

CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF SASKATCHEWAN

May 08, 2026

Catholic Education Week May 10-17, 2026

In great appreciation for the legacy of mission of Catholic Education, we the Catholic Bishops of Saskatchewan invite you to join us in recognizing the gift and the impact of Catholic education as we celebrate Catholic Education Week in our province from May 10 to May 17.

This year's theme is "**Catholic Education: Pilgrims of Hope: On the Path to Holiness.**" Building on last year's "Jubilee of Hope," this year we focus on the call to personal holiness that is achieved through ordinary, faithful daily life. This year's reflections are also inspired by the canonization of St. Carlo Acutis, and the 2022 Pastoral Letter to Young People by the Catholic Bishops of Canada.

Pilgrims of Hope is a theme taken from the Jubilee Year of Hope that we observed in 2025. It invites us to celebrate how Catholic Education is at the service of hope in so many ways. As the late Pope Francis stated, hope is a gift from God and a task for all Christians. It is a "...light in the night" as the world struggles with seeking truth, understanding, mutual respect, and true peace.

Five key themes will be explored in our schools this week to help us to understand how we can be pilgrims of hope through Catholic education.

On Monday, May 11, we celebrate the theme **Peace Be With You**. St. Carlos Acutis's famous statement: "To always be united with Jesus, this is my life plan" reminds us about our need to be united with Christ in all things. In this way Jesus Christ brings us true peace: "*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives.*" (John 14:27) Pope Leo XIV reminds us that *peace* is all encompassing, and not the mere absence of hostility and conflict, leaving tensions between peoples unaddressed. Rather, "*...Peace is first and foremost an active and demanding gift. It engages and challenges each of us, regardless of our cultural background or religious affiliation, demanding, first of all, that we work on ourselves ... [to] eliminate pride and vindictiveness.*" Peace seeks "*the purification of the heart necessary for building peaceful relationships.*"¹

On Tuesday, May 12, we reflect on the theme: **God loves you**. This may sound like a simple and obvious theme. Yet, we continue to experience so many ways in which people fail to see and receive God's tremendous love. During Pope Leo's recent trip to Africa, while visiting Bata Prison in Equatorial Guinea, the Holy Father reminds us about this underlying theme of our faith. As he states: "No one is excluded from God's love... [despite] pasts, mistakes, and sufferings ...[every person remains] precious." Jesus shows us, "...the power of love to change even the hardest of hearts."²

¹ See Address to the Diplomatic Corps of the Holy See, Friday May 16, 2025.

² See Pope Leo XIV, "Visit to Bata Prison, Apostolic Journey to Algeria, Cameroon, Angola &

Catholic educators are inspired and sustained by this most essential feature of God – His love is manifest in His Mercy. During his pontificate, Pope Francis stressed that *mercy* is not simply one of God’s many attributes, it is *the feature* through which we understand everything about God.

On Wednesday, May 13 we explore celebrate the theme ***God saves you!*** This theme builds on the previous day’s theme, emphasizing the life and ministry of Jesus Christ – God’s intervention in our lives in time and history, which has brought needed conversion, healing, and new life to all peoples of our world. Pope Francis stated that “God saves us, then by making Himself little, near and real ...Those who accept His offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness, and loneliness.”³ In this sense, Catholic education seeks excellence inspired by the close connection, the modelling, and the relationships of teachers with students. This mentoring for excellence involves learning, healing, and growth in such a way that all impediments to human flourishing are overcome. *Excellence* also inspires young people to bring to bear all their God-given gifts, talents, and abilities. As our students grow as disciples of the Lord, they are inspired and equipped to humbly serve God’s work to make the world a better place and seek our ultimate destiny.

On Thursday May 14 we focus on the theme ***The Holy Spirit lives in you.*** The Holy Spirit – proceeding from the Father and the Son – brings us into a living loving communion with the Triune God, empowering a life of unity, love and solidarity with others. Pope Francis frequently emphasized the importance of living in solidarity with our brothers and sisters, and most particularly with the poor and marginalized. Solidarity is more than individual acts of kindness. It is a way of thinking and living that prioritizes the needs of the community over individual desires. Solidarity is a matter of charity that seeks compassion and justice. It often requires a shift in our own perspective.⁴

Catholic schools teach and celebrate the work of the Holy Spirit to value each human person as precious to God and having inherent dignity. A key biblical passage that affirms this theme is in John’s Gospel, where Jesus teaches: “*Love one another as I have love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life... I give you these commands so that you may love one another.*” (see John 15:12; 17)

Finally, on Friday May 15 we reflect on ***Together on the Journey.*** As we celebrate this year’s theme “Pilgrims of Hope: On The Path to Holiness”, we emphasize that for people of faith, the virtue of Hope is not a passive issue. It is supported and enriched as we are strengthened by one another in community. To be *pilgrims of hope* is to seek, encourage and foster a virtue that calls forth a vision and response – by Catholic

Equatorial Guinea”, April 22, 2026.

³ Mass at Jasna Gora Shrine on the 1,050th anniversary of the baptism of Poland, Krakow, Poland, July 28, 2016

⁴ See: Message of Pope Francis re: “Globalize solidarity and not indifference,” March 4, 2023; Message of Pope Francis for World Day of the Poor” We must uphold values of responsibility, solidarity.” June 14, 2022.

educators, by members of the Church, by families, and the larger community – a vision that trusts in the redemption of all in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Such a call also reflects how the ministry of Jesus Christ emphasizes the problem and reality of poverty in our world, and the importance of compassion, care, and support for those in need. Jesus’ teachings and actions highlight the Kingdom of God as a place where all will be blessed – especially the poor: “*Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God.*” (see Luke 6:20). Encouraging reflection on the Church’s social doctrine, Pope Leo XIV emphasizes, “Give voice to the poor, ... (as we) participate actively and creatively – together with the People of God, in this time of great social upheaval, through attentive listening and open dialogue to all.”⁵

The journey of Jesus Christ– through His life and ministry of teaching and service, through His passion and death on the cross, and through His resurrection to new life which overcomes any obstacle between God and His people – provides the pattern for hope for Catholic education and formation.

We join together in giving thanks to God for the gift of Catholic education and its unique contribution in our province and our communities. We pray in thanksgiving for the continuing existence and protection of publicly-funded Catholic education in Saskatchewan, and for hope and perseverance for educators, students and families.

May Catholic education continue to model Christ: “... the Way, the Truth and the Life.” (John 14:16) May it help all to develop the head and the heart so that we may “prepare [our] minds for action; discipline [ourselves]; set all [our] hope on the grace that Jesus Christ will bring to [us] when he is revealed.” (see 1 Peter 1:13)

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Donald Bolen
Archbishop of Regina

Most Rev. Susai Jesu
Archbishop of Keewatin-Le Pas

Most Rev. Mark Hagemoen
Bishop of Saskatoon

Most Rev. Michael Smolinski, CSsR
Eparch of Saskatoon

Very Reverend Maurice Fiolleau
Administrator of Prince Albert