

God Calls Us



EACH BY NAME

. . . I have called you by name, you are mine. ~ Isaiah 43:1 ~

August 2020

Welcome back to the 2020-2021 school year! Whether you have chosen to return to the classroom or to participate in an online environment, it is wonderful to have our students and staff connecting in a more 'normal' manner as we work together to provide a Catholic education that inspires students to learn and that prepares them to live fully and to serve God in one another. This is going to be a year unlike any we have ever experienced, and we are all going to draw on our ability to be flexible, nimble, and responsive to the ever changing demands placed on us as we learn to exist in a Covid world. As you navigate through the quartermesters this year and revisit your learning options, it is important that you know that there are no wrong choices for your child and family with respect to the in-person vs. online learning environment. We are so pleased to be able to offer the advantage of multiple shifting points through a quartermester model.

Our theme for this year is ***God Calls Us Each By Name***. It is grounded in scripture from Isaiah: "I have called you by name, you are mine." This provides the beautiful vision of our work in Edmonton Catholic Schools as being work for God; this is the essence of Catholic education. It also provides a beautiful vision of what we are trying to instill in our students: the understanding that they, too, have been called by God to serve. Over their time with Edmonton Catholic Schools, as our students come to know and love Jesus ever more deeply, they will discern how God has called each of them by name to serve Him and the world.

There are some exciting things that are happening in our Division right now. Divine Mercy Catholic Elementary School will have its first students this year. Within just a few short weeks, we are going to be having a site blessing and ground breaking for our new 950 student K-9 school in Keswick. We are preparing for a new 1300 student high school in Heritage Valley, and the construction of the Ben Calf Robe replacement school has begun. As a nod to our agility and nimbleness as a Division, we will be creating a K-12 online school as a viable option for our families.

Each year, ECSD establishes a [Division Plan for Continuous Growth](#) that sets out our primary goals for the year and the global strategies that we will use to achieve them. Our schools ensure that their site-specific plans for continuous growth are aligned with these goals. You can explore our Division plan by visiting www.ecsd.net or clicking on the link above.

I would like to share just a few additional words about our re-entry plan. I can't begin to emphasize the countless hours that our re-entry team has put in getting ready for our start up. They have put so much effort into being sure that we are well prepared and consistent across the Division as in person learning begins again.

This team is simply amazing! You can see the diversity of membership on this tremendous team by visiting the [ECSD Re-Entry Plan page](http://www.ecsd.net) on www.ecsd.net.

I will leave you with a thought from Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation on the call to holiness in today's world, *Gaudete et Exsultate*, that reflects the essence of how God has called us each by name: "The Lord asks everything of us, and in return he offers us true life, the happiness for which we were created. He wants us to be saints and not to settle for a bland and mediocre existence... We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves." (*Pope Francis*, 2018, sections 1, 14)

Have a wonderful year of learning and growing in relationship with Christ!

Sincerely,

Robert Martin
Chief Superintendent