

WE ARE CALLED



Faith
Truth
Compassion
Service
Family
Forgiveness
Justice
Hope
Love



SIMCOE MUSKOKA CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Celebrating Our Catholic Values

We are pleased to introduce our Catholic values – faith, love, family, compassion, service, truth, justice, forgiveness and hope. Together with our vision and mission statements, our values help form our collective identity. These values, along with the *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations*, form a common reference point for all aspects of life in our Catholic schools, both curricular and non-curricular. They are the framework for the lifelong learning and spiritual journeys of the children we serve.

Our Vision

We are a faith-filled Catholic learning community dedicated to excellence.

Our Mission

The Catholic schools of Simcoe County and the District of Muskoka, rooted in a rich tradition of faith, family and community values, are committed to education as lifelong growth. Our response to personal and societal challenges has helped to form a vibrant school system which is resolute in its commitment to academic excellence nurtured within a faith-filled Catholic environment. As communities of faith, Catholic schools are called to be visible signs of Christ in the modern world.

The Gospel calls our Catholic school system to service, preserving the richness of our heritage while meeting the challenges of an ever-changing society by:

- Fostering the development of self-motivated, unselfish, responsible students
- Inviting staff, parents and clergy to active participation in our school community
- Accepting the responsibility of participation
- Living joyous faith-filled lives which call others to witness to the faith
- Communicating openly
- Respecting and enhancing individual rights and dignity



Celebrating Our Catholic Values

Catholic education embraces faith and learning. The distinct nature of Catholic education is rooted in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Everything we do in our Catholic school communities is shaped by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6).

Our core Catholic values are Christ-centred and Church-centred. They are inspired by:

- Love of the Creator of all things
- Our faith in Jesus Christ
- Hope we receive from the Holy Spirit

Our Catholic values, which are not exhaustive, include:

- Faith
- Love
- Family
- Compassion
- Hope
- Service
- Truth
- Justice
- Forgiveness

Our Catholic values will:

- Represent and affirm who we are
- Be visible in the work we do
- Be reflected in our relationships with one another

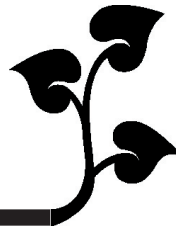
We can express our Catholic values in a number of ways. Each member of our faith-filled school communities will be called to live out our mission, vision and values. It is the way in which these values are lived and woven throughout the fabric of our Catholic school communities that help us express our unique identity.



Love

“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”
(John 13:34-35)

As members of a Catholic faith community, we recognize God’s unconditional love to be our source of love. In Jesus’ vision of the reign of God he saw divine love embracing all humanity and honouring the basic equality of each person – this is inclusive love. Christ’s sacrifice – His passion, death and resurrection – inspire us to self-sacrifice in our acts of love for others. Faith and hope promise us a better future and encourage us to do acts of love for others.

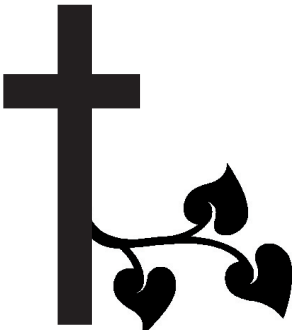


Faith

“Truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, “Move from here to there,” and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.”

(Matthew 17:20)

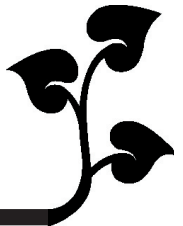
Faith means believing in God and being faithful to God. Faith looks to the risen Christ in Jesus, who is the “way, truth and life” for every generation of believers. As a Catholic faith community, we respond with courage and hope during the many times when our faith is challenged. Through faith, we believe in God and all that God has said and revealed to us. Through the gift of faith, we entrust ourselves completely to God. In doing so, we come to know God as the source of all life. We care for and protect this gift by participating in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and by living a life of prayer.



Service

“As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”
(Joshua 24: 15)

We are called by God to serve His word and to serve others. As part of a faith community, we are called to carry on the work of Jesus' service to humanity and model ourselves after Christ as servant/leaders. We are asked to lead by action and by example. We are challenged to give of ourselves by offering service to others so that others may live more fully. We learn that sharing, especially with those who are poor or most in need, helps us to celebrate God's life in us.

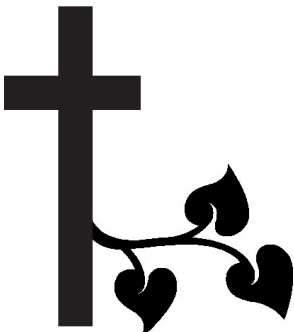


Hope

“God has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ...and into an inheritance that is imperishable.”

(1 Peter 1:3)

Hope is our trust that God offers the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness. Hope is the confidence that God will always be with us, make us happy now and forever, and help us to live so that we will be with Him forever. Hope keeps us from becoming discouraged and sustains us during difficult times. God’s almighty power, infinite goodness and fidelity to His promises are the pillars of our hope.



Family

“Whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.”
(Galatians 6:10)

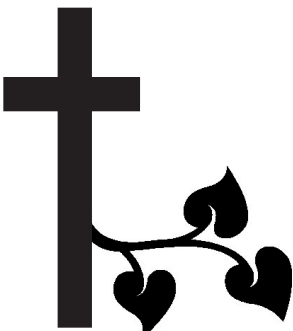
Catholics express their personal relationship with God within the context of the faith community. Family is a community of faith, hope and love and it is of singular importance in the Church. Families are central to our school communities. Through our home, parish, and school relationship, we live as part of a sacramental community with the Eucharist at its heart. We relate to family members in a loving, compassionate and respectful manner and value the importance of family in society.



Compassion

“As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves in compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.”
(Colossians 3:12)

Compassion is the ability to be conscious of the suffering of others, to be moved by their distress, and to desire to alleviate their suffering. Compassion refers to the most active and engaged form of empathy directed to those in great need or suffering. Becoming a person of compassion is a lifelong process that involves these dimensions: imitating the example of Jesus; turning our own suffering into opportunities for becoming more sensitive to the pain of others; actively seeking out opportunities to respond to the suffering of others.



Truth

“Then Jesus said, ‘If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.’”

(John 8: 31-32)



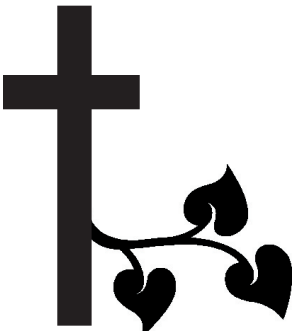
In Jesus Christ, the whole of God’s truth has been shown – His word is the truth. To His followers, Jesus teaches the unconditional love of the truth. Jesus lived the truth of love every day of His life. To follow Jesus as His disciples is to live in the spirit of truth. We are called to continually seek and uphold the truth.



Justice

*“And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice,
and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”
(Micah 6: 8)*

There is a strong tradition of justice in the Catholic faith and a rich history of Catholic social teaching. God “*is a God of justice*” (Isaiah 30:18). We embrace a commitment to work with all people and to recognize the dignity and sacredness of every person in order to build a more humane world and respect all of God’s creation. This commitment calls us to self-sacrifice so that everyone can share equally in the common good.



Forgiveness

“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ has forgiven you.”
(Ephesians 4:32)

Forgiveness stresses God’s love, His great mercy and willingness to forgive human misdirection and sin. It is a renewal of the relationship of love with God. Forgiveness is one of the inherent values in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper. As Jesus taught us in The Lord’s Prayer, we are called to forgive others as He forgives us. The sacrament of reconciliation, a sacrament of forgiveness, is a particular sign of Christ’s love for us.



Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations

Catholic education views human life as an integration of body, mind, and spirit. Rooted in this vision, Catholic education fosters the search for knowledge as a lifelong spiritual and academic quest. The expectations of Catholic graduates, therefore, are described not only in terms of knowledge and skills, but in terms of values, attitudes and actions.

We expect our graduates to be...

A discerning believer

An effective communicator

A reflective, creative and holistic thinker

A self-directed, responsible, lifelong learner

A collaborative contributor

A caring family member

A responsible citizen

(Institute for Catholic Education, 2003)

