



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Christmas Store allows students to share the joy of giving**

About 180 students from Greater Saskatoon Catholic School did something they may not have had the opportunity to do before—shop for Christmas gift (free of charge) to give to their family members.

Select students from three schools—St. Frances Cree Bilingual School, St. Michael Community School and St. Maria Goretti School—participated. Principals and teachers carefully selected families who would benefit most from the store.

A group of volunteers, led by Carla Shynkaruk-Adamko, whose children go to school within the division, spent months preparing a temporary Christmas Store at the building that was formerly St. Patrick School. They gathered donations from colleagues and local businesses, coordinated all the arrangements with the school division, set up the store, guided students through their shopping experience and wrapped the presents.

“Most of us take the simple act of giving a gift for granted. We can buy a friend a cup of coffee, or pick up ‘just one more little thing’ as a stocking stuffer. But these children and their families don’t have the same opportunities,” Shynkaruk-Adamko said. “They may not experience the joy of giving without this store.”

Superintendent of Learning Services Gordon Martell stated the division welcomes this unique form of support from the community. “A tremendous amount of work has gone into this. We are very thankful for all of the efforts to give these students a sense of belonging and build their confidence. Students who experience giving have a heightened sense of self-worth and empathy. This is a great opportunity to build these attributes in children and youth during the Christmas season.”

Shynkaruk-Adamko added, “Everyone feels a sense of pride and joy giving something to someone else or helping others—it really is better to give than receive. I just wish I could see their faces when their family members open those gifts.”

With 44 schools and over 17,000 students, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools is Saskatchewan’s largest Catholic school division, providing Catholic education from pre-kindergarten through Grade 12 in Saskatoon and area, Biggar, Humboldt, Martensville and Warman. We are rooted in faith, growing in knowledge and reaching out to transform the world.

- 30 -

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