



GrACE and the Impact of Catholic Education

GrACE (Grateful Advocates for Catholic Education) celebrates the profound impact of Catholic education, emphasizing that learning transcends textbooks to shape hearts, minds, and souls. This holistic approach is rooted in a rich tradition that seeks to develop the whole person.

Purpose of Catholic Schools

The Declaration on Christian Education, published in 1965 following the Second Vatican Council, outlines the purpose of Catholic schools. It states that Catholic schools aim to "relate all of human culture to the good news of salvation." This means they illuminate students' understanding of the world, life, and the human person through the lens of faith. The entire Catholic community—including parents, teachers, administrators, and trustees—collaborates to fulfill this mission.

Unique Features of Catholic Schools

1. Legislative Framework

Catholic schools operate under the same provincial legislation (the Education Act) as non-Catholic public schools.

2. Role of Parents

Parents are the primary educators of their children and play a vital role in choosing how their children receive formal education.

3. Role of Teachers

Teachers guide students towards an understanding of the world illuminated by the 'light of faith'.

4. Parishes and Sacramental Preparation

Local parishes work closely with schools for sacramental preparation, and the local bishop approves the religious education program taught in the school.

5. Role of Trustees

Catholic trustees oversee the operation of their local school districts on behalf of the provincial government and the Catholic community. They serve as both political and faith leaders within their communities.





Demographic Strength

The demographic strength of the Catholic community plays a crucial role in preserving the integrity of Catholic education and resisting attempts to dilute its Catholic identity.

Population

According to the 2021 census, the Catholic Canadian population stands at 10.9 million.

This figure does not account for the significant immigration numbers recorded in recent years. Immigration data for 2022, 2023, and so far in 2024 would likely show an increase in the Catholic population.

Catholics remain the largest religious and community group in Canada and a significant community worldwide. Their sheer numbers and democratic strength ensure the preservation of Catholic education's integrity and play a critical role in resisting efforts to dilute its Catholic identity.

Conclusion

Catholic education, supported by GrACE and the broader Catholic community, continues to be a vital force in shaping individuals who contribute positively to society. Its unique features and the strong demographic presence of Catholics in Canada and worldwide underscore its enduring impact and importance.