



St. Thomas Aquinas Regional Secondary School

Our Vision

Our school motto, “Dirige me in veritate tua”, which means “direct me in your truth”, reflects the call for our students to come to know Christ who is “the way, the truth and the life” (*John 14:6*). Catholic education is intended to make our faith become “living, conscious and active through the light of instruction” (*The Bishop’s Office in the Church, 14*). We are contemporary because we attempt to enable students to address, with Christian insight, the multiple problems that face individuals and society today. Having accomplished this, we can send our students into today’s world able to proclaim supernatural charity, peace, justice and mercy.

Our Philosophy

We, at Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic High School, are a learning community under God, growing our Faith, Knowledge, Love and Hope to foster the spiritual, intellectual and physical development of the students to enable them to become more responsible Christians.

A message from the Superintendent of our Catholic schools, Deacon Henk Luyten.

Promoting Anti-racism

Catholic Independent Schools of the Vancouver Archdiocese are firmly committed to preventing racism and all forms of bullying and harassment. The recent events around the world have demonstrated that all levels of society, including schools, must recognize that promoting anti-racism is the responsibility of all people. The opportunity for continuing education and growth in this area is particularly important for our young people, who are our future. This obligation is reinforced by the recent statements published by both the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and our own Archbishop Michael Miller. In light of this, all are encouraged to read both of these documents and become more familiar with the Church’s social teachings on racism. Please refer to the CISVA Harassment and Bullying Prevention Policy if you experience any form of racism in our schools.

CISVA continues to educate our young people regarding the inequities that exist for people of colour and the poor and marginalized. Racism and injustice are topics that need to be discussed not only in the classroom but also between parents and children. These resources can provide parents with the opportunity to simply have a conversation about each person being made in the image and likeness of God and treating all people with dignity.

Being a SAINT

Several years ago, the staff undertook an exercise in looking what we at STA stood for and how we could apply these characteristics in a contemporary and current way. We came up with 5 words that define what it is to be a saint at STA. These expectations are to be strived for by all students, staff and school community members.

ReSpect: *Our actions demonstrate that we value, and care for our school and every individual.*

- Our words and actions respect and defend the dignity of every person.
- Our uniform is worn with pride.
- Each individual keeps the school clean and tidy (inside and out) by always cleaning up after themselves.

PerseverAnCe: *We always strive to work hard, do our best, and never give up.*

- We do our best.
- We ask for help and use the resources that are available when we struggle.

ResponsIbility: *We recognize that our actions affect ourselves and others, and that we all have a role in building a positive and safe school environment.*

- We know and meet personal, classroom, school and community expectations.
- We stand up for what is right and make healthy choices.
- We accept the consequences of our actions.

CommUnIty: *We work together. We are Aquinas.*

- We acknowledge the unique gifts that each individual brings and appreciate each others' differences.
- We are courteous and committed to making people feel welcome in our school.

FaiTh: *Our Catholic faith permeates all that we do and who we are.*

- We are respectful at mass.
- During prayer, we stop, stand and participate reverently wherever you may find yourself.
- We participate fully when our school community comes together to celebrate our faith.
- We are beacons of God's love for us

Racism is a problem we can all address together

“No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love.”

– Nelson Mandela

We, at St. Thomas Aquinas Regional Secondary School, are very proud of the multiple ethnicities of our students who make up our school population. The multicultural nature of our population begs us to follow Jesus’ message for us to, “Love one another”. In the midst of the recent senseless, unjust and tragic deaths, most notably in the USA, St. Thomas Aquinas Regional Secondary School is committed to continuing its efforts towards combating racism, inequality and injustice.

The systemic challenges that come with being associated with numerous marginalized groups, including minority ethnic groups, indigenous peoples, LGBTQ, the homeless, and those suffering from mental illness, while working to continually educate ourselves and the exceptional young minds that make up our student body, is ongoing. Much of our approach is built into our ethos and should be prevalent in our day to day practices, especially those centered on relationships.

We acknowledge that the challenge is enduring and, despite our intervention strategies over the years, remains present in all areas of society, including schools. Moving forward, education will be a key catalyst as we continually seek for and implement ways and methods to combat the ignorance that is often prevalent when it comes to how we speak or act towards others, especially those individuals and groups deemed marginalized. We must be intrepid in our pursuit of truth and justice and open to addressing those important issues with staff and students (and others), with the goal of seeking out more effective ways to be as respectful, accepting, kind, tolerant, compassionate, and as just as possible to all those created in God’s image.

It is not enough to be non-racist; we must be anti-racist and understand the difference. Worthwhile change starts with us individually; let us be the change we want to see in others. The greatest form of leadership is still leadership by example. We, at St. Thomas Aquinas Regional Secondary School, stand in solidarity with those individuals and groups who may feel disrespected and, at times, even persecuted. We must continually honor our *raison d’être* by looking after each other, especially those who may, at different times in their lives, find it difficult to look after themselves.

Pope Francis reminds us that “We cannot close our eyes to any form of racism or exclusion, while pretending to defend the sacredness of every human life.”

Let’s work together to always know, love and serve God by demonstrating our faith in action in our thoughts, through our words and, most importantly, by our actions.