

December 2018

Dear Friends,

In December, we celebrate the event that changed history – the birth of Jesus. On Christmas Day, we will hear these words from the Gospel of Luke. *“And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn”* (Luke 2:7).

Last year in my Christmas message I offered you some opportunities to make room for Jesus in your hearts, by listening to the Word of God both at home and in your schools. I ask you to continue to make room for Jesus not only by listening but also by your actions. That is why I am very pleased that Edmonton Catholic Schools has chosen *“Walking Together in God’s Love”* for its theme this year.

This theme finds its source in the words of the prophet Micah. *“He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?”* (Micah 6:8)

Children and youth who attend our Catholic schools are given an opportunity to practice the way of life outlined by the prophet Micah. Through the modeling that they receive from their parents, teachers and support staff they learn to live the Christian way of life. They are encouraged to act with justice in their dealings with all they meet, not only at home and school, but also on the field, court, ice, streets – everywhere. In this way they are of service to others. Youth and children are fortified in their witnessing by the love of God, which leads them to act with kindness. Lastly, they are inspired to walk humbly with God through acts of worship. In our Catholic Schools, students are given the opportunity to learn about the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. They are introduced to the parish and to the life of worship. As Christmas draws near may we come, like the shepherds, to worship Christ!

To all the staff, students and parents of the Edmonton Catholic Schools, I pray that you have a Blessed Christmas!

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

✠Richard W. Smith  
Archbishop of Edmonton