



Director's Bulletin



Christ among us

"Christmas, my child, is love in action. Every time we love, every time we give, it's Christmas." ~ Dale Evans

This Christmas, thousands of children around the world and in our local communities will wake up on December 25th with a gift to unwrap – thanks to the generosity and kindness of students and staff from the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board through projects such as Tags for Toys, Schools Helping Schools, Samaritan's Purse and many others. Whether preparing Christmas hampers for struggling families, filling shoe boxes with novelty items, or buying gifts for children in our Equal Opportunity schools, our students and staff have shown that God dwells among us.

In a Letter to the Editor sent to The Hamilton Spectator, Brébeuf teacher Gerry Stephenson – describing a recent visit by his Grade 12 class to the Good Shepherd Christmas Store – wrote about finding God in the midst of all the activity. "He was there – there in the shoppers, there in the volunteers, there in these 17-year-olds who gave of themselves."

"Keep the Christ in Christmas," urged Stephenson, "in your own way, in your actions, by donating to causes or perhaps by attending your local place of worship — you might just see Him."

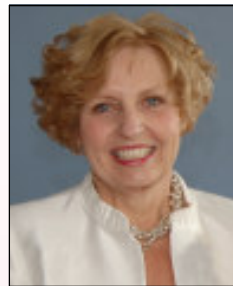


"O come, O come Emmanuel."

From the Director's Desk ...

December 2011

A banner hangs from the stairwell at Cardinal Newman Catholic Secondary School which reads, "It is in giving that we receive." Those words, taken from the prayer



Patricia Amos
Director of Education

of St. Francis, remind us that when we give – freely and without conditions – the Christ within us is realized.

Over the past several months, there have been countless examples of giving in our schools – pilgrimage fundraisers, food collections, Christmas hampers for needy families in our school communities, blanket and pyjama drives for local shelters, shoebox gifts for children in the ThirdWorld, school breakfast programs, toy drives for children in our Equal

Opportunity schools, along with numerous other service projects. While we are taught that "charity is at the heart of the Church" (*Caritas in Veritate*), we also come to experience a sense of satisfaction in giving to others. Whether it is giving materially or financially, or sharing our time and talents, through selfless giving, our hearts are transformed to goodness. Indeed, as Ralph Waldo Emerson once observed, "It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself."

As we prepare for Christmas, I'd like to thank our staff and students for their many wonderful acts of caring and generosity – not only at Christmas but throughout the year – and extend my sincere best wishes for a happy and holy Christmas. May the love, joy and peace of Christ fill your hearts and home this holiday season.



Wishing you a Christmas filled with peace and a New Year bright with hope.

~ Director's Council

So many reasons to be proud ...

Staff and schools have been recognized in recent weeks with scholarships, awards and medals celebrating excellence at all levels.

On November 1st, the board was recognized by Excellence Canada as one of the first organizations in Canada to achieve Level I in the *Performance Excellence Program: Mental Health at Work*.

The award was presented to Administrator of **Human Resources Jim LoPresti** and **Respectful Workplace Advisor Meg Petkoff**. **Mr. LoPresti** was also recognized this fall with the Sisters of St.

Joseph of Hamilton Legacy Award for his contributions over many years to the St. Joseph's health care ministry.

Jackie Bajus, Superintendent of Education and **Shannon Croome**, a staff member at the **St. Joachim Children's Centre** were presented with Agency Awards at the Week of the Child and Youth's 32nd Anniversary Awards Luncheon on November 27th. The award recognizes individuals in the Hamilton community who have made significant contributions toward improving the quality of life for children and/or youth.

Among the recipients of this year's Distinguished Service to Catholic Education were the **School Secretaries** and **Office Support Staff of the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board** who, as front-line and behind-the-scenes workers have ensured the smooth operation of the school board for more than 150 years. Individual awards were presented to **former Director of Education Marcel Castura** and **retired Special Projects Coordinator Allan Calvert**.

Congratulations to **Cardinal Newman Teachers Halina Saliccioli** and **Marisa Mariella** who received the

Daryl L. Cook Helping Hand Award from the Ontario School Counsellors' Association earlier this fall.

Andrew Caliban, a teacher at **St. Jean de Brébeuf Catholic Secondary School** returns to the classroom after a big year that saw him win nine medals at the 2011 World Karate Council World Championships in Spain, including Top Adult Competitor, and the title of Undisputed World Champion at the World Karate Association World Championships in Germany.



St. Matthew Catholic Elementary School received an Award of Merit for Architecture and Sustainability for its LEED features which inspire a new standard in school learning environments at this year's City of Hamilton Urban Design & Architecture Awards. On hand to receive the award was **Controller of Plant Dave Morrissey**.

Congratulations to **Peter Kisilnsky, Principal of St. Ann Catholic Elementary School in Hamilton** who won the Irene Mackowski and the Educational Leader of the Year Award, and **retired principal Laura Townsend** who won the President's Award to a CEC Member at the 2011 Ontario Council for Exceptional Children's Annual Provincial Conference on December 2nd.

In an unprecedented 'first', **St. Thomas More Knights** and **St. Mary Crusaders** captured gold medals at this year's OFSAA Senior Girls Basketball Championship – STM in the Quad A Division and St. Mary in the Triple A. It is the first time that two Catholic

schools from the same school board have won two gold medals at the same championship.

In other sports news, fifteen of McMaster University's current roster of players on its Men's Football Team are graduates of Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic secondary schools. The Marauders won their first Vanier Cup in more than 40 years on November 27th. Congratulations to Assistant Coach **Carm Genovese, Vice-Principal at Cardinal Newman Catholic Secondary School**.

Cardinal Newman and **St. Thomas More Catholic Secondary Schools** tied for 1st place at this year's YMCA Peace Medals Award Celebration in the Youth Group category. **CN's Peer Mentor Group** and **STM's Write for Rights** were recognized for their efforts to foster a culture of peace in their communities. **St. Mary Catholic secondary student Isabel Sinclair** won in the Youth Individual category. Also nominated were **CN's Run 4 Their Lives Club**, and **Cathedral's Breakfast Program** and **Haiti Visiting Friends Service Trip**.

St. Martin of Tours and **St. Luke Catholic Elementary Schools** are the province's top performers for 2011. At this year's Awards for Excellence in Education, St. Martin was named a School of Distinction for Excellence in Language Arts and Excellence in Mathematics. St. Luke distinguished itself for Improvement in Academics.

