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### CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF SASKATCHEWAN PROCLAMATION/PASTORAL LETTER RE: WORLD CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK May 21 – May 27, 2017

The Catholic Bishops of Saskatchewan would like to recognize Thursday, May 25, 2017 as World Catholic Education Day. On this day Catholics across the globe give thanks for the gift of Catholic Education, and we joyfully celebrate the unique identity and distinctive contributions of Catholic Education in the lives of people around the world. This year, the theme for World Catholic Education Day is “And You Will See Me”.

Mother Nature comes alive in May. The farmers are sowing their crops hoping and praying for a good harvest. Others are planting their garden and flower beds and it will soon be ‘back to the cottage’ time. Many of our Grade 12 students will be getting ready for exams and graduation. It is time to move on. The lower grades students are anxious to end the year and move up a grade.

Like our life, education is on the move. Actually, big changes seem to be on the horizon. The Catholic school system will not be exempt from these changes.

The Church has always had educational institutions and has taken this part of her mission very seriously. In our present time when society has turned to a more secular approach to life, we stand firm in our conviction. We may feel powerless before the economic challenges that we face, but the children we educate today will be the ones running our province and our Catholic educational system tomorrow. Do we not want the best in education for our children and our grandchildren? Indeed! We therefore want to offer them as many opportunities as possible to realize their dreams and fill their lives with hope. Education is not about curriculum, programs and buildings but it is about our children putting their dreams in our hands and giving them the tools to realize them. Needless to say, education is student centered, and any change from this goal would be challenged by many.

Acquiring knowledge has changed over the years. We may focus on knowledge but we must also give our children the skills to live in these times of electronic gadgets and technological advancement. These skills are to be tools to help us achieve knowledge.

But our students need more than knowledge and skills. We must help them to be aware that they also have a purpose in life and that faith has played an important part in all our lives. Being a good citizen is important but our purpose is to help all children become believing citizens. The teaching of the faith and the witness of our teachers and staff members are of great importance.

As parents play the primary role in education and we as Church, the family of families must support them in raising their children in a friendly and safe environment, respecting one another.

Being different is beautiful. We are called as committed Christians to be intentionally involved in the Catholic education system and support it by believing in it and being a part of it. A vibrant church is possible tomorrow if we sow the seed of faith today. Our hope is on the horizon because of today.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank those who are dedicating their lives to Catholic Education today. We admire their faith, their love for our students, and the hope they instill in their hearts of our children. We have a group of dedicated people. Let us support them. Thank you! God bless.

Most Rev. Donald Bolen  
Archbishop of Regina

Most Rev. Albert Thevenot  
Bishop of Prince Albert

Most Rev. Murray Chatlain  
Archbishop of Keewatin-Le Pas

Very Rev. Fr. Kevin McGee  
Saskatoon Diocesan Administrator

Most Rev. Bryan Bayda  
Ukrainian Eparchial Bishop of Saskatoon