

PRAYER SELECTION IN SCHOOLS

Background

St. Paul reminded the early Christian Church to “pray constantly, always and for everything ...”¹ The Catholic Church has and continues to acknowledge this responsibility by stating that prayer is the fundamental process through which we sustain a living and animated relationship with God — “prayer is the raising of one’s mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God.”² Therefore, catechesis and permeation within the Catholic school relies upon prayer as the primary mechanism through which a loving relationship with God and the example of Jesus Christ will be known to students and the greater community.

For this reason, decisions regarding prayer selection for the classroom and publications to the greater community must complement the ability of the learner and greater community to understand the meaning of its contents and further understanding of the New Covenant of the Christian story — that Jesus has revealed the unconditional love of God for all of creation.

Procedures

1. All written prayers used for classroom instruction and for community publications must be attributable to the source / writer of the prayer.
2. Prayers will not isolate biblical stories, historical events, or an analysis of these at the expense of bringing further understanding of the salvific nature of Jesus Christ for all God’s people.
3. Special care in prayer selection, including print, visual, audio, and or digital modes must be taken not to offend people by race, national or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation or their religious beliefs.
4. When requiring further clarification regarding the application of the previous expectations, principals are to consult with the Division’s Religious Education Consultant for further direction.
5. Application of this procedure does not diminish the relevancy and frequency of the use of prayer within our Catholic School Communities but only contextualizes its use so that prayer will remain the most meaningful and unifying mechanism through which personal and community communion with our Lord Jesus Christ can be nourished.

¹ Catholic Church. (1994). *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Vatican City: Liberia Editrice Vaticana, 2742, p. 583.

² Catholic Church. (1994). *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Vatican City: Liberia Editrice Vaticana, 2559, p. 544.

6. Nothing in this administrative procedure is to be interpreted so as to limit or be a waiver of the Greater St. Albert Catholic School Board's rights and powers pursuant the Constitution Act, 1867 and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to maintain the denominational character of Catholic schools.

References:

Alberta Human Rights Act

Board Policy 1: Division Mission Statement, Values and Beliefs, Goals and Objectives
Catholic Church. (1994). *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Vatican City: Liberia Editrice Vaticana

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