

Embrace the Spirit

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A Note from the Editor

The opening weeks of the second decade of the third millennium have been filled with tragedy and drama. We have been inundated with images from Haiti, as that nation, with an outpouring of help from around the world, rallies to restore some type of order out of the chaos of destruction. As I write this column, the Olympics are just getting under way with the promise of hundreds of hours of coverage. What next major event will galvanize the attention of the world?

This issue includes a new section entitled Kaleidoscope. When I was a child the kaleidoscope's changing patterns always fascinated me. The same pattern never appeared twice. I was inspired to include this section after I received several articles that were a kaleidoscope of images and activities from one school division. The debut of this section will highlight STAR Catholic schools (St Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic Separate Regional School Division). If you would like to gather four to eight short articles about events and projects happening in your school division that focus on faith, spirituality, social justice and service, please send them to me for inclusion in future issues.

Our regular columnists have come through in their usual fine style.

Teachers are pragmatic people who love to receive practical ideas. If you have a tried-and-true lesson plan that works and promotes the values of our council—faith, dignity, respect and collaboration—across different curricular areas, we would be pleased to share it with your colleagues in our new For the Classroom section.

Nominate your worthy colleagues for the Religious and Moral Education Council awards that are presented at the annual conference in October. Details are available on our website at <http://rmec.teachers.ab.ca> along with links to helpful websites and other information about the council.

Happy Easter!

Dorothy Burns



From the President

God may not show up when you need him, too.
But he always shows up on time.

The earthquake in Haiti has brought us to a time of troubled grace. We will act justly by contributing to organizations such as the Canadian Red Cross and Development and Peace to help them bring aid to the Haitian people. The people will rise again despite all of their trials and tribulations. We need to continue to meet their needs and bring them help as they face the challenges of life. Many children have been orphaned and others have lost their families and all of their possessions. For the next five to ten years, we as a body of believers must continue to support the people of Haiti in prayer and with all of the financial means that are available to us.

In times of disaster, we need to remember that we are loved. Love is the greatest gift that we have received. In Corinthians, we are told about love. It is patient and kind. It is not resentful, boastful or rude. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things and endures all things. Love never ends.

Are we going to be challenged in some way as were the people of Haiti? Do you see God's plan for you in the midst of trials? Answer those questions as you spend some time meditating. When you have finished, contemplate the following questions.

1. Are the deeds I perform done to win the approval of God or others?
2. Do my actions show what I believe in my heart?
3. Have I reflected on what God has done for me today?
4. Am I optimistic in my hopes for the future?

Please pray for the people of Haiti and all the people of the world as they continue to battle for their very being in life.

Sharon Malec

Sharon Malec is a teacher with Holy Spirit Catholic Schools, in Lethbridge, Alberta.



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St Thomas Aquinas RCRD No 38



St Thomas Aquinas Roman (STAR) Catholic Separate Regional School Division No 38 was formed on January 1, 1995, from three former Catholic school districts. The division extends across a wide area in central Alberta, from Beaumont in the north to Lacombe in the south, from Wetaskiwin in the east to Drayton Valley in the west. These communities fall within the

boundaries of five different public school divisions. Collaboration with our partners in health and education requires a significant commitment of time on the part of administration at all levels in our jurisdiction. The division office is situated in the City of Leduc.

Approximately 2,500 students are enrolled in the eight schools and one outreach school that constitute the division, and quality Catholic instruction is offered by over 140 full-time equivalent teachers and a support staff of approximately 110 employees. Each community has its own unique profile. Still, the sense of our identity as a Catholic school community continues to grow. In 2006, the division expanded its services to provide Catholic education in the town of Beaumont. The newest addition to the division is Holy Trinity Academy, which opened in April 2009, in Drayton Valley. Our current motto is "Faith in Your Future."

Christ The King School, Leduc

After hearing about the devastation that occurred in Haiti, students, staff and parents at Christ The King School, in Leduc, responded to the call for help.

In the week following the earthquake the school raised money through a schoolwide collection, as well as a lunch hour "Give to Haiti" collection, where students donated money instead of buying food at the vending machine.

By week's end, the school had raised more than \$5,100. The cheque will be given to the Canadian Red Cross, which ensures that all the money will go directly to the victims of Haiti. As well, our Canadian government will match any moneys donated. With the matching funds, Christ The King School has donated \$10,200 to Haiti.

"It was truly amazing to see the outpouring of concern and understanding from the school family for the need to help those less fortunate in a disaster of that magnitude," said principal Denis Cote.



Left to right: Mrs Sangster, Grade 9 student Caline Strach, Grade 10 student A J Baragar and Mr Webb

St Anthony School, Drayton Valley

The story of Jesus's birth was delivered in live fashion on December 17, 2009, at St Anthony School, in Drayton Valley. The school parking lot was transformed into the stable in Bethlehem complete with live animals. The miracle of Jesus's birth was brought to life by the members of the St Anthony School junior high drama club under the direction of Trish Molzan and Margaret Burns. The magic of Christmas was in the air as students enacted the story of the nativity while narrators Brandon Perez and Courtney McQueen passionately related the story of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem and the wonder of the

birth of our Lord Jesus. The play was delivered in five acts, each followed by a time of reflection where students, staff and guests were asked to think about the meaning of this miraculous event and how it applies to their own lives today. The joyful sounds of Christmas music could be heard as everyone joined together to sing in praise following each reflection.

This event was a huge undertaking by the staff and students, and could not have been accomplished without the support of many community members through the lending and transporting of animals, straw bales and corrals, and their generous donations of time in helping with the set-up. There are already plans to make this production an annual event.



Holy Trinity Academy, Drayton Valley

Robert Vaudan

On November 26, 2009, students and staff of Holy Trinity Academy, in Drayton Valley, took part in a Social Justice Day, which focused on world hunger. The day began with a pancake breakfast at which donations were collected to donate to a charity of the school's choice. The student body was divided into four groups with students from each grade in each group. The students then rotated through four sessions, which examined different aspects of world hunger by doing artwork, taking part in a religious skit or becoming a part of a living graph. The graphing session demonstrated the unjust distribution of wealth and food world-wide. We had an amazing day and students' responses were very favourable about the use of the day and their newly found knowledge of hunger in this world. Our Social Justice Committee is currently working on projects for this term, but we hope to concentrate our efforts on helping Haiti.



Father Lacombe School, Lacombe

Tammy Bessette

Each morning, every student and staff member in Father Lacombe School, in Lacombe, gather in the gym for morning prayer time. Tammy Bessette, the Grade 1 teacher, explains: "We all sit in the shape of a horseshoe with our portable prayer table. We start with a good morning and a prayer of choice from the teacher leading. As a staff, we take turns leading the prayer and including students when possible. After the prayer we all stand and hold hands to say the "Our Father." Then we face the flag and sing "O Canada" and say announcements for the day."

When students were asked what they like about this unique gathering time, the following were some of their responses.

"I like the morning prayer time because we get to be with everybody."

"It's nice to see the teachers talk about religion in person, not just over the intercom. It helps you understand more about religion."

"I like it because everyone gathers together and loves God as one."

"I like how the classes take turns going up and doing something. It builds my confidence."

During this first 10 minutes of the day, a positive and accepting atmosphere has been established. Bessette feels that this morning time is a great opportunity to build community in the school. "By gathering with the purpose of learning about God and sharing how God is working in our lives, we not only learn to appreciate what makes us each unique but also what draws us together as believers."



Education Reimagined: Leading Schools of Hope

Tim Cusack

Tim Cusack serves with Edmonton Catholic Schools in the Archbishop O'Leary learning community.

Hope is a word that evokes an array of connotative and emotional responses. It is a concept that is, ultimately, partnered with faith and love. 1 Corinthians 13:13 reminds us of this: "Right now three things remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love." Regardless of which Biblical translation one reads of this passage, hope finds itself in the middle of faith and love. Hope is, therefore, central to our understanding of faith and love. In today's world, however, hope is not readily apparent for many. In fact, despair, the antithesis of hope, has pervaded the psyche of our modern culture. Sadly, due to a variety of factors, including the media and pop culture, our youth have become disconnected from hope. They are lost in the complexities and temptations of the daily desert. Our youth find themselves wandering and wondering in the wilderness asking: "Is there hope for me? If so, what is that hope?" What then, can a religious educational leader do to reach out and offer hope to our youth?

I recently had the honour of meeting Jerry Goebel, the founder of ONEFamily Outreach, which is a ministry that seeks to "connect community to kids and kids to community." As part of his keynote address on the topic of social justice to employees of Edmonton Catholic Schools, Goebel cited from his recent book, *Reimagining Education*. He reviewed the nature of today's wilderness and suggested hope (in forming enthusiastic Disciples of Christ) as the goal of faith-based education. He states:

In order to achieve that goal, we need to provide young people with the tools to be peacemakers and lifelong learners. Because they live in a time of a) huge economic injustices b) rising religious fundamentalism and xenophobia and c) dark sarcasm that pervades our media. They will need to raise a compelling vision that will motivate people to "do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God [Micah 6:8b]." (Goebel 2008a, 7)

In order to realize this "compelling vision" and better empower our youth (and all stakeholders, I would argue) to walk with God, Goebel reminded me of two key aspects from one of his earlier

texts. He spoke of the concepts of "adolescing," which he defines: "As long as your peers interpret your self-esteem, you are 'adolescing' and 'adulging.'" "When you can articulate your values and make your life choices based upon those values, you are an adult" (Goebel 2008a, 21). In how we engage youth in conversation and in how we model to others how we wish to be treated (integral components of dignity and respect), Goebel offered these ideas on how to establish a meaningful connection to others: "We can help people transition from adolescent behaviour to adult behaviour, but only if we help them identify what they value and make decisions based upon those values." This is our challenge. We must actively seek ways to help our youth discern what is important to them (values) and how to interpret and act upon those values.

How does a leader inspire others to engage in meaningful conversations with youth when according to Goebel "because of the didactic methods used in teaching, most conversations between young people are seen as interruptions" (Goebel 2008a, 86). This is a mindset that must be transformed.

How? Goebel speaks of the importance of four critical concepts that are at the heart of his *Reimagining of Education*. In order to promote meaningful conversation among all partners, Goebel raises and explores in great depth these points:

1. *What will we teach?* Personal and communal values needed to raise proactive leaders.
2. *How will we teach?* Relevant and relational methods of imparting knowledge that can be effective in helping students attain rigorous standards.
3. *Systems of teaching:* The role that intergenerational and authoritative community must play in raising compassionate children.
4. *The world our children will inherit:* A segmented world in which cooperation will be more important than competition, where thinking creatively and conceptually will be more important than thinking systematically or in a linear fashion. (pp 8–9)

Coupled to these ideas, Goebel's (2008b) work in *Teachers of Hope* imparts a vision that sees hope as a message that permeates the four concepts mentioned above. With wonderful examples of Jesus as our model of hope, Goebel delves into the heart of the educational leader and raises reflective and thought-provoking questions through this excerpt from Matthew:

Here is my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he

will proclaim justice to the Gentiles. He will not wrangle or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets. He will not break a bruised reed or quench a smoldering wick until he brings justice to victory. And in his name the Gentiles will hope. (Matthew 12:18–21)

The questions below clearly reveal the mandate of the educational leader in promoting a culture of hope in our schools:

- What are the attributes of a person who has given you hope?
- Who are the bruised reeds and smoldering wicks in your school?
- What does it mean for a teacher to “bring justice to victory?” (Goebel 2008b, 4)”

In order to facilitate a personal connection to these questions, Goebel, in crafting his message for educators, substitutes the word *teacher* in for the word *servant* in the Matthew excerpt. The reality is, we could substitute the words *administrator* or *parent*, even *friend*. What Goebel so succinctly expresses is the individual's role and responsibility in establishing a culture of hope, by being hope to someone else. In *Teachers of Hope*, Goebel explores seven habits of hope, which are exemplified in the hope that Jesus modelled and embodied. Goebel's message is both clear and necessary. His books work in close partnership and would serve any learning community well in staff development or in helping people establish hope and engage youth. Jerry Goebel poses three final questions

in *Teachers of Hope* that I will leave with you to ponder:

1. Do others (students, peers, family) turn to me for hope?
2. What habit could I immediately focus on to increase my own “hope factor?”
3. How do I lower authority and increase influence in my classroom or workplace? (Goebel 2008b)

There is a wealth of ideas to consider in reading Goebel's work. Having the opportunity to listen to and meet him was a true blessing for me. I encourage you to explore his thoughts—they will challenge you to think, rethink and reimagine your thoughts on education! Reading his work has reinforced and re-envigorated my hope in my ministry with youth. Check out Jerry's website: www.onefamilyoutreach.com.

Hope is an attitude towards the future, an assurance that God's promises will be kept, a confidence that what is bad will pass and that what is good will be preserved.

—Daniel J Sundson

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Can We Bring Popcorn? Six Tips for Using Film in the Religion Classroom

Michael Marien

Michael Marien is the faith life and curriculum coordinator for St Thomas Aquinas RCSRD No 38. He is also a sessional lecturer for Newman Theological College. Check out his blog at <http://faithlife.staratholic.ab.ca/>.

Imagine two junior high religion classrooms. Holy Week is coming up, and not only has it been a long Lent, it has been a long term. The two teachers come up with similar ideas: one is going to show Franco Zeffirelli's *Jesus of Nazareth* and the other Cecil B DeMille's *The Ten Commandments*. Assuming all copyright issues are taken care of, who is making the better choice for student engagement? Before we can come up with the correct answer, let's look at the power of film in the religion classroom.

Film, like all art forms before it, has been used to portray the sacred and the profane as an expression of the culture. (For the purposes of this article, we will focus on the narrative Hollywood-style film.) In its early days, the novelty of film was just that—a novel form of entertainment, awe-inspiring to some and the devil's playground to others. It has

only been in the past 40 years that film has been considered an appropriate tool for student engagement and method of evangelization. We recognize, often to our dismay, that we are teaching students who are exposed to more visual images than printed words in any given day. We also realize that they have a desperate need to attain media literacy.

This has not gone by unnoticed by religious leaders. In 1995, Pope John Paul II addressed the importance of teaching students to interpret and critique film:

It is very useful when, even in school, teachers devote attention to this problem [of interpreting a film's message], sensitizing the students to images and gradually developing their critical attitude towards an idiom that is by now an integral part of our culture. (EWTN 1999)

A religion classroom that does not include film as part of instructional strategies is a classroom of missed opportunities. In fact, we are all too ready to "show a film" because we think that it will "appeal to the students." Like any powerful strategy, we need to know how to use it effectively. Here are six tips

for successful use of film in the religion classroom:

1. **Know your purpose.** In his book *Teaching Religion and Film* (2008) (an American Academy of Religion Book), Gregory J Watkins shows that four major approaches can be used when we connect religion and movies: (1) using religion to interpret movies; (2) using movies to critique religion; (3) using movies to promote religion and (4) using movies to expose cultural values. Which of these four approaches are you taking with your class? Are they aware of how they are viewing the film? Are they ready to make the leap from the literal story to the symbols? Do they have the background and experience to make that leap? In other words, do they know how to "read" a film?
2. **Begin with the end in mind.** You know that a certain film will be a perfect match for your curriculum and will engage the students. But is it really? Take a good look at the learner outcomes. Will spending two to three hours of instructional time viewing the film be worth it?

How are you assessing the students' learning? Instead of watching the entire movie in one sitting, try creating previewing, midviewing and postviewing activities. Make sure that the students understand why they are watching a particular film at a particular time.

3. **Preserve the religious imagination.** Some beautiful films have been made based on the Scriptures, which provide fairly authentic portrayals of life in ancient times. While the authenticity is important, so too is preserving the religious imagination. Students, depending on their age, can be swept away by the images found in *The Ten Commandments* and lose the significance of the story to their own lives. They can also become despondent about and cynical toward the faith story if it becomes a bag of special effects. Films can support the faith story, but not replace it.
4. **A little goes a long way.** There are some great guides out there that show how to use a portion of a popular film to get across the key concept. You can often pick a film that all the students have seen, and they will be able to retell the story. If they haven't seen it, you can do a quick synopsis, and let the dialogue or plot do the rest. Taking a scene out of context actually helps students explore the symbol or symbols independently.
5. **Connect with an interdisciplinary approach.** If you think a film needs to be seen in its entirety, connect it with other subjects, such as language arts or social studies. Doing this creates a wonderful opportunity to work with your peers to examine the movie from multiple perspectives.

6. **School yourself in film.** Check out some of the titles from the list below. They range from the university-level arts course to specific reviews of films and how they can be taught from a faith perspective.

All our religious traditions teach us the power of story, and the stories being told today can be found in our theatres and DVD players. With a few tools and some careful reflection, students can meaningfully embrace life through the way they see the world.

Oh, and which of those two junior high teachers made the right choice? If they used the six tips, both of them!

Resources

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\$3,000 Project Grants Available

The ATA Educational Trust is a charitable organization dedicated to the professional growth of Alberta teachers. The Trust awards a number of grants of up to \$3,000 to help Alberta teachers or others involved in education and teaching develop innovative resources that support curriculum, teaching or learning. Individuals or groups planning to undertake such a project must submit a detailed proposal on or before May 1, 2010.

In January of each year, the Trust posts all application forms for grants and bursaries on its website. Visit [www.teachers.ab.ca/ProfessionalDevelopment/Grants, Awards and Scholarships/The ATA Educational Trust for details](http://www.teachers.ab.ca/ProfessionalDevelopment/Grants,AwardsandScholarships/TheATAEducationalTrustfordetails).

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An Interview with Jerry Goebel

Tim Cusack

Tim Cusack serves with Edmonton Catholic Schools in the Archbishop O'Leary Learning Community. He is also the executive officer of HMCS NONSUCH, one of Canada's 24 Naval Reserve Divisions. He recently spoke with Jerry Goebel; that discussion is reproduced here.

Jerry Goebel has worked with youth and young adults for over 30 years. For 20 of those years he has focused primarily on bringing the Gospel to at-risk youth on the streets or in the juvenile court system. Jerry developed ONEFamily Outreach, which trains mentors to work with disconnected youth (incarcerated youth, youth in recovery and youth who are expelled from school). He has an international weekly newsletter and lectionary-based bible study, and travels extensively to teach church groups and secular groups how to empower young people to become a positive influence in their communities. Jerry has been awarded the 2006 Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry for Gospel Values of Justice and Peace.

Tim: Jerry, on February 2, 2010, you shared some time with teachers and staff of Edmonton Catholic

Schools on the district's Faith Development Day. You spoke on the theme "Think Locally, Act Globally: The Hands of Social Justice." I am wondering, Jerry, if you could share your thoughts on why justice is such an important thing for educators to embrace.

Jerry: Thanks, Tim, there are faith-based reasons and socioeconomic reasons why justice is critical to teach in today's world—especially in Catholic education. First, it is impossible to read the Gospels without realizing that Jesus's ministry began with being called to the poor (Luke 4:18–19) and ended with calling us to the poor (Matthew 25:31–46). If we could define one primary motivating trait of Jesus, it was compassion for the poor and helpless, the "least accepted" and "most rejected."

The greatest failing of any culture is to make God into our own image. Humankind has done this frequently, using only the parts of the Scriptures that accent our wants and leaving out those parts that would align us with God's focus. The failing of our culture is "meo-theism." "What about me?" has become our religious mantra, and we've used it to support unrestrained consumerism.



Jerry Goebel

Now we stand at a point where we have stolen our children's environment, economy, and educational and political capital in selfish pursuits. The world cannot afford another generation as selfish as ours. In essence, we have not been who we are telling our children to be.

Tim: Thank you, Jerry. One idea that stood out for me at Faith Development Day was your comment that we need to teach others how we wish to be treated. What advice would you offer to adults who work with you to help them foster this idea?

Jerry: Children learn to be unselfish in two ways: first, by observing unselfish behaviour in adults, and second, by receiving intrinsic rewards for acts of courtesy and justice. I need to also say that you just can't punish someone into unselfishness—it backfires.

Our initiative uses a seven-part paradigm for teaching unselfish behaviours to adults and children (much too lengthy to address here). Simply stated, we help young people defend new values and build cognitive pathways to courteous behaviours through play, imagination and conversation in relationships with mentors who see their roles not so much to teach children but to encourage them to play, imagine, and converse about courteous behaviours.

Essentially, Tim, we create opportunities to catch children doing the right thing and then ask them to tell us how they felt about doing so.

Tim: Jerry, I recently read your inspiring words in *Teachers of Hope* (2008). You state that “we believe that to HAVE hope you must GIVE hope.” In aspiring to make our classrooms, our schools and our greater communities places of hope, what do all partners in education need to understand about hope?

Jerry: The “Prisoner for the Lord,” Paul, gives us all we need to know in 1 Corinthians 13. He says, “And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love (1 Corinthians 13:13).”

Faith and hope grow out of love. Consider this ... while the male apostles were hiding behind locked doors in the Upper Room; the female followers went courageously out to dress the dead body of Jesus. They had run out of faith and hope. They thought their saviour was dead, but they wanted to care for the man who had loved

them when society said they were worthless.

They didn’t go to Christ out of faith, and they had no hope. They went for love, and love became faith and hope when they saw the stone removed and Christ’s burial robes empty. Jesus appears to these women before the men. They receive the Good News first, and it is because of their love—not their knowledge, faith or hope. “And the greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13).

Tim: Jerry, thank you for sharing your thoughts with me. As a final point of discussion, would you please tell me more about your ministry with ONEFamily Outreach? How did it begin and what are your hopes for your mission in the future?

Jerry: Thanks for these questions, Tim. The mission of ONEFamily Outreach has always been to “connect kids to community and communities to kids.” My goal is to change the world by focusing on this mission. I have no concern about whether I succeed at this goal, but—as Mother Teresa said—I will be faithful to it because I believe it is what God has called me to do.

I began as a musician, using my music to inspire people to live justly. Over time, I realized that the greatest impact I could have would not be inspiration, but application. I no longer wanted to be a “performer of the Word” but a “doer of the Word.”

I actually gave up music for almost 10 years. I didn’t even have a guitar during that time until I

was meeting with men in a jail and a visiting pastor (who knew of my past) asked me to play for the guys.

We need our leaders on the front lines modelling how to live in a just relationship with the least of these. I always say we need “fewer grain elevator managers and more labourers in the harvest.” If I want to teach children how to swim, I don’t *push* them in the pool, I *get* in the pool and have them jump in with me. If you wanted to talk to Jesus, you didn’t go to his office. You had to find him, and you would find him wherever the oppressed congregated. That’s the kind of leaders this generation needs and responds to. They don’t care about authority; they care about respect. Why? Look at the public leadership scandals they’ve witnessed in their lifetime.

I deeply believe that you don’t change a generation by *telling* them what *they* need to do. You help them articulate core issues and one significant, influential act *they could take* to address that issue. Then you advocate for them, help them find the resources and get out of their way.

So the ultimate goal would be to change the world and have no one even know you were involved. The community would say, “Look at what WE did,” not, “Look at what HE did.” It’s a yeast-in-the-bread sort of thing. When the bread has risen, no one even knows it was there.

Tim: Jerry, thank you so much for sharing your insights with me. May God continue to bless you and your mission.



Three Cups of Tea

Brenda Hamilton

Brenda Hamilton teaches at St Angela Elementary School, in Edmonton.

Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace...One School at a Time

by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin

New York: Penguin Books, 2007

At first glance *Three Cups of Tea* appears to be the perfect book for any teacher. Why wouldn't the cover photograph of three young Pakistani girls devoting themselves to reading what appear to be well-used but highly valued school textbooks immediately catch the eye of an avid, informed and dedicated teacher? Certainly this book is "for teachers." But to classify it as such would be a very unjust oversimplification. *Three Cups of Tea* is so much more than that!

This book is a truly eloquent and absolutely riveting account of Greg Mortenson's honourable and admirable humanitarian life mission—to build schools to provide a balanced secular education for all, especially girls, in remote villages of Pakistan where the *madrassas* gave birth to the Taliban.

First, if you love adventure this "astonishing, uplifting story of a real-life Indiana Jones," as the back covers states, will grip you at every turn. The opening chapter of Mortenson's failed attempt to summit K2, the second highest mountain in the world, in Pakistan's Karakoram, proves only the beginning of a series of struggles and brushes with danger. From the carrying of the school's roof beams by the men of Korphe 18 miles up the Braldu Valley, to Mortenson's abduction by the Waziri, the reader remains captivated and absorbed.

If you have ever felt totally committed to a cause, a personal goal in your own life, or a worthy purpose, Mortenson's compelling experiences will resonate with you. From his days as a soldier in a two-year tour of duty in the US military, to his days as a graduate student in neurophysiology at Indiana University right up to his life of rugged frugality sleeping in his grandmother's old burgundy Buick (nicknamed La Bamba), and his writing and posting of 580 letters of requests for financing for his first schools and voyage to Pakistan, the reader is thoroughly captivated.

Last, if you have ever become attached to someone of a culture

other than your own; if you have ever felt genuine empathy for a stranger who lives "outside of your own personal borders"; or if you have ever felt concern and frustration at the conditions some people face on a daily basis, every single one of the 338 pages of this book will delight you beyond measure. The reader is deeply impressed by the selfless service and unrelenting efforts of Greg Mortenson, whom many consider to be a modern-day hero.

Haji Ali, a chief of Korphe village and close companion of Mortenson's, describes the deep and mutually affecting relationship between the people of Pakistan and Mortenson; "Here [in Pakistan and Afghanistan] we drink three cups of tea to do business; the first you are a stranger, the second you become a friend, and the third, you join our family, and for our family we are prepared to do anything—even die." *Three Cups of Tea* is a must-read.

Editor's Note: There is a young readers' edition of this story published by Dial Books for Young Readers, a Division of Penguin Young Readers Group, ISBN 978-0-8037-3392-3.



Terry Fox and Grade 5 Social Studies

Terrence N Siqueira

Terrence N Siqueira was a music and elementary classroom teacher at Good Shepherd School in Okotoks for 19 years. Since the fall of 2008 he has been the assistant director of religious education for Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools.

This lesson plan was contributed as an assignment for REL ED 467 Contemporary Theory and Praxis in Religious Education at Newman Theological College.

Editor's Note: The five movements of shared praxis are (1) expressing our own reality, experience or praxis; (2) critical and shared reflection; (3) story and vision of the faith community; (4) appropriation/making the faith our own; and (5) response/decision. This shared praxis approach to religious education developed by Thomas Groome is a major approach, age appropriately adapted, of the current religious education programs in Alberta Catholic schools. This lesson demonstrates that this approach can be adapted to help faith permeate other subject areas.

The Five Movements of Shared Christian Praxis Lesson Planning

What I Will Teach

Grade 5 Social Studies—General Outcome 5.2—Histories and Stories of Canadians and ways of life

Focusing Activity

Have a brief discussion on being handicapped. See if students know any famous Canadian leaders who had a handicap. What strengths did they have? Bring in a couple of books on Terry Fox. Read excerpts aloud to the class. Talk about Terry's life and what sparked him to do what he did. How was Terry trying to be a leader, even though he was dealing with cancer? The class could come up with a list of qualities needed to be a leader.

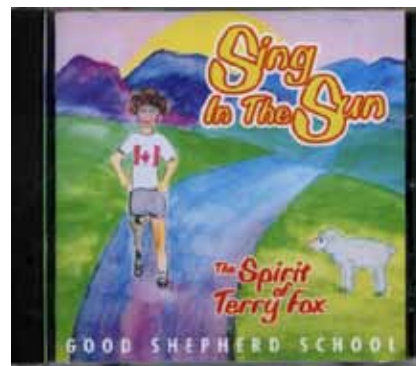
Step 1: Expressing Our Own Reality, Experience or Praxis

Talk with the class and let them share their experiences with people who get sick or have terminal illness. Students may refer to their families and friends.

What did these people do to deal with their circumstance? Could we all be ill at some point? How can we still show leadership and bring about change? Is Terry Fox different from any one of us?

Step 2: Critical and Shared Reflection

What is important in our lives if we get sick and are still trying to lead? List some of Terry Fox's characteristics. What was his vision for people in Canada living with cancer? Write some poetry (different styles) about Terry Fox and his mission. Students may even paint or draw symbols or pictures that show what Terry's cause was.



Step 3: Story and Vision of the Faith Community

- Refer to the story of the sower going out to sow. It is the source of inspiration for evangelization. Mark 4:3–8 “Behold! A sower went out to sow...” How did Terry Fox act like a sower? What was the seed he was trying to sow? Was it a seed of compassion?
- Then read and discuss Matthew 9:37 “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.” This passage tells of the many rewards of people who engage in a mission. What does God call us to do? How can we make a difference in our communities?
- Sing the song “Sing in the Sun,”¹ by Terrence Siqueira, in English and French. The song is about making a difference and was written to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Terry Fox Run for the Cure Campaign.

Step 4: Appropriation/Making the Faith Our Own

What can we do in our community to make a difference? Participate in the Terry Fox walk, donate money, raise awareness of people who need help and support through bake sales, head shavings, visiting the sick, prayer assemblies and so on.

Step 5: Response/Decision

Through their poetry, art and song, students can decide how they can keep the dream of Terry Fox alive on an annual basis. They can participate in activities that promote health and awareness of Terry’s mission. We need to hold events that show compassion and encourage those not so fortunate. With our enthusiasm we can engage all our community to continue the Marathon of Hope.

This lesson plan really goes across the curriculum as it involves

music, language arts, physical and art. I used it to engage a whole school and cite the Marathon of Hope as something that speaks to our faith as much as to our duty as citizens.

Note

1. This song is now used by both Foothills Public School Division and Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools in their annual joint project of a Terry Fox Run. Copies of the CD *Sing in the Sun*, produced by Good Shepherd School to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Terry Fox Run for the Cure Campaign are still available. It includes a combination of poetry, story, music and art, all produced by Good Shepherd School students, and the original composition “Sing in the Sun” in both English and French. Cost is \$15/unit including postage and handling or \$25 for two. Inquiries may be made to tsiqueira@redeemer.ab.ca.

\$500 Bursaries to Improve Knowledge and Skills

The ATA Educational Trust is a charitable organization dedicated to the professional growth of Alberta teachers. The Trust encourages Alberta teachers to improve their knowledge and skills through formal education. The names of 30 (or more) eligible teachers who apply will be entered into a draw for bursaries of up to \$500 that they can apply toward tuition.

In January of each year, the Trust posts all application forms for grants and bursaries on its website. Visit [www.teachers.ab.ca/Professional Development/Grants, Awards and Scholarships/](http://www.teachers.ab.ca/ProfessionalDevelopment/Grants,AwardsandScholarships/) ATA Educational Trust for details.



AB-ETF-24

\$300 ATA Specialist Council Grants

The ATA Educational Trust is a charitable organization dedicated to the professional growth of Alberta teachers. The \$300 grant program offers teachers who otherwise do not have access to sufficient funds the opportunity to be entered into a draw for \$300 towards the cost of an ATA specialist council conference.

In January of each year, the Trust posts all application forms for grants and bursaries on its website. Visit [www.teachers.ab.ca/Professional Development/Grants, Awards and Scholarships/](http://www.teachers.ab.ca/ProfessionalDevelopment/Grants,AwardsandScholarships/) ATA Educational Trust for details.



AB-ETF-23



Guidelines

The RMEC newsjournal *Embrace the Spirit* is published to

- promote professional development of educators in the areas of religious and moral education and
- provide a forum for contributors to share ideas related to religious and moral education.

Submissions are requested that will provide material for personal reflection, theoretical consideration and practical application. Where appropriate, graphics and photographs are welcome.

The following areas will be addressed in the newsjournal:

- Classroom and school projects
- Upcoming events
- Book reviews
- Reflections
- Feature articles and interviews
- Humour in religion
- Liturgies

Manuscripts should be submitted on disk (preferably) with an accompanying hard copy or in duplicate. The manuscript should include a title page that states the author's name, professional position, address and phone number(s). Submissions should be typed and double-spaced and may be any length to a maximum of 5,000 words. References must appear in full in a list at the end of the article.

Send contributions or enquiries to the editor: Dorothy Burns, PO Bag 3, 46 Elma Street West, Okotoks, AB T1S 2A2; phone 403-938-6051 (res) or 403-938-4265 (bus); fax 403-938-4575; e-mail dburns@redeemer.ab.ca.

The editorial board, which reserves the right to edit for clarity and space, reviews all submissions.

