

Good evening Trustees, students, parents, and fellow delegates. My name is Joanna Alphonso and I just completed my third year of neuroscience at the University of Toronto. I am here today to speak to you this evening about Trustee Crawford's Motion regarding the Celebration of the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus this June.

June is the month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus as celebrated in Church Tradition. In the image of the Sacred Heart, we see Jesus pointing at His Sacred Heart. In our culture, the heart is the symbol of love. On top of the heart we see the cross, and surrounding the heart we see the crown of thorns. This is to remind us of the highest form of love that He has for us – sacrificial love. Jesus suffered and died for us during His passion and death. His heart is also pierced with blood flowing out of it, just as it happened after His death. This is to represent His Divine Mercy. Above the heart is a fire – this is to show us that Jesus' heart is on fire with love for us. Just as fire is destructive, reckless, and without bounds, Jesus' love destroys all sin, loves us all recklessly and without bounds. This Most Sacred Heart of His encompasses perfect and True love – a love that is self-giving, sacrificial, and without bounds.

It is essential that the TCDSB school communities and families enthrone the Sacred Heart of Jesus in their schools and homes. During this time of lockdown, many families have been suffering and struggling financially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Jesus makes 12 promises to those who are devoted to His Sacred Heart, some of which I will highlight. "I will give them all the graces necessary in their state of life; I will give peace in their families and will unite families that are divided; I will console them in all their troubles; I will bless those places wherein an image of my Sacred Heart shall be exposed and honored; I promise you excessive mercy to those who receive communion on the First Friday in nine consecutive months, and they will not die in my disgrace, nor without receiving their Sacraments." Families will surely find refuge in the Sacred Heart of Jesus during this difficult time.

I testify to the fulfillment of these and the rest of the promises in the life of my grandmother. The image of Jesus' Sacred Heart you see behind me was given to her and my grandfather as a gift for their marriage when she lived in India and she brought it with her when she immigrated to Toronto in 2006. They kept Jesus at the center of their marriage. Her *faithful* devotion to Jesus' Sacred Heart during her lifetime was rewarded when she was dying due to cancer last year. She was blessed

with the sacrament of Holy Communion and an apostolic pardon prior to her death, as Jesus promised to His devotees.

In conclusion, I strongly encourage the TCDSB to vote “yes” for celebration of and devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus for the month of June this year and every year hereafter, and to enthrone in every school and home and image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus year-round.