most Reverend Jon Hansen CSsR
Bishop of Mackenzie-Fort Smith