

five marks
THE FIVE MARKS
OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL IDENTITY



FAITH FORMATION
PLAN 2025-2026 PROGRESS
REPORT

Faith formation includes a comprehensive and holistic approach to nurturing individuals' spiritual growth and development within the framework of Catholic teachings and practices. Rooted in the belief in God's revelation through Scripture and Tradition, faith formation emphasizes the importance of encountering Christ and deepening one's relationship with Him.

At the same time, faith formation involves evangelisation and catechesis, which provides systematic instruction in the teachings of the Church, including doctrine, morality, prayer, and social justice. While this instruction is often provided through religious education programs, parish-based ministries, and spiritual retreats, faith formation within the Church and broader community through fellowship and service. It is through these communal experiences that Catholics are invited to live out their faith in concrete ways, embodying the values of love, compassion, and solidarity in the world.

STANDARD ONE:

AN EXCELLENT CATHOLIC SCHOOL IS DRIVEN BY A MISSION WHICH VIEWS ALL PEOPLE WITH AN INHERENT DIGNITY AS CHILDREN OF GOD.

GOAL: MAKING MISSION VISIBLE, KNOWN, AND LIVED

ACTIONS TAKEN

- The focus of this goal this year was on updating school vision statements to reflect the Division Vision: *Our Students will learn together, work together, and pray together in answering the call to a faith-filled life of service.* Schools were provided with support materials and resources. As schools complete their vision statements, they receive a graphic of their new mission and vision to include in their school hallway screens. This is designed to complement the mission banner they received last year. The school mission and vision are also included in the School Plan for Continuous Growth and on the landing page of their school website.
- Included in the *Grace for the Heart and Soul* Guide is an optional school activity titled **Exploring Our Namesake and Inspiring Our Mission**, which supports schools in deepening their understanding of their namesake. The activities within the guide may be used throughout the year to strengthen growth in key areas of faith life.
- School anniversary celebrations have been supported by Religious Education Services in the creation of liturgies that highlight the school's namesake.

STANDARD TWO:

AN EXCELLENT CATHOLIC SCHOOL HAS A VISIBLE AND TANGIBLE CATHOLIC VISION EVIDENT IN ITS PHYSICAL SPACE, LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS, AND PRAYER LIFE.

GOAL: MAKING OUR CATHOLIC FAITH VISIBLE, KNOWN, AND LIVED

ACTIONS TAKEN:

- The *Grace for the Heart and Soul* Guide offered several activities to support this work, including **Teaching Mass** and reflection; **Connecting Mind, Body, and Spirit Through Prayer** (from an Indigenous perspective); **Creative Prayer**; and an exploration of the Liturgical Calendar, which included a plan to make its elements more visible within the school community. Additional activities focused on **Connecting to Creation Through an Indigenous Lens** and **Service Opportunities**, with explicit connections to Catholic Social Teaching and an emphasis on making acts of service visible within the school community.
- All grade 8 students participated in the Father Michael Mireau Youth Faith Day which included Mass and an uplifting presentation by Jesse Manibusan, a composer, singer-songwriter, and faith leader.
- In addition to the Division-wide Liturgical opportunities that we typically provide, schools were also provided with liturgical resources to celebrate the end of the Jubilee Year of Hope.
- Images of Pope Leo XIV and Archbishop Hero were provided to every school and are prominently displayed.
- All schools have a dedicated Catholic prayer space with common guidelines that details what should be incorporated into this space.
- New schools have dedicated chapels space and have been supported in the creation of this space.

STANDARD THREE:

AN EXCELLENT CATHOLIC SCHOOL HAS AN ACADEMIC CURRICULUM THAT INTEGRATES A VISION OF FAITH WITHIN THE LEARNER OUTCOMES AND TEACHING STRATEGIES.

GOAL: KNOWING, UNDERSTANDING, AND APPLYING FAITH IN OUR LEARNING AND WORK

ACTIONS TAKEN:

- With the advancement of the artificial intelligence application Magisterium.com, which is a closed system that refers only to Church documents in its searches and responses, one of the activities that was provided to all schools as part of *Grace for the Heart and Soul* was **Empowering Catholic School Staff with Magisterium AI**. This session was designed to help staff explore how to use the site to strengthen the Catholic worldview and/or content in their daily practice and in their own faith lives.
- This year, Elementary Curriculum engaged in a deep exploration of permeation, developing and piloting a thoughtful planning process in mathematics in partnership with Religious Education Services to ensure learning is experienced in light of the Gospel. This intentional work is now extending into Physical Education and Wellness, with a clear plan to showcase permeation across all subject areas through School Teams in 2026–2027, as we bring to life the Optimal Learning condition of Catholic Faith Permeating.
- In our French Immersion program, some of our curriculum crates have been intentionally designed to ensure permeation of Catholic values across grade levels and subject areas, in alignment with the 5 Marks of an Excellent Catholic School. In K–3 FILAL, learning experiences such as FNMI sharing circles honour the inherent dignity of every child, ensuring that each voice and contribution is valued as a reflection of their identity as a child of God. Across grade levels, interactive learning strategies are used to support students in listening attentively and sharing multiple perspectives in respectful and meaningful ways. For example, in Social Studies, strategies such as the inside/outside circle provide structured opportunities for students to engage with a variety of viewpoints, deepening understanding while fostering respect for others. In Grades 4–6 FILAL, listening and speaking activities are also connected to reflective practices that affirm students’ identities as language learners, recognizing the dignity and growth of each individual. In Social Studies crates, themes such as quality of life,

charity, and volunteerism are explored through authentic Catholic examples, including Catholic Social Services and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, highlighting our shared responsibility for the common good.

- Within Secondary Curriculum, consultants engaged in exploratory work examining the use of artificial intelligence as a supportive tool for enhancing the integration of faith across subject areas. Through collaborative work with classroom teachers, they modeled and demonstrated intentional strategies for embedding Catholic perspectives into lesson design, ensuring that faith-based principles are meaningfully and authentically reflected in instructional practice.
- In the area of Physical Education and Wellness, consultants partnered closely with Religious Education Services to align curriculum outcomes related to growth and development with Catholic teachings. This collaboration ensured that content is presented through a faith-informed lens, supporting both the spiritual and personal development of students in a manner consistent with Catholic values.
- As draft curricula continue to be implemented in Social Studies, Physical Education and Wellness, Career Education and Financial Literacy, and Mathematics, working groups composed of teachers are actively engaged in the development of targeted student learning activities. These activities are intentionally designed to be rooted in Catholic values and faith traditions, promoting coherence between academic learning and the broader mission of Catholic education.
- Teachers are supported in their faith permeation goals through professional development sessions created through a collaboration between Religious Education and Learning Services Consultants. These certificated staff can select Faith-centered Division Focused Professional Development sessions.

STANDARD FOUR:

AN EXCELLENT CATHOLIC SCHOOL HIRES AND NURTURES TEACHERS THAT ARE LIVING WITNESSES TO THE GOSPEL, AND INTENTIONAL DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH.

GOAL: IGNITING THE SPARK TO GROW IN FAITH AS A COMMUNITY AND AS AN INDIVIDUAL.

ACTIONS TAKEN:

- All staff participated in Faith Development Day, which included Eucharistic Mass and then engaging virtual presentations by David Wells and Terry Hershey on People of Hope, our theme for the year.
- *Grace for the Heart and Soul*, our yearly staff faith formation afternoon, offered a variety of activities for sites to choose from. The activities were rooted in the Six Tasks of Catechesis. Sites appreciated the menu of activities to choose from based on their staff needs and interests.
- Schools and departments have a distinct faith goal that is lived and reviewed throughout the year.
- Lay chaplains serve as support to staff in questions or issues related to Faith.
- The Division has offered in-person and online Catholic courses to any staff that want to learn more about their faith. There were over 175 registrations for these courses this year.
- Religious Education Services, including Division Chaplains, support spiritual wellbeing of staff through the implementation of the Wellbeing Framework.
- The principles of Catholic Social Teaching are intentionally connected to Creating Communities of Belonging, Catholic Educational Leadership, Assistant Principal Catholic Educational Leadership and Chaplain meetings.
- Division Wide Celebrations were well attended including Opening School Mass and Faith Development Day.

STANDARD FIVE:

STANDARD FIVE: AN EXCELLENT CATHOLIC SCHOOL RECOGNIZES THAT EACH AND EVERY MEMBER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COMMON GOOD.

GOAL: WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE COMMON GOOD

ACTIONS TAKEN:

- One of the activities provided in the Grace for the Heart and Soul Guide was titled “getting to Know Pope Leo XIV. This was a digital exploration of his life’s journey as well as the learnings from the first year of his papacy.
- The Division continues to support the home, school parish relationship through regular parish and school visits.
- The Division works alongside our Catholic Partners such as the Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton, Ukrainian Eparchy, St. Joseph College, Catholic Social Services and the broader Catholic community through many social justice projects.
- The Senior Team from the Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton attended numerous events and celebrations throughout the year.

The Catholic school “must be a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven, and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel.”

(The Joy of the Gospel, 114)