



“When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:9-11)

Today, the Feast of the Ascension is World Catholic Education Day. Each year on this feast day we celebrate Catholic Education and remind ourselves, our students, and the community of the importance and value of Catholic education.

“The Catholic school forms part of the saving mission of the Church, especially for education in the faith.” (The Catholic School, 1977)

Through the witnessing of Trustees, Administrators and especially school staff (school leaders, teachers, and support staff) our students and their parents, those we have been blessed to serve, are led to the reality of Jesus Christ, our Lord and saviour. Catholic schools, by leading students to perfection and the fullness of promise and dignity as creations of God, ultimately lead students to a personal encounter with Christ.

As Jorge Cardinal Bergoglio wrote about the Catholic school in the Arapecida document from the CELAM meetings in 2007:

336. Therefore, the goal that the Catholic school sets for itself is to lead children and youth to the encounter with the living Jesus Christ, Son of the Father, brother and friend, Master and merciful Shepherd, hope, way, truth and life, and thus to experience covenant with God and with human beings. It does so by aiding in building the personality of the students, having Christ as reference point for mindset and life. As that reference point gradually becomes explicit and internalized, it will help them to see history as Christ sees it, to judge life as He does, to choose and live as He does, to cultivate hope as He teaches us, and to live communion with the Father and the Holy Spirit in Him. By the mysterious fruitfulness of this reference point, persons are built up in their existential unity, that is, they assume their responsibilities and seek the ultimate meaning of their life. Situated within the Church, community of believers, in freedom they are able to live the faith intensely, proclaim it, and celebrate it joyfully in the reality of each day. As a consequence, the human attitudes that lead to sincere openness to truth, to respecting and loving people, to expressing their own freedom in self-giving and in service to others to transform society, mature and become second nature.

Let us as members of the Alberta Catholic School Trustees’ Association and all people who share in our mission for Catholic Education keep in our witnessing and deliberations and decisions the central tenet of Catholic education and celebrate it on this day and every day through our words, deeds and communities.