The goal of the Nurturing Our Catholic Community initiative is to strengthen the faith life of our schools and to raise the public profile of Catholic education in Toronto.

Through our previous plan of Word, Worship and Witness we gained a new appreciation of scripture, the sacred liturgy, and putting our faith into action through witness. Many people in our system have been nourished spiritually as a result of the many activities that were undertaken over the last three years. Most importantly, many of our young people have benefitted from the activities that happened in many schools as a result of Word, Worship, and Witness.

The Journey of the Witness Cross that is making its way to each school in our system will bridge the conclusion of this pastoral plan to our current one based upon the theological virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity. It is fitting that the cross should bridge our two pastoral plans since it is a sign of the love of God for us as well as the universal symbol of our faith. September 2012 marks the beginning of this new three year cycle by focusing on the first of these virtues which is Faith. This will coincide with the Vatican’s recent proclamation that from October 2012 to October 2013 a Year of Faith will be celebrated in the Church. We look forward to celebrating our own Year of Faith in conjunction with the universal Church. This new pastoral plan, Faith, Hope, and Charity, gives us an opportunity to continue to celebrate our schools and all the good that occurs in them.

This resource was prepared to focus on the Year of Faith using the Ontario Catholic School Graduate School Expectations in our Elementary Schools. It is a common language around Faith that allows us to articulate our distinctive Catholic role and identity.

We as educators share the responsibility to lead our students to grasp an understanding of their Faith.

Our students cannot do this alone. We cannot do this alone. We need to be members of a community, which encourages each person in the difficult task of living according to faith values, which are often at odds increasingly secular, there is more need than ever before for an educational community, which stakes its existence on the infinite promise which Jesus Christ, has offered through his death and resurrection. He came that we may have life and have it more abundantly.

This Moment of Promise, p. 16
This resource was prepared focussing on the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectation: **A Discerning Believer Formed in the Catholic Faith Community** and is divided into sections accordingly.

**Overall expectation -** A discerning believer formed in the Catholic Faith community who celebrates the signs and sacred mystery of God’s presence through word, sacrament, prayer, forgiveness, reflection and moral living.

- **CGE1a** illustrates a basic understanding of the saving story of our Christian faith;
- **CGE1b** participates in the sacramental life of the church and demonstrates an understanding of the centrality of the Eucharist to our Catholic story;
- **CGE1c** actively reflects on God’s Word as communicated through the Hebrew and Christian scriptures;
- **CGE1d** develops attitudes and values founded on Catholic social teaching and acts to promote social responsibility, human solidarity and the common good;
- **CGE1e** speaks the language of life... “recognizing that life is an unearned gift and that a person entrusted with life does not own it but that one is called to protect and cherish it.”
- **CGE1f** seeks intimacy with God and celebrates communion with God, others and creation through prayer and worship;
- **CGE1g** understands that one’s purpose or call in life comes from God and strives to discern and live out this call throughout life’s journey;
- **CGE1h** respects the faith traditions, world religions and the life-journeys of all people of good will;
- **CGE1i** integrates faith with life;
- **CGE1j** recognizes that “sin, human weakness, conflict and forgiveness are part of the human journey” and that the cross, the ultimate sign of forgiveness is at the heart of redemption. (Witnesses to Faith)

Faith is the word for the human person’s natural acknowledgement of God.

> “Blessed are those who do not see and still believe” John 21:29

Our children’s faith is nurtured by our own faith. We teach Religion... we grasp our Faith.

Live your Faith and the students will grasp the Faith. We grasp our lived Faith by what we see and do every day.