

October 12, 2022

Dear Guardians and Parents of Red Deer Catholic,

As you gathered around the Thanksgiving table, whether large or small, turkey or not, I am thankful that you took time to reflect and express your gratitude for the blessings that you and your family have received. We have so much to be thankful for!

In my musings this past weekend, I came upon the courageous words of Pope Francis and his reflections on gratitude, hope, connection and personal responsibility. Beautifully said, seemingly easy to achieve, I wonder how each of us deliver on his words. Pope Francis eloquently reminds us,

“Above all, let us not forget to thank: if we are bearers of gratitude, the world itself will become better, even if only a little bit, but that is enough to transmit a bit of hope. The world needs hope. And with gratitude, with this habit of saying thank you, we transmit a bit of hope. Everything is united and everything is connected, and everyone needs to do his or her part wherever we are.” (Pope Francis, 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time).

When I think about gratitude, I recount recent conversations with our school principals about food scarcity and the impact on families within our very own school division. School communities are reaching out to other schools for support as social justice projects are initiated. One courageous principal noted that over 40 of their families are dealing with food scarcity. Every day, children and their families may be without.

In my letter to you this month, I am thankful to all of you for your graciousness to others; for being bearers of gratitude and for always providing a sense of hope to our students, staff and families. Red Deer Catholic is known as strong leaders of social justice and this is evident in the many projects initiated by our students and their exemplary actions as change agents. I ask you to continue to support our students as they reach out to help those most in need.

As noted in the past Regular Board Meeting, curriculum implementation is moving forward in our Division with success. Although only six weeks into the school year, feedback from schools indicates that staff are appreciating the narrow focus for school improvement planning and that teachers are working collectively and collaboratively to implement the new curriculum.

Schools have developed strong launch events to introduce the new curriculum and establish safe risk-taking environments for collaborating and examining instructional practices. Schools are also providing regular time and space to collaborate on instruction and review data and student work for evidence of success. Further, teachers and administrators are beginning the process of examining



resources and determining the best use of the provided funding from Alberta Education and Red Deer Catholic by identifying strong pedagogical resources and their alignment with the new curriculum as well as any curriculum gaps.

As we continue our journey of encountering Christ, may we be open to being nurtured by Christ, and then serving others for Christ.

God bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Finnigan'.

Dr. Kathleen Finnigan
Superintendent