Eight Characters of Catholic Education

Community
Catholics approach God together and commit to living as a community, a people of God in the world. The Catholic community, which extends over time and space, finds its life source in the traditional belief that the church represents the mystical Body of Christ. The Catholic community serves the common good of society by integrating faith and culture, thereby transforming society.

Tradition
Tradition is foundational to the formation of the Catholic community. Tradition means holding on to the life of the community, being open to the continuing action of the Holy Spirit and paying homage to the God who acts in the history of a people. The focus of tradition is clarified by a vision of the future in Christ.

Humanness
God affirms the essential goodness of the human condition in becoming human in Jesus. A Catholic attitude towards the human condition is decidedly positive and compassionate. Catholics embrace their humanness as a gift, celebrate the essential goodness of being human, take delight in the enjoyment of human living, tolerate human imperfections, and are merciful in the face of human sinfulness.

Sacramentality
All of creation is the ordinary medium of God's outreach to the human family. God communicates to humans...through everything and anything of our world. Everything created is good because it is of God. A Catholic attitude to the world affirms the world as so good as to be sacramental. That is, it is made holy and is sacred.

Rationality
Throughout Catholic history reason has played an important role in the search for truth. The critical and speculative powers of reason allow for an active and open stance in relation to the truth. Catholics seek truth rationally and critically as well as though appreciation and respect. Rationality encourages faith to seek understanding.

Spirituality
Catholic spirituality is rooted in the life of the Trinity and is lived “according to the Spirit”. Spirituality has to do with the way Catholics live their beliefs. Spirituality consists in letting God be present in each moment of the day, becoming attuned to God's presence in the ups and downs of life. Prayer and a commitment to the moral and ethical values of the gospel provide the opening to God's presence.

Justice
Catholic social teaching establishes justice as a core commitment of faith and a sign of the Reign of God. Church statements capture the scriptural bases for justice, insisting that Catholics have a preferential option for the poor and marginalized. The dignity of the human person, the primacy of the common good, and the primacy of workers are the cornerstones of Catholic social justice.

Hospitality
Being Catholic entails an abiding love for all people with commitment to their welfare, to rights and justice. The Catholic community is inclusive of diverse peoples and perspectives; is free of discrimination and sectarianism; and welcomes all peoples especially those most in need.
"In one Spirit we were all baptized into one body."
(1 Corinthians 12:13)

Edmonton Catholic Schools seeks to create a learning environment that reflects the identity and character of the Catholic Church, and express the uniqueness of the Catholic experience.
"We must pay greater attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it."

(Hebrews 2:1)

We learn through life. Catholic education brings a focus to learning to discover, evaluate, and interpret the human experience, which is always in transition. It provides insight into how learning can lead to fullness and freedom for all people.
"And being found in human form, he humbles himself."

(Philippians 2:8)

Catholic schools, in partnership with the family and the entire community, strive to form strong and responsible persons who are capable of making free and correct choices, and are able to form in themselves a clear idea of the meaning of life.
He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor." (Luke 4: 18)

Justice is a mandate of Catholic faith. Catholic schools aim towards a synthesis of faith and culture, of faith and life, syntheses that characterize mature faith.
Hospitality

"Whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me."
(Mark 9:37)

The Catholic community is inclusive of diverse peoples and perspectives; is free of discrimination and sectarianism; and welcomes strangers, especially those most in need.
In Catholic education, the learners are invited to be active agents of their learning, and have an attitude of openness to the truth. Such openness welcomes everyone into the learning process.
"God saw everything that was made, and indeed, it was very good."
(Genesis 1:31)

The idea of a Catholic school is to educate its members into a world that is sacred and holy because it is God's creation. Appreciation for God's gift finds expression in the attitudes and actions of a school community through liturgy and stewardship.
"You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy." (Leviticus 19:2)

Spirituality in Catholic schools consists in letting God be present in each moment of the day, becoming attuned to God's presence in the ups and downs of the life journey of the school community. Prayer and a commitment to the moral and ethical values of the gospel provide the opening to God's presence.