



**DURHAM CATHOLIC  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**  
*Learning and Living in Faith*

## **Memorandum**

To: Board of Trustees  
From: Tracy Barill, Director of Education  
Date: April 24, 2023  
Subject: **Witnessing Faith Strategic Goals and Actions**  
Origin: Katharine Stevenson, Superintendent of Education

## **Purpose**

To provide an update to the Board of Trustees on the ways in which the Durham Catholic District School Board 2022-2023 Goals and Actions associated with the Witnessing Faith Strategic Priority have:

- increased opportunities to support a culture of teaching and learning which is rooted in the Gospel values and reflects and nurtures the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations across curricula;
- increased opportunities to support faith formation for all members of the community that are inviting, engaging, and purposeful; and
- fostered a relationship between home, school, and parish through pastoral planning at both the school and system level.

TB/lj

Attachment: Witnessing Faith Strategic Goals and Actions Presentation



**DURHAM CATHOLIC  
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# Witnessing Faith

# Strategic Goals and Actions

Strategic Priority 1

2022-2023



**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1:**  
**Witnessing  
Faith**

*“On a daily basis, Catholic School demonstrates the joy of believing and witness the Good News to the communities we serve.”*

—RENEWING THE PROMISE,  
ASSEMBLY OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF ONTARIO



*Listening, Learning, and Living in Faith*

# Goal

- To increase opportunities to support a culture of teaching and learning which is rooted in the Gospel values and reflects and nurtures the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations across all curricula



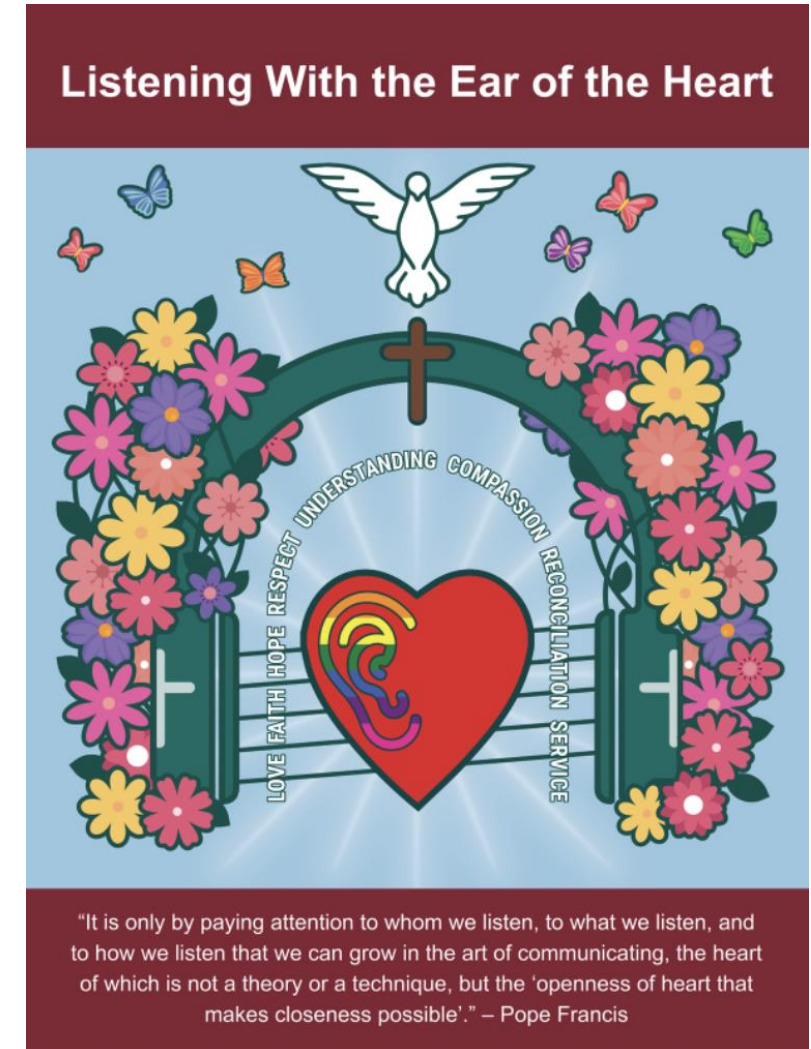
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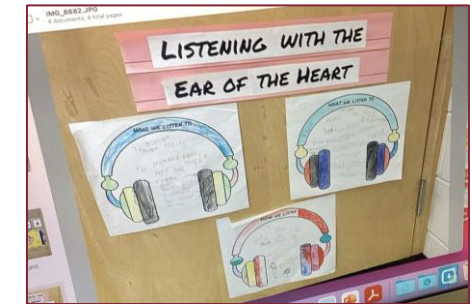
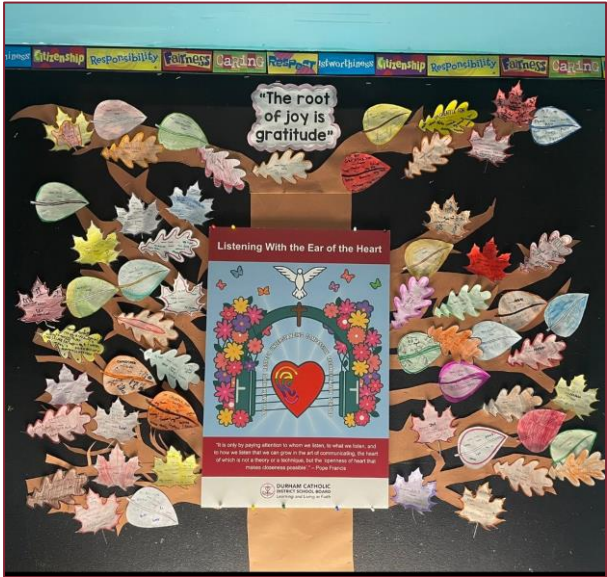
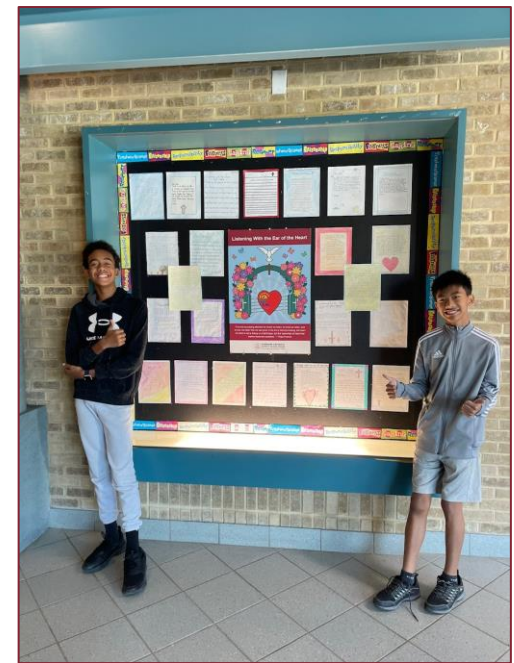
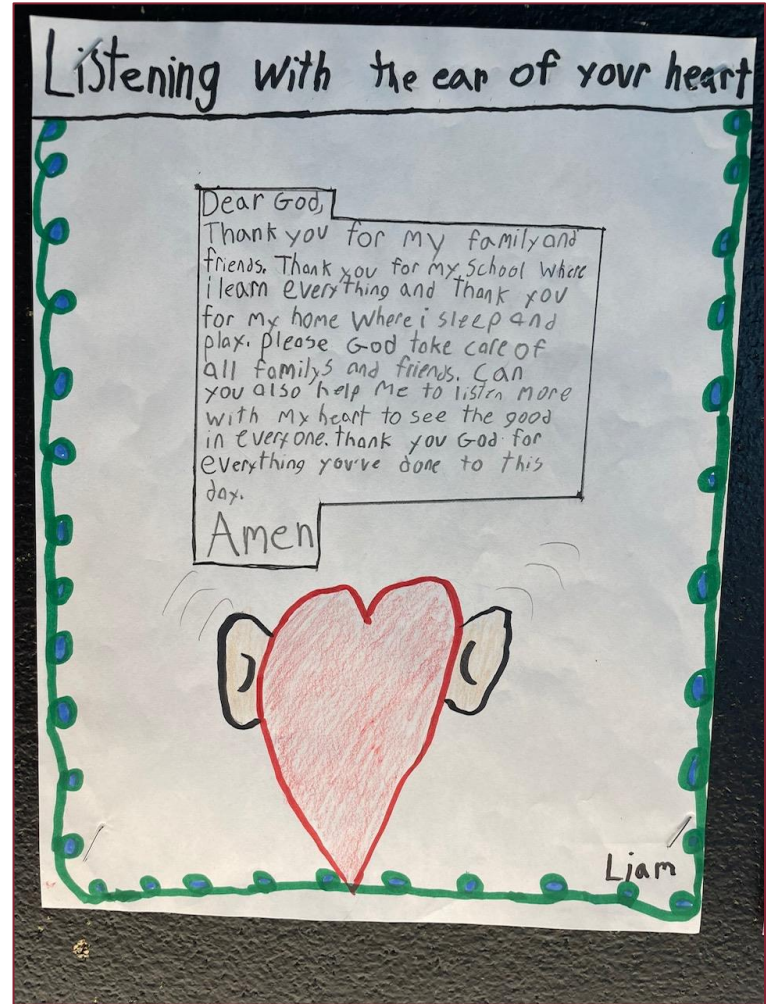
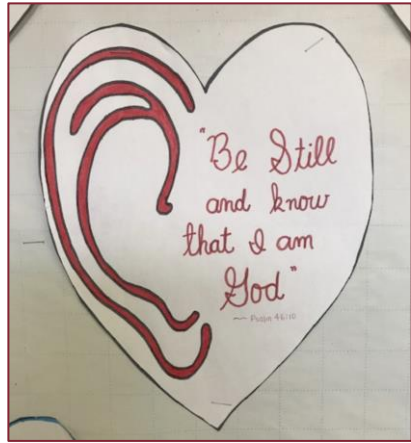
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# Spiritual Theme

- Introduction in the Fall of 2022:
  - School Administrators
  - School Administrative Assistants
  - CEC/OMAC staff
  - DCPIC
  - Trustees
- Linking learning and experiences to the theme:
  - Liturgical celebrations
  - Advent and Lenten retreats
  - Administrator and Student retreats
  - Sharing of Excellence staff PD sessions





Listening, Learning, and Living in Faith

# Catholicity Across the Curriculum



*Listening, Learning, and Living in Faith*

# Goal

- To increase opportunities to support faith formation for all members of the community that are inviting, engaging, and purposeful



**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1:**

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# Adult Faith Ambassadors

- Engaged in a full-day of learning and fellowship
- Supported by Secondary School Chaplains



# Faith Ambassadors



- Feedback from participants:
  - Very appreciative of opportunity to meet face-to-face with secondary school chaplains in their Family of Schools
  - Desire more opportunities to collaborate with one another and share resources and best practices
  - Some are seeking further clarification of their role in elementary schools

# Adult Faith Formation

We look to the future of Catholic Education with great hope because we are blessed to have so many committed and faith-filled educators and leaders whose witness to faith provides a compelling example to our young people. The Catholic education community is encouraged to support opportunities for faith formation for all members of the community in ways that are inviting, engaging, and purposeful.

*Renewing the Promise, p. 28*

# Principal and Vice Principal Retreats

- Two-day Principal retreat in October and Vice Principal Retreat in March
- Facilitated by Michael Way Skinner
  - Listen, Rest, Rise: Sustaining a Listening Heart in Trying Times
- Administrators scored high:
  - make personal connections to faith
  - gain new insights in the role as faith leader in the school community



# Advent Retreat

- Manresa Jesuit Spiritual Renewal Centre on November 30
  - 20 Teachers
  - 13 Educational Assistants
  - 2 Administrative Assistants
  - 1 Chaplain
- Celebrant Fr. Henk van Meijel spoke to the retreat theme, “Celebrating our Gifts of the Holy Spirit.”
- Called to reflect upon how we can use our God-given gifts in the context of Catholic education through Scripture, guided journaling, and prayer



# Advent Retreat

- Retreatants enjoyed creating Advent-themed centrepieces
- Many commented about the beauty of coming together in person again as people of faith



# Lenten Retreat

- Manresa Jesuit Spiritual Renewal Centre on March 2
  - 28 Teachers
  - 12 Educational Assistants
  - 3 Administrative Assistants
  - 1 Chaplain
- The theme, “Reflect and Renew: Embracing Silence” was inspired by this year’s spiritual theme
- The mass celebrant, Fr. Jim Kelly, spoke about the importance of prayer, especially during the Lenten season



# Lenten Retreat

- Retreatants shared a meal, enjoyed the Clothes Pin Cross craft activity, and experienced a traditional “Examen Prayer” in true Jesuit fashion
- Retreatants rated their experience 4.6/5, appreciated the time for quiet reflection and silence, and expressed thanks for this yearly opportunity





# Walking Each Other Home

- Series of monographs and related research  
<https://catholicpartners.ca/adult-faith-formation/>
- Bishop Douglas Crosby invited Catholic partners to:
  - Explore formation for mission
  - Grow in knowledge of adult faith formation
  - Enhance efforts to lead the important work of safeguarding and enriching Catholic education



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# ICE Symposium 2023

- The next Institute for Catholic Education Symposium is May 9-10, 2023
- Theme is *On the Way: Adult Faith Formation in Catholic Education*
- English Catholic and French Catholic board teams from across the province
- DCDSB team of 12 will attend this provincial symposium



# Goal

- To foster a relationship between home, school, and parish through pastoral planning at both the school and system level



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# Pastoral Plans

- Currently engaged in a “refresh” of the pastoral planning template
- How do we animate our Catholic faith in the school and make evident our Catholic identity?
- Working group of Principals and Vice Principals
- Focus on the three processes of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan
  - **LISTENING**
  - **LEARNING**
  - **LIVING IN FAITH**

# Pastoral Plans – our hopes

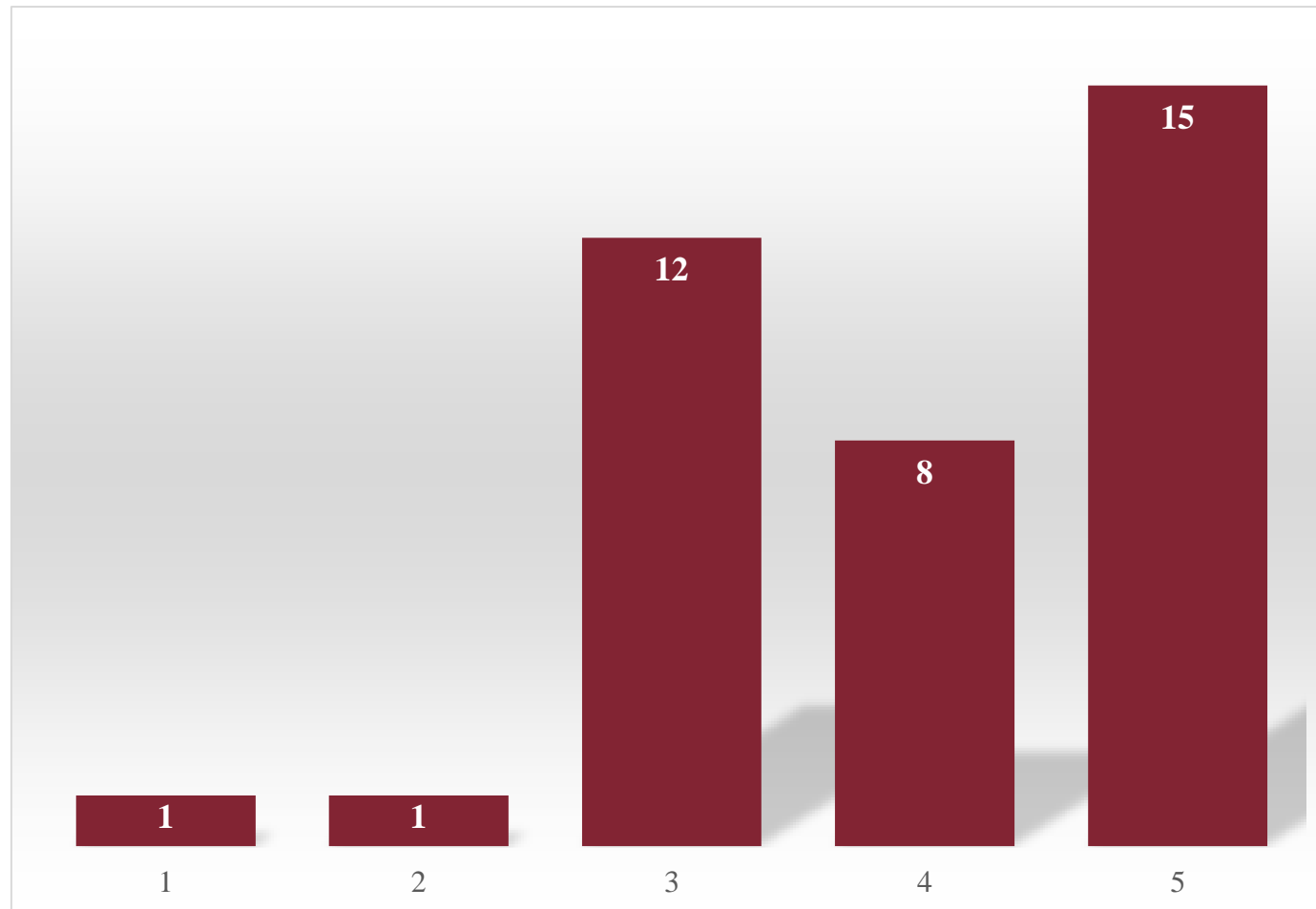
- It is our hope that the revised Pastoral Planning template will serve to:
  - Provide a deeper understanding of the purpose of the pastoral plan with opportunity for accompanying learning and formation
  - Support enhanced communication and collaboration with pastors and the parish team
  - Provide an easy-to-understand “roadmap” for the year
  - Facilitate transparency and accountability to our families
  - Provide an at-a-glance reference for liturgical celebrations and other special celebrations in each Catholic school (e.g., Advent celebrations, Catholic Education Week activities, graduation, etc.)

# Parish Partnership Check-in Post-COVID

- Elementary and Secondary Administrator survey to assess the current parish partnership
- Survey will serve to set a baseline to name and celebrate what is going well and to collaboratively seek ways to journey forward in faith together



# How would you rate your current school-parish partnership? (1 to 5)



**n=41**  
**avg=3.98**

# What is working well?

mass • liturgical seasons • youth minister • sacramental prep  
charity work • good rapport • class visits • reconciliation  
collaboration with parish team • communication  
proximity to church • Christmas family support  
instructional masses • assist student retreats  
parish rep on school council • pastor as guest speaker  
use of parish for retreats



# What challenges are you experiencing?

more frequent visits • a presence in the school  
distance to church • communication about parish events  
including priest in school events • conflicting schedules  
encouraging parental involvement in parish  
availability of priests • early school start time  
understanding students who are not practicing their faith  
ability to connect with diverse student population  
use of parish for retreats • more non-liturgical visits

# Shoutouts on Twitter...

**St. Monica Pickering** @StMonicaCS

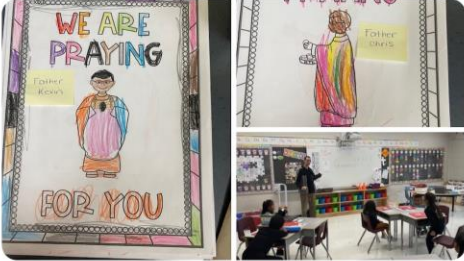
Thank you to Father Colman and Ms. Ritchie for celebrating our Bible presentation/ blessing today for our Grade 4 students. 🙏🏠🏡



7:26 PM · 2022-10-14

**St.TeresaofCalcutta** @StTeresaAjax

During this Pastoral and Spiritual Care Week, we thank Fr. Chris, Fr. Kevin, Seminarian Victor and the sacramental coordinator, Mrs. Romero in a special way for helping us grow spiritually! Students made special art work for the team!



10:34 AM · 2022-10-28

**St. Monica Pickering** @St... · 2022-09-26

Thank you to our Youth Minister Ms. Krissy for your leadership with the "Junior Chaplaincy Club"! We look forward to the learning and service that these students will be engaged in! The Grade 6, 7 and 8 students were excited at the first meeting today! 🙏🏠



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**St Patrick Catholic School** · 2022-12-15

We are grateful to our @SFDSAjax staff for being so flexible and accommodating to adjust our plans to go to church this morning and instead come celebrate our Advent Mass in our gym. What a beautiful way to celebrate our preparations for the coming of Jesus. #DCDSBFaith



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# ...and in Newsletters

## **BIBLE PRESENTATION CEREMONY | Grade 4 and 5**

The church has preserved and passed on, the Word of God from generation to generation. In art, music and liturgy, the Word of God has been proclaimed, celebrated and treasured. Recognizing that we are all called to grow in faith and love of Christ, we now prepare to hand on that precious gift to our grade 4 and 5 students. Yesterday Father Francisco joined us for a very special event for our Grade 4 and 5 students, the presentation of their own Bible. Thank you, Mr. Fahey, Mr. D'Onofrio and Ms. Tieche for arranging the presentation for the students and to Mr. Goldsmith for joining us to provide technical support and music.



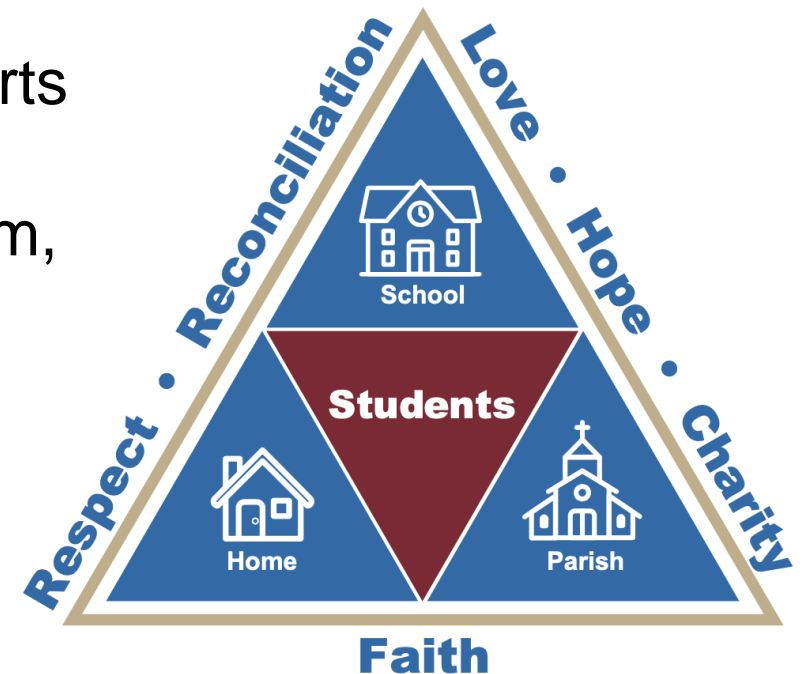


Students at Archbishop Denis O'Connor Catholic High School build a nativity for St. Bernadette Parish

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# Strengthening Parish Partnerships

- DCDSB to host brunch on May 31 for Bishop Nguyen and the priests from our zone
- Tentative opportunity to:
  - Share pastoral planning template and supports
  - Provide an overview of the *Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ* religious education program, including the parish portal
  - Begin conversations of the ways in which we can support one another in our complementary vocations




# OCSTA Catholic Education Week

CATHOLIC EDUCATION:  
**WE ARE  
MANY,  
WE ARE  
ONE**



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“We, who are many, are one body  
in Christ, and individually we are  
members, one of another.”  
(Romans 12:5)

- April 30 - May 5, 2023
- Resource package for use in Catholic schools
  - Elementary and Secondary
- System-wide Mass - May 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Distinguished Catholic Educator Awards