

PILGRIMS OF HOPE: ON THE PATH TO HOLINESS



L'éducation catholique: Pèlerins de l'espérance ~ November 2025 Bulletin

This month's bulletin invites us to reflect on the importance of journeying in community with one another. In Catholic education, accompanying young people is not merely about teaching subjects — it is a ministry of presence and vocation of providing Christian witness. At the heart of this accompaniment are dialogue and listening, which reflect the way Jesus encountered others with compassion and openness. The Pastoral Letter to Young People highlights the importance of authentic dialogue and walking together. As we journey as Pilgrims of Hope, let us explore the ways we can engage in this synodal experience in our school communities and beyond.

Michael Bellmore, President & Patrick Daly, Executive Director

THE PASTORAL LETTER TO YOUNG PEOPLE: A SYNODAL EXPERIENCE

In the fall of 2020, during the COVID19 pandemic, the Bishops of Canada hosted several Zoom conversations with young people inviting them to share openly about how they viewed the world, about their hopes and dreams, and the stresses they experienced in their daily lives. This time together involved listening, reflecting, and discerning. These activities are part of what we call a “synodal” experience. The word “synodal” refers to a “path along which the People of God walk together.” ([Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church](#))

The synodal experience—journeying together in faith—is vital in Catholic schools. It reminds us that Catholic education is not a solo effort but a shared mission rooted in communion, participation, and mission. By listening to one another, valuing each other's voice, and working together in faith, we build a community that reflects the heart of the Church. A synodal Catholic school community teaches young people to walk with others, to discern God's will, and to serve with compassion—becoming true missionary disciples in today's world.

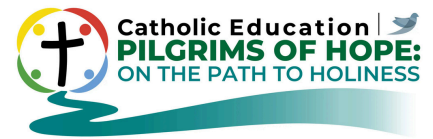
The Pastoral Letter to Young People encourages young people to grow in friendship with Jesus, live their faith with courage, and share their gifts with the Church and the world. It highlights the importance of dialogue, hope, and responsible use of technology, reminding youth that they are deeply loved, valued, and called to make a difference through service and compassion.

The Bishops express deep gratitude and hope for young people, recognizing their energy, creativity, and leadership in the Church. They affirm that the Church needs their voices and gifts.



“The spirit of the risen Christ is alive in you and seeks to guide you in all that you do.”

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WALKING AND TALKING TOGETHER

In this section of the Pastoral Letter to Young People, the Bishops emphasize the importance of dialogue and companionship in the journey of faith. They highlight that young people value having authentic opportunities to speak and to be heard—to engage in meaningful conversations about their beliefs, the world around them, their hopes and dreams. When we talk and listen to one another—sharing our gifts and experiences—this creates a space where the Gospel can “ignite a spark deep within our hearts and transform each of us.” (p.3)

Reflection Questions



- Who are the people in your life who have helped you grow in faith?
- When have you felt truly listened to in your faith journey, and how did that experience help you grow closer to God or others?
- How can we create spaces in our community or school where everyone feels free to share their faith, doubts, and dreams?
- How does honest dialogue help your faith come alive and deepen your connection with others?

In Catholic education, walking together—or synodality—is more than a metaphor; it is a way of living out the Gospel in Christian community. Rooted in Jesus’ invitation to “come, follow me,” it reminds us that faith and learning are journeys best shared.

In Renewing the Promise (2018), Catholic education is described as a community that journeys together in faith, rooted in the love of Christ and committed to hope, inclusion, and accompaniment. This call to walk together echoes the story of the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–35), one of the most powerful images of Christian community and education.

On the road to Emmaus, two disciples walked in sadness and confusion after Jesus’ death. They felt lost and uncertain—much like our students or school communities can sometimes feel in challenging times. Yet Jesus came to them where they were and walked with them, even when they did not recognize Him. Later they were filled with hope, recognizing Him in the breaking of the bread.

In Catholic education, we are called to do the same: to accompany one another with compassion and patience, to be signs of hope for those who struggle, and to trust that Christ walks with us, even when the road seems unclear.



“It is about taking the time to walk alongside one another, to listen and to teach, and in so doing, to transform.”

Pope Francis (Renewing the Promise, p. 6)



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Reflection Questions

How do you engage in the art of accompaniment in your school communities?

What does walking together in hope look like?

Catholic education is a journey of encounter – with Christ and with one another. When we walk together—in faith, hope, and love—we become a living sign of God’s presence in the world. The journey becomes a pilgrimage of faith—where listening, discernment, and prayer guide our steps. Through walking together, we help one another grow closer to Christ.

PRAYER: WALKING TOGETHER IN FAITH

Loving God,

You call us to walk together as one family in faith.

Bless our school community with hearts that listen, hands that serve,
and spirits that care for one another with kindness and respect.

Help us to see Your face in each person we meet—
in our classmates, our teachers, and all who guide us.

When the path feels hard, remind us that we do not walk alone—

You walk beside us, leading us in love and truth.

May our journey together be filled with joy, compassion,
and the courage to support one another as Jesus taught us.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



ON THE PATH TO HOLINESS: POPE LEO XIV CANONIZES 7 NEW SAINTS

On October 19, 2025, Pope Leo XIV canonized seven new saints, offering the Church and the world a profound message of holiness, unity, and hope.

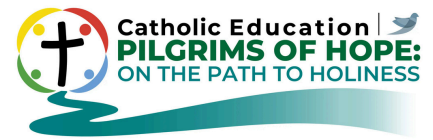
Ignatius Maloyan, Peter To Rot, Vincenza Maria Poloni, María Carmen Rendiles Martínez, Maria Troncatti, José Gregorio Hernández Cisneros, and Bartolo Longo were officially recognized as saints during a ceremony celebrating the Church’s universality.

“The primary requirement was for the group to be international, ensuring that the new saints represent the universal Church’s holiness by coming from various regions around the world.” Fr. Boguslaw Turek



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7 NEWLY CANONIZED SAINTS

Among the newly canonized, three come from Italy; two from Venezuela; and two from Oceania and West Asia. In his homily, Pope Leo, said, “Today we have before us seven witnesses, the new Saints, who, with God’s grace, kept the lamp of faith burning,” he said. “Indeed, they themselves became lamps capable of spreading the light of Christ.” ([National Catholic Register](#))

- Ignatius Maloyan - Armenian bishop and martyr
- Peter To Rot - lay catechist from Papua New Guinea
- Vincenza Maria Poloni - founder of the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy of Verona
- María Carmen Rendiles Martínez - nun and founder of the Servants of Jesus
- Maria Troncatti - Italian Salesian missionary nurse
- José Gregorio Hernández Cisneros- Doctor to the poor
- Bartolo Longo - Satanist turned saint

The seven new Saints will assist us in our vocation to holiness. They are powerful examples of holiness because their lives show us what love for God looks like in real, human form. They are not distant heroes, but men and women who allowed God’s grace to transform their weaknesses into witness.

Saints show us that holiness is possible for everyone. They came from all walks of life: farmers, students, parents, teachers, soldiers, even former sinners. They teach us how to love and persevere. Every saint’s life ultimately reflects Jesus himself. Their humility, compassion, and courage are not their own achievements but signs of Christ living within them. They help us see what it looks like to follow Jesus closely – and they intercede for us as we try to do the same.

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“Saints are not superheroes.
They are people who let God’s grace work in them.” — Pope Francis
— ”

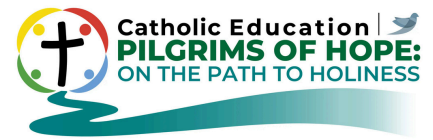
Reflection Questions

- Which virtues (love, patience, humility, courage, etc.) do I most need to cultivate right now?
- Which saint’s life resonates with me most, and why?
- How can I show Christ’s love to those around me today?
- Do I invite the saints to intercede for me and guide me on my journey?



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GUIDED REFLECTION: WALKING WITH THE SAINTS

STEP 1: TAKE TIME TO CENTRE YOURSELF

- Find a quiet space and take a few deep breaths.
- Invite God to be present: "Lord, help me see Your love today and guide me on the path of holiness."
- Ask a saint you admire to intercede: "Saint [Name], pray for me and teach me to follow Christ as you did."



STEP 2: TIME TO REFLECT

- Reflect on one thing you are grateful for today.
- Ask: Where did I see God's presence in my life today?
- Briefly note or think of moments where you felt joy, peace, or inspiration.

STEP 3: LEARN FROM THE SAINTS

- Pick one saint
- Reflect on one of their virtues or actions
- Ask: How did they show love for God or others? How did they handle difficulties or temptations?
- Ask yourself: How can I imitate this in my life today?



STEP 4: EXAMINE YOUR HEART

Think about your day:

- Where did I act with love, patience, or humility?
- Where did I fall short?
- Offer your shortcomings to God and ask for His grace: "Lord, help me grow in virtue and holiness."

STEP 5:

Choose one concrete action to live out your reflection tomorrow:

- Small act of kindness
- Patience with someone
- Extra time in prayer or reflection
- Close with a short prayer: "Lord, help me to live this day in Your love and holiness. Amen."



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CATHOLIC EDUCATION: TOGETHER IN FAITH

PILGRIMS OF HOPE: ON THE PATH TO HOLINESS



OUR CATHOLIC IDENTITY: THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

The Ten Commandments are a set of moral principles given by God to the Israelites, as recorded in the Bible, specifically in the Book of Exodus (Exodus 20:1-17) and Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 5:4-21). For Catholics, the Ten Commandments are a roadmap for living as disciples of Christ, striving to fulfill His command to love God and love others. They are a central aspect of what it means to be Catholic—not only in terms of outward behaviour but as an ongoing journey of conversion, grace, and growing in Christlikeness.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

The Ten Commandments are divided into two sections – Relationship with God and Relationship with Others (based on the CCC).

The first three commandments focus on honouring God and maintaining a proper relationship with Him.

1. I, the Lord, am your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.

Reflection: Do I put God first in my life, or do I sometimes prioritize other things over Him?

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain.

Reflection: How can I use my words to honour God rather than disrespect Him or others?

3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

Reflection: How does participating in Sunday Mass help me grow closer to God and community?

The last seven commandments focus on living justly and peacefully with others.

4. Honour your father and your mother.

Reflection: Are there ways I could show more patience, understanding, or love toward my family?



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THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

5. You shall not kill.

Reflection: How do I respect the life and dignity of others, even in thought or word?

6. You shall not commit adultery.

Reflection: How do I show respect for the relationships and commitments of others?

7. You shall not steal.

Reflection: How can I practice honesty and generosity in my daily life?

8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

Reflection: Am I truthful in my words, or do I sometimes exaggerate, gossip, or mislead?

9. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife.

Reflection: Do I appreciate and give thanks for what I have instead of being envious?

10. You shall not covet your neighbour's goods.

Reflection: How can I celebrate others' blessings without comparing or envying them?

The Ten Commandments are God's loving guide for living a holy and moral life. They show us how to love God fully and how to love others genuinely. For Catholics, following the commandments is not just about obeying rules—it is about growing closer to God and becoming the person He created us to be.

Holiness is the journey of becoming more like Christ. The commandments are our roadmap: they teach us to live with love, integrity, and selflessness in every part of life. When we follow them, we align our choices with God's will and reflect His love in the world—just as the saints did.

The Ten Commandments help us grow in holiness by shaping our actions, our hearts, and our relationships according to God's perfect love.



“It is not that we keep His commandments first and that then He loves us but that He loves us and then we keep His commandments.”

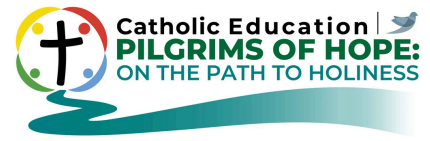
-St. Augustine



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THE MONTH OF THE HOLY SOULS

The month of November is dedicated as the Month of the Holy Souls with All Saints' Day celebrated on November 1 and All Souls' Day commemorated on November 2. This month honours the special connection between heaven and earth because the heavenly Saints inspire and guide those of us on earth. As well, purgatory is an expression of God's love, serving as a place where souls are cleansed and providing an opportunity to experience God's saving grace.

ALL SAINTS' DAY

On All Saints' Day (November 1), the Church honours all the saints—both known and unknown—who now share eternal life with God. It reminds the faithful of their own call to holiness. We turn to the saints for unique ways of being selfless, living out a pattern of a sacred life worthy of pursuing. It reminds us to honour all the saints who now share in the glory of God's presence. It's a day to thank God for their holy example and to seek their prayers as we strive to follow Christ more closely.

ALL SOULS' DAY

All Souls' Day (November 2) is dedicated to praying for all the faithful departed, especially those still being purified in purgatory. Through our prayers, Masses, and acts of charity, we help our loved ones on their journey to eternal rest. All Souls' Day is a day of remembrance, love, and hope. Catholics honour the memory of their loved ones who have passed away.

The belief behind All Souls' Day is rooted in the Church's teaching on the Communion of Saints—the spiritual connection between the faithful on earth, the souls in purgatory, and the saints in heaven. In essence, All Souls' Day is an expression of faith in God's mercy, the promise of resurrection, and the power of prayer to help others on their journey to eternal life.

May these days strengthen our faith, deepen our hope, and unite us in love with all the saints and souls in God's eternal family.

PRAYER FOR ALL SOULS' DAY

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.
May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God,
rest in peace. Amen.



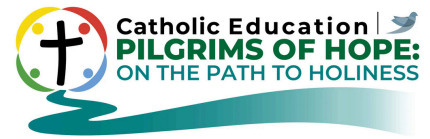
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LATEST NEWS CATHOLIC NEWS UPDATES ~ WHAT A MONTH!

October has been an amazing month in the world of Catholic education:

On October 28, the Church celebrated the 60th anniversary of two of the Vatican II documents that guide and inspire our educational vision: its Declaration on Catholic Education (known by its Latin title, *Gravissimum Educationis*) and its Declaration on the Church's Relationship with Non-Christian Religions (*Nostra Aetate*). Both documents were celebrated with special events in Rome and around the world, highlighting their ongoing relevance, and how far we have come in those six decades, in the worlds of Catholic education and interreligious dialogue.

As part of those celebrations, Pope Leo XIV published a remarkable new Apostolic Letter on Catholic Education, called "Drawing New Maps of Hope". Reflecting on where we are at 60 years after Vatican II, the Holy Father highlights the history and distinctiveness of the Catholic educational vision, underscoring its holistic approach, inviting us to "disarm our words" in a polarized world; to "raise our gaze toward heaven"; to cultivate spaces of silence, interiority, and contemplation; and to build bridges instead of walls. He highlights the intimate connection of Catholic education and Catholic social teaching in a world of poverty and suffering, and he calls us to "draw new maps of hope" for Catholic education in this twenty-first century.

Writing in that document, Pope Leo also named St. John Henry Newman to be a co-patron of Catholic education, alongside St. Thomas Aquinas. Cardinal Newman (1801-1890) was an Anglican priest, scholar, and writer who controversially converted to Catholicism in 1845, because of his intensive studies of early Christianity. His writings about Catholic education articulated a vision of a holistic, integrated blending of faith and learning that continues to influence Catholic education today (especially at the university level, where Catholic chaplaincies have often been named "Newman Centres"). Newman argued that all truth—whether from a science lab or from Scripture—ultimately comes from the same source: God. For that reason, faith and reason are partners, not enemies. He was canonized in 2019, and his writings on the importance of conscience, and on the organic development of doctrine, have been foundational for modern Catholic thinking. On November 1, 2025, during the Jubilee of the World of Catholic Education, Pope Leo XIV will proclaim St. John Henry Newman as doctor of the Church.

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*"We can believe what we choose. We are answerable for
what we choose to believe."*

— St. John Henry Newman — ”



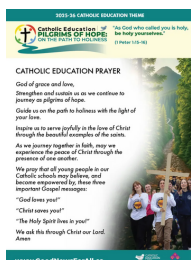
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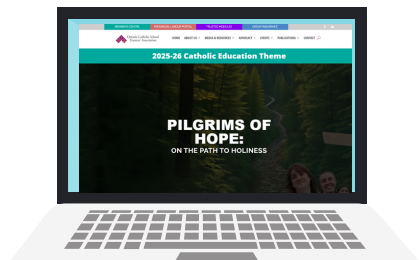
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Catholic Education Week Resources



CEW Prayer Card



<https://goodnewsforall.ca>



CEW Poster

Newly Canonized Saints

These 7 New Saints are Arriving at Just the Right Time

Pope Leo XIV Canonizes 7 New Saints



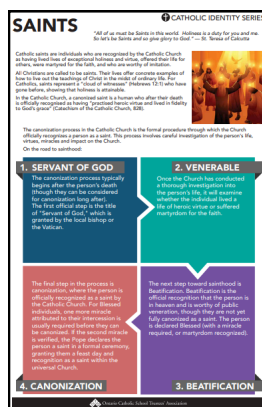
COMING SOON

Catholic Education Week Song

Our Catholic Identity Series (Posters)

Please note, this poster series will be available for schools to purchase.

NEW



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