

Regina Catholic School Division

Director's Communiqué

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"Let Your Light Shine"

A Message from Director of Education, Domenic Scuglia



Through the darkness of today's conflicts, every one of us can become a bright candle, a reminder that light will overcome darkness. ~Pope Francis

How fitting that, not long after we chose "Let Your Light Shine" as our theme for this school year, Pope Francis would remark on the importance of each of us becoming a 'bright candle'. Every day, our lights are shining: on stage, at the rink, on the basketball court, and in each of our classrooms. The message we share of hope and love is making a wave as others are welcomed to the adoration of Christ through interactions with our staff and students.

In November, we paused to pay tribute to those who have gone before us. We remembered brothers, sisters, daughters, sons, friends and relatives who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom, and honoured those who made it home to share their stories. We found new ways to acknowledge our fallen soldiers, such as St. Nicholas School's participation in No Stone Left Alone. We thought of those who suffered through Holodomor, and prayed for those who did not survive. A group of staff and students attended the commemoration ceremony at the Legislative Building during Holodomor Remembrance Week. Our Ukrainian choir performed several numbers. While there is an innate sadness that comes with remembering, there is also hope. Hope that moving forward; we will all have the strength and bravery to stop these atrocities from happening again.

Moving into December, we gather for a time of waiting: Advent. These weeks leading to the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ are filled with joyful anticipation, a welcome and comforting feeling as we settle into the deep cold of winter. Looking at our December calendar, I see schools celebrating masses, liturgies, concerts and jubilant gatherings. I am happy to see so many events that bring together school communities, in particular the annual Choral Concert that allows for the harmonic collaboration of all four of our high schools. I am also grateful for the charitable work of our schools as we recognize that there will be families who will struggle to share the joy of Christmas and that we are doing our part to support those families. On behalf of the senior team, we wholeheartedly thank you for your service to others both with our immediate community and abroad.

Finally, we have just launched our fundraising campaign to defend our right to continue to deliver Catholic education in our province. The campaign called 'Schools You Can Believe In' is appropriately titled. We are asking everyone to do their part in whatever means they are able to contribute to support our campaign.

I pray that December brings joy, peace and the blessings of Christ to each of you, your families, and all of our students.

God Bless,

Dom



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Do You Believe in Angels?

Becoming a grandfather was quite a shock. Becoming a grandfather of a child with Cerebral Palsy put me in a state of consciousness that I had never before experienced. Even though I have worked in the disabled community as an Executive Director for many years, I was unprepared at what was about to befall me. Circumstance allowed us the incredible opportunity to raise her. This was quite a step, in that both of us worked full time, yet we wanted so much to care for this beautiful young gift from God.

Anja began school at Jean Vanier five years ago. She is with children who have physical and development disabilities. Staffing Jean Vanier requires nurses, special educators, support staff in addition to many volunteers and outside agency supports offering their services. There are also opportunities for Anja to interact with students from St. Augustine and other schools through unique partnerships such as reading buddies, swim buddies, liturgy, bake sales and other projects throughout the school year.

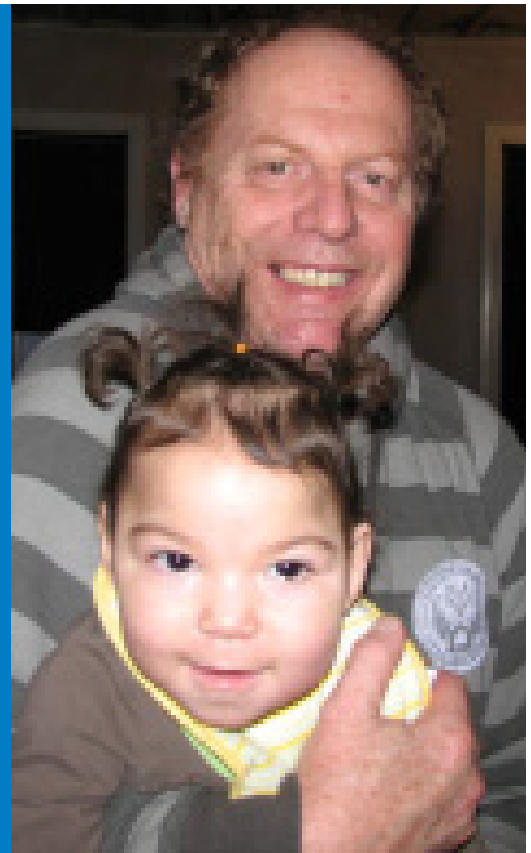
Anja has blossomed in this environment and is able to communicate how she feels and most importantly able to decide what we take for granted such as picking out the clothes she would like to wear.

Because of Jean Vanier Anja is able to experience the joy of being at student.

Sincerely,

Pierre Schweda

Jean Vanier School CSCC Chair



Riffel Vocal Jazz

On Wednesday, October 25th, the Riffel Vocal Jazz group was privileged to perform On the Occasion of the Official Opening of the Second Session of the Twenty-Eighth Legislature. The students had the opportunity to hear the Throne Speech, and then sang for the closing of the ceremonies. The students were honoured by the encouragement they received from the MLAs.



Remembrance

On November 8, Club du Souvenir from École St. Elizabeth was invited to sing *Au Champ d'Honneur/In Flanders Fields* for the Province of Saskatchewan's Ceremony of Remembrance at the Saskatchewan Legislative Building. The students worked hard to prepare for the event, and performed wonderfully.



Following the Remembrance Day Ceremony at École St. Elizabeth, the Club du Souvenir posed for a photo with invited guests. These students supported our veterans in various ways, including a *Toonie for Two Minutes of Silence* fundraiser, which raised \$596.40 for Royal Canadian Legion Branch 001. They also baked and decorated cookies for Veterans. Over 100 cookies were delivered to Veterans living in care facilities throughout the city.

Calling all St. Catherine School Alumni:

St. Catherine Community School is scheduling an event for May 16th, 2018 to celebrate our 50th anniversary. We are also looking invite former staff and students. In addition, we are hoping for any stories and/or pictures that you can contribute. Kindly contact us at 306-791-7325 or p.tourigny@rcsd.ca if you have pictures and/or you are able to attend this event. It will most likely take place at the end of the school day and into the early evening. There will more details to follow soon!





Apprenticeship Week

Skilled Trades and Technology Week was proclaimed by the provincial government for Nov 5-11. Attending the launch announcement at the Plumbers/Pipefitters Training Centre was Minister Scott Moe (far right), Gord Heidel, Executive Director of the Regina Industry Education Council (second from right) and Jeff Ritter, CEO of the Sask Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (second row, in between Gord and Minister Moe). For those of you into 'Where's Waldo?', you can look for Brian Lach, Superintendent of Education Services, and Richard Donnelly, PAA/Partnerships Consultant. On the far left are high school students, including one from Archbishop MC O'Neill Catholic High School.

Trick or Treat!

Mrs. Holle-Meyers' morning kindergarten class made a visit to Queen Victoria Estates on Halloween to spend time with the residents there and do a little bit of trick or treating at the same time! The residents had a wonderful time, and it was a great experience for the students.



Thank you to our Ukrainian Program students and staff for their participation in the Holodomor Memorial Event at the Legislature. Bringing awareness, and of course praying, for those affected by Holodomor will help ensure this mistake never happens again.



Riffel's New Welding Facility!

November 21 was the date of the official opening of Michael A. Riffel Catholic High School's new welding facility! RCSD was fortunate to welcome Erin Leier, an engineer from Saskatoon who is on the Board of the Canadian Welding Association, to Riffel to receive a plaque thanking the CWA for its partnership with our school division. Participating in the official opening are (from the left) Dave Ripplinger (Principal), Dom Scuglia, Mike Chase (Vice-Principal), Erin Leier, Ryan Schmitz (Riffel PAA teacher), Max Ceron (Sask Polytech Welding and Chair of the CWA Regina Chapter), Murray Whitelaw (Riffel Maintenance Staff), Todd Richter (Southern Sask Manager for Praxair), Richard Donnelly (PAA Consultant) and Sean Chase (Superintendent for Riffel). Also shown are two Riffel students using the new equipment, which features new ventilation for both grinding and welding, new booths, motion sensors, LED lighting, custom instructional tables, etc. all of which put Riffel's new facility well ahead of industry standards!



Safety Knowledge

On November 2, the Service & Hospitality Safety Association delivered a talk to the Grade 6's at St. Dominic Savio. The SHSA firmly believes that changing the culture of poor safety in Saskatchewan begins with our leaders of tomorrow, which is why they have committed to speaking to every Grade 6 student, the same as last year. Also listening to the presentation is St. Dominic Vice-Principal Clayton Murray.

Noah Picton Award Presentation

Noah Picton of the Regina Rams visited St. Bernadette School to present cross country awards on November 17. He shared his three keys to success with the Bobcats and awarded Kobe P., Tyia T., Matthew D., and Alexis D. with their plaques. Congratulations Bobcats!





Partners

Our school division is appreciative of its many educational partners, including the Service and Hospitality Safety Association. For many years, they have been presenting to a variety of grade levels. Most recently, Grade 6 classrooms covered Career Education curricular outcomes that tie into being safe at home, school, on the playground, etc. SHSA also organized a wonderful assembly at O'Neill Catholic High School in September for Youth Safety Education Day. From the left in the photo, Brian Lach, George Marshall, CEO of the SHSA, Dom Scuglia and Richard Donnelly present a thank you for SHSA's ongoing commitment to our students and their safety.



Jazzy Travels

Our 41 Regina Catholic Schools Senior and Intermediate Jazz Bands students attended the Vic Lewis Festival, November 3rd to 5th in Canmore, Alberta. These jazz bands are under the direction of Chad Huel. Thank you, jazz musicians, for letting your lights shine!



We are so proud of our own Pat Roth, Chaplain at Michael A. Riffel Catholic High School, awarded the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteerism. His example is inspiring hundreds of students to serve others in their journey to serve God. Congratulations, Pat!



Changing the Classroom Landscape Block by Block

by Dean Vendramin, Archbishop M. C. O'Neill Catholic High School

Using Minecraft in my classroom has been a game changer both figuratively and literally. After using this dynamic tool in my classes for a few years now, it has evolved and provided a wider range of possibilities and opportunities. Reflecting on the use of Minecraft in the classroom, it has helped me redefine lessons based on the Substitution, Augmentation, Modification and Redefinition (SAMR) Model, met and exceeded 21st Century skills, offer STEM experiences, and embrace ISTE teacher and students standards.

My journey down this path started many moons ago with a love of Lego. Building and creating with Lego was always a good time and I realize now how much it helped me recognize patterns, understand structures, and more. The ability to play is one of the fundamental ways people learn and I can attest to this personally. With my own children, we played with Lego but now there was a new 'kid on the block': Minecraft. When my own kids introduced me to the world of Minecraft, I was impressed they were not playing something that kept score or had a quest to follow, instead they were in a 'digital sandbox' where they crafted their own journey. After seeing this, I thought "I gotta get me some of this into my classroom!" Now I wasn't as adept as them as playing (and I'm still not even close) but even the way they explained the game and showed me a thing or ten was also inspiring.

My Minecraft journey into the classroom wasn't a full blown "Okay! Everything we do in class will now be in Minecraft and you will be expected to build Rome in a day." (Note with some student's skills this might be possible in Minecraft.)

I started by giving students options to show their learning using Minecraft as a tool in a Grade 9 Social Studies class I was teaching by having students submit reconstructions of Mayan pyramids and a scale version of the Coliseum. Later in Grade 9 Math classroom, I had students show understanding of surface area using Minecraft Pocket Edition. It was great to use a tool like Minecraft to help students understand a concept like this and actually create a 3D object that they could walk around and explore to understand the topic rather than memorizing a formula. I have found many more uses for Minecraft to ignite creativity, curiosity, and collaboration in my Math classes.

I currently teach a Work Place math class to 16-17-year-old students. Unfortunately, many who take this class are labeled 'not good' at math and frequently enough they believe it. When I have incorporated Minecraft to complete the projects, I quickly find out not only are they good at math, but what problems that they can solve is impressive. These students build amusement parks with rollercoasters to show understanding of slope, water parks to show understanding of surface area and volume, park features to show understanding of scale, and fencing to show understanding of trigonometry concepts. The engagement and excitement levels are intense and students that used to be the first to leave are now begging to stay a little longer. I constantly have requests from students to 'come into their worlds' and check out what they are working on. Students who

do not consider themselves 'gamers' or 'crafters' quickly find the tools easy to pick up and there are many mentors willing and eager to help along the way. I have also used Minecraft as an option in Genius Hour/Maker Projects. A student of mine did a prairie portrait for a Microsoft Canada/Minecraft Canada 150 contest and won the grand prize of a class set of laptops. Minecraft is now a staple in our Technology Club.

By constructing a variety of workshops, attending edCamps, offering an online session on #MADPD, and spreading the good news at Microsoft's amazing international E2 conference, I have shared my Minecraft journey locally, nationally, and internationally. Earlier this year I applied and was selected to be part of the amazing network of Global Minecraft Mentors led by a caring and supportive team at Minecraft: Education Edition. The sense of community and passion I have felt from the community is truly inspiring. No matter where you may be on your Minecraft journey, there are many resources (human, worlds, how-tos, lessons) out there to get you started or take you to the next level. I am excited to continue my journey and look forward to where it takes me next with the Code Builder, mixed reality, global projects, and more.

My advice to anyone is to take one good idea, turn it over to your students, and have the courage to go learn with them - you will be glad you did.



2nd Annual Cooking Competition

On Saturday, November 18, Miller Comprehensive Catholic High School hosted our second annual Cooking Competition. No newsletter can do justice to the sights and smells of the wonderful recipes students researched, practiced, prepared and presented that day, but the competition was intense! Thirty-two students formed 8 teams, 2 from each of our high schools. Teams 90 minutes to cook a meal centred on beef, as the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association was the major sponsor of this wonderful event. At the closing ceremonies, prizes were presented to the top 3 teams, and every student who competed went home with a swag bag full of gifts from a variety of supporting organizations. All recipes have been compiled into a booklet, contact Richard Donnelly at r.donnelly@rcsd.ca if case you are interested.



Tweets from Pope Francis @Pontifex

"Dear friends, the world needs saints and we are all called to holiness without exception. Don't be afraid!"

"The Church needs faithful people who proclaim the Gospel with enthusiasm and wisdom, instilling hope and faith."

"Only faith can transform the end of our earthly life into the beginning of eternal life."

"We cannot change the world alone, but together we can spread the joy of the Gospel by staying close to those most in need."

"We need to encounter the poor and learn how to share so that it becomes a way of life."

"Let us work together to ensure that children continue to smile: their faces serene, filled with joy and hope. #WorldChildrensDay"

"The love of Christ is like a "spiritual GPS" that guides us unerringly towards God and towards the heart of our neighbor."

"A Christian can never be a pessimist!"

"The most holy name of God can never be invoked to justify hatred and violence against other human beings."

"On this day, I invite the entire Church to keep its gaze fixed on those who hold out their hands asking for our solidarity."



Métis Flag Raising

Sacred Heart Community School hosted our official Métis Flag Raising Ceremony on the 132nd anniversary of the death of Métis leader Louis Riel. The symbolism of the flag is powerful. The Regina Catholic School Division is proud to fly this flag as a sign of our commitment to truth and reconciliation.



Multi-Language Library

Deshaye Catholic School now has a very special kindergarten library, all thanks to the United Way. This library features books in multiple language, allowing for students to read in both English, and, in many cases, in their family's own language. The literary gift includes new furniture, and a collection of wonderful story books. This initiative was made possible by the Community Fund for Canada's 150th, a collaboration between the South Saskatchewan Community Foundation, the Government of Canada, and extraordinary leaders from coast to coast to coast.

Month at a Glance - January 2017

Monday, January 1 - New Years Day

Monday, January 8 - Students Return; Board Meeting 5:00

Friday, January 12 - Feast Day of St. Marguerite Bourgeays

Friday, January 26 - Teachers' Institute; No School for Elementary Students; Feast Day of St. Timothy

Saturday, January 27 - Feast Day of St. Angela Merici

Tuesday, January 30 - Teachers' Institute; No School for High School Students

Wednesday, January 31 - High School Turnaround Day; No School for High School Students