

# How We Live ... Matters

*A communication from the ALCDSB Committee for Social Justice*

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## Mandate of the ALCDSB Committee for Social Justice

The ALCDSB Committee for Social Justice was mandated by the Board of Trustees in the fall of 2002 to assume the following responsibilities:

- promote the integration of the social teachings of the Church into the curriculum and broader life of the schools around a three-fold structure of service, education and action
- support school based initiatives geared to promoting the social teachings of the Church;
- develop and/or promote professional development opportunities for staff around the social teachings of the Church
- promote practices in all undertakings of the Board in a manner consistent with the social teachings of the Church
- seek funding (in addition to Board funding) from outside agencies (e.g. CIDA)
- serve as a clearinghouse for the identification of resources related to the Church's social teachings
- network with other jurisdictions in the area of social justice
- work with the Archdiocese of Kingston to develop a mechanism for cooperation with the Board in the area of social justice
- annually consider with the Archdiocese of Kingston the identification and promotion of social justice themes that would inform social actions projects at the local level

The committee membership is comprised of the following representatives: students, teachers, administrators, trustees, the Justice and Peace Commission and the Office of Youth Ministry of the Archdiocese of Kingston, school councils, chaplaincy leaders, OECTA, CUPE, The Office of Curriculum and Staff Development and the Office of Religious and Family Life Education. This ALCDSB committee is one of the few, if not, the only school-board based social justice committee(s) in North America.

## St. Martha supports One Roof

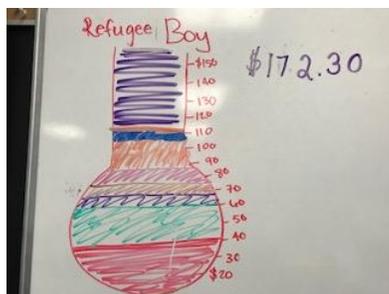
By Gail Ows

St. Martha school community spent the month of December collecting food, toiletries, gift cards, warm socks and clothing and treats to fill backpacks for One Roof. We collected 47 backpacks as a school! They were delivered to One Roof in time to be given to youth at their Christmas luncheon on December 21st.



Our school choir sang carols downtown in December to raise funds for this charity. Some of the proceeds of our Christmas Market also went to fund items for the backpacks!

# Cross-curricular Connections lead to Support for Newcomers

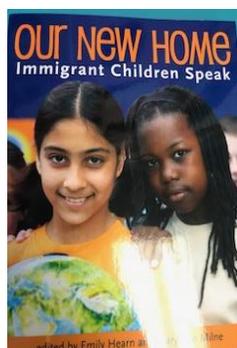


By Jack Raycraft

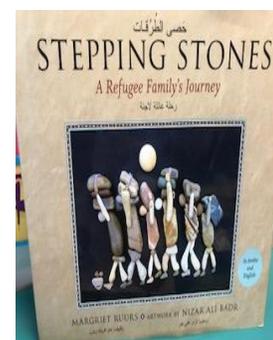
Grade 6



Four of our classes from St. Martha Catholic raised money for the new refugee families coming into Kingston at the end of December. We also collected hats and mitts for them. The money went towards a gift card for each person to buy a coat and snowpants. We sponsored three different children. We wrote letters to them and gave them some tips about life in Canada!



Read alouds with rich texts help to prompt discussions and deeper learning. Students represented their thinking about refugees in a variety of ways.



Pictured below are some examples of plasticine art completed by students in Mrs. Ows' 5/6 class as a part of a student reflection of their learning.



# Advent CHALICE Collection at Holy Cross a Great Success!

By Chris Forster

We have now completed one of our most successful Advent Campaigns ever here at Holy Cross. So far, we have raised over \$2900.00 for CHALICE from our Home Room Collection which ran from Dec. 3 - 19. The teachers report that they have seen a wonderful response from their students to the appeal this Advent for CHALICE. The opportunity to choose which gift to give from the CHALICE Gift Catalogue was very helpful. And, as always, some of the teachers organized some very creative ways to encourage their students to give.

Mr. Coleman raised over \$760.00 by having his home room students sell milk shakes every lunch hour during the Campaign.

Another teacher, Ms. Melo Jordan, used such a 'heartfelt' begging approach every morning with her students that they could not say no, and ended up giving \$129.00 into her collection bucket. Everyone was thrilled to be able to choose which gifts their money will be going to.

We will be sending our list of gift requests to CHALICE once we have finished rolling coins and have banked the money collected. We would encourage other schools who have not yet done so to see if CHALICE would work for them. Just go to their website at [chalice.ca](http://chalice.ca) and give them a call. We at Holy Cross greatly appreciated the opportunity to support CHALICE through our Advent Collection this year.

Photo Credit by Hector Perez



# St. Michael Catholic School's Textile Drive

By Rebecca MacGillivray



The St. Michael Eco-Club is passionate about raising awareness for environmental issues, as well as participating in hands-on activities to help preserve our environment. The St. Michael Textile Drive ran from November 1st - 13th, and is just one of the many eco-initiatives we are organizing, planning and implementing this year. The Textile Drive was facilitated through Ontario EcoSchools and Bag2School, a company dedicated to the reduction of textile waste.

Instead of being thrown into landfills as garbage, textiles are re-used as second-hand clothing both in North America and overseas. Any items that are unsuitable for resale are taken to textile recycling facilities where they are broken down and remade into other materials.

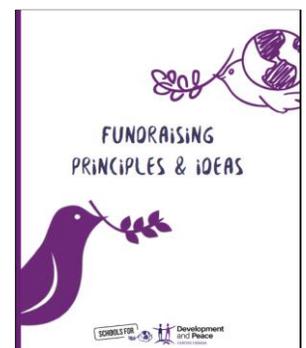
After Bag2School collects the textiles, they weigh the items and pay the school for their contributions. The goal of our drive is to help raise money for a water-filling station on the upper floor of the school.

Before our drive began, students brainstormed the best ways to promote the initiative. Posters, announcements and social media videos were created and used throughout the duration of the drive. The Eco-Club was overwhelmed by the number of bags of unwanted textiles people brought to the school. We are currently waiting for Bag2School to collect our textiles (mid-December), and we are very excited to hear about our results.

## Thinking about Ethical Fundraising

Development and Peace has developed a resource to help facilitate discussions around ethical fundraising in a school setting. The resource calls us to consider how the principles of **Catholic Social Teaching** can guide our fundraising efforts and provides tips on how to fundraise while focusing on community building.

For a copy of this resource please email Sarah Cassidy  
at [cassisar@alcdsb.on.ca](mailto:cassisar@alcdsb.on.ca).



# Poverty Challenge Provides a New Perspective

By Aaron Supryka

On October 25, almost one hundred students from all ALCDSB secondary schools participated in the impactful Poverty Challenge at Loyalist College. Participants included students in the board's Non-profit and Health & Wellness Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) programs.

In the event, students walk in the shoes of real people living in poverty as they navigate the world of social service and government agencies. Assuming the identity of one of nine actual people, students encounter authentic challenges through role plays simulating real-life scenarios involving housing, education, mental health services, employment agencies, shelters, and the legal system. In another eye-opening encounter, students hear from people living in poverty. As a result, "the event challenges the stigma of poverty. It makes poverty very real for students when they hear authentic stories – heart-breaking stories – and see how people need to interact with a system that can't always alleviate immediate concerns" (Phil Carney, SHSM Non-profit lead teacher, St Paul).

Throughout, students are challenged to confront stereotypes and consider the ethical implications of poverty in our communities – the questions of our moral obligations in regards to poverty, the difference between charity and social justice, and how to ethically address the causes of poverty while respecting the dignity of all. In the course of the day, hearts and minds are opened and primed for action.



"The Poverty Challenge was an excellent experience for our students in the SHSM Non-Profit classes. The role playing aspect of the day afforded students an easy shift in thinking from sympathy to empathy. It sparked questions regarding lack of resources and/or agencies in our area along with deeper questions as to why there are 'have and have not's' in our communities...The Poverty Challenge fueled my student's desire to demonstrate their faith through leadership, service and advocacy. They were shocked by the challenges faced by people in this area and have since discussed ways to promote the physical, spiritual, mental and wellbeing of all community members" (Sherry Zborovsky, SHSM Non-profit lead teacher, Regiopolis Notre Dame).

By raising awareness and encouraging engagement, the event advances students' thinking towards their role in working

towards justice.

"The Poverty Challenge was a great experience for the students in SHSM Non Profit classes as it provided real world experiences and required the students to work together to solve the problems given to them. In addition, they had to put themselves in the position of others. It was fascinating to watch how the students challenged their pre-conceived notions of poverty and come up with some real world solutions to poverty close to home based on the information they gathered and the people they met" (Rachel Hughes, Lead Teacher for SHSM Non-profit, St Theresa).

In general, SHSM programs allow students to customize their high school experience to a sector of interest and better prepare for graduation and beyond by bundling courses, related workplace experience, certifications and training, experiential learning, and post-secondary exploration. In the case of Non-profit programs, students learn how they might apply their interests and skills to the myriad of careers in the non-profit sector and how they can make the cause of justice an element of their life's work.

In the challenge Vivian Simard-Vandal, a Grade 11 student from St. Paul, played the role of Tim, a single father. As quoted in The Intelligencer (October 26), "I'm filling out an application to get Ontario Works and it's such a long process," she said while clutching her baby (doll) under her arm. "This is definitely showing me exactly what people are going through - there is so much paper work and it is so frustrating - hopefully someday I will be able to help people like Tim.



# A Warm Response to Winter Chill!

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Kingston Youth Office in partnership with DOORS, the Anglican Diocese of Ontario Refugee Support, came together for a fundraising initiative to support families who have recently moved to the Kingston area. Individuals, families in the Archdiocese and some classes from the ALCDSB donated 18 winter clothing kits comprised of hats, gloves, scarves and warm socks for Kingston newcomers. Some of the kits included boots, snowsuits and coats, while others included gift cards to purchase the warm clothing and footwear needed. Nadia Gundert, the youth ministry coordinator, said: “this initiative was a great way for families and students to give back to others, especially as Catholics entered into the season of Advent. It brought about more awareness about refugee needs and the reality that these newcomers face and what it might be like to transition to a new home. It was a practical way that students and others could help and welcome these new families to our Kingston community.”



## WE Day 2018 : Get Doing!

Abby Ows, Grade 8, St. Martha Catholic School

On November 14, 2018, some members of the St. Martha Social Justice Committee, our youth worker, Ms. Rowe, and Megan, our student youth worker from St. Lawrence travelled to the Canadian Tire Centre in Ottawa to attend WE Day 2018. The theme of this year's WE Day was “Get Doing!” To me, the theme of the day means for everyone to start taking action for things we believe in!

One of the most inspirational speakers there for me was Silken Laumann. She is an Olympic rower who was in a bad accident where another boat smashed into her own. She worked hard to recover in ten weeks and eventually won a bronze medal for Canada in the Olympics. Silken Laumann also talked about her childhood and how she suffered from depression and her mother suffered from alcoholism. It was not a happy childhood for her but she got past it and she made it to the Olympics. She is now a life coach and a motivational speaker.

As an athlete myself, I could really understand how hard Silken Laumann had to work to get where she is now in life. Her speech probably impacted me the most out of the entire day because if she could overcome that much adversity it makes me feel better about all the challenges that I face in my own life. Another part I will never forget is how everyone was supposed to bring nonperishable food to donate. With so many people attending WE Day there were a lot of donations and that made a big difference to so many people. Also, the energy there was so positive!

Everyone at WE Day received these bracelets when we came into the building. At different times, the bracelets would all glow in different colours. You could see thousands of bracelets shining around us! I loved seeing the lights shining at different parts of our day. The lights, to me, represented how many people we were there, being inspired to “Get Doing!” for God and for the world!

Coming back from WE Day, our Social Justice Committee has continued to work on our initiatives. In December we worked with our Eco team to raise to host a Christmas market for our school. We raised money for different charities. Right now we are focusing on “Bell, Let’s Talk Day.” With partners, we have also chosen a social justice topic and we are going to present them to the committee. My group’s topic is women’s rights. Being part of the social justice committee at school has taught everyone involved to go from ME to WE!

# Looking for other resources to use in your class or school?



## Education for Justice

The mission of the Education for Justice Web site is rooted in the biblical call of justice. As disciples, we are called to see, hear, understand, and respond to the message of the gospel and the manifestations of injustice that demand the engagement of our heads, hearts and hands.

The features of the Education for Justice Web site include:

Resource finder, Catholic Social Teaching Resources, Quick Search, Newest Resources, Media, Faith, Culture, Liturgical and Prayer Resources, Member Login, Calendar Connection, Prayers, and Current Events. Education For Justice is a subscription-based website that also offers free resources. Visit <https://educationforjustice.org/> to access these social justice resources.



## Schools for Development and Peace

Development and Peace would like to engage a new generation in the Catholic Social Teachings of the Church by raising the awareness on social injustices occurring in the world and how they can contribute to creating a just world. This site offers information about campaigns, retreats, activities, prayers and curriculum resources from Kindergarten to Grade 12 on Religious Education, Social Studies, Language Arts, and Science. <https://www.devp.org/en/csp>



## Canadian Foodgrains Bank

Canadian Foodgrains Bank partners with 15 Canadian churches and church-based agencies that work together to end global hunger. This site provides resources, activities and lessons plans for children and youth to learn about issues related to world hunger. To access their website and resources visit <https://foodgrainsbank.ca/product-category/educational-activities/?swppg=2>



## WE Schools

The WE Schools program provides educators and students with curriculum, educational resources and a full calendar of action campaign ideas. Through WE Schools, students gain an understanding of the root causes of pressing issues like hunger, poverty and access to education, as they explore how they can make positive impacts. They also plan and carry out at least one local and one global action to improve their communities and the world. <https://www.we.org/we-schools/program/>



## Fair Labor Association

The mission of the Fair Labor Association is to combine the efforts of business, civil society organizations, and colleges and universities to promote and protect workers' rights and to improve working conditions globally through adherence to international standards. The Fair Labor Association believes that all goods should be produced fairly and ethically, and brings together its three key constituencies to find sustainable solutions to systemic labour issues. This website proves helpful in seeking clothing manufacturers that adhere to fair labour practices for the purposes of spirit wear and other school-related apparel. The Fair Labor Association publishes reports that are made available on its website regarding all assessments, complaints, and investigations of its affiliate companies to ensure transparency and accountability. Visit the website at [www.fairlabor.org](http://www.fairlabor.org).

**We want to hear from you!**

**Please contact us to share a social justice trip or initiative on behalf of your school community! We would be happy to include an article and photo in an upcoming edition of the newsletter!**

**The ALCDSB Social Justice Committee is on Twitter!**



Follow the ALCDSB Social Justice Committee on Twitter (@ALCDSBJustice). Please follow us for resources, information and tweet to share the amazing Social Justice Initiatives in your school communities with others.

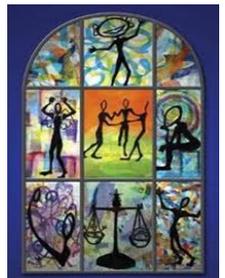
## **Catholic Social Teaching and the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations**

*Adapted from the USCCB and the Institute for Catholic Education*

The Church's social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. There are seven key themes that are at the heart of our Catholic social tradition. One of these themes is: **The Life and Dignity of the Human Person.**

We must recognize we are all brothers and sisters which requires us to respect, value and uphold a common dignity for ourselves and each other. As human beings we are created in the image and likeness of God so therefore we have an inherent worth and distinction.

This social teaching connects to the OCSGE: **A Responsible Citizen who witnesses Catholic social teaching by promoting equality, democracy, and solidarity for a just, peaceful and compassionate society**



## **Renewing the Promise: A Pastoral Letter for Catholic Education**

### **A Community that Encourages Engagement and Instils Hope**

“The Christ-centered mission of each school, by its very nature, contains a call to service in the greater community. Catholic schools form disciples with a social conscious who put their faith into action. Students and staff help to promote engagement with the local and global community through their many acts of charity and by their witness to social justice and environmental stewardship. Pope Francis also reminds us that to be formed in the faith is not simply to be able to profess it on our lips, we must also live it with love; faith works through love.” Pg. 10 & 11



**Renewing The Promise**  
**A Pastoral Letter**  
**for Catholic Education**