

Spiritual Development: Learning from Lent

The Religious and Family Life Education Department shared with Trustees a presentation which focused on our Christian call to live well the liturgical season of Lent.

Superintendent of Education, Marg Shea-Lawrence; Principal of Religious and Family Life Education, Jim Roberts; and Religious Education Consultants, Paula Wheeler and Cindy Morgan, presented a summary of Lenten resources that have been made available to schools within the Board.

Mr. Roberts outlined a number of connections between the Lenten Resources and the resource binder for the Board theme, *We walk in good company!*

Also explained were Literacy connections between Lenten themes and such mentor texts as *Ryan and Jimmy: and the Well in Africa that Brought Them Together*, and *Yatandou*, about a child who is able to attend school after a machine is purchased to mill corn for her village.

February 17, Ash Wednesday, marked the beginning of Lent for 2010. Lent continues until March 28, the beginning of Holy Week. The Easter Triduum begins on Holy Thursday, April 1, with Easter Sunday celebrated on April 4.

Mr. Roberts told the Board, "Lent presents a wonderful opportunity to partake in a period of penance through prayer, sacrifice, and almsgiving. This prepares us spiritually for the great feast

of Easter. Our schools mark the season with a more profound awareness of our baptismal call to act justly."

The department highlighted the messages from Pope Benedict XVI and in particular, the relevance of the virtue of Justice to the Lenten season.

The group also emphasized the liturgical symbols that are used during this special time.

Mr. Roberts told the Board, "The activities in which our students take part deepen awareness of the significance of Lent to their spiritual development. It is wonderful to see them embrace it and share it with others."

Also highlighted were many quality and diverse Lenten activities taking place in CDSBEO schools.

In addition to prayer services, family Lenten liturgies, and special Masses, some schools have prepared Passion of Christ, or Last Supper presentations for Holy Thursday. Special blessings for Secondary students travelling abroad on Mission Trips have also taken place.

Many schools have been initiated into the Holy Childhood Association, which sees extra money earned by doing household chores donated to the effort to outfit a classroom in the developing world.

Students are also giving their time to help others. Fundraising efforts have been initiated for the people of Kenya. The ThinkFast 24 hour famine for Development and Peace is raising money in a number of secondary schools and other students are helping local Big

Brothers/Big Sisters organizations with a Bowl-a-thon.

Making a Difference with our Schools in the Middle

A province-wide Ministry of Education initiative is underway at seven CDSBEO schools. The program is aimed at building capacity in school boards by focusing on the work of program staff, principals and teachers.

CDSBEO Supervising Principal of School Effectiveness, Kerry Lamming, outlined the *Schools in the Middle* initiative. A *School in the Middle* is defined by the Ministry of Education as a school achieving EQAO results between 50% and 75% in at least four out of the six strands assessed in the areas of reading, writing and mathematics.

"The program's goal is simple," said Mr. Lamming, "to increase student achievement. Specifically, we are providing support to schools to target literacy and numeracy."

Schools in the Middle is based on the development of a network which concentrates on focused learning through collaboration within our Catholic school communities. Schools chosen for the project represent both large and small schools from all regions of the Board. A variety of resources and support are offered to these schools.

Best practices and effective use of resources are also shared amongst the schools in order to ensure a positive learning environment for all of our students.

We walk in



good company!

Mar. 15 - 19, 2010 - March Break

Mar. 31, 2010 - Special Education Advisory Committee

Apr. 2, 2010 - Good Friday

Apr. 4, 2010 Easter Sunday

Apr. 5, 2010 Easter Monday

For more information contact **613-258-7757** or **1-800-443-4562, ext. 206.**

Visit us online at www.cdsbeo.on.ca.

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Next Board Meeting
March 23, 2010
Kemptville Board
Office
7:00 p.m.