

CATHOLIC EDUCATION: PILGRIMS OF HOPE

L'éducation catholique: Pèlerins de l'espérance

January 2025 Bulletin

PILGRIMS OF HOPE ~ OUR CATHOLIC IDENTITY

This month's Pilgrims of Hope bulletin will celebrate the Jubilee year we have embarked on together as well as highlight the foundational components of our Catholic identity. This month will focus on the Beatitudes and in particular, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.." as we celebrate the World Day of Peace on January 1.

Celebrating the Jubilee Year 2025

The Jubilee Year is upon us!

Prior to the first Mass of Christmas on December 24, his Holiness Pope Francis in Saint Peter's Basilica, Rome, opened the Holy Door to commence the Jubilee Year 2025. This marked the beginning of a special time of grace and celebration in the Catholic Church. The Jubilee Year will continue until January 6, 2026, the Solemnity of the Epiphany, with the closing of the Holy Door. The opening of the Holy Door on Christmas Eve symbolizes the spiritual passage into this year of grace, inviting the faithful to receive God's mercy and embrace the message of Christ's love and salvation. Pope Francis opened the door as an invitation to all men and women to open the doors of their hearts to Christ.

The Jubilee Year is a time of spiritual renewal, reconciliation, and pilgrimage, where the faithful are encouraged to grow closer to God through repentance, prayer, acts of mercy, and charity.

For everyone, may the Jubilee be a moment of genuine, personal encounter with the Lord Jesus, the 'door' (cf. Jn 10:7.9) of our salvation, whom the Church is charged to proclaim always, everywhere and to all as 'our hope' (1 Tim 1:1)
(Spes non confundit - Bull of Indiction)

May this Holy Year provide each one of us with a grace-filled opportunity to nurture the seeds of faith within and to immerse ourselves as Pilgrims of Hope as we journey together in prayer, witness and service drawing on the example of our Lord, Jesus Christ.



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The Jubilee of Hope

The celebration of a Holy Year every 25 years is an acknowledgment that:

“the Christian life is a journey calling for moments of greater intensity to encourage and sustain hope as the constant companion that guides our steps toward the goal of our encounter with the Lord Jesus,”

Pope Francis wrote when announcing the jubilee.

Everyone knows what it is to hope. In *Spes Non Confundit*, or *Hope Does Not Disappoint*, Pope Francis writes,

“In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring.

Even so, uncertainty about the future may at times give rise to conflicting feelings, ranging from confident trust to apprehensiveness, from serenity to anxiety, from firm conviction to hesitation and doubt.”

“Often we come across people who are discouraged, pessimistic and cynical about the future, as if nothing could possibly bring them happiness. For all of us, may the Jubilee be an opportunity to be renewed in hope. God’s word helps us find reasons for that hope.”



Jubilee Prayer

Father in heaven, may the faith you have given us in your Son, Jesus Christ, enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel. May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth, when, with the powers of evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally. May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope, a yearning for the treasures of heaven. May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth.

To you our God, eternally blessed, be glory and praise for ever. Amen.



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Our Catholic Identity ~ How are we called to live out our faith?



As we journey together, we are pilgrims of hope, pressing forward towards a better future. In this Jubilee Year, we can commit to bring about hope by embarking on a shared journey of faith. Together, we can celebrate our Catholic identity, deeply rooted in Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Catholic Church and foster a renewed sense of hope in those around us.

Scripture, the Beatitudes, the Ten Commandments, Catholic Social Teaching (CST) and the Sacraments, to name a few, are foundational elements that shape our Catholic identity. They each provide insight into how Catholics are called to live out their faith in both personal and social contexts. Together, these elements define the moral, spiritual, and social dimensions of the Catholic life.



Our Catholic schools exist to inform, form and transform students according to the message of Jesus as it comes to us through scripture, the living tradition and teachings of the Catholic Church, and the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (OCSGE). Inspired by these foundational elements of our Catholic identity, students will live out their faith, spreading the joy of the Gospel in their homes, parishes and wider community.

Scripture, the Ten Commandments, Catholic Social Teaching, and the Beatitudes form the foundation of Catholic identity by providing moral guidance, a call to justice, and a vision of holiness rooted in the values of the Gospel. Through the Sacraments, such as the grace of Baptism, and the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation, Catholics are inspired and challenged to live lives of integrity, to serve others selflessly, to work for justice and peace, and to embrace a personal relationship with God that transforms their relationships with others. These elements guide Catholics in their journey toward holiness and in their mission to contribute to the common good.



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Our Catholic Identity ~ The Beatitudes

This month, we will focus on the Beatitudes which are a series of teachings given by Jesus, primarily recorded in the Gospel of Matthew (Matthew 5:3–12) and in a slightly shorter version in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 6:20–23). They are part of what is known as the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew and the Sermon on the Plain in Luke. The Beatitudes describe the characteristics of those who are blessed by God and offer spiritual promises.

The Beatitudes

Here are the Beatitudes from the Gospel of Matthew (5:3–12):

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
(Blessed are those who are humble and know they need God. They are valued and will be close to God forever.)

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
(Those who grieve or suffer will be comforted by God.)

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
(Meekness refers to gentleness, humility, and patience, not weakness. God loves those who are kind and gentle.)

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
(Blessed are those who want to do the right thing and care about justice. God will help you be strong and do what's right.)

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.
(Those who show compassion and forgiveness toward others will receive God's kindness and mercy in return.)

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
(When your heart is pure and you do good things, you will be close to God and experience His presence.)

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
(Those who get along with others, foster peace, and promote harmony are recognized as God's true children.)

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
(Those who are persecuted for standing up for what is right will be rewarded with the kingdom of heaven. God will reward you with His love and happiness forever.)

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.



Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.



There is a ninth beatitude in Matthew 5:11–12, often seen as an extension of the eighth:
Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you, and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.



CATHOLIC EDUCATION: PILGRIMS OF HOPE



Blessed are the Peacemakers...

The Beatitudes encourage believers to live lives of humility, mercy, and justice. They are often viewed as a description of the ideal Christian life.

The Beatitudes teach us that God loves people who are humble, kind, forgiving, and who make peace. Even if life gets hard, God promises to be with us and bless us when we follow His ways. These are the attitudes and actions that help us grow closer to God and live a happy, peaceful life with others!

Let's take a closer look at seventh Beatitude, "*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.*"

Reflection Questions

What does it mean to be a peacemaker?

How can you be a peacemaker in your daily lives?

How can you foster peace at home, school and in the wider community?

Why do you think Jesus calls peacemakers "children of God"?



School & Classroom Connection

Role-Play Scenarios: Divide the students into small groups and give them one of the following scenarios to role-play or a real-life conflict scenario to role-play.

- Two friends are arguing over a toy or a game.
- A disagreement between two people occurs over a project.
- Someone in class feels left out in a group activity.
- Someone is being treated unfairly outside at recess.

Encourage students to use peacemaking strategies (e.g., empathy, active listening, apologizing). After each group performs their role-play, discuss how the conflict was resolved and how they were a peacemaker.

Peace Prayers: Write a prayer for peace together promoting our call to be peacemakers in our daily lives.

Design a Peace Poster: Invite students to create a poster illustrating what it means to be a peacemaker. The poster can include images or symbols of peace, inspirational or scripture quotes about peace and kindness.



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World Day of Peace ~ January 1, 2025

On December 12, 2024, the Holy See published the Holy Father's Message for the 58th World Day of Peace, which will be celebrated on January 1, 2025, the liturgical Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God, who is likewise the Queen of Peace. The theme chosen by Pope Francis is ***"Forgive us our trespasses: grant us your peace"***.

This theme aligns with the spirit of the Jubilee Year, focusing on hope, forgiveness, and bringing people together. Inspired by *Laudato Si'* and *Fratelli Tutti*, the message highlights the need for change to build lasting peace in our lives individually, in communities, and worldwide.

In the spirit of hope, we are called to extend well wishes of peace to one another.

"True peace," the Pope says, "is granted by God to hearts that are disarmed of selfishness, hostility, and anxiety for the future, replacing them with generosity, forgiveness, and hope for a better world: May we seek the true peace that is granted to God by hearts disarmed."



Peacemakers

WE ARE CALLED TO BE PEACEMAKERS

Simple acts of kindness and solidarity can pave the way for this new world, fostering a deeper sense of fraternity and shared humanity.

"May 2025 be a year in which peace flourishes! A true and lasting peace that goes beyond quibbling over the details of agreements and human compromises. May we seek the true peace that is granted by God to hearts disarmed: hearts not set on calculating what is mine and what is yours; hearts that turn selfishness into readiness to reach out to others; hearts that see themselves as indebted to God and thus prepared to forgive the debts that oppress others; hearts that replace anxiety about the future with the hope that every individual can be a resource for the building of a better world."

(Message for the World Day of Peace 2025, Pope Francis)

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Reflection Questions

How will you bring peace to those around you?

How will you turn your heart away from selfishness and towards a readiness to reach out to others?

#BeKind

Pope Francis reminds us that peace can indeed begin with *“a smile, a small gesture of friendship, a kind look, a ready ear, a good deed.”*

With such gestures, we progress towards the goal of peace.

“We will arrive all the more quickly if, in the course of journeying alongside our brothers and sisters, we discover that we have changed from the time we first set out.”



Peace Prayer

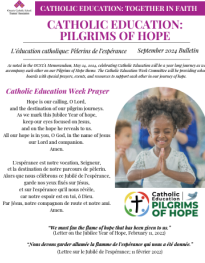
Pope Francis offers the following prayer for peace:

Forgive us our trespasses, Lord,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
In this cycle of forgiveness, grant us your peace,
the peace that you alone can give
to those who let themselves be disarmed in heart,
to those who choose in hope to forgive the debts of their brothers and sisters,
to those who are unafraid to confess their debt to you,
and to those who do not close their ears to the cry of the poor.
Amen.

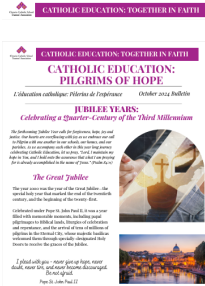
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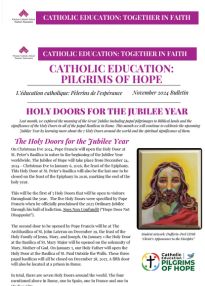
OCSTA Catholic Education Week Resources Catholic Education Pilgrims of Hope Monthly Bulletins



September Bulletin: Looking for ways to promote how we can be Pilgrims of Hope in our schools, homes, parishes and communities? Check out this bulletin!



October Bulletin: This month's bulletin highlights the significance of the Jubilee Year and promotes ways you can celebrate the Jubilee Year of Hope.



November Bulletin: This month's bulletin highlights the 7 Holy Doors around the world and their spiritual significance. This bulletin also provides suggestions on how you can promote the Holy Doors in your schools.



December Bulletin: This month's bulletin celebrates our journey through Advent as Pilgrims of Hope. This bulletin also explores ways we can be Advent Pilgrims of Hope by Honouring Human Dignity, by Caring For Creation, by Responding to the Poverties of our World, by Serving in Solidarity and by Living as Peacemakers.

Our Catholic Identity: Beatitudes Poster

CATHOLIC IDENTITY SERIES

THE BEATITUDES

The beatitudes are a collection of teachings given by Jesus primarily found in the Gospel of Matthew (5:3-10). They describe the qualities of those who are blessed by God and emphasize values such as humility, mercy, purity and generosity.

"When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he began to teach them, saying:

<p>BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.</p>	<p>BLESSED ARE THE MEEK, for they will inherit the earth.</p>	<p>BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO HUNGER AND THIRST FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS, for they will be filled.</p>
<p>BLESSED ARE THEY WHO MOURN, for they will be comforted.</p>	<p>BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART, for they will see God.</p>	<p>BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS, for they will be called the children of God.</p>
<p>BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO ARE PERSECUTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS' SAKE, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.</p>	<p>BLESSED ARE YOU WHEN PEOPLE REVILE YOU AND PERSECUTE YOU AND UTTER all kinds of evil falsely on my account,</p>	<p>REJOICE AND BE GLAD, FOR YOUR REWARD IS GREAT IN HEAVEN, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.</p>

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Jubilee Year 2025 Resources

Don't forget to visit the OCSTA Catholic Education Week site for more resources.

NEW

GOODNEWSFORALL.CA RESOURCES: JANUARY LITURGY OF THE WORD



Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops Webinar Series:
The CCCB Office for Evangelization and Catechesis hosted the webinar series titled, “The Four Constitutions of Vatican II,” inviting the faithful to reflect on the meaning of these documents for the life of the Church today.

CCCB Adult Faith Resources on the Jubilee Year 2025

CCCB Catechetical Activities for Children and Youth

Here you will find age appropriate catechetical resources for children and youth that provide opportunities for reflection on the themes outlined in the Papal Bull of Indiction *Spes Non Confundit*, issued 9 May 2024.



The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network
**The Pope Video: December -
For Pilgrims of Hope**



**MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE
FRANCIS FOR THE 58th WORLD DAY OF
PEACE 1st JANUARY 2025**

Stay
tuned!

NEXT MONTH'S FEATURE

**Pilgrims of Hope ~ Our Catholic Identity:
Catholic Social Teaching**

Interested in sharing what your school community is doing to promote the Jubilee Year ~ Pilgrims of Hope?
Email: julie.webster@dpocdsb.org

Share

Jubilee Year Calendar of Major Events

JUBILEE 2025
CALENDAR OF MAJOR EVENTS

DECEMBER 2024	MAY 2025	JULY 2025
24 December Opening of the Holy Door of Saint Peter's Basilica	1-4 May Jubilee of Workers	28 July - 3 August Jubilee of Youth
24-28 January Jubilee of the World of Communications	4-5 May Jubilee of Entrepreneurs	15 September Jubilee of Consolation
8-9 February Jubilee of Armed Forces, Police and Security Personnel	10-11 May Jubilee of Marching Bands	20 September Jubilee of Justice
15-18 February Jubilee of Artists	12-14 May Jubilee of the Eastern Churches	26-28 September Jubilee of Catechists
21-23 February Jubilee of Deacons	16-18 May Jubilee of confraternities	30 October - 2 November Jubilee of the World of Education
8-9 March Jubilee of the World of Volunteering	30 May - 1 June Jubilee of Families, Children, Grandparents and the Elderly	4-5 October Jubilee of the Missions
28 March 24 Hours for the Lord	7-8 June Jubilee of Ecclesial Movements, Associations and New Communities	8-9 October Jubilee of Integrated Life
28-30 March Jubilee of the Missionaries of Mercy	9 June Jubilee of the Holy See	11-12 October Jubilee of Marian Spirituality
5-9 April Jubilee of the Sick and Health Care Workers	14-15 June Jubilee of Sport	31 October - 2 November Jubilee of the World of Education
25-27 April Jubilee of Teenagers	20-22 June Jubilee of Governments	18 November Jubilee of the Poor
28-29 April Jubilee of People with Disabilities	23-24 June Jubilee of Seminarians	22-23 November Jubilee of Choirs
	25 June Jubilee of Bishops	14 December Jubilee of Prisoners
	25-27 June Jubilee of Priests	

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