



St. Gregory the Great Catholic Academy

140 Greenpark Blvd. Woodbridge, ON L4L 6Z6
Tel: 905-856-0955 | Fax: 905-856-0999
<http://sgg.ycdsb.ca> | Twitter: @StGregoryCA



MAY 2020 EDITION

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& YCDSB Chair**
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Principal
Vince Galea

Dear Parents and Guardians -

I hope this May newsletter finds you well.

As we continue this journey in distance learning, I want to thank our parent community for everything you are doing at home to support your child's learning. What has been asked of us all in this distance learning is beyond anything I could have ever imagined, but I see our community's incredible resiliency in every interaction I am grateful to have with you all. I want to say a special thank you to our students. This is hardest for them, I know it is. And yet, I see their smiles and their work and their creativity. For our friends who are having a harder time smiling these days, there is support. Please connect with us. Please reach out to myself or to your child's teacher. There are many avenues for assistance. There is no better time than now to lean on one another - we will be each other's strength. I also want to say a special thank you to our teachers and support staff. They love your children - that I do not doubt. They continue to collaborate in their efforts to provide an engaging continuation of learning in these times. I am grateful for their partnership. I wish to thank our Catholic School Council for their support even in these days of distance learning. Our CSC has been a great help to our school when called upon. It is the collective efforts of our staff, students and parents that are key to our shared successes.

This first week of May, we will celebrate **Catholic Education Week** in the province of Ontario. It will be a different CEW than was originally planned, but we will mark this week at SGG nonetheless with a number of activities and reflections. This year's theme is *Igniting Hope*. We all need hope - and we need never look further than our children to understand why we do what we do!

You are all in our thoughts and prayers and I remain confident that you are praying for us as well - this is what families do. I wish you all good health and the protection of our risen Lord.

V. Galea, Principal

The Light of God – surround us.
The Love of God – enfold us.
The Power of God – protect us.
The Presence of God – watch over us.
The Mind of God – guide us.
Wherever we are, God - be our strength and harbour.

Mission Statement

Guided by Gospel values and Catholic Virtues, in partnership with home and Church, we educate and inspire all students to reach their full potential in a safe and caring environment.

Vision Statement

Our students will become creative and critical thinkers who integrate Catholic Values into their daily lives, as socially responsible global citizens.

Core Values



Strategic Commitments



Catholic Communities of Faith



OUR APRIL VIRTUE WAS REVERENCE: April's virtue was reverence. We were guided by the following statements: *I will honour and respect God's gift of life, I will show good manners and treat others the way I want to be treated.* These virtues, especially the final one, were a focus for our online distance learning. Congratulations to our virtue recipients. We will recognize these students upon our return to school.

Ms. Granchelli & Ms. Pecora:	<i>Giuseppe D., Jayden L., Victoria V. Christian B.</i>
Mr. Ricci:	<i>Elina L., Dante L.</i>
Ms. Pasquariello:	<i>Joseph B.</i>
Ms. Ciccolini:	<i>Loredana C., Alessia L.</i>
Ms. Cipriani:	<i>Liya C.</i>
Ms. Mammone	<i>Lucas K., Victoria N.</i>
Ms. Mischiato:	<i>Una B., James C., Noemi Z.</i>
Ms. Ferazzutti:	<i>Stefano T., Iris L.</i>
Ms. Nunes:	<i>Nicholas F., Adrien G. Eileen L., & Corrado B.</i>
Ms. Mastrangelo:	<i>Adrian A., Blake R.</i>
Ms. Lapolla:	<i>Domenic P.</i>
Ms. Scariot:	<i>Joshua W., Sebastian A., Santiago O.</i>
Ms. Cook:	<i>Sofia G.</i>
Ms. Loizides:	<i>Alessandra T.M.</i>
Ms. Solimine	<i>Anthony L.</i>

**This month's virtue:
RESPONSIBILITY**

CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK: This year's Catholic Education Week theme is, *"Igniting Hope."* The theme for CEW 2020 was inspired by three sources:

- *The recent Papal Exhortation, Christus Vivit, by Pope Francis following the 2018 Synod of Bishops on Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment*
- *The recent Ontario Bishops' pastoral letter, Renewing the Promise (2018)*
- *The Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations by the Institute for Catholic Education (2011)*

There are five sub-themes for each day of Catholic Education Week: *Our Hope in Christ (Day 1), The Hope Within Us (Day 2), The Hope Among Us (Day 3), Hope for the World (Day 4) and Future Full of Hope (Day 5).*



Every year, the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA) provides our Catholic schools with a resource kit to help schools prepare for Catholic Education Week. Using these resources, as well as our own developed activities, we have prepared a series of 'distance learning' activities, which will highlight how the students and staff at our school are *Igniting Hope*.

Our **Living Rosary Project** is a wonderful way to bring our community together in hope. We hope that many of our FDK - Gr. 8 students and families will take part. Please note the deadline for submissions is Tuesday, May 5th. A letter with all the details is attached to this newsletter.

We will also be hosting a **letter, card and poster writing campaign** for all our essential and frontline workers. Those letters will be collected by our teacher-librarian Ms. Fazari and our classroom teachers. Details will be shared in your child's Google Classroom.

A **choice board** with daily CEW activities will be on our school website and Google Classrooms for students to explore.

Working from home can be challenging!
Looking for tips and tricks to support healthy
minds and wellbeing?

Follow [@YCDSB_MH](#) on Twitter!

DISTANCE LEARNING

UPDATE: As you may be aware, our Minister of Education announced that school closures have been extended until May 31st. Our staff is committed to continue to do the best they can during this period of distance learning to provide an engaging continuation of learning for our students. While we would prefer to be all together, until that day is announced, we are here to support our community. Our Board shared a document with our parents and guardians on the importance of a strong home-school partnership required for this system to work as best it can. Our expectation is that students are completing their lessons and learning tasks to the best of their ability for teacher feedback. If circumstances are permitting students from doing so, please be in touch with your child's teacher so that we can collaborate and partner on a supportive solution. Our phone calls and emails are never meant to cause additional stress for your child or your family; they are a means for keeping an open and honest dialogue ongoing in the best interest of our students, your children. Despite the challenges of these times and the difficulties in every household (our own included), what keeps us all motivated are the moments when we see the brilliant work created under these circumstances. Our students are resilient because parents and educators are working together to raise them up!



For more information on Distance Learning,
visit: <https://www.ycdsb.ca/covid-19>

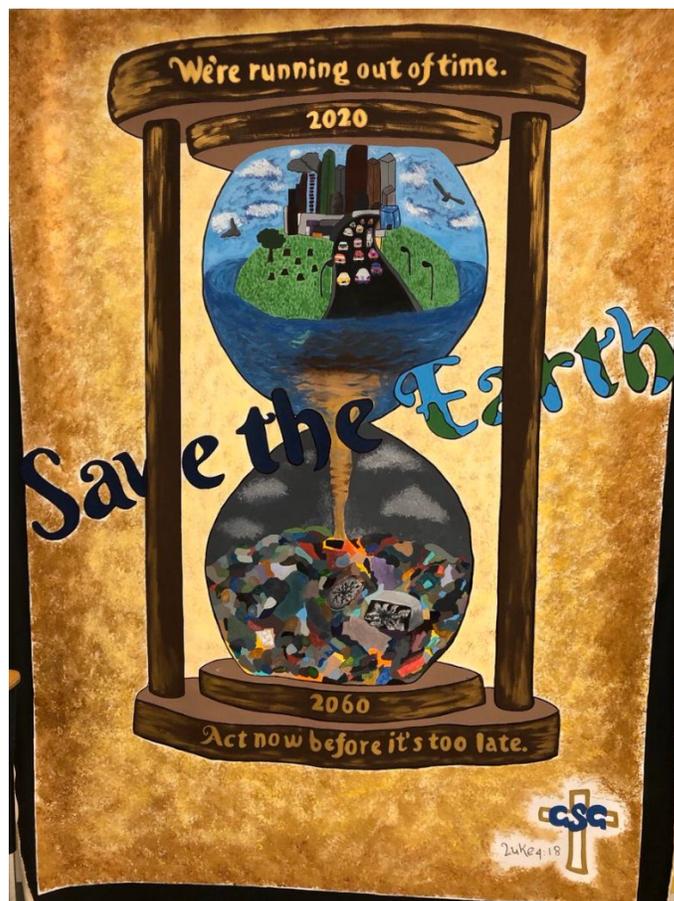
Click [Parent Guide](#) to Distance Learning



MENTAL HEALTH WEEK: Every year, the first week of May is Children's Mental Health Week. It is a week where we draw attention to the mental health issues that children and youth face, raise awareness of these issues, decrease stigma and provide understanding of the help that is available.

During this period of distance learning, we continue to focus on the mental health of our students and families. Please take an opportunity to explore the mental health and wellness activities shared via School Messenger and Twitter this week.

#EARTHDAY BANNER: This year, our Luke 4:18 committee's Grade 8 students created a banner for the City of Vaughn's Earth Day Banner Competition under the guidance of Mme. Dele Donne, Mlle. Loiacono and Signora Romualdi. While school closures have prevented the banner from being entered into the competition, it will not stop us from celebrating these artists' work and incredible message. Congratulations students!



REFUNDS: Ms. DiCarlo, our school secretary, is in the process of preparing refund cheques for the following cancelled events/activities: hot lunches, Artist in the School, Gr. 6 Brock Excursion, and the Toronto Marlies game. We anticipate the cheques to arrive at your home by mail between mid-May and the beginning of June. Please deposit these cheques as soon as possible. Cheques that were not cashed will also be returned voided with the exception of the Big Box of Cards fundraiser (please see below).



BIG BOX OF CARDS: Our CSC will be completing our school's successful Big Box of Cards fundraiser. We thank our community for their amazing generosity. The fundraiser brought in just over \$5000 for the purchase of our new gymnasium mats (final amount will be confirmed soon). All Big Box cheques will be processed and additional boxes ordered will be making their way to school. A process for families to be united with the additional boxes ordered will be shared once we are given direction that it is safe to do so.

FOLLOW US ON TWITTER: Please follow our very active Twitter account at @StGregoryCA. Turn on notifications and never miss an update!

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION IS OPEN: Registration for our September 2020 Kindergarten class is open. Please visit our Board's website at www.ycdsb.ca/admissions/.

NEW TO SGG: Do you know someone new to the area? Are they hoping to attend St. Gregory the Great in September 2020? If so, please encourage them to enrol their child via the Board's Admissions department. We want to ensure that we are accurately capturing student enrolment for the coming school year as this impacts our school staffing. Thank you for sharing this information with your new friends and neighbours. #YouBelongToSGG

LEAVING OUR SCHOOL: *Goodbyes are never easy!* Are you moving? Will you be leaving SGG at the end of this school year? If so, please let us know so that our September enrollment is accurate and we can plan effectively.

It is during moments of crisis and despair that as a community of faith, we come together to show kindness, care and solidarity. During this period of school and work closures, more families than ever before are in need of the Vaughan Food Bank's services. In prior times, the Vaughan Food Bank would support 200 families per month with a 10-day supply of food. In the first three weeks of the closures due to COVID-19, 1000 families have lined up to receive pre-packed boxes outside of the Vaughan Food Bank's doors. Unfortunately, the number of families requiring support is consistently increasing. **As a response to this critical situation, school communities across the York Catholic District School Board are coming together to support our neighbours in need.** Collection bins will be placed at the front doors of neighbouring schools and monitored by school cameras for safety purposes. **Our St. Gregory the Great Catholic Academy families are invited to take a walk to our school and place a bag of food and/or personal hygiene items in the Food Bank Bins.**

When: Tuesday, May 12th, 2020 | **Time:** Approximately 10 am - 7 pm

Please ensure that you maintain social distancing at all times to ensure your personal well being.

Kindly note that all bins will be held in a 5-day quarantine by the Vaughan Food Bank prior to being handled by their volunteers.

Items Requested: any canned or dry food items (i.e., canned fruit, vegetables, beans, rice, cereal), personal hygiene items (soap, shampoo); please note, baby food and pasta are not sought at this time as they have been donated in bulk by food producers

Thank you all for your continued support and generosity as we are all truly in this together!



St. Gregory the Great Catholic Academy

The Proof of Love is in the Works

Dear Parents & Guardians of St. Gregory the Great,

I hope this letter finds you and your families safe and in good health.

Next week is **Catholic Education Week** in Ontario - a time to celebrate the best of and to be thankful for the gift of Catholic Education in our province. This year's Catholic Education Week theme is ***Igniting Hope***; especially appropriate given the current COVID-19 pandemic. Albeit in a different way, St. Gregory the Great will acknowledge this annual event with the support of our resilient community and show that, as Easter people, we are ignited by the Holy Spirit.

This coming week SGG would have celebrated the blessing of our beautiful chapel and modernized library learning commons. This student-led liturgical celebration would have included an outdoor prayerful procession with our staff, students, and statue of the Virgin Mary: *a living rosary*. We wish to proceed with a 'distance learning' devotion to our Heavenly Mother - *our staff, students and families representing each bead in the rosary*.

How do our families who wish to participate in this devotion get involved?

Please note that participation in this activity is completely voluntary.

Please find attached a template families may use to create rosary beads. Alternately, students and their families can create beads from materials at home (i.e., cardboard, bristol board, etc). The beads may include pictures, scripture, or inspirational messages based on the 'Igniting Hope' theme. Resources for your consideration have been provided in this letter.

Once the beads are completed, parents can take a photo of their child(ren) holding the rosary bead or include the whole family in the photo. The family has always been a symbol of hope, representing faith, strength and support. Photos can be uploaded by visiting this Google Form link: <https://forms.gle/aM8AzytqBPy6oiR88>. Alternately, photos can be emailed to your child's teacher via the Google Classroom. Each photo (rosary bead) will be put together in a video slideshow. As the rosary contains 50 rosary beads, each one representing a *Hail Mary*, we are hoping to receive at least 50 submissions from our community.

The video will be shared with our school community via School Messenger and social media (kindly note this if you choose to participate in this project by sharing a photo with us). Hope means that we expect better - we know that better days are coming because they have been promised to us by our God. This video slideshow will come to represent our community's hope, love, strength and resiliency.

We ask that all photos be shared by 3pm on Tuesday, May 5th, 2020.

We hope this project helps to lift the spirits of our students and school community.

Should you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher or school administration.

Yours in Catholic Education

V. Galea, *Principal*

Resources for your consideration:

1. *YouTube:* [Thank you Canada's Essential Workers](#)
2. *Audio:* Catholic Education Week Song *Hope* [Audio](#)
3. *Lyrics:* Catholic Education Week Song *Hope* [Lyrics](#)
4. *Video:* Catholic Education Week Song *Hope* [Music Video](#)
5. Template - [Rosary Bead Option 1](#)
6. Template - [Rosary Bead Option 2](#)



Select Catholic Education Week Prayers

Loving God,

You sent your son, Jesus, to be our hope.
We feel his promised spirit at work within us.

We recognize his risen presence among us as we
gather in his name in prayer, and celebrate the
Eucharist.

He is the hope which inspires us to share as
members of the Catholic educational community, in
your Church's mission to announce the Good News
to the whole world.

We thank you for the gift of Catholic education. May
it continue to be a place where Christ ignites within
us, an abiding confidence, in a future filled with
hope.

We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

O God, our Creator,

You are our hope and light.
We are your people, a people of hope.
Bless us, O Lord, and send your Spirit upon us.

It is through our love and caring, that you give us
hope, and we bring light to each other.

May your love inspire us, and your light sustain us.

May a future full of hope bring us closer to you.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

Amen.