

| Edmonton Catholic Schools |

CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK UPDATE 2026

| September 2026 |



CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK

Edmonton Catholic Schools has been an ardent supporter of Catholic Education Sunday and Catholic Education Week since its inception. For us, Catholic Education Week is an opportunity to celebrate the distinctive mission of Catholic education and to recognize the important partnership among students, families, schools, parishes, and the wider Catholic community.

This year, Catholic Education Week is scheduled for Saturday, October 18th until Friday, October 23rd, with Catholic Education Sunday being celebrated on October 18th. While Catholic Education Week has taken many forms over the years, the Alberta Catholic Schools Trustees Association (ACSTA) and the Council of Catholic School Superintendents of Alberta (CCSSA) currently lead its development.

This year, the theme: "The Power of the Holy Spirit," is inspired by Romans 15:13: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Saint Pier Giorgio will also be featured as part of Catholic Education Week. Pier Giorgio Frassati was an Italian Catholic activist and a member of the Third Order of Saint Dominic. He was dedicated to social justice issues and joined several charitable organizations, including Catholic Action and the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, to better aid the poor and less fortunate living in his hometown of Turin. Pope John Paul II beatified Frassati in May of 1990 and dubbed him the "Man of the Eight Beatitudes." On September 7, 2025, Pope Leo XIV canonized Frassati along with Carlo Acutis.



The example of Saint Pier Giorgio Frassati reminds us that authentic faith is lived through service. As you heard during our School Opening Meeting for Division Leadership, Service is one of the 5 roots of Joy that we will intentionally explore at our sites

throughout the school year. Many schools choose to incorporate activities rooted in Catholic Social Teaching during Catholic Education Week. These may include charitable initiatives, outreach projects, fundraising campaigns, environmental stewardship activities, social justice projects, or acts of service that respond to local community needs. Such experiences help students understand that their faith

calls them to love their neighbor, serve the vulnerable, and work toward the common good. Through these acts of service, students encounter Christ in others and learn that Catholic education extends beyond the classroom into the wider world.

The master template for Catholic Education Week, including the bishop's letter, a liturgy, and some ideas and activities for schools, will be shared in the coming weeks. The CCSSA will also unveil a new logo created exclusively for Catholic Education Week.

CELEBRATING THE GIFT OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

At its core, Catholic Education Week is an opportunity to give thanks for the gift of publicly funded Catholic education in Alberta. Throughout the week, students, staff, trustees, clergy, parents, parishioners, and community members are invited to reflect on the unique role Catholic schools play in forming young people academically, spiritually, socially, emotionally, and morally. Catholic schools remain places where faith and learning are intentionally integrated, helping students grow in wisdom, virtue, compassion, and faith while preparing them to contribute meaningfully to society. Catholic Education Week provides an opportunity to celebrate this mission and to recognize the countless individuals whose efforts help sustain and strengthen Catholic education throughout our province.



One of the most meaningful ways this celebration is expressed is through prayer and worship. Prayer remains central to Catholic Education Week, and schools across the province traditionally gather as communities of faith to celebrate liturgies, Masses, prayer services, and reflections rooted in the annual theme and accompanying scripture passage. These celebrations provide opportunities for students and staff to encounter Christ through prayer, proclaim the Gospel, and give thanks for the blessings of Catholic education. Provincial resources often include liturgical celebrations, prayers of the faithful, classroom reflections, and prayer experiences that schools can adapt to their own local contexts. Through these gatherings, Catholic schools demonstrate that faith is not simply taught in the classroom but is lived, celebrated, and witnessed through the daily life of the community.

This emphasis on prayer and faith formation helps remind us that Catholic education is more than an educational model; its shared mission of education, evangelization and discipleship remains one of the Board's priorities. Our shared missions seeks to form young people in mind, body, and spirit as they grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ and their commitment to serving others.

LIVING THE SCHOOL-HOME-PARISH PARTNERSHIP

One of the defining characteristics of Catholic Education Week is the opportunity to strengthen the relationship among schools, families, and parish communities. Edmonton Catholic Schools has long recognized that the faith formation of children and youth is most effective when school, home, and parish work together in a shared mission. During Catholic Education Week, schools may invite parish priests, pastoral assistants, trustees, and families to participate in prayer services, liturgical celebrations, faith-based learning opportunities, and community gatherings. These activities celebrate the important role each partner plays in supporting students as they grow in their relationship with Christ and become active members of the Church.

Within this partnership, students themselves are at the center. Catholic Education Week provides meaningful opportunities for young people to share their faith through leadership, service, creativity, and witness. Schools may invite students to lead prayers, proclaim Scripture, share reflections, create artwork, produce videos, participate in liturgies, or speak about the impact of Catholic education on their lives. These experiences not only highlight student voice but also demonstrate the ways in which faith is nurtured through the collective efforts of families, parish communities, and schools working together.

By creating opportunities for students to actively participate in the life of the faith community, Catholic Education Week reminds us that students are not merely recipients of Catholic education but active participants in the mission of the Church. This year's focus on Saint Pier Giorgio Frassati provides a particularly meaningful example of youthful discipleship, joyful faith, and courageous service. His witness invites students to embrace their own call to holiness, leadership, and service while recognizing the important role they play in bringing the Gospel to life within their schools, parishes, and wider communities.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION SUNDAY AND OUR CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES

Catholic Education Sunday traditionally serves as the opening celebration of Catholic Education Week and provides a unique opportunity to strengthen relationships between schools and parish communities. Schools may participate in parish liturgies through student involvement, choir ministry, hospitality, parish displays, bulletin inserts, faith witness presentations, or opportunities to share the story of Catholic education with parishioners. These celebrations make visible the close connection between parish and school and remind us that Catholic education remains an important ministry of the

Church, supported by the collective efforts of families, educators, clergy, trustees, and parish communities.

Building upon these parish connections, Catholic Education Week also provides opportunities to celebrate the broader Catholic community that supports our schools. Many schools choose to open their doors to parents, grandparents, trustees, parish representatives, alumni, and community members through open houses, learning showcases, faith fairs, classroom visits, student performances, prayer gatherings, and family events. These celebrations offer opportunities for guests to witness firsthand the learning, faith development, and sense of belonging that characterize Catholic schools throughout Edmonton Catholic Schools. They also serve as a reminder that Catholic education flourishes through the support, engagement, and shared commitment of the entire faith community.

To support these local celebrations, schools receive resources developed collaboratively by the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association (ACSTA), the Council of Catholic School Superintendents of Alberta (CCSSA), the Alberta Bishops, and Catholic school jurisdictions across the province. These resources often include lesson ideas, liturgical materials, classroom activities, prayer services, reflections, and communication supports designed to bring the annual theme to life. In addition, Edmonton Catholic Schools' Religious Education Services team continues to work alongside schools to adapt provincial resources to local school and parish contexts while ensuring that Catholic Education Week remains focused on faith formation, community engagement, and celebrating the enduring gift of Catholic education.



LOOKING AHEAD TO CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK

As details continue to emerge from the Provincial Catholic Education Week Committee, schools may wish to begin considering how they will celebrate this important week within their local context. Opportunities to gather in prayer, celebrate the Eucharist, engage students in faith-filled activities, serve others, welcome families into the life of the school, and strengthen relationships with parish communities all contribute to making Catholic education visible and vibrant. While the specific theme resources are still forthcoming, Catholic Education Week remains an opportunity to celebrate the many ways faith is lived, shared, and nurtured within our schools and communities.

At its heart, Catholic Education Week is a celebration of Jesus Christ and the mission of Catholic education. It invites us to reflect on our shared responsibility to form students who are grounded in faith, committed to serving others, and prepared to contribute to the common good. Through prayer, liturgy, Scripture, faith-filled learning, service, and meaningful engagement with families and parishes, Catholic schools continue to witness to the Gospel and strengthen the partnership between school, home, and parish. Additional resources, including the annual pastoral letter from the Alberta Bishops, are anticipated and will provide further reflection and encouragement as schools prepare to celebrate this important week.

We are looking forward to celebrating Catholic Education Week together and giving thanks for the enduring gift of Catholic education.



EDMONTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

LUMEN CHRISTI CATHOLIC EDUCATION CENTRE

9405 50 Street NW | Edmonton AB T6B 2T4 | T:780-441-6000 | E: info@ecsd.net | ecsd.net