

How Does Blessed Trinity Address the Catholic Graduate Expectations?

Blessed Trinity is a publicly funded Catholic Secondary School. However, the public funding does not mean that the education that a student receives at Blessed Trinity is identical to the education received at a public high school. There is value added to the education that students receive here in terms of both the explicit and implicit ways that Catholicity is integrated within the total school environment.

The education that a graduate from Blessed Trinity receives is different from that at a public high school in three ways:

1. The curriculum is different and is based on Catholic Course Profiles
2. The environment within the individual classrooms and school depict visible symbols of our faith and form the foundation from which all interactions stem, and
3. The way in which the curriculum is taught. Staff interacts with students in a manner that is consistent with our faith heritage and view students as gifts from God.

Catholic Graduate Expectations

The effect of this infusion is to graduate students who have satisfied the Catholic Graduate Expectations as defined by the Institute for Catholic Education.

1. A Discerning Believer Formed in the Catholic Faith Community

At Blessed Trinity students become discerning believers formed in the Catholic faith community through sacramental and liturgical opportunities, charity fundraisers, social justice projects, and clubs that promote life and leadership.

Daily prayers begin and end the school day. School Masses are celebrated four times a year and school prayer services are held twice a year. Smaller prayer services are celebrated in the classroom throughout the year. Students have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. All grade nine and grade twelve students participate in an annual retreat. Sacred art and music are incorporated in courses to develop a student's appreciation of these treasures of the Church.

The Blessed Trinity community participates in a variety of social justice projects and charity fundraisers. Each fall the community takes part in Pilgrimage to raise money for the people of Las Pajas, Dominican Republic. Blessed Trinity comes together at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter to collect canned goods and gifts for local food banks. Awareness campaigns on social justice and environmental issues are run throughout the year helping students to become aware of the needs of others and to become good stewards of God's creation. The staff and students raise funds for charities such as the West Lincoln Memorial Hospital, Development and Peace, the Holy Cross

Fathers, and Big Brothers Big Sisters. Through these events students learn to help their brothers and sisters in Christ at home and abroad.

There are a number of clubs that students can become involved with to deepen their appreciation of the gift of life and help to develop leadership skills. They include: OSAID (Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving), High on Life, Sky Pilots, and ECO club.

2. An Effective Communicator

At Blessed Trinity students develop the skills needed to become effective communicators through programs such as DEAR (Drop Everything And Read), OSSLT (Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test), and ESL (English as a Second Language). In courses students are taught proper grammar and spelling, and reading comprehension is stressed. The use of anthologies and dictionaries are encouraged to expand vocabulary and research skills.

Students are also taught practical life skills such as respect, listening to others, interview skills, and resume writing.

3. Reflective and Creative Thinker

Students are encouraged to be reflective and creative thinkers in their academic studies and to think locally as well as globally. Recognizing that students learn in different ways, teachers utilize differentiated instruction so that every student can learn. Insightful and creative writing in class is strongly encouraged. In science and math class, teachers endeavour to develop students into independent problem thinkers who think “outside the box” and reflect critically.

The various charity fundraisers help students to think locally and globally. Blessed Trinity Pilgrimage, fundraisers, and food drives help the local community and those in third world countries. In a number of classes students learn about social justice issues in the world and how their actions can make a difference to help uphold the basic human rights of all people. Students also examine the question of the common good and what their role and responsibility is in helping to contribute to the common good.

4. Self Directed, Responsible, Life Long Learner

At Blessed Trinity we strive to instil in students the life and leadership skills necessary for them to become respectful, self directed, responsible, life long learners who uphold the dignity of all people.

From the beginning of their time at Blessed Trinity students are taught the importance of time management, goal setting, and how to prioritize their academic and extra curricular activities. The use of the school agenda is a great asset to help students manage their activities and it contains many helpful tips on how to succeed at school. Due dates and

work expectations are clearly defined in each course at the beginning of the semester. All grade ten students take the Careers course to help them discern their options for the future. This is further supported by the staff of Student Services who help students select courses throughout high school in order to achieve their chosen path (workplace, apprenticeship, college, or university). Co-operative education is also available for students to explore career options. In science classes students participate in career exploration through hands on opportunities and workshops including Science Olympics.

Programs such as Eat Smart and Healthy Schools teach students how to make healthy life style choices and the importance of good nutrition which helps them to achieve their potential at school. Physical Education courses focus on good nutrition and the importance of regular exercise to maintain a healthy body and mind.

Students can develop leadership skills through a variety of extra curricular activities as well as through joining clubs such as OSAID (Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving), Safe Schools Team, Sky Pilots, Music Council, and Student Council. Opportunities are also available through SCOEP (Spiritual Centre and Outdoor Education Program) and community service.

5. Collaborative Contributor

Students at Blessed Trinity learn the importance of team work in their academic and extra curricular activities. In the classroom group work is encouraged and in science classes students work together on labs. Students are taught the concept of intellectual property and that plagiarism is not acceptable. Integrity for one's own work and contributions to group work are stressed. Co-operative Education gives the student the chance to use their collaboration skills in a workplace setting.

Through a variety of community service opportunities and school based charity fundraisers, students learn that giving back to the community and helping those in need contributes to the well being of society.

Students have multiple avenues to develop their team and leadership skills whether it is by joining one of the sports teams or other clubs such as the Safe Schools Team, Music Council, Sky Pilots, Student Senate, or Student Council.

6. Caring Family Member

The Niagara Catholic District School Board stresses the importance of the relationships between home, school, and parish and this holds true for the Blessed Trinity community. Blessed Trinity encourages the parents of our students to be involved in all aspects of their child's learning and development. As a school family, we come together daily in prayer and throughout the year to celebrate Mass, prayer services, and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The role and the importance of the family are explored in the Parenting course at Blessed Trinity as well as God's gift of sexuality and its understanding from the Catholic perspective. The health unit of the Physical Education course also covers this very important topic. Guest speakers complement what is taught in the classroom by providing talks on chastity to the students.

Students have numerous ways in which to contribute to the school community and to the greater community through extra curricular activities, clubs, and community service hours.

7. Responsible Citizen

When students leave Blessed Trinity they should possess the academic knowledge needed to pursue their future goals and be well rounded individuals who are responsible citizens. All grade ten students take a course on Civics which explores the Canadian political system and the rights and responsibilities of a Canadian citizen. Within the school environment students are expected to adhere to a code of conduct and are accountable for their actions.

Blessed Trinity has been designated an ECO school and the staff and students do their share to protect the environment through recycling, local clean ups and awareness campaigns. As well students can further their knowledge of the environment and its care by joining the ECO club.

To be a responsible citizen means doing one's part to help others in the community. Blessed Trinity students help members of their local community and those in the third world through food and clothing drives and fund raising. Each year students participate in Pilgrimage to help the people of Las Pajas, a community in the Dominican Republic. Fundraisers have helped to support the local hospital West Lincoln Memorial and Big Brothers Big Sisters. Recently the Blessed Trinity community raised money to help the earthquake victims of Haiti.

Responsible citizenship is connected with good leadership skills and students have ample opportunities to join sports teams and clubs to develop and enhance leadership skills (Student Council, Safe Schools Team, Sky Pilots, and OSAID).

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