

# PASTORAL PLAN

**School Name:** St. Gerard Separate School

**School Mission Statement:**

Christ is our model for our actions. Students, teachers and parents of St. Gerard School are encouraged to respect and celebrate diversity and live the Virtues that promote responsible citizenship. Together we model Catholic values by setting the examples of fairness, respect and a positive attitude.

St. Gerard School is committed to academic excellence, upholding the values of a caring Catholic community. As a community of learners, we promote the development of the whole child by nurturing the intellectual, social, emotional, physical and spiritual growth of each individual.

Together, we are St. Gerard School!

**School Motto:** Learn - Pray - Play

**Our Parish:** St. Martin of Tours Parish

**Pastor:** Rev. Gijo Muthanattu George

**Parish website:** <https://stmartinoftourschurch.blogspot.com/>

**Message from the Pastor:**

Catholic schools are an integral part of the Catholic Church's mission. The relationship that exists between home, school and parish is of vital importance to Catholic education today. This is an important partnership because it helps St Martin of Tours parish to connect with families, not only for sacramental preparation, but more importantly, for Sunday worship. Through the school, there are also other opportunities to draw parents and families into the life of the parish.

The goal of Catholic education is to prepare hearts using the language of love, dialogue and service. Pope Francis reminds us that the essence of our vocation is to love. This means that as partners in Catholic education it is not about the great things we do; it is about doing little things with great love. This is the heart of joyful discipleship; it is the foundation of Catholic education.

May the Lord continue to guide us and bless our school to be a loving caring community where all feel loved, accepted, and empowered to grow.

Rev. Gijo Muthanattu George  
Pastor

### **Message from the Catholic School Council:**

As members of the St. Gerard community, and our school council we believe in the shared responsibility of education that exists among the school, the family, and the parish. Our duty is to support and help engage our students in becoming people of virtues and Christian values. Catholic Education involves the Home, Parish and School. This plan demonstrates how those pieces fit together in providing a Catholic Education for our children. We, as Council, fully support the school's plan for the 2023-2024 school year.

We pledge to support and enhance the development of our children's faith and spiritual awareness as they learn and grow to be loving, faithful members of our community.

### **Catholic Education Week – May 5<sup>th</sup> – May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Catholic Education: We are Called to Love**  
**L'éducation catholique: Appelés à aimer**

*Throughout Catholic Education Week, we ask you to reflect on the significance of Catholic education's presence and contribution in our Church, and in our society.*

*"If we love one another, God lives in us." 1 John 4:12*

*Si nous nous aimons les uns les autres, Dieu demeure en nous. (1 Jean 4, 12)*

The sub-themes for Catholic Education Week 2024 are:

Monday: **As people of hope / Dans l'espérance**  
Tuesday: **As people of faith / Dans la foi**  
Wednesday: **As people of mercy / Avec compassion**  
Thursday: **As people of justice / Dans la justice**

Friday: **As people of joy / Dans la joie**

Catholic Education Week begins on a Sunday to highlight the partnership that remains the foundation of Catholic education between our Catholic schools and local Catholic Parishes. During this week we will:

- Gather for a school-wide liturgy
- Participate in classroom celebrations and liturgies
- Take part in daily Christian meditation
- Listen to Christian music during morning announcements

Many activities from this week will be taken from the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association website (OCSTA) which provides our Catholic schools with a Resource kit to help schools prepare for Catholic Education Week. We will use these resources as well as develop our own to help the students understand what it means to understand We Are Called to Love. Specific information for Catholic Education Week will be shared with the community closer to Catholic Education Week. We focus on providing a voice to our students, our staff and to our community so that together we can do what is best for the school. Each month students were provided with an activity to reinforce the theme We Are Called to Love.

### **Faith Formation:**

*Forming ourselves in our Catholic faith is a foundational element in helping each of us understand and live in the example of Christ.*

St. Gerard Catholic School promotes faith by having vibrant programs for staff and students that promote stewardship and service towards others as well as Adult Faith Leaders, and Equity Lead Staff member and our Eco Lead staff member who provide guidance, support, and liturgical opportunities for staff and students.

- Student lead daily prayers and land acknowledgement
- Staff and students will deepen their understanding of Catholic virtues through monthly virtues assemblies created by students and teachers
- Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations and Virtues of each month are highlighted through newsletters, daily announcements and classroom discussions.
- The school community will actively develop an appreciation, understanding, and knowledge of the Mass.
- Students at all grade levels will improve their knowledge and enhance their understanding of our Christian Faith Story as told in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible.
- The school community will continue to expand initiatives in stewardship and social justice, which meet individual, local and global community needs, always being mindful of a Catholic perspective.

- The school will continue to expand our goal to have students more frequently and authentically reflect on how they can contribute to the common good.
  - Faith Ambassador gatherings for staff
  - Stations of the Cross
  - School Wide Liturgical celebrations
  - Staff Liturgies and Reflections
  - Daily classroom prayer: beginning of the day, lunch and dismissal
  - Daily Religious/Family Life Education
  - Staff PD opportunities, "When Faith Meets Pedagogy," religion in-services
  - Informal living and teaching of our faith occurs throughout our day in our treatment/respect of others
  - Sacramental retreats and celebrations
  - Food Drives to St. Vincent de Paul
  - ECO Initiatives
- The school will continue to enhance its relationship with the St. Martin of Tours Parish.

### **Sacramental Preparation:**

*As Catholics, we understand sacraments to be "outward signs instituted by Christ to give grace." Together in partnership with our parish, we support the preparation of God's children in receiving the sacraments.*

<b>Event</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 7</b>
Sacrament of Reconciliation	Sat., Feb. 24 @ 10:30 a.m.	Thurs., April 18 @ 10:00 a.m.
Pastoral Visit (Fr. Gijo)		Tues., Jan. 30 @ 10:00 a.m.
Visit with the Bishop		Fri., March 1 @ 10:30 a.m.
First Communion Rehearsal	Thurs., April 11 @ 1:30 p.m.	
Sacrament of First Communion	Sun., April 14 @ 2:00 p.m.	
Confessions and Rehearsal for Confirmation		Thurs., April 18 @ 10:00 a.m.
Sacrament of Confirmation		Tues., April 23 @ 7:00 p.m.

### **Liturgical Celebrations:**

*The Liturgical calendar is marked by the gathering in community to celebrate the Eucharist and share in prayer.*

<b>Celebration</b>	<b>Date</b>
Opening Mass – Feast of St. Gerard	Mon., Oct. 16 @ 10:00 a.m. (church)

Advent Mass	Wed., Dec. 13 @ 10:00 (church)
Ash Wednesday Liturgy of the Word	Wed., Feb. 14 @ 10:45 a.m. (school gym)
Lenten Confessions (grades 2-8)	Wed., March 6 beginning @ 1:30 p.m. (church)
Stations of the Cross	Thurs., March 28 <sup>th</sup> @ 10:45 a.m. (school gym)
Catholic Education Week Liturgy	Fri., May 10 @ 10:45 a.m. (school gym)
Year end mass/ Graduation mass	Mon., June 17 @ 11:00 a.m.

### **Social Justice / Outreach Activities / Charities:**

*Catholic Social Teachings of the Church root our actions in supporting human dignity and the preferential option of the poor which calls us to serve the most vulnerable in the world.*

Throughout the year we will participate in Food Drives, supporting the Terry Fox Foundation, St. Vincent de Paul, and ShareLife activities. Teachers also participate in dress down days and contribute to ShareLife, including raising funds for Sharelife through our Spirit Week initiatives. We will continue to look for opportunities to demonstrate our commitment to Jesus and His ministry through community service projects. We show our compassion and generosity by giving to those in need in our community. By reaching out to others, students are encouraged to become thoughtful and caring members of the community and to appreciate the importance of social justice and stewardship.

### **Recognizing Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations:**

*Framed by the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (OCSGE), our graduates will be effective communicators, reflective thinkers, lifelong learners, collaborative contributors, caring family members, responsible citizens and discerning believers formed in the Catholic faith community.*

As a Catholic community of learners including and involving students, home, school, and parish, we are committed to the principles inherent in the following:

We live and grow in our faith by modeling ourselves after our Lord, Jesus Christ.

- We appreciate our own uniqueness and the uniqueness of others by treating each other with courtesy, consideration, kindness, and respect.
- We build and foster school spirit by sharing, cooperating and learning from each other, recognizing that people are our greatest resource.

- We realize learning is a lifelong process in an ever-changing world and that we must take personal responsibility for our own learning and education.
- We provide a nurturing environment, in order that students may empower themselves, resulting in confident, creative risk takers and problem solvers in academic and social experiences.
- We foster a work ethic that includes pride and satisfaction in the quality of work through collaboration and communication among all members of our school community.
- We are informed and involved citizens who identify and respond respectfully to the human and environmental needs and issues of our global community.
- We strive for excellence in everything that we do to achieve our personal best academically, spiritually, emotionally, physically, and socially.

We value and encourage the contribution and cooperation of all the St. Edith Stein community members in the achievement of all our goals.

We highlight different Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations each month (using the ones described in words elementary students can understand and make connections to):

September – I Am a Believer

October – I Have a Voice

November – I Have Responsibilities

December – I am a Discerning Believer

January – I Have Ideas

February – I Am a Team Player

March – I Am a Learner for Life

April – I am a Believer

May – I Care

June – I Have Responsibilities

### **Celebrating Virtues:**

*A virtue is a habit or established capacity to perform good actions according to a moral standard. When we practice these virtues, we strengthen them and thereby make the presence of God more and more visible in the world around us.*

Each month, the entire school will focus on a different virtue. Classroom activities and school wide activities and prayer will all focus on the nurturing of a specific virtue. Here is a list of the virtues we will be nurturing this school year.

September – Faith

October – Empathy

November – Conscience

December – Hope  
 January – Self Control  
 February – Respect  
 March – Kindness  
 April – Love  
 May – Acceptance  
 June – Fairness

Each class is responsible for highlighting a virtue each month. A Catholic Faith Community is rooted in a set of common beliefs which are inspired by the life, mission and teaching of Jesus. At the end of each month, we gather as a School Community in our Gym to honour our student virtue recipients and celebrate each month's virtue celebrated by a class presentation.

### **Visible Signs of our Faith:**

*Through symbol and service, we are instruments of God's love whose work within our communities stands as a witness to our faith.*

As you enter St. Gerard you will see the Catholic Graduates Expectations, alongside the 10 Virtues. In the main hallway, we have our Virtue Bulletin Board. The theme of this bulletin board changes each month to reflect the corresponding virtue. Each classroom has a cross, Bibles, a sacred space that reflects the liturgical calendar, and posters.

We celebrate our Indigenous community also our Indigenous Medicine Garden and the symbolism of the Turtle. We are fortunate to be next door to our church and look forward to being able to bring our students to the chapel for prayer and reflection.

### **Resource List for Parents/Guardians:**

- **General Roman 2023-2024 Liturgical Calendar** - [2023-2024 Liturgical Calendar](#)
- **Religious Education Curriculum** - [Ontario Religious Education Curriculum](#)
- **Family Life Curriculum** - [Ontario Family Life Curriculum](#)
- **Fully Alive Program information** - [Ontario Bishops' information on Fully Alive](#)
- **Encyclical Letter "Fratelli Tutti"** - [Fratelli Tutti](#)
- **National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation** - [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#)
- **Catholic Education Week 2024** – [Catholic Education Week 2024](#)

- Synod on Synodality – Synod 2021 - 2024

## **Resource List for Schools:**

### **Board**

- **General Roman 2023-2024 Liturgical Calendar - 2023-2024 Liturgical Calendar**
- **Multi-Year Strategic Plan - Multi-Year Strategic Plan 2019-2023**
- **Renewing the Promise – A Pastoral Letter for Catholic Education**
- **Encyclical Letter “Fratelli Tutti”- Fratelli Tutti**
- **National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation - National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation**
- **Catholic Education Week 2024 – Catholic Education Week 2024**
- **Synod on Synodality – Synod 2021 - 2024**

### **School-Based**

- Adaptive Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation Kits
- Adaptive Program – Finding God Kit (kindergarten)
- Religion Textbook and Teacher’s Resource: Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ (Grade 1-8)
- Family Life Textbook and Teacher’s Resource: Fully Alive (Grade 1-8)
- Many Gifts Program (Grade 1-6)
- NSRV Bibles
- Institute for Catholic Education: <https://iceont.ca/>
- “Where to find it in the Bible” by Ken Anderson
- A Canadian Prayer Book: “Northern Light” by Les Miller
- “On Earth as it is in Heaven” by Josephine Lombardi
- Children’s Daily Prayer Book 2022-2023
- “Words for the Journey: 10-Minute Prayer Services for Teachers and Administrators” by Lisa Freemantle & Les Miller





**Signature Page**

**Pastor**



**Faith Ambassador(s) (as applicable)**

*S. Lepido*  
*Huana*

**Teacher(s)** *M. Engle*

**Chair of Catholic School Council**

*W. Reese* *Indy Lee*

**Vice Principal(s)**

**Principal**



**Superintendent**

*Silvana Jos*