



Date: **September 17, 2024**  
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Subject: **Board Pastoral Plan 2024-2025: Pilgrims of Hope**

## **Background**

Each year, the Board Pastoral Plan supports faith formation of our community and identifies specific system goals for the year, in alignment with the Board Strategic Plan and Student Achievement Plan.

Working with the Catholic Faith Advisory Committee, the System Chaplaincy Lead, and the Catholic Elementary Curriculum Consultant, goals are established to frame our work as a system for the coming year and root our work in our faith.

This year, our Board Pastoral Theme is *Pilgrims of Hope*, and this mirrors the Catholic Education Week theme. This theme is pertinent for several reasons:

- As we begin this new school year, we are invited to rediscover the theme of hope and the meaning of hope in our lives. In Scripture, hope is found through the actions of those who Pilgrim following Jesus' example. God's Pilgrims bring communities hope, peace and strengthened faith because of their trust in Jesus' teachings.
- Celebrating Catholic Education will be a year long journey as we accompany each other on our Pilgrims of Hope theme. To be pilgrims, represents our journey in this life as we connect to our faith and relationship with Christ. We are called to "pilgrim" with one another building relationships of love, peace, and our solidarity towards each other.
- Pope Francis has chosen to celebrate and honour the upcoming Jubilee Year which begins on Christmas Eve 2024 and continues until January 6, 2026 noting that this is a special opportunity for School Boards to place Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Catholic church at the centre of our Pilgrims of Hope journey.
- In our continued work for Equity and Inclusion in Catholic schools, may the focus of hope lead us to love genuinely and to live generously.

There are monthly sub-themes that will be explored:

Month	Sub-theme	<p><b>2024 - 2025 Pastoral Theme: PILGRIMS OF HOPE</b></p> <p>We are Pilgrims of Hope with Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Catholic Church at the centre of our journey. Hope is foundational to our faith. We find hope in God's grace and love.</p> <p><i>"We must fan the flame of hope that has been given to us." / "Nous devons garder allumée la flamme de l'espérance qui nous a été donnée."</i></p> <p>(Letter on the Jubilee Year of Hope, February 11, 2022)</p>
September	by being caring family members	<p><u>How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!</u> (Psalm 133:1)</p> <p><i>As pilgrims of hope, we are called to be caring family members who attend to family, school, parish and the wider community with respect rooted in God's love.</i></p>
October	by striving to grow as learners, thinkers and communicators	<p><u>"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."</u> (Philippians 4:13)</p> <p><i>As pilgrims of hope, and in light of Gospel values, we are called to learn together today to transform tomorrow as self-directed, responsible, lifelong learners; reflective, creative and holistic thinkers; and effective communicators.</i></p>
November	by ensuring the faith and well-being of all	<p><u>"Encourage one another and build each other up."</u> (1 Thess 5.11)</p> <p><i>As pilgrims of hope, created in the image and likeness of God, we are called to foster caring, inclusive, equitable and safe spaces for all.</i></p>
December	by living as discerning believers	<p><u>"Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take."</u> (Proverbs 3:5-6)</p> <p><i>As pilgrims of hope and formed in the Catholic Faith community, we will celebrate the signs and sacred mystery of God's presence through word, sacrament, prayer, forgiveness, reflection and moral living.</i></p>
January	by being collaborative contributors	<p><u>"For we are God's coworkers, working together."</u> (1 Corinthians 3:9)</p> <p><i>As pilgrims of hope and with God as our guide, we are called to find meaning, engagement, dignity and vocation in work which respects the rights of all and contributes to the common good.</i></p>
February	by living as peacemakers	<p><u>"Live in peace and the God of love and peace will be with you."</u> (2 Corinthians 13:11)</p> <p><i>As pilgrims of hope, we are called to be peacemakers. God's commandment to love all neighbours near and far demands that we promote peace in a world surrounded by violence and conflict.</i></p>
March	by responding to poverties in our world	<p><u>"Don't delay giving to those in need."</u> (Sirach 4:1-10)</p> <p><i>As pilgrims of hope and imitators of Jesus, we are called to serve the world in ways that put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.</i></p>
April	by caring for creation	<p><u>"You are called to care for creation not only as responsible citizens, but also as followers of Christ."</u> (Pope Francis)</p> <p><i>As pilgrims of hope, we are called to be accountable to God, self and others through Catholic Citizenship that inspires ethical and responsible stewardship of God's creation.</i></p>
May	by serving in solidarity as responsible citizens	<p><u>"Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God."</u> (Micah 6:8)</p> <p><i>As pilgrims of hope, we are called to serve the world as responsible citizens who give witness to Catholic social teaching by promoting peace, justice and the sacredness of human life.</i></p>
June	by honouring human dignity	<p><u>"Honour everyone"</u> (1 Peter 2:17)</p> <p><i>As pilgrims of hope, we are called to uphold and protect the life and dignity of every human person created equally in the likeness and image of God.</i></p>



The pastoral plan continues to focus on the following:

- Using Growing in Faith/Growing in Christ K-8 in daily religious instruction.
- Reflecting our Catholicity in all that we do, in our classrooms and school communities.
- Aligning learning and achievement with the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations.
- Communicating regularly with families and parishes to intentionally strengthen partnerships.

## **Recommendations**

**That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board receive the report: *Board Pastoral Plan 2024-2025: Pilgrims of Hope*, for information.**