

# Evergreen Schools chaplain takes students and staff on a Bible adventure

School chaplain – and Grandin Media columnist – Mike Landry has devoted much of the pandemic-challenged 2020-21 academic year introducing his students and staff in the Evergreen Catholic School Division to the, well, evergreen wisdom of the Bible.

The resident of Stony Plain, who is also a musician, writer and professional speaker, said he was introduced to the Great Adventure Bible Study program about 20 years ago when its founder, American evangelist and biblical scholar Jeff Cavins, taught the learning system to Landry and his classmates pursuing an Advanced Certificate in Youth Ministry from Life Teen Inc. in Arizona.

Landry says Cavins' work, along with the book written by Scott Hahn entitled *A Father Who Keeps His Promises: God's Covenant Love in Scripture*, gifted him with a more holistic view of the Bible.

"They gave me a framework to understand what I was reading and listening to when I would go to Mass on Sunday and when I devoted time to my own private Bible study," said Landry, who with wife Jennifer has five children. "In youth groups, we would read a passage here or a book there, but never the whole big picture."

Successful completion of the Great Adventure Bible timeline is reading and meditating upon 14 books. Genesis, Exodus, Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, Luke and Acts are among the featured books. The connective tissue that Cavins scholarly forged between these 14 narratives spread over 12 time periods is illuminating God's "family plan" going from Adam and Eve to King David up to Jesus and the Church.

Sparked by coming across a different book authored by Cavins last summer, Landry took the scriptural knowledge he learned and pass it along to the Evergreen Catholic Schools' community, which consists of five schools in Spruce Grove, two in Hinton and one apiece in Devon, Stony Plain and Westlock.

The timing was right to complete an activity of this nature as Landry knew entering the school year that his visits to classrooms and large school activities or assemblies would be essentially off the table.

Landry posted an introductory video to the study on Oct. 5 and has proceeded to release video commentaries and written excerpts for the chapters assigned for that week. He is slated to wrap up this experience with a concluding video on April 30 to summarize Acts 16-28. All the materials for the study are posted on his website Mike is Third ([mikeisthird.com](http://mikeisthird.com)). The tagline for his website is God

First, Others Second, I am Third.

Students have expressed gratitude for the study, but Landry has received more feedback to how his colleagues have received his initiative, and he says greater spiritual knowledge has been attained.

“There’s a lot of people who don’t see the connection between Moses and the Passover meal with the Eucharist, and it’s one of the things I’ve assumed,” he said. “Having worked around the Church for about 24 years, connecting the Passover with the Eucharist is always how I’ve seen things. Moses had the Israelites take a lamb, kill the lamb, spread its blood on the door posts and then eat the lamb to join themselves to what is sacrificed to God.

“If the apostles had grown to understand Jesus as the Lamb of God, they take the lamb, kill the lamb and eat the lamb, you are freed. The light really went off for one of the teachers extraordinarily well.”

Landry recalls that prominent Catholic figures such as Bishop Robert Barron and Edmonton Archbishop Richard Smith advocated for followers of Christ to become comfortable with being still and quiet to give room for God to speak to you and direct you.

“But in many ways, we’ve done the opposite,” said Landry. “We’ve seen political difference in our province, our country and beyond our country. We have kind of sat behind a bunker and lob hand grenades at each other.

“Taking a step back and reading Scripture can orient our hearts and put our minds to listening to God’s voice.”

While Landry will be done posting digital content for this Bible study at the end of the month, anyone Catholic, young and old, can visit his website and complete the timeline for themselves.