

## Catholic Education Service Awards Recipients 2016!

Congratulations to our recipients for the Catholic Education Service Awards for 2016 - ***Dale Regel and Jennifer Sosnowski!***

The Board of Education established the Catholic Education Service Award in 1998 to recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to Catholic Education in Prince Albert.

Please join me in congratulating our recipients and thanking them for the many efforts and contributions they have made to Catholic Education, to our students and staff and acknowledge them for their efforts in their own parish/faith community.



**Dale Regel** - currently is working as a Vice Principal of St. Mary School. Dale is a long term employee who has worked at a number of schools in the Prince Albert Catholic School division. He is a core member of St Mary High School and has contributed to the success of the school. His deep faith is always evident as he is always willing to openly live the gospel values each day with students and staff.

Dale is famously known across the province for being an effective school administrator that gives his time before and after school in many extracurricular activities. He has coached many sports teams and he is also famously known for bringing home provincial titles in volleyball and basketball with his high school senior teams. Go Marauders Go!

Dale has made many contributions to school division staff. He has positively impacted many new teachers as he welcomed opportunities to mentor others. He would spend time with teachers to assist them with the work at hand. Dale is humble about his achievements but should be recognized as a staff member who served others within our Catholic education community of Prince Albert Catholic Schools. Congratulations Dale!



**Jennifer Sosnowski** - The Catholic Education Service award recognizes employees of the Prince Albert Catholic School Division who live their lives in service to others. Jennifer is a long term employee and is known to support her parish and school community by serving on committees such as sacramental preparation teams, liturgical committees, reading teams and is always willing to help when called upon. Jennifer is currently the grade 5 teacher at St. John Community School and is the mother of 3 lovely boys.

Jennifer lives out her strong faith by sharing the Catholic beliefs with her students and colleagues. Jennifer's warm and personal approach is appreciated by all who know her as many people call her a great friend. Jennifer graciously supports her students, staff and families and diligently works to promote the aims of the Catholic schools as she models her deep commitment to God through her faithful service and prayers for others. Congratulations Jennifer!

## St. Mary Student, Kaitlyn's Testimonial on Catholic Education



### **Catholic Education: Opening Doors of Mercy**

Good evening everyone, my name is Kaitlyn and I am a student at St. Mary High School. I'd first like to start off by thanking you for the opportunity to speak about Catholic Education. When I was first approached by Mr. Phaneuf earlier this week and asked to share my testimony with all of you, I jumped at the opportunity. Not only was I humbled by the offer, but also very thankful to have been given this chance to speak about something that is so near and dear to my heart.

From May 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>, our school will celebrate the gift of Catholic education by having special prayers to start our day as well as a special assembly on Thursday, May 5<sup>th</sup> to remember World Catholic Education day.

The theme of this year's Catholic Education week is Opening doors of Mercy. This theme fits in very well with the Year of Mercy announced by Pope Francis last year.

I am very happy and grateful to be able to go to a Catholic School where the values of Jesus and His Church are at the centre of all that we do. So today, I would like to share with you my own special reasons as to why I love Catholic Schools and what my catholic education means to me.

Catholic education means the world to me. It holds great value in my life that will stay with me forever. Much like the "Glory Be Prayer" that says, "as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be", everything in my life clearly revolves around my faith which is a constant. This faith is being fortified by my family, my parish and my education in a Catholic school. I find myself with quite a wonderful gift; a true blessing to me. I have

and continue to gain a true appreciation for my faith. I have grown as an individual and as a daughter of Christ and my moral compass has been molded to guide me along the right path. My values and the woman I am becoming attest to the Catholic education I have received in Prince Albert.

From the time I first stepped foot into Mme Dyer's kindergarten class at École Holy Cross School to my last couple months as a high school student, I have had ample chances to witness what Catholic education means. It means family, growth, independence, belief, faith, love, sportsmanship, community, forgiveness, opportunity... need I say more? Throughout my schooling, my catholic education has given me the chance to serve and to aspire into the individual whom God created me to be.

These past couple years, one thing I have come to realize is that some of these important lessons I have learned were not in history or math class, or any other subject for that matter. They are learnt at recess, in the halls, in the commons, over lunch hour, at sporting events and other extracurricular activities. Not that that's a bad thing; believe me, the knowledge I have gained from being taught by all my wonderful teachers has served great purpose, but it's what happens outside of class that often influences our ideals. In times when my patience has been tested, when I met a new friend, won or lost that soccer game, helped someone in need; these are the moments that have helped shape a distinct identity for myself, strengthened my Christian morals and encouraged me to make my own wise decisions. I will be forever grateful and appreciative for having experienced the way each one of these moments, and more, have developed my experience of Catholicism and what it means to be Christian.

Love your enemy is a dominant theme at St Mary's this year. I believe this challenge is very fitting to our catholic education in two ways. One, we often forget that our greatest enemy is within us; we are our own greatest enemy. With that being said, we are challenged to love ourselves for all of our flaws and imperfections. No one is perfect, but in the eyes of our Lord, we were created perfectly in his hands for who we are. When we learn to love ourselves, we gain self-confidence and can then work towards being true followers of Christ. I can personally say from experience that my catholic education has helped me grow in confidence and in humility, all because of the continuous welcoming atmosphere, the compassionate people in it and their encouragement along the way. Throughout my thirteen years in our catholic division, I have met so many wonderful sons and daughters of Christ who have accepted me as I am, and I will always admire every one of them for being a true testament to this principle. Secondly, we as Catholics value being accepting, loving and respectful of all people. Therefore, we do not want to be judgemental of others even if we have opposing beliefs or differences in our way of life. I myself continue to work on this daily, but at times I do fall short. Loving your enemy comes with a great deal of acceptance. I am so fortunate to be in a catholic environment full of diversity where I may not only practice this virtue myself, but also witness others being an example of this and grow as Christians every day. Through every noon-hour supervisor, caretaker, cafeteria worker, secretary, teacher, fellow classmates and beyond; I have witnessed an abundance of love and acceptance on a daily basis. Love one another as God loves us. Setting goals for myself to improve on these lessons has resulted in me becoming a better Catholic emotionally, physically; through my actions, and most of all spiritually. I can't even begin

to fathom what it would be like to go to a school where I'd have to walk in and leave my values at the door. Who would I be today if it weren't for my Catholic education?

My Catholic education has taught me not only how to conjugate French verbs, appreciate literature or solve that math problem; it has enriched the person I am today, and who I am to become tomorrow. It has helped prepare me for the road ahead that is sure to include the good, the bad and the challenging. However, I can be reassured that the Lord will guide me along the right path and that everything that happens, will happen for a reason. I know this thanks to my Catholic education. Jeremiah 29: 11 says "For I know the plans I have for you says the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future". My catholic education is yet another significant stepping stone in the plan the Lord has set for me.

Tonight, I wanted to bring to your attention the importance of Catholic education, however, not every student across Canada is able to go to a Catholic School because in some provinces parents have to pay for their child to attend. If you are able, it would be greatly appreciated if you could donate a toonie to help students in another province go to a Catholic School. There will be a basket at the back of the church for your donation.

In closing, there are three ways you can help Catholic schools. First, please pray for Catholic education. Second, please consider donating to Toonies for Tuition. Finally, please remember how important Catholic education is to me and to all Catholic Students.

Thank you once again for letting me speak to you this evening and may the remainder of the school year bring you joy and fulfillment. I pray that you all know how much you are appreciated and that you know of the positive impact you have in the lives of students just like me. God bless you all.