

# **MEDIA RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

OUR VISION

**Catholic Education † Future Ready**

*Monday, May 4, 2020*

**Catholic Education Centre**  
420 Creek Street  
Wallaceburg, ON N8A 4C4  
Telephone: 519-627-6762  
Facsimile: 519-627-8230  
Website: [www.st-clair.net](http://www.st-clair.net)

*For further information regarding  
this release, please contact:*

**Director of Education**  
Deb Crawford  
519-627-6762, ext. 10241  
Email: [media@st-clair.net](mailto:media@st-clair.net)

**Chair of the Board**  
John Van Heck  
519-627-5746

**Supervisor –  
Communications and  
Community Relations**  
Todd Lozon  
519-627-6762 Ext. 10243  
Email: [todd.lozon@st-clair.net](mailto:todd.lozon@st-clair.net)

## ***CELEBRATING CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK 2020 – ‘IGNITING HOPE’ WITH MUSIC, MASS AND TEACHER-LED STUDENT LEARNING AT HOME***

Even though we are separated by distance, students and staff across the St. Clair district are uniting in celebration of Catholic Education Week all this week. The theme for 2020 is ‘Igniting Hope.’

“The theme for this year’s celebration was selected months ago, but it’s hard to imagine a time in recent history when the world has needed hope like it does today,” says Deb Crawford, Director of Education. “But through our faith in Christ, that hope is alive in our students, our families, our staff and our communities. We are marking Catholic Education Week in different ways this year – physically separated as we continue to protect ourselves from the COVID-19 virus – but united as we connect online to communicate, celebrate and learn.”

The 2020 theme song for Catholic Education Week is *Hope*, written by Chris Rait. A group of St. Clair Catholic’s music specialist teachers collaborated to produce an online performance of the song, with piano, harp, guitar and violin.

You can listen to their beautiful rendition of the song at:  
<https://drive.google.com/a/sccdsb.net/file/d/1wb9x-2fmBtv9HSyfHw1EfDDsfRA2jSA1/view?usp=drivesdk>

“I want to thank our amazing and gifted music teachers for this beautiful and moving online performance,” says Mrs. Crawford. “What an inspiring message of hope for our students, their families and our staff, especially during these uncertain days. Thank you for using your gifts to lift our spirits!”

Each year, Catholic Education Week is marked by special prayer celebrations and Masses. This year, Bishop Fabbro has recorded a video message to students at: <https://youtu.be/LG7FsZIVkL8> and Bishop Joseph Dabrowski will lead a special online Catholic Education Week Mass on Wednesday, May 6 at 10:00 a.m.

“Catholic Education Week is also the perfect occasion to celebrate the tremendous work of our staff, during this very difficult time,” says Mrs. Crawford. “Every day, our staff is reaching out to students as they lead their virtual classrooms. This is brand new territory for all of us, but our staff has accepted the challenges of virtual learning by embracing a variety of digital learning tools and platforms to engage our students in meaningful learning.”

Since the shuttering of schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic, nearly 1,000 members of the St. Clair Catholic staff have registered for professional development, filling more than 1,500 seats during online sessions. Staff members are signing up for weekly PD and on average they are attending more than one session per week. The PD includes developing distance learning classrooms using Google Classroom, Edsby and D2L; math and literacy planning using tools such as MathUp, Lexia, Flipgrid and GSuite; and exploring ways to connect digitally with students and families using Google Meet.

“I am proud of our outstanding staff members and the outstanding work they are doing,” says Mrs. Crawford.

Last week, St. Clair Catholic launched Connecting heARTs, a social media campaign in which students, local artists and community members are sharing artwork as a sign of hope. Students, teachers, families and local artists have produced dozens of examples of heARTwork in the days since then, which are being shared on social media.

For more information, go to: <https://bit.ly/connectingheARTs>

“These beautiful heARTwork contributions are inspiring messages of faith and hope that brighter days are ahead of us,” says Mrs. Crawford. “Thanks to everyone who is adding their voice and their creativity to this uplifting campaign!”

For the latest updates from St. Clair Catholic, go to *Newsdesk* at [www.st-clair.net](http://www.st-clair.net)