

# CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF SASKATCHEWAN



Most Rev. Donald Bolen  
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Most Rev. Bryan Bayda, CSsR  
Eparchy of Saskatoon



Most Rev. Murray Chatlain  
Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas



Most Rev. Mark Hagemoen  
Diocese of Saskatoon



Most Rev. Albert Thévenot  
Diocese of Prince Albert

## Catholic Education Week May 9-16, 2021

In joy and thanksgiving, we, the Catholic Bishops of Saskatchewan, invite you to join us in recognizing the gift and the impact of Catholic education as we mark World Catholic Education Day on May 13, 2021, and celebrate Catholic Education Week in our province from May 9 to May 16.

This year's theme – “Nurturing Hope!” – comes to us as we continue to deal with extraordinary circumstances: educators, students and their families recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has obliged our school systems to operate in very different ways as we have had to take steps to mitigate the effects of the virus, and this has changed the normal learning and community environment for our children, their families, and our educators.

Yet we hear that despite these challenges, there have been unexpected insights, even blessings through this crisis. Having to find creative ways to educate our children has been the occasion to strengthen the awareness that our homes are an important Catholic education environment. We have also faced the need to focus and expand the teaching of our Catholic faith to address other subjects and new issues as we face the crisis together, and respond as people of faith and hope, resisting any temptation to respond in fear or despair.

Recently we also gratefully received news that the decision of the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal in the “Theodore case” will stand, thus ending the question of government funding support for non-Catholics who seek education through our Catholic system. We join with all of you in expressing our gratitude to God for this development, and offer special thanks for many involved in leadership who worked very hard over the last several years to navigate this issue. We join with the leadership of our Catholic schools across Saskatchewan in expressing to our public school counterparts our commitment to work in solidarity in providing good quality education to the young people of our province, and be in service and support of families.

As we celebrate this year's theme of “**Nurturing Hope!**” we recall that as people of faith, the virtue of *hope* is not a passive issue, nor is it merely about ‘positive thinking.’ To *nurture hope* is to encourage and foster a virtue that calls forth a vision and response – by Catholic educators, by members of the Church, by families of the larger community – that trusts in the Lord Jesus Christ. The journey of Jesus Christ– through His life and ministry of

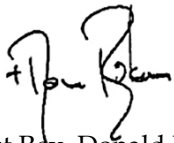
teaching and service, through His passion and death on the cross, and through His resurrection to *new life* which overcomes any obstacle between God and His people – provides the pattern for *hope* for Catholic education and formation.

In this sense, Catholic education seeks *excellence*: an excellence which involves developing and bringing to bear all young peoples’ gifts and abilities to be excellent disciples of the Lord as they humbly serve God’s plan to make the world a better place and seek our ultimate destiny.

We join together in giving thanks to God for the gift of Catholic education and its unique contribution in our province and our communities. We pray in thanksgiving for the continuing existence and protection of publicly-funded Catholic education in Saskatchewan, and for hope and perseverance for educators, students and families who are navigating the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

May Catholic education continue to model Christ: “... *the Way, the Truth and the Life...*,” (John 14:6) and develop the *head* and the *heart* so that we may serve our brothers and sisters seeking, “... *a new heaven and a new earth.*” (Rev. 21:1)

Sincerely Yours in Christ,



Most Rev. Donald Bolen  
Archbishop of Regina



Most Rev. Bryan Bayda  
Ukrainian Eparchial Bishop of Saskatoon



Most Rev. Murray Chatlain  
Archbishop of Keewatin-Le Pas



Most Rev. Mark Hagemoen  
Bishop of Saskatoon



Most Rev. Albert Thevenot  
Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Prince Albert