



**Message of His Eminence Cardinal Frank Leo  
Metropolitan Archbishop of Toronto**

**Catholic Education Week – May 3-8, 2026**

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

May Jesus and Mary be in your soul.

Each year, *Catholic Education Week* offers us a special opportunity to give thanks to God for the gift of publicly funded Catholic education and for the many people who sustain this important mission. I am grateful to our students, teachers, administrators, support staff, volunteers, parents, trustees, clergy, religious and parish communities who together form the vibrant family of Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Toronto.

This year's theme, "*Catholic Education: Pilgrims of Hope: On the Path to Holiness*," reminds us that the work of Catholic education is not merely the transmission of knowledge, but a common journey of hope and sanctity that leads to our Heavenly Father (cf. Matt. 28:19–20). We often think of our schools solely in terms of places of learning for our children, but in reality, the call to holiness speaks to the vocation of teachers, parents, clergy and indeed everyone involved in the educational ministry (CCC 2013–2014). Consequently, we are invited to consider our schools as places of accompaniment where *everyone* walks together on a journey of faith, helping one another discover that every life is precious, has purpose, and is rooted in the love of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, our schools are privileged environments where we learn to walk together with our Lord who enlightens our minds, forms our hearts, and directs us towards holiness (1 Pet. 1:15-16).

The theological virtue of hope is especially important in our time because it allows us to see beyond this physical, material world to the eternal love of God who calls us to himself, to a real, life-altering, transformative relationship with him (Rom. 5:5). Many people in our schools face uncertainty and pressures that can obscure the deeper meaning of life. The dire needs of many students, families and staff members can be overwhelming and daunting. Catholic schools respond to these challenges by proclaiming a simple yet profound truth: God loves you, Christ saves you, the Holy Spirit dwells in you and you are called to greatness in God's eyes, to serve, witness and build his Kingdom on earth. These truths give young and old alike the courage to live with faith, compassion, and generosity toward others. It strengthens hope and provides an eternal perspective so badly needed in our world (CCC 1817).



I wish to express my heartfelt appreciation to all who contribute to this sacred mission. Parents and families are the first educators of their children in the faith (CCC 2223). Teachers and staff generously share their talents and dedication each day. Our parishes, clergy and religious strengthen the spiritual and sacramental life of our schools. Together, this partnership of home, school, and parish creates an environment where faith and learning flourish — fostering hope and encouraging holiness.

Catholic education is a precious gift and a responsibility entrusted to us. We must continue to nurture it with fidelity, ensuring that our schools remain places where the Gospel is lived authentically and where we are inspired to become saints in our own time and place (Matt. 5:14-16). My hope is that everyone who comes into contact with our schools is lifted up and inspired by our witness in such a way that our schools become aspirational places for those who seek to know and live the truth and love of God. We must also remain attentive to the ideas and influences around us — especially those that can misrepresent our Catholic faith and the teachings of the Church. Let us be one in mind and heart as we pursue the mission and celebrate the gift of authentic Catholic education while striving to always live in communion with the integral Gospel of Jesus Christ and the authentic teachings of Holy Mother Church, irrespective of any social and ill-informed pressures.

During this *Catholic Education Week*, I encourage each of you to renew your commitment to the mission we share. May our schools continue to be communities of faith, hope and love, seeking truth and forming hearts in virtue and holiness. I entrust all our efforts to the Blessed Mother as our special intercessor, mediatrix, advocate and guide. Be assured of my prayers and gratitude. May the Lord bless our Catholic schools and guide us always as *pilgrims of hope on the path to holiness*.