



## Director's Monthly Report

December 2021

In this season of Advent, we are preparing for the celebration of the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day. These preparations are revealed in our schools throughout the system as we acknowledge the excitement of Christmas and focus on Christ's birth as the reason for the season. I have been blessed by my visits to schools to witness this focus on faith, and to share in the celebration of the Eucharist and liturgies in our schools, parishes, and here at the Catholic Education Centre.

This time of year brings tremendous excitement and also marks a milestone in the school year. While we acknowledge that this year has been yet another like no other, we do so with profound appreciation for the ways in which all staff, students, parents and caregivers have come together in community to overcome challenges and strengthen the bonds that make each individual school so unique. We are blessed by our staff who continue to go above and beyond in support of students and families and are so appreciative of the ways in which parents and caregivers provide such unwavering support.

I have appreciated the invitations to connect in community over the past few weeks and feel the spirit of welcome and invitation from each school throughout the system. It is my sincere hope that the weeks leading up to Christmas and beyond are filled with joyful hope and an optimism for the year ahead. We continue to focus on the health and safety of everyone within our TCDSB community, so that "normal" can return as soon as possible. Thank you for your on-going support of our shared commitment to facing the challenges this pandemic continues to present with conviction and faith.

### Highlights from the past few weeks and the rest of December include:

- Celebrating **Charity as the Virtue of the Month** and recognizing important observances such as: International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, International Day of Persons with Disabilities, International Volunteer Day, The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Human Rights Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas, Kwanzaa, New Year's Eve
- Visiting **Francis Libermann and Marshall McLuhan Catholic Secondary Schools**
- Participating and delivering opening remarks at the **OPACE Toronto Commissioning Ceremony** – Commissioning the OAPCE Liaison Representatives for the 2021-22 school year
- Delivering remarks and welcome to Dr. Max Eisen at the **Stories of Resilience – The Road to Hope Live event** with grades 7 to 12 teachers and students where stories of various survivors through dramatic expression and reflection that speak to the theme of moving crimes against humanity, to inspire hope

- Connecting with our **African Canadian Advisory Committee** in support of our system strategies to dismantle anti-Black racism
- Meeting with **His Eminence Cardinal Collins and continuing our dialogue** on matters of shared interest and partnership between home, school, and parishes throughout Toronto, and shared faith leadership.
- Attending a **Community Liturgy and Donation Drive** at St. Nicholas of Bari Parish with Vice Chair Frank D'Amico, the Stella Maris Catholic Elementary School community, and the wonderful principals of Ward 6
- Visiting **Loretto Abbey Catholic Secondary School** to participate in the Student Fundraiser in Support of the Tanzania Water Project: Winter Wonderland Christmas Market
- Joining our **Nurturing our Catholic Community Team** and participating in the Advent Mass at the CEC
- Connecting with Trustees and Senior Staff at the December **Multi Year Strategy Plan (MYSP) Session**
- Participating in the **Team Canada at the 2021 Tokyo Paralympic Games Virtual Visit** with the **Holy Trinity Catholic Elementary** school community
- Participating in monthly **Ripple Effect Circle** Meetings - Ripple Effect Circle is an action-oriented alliance of individuals of influence across multiple sectors (private, public, non-profit) in Canada created to take action and work towards combatting systemic racism in Black communities
- Connecting with our TCDSB Community through our monthly **"Lunch with the Director"** series live streamed on Facebook and YouTube where we discussed questions from the TCDSB community related to Health and Safety in the pandemic with Marta Radic from our Health and Safety Department
- On-going engagement with **Toronto Public Health** with vaccination and testing strategies in Toronto, and public health recommendations from TPH that impact and influence TCDSB staff and students, including support for the impending rollout of a vaccination strategy for children aged 5-11
- Continuing **important connections throughout the pandemic with the Deputy Minister of Education, Toronto Public Health, and the Ministry of Health** in support of provincial and local initiatives to keep students, staff, and families safe and healthy during this current COVID-19 pandemic
- Participating on and contributing to **provincial leadership conversations** with **Directors of Education and Health Officials** from across the province in support of TCDSB staff, students, and families, and to influence public policy decisions in support of education and health care