

PASTORAL PLAN
FOR
ASSUMPTION COLLEGE SCHOOL
2017-2018

QUAE SURSUM SUNT QUAERITE
“SEEK THAT WHICH COMES FROM ABOVE”

ADMINISTRATION
Principal: Allison Hayes
Vice-Principal: Patrick Brophy
Vice-Principal: Tara Williams
Chaplaincy Leader: Debra Sheldrake
Parish Advisor: Msgr. Earl Talbot, St. Basil Parish

BHNCDSB Theme: Act Justly, Love Tenderly, Walk Humbly With Our God

PASTORAL PLAN 2017-18

School Board Theme 2015-2018: *“Act Justly, Love Tenderly, Walk Humbly With Our God.” (Micah 6:8)*

School Mission Statement: *"Assumption College School is our catholic learning community where we strive for excellence and we work to Become Respectful, Responsible Individuals Who are ready to serve our World In the Spirit of Christ"*

Vision of the Pastoral Plan:

The school's annual Pastoral Plan is developed to ensure that the whole school community works with an eye toward a common goal. Inspired by the challenge of Micah 6:8, our school's goal is to continue to seek out ways in which God communicates to us in our modern world and calls us to respond. The community of Assumption will strive to live the Gospel values of faith, love, peace, and service as taught by Jesus and His Church. In doing so, a caring inclusive environment will be created where cultural differences are celebrated and individual gifts are valued. The spiritual dimension of the person is an essential factor in education. Together excellence in Catholic Education will be promoted.

“Walk Humbly” And Reflect God’s Love and Care For Us

Focus: The goal for our staff and students is to deepen our love for God, self, and others, building capacity among all our community to live by the faith we profess, sharing the love of Christ and the Gospel with each other.

Strategies:

A school staff Faith Ambassador Team will be created who will meet at least twice each semester to discern ways the staff can work together with the chaplaincy leader to actively engage in the faith life and faith activities in the school (pastoral plan) taking active responsible participation in their own faith development, integrating all staff of the school community into the life and mission of the Catholic Church.

The student chaplaincy team will continue to be promoted, called the “180 Team”, turning to Christ and the Gospel to guide our thoughts and actions and leading others to Christ by being ambassadors of His love. These students play a prominent role in the faith formation and community-building initiatives in the ACS community for staff and students and in social justice initiatives. These 180 Team students meet weekly and receive ongoing support and Catholic Christian leadership formation under the mentorship and guidance of the chaplaincy leader through various activities such as prayer and retreats. The chaplaincy leader will visit the grade 9 homerooms to share the vision of the pastoral plan and chaplaincy department initiatives and invite students to be involved. The 2017 Catholic Student Leadership Award recipients attending grade 9 at Assumption will be invited to be involved.

A guest speaker on the theme of Healthy Relationships will give a presentation to all grade 10 students who will speak about self-love and healthy friendships and relationships grounded on the Gospel values, empowering students to discern their personal relationships and to make good choices that respect and love self, other, and God.

At the new grade 12 retreats, students will have the opportunity to get in touch with the flow of their life by reflecting on their past and present and move to focus on their futures pondering their relationship with others, self, and God. Reflection is brought to bear on choosing options that will empower them to be pro-active on their life journey going forward with a personal vision and mission based on the Gospel values and sharing the love of Christ throughout the world. Our grade 12 retreat program will be consistent with the life and mission of the Catholic Church

Journeying with our Catholic faith: Our community will celebrate Masses as a large school community under the shepherding of Msgr. Earl Talbot. Eucharistic celebrations will involve students and staff and provide meaning to our liturgical year. Our experience of liturgy will be enhanced through music, video presentations, liturgical dance, and drama, where appropriate. Chapel experiences such as forms of Christian meditation and contemplative prayer, and Reconciliation preparation services will deepen students' personal relationship with God. Teaching Masses for grade 9 students will also be offered each semester to complement the learning and faith development in the classroom. The students will glean a deeper understanding and appreciation of Mass and the Eucharist and will build relationship with our local priests. Pastoral care and spiritual direction are available to students and staff through the chaplaincy leader, seeking to discern how God is present in every aspect of your life.

“Walking Together as a School Community”

Focus: To deepen our sense of belonging and caring for all in our ACS school community.

We unite ourselves in prayer with the universal Church by praying for the intercession of Mary and all the Saints, and for our own personal intentions. All students and staff are invited to participate in and lead the morning prayer.

The grade 9 retreats will focus on the school theme, Friendship and Discovering Self: Making the most of your high school years. Students identify and affirm God's gifts to us as individuals; reflecting on God's unconditional love for us; getting to know each other, building community and decision-making. Students will discern how we all benefit by sharing our gifts and talents with our ACS school community, creating a safe, caring, inclusive Catholic school community. Our grade 9 retreat program will be consistent with the life and mission of the Catholic Church

We will have an Acts of Kindness day to kick off Catholic Education Week in May and the feast month of the patron saint of our school, Mary the mother of Jesus. This event will be lead by the 180 Team encouraging students and staff to celebrate each other and recognize the many blessings in our lives and to in turn be a blessing to others.

We will have a cultural dress day on which students must wear at least one piece of clothing that displays their cultural background. This is an opportunity for us to reflect to each other God's love for the diverse human family he has created in his image, and to encourage acceptance for and education about the various cultures and faiths that make up our diverse Catholic school community. There is unity in our diversity!

During Lent, a digital fast challenge day will be promoted to encourage students to focus on developing and strengthening their relationships with others in a tangible way—to spend time face to face with friends, family, and God.

Our annual Pennies From Heaven campaign at Christmas time will fundraise to provide food, clothing, other necessities and Christmas gifts to families in our school community who are in need. It demonstrates our sense belonging and caring for each other and deepens our oneness in Christ in our school community. This campaign also serves to provide funds to assist our families in need throughout the school year.

Walking with a Greater Catholic Community

Focus: The goal is to connect and engage with the larger Catholic community of Brant, Hamilton Diocese, and globally. The local Brant Catholic community will be invited into engagement in the sacramental, apostolic and prayer life of our school and we will venture outward. This will act as a tool for evangelization as well as a reminder that we as parish, school, family, and community must be in constant prayerful communion and active mission with one another.

Strategies:

St. Basil parishioners and our local Catholic community organizations along with parents, students, teachers and staff are invited to come together in prayerful worship for liturgies and Masses during times such as Thanksgiving, Veterans Week, Advent, Holy Week, and in June. Our new grade 9 retreats will take place at St. Basil Church and hall in order to build connection with our local parish.

ACS will continue to nourish its vibrant relationship with the Brant Particular Council of the St. Vincent de Paul through monthly offerings of material assistance, regular prayer for the society, monetary donations from 2 casual dress days, as well as hands-on service at the SSVP Valu Shoppe. Students will also have the opportunity to provide hands-on service actively witnessing Christ to the poor in the inner-city of Hamilton at Good Shepherd Centre which is a significant Catholic partner of the Diocese of Hamilton.

To also build connections to our other local Catholic community organizations, colourful posters will be created and displayed in prominent locations with contact information for our local Catholic Service Organizations to encourage students to choose to fulfill their community service hours volunteering with our local Catholic community organizations.

ACS will provide witness to live out the Gospel call to respond to the needs of our global brothers and sisters in the developing world and respond to their needs through monetary donations from a casual dress day during Lent for Development and Peace,

which is the Canadian Catholic Church's global social justice arm, and by continuing our commitment to sponsor a family through the Save A Family program which is a Catholic social justice organization that works in partnership with more than 50 Catholic Diocesan Social Service Societies in India.

A Vocations presentation will be organized for all grade 10 students. We are all called to holiness. Everyone has a vocation. A vocation is God's unique invitation for you, a particular way for you to live your life to the fullest. The four specific vocations are: single life, married life, consecrated life or the ordained ministry. Guest speakers will share how each vocation is a call to follow Christ closely.

We will continue to support a working relationship with the Office of Catholic Youth of the Diocese of Hamilton. We work together to create a more inclusive and sacred environment for all students. The office has extended its support in all initiatives and is assisting us in our programs

Our Halloween For Hunger event will collect non-perishable food donations from the community and gives back to the community by donation of the food items collected to our local Catholic partner, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Brant who serve those in need in our area. This year our Assumption Cares overnight fundraising event will be held with donations raised going to support Brant SSVP.

Walking with the Multi-Faith Community

Focus: To strengthen connections with the multi-faith community of Brantford and in our school and highlight our shared values in our religiously diverse Catholic school community.

Strategies

In May 2017, the 180 Team sent a card to every church and house of worship in Brantford with a short prayer for unity, from Scarborough Foreign Missions, and a short note thanking them for being part of the Brantford multi-faith community.

We will acknowledge various holy days and celebrations of world religions through announcements. This serves to affirm the unity and solidarity of the human family while respecting religious differences and gives us the opportunity to extend Christ's inclusion of all people. There is unity in our diversity.

We will continue our monthly hands-on service at St. Andrew's United Church Soup for the Soul meal program. This year we will expand this initiative to include participation of a greater number of staff and students. There is nothing more humbling than to provide service face to face, to encounter the face of Christ in those in need.