



Strategic Directions



One of our board’s strategic directions, Catholicity, is truly what sets us apart from other organizations and school systems. Our recent **Faith Day**, where we all joined in Eucharistic celebration, was a powerful reminder of how we are all called to embrace this year’s theme of *Living as Joyful Disciples*.

What does it mean to live as a joyful disciple? The inspirational **slide deck** we viewed on Faith Day, which was based on your feedback and created by our Communications Department, provided some insight into how our employees do this every day.

If this slide deck taught me anything, it was that smiling is a simple and powerful way of demonstrating joyful discipleship. And the few slides in that deck represent only the tip of the iceberg in our board. How many other employees could have been mentioned, had time allowed us to honour them all?

Our Faith Day keynote speaker, Dr. David Wells, emphasized the importance of smiling when he humorously said, “Some people might be very happy and joyful, but their faces don’t know it yet.” The altered images of the famous portraits that Wells showed us drove the message home – dour and sombre-looking men and women were transformed, just because someone added a toothy grin to their faces. Imagine what effect a smile on a real face would have!

Why is it that we believe demonstrating joy requires something much more dramatic or time-consuming of us? **Discipleship** certainly does. However, joy? How often do we neglect to smile at those with whom we spend the most time, such as our students, co-workers, or families, either because our own concerns consume us, or because we think it somehow sends an inappropriate message? (I cannot help but think of a dear friend who advised me near the beginning of my career that the secret to a successful year in teaching was to not smile until Christmas. Yikes!) How often do our daily difficulties and challenges blind us to the amazing gifts all around us? And honestly, will we remember those challenges a month, year, or decade from now?

I am glad that *Living as Joyful Disciples* is this year’s theme, and I look forward to exploring this theme with you throughout the school year. I suspect that this exploration will lead us into deeper conversations about the **Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (OCSGEs)**, **Renewing the Promise: A Pastoral Letter for Catholic Education**, and of course, our own faith journeys. Look for these items to crop up again and again in emails, meetings, and liturgies throughout 2018-19!

God bless,

Rose Burton Spohn
Director of Education

Quoi de neuf!



What's New!



Minwajjimo!



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