

# COMMUNITY UPDATE

Quality • Inclusive • Faith-based • Education



w w w . w c d s b . c a

## Merry Christmas!!



**Loretta Notten**  
Director of Education

*"As we hasten toward the manger, enjoy the upcoming valued time with family and friends. Let us quiet our hearts and open our minds to the joy that is Christmas..."*



*"Let the wisdom of those who have borne the trials and blessings of a lifetime provide a foundation for those who are new. Together let us be Jesus to each other."*

In this season of hopeful anticipation it is wonderful to be able to reflect on the deep blessings that have been bestowed upon the Waterloo Catholic family these past few months. Our schools and our community have been bread to those who are hungry. I have been privileged to be witness to many wonderful acts of care and of compassion that emphasize that we are indeed the "heart of the community". Advent is an invitation to pause and prepare for the coming of our Lord. In that spirit, let us pause and celebrate the wonder of Waterloo Catholic.

A true highlight for me was the celebration of our Pastoral Plan from **People of Love to People of Hope**. With **Bishop Crosby** as our celebrant, it was enormously gratifying to see all of the representatives of our broader family joined in one liturgical celebration. Our clergy are valued partners, as are our parents and all of our staff. Together we proclaimed to all that we see the wood of the tree that becomes both manger and cross, as a symbol of new hope and all that is possible. On our Faith Day it was wonderful to take in the many images of shared community that flooded our way.

At this time of year when many suffer due to losses or personal circumstance, it is heartening to realize that our schools offer so much to so many. In virtually all of our schools we see hampers being assembled, awareness campaigns that are launched, fundraising for and participation in causes such as **The Push for Change** and careful support for those experiencing loss. Thank you for all you do in this regard.

*...continued on page 2*

## Message from the Board Chair



**Joyce Anderson**  
Chair of the Board

It is my privilege as one of my first activities as Chair of the Board, to wish each of you a wonderful, blessed Christmas season. As we celebrate the birth of our Saviour who brought the promise of love and hope to the world, we are reminded how fortunate we are at Waterloo Catholic to have an abundance of dedicated parents, students, teachers, and staff, who care deeply about one another, and those around us. Their caring is demonstrated regularly by so very many acts of kindness.

We are also reminded at this time of those in our community who are alone, or suffering in some way, and for whom the Advent season is an especially difficult time. We are called to seek opportunities, both large and small, to reach out and offer our support. As we celebrate with family and friends, may we allow the spirit of the season to reignite hope, peace, joy and love in our hearts.

On behalf of trustees **Bill Conway**, **Manuel da Silva**, **Amy Fee**, **Jeanne Gravelle**, Vice-Chair **Wendy Price**, **Greg Reitzel**, **Brian Schmalz**, **Melanie VanAlphen**, and student trustees **Samantha Lim** and **Joseph De Sousa**, we wish you and your families a wonderful and joyful Christmas.

*Joyce Anderson*



Wishing all a blessed  
Advent & Merry Christmas!!

On December 5, 2016 **Joyce Anderson** (Kitchener/Wilmot) was elected Chair of the Board and **Wendy Price** (Cambridge/North Dumfries) was elected Vice Chair of the Board. For information about the Board of Trustees visit:

[www.wcdsb.ca/about/board/trustees.html](http://www.wcdsb.ca/about/board/trustees.html)

December, 2016



Waterloo Region's Catholic Schools

w w w . w c d s b . c a



As these "Great 8's" from **St. Augustine CES** know, the retreat at **Mount Mary** is a not-to-be forgotten experience!

### Director's Message Continued...

A wide range of athletics – intramural and varsity, along with artistic, theatrical and musical productions that allow a myriad of students to shine, are assembled with the enormous good will of so many. Our commissioning ceremony for School Council Chairs brought together members of our **Waterloo Region Catholic Schools Foundation** as sponsors, our trustees as hosts, and our school leaders and council chairs as collaborators. Progress within key initiatives such as our **Renewed Math Strategy** and the implementation of our new **Board Improvement Plan** are a tribute to the dedication of our community and our resilience as learners. Our "**Schools of the Week**" on the board website are amazing testament to all that happens daily in our schools. Pride is the overwhelming emotion one experiences as you review the images, stories and videos assembled.



So let me end where I began – in gratitude. Our system is a wonderful tapestry of individuals and experiences that truly is a rich exemplar of publicly funded Catholic education. Our schools and the people who populate them are a source of deep inspiration. As we hasten toward the manger, enjoy the upcoming valued time with family and friends. Let us quiet our hearts and open our minds to the joy that is Christmas, to the simple pleasures that delight and to the miracles of the season. On behalf of the senior team, may each of you encounter the love of the Christ Child now and throughout the coming year.

### WCDSB Trustee Profile

In October, 2014 a new Board of Trustees was elected and we were pleased to welcome **Bill Conway, Amy Fee, Brian Schmalz** and **Melanie Van Alphen**. Since then, we have been profiling each. Today...meet **Brian Schmalz**, Trustee for **Kitchener/Wilmot**...

Brian was born and raised in Kitchener. He attended **St. Francis CES** in Kindergarten and then became one of the first students of **St. Paul CES**, which he attended for Grades 1 to 8. After attending **St. Jerome's High School**, Brian earned his last high school credit as part of the first graduating class of the **St. Louis Adult Learning and Continuing Education Centre**.



**FUN FACT**  
 Brian enjoys visiting children in hospital as part of the **Kitchener Firefighters' Our Everyday Heroes** program - with gifts to bring a smile to their faces

Married, with one daughter, Brian served the WCDSB for more than 35 years as a member of the maintenance department. A devoted member of the **Knights of Columbus** since 1976, Brian last year concluded his term as Grand Knight.

Brian says: "*My father was a trustee back in the late 70's. When the Bishop thinks you should run for trustee then you figure you'd better run for trustee, so now I am following my father in his footsteps. Growing up, my parents instilled in me that family is very important and to treat everyone the way you would want to be treated if you are in their shoes. I see our school system as one large family and without that family the world can be a lonely place!*"

### A Special Anniversary



Earlier in December, **St. Louis Adult & Continuing Education Centre** student **Ronal Aguirre** (right) & Principal **Paul Cox** appeared on **Rogers "Daytime"** to talk about the school's milestone 30<sup>th</sup> year.





# Our Schools: Heart of the Community...!



The Grade 7/8's in teacher **Heather Papp's** class at **St. Peter CES** have taken Christmas door decorating to a whole new level!



It's not uncommon for our Education Director **Loretta Notten** to visit several schools per day. You can keep up with her on Twitter: **@WCDSB\_notten!**



On December 16 & 19 our schools proudly welcomed **Joe Roberts** and the cross Canada **Push for Change** campaign to Waterloo Region. Once a homeless youth pushing a shopping cart around the streets of Vancouver, Joe became a successful businessperson and is currently pushing a shopping cart across Canada to raise funds and awareness to prevent youth homelessness. When Joe reached Kitchener he had already walked more than **4,300 kms** of the **9,000 km** journey. Our schools raised **\$5,500** for the cause. To learn more about Joe & The Push for Change – and **to make a donation** – visit [www.thepushforchange.com/](http://www.thepushforchange.com/). Follow the journey on Twitter: **@PushForChange**



Students at **St. Gabriel CES** (left) and **Sir Edgar Bauer CES** (right) know all about being **"People of Love"** & **"People of Hope"**. St. Gabriel collected 100's of pairs of socks for the homeless during **"Socktober"** while SEB collected more than 500 food items in just three days!



**Waterloo Region's Catholic Schools**

w w w . w c d s b . c a





## Christmas: Revealing a Beautiful Truth

By Father Fr. Toby Collins, C. R.

This past year many of us have experienced great moments of tension when following world events or simply trying to get along with those closest to us. At times it can seem like a never ending struggle to just to know the truth and find some sense of peace in our lives.

I find it interesting that Christ was born at a time not much different than our own. At the time of his birth there was much corruption in the Roman Empire's handling of money and power. People were also in conflict with each other because of disagreements in political ideologies and religious beliefs. And those who did not fit within the political structures of that era were often imprisoned or left to flee to another country, sometimes dying on the way.

Yet Jesus was born. The Messiah came. People drew near and many were changed for the better; not so much because their old ways weren't of value but because they encountered something far more precious than anything else - a beautiful truth about us and about God hidden in the vulnerability of a child.

Someone once told me that there are only two things in life that always tell the truth: children and yoga pants! I would like to add the child Jesus to that list because he always seems to reveal the truth; how humanity has very little room for him and his family and that, in a way, we are all just like him - small, vulnerable and in need of God's love and guidance.



### Painted glass windows – WCDSB Education Centre

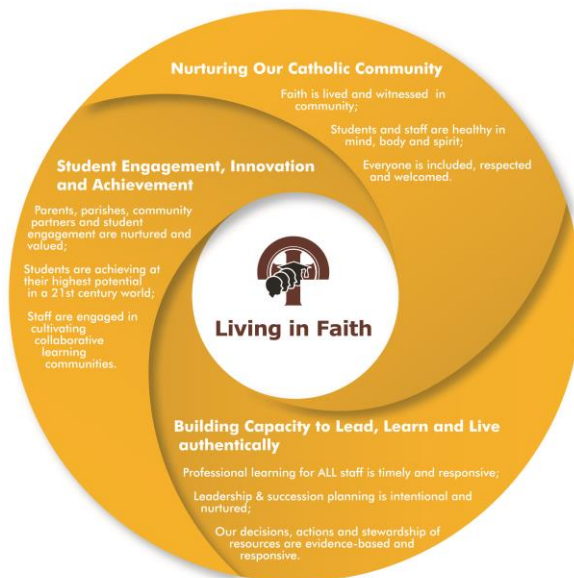
This Christmas we may find ourselves overwhelmed with the inadequacies of this life and even give up on the quest for the truth that Christ brings. But if we take time to nurture our relationship with God we will discover just how much we are loved -- and that God will always be waiting for us to go to a quiet place in our hearts...where the love of a child assures us once more that amidst all life's hardships and broken dreams we can all still live in his peace.

Father Toby Collins, C.R., -- Vocations Director for the Congregation of the Resurrection -- is Spiritual Animator of the WCDSB.

## WCDSB: Come Experience the Difference a Catholic Education Makes!!

One of the most important factors setting Waterloo Region's Catholic Schools apart and allowing our students to add so much extra value to the community are the **Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations**. The OCGSE's underpin our board's **Multi-Year Strategic Plan** and all we do. Long before the government made "character education" mandatory each and every WCDSB graduate has been trained to be:

- A **discerning believer** formed in the Catholic faith community who celebrates the signs and sacred mysteries of God's presence through word, sacrament, prayer, forgiveness, reflection and moral living;
- An **effective communicator** who speaks, writes and listens honestly and sensitively, responding critically in light of gospel values;
- A **reflective, creative and holistic thinker** who solves problems and makes responsible decisions with an informed moral conscience for the common good;



- A **self-directed, responsible, life-long learner** who develops and demonstrates his/her God-given potential;
- A **collaborative contributor** who finds meaning, dignity and vocation in work which respects the rights of all and contributes to the common good;
- A **caring family member** who attends to family, school, parish, and the wider community;
- A **responsible citizen** who gives witness to Catholic social teaching by promoting peace, justice and the sacredness of human life.

Find our Multi-Year Strategic Plan at:

[www.wcdsb.ca/about/mysp/pdf/WCDSB-MYSP-2016-18.pdf](http://www.wcdsb.ca/about/mysp/pdf/WCDSB-MYSP-2016-18.pdf)



Waterloo Region's Catholic Schools

w w w . w c d s b . c a