

Let Your Light Shine Forth



Social Justice in Edmonton Catholic Schools
2022-2023

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INTRODUCTION

Catholic Social Teaching is a central and essential element of our faith. Its roots are in the Hebrew prophets who announced God's special love for the poor and called God's people to a covenant of love and justice. It is a teaching founded on the life and words of Jesus Christ, who came "to bring glad tidings to the poor . . . liberty to captives . . . recovery of sight to the blind" (Luke 4:18-19), and who identified himself with "the least of these," the hungry and the stranger (Matthew 25:45). Indeed, our commitment to the Catholic social mission of the Church must be rooted in and strengthened by our spiritual lives. In our relationship with God, we experience the conversion of heart that is necessary to truly love one another as God has loved us.

Edmonton Catholic Schools has a long and proud tradition of participation in acts of social justice. Schools are encouraged to take their children through a broad range of activities that allow them to experience the many ways that they can make a difference in the world. Indeed, when we consider the Five Marks of Catholic School Identity, our acts of social justice provide a visible and tangible embodiment of our Catholic worldview.

The beautiful stories of our students and schools as agents of change are captured in our Social Justice Report 2022-2023.



ANNE FITZGERALD

Students participated in an afternoon run to raise money for the Terry Fox Foundation for cancer research. We collected \$440. Students were very excited about the run. They learned about Terry Fox and how difficult it was for him to run for cancer. They got tired after running a short time inspiring a newfound respect for him. A guest speaker who had cancer also came and spoke to them about Terry and his personal experience. The students were moved.

The 143 students at Anne Fitzgerald School participated in the "Postcards for Peace" project. They each created a postcard with words of thanks and beautiful pictures for Canadian Veterans. This project provides an opportunity for youth to send postcards to express messages of thanks to those who served Canada in times of war, military conflict, and peace or who are still-serving Canadian Armed Forces members. This learning activity allowed youth to actively remember the sacrifices and achievements of Canadian Veterans. These postcards were sent to the military base here in Edmonton to be distributed to local veterans. The students learned respect for the local military and the sacrifices they made for our country. Many stated how proud they were to call this country their home and how blessed they felt to live in a free country away from the effects of War. This project also encouraged compassion for our refugee/immigrant students who had experienced war.

Students at our school created holiday cards to send to seniors living at Touchmark Wedgewood Retirement Community to share Christmas Spirit. Students felt joy at sharing their holiday spirit and being able to create something beautiful to bring joy to others. They were proud of their printing and colouring as well as the work and love that they put into each card created. It helped them think about the how the spirit of Christmas was giving to others and sharing with others.

Students created bookmarks and hid them in books in the school library. Each student created a unique bookmark with a message of kindness to be found by students as they took out books from the library. Over 150 bookmarks were created. The bookmarks proved to be a pleasant surprise, valuable message, and fun way for students to find books to read in the library. Students enjoyed finding

the bookmarks. They shared what they found and their excitement with others as well as the enjoyment they had in their reading. The students decided they would create cards for the community next as the idea of making the bookmarks proved to be a big hit with others in the school.

The school bought seed packets of Canadian wildflowers to be distributed with cards made by students to thank our neighbours for growing with us. Students were so eager and excited to be able to visit our neighbours and share their cards. Many of the community members were outside so students were able to hand the cards to them personally which made an extra impact. Students were also able to visit a part of their community many of them were not familiar with so that was very exciting for them. They felt very special to be able to share a thank you to our neighbours.

ANNUNCIATION

In 1980, Terry Fox set the bar high for himself when he started his Marathon of Hope, saying, "Nobody is ever going to call me a quitter." Our school proudly took part in this year's Terry Fox school run to continue Terry's legacy. Students decorated running shoes with an adjective for Terry Fox. The Running Club lead the entire school on a 20-minute run for Terry Fox on September 23rd. We surpassed our \$700 donation goal by raising \$973. Students learned that if one person could make a difference in the world, they too had the ability to make a difference. Students learned to lift one another up. The sense of comradery was truly felt among all the grades during the Terry Fox Run.

During the Thanksgiving season, Annunciation students participated in the Fight to Stop Hunger fundraiser. Utilizing the Edmonton Food Bank's most needed list, each grade was responsible for bringing in a specific item, however, all donations were welcome. In the end, the school community came together and collected over eight boxes overflowing with non-perishable food items. Participating in this fundraiser brought clarity to the issues that communities may face in times of need. The students were excited to participate and help those in need.

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Over the Advent season, our school engaged students in a Dream Builder Challenge. Money was collected for two events. The first being a school-wide movie whereby students could donate and then be provided a healthy snack or wear their PJs. The second was a draw for "Best Seats in the House" for the Christmas concert. Parents had the opportunity to receive tickets to front row seating during either the afternoon or evening concert. Students felt empowered that they were making a difference in the lives of other students including some at our school. They also built a sense of community as classes and as a whole school. The "Best Seats in the House" was an excellent opportunity for parents with one parent even saying, "the donation was to a good cause."

Each class went to a different community location to give out cards as a sign of gratitude on Valentine's Day as part of Random Acts of Kindness. Classes went to the Misericordia Hospital and dropped off cards on the windshields of hospital staff, handed out cards in front of a grocery store, stopped by the Fire Station, delivered to community mailboxes, and went to a retirement home where they completed a craft with the residents. The cards were well received, and many called or emailed the school to say thank you. The Misericordia staff even dropped off paper cranes, made by volunteers, for the class that went to the hospital. Students felt a sense of pride. They also were able to see how their small act of gratitude could make a positive change. Students were really impacted when people returned the kindness to their class.

A class researched the Fauna Foundation, the work they did, and why organizations like this were important. Students participated in the Adopt-a-Chimp program and chose the specific chimp they wanted to adopt. The class discussed the role they could have in helping God's creations and what the responsibilities were to other living creatures. Students developed or deepened their empathy for God's creations and their understanding that humans could have a profound impact on the lives of others, both positive and negative. They were proud of being able to make a difference in the lives of the animals living at the Fauna Foundation Sanctuary.

With the tragic passing of two Edmonton Police Service constables, the students at Annunciation School wanted to pay their respects by creating a thank you banner that was displayed at the front of the school. Each student created their handprint using blue paint. Then each handprint was placed in a display that read

"Thank you Edmonton Police Service." The blue handprints created the blue ribbon symbol that showed support for the Edmonton Police Service. The students were able to recognize the hard work that the Edmonton Police Service does for the community. They understood the ultimate sacrifice that the two constables made to keep everyone safe.

ARCHBISHOP JOSEPH MACNEIL

Students and staff set a goal to raise \$10,000 this year for the Terry Fox Run. The Terry Fox Foundation told us that Terry, "Was an average kid. He wasn't the smartest, fastest, strongest, or best athlete – but he was a hard worker. When he found out that cancer would cause him to lose his right leg, he did not give up hope. Instead, he was inspired by other children who were also battling cancer and decided that he must do something to help. That's when he got the idea to run across Canada to raise money for cancer research. This was a huge challenge, but Terry's courage and determination helped him through this journey." Students were excited to step up to the challenge. The Grade 5B class started us off strong, raising \$350 in three days. Their energy was contagious, and school-wide donations began doubling. Efforts ranged from setting up a lemonade stand, sharing the school's fundraising link, and to giving what cash could be spared. One of the teachers pledged to shave his head if we met our goal. Raising \$10,000 seemed like a huge challenge, but the AJM community rallied and raised a grand total of \$13,165.50 in just three weeks! Our heartfelt thanks to all who made this happen.



The Junior High Student Leadership group promoted the collection of cereal box donations from the student population over the season of Advent. We collected 489 cereal boxes that were donated to schools in need within ECSD. Students



learned the importance of supporting the needs of poor and vulnerable people by providing food for the hungry.

Students and staff, in both elementary and junior high, were given options of activities and draws they could participate in by donating money that would be given to the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation's Dream Builders Fund. As a school, we raised \$2,343.45 to donate to the Foundation and asked that the money be used for programs most in need. Students learned that they had a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially poor and vulnerable people.

The Kindergarten students collected lonely (unmatched) mittens from the school community. After sorting them by colour and type (gloves/mittens), we were able to make 5 pairs which we donated to the Water Warriors YEG program. The remaining 68 mittens were donated to the city-wide Mitten Match up program where they would be matched with other similar mittens and donated to those in need. The students were excited to practice their math skills in a meaningful context. They were so excited when they were able to make the pairs and hoped that the remaining mittens would be matched up as well.

ARCHBISHOP MACDONALD

The MAC Social Justice Club collected yarn for the seniors at the GEF Seniors Home which is a neighbor to our school. Our call to community was to support the seniors that call the GEF facility home. Students were excited to help our neighbors and wished the seniors the best with their knitting projects.

The students served the entire student body of St. Vincent School on St. Vincent's Feast Day. St. Vincent is a neighboring school, and we were called to be in community with them. The lunch was hotdogs, chips, and juice boxes. The students loved seeing the happy faces of the elementary students.

During the week of the October 10th to 16th, the students donated clothing for Boyle Street Community Services. The initiative kicked off with the school Thanksgiving celebration where the Seven Catholic Social Teachings (CST) were

the theme. When it came to the option for the poor and vulnerable, staff from Boyle Street shared the good work they do. This was then followed up with a school presentation where 140 students attended. In the end, 8 boxes (3'x3'x3') of clothing were collected. Boyle Street Community Services was thrilled. Students not only learned about the Seven CST, and specifically the option for the poor and vulnerable, but they also got hands on experience of making a difference. The event brought about awareness, service, and philanthropy, coming together to make impact in their understanding of what it meant to participate in Christian Service.

Students in the Social Justice Club (120 students), after a brainstorming session, made a list of initiatives they were passionate about. One of them was breakfast programs. With a call to serve the ECSD community, they chose to collect cereal for Ben Calf Robe/St. Clare School. In total, 50 boxes of cereal were donated within the club and delivered to Ben Calf Robe School. Sometimes donations to organizations lacked the personal touch so knowing that the cereal being collected was going to students in our School Division made this initiative feel more connected and meaningful.

The International Mindness Club (IM Club) did a 16-day advocacy and awareness campaign with the addition of a cash collection for "16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence." This included infographics, morning announcements and posters for awareness and a cash collection of just over \$1,000. This money was donated to Amnesty International. This initiative started with the IM Club's concern over what was happening in Iran. Seeing this as a life issue and learning about the Catholic Social Teaching (CST) on life and dignity, the group was pleased to make a real connection with action and their understanding of CST.

On November 8th, the entire school participated in a variety of Personal Learning Time (PLT's). All 1,100 students and 50 staff members signed up for a session. Students planted seeds, made sandwiches for Boyle Street, played cooperative games, donated blood to Canadian Blood Services, created 60 Christmas cards for the elderly, wrote letters to veterans, and the list goes on. This PLT event was good not only for the students but the staff as well. Learning, advocating, and acting on Catholic Social Teachings helped deepen our connection to our Catholic faith.

Let Your Light Shine Forth

The school had a play performed by Work Plays School Program. The play, attended by 200 students, highlighted the importance of worker rights in Alberta. The play, "Working It Out," followed two young restaurant employees, Ben and Sophie, through their fast-paced journey of getting to know the working world with the help of a number of characters that they encountered on the jobsite. Students left entertained and knowledgeable about their rights as workers.

Dominic the Donkey was an annual event at our school where a teacher played what some would say was an annoying song called Dominic the Donkey in the hallways at lunch until students raised \$1,000. Students looked forward to this fun and slightly annoying event every year but in the end, it was the generosity to help our school family that really shone through. Students were very aware of local and global initiatives that the school completed for social justice but always remembered that there were students in need in our own school community. This event, along with others, strengthens the idea that call to community was so important.

Students in the Social Justice Program collected a cash donation for the Our Lady of Grace Program and collected baby items for Basically Babies. Both these programs help support teenage parents. The Social Justice Group indicated this was an area of concern early in October. The cash donations and items collected went to a great school and organization. In solidarity with their peers, it was great to see students support one another. Being a teenage parent was challenging and our students standing in solidarity with them was amazing.

The school community ran a Christmas Hamper Campaign for the season of Advent. We supplied at total of 35 hamper containers, one to each classroom, where a social justice member advocated for food and/or cash donations. The donations were collected for the Edmonton Food Bank and for students within our school community. We collected over 649 kgs. of food. In total, we collected approximately \$2,389.75 in cash donations for all our Christmas initiatives which included Christmas hampers, Dominic the Donkey sing along, and staff donations. Contagious energy filled the school when students packed the bright red Christmas hampers. By encouraging students to bring in 1 item or \$5 in cash, this helped the students pull together, while not overburdening any one student. It provided a daily classroom reminder that many within our community were struggling with food insecurity.

In an ongoing effort to build cross-generation relationships as active participants in our community, students made multiple visits to the retirement home across the street, McQueen Lodge Seniors Residence. Before Christmas, students went to play seated volleyball with the residents, and it was such a hit. Residents asked for a rematch which was in April. After laughing through a surprisingly competitive game, students spent time visiting with residents and it was clear these interactions lifted both the residents and the students, as well as staff. It really was a joy to watch and be part of. Students described how much they enjoyed the activity and the opportunity. They were surprised at how competitive the game was and it was clear to see the game acted as an "ice breaker" for the visiting that followed. Many laughs were shared between the students and residents.

Black History Month at Archbishop MacDonald aimed to spark conversation and celebration in our community. We hosted many events to celebrate the diversity of our school and highlight Black excellence including guest speakers who were featured in our "Let's Talk" sessions. As well, students led morning announcements to celebrate Black figures and we were also able to host our annual Taste of MAC celebration in which students of different cultures were invited to share their culture through food, dance, and community. We hoped that the impact and importance placed on Black History Month allowed for the entire school community to not only think of the history and the impacts that it had, but also to see the future and what could be achieved. By celebrating together and embracing the cultures that makeup our school community, we hoped it created a sense of a safe and caring community coming together to celebrate diversity, inclusion, and solidarity.

The entire staff at our school went to Sacred Heart Catholic Church of the First Peoples to celebrate Mass but also have a session put on by one of the Division Chaplains regarding Catholic Social Teaching. After lunch, teachers went to various organizations such as the Food Bank, Catholic Social Services, Hope Mission, Boyle Street, and more, and served the community. Students, through social media and stories from their teachers, heard the impact of this service from the lens of their teachers' actions.

For a Lenten Project, our school via Chalice, was connected with a sister school in Kenya called Starehe Girls' Centre. Students raised money, made videos to share



back with the school and sent prayer intentions to them. Students learned about the other school, the challenges they had and got to not only raise money but join in awareness and prayer with the other school.

Throughout the school year, students and staff volunteered at the Edmonton Food Bank. This project was organized by our student led social justice group. Whether it was packing boxes or sorting food, students and staff collected over 60 hours of service. Students got to work directly with the agency to serve but also learn about the logistics of the Food Bank and awareness of the complex issue of food scarcity in our city.

Students made and sold their baked goods to support the Stollery Hospital. From circulating letters of support to local businesses, students received donations to offset the cost of the baked goods. Through a poster awareness campaign and the weeklong sale, students raised money to support the goals of the Stollery. Students learned to advocate for a cause by reaching out to local businesses. This not only empowered them but also allowed them to put on a great bake sale. They learned more about the Stollery and were surprised by the support of the community but also the money raised.

Students sold sundaes at lunch with all proceeds going to the Edmonton Humane Society. Students had to organize a schedule, contact the organization, and work every lunch hour for a week. Students learned new organization skills and time management skills. They also gained an appreciation for giving back to the needy, cute animals!

The IM Club decided to inform the school community about cancer and more specifically the lack of resources throughout the world. The care that we receive here is not the same as the care in underdeveloped countries. The club supplied all lockers with purple ribbons so that students were aware of the fact that cancer affected so many people. Also, we wanted to educate the students of MAC that health resources were not the same.

In the fall, the gardening club did a cleanup of the garden beds at the school but most of their work started in February. Over 200 tomato plants of various varieties were grown from seed. Students learned to repot seedlings and then eventually sold the plants to staff and students. Over \$400 was earned from

these sales and some of the funds were used to buy plants to beautify the school greenspaces and provide flowers for pollinators of which students learned to also care for by turning soil, pulling weeds, and other activities. Also, from the funds earned, \$235 was donated to the Edmonton Food Bank. A vegetable plot was also created to grow carrots, beets, zucchini, spaghetti squash, kale, and garlic which will be harvested in the fall. There may be learning opportunities in the fall after the vegetables are harvested to can, pickle, or make soups from them and possibly sell these to staff and students. This exercise provided an opportunity for students to learn how to care and grow plants both for food as well as aesthetics. It also aided in mental health and physical health benefits as the activities of getting outside and cleaning up green spaces gave them time outside with nature. The students took pride in creating a beautiful outside space and they enjoyed exercise and a mental break from everyday schoolwork. Students got their hands in the dirt learning how simple it was to grow their own plants and food as well as what care it took to grow these plants then repot them as they grew. All students could take home tomato plants if they wanted. They took pride that the money earned from sales continued to beautify school spaces and support the Food Bank.

ARCHBISHOP O'LEARY

Spartans in Action was a semester long service collaboration project with St. Matthew School students. This project involved O'Leary students engaging on a weekly basis with these elementary students, supporting their literacy, numeracy, and social/emotional wellness. In the relationships that developed between our two schools, this collaborative project helped create a safe, caring community between our two schools.

For the Christmas Hamper Campaign, students raised funds, prepared, and delivered 64 hampers to needy families in our community. A total of 300 individuals were positively impacted by this generous gift provided by our students. Students shared that they gained a greater empathy for the struggles people in need faced in our community.

Let Your Light Shine Forth

Our Chaplain took five groups of students to volunteer at the Edmonton Food Bank to help staff coordinate the tasks for volunteers assisting clients accessing the Food Bank. Students learned about the inner workings of this important institution. Additionally, students were able to understand some of the root causes of poverty in our society.

For Black History Month, the students participated in a month-long initiative highlighting injustices faced by people of colour in our society. Activities included guest speakers from the Edmonton Police Service, and various presenters from ECSD Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti Racism (EDIAR) specialists. Students gained a greater appreciation for the root causes of racism. Additionally, students participated in workshops focused on microaggressions. These workshops were very impactful for our students because they came away with a greater appreciation for how these actions contributed to racist behaviours that were unacceptable.

“Missing Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls” was a month-long campaign focused on raising the awareness of violence issued towards Indigenous women and girls. Students participated in presentations focused on the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Additionally, students participated in activities focused on the Moose Hide Campaign. This is a grassroots movement of men and boys who are standing up against violence towards women and girls. Students commented that they had a greater appreciation for the dignity of the human person. Many students were not aware of the scope of this injustice in Canada. Students shared that this experience raised their awareness of the problem and the need to work at ways to combat the issue in our society.

The Archbishop O’Leary Bike-A-Thon was a 24-hour event involving 160 O’Leary students that raised over \$40,000 for the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation, Catholic Social Services Sign of Hope Campaign, and the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Various presenters spoke to participating students during the event outlining the people that would be advantaged by the funds raised by the students. Students shared how impactful the presentations made by Catholic Social Services and the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation were for them. Knowing funds raised were going to support a wide scope of people, ranging from

young people in need to refugees arriving from war-torn Ukraine, helped them feel their efforts were making a positive impact for people in need.

AUSTIN O’BRIEN

All students at the school participated in our first-ever Terry Fox Walk. Students fundraised and donated to cancer research through the following website, <https://schools.terryfox.ca/AustinOBrienCath>. Leading up to this event, several announcements were made to educate all students and staff about Terry’s story and the importance of raising awareness for cancer research. On the day of the Walk, students listened to his story and together we prayed for anyone who has been affected by cancer in one way or another. Together, AOB fundraised over \$500, and we made it our goal to bring in more funds for the Terry Fox Foundation next year. It had a wonderful impact on the entire school community. Students were moved by Terry’s story as many did not know the details of what he accomplished and what he started in hopes of supporting others affected by cancer. Together, as a community, we were able to join in on raising awareness for a cause and pray together in person. Students appreciated the walk, and everyone was respectful and understanding as to why we did this. There was a feeling and sense of community during this event which brought joy to the school.

For the last several years, our school has sponsored students in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, and Rwanda. Each year, AOB students work together to raise funds to send to these students for them to have shelter, food, and any school supplies they may need. Month after month, students work together as a school community to care for these children. Students contributed and raised funds through Slushy sales, Freezie sales, hot chocolate sales, 3-on-3 basketball tournaments, and the Foods classes collected donations as well. All these events took place throughout the course of the school year. Fundraising for these students allowed for our community to contribute to those in need and have a chance to be responsible as well. The students were creative and figured out ways in which they could help other. It was inspiring to watch students reach out and support other students.



The WIN class applied for a grant this year through a community-based learning organization, The United Way's "Make Your Mark Organization." Everyone at AOB was very proud of the class, not only for applying for this grant, but for also being the successful recipient! A cheque for \$982 was given to our students at AOB to carry out a project they planned for, "Stockings for Soldiers" charity. The students created a project to spread Christmas cheer and raise awareness for issues related to poverty in Edmonton. The "Stockings for Soldiers in Edmonton" project was a major success overall. This student lead project included the following: creating lists of items that could benefit those in need; creating a budget; completing all the shopping, and organizing the items into each stocking. The culminating event for this project included our students personally delivering these stockings to Edmonton soldiers. Our students felt good about helping others and learning more about those struggling in Edmonton to provide for themselves. This project allowed our students to learn about budgeting, planning ahead, and helping others. Overall, our students were inspired to look for ways to help more people in our surrounding communities.

Students and staff participated in their first annual Bike-A-Thon! Students entered teams of 10-12 participants and one person in the group had to be on a spin bike at all times. The event took place in April and lasted over a 12-hour period. In total, \$22,000 was raised and donated to Catholic Social Services. We were very proud of our students and their commitment to helping others! Students not only had a wonderful time bonding and having fun together during this event but also made a huge impact on many refugees who had been coming to Canada in the last several months. Being able to help the many Ukrainians coming to Canada brought joy to our AOB community.

To follow up with our Food Drive for the Edmonton Food Bank held in September, students went to their warehouse in May to donate some of their time to help this organization. Students were encouraged to bring donations with them and volunteer their time for a day to work in the warehouse. The Edmonton Food Bank was grateful for our service as a school community, and we will be sure to go back next year. Many students learned about giving to those who needed a helping hand. They worked very hard to get as much done as they could in the warehouse to assist the Food Bank. They made a positive impact on so many citizens of Edmonton, and we hope to continue this tradition in years to come.

BEN CALF ROBE – ST. CLARE

BCR students from Grade 4 led a school-wide food collection of non-perishable food items in November. The items gathered were donated to families in need that our school community served. The students were able to witness the donations helping those in need of our own school community. They were also able to collect, sort and organize the food items into the school Community Pantry. Students noticed that what was gathered was able to be shared amongst students and families in need.

In January, for our Community Closet Connection, students and staff were able to collect, gather, and sort winter garments ensuring all those in need were warm during the winter months. The winter clothing donations were collected, organized, cleaned, and redistributed to those in need amongst those we served. Students were able to contribute to the Community Closet Connection in a meaningful way giving back to vulnerable families that were facing challenging times. The students who accessed the Community Closet in the past were able to contribute to those in need of the present. The students learned about gratitude and generosity of the spirit. Helping hands help those when needed, as it was always better to give.

BISHOP DAVID MOTIUK

As part of our commitment to Catholic social justice and service, our staff joined together in making sandwiches for the Outreach Programs at Sacred Heart Catholic Church of the First Peoples. This was an opportunity to live out our faith and extend a helping hand to those in need. Participating in the sandwich-making social justice act not only had a positive impact on staff morale and engagement but fostered a sense of spiritual fulfillment guided by our Catholic Social Teachings. The powerful reminder from Matthew 25:35-36, "For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me," reminds us of our duty to serve others and see the face of Christ in the marginalized and vulnerable.

Let Your Light Shine Forth

Grade 7 and 8 classes went one class at a time to volunteer at the Edmonton Food Bank. There were eight field trips and while there, students sorted food and built hampers. Students were able to see what happened once food or money was donated to the Food Bank. They were able to learn how important this organization was to people from all walks of life.

Students in the Grade 5 Exhibition Group worked together to teach a Grade 2 class about hunger in our world and our community and encouraged others to donate to the Edmonton Food Bank. The group of students also created posters and placed them around the school to inform the school community. This had a positive impact on the students. They were happy to take ownership and action for this important cause. They enjoyed teaching the Grade 2 students about hunger in the world and in their community. The group created a Kahoot game to further engage the Grade 2 students in their understanding. The students confidently shared their research on this topic at their Grade 5 Exhibition Night to share with parents in the community. They were able to respond to parent questions and to encourage them to donate to the Edmonton Food Bank.

Students created bookmarks for the families staying at the Edmonton Ronald McDonald House. Over 60 bookmarks were made. These were then delivered to the House and seven students were able to attend. A small tour was given as well as an informative session on what the RMH does and the impact they have on families in need. Students were able to see the importance of empathy and how something as small as a bookmark could make a difference.

The Indigenous students of Bishop David Motiuk School, along with their dedicated allies, displayed their unwavering commitment to compassion and community support. After school, they invested their time in meetings and organization to initiate a campaign aimed at collecting sock donations for those in need at Sacred Heart Catholic Church of the First Peoples. With determination, they designed vibrant posters, effectively communicated their cause through morning announcements, and diligently gathered the generous contributions from their peers. They attentively listened to the needs expressed by the church, and it became evident that one essential item required was socks. Recognizing that socks not only provided comfort but also played a crucial role in maintaining good health and well-being, the students believed that this was an achievable goal to collect and distribute. As they embarked on their mission, the students

quickly realized the immense level of organization and cooperation required to orchestrate a successful collection campaign. However, they were humbled by the fact that such a seemingly simple item like socks could have a profound positive impact on the lives of numerous individuals. Their dedication extended beyond collecting socks, as the students also dedicated time to prepare sandwiches that would be served to individuals supported by the Parish. Through their collaborative efforts and selfless actions, these students showcased the true spirit of unity and empathy, demonstrating that even the simplest acts of kindness could make a significant difference in the lives of those in need. The students, driven by a strong sense of empathy and compassion, found themselves in a unique position to lend their support to those in need. This experience served as a powerful reminder that hardship can befall anyone, regardless of their background, and that even the most basic necessities could become unattainable for some. Guided by their faith and understanding that God calls upon us to care for all people, the students became passionate advocates for the well-being of the community, striving to make a difference in the lives of those facing various challenges.

Students collected books for the Little Free Library as their community project. They undertook research, communication with agencies and communicated the needs of the project with their school community. They collected 201 books altogether and 175 were usable for the project. Students were surprised at the complexity of the project undertaking, and the amount of research and planning for what appeared to be a very simple task that was more complex. They gained a lot of confidence by capitalizing on their individual strengths and taking risks in different ways. They were very proud of their community project.

As part of the IB MYP Community Project, three Grade 9 students set a goal to address the effects of poverty by creating a relationship and community with students at St. Justin School. The first part of the project entailed reaching out to the school to find out specific needs of the school and background information of the community. Two areas to be addressed were food and clothing. The Grade 9 students sorted and washed lost and found clothing items. They then delivered and helped to sort the clothing at the school. The second visit to St. Justin consisted of the Grade 9 students meeting a class of Grade 1 students and leading them through the preparation of healthy, easy and inexpensive snacks. The idea was that the students could gain independence in preparing their own



healthy snacks at home. The Grade 9 students were amazed at the reception they received from the school community and especially from the Grade 1 students. Within minutes of being in the room, a Grade 1 student put her hand up to say, "You are really great at this." By the end of the visit, the Grade 1 and Grade 9 students were asking for a follow-up visit. It was planned that the students would visit St. Justin again, teaching cooperative playground and tarmac games. The students said the biggest surprise about the students was that they did not look any different than the students at their own school.

A group of students took action against waste in our community through Eco-Bricking. This was the process of collecting waste to be cleaned and stuffed into plastic water bottles in order to create an "eco brick." The students in this group were passionate about the environment and took it upon themselves to incorporate this passion into their Community Project. They researched Eco-Bricking and created an action plan to educate the younger students at our school who helped them collect the garbage and create eco bricks. Their goal was to collect waste to make enough bricks to construct a structure that could be displayed in our school, such as a flowerpot or garden planter box. The students felt empowered when they realized that they could make a difference in their school and wider community. They took initiative in setting up dates to present to younger students and followed through on their action by collecting the waste and creating their bricks. They have inspired many students and teachers at our school to think differently about the waste we produce and take action to care for God's creation in creative ways.

In Grade 5, as part of the IB program, every student participates in a 6-month Exhibition project where they research, collaborate, and decide on a meaningful action that they were passionate about. An Exhibition group in our school, researched about quality education (one of the UN goals for sustainable development), and they found that quality education required quality technology. The group created their own keyboard and coding game using Scratch and a Makey Makey. During our Exhibition Gallery night, parents and students got to try out their creation! This group felt very accomplished and proud of their creation. They made a difference through building something to inspire others and inform others of the importance of technology in education. Through researching about education in other countries, this group gained an appreciation of their own education.

As part of their MYP community project, four students identified a need of inequality for seniors in care centers. Students created videos and presentations to educate the community about these inequalities. They also requested donations of toiletries and other care items that they used to create care packages for seniors. In total, 150 cards were made by the Grade 2 students to go along with the care packages. Students completed two visits to the Dr. Gerald Zeter Care Center to get to know the individuals and to distribute the items. Students felt that this provided them an opportunity to participate in an action that they otherwise would not have been interested in. They developed their communication skills and were risk-takers when communicating with the residents, as many had never interacted with seniors in this type of setting. Students saw the joy brought to these individuals as they built relationships and shared their packages.

Grade 5 students wrote a letter to Nestle urging them to stop using plastic in their water bottles. Students researched alternatives to plastic and suggested them in their letter. Students became more aware of human effects on water. Students also learned how to use their voice to fight for change.

Four students began their journey as a group with a passion for planting and gardening as part of their MYP community project. After their first attempt of researching to create an indoor garden, students realized that there were too many obstacles to overcome to achieve this action. In keeping with their passion of planting and the benefits of gardening on mental health, they decided to bring some joy to seniors by planting some flowers with them at the Dr. Gerald Zeter Care Center. Students sent emails and made phone calls to many local organizations to obtain donations of seeds, dirt, and plant pots to paint. After being told no many times, students finally received donations from Canadian Tire and Home Depot. Students also enlisted some Grade 5 students to crochet some prizes for when they played Bingo. During their two visits, students painted pots and planted seeds, played bingo and balloon drop, and created a mini spa for manicures. This was an opportunity to participate in an action that students would normally not have been interested in. They developed communication skills by communicating with the residents. Students saw the joy brought to these individuals as they built relationships and shared their packages.

Let Your Light Shine Forth

BISHOP GRESCHUK

Our school participated in a "Share the Warmth: From Head to Toe" project from December 1st to 20th during the Advent Season. The whole school was asked to bring new scarves, mitts, hats, and socks for Ukrainian Newcomers and the Marian Centre. We hoped to help those in need this winter to keep warm in Edmonton's cold winter. "Share the Warmth" is our school motto, as Bishop Greschuk was such a warm person. The Grade 1 and 4 students planned this project and encouraged all the students in the school to participate. The students felt happy that they were helping those in need and those who were perhaps less fortunate here in Edmonton. The students also realized that without warm outerwear those without could freeze in our climate.

As a school, we decided to promote kindness for Bell Let's Talk Day. We gave each class a bucket with post-its and envelopes. Each student wrote compliments to the other students in their class. The students also wrote a self-compliment. As a social justice project, we hoped to promote solidarity, by loving our neighbour and appreciating our differences. All these compliments were then collected into an envelope. The envelope for each student was sent home on Bell Let's Talk Day on January 25th. The students were very thoughtful in writing their compliments to others. One class placed their compliments on a large heart that was placed on each person's desk. The students seemed to value the comments their friends gave to them because they read them so carefully, almost reverently, then quite carefully placed them in their envelope at the end of the day. The students asked to extend the compliments to their teachers and other staff. After the project, as a school, we noticed a decline in behaviour issues between classmates.

As part of Lent and the act of Almsgiving, the school collected essential items for families who recently fled Ukraine and arrived in Edmonton. Once collected, these items were donated to the Free Store for Ukrainian Newcomers in Edmonton. On February 24th, 2022, Russia initiated its invasion of Ukraine and since then there have been over 150,000 newly arrived Ukrainians in Canada with an estimated 20,000 in Alberta. As Ukrainians continued to arrive it was essential that they had basic essentials. We invited our school community to come together in solidarity to donate some of these essential items as part of the basic needs for the families arriving in Edmonton. We collected diapers, toiletries, baby

wipes, formula, linens, towels, and children's toys. We collected two truck loads full to the brim of items. The families continued to bring items. The staff and students at the school came together to participate and witness our Catholic faith in action by assisting a community that was in great need. The generosity of our families was displayed by the overwhelming number of items donated to "The Free Store for Ukrainian Newcomers." Through this campaign it was evident that the families wanted a way to support the Newcomers. This campaign provided an outlet for the families to feel empowered and gave them a way of helping people coming from a war zone.

Each student at the school created a handmade card for the Ukrainian Free Store to give with donations to newcomers when they were receiving donated items or support. In total, 450 "Welcome to Canada" cards were made. The students understood that there was a war in the Ukraine and that the families had been displaced. The students knew Bishop Greschuk was Ukrainian. The students were very happy to welcome the Ukrainian people to Canada and wanted them to feel safe here. The students linked this action of creating a message, making a card, and welcoming with our school's motto "Sharing the Warmth as Bishop Greschuk always did."

Our school made a connection with Kipness Seniors' Centre which was near our school. The students in Kindergarten, Grades 2 and 5 created 120 handmade cards. These cards had the message, "Thinking of You" and were brought to the Centre in June. The students worked on being kind as part of building the Kingdom of God. Kindness meant including all people and helping them feel happy as well as included in the community. The students watched a video on kindness. Discussions were held on how the cards could make a difference for a senior who might be lonely. The cards had colourful art to hopefully raise the spirit of the people in the neighbourhood to know we appreciated, and were thinking of them. The students learned that this was part of sharing our light to our community.



ÉCOLE BISHOP SAVARYN

Students at Bishop Savaryn School participated in the annual Terry Fox Run. Each participant was asked to donate a Toonie for Terry. Students wrote the name of someone affected by cancer before the run. They were told that the money collected would be donated toward cancer research. Students learned how important it was to contribute to research.

Thanksgiving is a time to be grateful for our many blessings and provides the opportunity to share our blessings with others. To ensure all our school family members were able to enjoy a Thanksgiving meal, staff and students collected food donations for two weeks prior to our Thanksgiving celebration. Our school prepared food hampers for the families in our school community and donated the remaining food to the Food Bank. Food security is an ongoing struggle for many families in Edmonton and within our community. Our school community wanted to ensure equitable access to food for families and people in Edmonton. Students were proud to donate food knowing it was going to help people in our community. Students increased their awareness and empathy toward the needs of people in Edmonton.

During the Lenten season, Bishop Savaryn, in partnership with St. Charles Parish, filled the shelves in the Society of St. Vincent De Paul's pantry. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul recently moved to a new location with a bigger pantry. Bishop Savaryn families were challenged to fill a brown grocery bag with non-perishable items. The grocery bags were donated from the Castle Downs Sobeys. Students decorated the bags with positive messaging and filled over 200 bags with food donations. Students took pride in decorating the brown paper bags used to support people who were in need. Students helped pack four vehicles full of food. Our Social Justice Leaders decided that our students would benefit from learning more about poverty and houselessness. During our Monday Morning Teams announcements, a book was shared with the school to further our understanding of poverty and houselessness to maintain dignity and foster empathy and compassion. Taking the time as a school community to deepen our understanding of poverty and houselessness provided students with a different perspective. Students' comments about seeing a person who was homeless included the fact that it could happen to anyone and resulted in a deeper level of

gratitude. Students were genuinely thankful for all the blessings in their lives. Students empathized and were better poised to see the person rather than the challenge of poverty or houselessness.

Our Grade 6 leaders prepared and led the Stations of the Cross during the Lenten season with the help of a Deacon from St. Charles Parish. Our students read the quotations and reflections from the Development and Peace Social Justice Stations of the Cross on a Friday night at St. Charles Parish. All families from our school community were invited to attend the Stations of the Cross and we had over 100 people attend along with other community parishioners. Students were able to witness the gathering of a community in church to pray and reflect during the Lenten season. Students were reverent and engaged during the Stations of the Cross. The Deacon helped to prepare the students at our school prior to the evening. They learned how to prepare and why the Deacon chose to use the Peace and Development Stations of the Cross. Students and parents were proud to be involved in gathering the community in prayer for a faith-filled evening. It was a beautiful evening uniting school, home, and parish. Students witnessed how their leadership positively impacted our community and were authentically engaged in the Stations of the Cross.

The Grade 6 students leading our Social Justice Club wanted to organize and lead a bake sale to support the Edmonton Humane Society. A student leader called the Humane Society and discovered their need for heavy-duty dog toys for dogs in the adoption program. He wrote the following text to describe the project, "On May 23rd and 24th, we are doing a bake sale for the Edmonton Humane Society, which is an animal shelter to help dogs, cats, birds and even lizards. We recommend bringing 5-dollar bills and 1 or 2 dollar coins. If you buy something at the bake sale, the money will go to support the adoption campaign. The Humane Society relies on donations like yours, so please buy lots of goodies! We are helping supply large heavy duty dog toys with our money. Thank you for your support!" Our school's charism is "Leaders grow here as disciples of Jesus." As such, students were provided with as many leadership opportunities as possible. Students wrote announcements and messages to be shared with students and parents. They created posters and organized decorations. They also led the bake sale by baking goods, running the bake sale, and giving change as needed. The first two days were much more successful than expected! As such, the students reflected, made adjustments, and decided to organize a third day.

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The student leaders were very proud of the work that they had done and the help that they were able to offer this organization. They even asked if we could visit the Humane Society and volunteer one day! For the wider school community, the bake sale opened up discussions about how they could support the work of the Humane Society and the animals in our city. Many students asked what the money raised would do and were surprised to hear about animals in need. Some even chose to make donations after discussing the work of this group.

ESCUELA BLESSED JOHN PAUL I

Over the month of October, the community members of our school collected various non-perishable food items for the Edmonton Food Bank. The school community collected over 20 boxes of food! The Food Bank expressed tremendous gratitude for the generous donation and mentioned that the food would help stock their sparse shelves. The students felt a sense of purpose and fulfillment knowing that their food donations were going to a great cause. After hearing about the impact that the pandemic had on the economy and how much the price of food increased, the community was gracious in their donations. The students felt overjoyed when they heard that their food bank items went towards stocking empty shelves.

Students in division 2 (Grade 4, 5, 6) made Christmas Cards for the psychiatric inpatients at the Alberta Hospital Edmonton who may not have had the ability to leave the hospital or be with friends and family over the holidays. Students were able to reflect on how lucky they were to be surrounded by friends and family during the holidays while others may not be as fortunate.

CARDINAL COLLINS ACADEMIC CENTRE

Bottles and cans were collected for the Winnifred Stewart Association charity. Our students learned about the community opportunities, home services, and employment programs that were supported in the community. They learned that it felt gratifying to give. Students felt empowered knowing that their small

contributions could make a larger impact for "disadvantaged" people in the community. When we discussed the benefits of donating to this charity, students often reflected on those people in their own lives who this charity may be helping. As our students largely did not come from privileged backgrounds, they came to appreciate what others may be doing for them in the background.

Students visited the 5 Freedoms Horse Rescue to learn about it's Mission which can be viewed at <https://5freedomshorserescue.com/about>. This organization rescues all kinds of equine suffering from neglect, abandonment, abuse, and slaughter. The organization invites the community to come learn and connect with the equine. This was a wonderful opportunity of animal therapy for the students. The day started out with a beautiful smudge ceremony at the Ranch. Students and staff, each with a different knowledge of and exposure to horses, listened, learned, and asked questions. Throughout the visit there were numerous examples of "connection" between student and horse, but also among students and staff. It was evident the impact this experience had on all who attended.

A total of 30 Christmas cards were created by students for senior citizens at the Greater Edmonton Foundation Pleasantview location. Students thought about how senior citizens could feel lonely over the holiday season and enjoyed the opportunity to bring them some cheer.

Students and staff collected used writing instruments to be recycled by Terracycle. Students were concerned about the environment. They learned how even small changes to their behaviour, such as recycling pens and felt markers, could make an impact on keeping items out of the landfill.

Students and staff collected and recycled old, unwanted socks to keep them out of the landfill through the Second Cut Project. Students were concerned about the environment. They learned how socks were one of the garments that was most often thrown away rather than recycled or reused. This project helped keep thousands of pounds of unwanted socks out of the landfill and turned them into new goods. Even small acts like recycling socks could have a big impact.

Students and staff attended a Reconciliation Walk through the River Valley guided by our Braided Journeys Graduation Coach starting at Emily Murphy Park.



Here they learned some of the Cree history of Edmonton including storytelling, plant teachings, Treaty teachings, tobacco protocol, and the sharing of stories including colonial history and injustices that made Edmonton what it is today. This walk was both a connection to the land in a healing way, and an invitation to learn the stories of Edmonton rooted in colonialism, displacement of peoples, annexed reserves, and problematic politics. It was land-based as many of the stories shared, both the Cree stories and historical sharing, were relevant to the exact land they were on while they were learning. Students were engaged by both the location and the teachings. When asked, students were very surprised to learn of the Papaschase Reserve in Edmonton and what had become of it. Another student commented about the river having a more historical meaning for her and that after speaking with her mother about the walk, felt she had a deeper and more personal connection to the land.

CARDINAL LÉGER

On September 23rd, the Cardinal Leger Chargers participated in a Terry Fox Walk as a school community. The Leadership Team started a collection for the Terry Fox Foundation on Monday, September 19th and collected from the students all week. We placed advertisements on the school SWIFT that goes out to the parents, along with placing reminders on our school message board. The school sold cold Gatorade to the students, and all proceeds went towards the Terry Fox collection. The classes also watched "The Terry Fox Story" with their classmates, in preparation for the day's meaningful activity. Our school goal was \$500, and we surpassed it by collecting a total of \$628. Throughout the week leading up to our Terry Fox event, students spent time learning more about how cancer impacts the lives of those who have this terrible disease, as well as their families and friends. Students learned that cancer is the leading cause of death in Canada, and that almost 1/3 individuals will be impacted by this disease in their lifetime. Students also learned about the impact that Terry Fox and his Foundation has had and continues to have when it comes to cancer research. Students were greatly motivated to participate in our Terry Fox Day events and donate money to this amazing cause.

Our students and staff made a year-long plan to focus on reducing the amount of garbage in our school field and our local neighbourhood. One direct action that all members of our school community took included going out into the field and community to pick up litter. In the month of September, our Grade 7 students spent two blocks outside doing their part. By the end of the school year, each grade level spent at least 3 hours outside cleaning up our community. This event had a direct positive impact on our entire school community. When our Grade 7 students completed their first period outside cleaning up the yard, they were astounded by the amount of garbage that they had collected, and that they had never really noticed how bad the trash in the community had become. They also realized that often they had been partly responsible for garbage being there in the first place. If each member of our school dropped one piece of garbage on the ground, there would be over 500 pieces of litter dirtying up our school field! Students became motivated to prevent litter from happening by properly disposing of their trash. Students were also positively impacted by our yard clean-up events because they could enjoy playing in our sports fields without playing in trash.

Our school ran a month-long breakfast cereal food drive to collect breakfast cereal to help supplement breakfast programs at St. Francis of Assisi School. By the end of the food drive, we were able to collect 122 boxes of breakfast cereal that was then donated that school. Students were impacted by this cereal drive when they realized that there were many kids in our city that were much less fortunate than they were. Knowing that kids go to school hungry every day because they do not have food at home definitely spurred on many of our students to donate extra cereal to our food drive to help feed these hungry students in our Division.

Every year, our school completes a Christmas Food Hamper Campaign to provide meals for families within our own school community that were in need over the Christmas Holidays. We had many families in our school that were new to Canada and needed a little help getting settled and established. We also had many families that struggled to get by on a daily basis. In this event, classes are challenged to bring in enough food to provide a full food hamper for a family in need. This year we identified 13 families that were in significant need for food over the holidays, so our goal was 13 full food hampers. By the end of our event, we were able to collect over 300 lbs. of food, \$150 in cash donations, and we

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received generous donations from Franco's Pizza (turkeys for each hamper), and Cobbs Bakery (fresh bread and buns for each hamper). All the families we identified were able to get a full food hamper plus extra food on the side. School staff delivered the food hampers to families on the last day of school before the Christmas break. When students realized that the food hampers were going to support families within our own school that were in need, students had an even stronger desire to help. Many students did not realize that some of their classmates struggled to find food to eat on a daily basis and would not be enjoying a Christmas dinner because it was a luxury they could not afford. Knowing that as a school we could provide for these families helped students to do all that they could to help out our school community.

In the past, our school and students have benefited from the ECS Foundation and its many supports. This year, our leadership students wanted to find some ways to help give back to the Foundation. As a quick way to collect some donation money for the Foundation, our school held a Christmas dance on the last day of school before the holidays, and we asked students to donate some money to the ECS Foundation. In total, our school raised \$150 for the Dream Builder's Challenge and the ECS Foundation. Our Leadership Club had more ideas that they wanted to pursue in the new year to add to the amount we donated to the Foundation. As with previous fundraisers and social justice events we held at the school, students realized that we were not just helping random people but were helping people in their own community. Students really stepped up their drive and desire to help. When we told students that our school received assistance from the ECS Foundation to provide snacks and lunches for students, as well as provide necessities for new families in our community, students were happy for an opportunity to give back. They also looked forward to helping our Leadership Club run more events, and to participate in events that were aimed at raising funds for the ECS Foundation.

In order to raise awareness and support survivors of residential schools, students participated in a fundraiser for the Gord Downie and Chanie Wenjack Fund. This fundraiser was led by our Math Department during Numeracy Week. To help with raising funds, students could 'pi' a math teacher with a whipped cream pie if they reached a donation goal. In total, our school raised \$545 for this cause. Students had been learning about the impact that Residential Schools had on Indigenous peoples, societies, and families throughout Canada's history. They had also been

learning about the generational trauma that was inflicted because of these institutions. Students were eager to support a Foundation that focused on supporting Truth and Reconciliation and helping Indigenous peoples and communities to cope with the trauma.

For our Cardinal Leger Social Justice and Mental Wellness Day, a group of students and teachers visited our local senior residence, McConnell Place North, to help clean and maintain their courtyard and garden area. Our school has been visiting and volunteering at the residence for many years. This is a longstanding tradition that our students and staff strive to maintain. In this event, students focused on helping to maintain the outdoor courtyard space that the seniors used daily. This included cleaning the area, painting the planters and garden boxes, weeding the flowerbeds, and planting flowers. The students and staff that participated in this event had a very motivational and fulfilling experience. Many students wanted to participate in this opportunity to help seniors in our community and get their hands dirty by getting to work and making a noticeable impact and improvement for the residence. Although the students did not directly interact with the seniors at the residence during this visit, they knew that they made a positive impact on the lives of the seniors who now had an improved garden space to sit outside and enjoy God's creation. The residence sent us their deepest thanks and gratitude for the work that our students did at their centre, as well as thanks from the seniors who had already been enjoying time outdoors in the space. Upon hearing this response, the students felt a surge of joy knowing that just a few short hours of work could make so many people in their community happy.

During our Cardinal Leger Social Justice and Mental Wellness Day, a large group of students and staff members spent time at our neighbouring elementary school, St. Phillip. During the visit, our junior high students spent time tutoring the elementary students, reading with them, and participating in school activities. Cardinal Leger students have been tutoring and mentoring elementary students at St. Phillip for decades, making it a long-standing tradition of service between the two schools. It was an ongoing opportunity for the teenagers at our school to share their knowledge and skills with younger students in an effort to help them improve in their academics and build friendships and connections between the kids. The students who attended this volunteer activity had a fun and uplifting time with the elementary students. They shared with staff how the experience



left them feeling proud of their personal abilities and being able to share what they had and what they knew with the younger kids. Our students learned that everyone had gifts and talents that they could share with others, and that they could be positive role models for the elementary students. Many students had already asked for us to return to the school so that they could continue to help and mentor the elementary students.

CHRIST THE KING

Grade 5 students made Christmas cards for residents at Venta Long Term Care Centre. Students were inspired to create cards to lift up the spirits of the residents at the Centre, some of whom have dementia or do not have regular visitors. Students realized that each person has the right to human dignity, respect, and to know someone was thinking about them even if they were a stranger.

Before, during and after the Lenten season, our school wanted to support our neighbours just like Jesus did. We wanted to help other ECSD schools by donating healthy cereals and oatmeal to their breakfast programs. Grade 3E created posters to place around the school to remind students and staff about the social justice project. The students of 4E created a video discussing how students could choose healthy cereals and oatmeal. It was advertised/announced on our school broadcast and the video was posted on all the Google Classrooms along with being played in class. We ended up collecting 297 boxes which were delivered to St. Teresa of Calcutta and Ben Calf Robe Schools. The cereal boxes were lined up like dominos in the hallway and the student teachers at CTK created a video of them falling one by one. The students were so excited to see all of the boxes that were donated! This was played on the tv screens in the hallways. Students at our school felt inspired to help other students their age. They learned about the importance of looking out for others in our community and they realized how fortunate they were to have breakfast available to them. The students were determined to donate as many cereal/oatmeal boxes as they could because they wanted to be an example to others like Jesus.

Our Junior High Leadership Team raised \$1,000 for Santa's Anonymous by raffling off a 10-foot inflatable Christmas Mickey Mouse. Our students used the money and went shopping as a team and personally picked out gifts for other children to have at Christmas. Donating to Santa's Anonymous put a big smile on the faces of all our Junior High Leadership Team. It filled their hearts with the Christmas spirit, and they felt grateful to be part of helping support families during the Christmas and Advent season.

A teacher held a Winter Flex session for students to build a carnival game. Once games were complete, a school-wide Christmas carnival was held. Part of the flex was for students to choose an Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation fund to donate to. Classes were encouraged to donate as much as they could, and the class who donated the most money would be invited back for an extra half an hour in the carnival just their class. In total, \$1676.50 was raised and donated to the ECS Foundation Helping Hands Fund! Students were appreciative of the impact that something they did was for others in need. They realized that they could have fun while doing something for the community. Students felt empowered by being able to choose where the money went.

A teacher hosted our first ever Grade 9 Bike-A-Thon. Grade 9 students who were interested in participating in the Bike-A-Thon had to raise money in order to stay overnight. Teams were challenged with raising at minimum \$300 that would go to their farewell and a charity of their choice. Students were so excited to have something new for themselves to experience in junior high, especially after the COVID pandemic, and the Bike-A-Thon was a great success! Students asked their friends, families, and community members for donations for the Bike-A-Thon and for a social justice donation. Students were excited to have something for themselves while giving back to their community. The biggest feedback we received from students was that school was finally getting back to normal and that they were happy they could do something that helped themselves and their community.

Christ the King School created cards of sympathy for EPS members, EPS stations, and their families after the tragic passing of two Constables who lost their lives in the line of duty. The cards were delivered to the East, Northwest, and West Divisions. This project impacted our students in a way that gave them the opportunity to give love and prayers of strength to the families that lost these

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EPS members. In total, 50 - 12x17 cards were created by our students. They felt full and learned that others who were in a position of protecting others also needed support and protection. They realized how many people were affected as we have EPS families in our building.

CORPUS CHRISTI

The school held the annual Terry Fox Run on September 23rd. Our school community raised \$1,450. The race was set up in our school field and students were asked trivia questions while they completed the run. A great time was had by all, and students learned facts about Terry Fox, a Canadian Hero. Students felt good knowing that their donations were going to help people who had cancer and hopefully find a cure for this disease. They were taught about Terry Fox before the day of the run. We showed them how Terry let his light shine so others could live a better life. Hopefully, one day we will have a cure for cancer.

Each student was asked to bring a toonie for a Turkey. The toonies were sent to the Edmonton Food Bank to help the poor celebrate Thanksgiving. Our school community raised \$740.75. The students felt good about helping the less fortunate. They learned about how the Hope Mission and other groups made Thanksgiving Dinner for those people who were homeless or could not afford food. We asked the students to be truly thankful for all the blessings they enjoyed. Students made prayers for Thanksgiving dinner, remembering to thank farmers, food producers and those that prepared the meal.

Donations were collected for the Royal Canadian Legion Poppy Fund. We explained that the Veterans who sacrificed a lot so we could live in freedom needed our support. The students felt good about helping those in need. On November 10th, they were happy to meet and have a conversation with two veterans along with one active-duty military guest for our Remembrance Day Ceremony.

DIVINE MERCY

Students created Christmas cards for houseless seniors in Edmonton. Cards were given to the Operation Friendship Seniors Society (OFSS), an organization who offer services without judgement to improve the quality of life for seniors over 55 years of age. Students began to understand the lives that other people in our community have and the impact a card and positive message could have on someone, especially during the holidays.

Students and families collected food items for the Edmonton Food Bank during our Christmas concert week. We were able to fill two Food Bank boxes as well as another smaller box full of food items. Students learned about the Food Bank and how they helped people in the community. Students learned how they could have an impact on people, even if it is only by providing one can or item of food. Working together makes a big impact!

The Kindergarten students planted flowers that were donated to others in the spring! The flowers were planted into arrangements and donated to spread kindness and beauty to others in the community! Giving to others helped students feel good at the same time as spreading happiness onto others!

For the 40 days of Lent, we collected food items for the St. Teresa Parish Food Bank. We collected enough food for a family for 40 days and 3 meals with snacks for the days, as well as diapers for the infants. Students looked at what they had for three meals and grades paired up to make sure that all non-perishable food items were collected to provide meals for those in need in our Parish. As we fasted for Lent, we fed others who needed it.

The Grade 2 students at our school made bird feeders to hang around the school yard this Spring. They celebrated Earth Day by showing care for God's creations. The students were so excited to help God's creatures this Spring! They learned about the food animals eat, where they get food, and how difficult it could be for the birds to find food in the Spring when the plants were just beginning to grow. The students were happy to see the birds enjoy their feeders around our Divine Mercy fields.

EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

The Educational Planning team asked for gently used or new blankets to be donated for the people in need at the Boyle Street Community Center for their Blankets of Hugs for Boyle Street initiative. The goal was to have 25-30 blankets for our friends in need for the Thanksgiving long weekend, before the outside temperature dropped. Our goal was met and our colleagues from the Communication Department graciously put together 25 care packages to accompany each blanket of hugs. We wrapped each blanket with love and a special message of hope. As a department, we came together as an entire community to help provide for people in need.

FACILITY SERVICES

Staff collected 250 lbs of food which was donated to the Edmonton Food Bank.

A staff fundraising event was held through raffle items and a staff 50/50. In total, \$954.50 was raised for the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation, Helping Hands Fund.

ÉCOLE ESCUELA FATHER LEO GREEN

The "hummingbird team" received a grant from the United Way to help homelessness. The team, Kindergarten, Grade 5, and Grade 6, decided to grow the grant by having a movie day in the gym where students donated to join. The total money for the grant and fundraiser was \$1,700. The team then built a budget sheet where each buddy group got to spend \$25 at Giant Tiger. Students purchased, and created beautiful pillowcases, collected over 100 gently used jackets, and made care packages to send to the Mustard Seed. A great initiative that taught the whole team so much! The students were in charge of the entire project! They had presenters to learn about empathy, planning, budgeting, how to support those less fortunate, and a sneak peek of a day in the life of a

homeless person. They made new friends and built connections. The students wrote letters requesting what they needed, created all the advertising, established their budget, did all the shopping, and then finally put everything together. The story was even featured on Global News and many students were interviewed. <https://globalnews.ca/video/9431789/father-leo-green-students-team-up-to-help-edmontons-vulnerable-population>

Every two weeks, a different class from our school walked over to St. Michael's Seniors home to do art with the residents. During COVID, they became our friends through the window, however now, we get the opportunity to go inside and fill the hearts of the residents. The students adored visiting with the residents. A video was created by St. Michael's to educate the students about dementia and how it could affect someone. The students then had a better understanding of how to work with the residents. St. Michael's received a grant to help fund this project, and they chose us to continue to create magic every two weeks. Teachers, some parents, the residents, the staff, the students, and all involved always left with such a full heart, as well, the residents had beautiful decorations for their rooms.

Giant Tiger store, which is next door to our school, donated almost \$1,000 worth of clothing to the school. Students in Grade 3 decided that they wanted to package up the clothing into packages for mothers and their children needing support. A Sister was contacted, and she helped guide us on how and where to send the items. Students packaged the items up and attached notes of kindness for the recipients at the Lurana Shelter. Students were so excited about the opportunity to share these gifts with others. It made them feel happy to help those who need our help and do what they can.

FATHER MICHAEL MIREAU

Students across all grades spent the greater part of September and part of October learning about the life of Terry Fox. They came to appreciate his motivation and struggle to continue raising money for cancer research. In addition to raising money, students shared in a whole school run in solidarity with all those who had been touched by cancer. Students raised a total of \$1,093.55

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for the Terry Fox Foundation. The students were so happy to be out in our field running together in support of this cause. They learned the value of coming together in support of one goal.

Students across all grades participated in fundraising for the Heart and Stroke Foundation by jumping rope all while learning about heart and brain health and keeping active by skipping in PE class. Students raised \$2,298 for the Foundation. Students were excited to learn new ways to stay active in their lives. Students created goals for PE class that they could work towards achieving during the duration of the fundraiser. Many proudly accomplished these goals and set new ones. Many learned skipping tricks on their own, with a partner, and in groups, and shared how skipping could benefit their brain and heart. On a paper heart, they wrote words and drew pictures to represent heart and brain health. These hearts were used to create a collage in our school. Students now knew some "EASY" lifestyle habits that would contribute positively to whole-body health.

The staff at our school planned a Christmas Family Night on December 8th. The event ran from 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. The activities included cookie decorating, a hot chocolate station, hayride, caroling, reindeer games and crafts, card making, a movie, face painting, and photo booth. The goal of our event was to welcome everyone back into our school community to come out for a safe way to get together after a difficult time of isolation and on-line learning. We invited our students and their families to participate in some fun Christmas activities, as we engaged in building a community of connectedness. The school also participated in some charitable events such as collecting for the Food Bank and Bissell Centre. The school donated 137 kilograms of food to the Edmonton Food Bank. The Food Bank was gracious enough to come to our site and educate our Kindness Club on how the Food Bank runs and helps those in need. Additionally, many warm items were donated to the Bissell Centre to help families stay warm during the holiday season. The students learned what it meant to give to those most vulnerable in our society. By coming together during our Christmas Family Night with their families, it helped students stay connected with our school community. This was especially needed after a time of isolation and on-line learning. Students at FMM learned that donating to charitable organizations could foster feelings of gratitude and compassion. They realized that their actions helped others who were suffering in our society. Also, this simple act of donating helped them realize that they could make a difference.

A Grade 6 class collected boxes of cereal as a school-wide initiative. The cereal was donated to the St. Francis of Assisi School breakfast program. Students managed to collect 275 boxes of cereal. Students were very motivated to fundraise for this cause. Students made signs, packed the cereal, and counted the boxes. This was a very important cause for the students and teacher. Students learned that their peers of the same age might not always have enough to eat. This helped students gain compassion for others.

As part of our last unit in Religion, the Grade 5 students collected pop can tabs to donate to St. Theresa's Church. The Knights of Columbus collected the tabs for the Canadian Wheelchair Foundation. Students enjoyed this project as they felt that they were having an impact on their local community through their local church as well as helping those in less fortunate parts of the world gain access to the mobility they deserved as human beings made in the image of God.

During our inquiry into the needs of animals and the responsibilities we had to provide for pets, the students discovered that not all animals were wanted or had their needs met. Through further exploration they wanted to make a difference for animals in need of a second chance and chose the Edmonton Humane Society. The students made hair scrunchies and bracelets to sell to raise funds. They were proud of the posters they created to advertise their sale, and the hard work involved in creating the products. They were also proud of the amount they were able to donate to the care of animals, however, conversations continued to evolve surrounding our responsibilities in not only caring for pets, but other animals and this land that God created. They also inquired about other aspects such as endangered animals, destruction of habitat, the importance of clean drinking water, and realizing that like the hummingbird, from The Little Hummingbird book, that if they each did all that they could, they could make a difference.

FATHER MICHAEL TROY

To celebrate Father Troy's birthday, the Student Leadership Team sold cupcakes to raise money for his favourite charity, Holy Childhood Association. This event was part of our Spirit Week which promoted school unity and community. The



Student Leadership Team planned and coordinated all activities to welcome all students to the new school year. Student Leadership members learned responsibility by being in charge of planning, organizing, and selling the cupcakes. They also developed interpersonal skills by interacting with other students in the school. Passing on Father Michael Troy's vision of school culture and generosity was the focus of Spirit Week for the Leadership Team.

During the month of October, our school collected food item donations for St. Theresa's Parish. The Student Leadership Team worked hard to keep this initiative alive for the whole month. They personally went on the weekly announcements to share information, created weekly challenges, and a grade level competition for which homerooms could bring in the most food items in total. Every Friday the Student Leadership Team collected, counted, sorted, and packed food items. In total, 308 items were collected. Many of our students do not worry about their next meal or how they will get food, but this was not the case for all. Educating others about how not all people had access to this basic human need was important. Teaching our students about contributing to their community was also highlighted. Many of our students attend St. Theresa's Parish so they felt a sense of accomplishment knowing that they had helped the church be able to help families.

During the month of November, our school held a bake sale to raise funds for the Royal Canadian Legion. Staff and students participated by donating baked or store-bought baked goods to sell over a period of days. The Student Leadership Team was responsible for planning, organizing, and advertising the sale which included posters, broadcast announcements, set up and take down. Our school raised \$346 to help veterans and their families. The Royal Canadian Legion provides financial assistance to serving and former Canadian Armed Forces members and their families. While preparing for the No Stone Left Alone campaign, our Students Ambassadors and Leadership Team reflected on the sacrifices made by soldiers on our behalf and wanted to give back. This also served as an extension of our Remembrance Day celebration and activities that led up to Remembrance Day.

Over the course of the 2022-2023 school year, our school participated in various opportunities to support the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation Dreams for Kids. In December, we held two fundraisers for the Foundation. Funds were

raised through our "Chips for Children" project as there was a surplus of chips in our canteen. Instead of putting the funds back into the canteen budget, the Student Leadership Team raised funds by selling small bags of chips for \$1 at the canteen during the second half of the lunch hour. Using school announcements, student volunteers expressed the importance of the Foundation and how funds raised helped our local families. In total, \$127 was raised. We also raised money through morning hot chocolate sales to students as they came into the building. The Student Leadership Team was also happy to spread some Christmas cheer in the mornings. In total, \$149 was raised for Dreams for Kids through hot chocolate sales. The fundraiser was advertised using announcements, posters, and Troy TVs. Students saw how small acts could make a big difference in other people's lives as all their monthly initiatives for this cause added up. They gained an understanding that many of their peers and others in their community were affected by poverty and may have benefited from Dreams for Kids.

The Green Team spearheaded a Christmas Thrift Shop project promoting the environmentally friendly practice of reusing items as well as donating money towards a charitable cause. The student body was encouraged to donate clothes they no longer needed or wore to the Thrift Shop and on December 15th, the clothes were available for purchase and the money went to the Green Team's charity of choice, the Stollery Children's Hospital. Green Team students created a Google Slides presentation explaining the initiative and presented to classes three weeks in advance of the Thrift Shop event. Two weeks after the presentation, they sorted, priced, and organized the clothes. The day before the event, the Green Team set up the Thrift Shop in the library. In total, \$165 was raised for Stollery Children's Hospital. All the unsold clothing (6 full recycle bags) were donated to Value Village. The students of the Green Team were very engaged throughout the entire process. They were motivated to create slides and present to their peers. They felt a sense of accomplishment in organizing and pricing the clothes that had been donated. They also took care to set up their Thrift Shop in a way that was accessible for the shoppers. The Green Team acknowledged that an endeavour like this took strategic planning and clear messaging to their target audience and were anticipatory of issues along the way. Hearing how much they raised for the Stollery was evidence to them of their hard work and determination.

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Due to extreme cold temperatures Edmontonians may experience, our Student Leadership Team was concerned for the safety and well-being of people experiencing houselessness. They decided to collect new toques, mittens, gloves, and socks to donate to The Mustard Seed. The Student Leadership Team set up a Christmas Tree in the front area of our school, and donations were hung as the ornaments to celebrate our students' generosity. Forty-three items were collected and were dropped off. Due to the visual nature of this fundraiser, students were able to see a representation of the difference that they were making for the people who relied on The Mustard Seed. The tree also served as a reminder for students to bring in donations as they came into the school.

During our Winter Band Concert, parents and guardians had the opportunity to purchase raffle tickets for the "Best Seat in the House." Before the concert, two names were drawn, and families were able to move to the front row and sit on comfortable couches to enjoy the performance. In total, \$182 was raised for the ECS Foundation Dreams for Kids Campaign. The Student Leadership Team members were responsible for organizing and running the fundraising. They grew in their abilities to speak in front of a large audience full of parents, guardians, and siblings to inform them of their fundraising initiative and explain the Dreams for Kids Campaign.

During the month of February, the Father Michael Troy Leadership Team sold candygrams to be delivered on Valentine's Day to raise funds for the Dreams for Kids Campaign. The Student Leadership Team was responsible for planning, advertising, organizing, and delivering of the candygrams. In total, \$134 was raised. Students learned the value of serving others. They listened to the student body request of Candygrams and organized the event for their peers. The overall atmosphere of the school was very positive and contributed to school spirit.

The EDIAR Multicultural Leadership Team organized a Multicultural Day that consisted of a cultural fashion show, performances, and an international food sale. This event celebrated diversity in our school and raised funds for Catholic Social Services Sign of Hope to support newcomer families to Canada. Our students shared their culture, time, and talents to celebrate this day and contribute to such an important cause! They wore their cultural outfits and proudly showed them off in the fashion show walking and dancing to their country's song that they chose. As well, the students cooked and proudly shared

the food with the school community raising \$971.70! The entire event built leadership capacity in the student body, and heightened the positive energy and school spirit.

In Social Studies 9, students spent a great deal of time discussing rights and responsibilities. When economics was discussed, taxes were discussed. Taxes were explained as a way societies cooperate to ensure that all citizens have access to things they need. In a sense, taxes were a responsibility. As Catholics, we have a responsibility to help those who were less fortunate. Our students set up restaurants and spent the afternoon selling food to the Grade 7 and 8 students. Each restaurant was charged a tax, and the money collected was donated to the Catholic Social Services Refugee Relief Fund. In total, we managed to raise \$360. Grade 9 Social Studies students also learned about immigration. One of the immigration categories covered was refugees. Through this fundraising activity, students were made aware of the rights that we had as human beings, and how not all people had access to these basic needs. Many new refugees require support as they navigate their new lives in Canada. The students understood that it was the responsibility of all of us to ensure that everyone had access to these basic needs.

During our Spring Band Concert, parents and guardians had the opportunity to purchase raffle tickets for the, "Best Seat in the House." Before the concert, two names were drawn, and families were able to move to the front row to enjoy the performance. In total, \$128 was raised for Catholic Social Services Refugee Relief Fund. Student Leadership Team members had three guest speakers come from Catholic Social Services, one being a woman who fled Ukraine at the beginning of the war. She shared her journey and experiences with the students and how Catholic Social Services had helped her throughout her seven months in Canada. The Student Leadership Team was then responsible for organizing and running a fundraiser. They grew in their abilities to speak in front of a large audience full of parents, guardians, and siblings to inform them of their fundraising initiative and explain the Catholic Social Services Refugee Relief Fund.



ÉCOLE FRÈRE ANTOINE

Throughout the month of October, the Grade 2 students led the school in donating non-perishable food items for St. Theresa Parish Food Bank. During the daily morning announcements, the students were proud to be able to deliver their messages in French, explaining the project and encouraging everyone to donate. Students in every classroom had decorated boxes where the food items were collected. As the food was received, Grade 2 students were responsible for bringing the boxes to the display window by the office. They celebrated the amount of food collected during morning announcements. Students were delighted to have the opportunity to oversee such a special project and make a difference in their communities. Grade 2 students felt a sense of pride and made them aware of how much there was a need for food in their very own community. As other students in the school continued to contribute and donate food items, their level of empathy increased as did their willingness to give.

During the month of December, Grade 3 students led a collection of toques, mittens and scarves to be donated to a neighboring school in need in our Mill Woods community, St. Elizabeth School. This was a school-wide initiative where Grade 3 students engaged in presenting the information to the school via the morning announcements, visiting classrooms and presenting their social justice project. Additionally, they collaborated to collect the donations from various classrooms. These items were displayed on our Giving Christmas Tree that was in the hallway for all students to see the tree be fully covered with their donations. The students in our school learned that families in our neighborhood did not all have the necessary clothing to be warm during the winter. Throughout this project, the Grade 3 students were proud to have a direct impact on their community by selecting items to donate, spreading the message about the project to the rest of the school, and by sharing the love of Jesus with others.

In December, the Grade 1 students participated in a Christmas “sock tree” for which we collected new socks for kids, men and women that were donated to St. Theresa Parish. Students brought many different sizes and pairs of socks. The students were excited and displayed the socks on a paper Christmas tree made by students’ hands for all the school to see. The Grade 1 students discussed in class how it must feel to not have any socks to wear in different types of weather.

They participated in taking off their socks and putting on their boots and shoes. The Grade 1 students demonstrated how to take action to help the less fortunate. They better understood the true act of kindness and the awareness that some people were in need of basic clothing.

From December through February, each Grade 6 student researched a social justice issue of their choice and reported to the class on this topic. Students then voted on one organization to support as a class. This year, the students wanted to focus on Youth Mental Health Canada. Additionally, Grade 6 students also organized and hosted our annual Hunger Lunch, where they helped bring awareness to hunger issues worldwide. The Hunger Lunch took part in the gym during the lunch hour where each student in the school took part with their class to listen to a presentation led by the Grade 6 students and their teachers. For the lunch, each student received a slice of bread, a slice of cheese and water. Students were asked to donate a toonie for the Hunger Lunch. A total of \$529.90 was collected. Proceeds from this event went to the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation. Students shared that they felt how not having a full tummy of food impacted the rest of their learning of the day. This event demonstrated the empathy that students felt in wanting to put themselves in other's shoes by not having their usual full lunches.

For the month of February, Black History Month and racial diversity, Grade 4-6 students examined important Black historians and culture, their struggles, and contributions to Canada with various activities and lessons. Led by our Grade 6 students and our Grade 6 teacher, each day throughout the month of February on TVFA, students were taught a different quote or fact related to an influential individual or event. Each class also took part in a school-wide initiative that involved decorating our classroom doors to commemorate and celebrate important individuals that were influential to Black history. Students were also involved and inspired to research organizations that fought racism and researched how to be an ally. Students wrote many reflections on what they learned from this month-long activity. Many students felt proud of their culture and their personal experiences were validated. Others felt brave and safe to talk about race and inequality, as well expressed their allyship. All students felt proud of their diversity.

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Each student at the school made Valentine cards for the those in need that visited The Mustard Seed Church. Each and every student at the school took time to give from the heart for this social justice project during the first week of February to be shared for Valentine's Day. There were over 425 cards that were made! Students made beautiful cards which included a verse and a drawing, signed with first names only and grade level. Each card included a heart lollipop for Valentine's Day. Students were so happy to have these cards from the heart dropped off for members of Edmonton's inner-city community that struggled with poverty, hunger, and homelessness. Like The Mustard Seed Church, our students wanted to shine a light of love in their world too.

To end our month of Kindness in February, our Principal and Assistant Principal challenged the entire school to Break the Rules on February 28th. Students donated \$1 to break a rule such as wearing pajamas, bringing a stuffy or chewing gum. Some students broke multiple rules for which they donated more than \$1 each. Students raised a grand total of \$670.67! We were so proud of our students for so enthusiastically participating in this fundraiser that supported a wonderful cause. All money was donated to the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation Dream Maker's Fund, which supported families in need in our Catholic community. Inspired by Faith, Embraced by Love, and Empowered by Hope! Our students were able to examine how lucky they were to have all that they had. This created a sense of empathy with our students to come together and raise funds for those in our own schools that may be less fortunate than them that they wanted to support.

During the month of March, our Grade 5 students collected personal hygiene products to donate to the Hope Mission. Students were eager to share their announcement with the student body of the school and ignite in them the spirit to give and share. Our students were proud to visit every class to pick up these generous donations and watch the donations grow with every passing day. The Hope Mission made a special trip to our school to pick up the donations. In completing this project, students were able to see just how profound of an impact their generosity would have on Edmonton's more vulnerable population. As stewards of God's creation, they demonstrated Faith in Action and with the help of their school community, made a difference in the lives of others. Grade 5 students also created cards with messages of hope that was sent with the donations. Students were moved by the generosity of our school community and

took great pride in knowing that these donations would help the less fortunate and make a difference in their lives.

For the month of May, as we also celebrated the month of Mary and celebrated Mothers everywhere, our Grade 4 students collected gently used clothes in support of the WIN House. The clothes collected were donated to Goodwill. Goodwill gave the WIN House gift cards for the WIN House's Champions to use in their stores. Grade 4 students made daily announcements on Télévision Frère Antoine and encouraged the whole student population to participate. Our Grade 4 students felt that donating clothes in honor of the women in their lives helped to support them and created an impact in our city. They came to the realization that there were many ways we could honor women. They felt that they understood that donations did not need to be of monetary value. While going through their closets with their parents they felt successful because it was possible even for a 10-year-old to give up their time and clothing to make a difference. As they studied "Waste in Our World," they were also thrilled to internalize the idea that their re-use of their items had a positive impact on the environment. Many students expressed how they would like to continue the tradition of passing on clothing to those in need.

GENESIS CATHOLIC ONLINE

Students fundraised for the Terry Fox Foundation bringing awareness and donations for cancer research. Students felt connected as a community, learning about the same topic, working towards the same goal, both financially and physically, with the run for our blended students and our workouts for online.

GOOD SHEPHERD

During the Lenten season, the Grade 2B students at Good Shepherd explored the three pillars of Lent: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. As a class, students created Lenten promises such as setting aside more time for prayer which draws us closer to God and one another. As a sign of gratitude for all God has given us, and as an



act of love to those in need, the students wanted to participate in almsgiving as a whole class. After deciding on a group of individuals that students felt needed their support, Ukrainian Canadian Social Services, they then decided what basic needs they felt were important if you were a newcomer to Canada. They brought in items such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, deodorant, lotion, hand wipes, sanitizer, brushes, combs, toques, mitts, socks, and other hygiene items to create Blessing Bags. All items were placed on a large table and students filled Ziplock baggies with the donated items. After the bags were filled, they created handmade Blessing/Welcome notes for each bag. The bags were then delivered to Ukrainian Canadian Social Services along with a card and an Easter bucket full of Easter treats thanking the individuals who worked at the organization. The students learned that the Lenten call to almsgiving meant making the needs of other people our own and by sharing our material goods was “doing for Jesus!” Students were asked to reflect on how they felt after they made their Blessing Bags and they stated they felt proud, happy they were helping the families/individuals coming to Canada from Ukraine, and closer to Jesus.

H. E. BERIAULT

The staff and students of H.E. Beriault participated in our annual Terry Fox Run through the Elmwood community. Over 380 staff and students completed a 2 km loop through the ravine to raise money and support our friends and loved ones who were fighting against cancer. Too many of us have had cancer impact our families and we united to “Try Like Terry” to beat this disease. The students were bonded in this goal. Each student wore a sticker to identify who they were dedicating their run to. This event united our community and allowed students to recognize the power of social action when we worked together as a community.

Thanks to the H.E. Beriault community and our Make A Difference Club, our themed Advent collection, “Don’t Let the Cold Bother Them Anyway,” yielded three large moving boxes full of hats, scarves, mittens, and socks which were donated to the Bissell Centre for the vulnerable in the community of Edmonton. The campaign was at the centre of our Advent season at our school, and the students really came through to help those in need. The students were excited and driven to collect warm winter items and felt like they were really making an

impact, especially due to the weather conditions many vulnerable individuals were facing in the city.

The Make A Difference Club hosted a cultural bake sale in the month of March to celebrate the diverse community of our school. We raised \$700 that went back to the school to use for future events. The students were encouraged to wear cultural colors and costumes for the day. The students worked collaboratively to set-up and take down the bake sale. They baked goodies, sold items, and helped clean everything. They provided cultural music and made posters and a slideshow to represent all of the cultures of the school community. They felt a sense of togetherness, and learned how to run a large bake sale.

ÉCOLE ESCUELA HOLY CHILD

Holy Child School chose to gather money in support of the Terry Fox Run. As a whole school, we gathered \$509.95 in total towards cancer research. We invited Police officers to join us in the run. They came along with over 40 parent volunteers to cheer us on in the gym as we stretched and warmed up. The Kindergarten to Grade 3 students ran on the sidewalk around the school and the Grades 4-6 ran down to Constable Ezio Faraone Park, down into the Edmonton River Valley and back up to the school. The parents were stationed all along the paths and cheered on the students as they ran by. Each student then coloured a Terry Fox shoe and we posted their shoes in the busiest hallway of our school. Students learned that no matter how sick and difficult it was for Terry Fox, he never gave up. That was the motto of our run, “to never give up even when things get tough.” They also learned that their contributions could help the real world. They learned that their money was going to real cancer research in hopes of one day finding a cure for cancer. They felt very proud of themselves and supported by our large parent turnout.

The school staff spent the afternoon prepping boxes, sorting food and preparing food hampers for the Food Bank for people and families in need in Edmonton. Teachers led by example and gave of their time and energy to serve the Edmonton community. We hoped this would inspire students to use their gifts to impact the people around them and we hoped to be role models for our school

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community. This was the first of many other projects to come as we, the Holy Child staff, hoped to serve our community more and more.

ÉCOLE HOLY CROSS

Our students participated in our Week of Terry every morning leading up to our school-wide Terry Fox Walk/Run. The Terry Fox Run taught the students a very valuable lesson. It taught the students the importance of working together as a team to help others. This year, Holy Cross was able to raise over \$500 for cancer research! Through our morning announcements throughout our Week of Terry, the students were able to learn important information about Terry Fox and his initiative to help others. Our leadership students were able to practice responsibility by collecting the class donations each morning. Our students were also able to build on our sense of community within the school by running and walking with their grade partner buddies. This was another excellent opportunity to witness leadership and community at Holy Cross.

Beanomania was held at our school throughout October. Staff and students were encouraged to bring their donations for Beanomania, a collection of beans for Edmonton's Food Bank. Students learned facts about the Food Bank and beans as they watched the donation bins multiply. We filled three bins! Edmonton's Food Bank needed food, funds, and time from volunteers. Food, however, was the foundation and was very tangible. Specifically, food banks often need items like canned soup, canned fruit, canned vegetables, canned fish, and canned beans. We will continue working on a variety of social justice initiatives this year through a cross-graded approach. Younger classes have been partnered with upper grades to collaborate on monthly social justice projects. Projects could take on many forms such as collections, advocacy, direct action, and so forth. Beanomania was organised by administration and support staff. These actions served as an example for students. A display with the "Bacs à bines" (Bean Bins) and a "Test your Bean Knowledge Quiz" was put up in the school's entrance. Students were excited to monitor progress daily. Messages about the Beanomania campaign were made every day on morning announcements, accompanied by facts about Edmonton's Food Bank. Students were curious about the unexpected food items collected. Many did not know that beans were

available dried as well as in cans. A Grade 2 student who has autism was especially impacted. His enthusiasm for the project was noticed by a staff member and he was asked to read labels on cans, sort and count the goods collected in preparation for pick-up.

December's social justice action focussed on reflecting on the four themes of Advent and partaking in almsgiving by collectively sharing messages of Hope, Faith, Joy and Peace with community members. Students worked with their cross-graded partner classes to prepare Christmas cards to be shared with an organization of their choosing. Christmas cards were sent to the Stollery, CFB Edmonton, and several senior's homes throughout the city. It would be hard not to feel Christmas cheer if you received one of these cards. Over 200 cards were made. Students benefited from the cross-graded opportunities to learn from each other and develop leadership skills. The reflection process and discussion with the classes led to greater awareness of areas of need in the community and gratitude for others who cared and supported community members.

Our school grade partners worked together to create "thank you" banners for our Canora community. We knew that schools could often have an impact on the community through traffic and noise levels. Our classes wanted to take an opportunity to say thank you to those who lived around the school. We also knew that after the Christmas season families had given a lot and we wanted to ensure we gave our school community a break from physical/financial donations. This project gave our school grade partners an opportunity to work together and blend their talents and abilities. Our older students were able to guide the younger students with organization and writing. This project also afforded the students an opportunity to think about their community members and their impact on those around them. For a month, the students and community members were able to see the banners hung with all the kind messages and drawings.

Our Lenten Appeal was called "Buckets of Change" to collect donations for the Eparchy of Edmonton Aid for Humanitarian Crisis in Ukraine. The students were encouraged to fill their classroom bucket with money and personal care items for Ukrainian refugees in Edmonton. The students raised over \$200 and collected 5 boxes of personal care items. Students felt encouraged and uplifted knowing that what they were giving would positively impact those who came to Edmonton



with little or nothing. Many had a greater appreciation for God's provision in our lives.

Holy Cross hosted our 2nd annual Run Wild at Holy Cross event to raise money and awareness for Edmonton's Zebra Youth Child & Advocacy Centre. Our event complemented and promoted the main Run Wild events hosted in St. Albert and Spruce Grove lead by Leading Edge Physiotherapy in May. Run Wild helps to teach our students about healthy living and community as they prepare for a walk/run and learn about the important work done through the Zebra Child & Youth Advocacy Centre to support youth facing abuse. Additionally, our school was able to raise over \$550 for the charity! The students were able to learn about the great work that the Centre does to protect youth who were dealing with abuse. The students were able to work together as a school community to raise money and awareness for the great cause. Our school community had a great time combining fitness and social justice!

HOLY FAMILY

In October, the Grade 8B and 9B students at our school arranged a cereal box drive for the breakfast programs at St. Catherine and Anne Fitzgerald Schools. Posters were created during class and hung around the school to promote donations. The morning broadcast reporters reminded classes daily with the phrase, "we want to cereal-sly scare hunger away." At the end of the month, 9B students gathered all donations, counted, and prepared the boxes for donation. We were able to collect a total of 175 boxes of cereal to help support our ECSD family. Using the school's theme book, "I am One: A Book of Action," classes discussed what it meant to take action and how one action could add up to great things. This topic was introduced to the school during the Thanksgiving celebration, where the question was asked, "How can your one action help others?" As a culminating activity, students in 8B and 9B demonstrated the power of one light and how each person's light, shone together, lights up a room and affects everyone. The visualization of one small action helped students to see how their actions helped others everyday. By showcasing the cereal collection, students were able to see how one small action, one box of cereal, could make a

difference if all worked together and our "small actions" could culminate to have a positive larger impact.

During the Advent season, we encouraged students to focus on preparing our hearts for the coming of Jesus through acts of kindness. These were recorded on yellow strips of paper and placed in a manger. As the manger became full, our kind acts welcomed the arrival of baby Jesus. The Grade 3 classes also sold candygrams as part of our school's social justice project. The proceeds of this fundraiser went to the ECS Foundation. The ECS Foundation helps thousands of kids each year who lack access to basic needs like having enough food to eat. Together, we raised \$643. Thank you to Holy Family students and staff for your support! The students were reminded that small acts of kindness could go a long way in helping make someone else's day brighter. When helping others, either by action, words, or gifts, you feel joy and happiness in your heart.

During the month of February, students and staff worked together to create a "graffiti wall" with the theme of "Unity in Diversity and Inclusion." Teachers led classroom discussions around the themes of diversity, inclusion, and how, as Catholics, we should love others. Students expressed their ideas through visual art, words, and symbols on several walls covered in paper. Students felt empowered to express their ideas, view/read others, and know that they were accepted, valued, and loved for who they were as a child of God. They learned the power that art and creativity held to affect social change. They were excited to express themselves, especially those who were reserved and quiet, and to know that each of us was important within the school community.

The Grade 6 classes led a social justice project in support of our Lenten journeys. We focused on one of the Pillars of Lent: Prayer. The whole school wrote special prayers of intention that were collected in our school's prayer box. Using these prayers, each class had an opportunity to gather in our Chapel and pray together as a faith community for the members of our Holy Family. Students learned that Lent was a time to prepare our hearts and minds for Easter, and the Church recommends prayer, fasting, and almsgiving to focus our preparation. Although we practice these all year round, students learned that we intensify our devotion to these pillars during Lent as we pause and reflect on our relationship with God. We emphasized that setting aside more time for prayer during Lent draws us closer to one another and to God. Also, that through group or family prayer, we

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begin to recognize ourselves as a close community or dedicated family rooted in Christ's mission.

A quote from our theme book, "... Because ONE is all it takes to start something beautiful," provided a connection to our Social Justice project as the quote implied that something simple could change someone's world. Our classes discussed and reflected in journals how a simple gesture could make a big difference in someone's world. The Grade 1A and 2B classes wanted to donate a smile to the sick kids at the Stollery Children's Hospital by sending a card with an encouraging message that would make them smile. The classes, together with the school community, made a simple card with "ONE" small encouraging message and drew a picture that would bring a smile to their little faces. It encouraged empathy and the realization that there were children the same age as them that were experiencing terrible and frightening things. The students learned how one simple thing could make a huge difference. The students felt happy that they could cheer someone up who really needed it.

As a part of our collaboration month, Grade 2A and Grade 5A decided to help draw attention to the importance of simply having materials to read at home, as part of an individual's right to an education. Access to good books in our homes, our libraries, our community centres is a key part of children learning to read, both at home and at school. We announced our plan on morning announcements, put out some bins and collected over 500 books. These were then sorted by age group, cover style and age, and donated to various daycares, charity shops as well as community centres. The students were excited to see so many books being donated as our collection grew. They were impressed that such a simple action could empower children just like them in their own city. We also acknowledged that many of us keep possessions that we no longer need, and that it feels good to share what we have with others in support of reading.

HOLY TRINITY

Holy Trinity students donated toys for Santa's Anonymous throughout the month of December. This was part of the Holy Trinity Advent Social Justice Initiative. The school also hosted a "Teddy Bear Toss" during half-time of a lunchtime basketball

game at the school during the annual junior basketball tournament to add to the collection. In total, approximately sixty toys were donated to Santa's Anonymous for underprivileged children. The toys filled three extra large garbage bags and were delivered to Santa's Anonymous just before Christmas. Students were excited and enthusiastic about helping with this cause. Holy Trinity students felt empowered. It was a joyous experience for many of our kids to know that the toy they were donating, often bought with their own hard-earned money, would be received by children on Christmas morning who otherwise would not have received anything. They understood that many vulnerable children in our city did not have the type of Christmas that they enjoyed every year. This was a stressful time of year for many families and students were happy to help alleviate that stress and hardship as much as they could. To know that they were making a real, tangible difference was very special for our students.

Holy Trinity students donated toiletry items that were delivered to YESS (Youth Empowerment and Support Services) Edmonton. Students understood that the toiletry items they donated would ultimately go to underprivileged and vulnerable youth in the Edmonton community, many of whom were homeless or struggling with addiction or mental illness. Our students support this initiative every year and understand its value and importance. In total, six garbage bags full of toiletry items were delivered to YESS in March. Students appreciated the opportunity to help young people like themselves who were vulnerable or were going through difficult times in their lives. Many of our students knew young individuals who had left or been removed from their homes and faced extreme hardships on the streets of Edmonton. They heard stories about young people who struggled with addiction and mental illness. This was an important initiative every March/April for the students of Holy Trinity.

ÉCOLE J. H. PICARD

Our students collected donations for the Edmonton Food Bank during the Thanksgiving season. Our Grade 3 students promoted this project amongst our elementary classes, and our junior high student council members organized and promoted it throughout the older grades. Students emphasized the importance of giving to others to support the less fortunate in our community. Overall, as a



school, we collected 241 kilograms of food. This project impacted our students positively because it reminded them of the importance of giving. Christ modeled this behaviour for us, giving all that he had to the poor, and we were asked by him to follow his example. By giving to others, it allowed us to be grateful and thankful for all that God had provided for us.

The École J. H. Picard community supported the ECS Foundation and its Dreams for Kids Campaign through school-wide fundraising activities during the month of December. Elementary students participated in a snack fundraiser in which they received popcorn and candy canes. Secondary students were encouraged to donate a toonie to the cause. Monetary donations were also collected at the door of the elementary Christmas Concert and of the Fine Arts Winter Showcase. Thanks to the generosity of our school community, we were able to donate \$654 to the Dreams for Kids, Conquer Hunger Fund. This fund provides financial assistance to ECSD schools so that they may offer healthy breakfast, lunch, and/or snack programs to students in need. Our students learned about the importance of supporting organizations that worked to help those in need. They were happy to know that their donations would be put towards supporting in-school nutrition programs in our city.

During the 2022-2023 school year, the Fashion Studies 20 students engaged in direct service work by participating in our student-made mittens and tuques initiative. Each student followed a pattern to construct either a tuque or a pair of lined mittens to donate. Four tuques and five pairs of mittens were completed. The finished products were donated to Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples for distribution to parishioners in need. At the beginning of this project, students brainstormed what qualities and characteristics people would want to find in a tuque or in a pair of mittens, for example, warmth, durability, and so forth. This process helped students to empathize with those who would be receiving the donations. The students were excited to see their completed mittens and tuques, and they were hopeful that those receiving the products would enjoy wearing them.

J. J. BOWLEN

As a whole school community, we raised over \$1,600 for the Terry Fox Foundation. Students ran in our school yard and raised awareness of cancer and how it impacted so many of us in our lives. Students learned about Terry Fox and his battle with cancer. They learned about struggle and perseverance.

Our school collected items for 16 hampers for our school community. The students all brought in their items, and we worked together to build the hampers. The students experienced philanthropy with giving without receiving something in return. They were so happy to fill their hampers and be able to give back to others in need.

We hosted our first annual “Taste of J.J.” We shared one another's cultural food with our school community. Our Cultural Student Association raised money for the Red Cross Syria Crisis which was chosen by our students. Students learned about sharing our cultures with one another. We raised funds to help a country in need due to a natural disaster that had left Syria in crisis.

As a whole school, funds were raised and awareness for the fallen officers of the Edmonton Police Service. Students made banners and cards for EPS.

Our Grade 9 Social Studies classes completed an Economics project where they had to work in a large group and come up with a business plan. They sold products and experienced the economic cycle. They learned how hard it was to run a business and the ups and downs of the economics cycle. The funds raised were donated to the ECS Foundation and the Stollery Children's Hospital. A total of \$3,000 was donated.

JOAN CARR

Our school participated in a week of activities and fundraising, leading up to our Terry Fox Run. Students were engaged in read alouds, goal writing, and media viewing to prepare for their run and fully understand the importance of Terry

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Fox's contribution to Canada and cancer research. We created a mural of over 300 footprints, one to represent each student in the school, and their reason for running. All students were encouraged to come up with a 'why' to motivate them during their run. All grades, Kindergarten to Grade-7, participated in the run. When participating in this social justice project, students learned that we could work together to make a difference in our community. They learned that they could have a direct impact on the lives of others, and they learned about empathy, compassion and contributing to a cause that was greater than them. Many students expressed that their outlook on their own lives changed, and they came to understand how blessed they were as a student of the Edmonton Catholic School community, and the community of Joan Carr.

In partnership with the Roots of Change Foundation, Joan Carr School took part in a pilot project with the goal to provide students with the essential supplies to begin their school year. In the community of Chinandega, approximately 220 km from Nicaragua's capital, is a school called Los Chupaderos. There are 60 students who attend this school and range from ages 4-12. In preparation for their school year, which begins in February, our goal was to provide each student with a backpack that would include notebooks, pencils, erasers, a ruler, pencil crayons, scissors, glue, school uniform (shirt, pants or skirt and shoes) and textbooks for their classroom. To achieve this goal, students hosted a Christmas market fundraiser with all proceeds going towards the project. Students were asked to bring in their gently used toys, puzzles, and books, and then the school hosted a market where students could come and purchase those items for their family members for Christmas. Items ranged from \$1 to \$5. All unpurchased items were donated to Ukrainian refugees. This project helped our students to understand the conditions and what students from other parts of the world had access to. It gave them perspective when they were able to see through photos what they had in comparison to students in Nicaragua. Many expressed gratitude and felt a sense of purpose knowing that the funds they were raising were going towards helping students from Nicaragua have the tools they needed for success.

Students and staff were asked to bring in boxes of cereal in support of St. Francis of Assisi's breakfast program. Students learned that some students eat breakfast at school because they do not get breakfast at home. All the students and staff were proud to be able to support this initiative.

KATHERINE THERRIEN

A Grade 4 teacher coordinated candy donations for the Youth Emergency Shelter from students following Halloween. The candy was then delivered to the Shelter to let struggling youth know that others were thinking about them. Students were asked to consider donating some of their Halloween candy to youth who might not have the opportunity to enjoy any treats. Attention was brought to the fact that some young people in our city have a tough time and do not even live at home with their families. This was a way for our students to sacrifice a little and let others know that they were not forgotten and that someone was thinking about them.

In coordination with our Demonstration of Learning on November 30th, one of our teachers organized a toy drive. Students were invited to bring in new or gently used toys that could be sold for \$1 or \$2 to families as they came into the school that night. Student shoppers were encouraged to think about purchasing a Christmas gift for a household member. The money raised was donated to Santa's Anonymous and leftover toys were dropped off at a women's shelter. The Grade 4 and 5 students involved were very proud of the organizing and preparation they did to make ready for this event. There was much joy from the students as they realized our community was going to make use of what would have been discarded items and that children were happy to have 'new' toys. While part of the teaching involved was related to reusing items instead of sending them to the landfill, students also realized the importance of helping those with less money have access to giving gifts and how that act was good for us all.

A teacher and her Grade 1 students coordinated our Thanksgiving food drive for the school. They, along with their Grade 5 buddy class, collected donations from classes in the school leading up to the Thanksgiving weekend in October. The food was part of our offering during our Thanksgiving liturgy. Teachers reported that students were keen to give and help other families during a time when everyone else was being thankful. The teacher said her students talked about giving to those who did not have enough to eat and that it was up to us to try and help them when we could. Students were a little more aware that others did not



always have as much as they did. The collected food was delivered to the Edmonton Food Bank.

A Grade 2 teacher started a Library Lunch Club with students from a variety of grades. They took in donations of books from our families, sorted and then laid them out on display for parents and children at our second Demonstration of Learning at the end of March. Books were sold for a dollar with proceeds used to purchase new reading material for our library. The participating students had an opportunity to work together as a team with the goal of making literacy more affordable to families. There were many smiles and positivity among the students who worked to prepare for the book sale. The lead teacher spent time explaining how some families do not always have money to replace existing books in the home and that this was an opportunity for the whole community to help one another.

The lead teacher for our Orange Shirt Day Smudge, invited an Indigenous student to take part in the school announcements on Orange Shirt Day teaching us all about some important connections he had with his grandmother and his culture. Secondly, the whole school met outside for a smudge led by the student. All students and staff were invited to take part in the smudge. During the smudge ceremony, our students were reverent and quiet. As the smudge pan was passed around, nearly every student took part by smudging themselves in a respectful and prayerful manner. Teachers guided students through age-appropriate lessons on Residential Schools and we also gathered in our gymnasium for a celebration commemorating Residential School survivors. These experiences and events helped remove the silence about Canada's Residential School past for the next generation of Canadians as we begin to acknowledge the suffering of our Indigenous brothers and sisters.

Grade 5 students were invited to write Christmas letters to soldiers currently serving in the Armed Forces. The intent was to reach out and let people who were away from their families at Christmas know that their sacrifice was appreciated and acknowledged. The discussions and dialogue shared by the students with their teacher brought greater awareness to the sacrifices that happen in our society. The act of reaching out and connecting with someone through the written word was a meaningful exercise in giving of one's self. For

those receiving, it could also be a powerful experience to read the kind words of a child.

The Grade 5 class partnered with another group of students from Bishop David Motiuk School and created bookmarks with personalized messages for individuals within the prison system in the Edmonton area. These were delivered at Easter time via the Chaplain at the Edmonton Remand Centre. Teachers kept the bookmarks anonymous, but messages were of hope, love, and Easter themed. Our Grade 5 teacher invested time with her students talking about human dignity and the inherent goodness of all people. This led to the creation of the bookmarks. Teachers received feedback from the Chaplain after Easter, and it was shared with the students that their gifts were received happily and did bring hope to many of those who received bookmarks.

LEARNING SERVICES

During the month of April, Learning Services participated in a social justice initiative to support Little Warriors Be Brave Ranch in Sherwood Park. The Little Warriors Be Brave Ranch is a centre that supports children and their families who are victims of sexual abuse. The staff offer trauma-informed and evidence-based programming, both on site and in patient, and focus on awareness, prevention, and treatment of sexual abuse. Granola bars, toilet paper, socks, underwear, gum, art supplies, and online monetary donations were given to support their therapy programming. Donating to this organization helped the members of Learning Services support organizations outside of ECSD that were assisting current and future ECSD students.

A coffee bar was held during a staff meeting and coins for kids were collected. The collection was donated to the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation Dream Maker Fund, Helping Hands Fund, and Champion Projects.

Many students who attend St. Elizabeth Seton School do not have access to adequate nutrition. As such, the school provides a snack program that relies on donations to serve the population. As part of a monthly altogether meeting, snacks were collected to support the snack program at the school. This support

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helped St. Elizabeth Seton School continue to provide healthy snacks to students as well as support continued well-being, self-regulation and readiness to learn.

As part of our May Learning Services social justice initiative, the group 9 team choose to support Our Lady of Grace, an ECSD program that supports pregnant and parenting teens (female and male) while they were completing school. The staff at Our Lady of Grace provided a list of highly sought after and used items that could be donated. Learning Service staff brought donations to a meeting. The young and parenting students and their families at OLOG were the direct recipients of the donations. These donations often go to families who were not able to make purchases.

LOUIS ST. LAURENT

The students participated in our largest fundraising campaign to date, the Terry Fox Run. This year, to increase student engagement and fundraising, three staff members offered to shave their heads if a goal of \$6,000 was met. As a result, on Terry Fox Day, a total of four staff members got their heads shaved in a school assembly before tackling the run. The students ended up raising over \$7,000 for the Terry Fox Foundation. The students heard from a Terry Fox Foundation member who was a survivor of a rare form of cancer. They realized that any amount donated made a difference in the lives of those battling cancer. Many students shared stories about how cancer had impacted their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

High School Religion classes volunteered at the Edmonton Food Bank. The students discovered the agency and how it supported marginalized populations in Edmonton. The students travelled to the Foodbank where they were divided into groups to support "Agency Row." They sorted food donations, as well as assembled the boxes that were assigned to individual families. They became aware of the impact of inflation on families and their ability to buy food. They learned that the Holy Spirit worked through them, and that God calls us to reach out to the most marginalized groups in our society in times of need."

Students in the school each brought in non-perishable food, and a toonie for fresh items for a Christmas Hamper Campaign. Robust hampers were created for 27 LSL families. Families were supplied with food items that were lovingly collected by every class in the school. They were also given gift cards to grocery stores to supplement their food needs according to dietary customs in their household. The students learned just how much food insecurity there was in our school's walls. Historically, our hamper campaign had supported the Christmas Bureau of Edmonton, but with the changing socioeconomics of our school, as well as in influx of refugees, we found ourselves with an increasing amount of poverty in the school. The students took an active role in learning about food insecurity and supported the initiative for no students to be left hungry at Christmas.

Students from across grade levels created Christmas Cards for the psychiatric patients at Alberta Hospital. Over the span of a month, various religion classes created "Cards of Hope" to bring happiness, joy, and hope into the walls of the hospital. These cards were then distributed to the patients who could not or were not permitted to leave the hospital during the Christmas season. Students took a deep dive into understanding that, for many people, the Christmas season was not very joyful. They came to understand that a Christ-like love was best demonstrated by reaching out to the marginalized and shut-ins. They connected this to the scripture verse Matthew 25:40, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

The Religion 15-35 students went to St. Boniface School four times to read to the elementary students. They were partnered up with students of low reading ability and helped them to build their literacy skills. The students learned the importance of building relationships with younger students and modelling appropriate social behaviours. Many of the students developed leadership skills and became more in-tune with the emotions and needs of younger populations. They realized that they were leaders and role models for younger students. They came to a better understanding of how their actions impacted those around them.



MARY HANLEY

The school participated in the annual Terry Fox Run and raised over \$1,000 for this worthy cause. Students were able to raise money and reflect on those in their lives that had been impacted by cancer. Many students had been impacted by at least one person that has had cancer in their lives. Students felt they were helping to make a step towards finding a cure and helping those that needed medicine and treatment.

Grade 3 students wrote thank you postcards to Veterans in long term care facilities for Remembrance Day. In total, 25 cards were delivered by mail to Edmonton General Continuing Care Centre. Students learned about what it meant to be a global citizen. Students were very interested in learning about what a Veteran was and felt very proud to write a letter of thanks to a Veteran.

During the Advent Season, a food drive was held for the Edmonton Food Bank. Our families were asked to donate food. Students helped to collect and organize the food for the Food Bank. Students were able to help those in the Edmonton community that were in need of food for themselves and their families. Our students appreciated that many in our community struggled to feed their families and that our community was able to help those in need.

Grade 1 students made Christmas cards for some of the senior citizens at the Allen Gray Continuing Care Centre. As a class, online research on the Care Centre was completed and it was discussed what it was like to be an old person. The students shared any personal connections that they had with old people such as grandparents, great grandparents, and so forth. This helped them to learn empathy. The students felt proud of their cards and their personal, joyful messages to the senior citizens.

Grade 4, 5, and 6 Leadership Students at our school planned and executed a Candygram fundraiser during the month of February. Candygrams were sold and money collected was donated to the Catholic Social Services Sign of Hope, specifically for individuals suffering mental illness or families in need of counselling. This fundraiser raised approximately \$600 for CSS Sign of Hope. The

leadership students were very proud of themselves and couldn't believe how much money they raised during this fundraiser.

For Valentines, our Kindergarten, Grade 2 and Grade 6 students worked together to make 160 handmade cards for the seniors of the Laurel Heights Retirement Residence. Messages were filled with friendship and love. Students learned what being 'old' or 'elderly' meant and that these people may not always receive Valentine's cards, which made them feel lonely, alone, or forgotten. Students were happy to spread kindness, love, and add some sunshine to the to seniors' day by making cards. They learned that small acts like card making could fill other peoples buckets.

A food drive was held to collect food for St. Theresa Parish. This Parish collects food and helps those in the Mill Woods area. Students helped pack and box food that was donated by the families in our community. The students were able to see that people needed food all year long, not just during the holidays.

The Grade 5 students sold Freezies and then all proceeds were donated to the Alberta Red Cross to help those in need that were displaced by wildfires in Alberta. Students helped those that needed help by donating money to this worthy cause and felt like they made a difference in their lives.

MONSIGNOR FEE OTTERSON

Our school collected cereal to support ECSD inner city schools breakfast programs. Students felt a part of being able to help others in need.

Through various sales and events, students raised funds that supported our sponsored student, Ester, at the Burundi English School. She has been a sponsor student of our school for nine years. Students had a connection to her success and progress through school with our support. They saw a long-term commitment making a difference.

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Students led and planned a fundraiser for Kids with Cancer. They raised money to support this charity of their choice through sales and service. Students were involved in the planning and roll out of this fundraiser.

MONSIGNOR WILLIAM IRWIN

As a school, we brought in food items for the St. Thomas More Parish Food Bank. At our Thanksgiving Mass, the students were able to see the food bank at the parish and to understand how it helped those in our community. For the following two weeks, we encouraged food donations for the food bank. We received an abundance of donations. Students were proud of being able to give back to others especially those in our community who had less.

Students were encouraged to bring their leftover candy after Halloween to donate to the food bank. Students learned about sharing. They also learned that those who were less fortunate should also be free to have small pleasures in life.

During the Advent season, we asked students to bring in a toonie as well as to bring in one food item that had been determined by the school for Christmas hampers. The food items were put into bins and the toonie money was divided into gift cards from Walmart for our school communities most needy families. The ideas were to offer the families food and treats for their Christmas dinners. The Walmart gift cards allowed the families to purchase turkeys and fresh foods that were not part of the hampers. Students were proud to help others in their own school community. Not only did they donate money and a food items, but Grade 6 students helped to sort and pack the baskets.

One of the Grade 6 classes organized a bottle drive with the hope of collecting \$500 to be sent to help the rescue efforts in Syria and Turkey after devastating earthquakes. By organizing, planning, and implementing the bottle drive, the Grade 6 students learned how to help others through service. They felt good knowing that they were doing something to try to help another community.

Students were invited to make Christmas cards for staff at the Stollery Hospital thanking them for their service and dedication to their work. Approximately 200+

cards were made and delivered. Students learned the value of appreciation for others.

During Lent, we raised money for Catholic Social Services in a project called "Baskets of Blessings." Students were asked to bring in money to support the cause. A list of items was created for students to follow to earn money at home, for example, putting away the dishes \$0.25, bring in \$0.01 for all the books you have in your home, and so forth. Each class was encouraged to raise \$100. The donation money would be used by Catholic Social Services to create baskets of necessary household items for new immigrants or for those who were recently homeless. We also raised money during a fasting lunch and students were encouraged to donate \$5, which went to the same cause. Overall, we raised \$2,500 for Catholic Social Services. Students learned the importance of almsgiving as well as how fortunate they were compared to others. They felt proud and happy to give to a cause that they knew would directly benefit people in our community.

During our Father Bill Week, we dedicated time for classes to go out and clean the school yard as Father Bill enjoyed nature. Students were proud to have contributed to a clean schoolyard and to have helped Planet Earth. Also during this week, classes were encouraged to make cards to send to the staff of Catholic Social Services thanking them for all that they did to support the poor and new immigrants in our community. Students learned the importance of showing gratitude and the importance of thanking others for their service to others.

MOTHER MARGARET MARY

From our school, 120 "Elves of Edmonton" signed up for a friend from St. Jerome School to fulfil a Christmas wish list. The students filled 3 busses of Christmas joy and spirit with presents in hand to share in the gift of friendship, generosity, and care for those in our community. The MMM students were able to witness first hand the joy experienced by those less fortunate through their generous efforts and allowed them to see that the gift of giving was truly a gift, and that their time and personal connection brought true joy to younger students in our school community.



A winter clothing drive ran for a week at our school to provide winter clothing for our friends at St. Catherine's School. Storm Council motivated the classes to compete in the greatest amount of bags filled and it resulted in a big SUV loaded with many bags of new and gently used winter clothing. This winter clothing campaign ran the month of December when temperatures were freezing. Morning announcements addressed the issue of many people not having proper clothing for our Canadian winters and how we could help support as we related and experienced the cold. Students could empathize and wanted to help give the gift of warmth.

As part of our annual Changemaker Day, a group of students were invited to go to The Mustard Seed Support Center where it sorts donations that were used in a variety of programs throughout Edmonton. Another group of students made sandwiches for donation at The Mustard Seed Pallisade Housing Project. Students learned how The Mustard Seed organization had a zero-landfill directive where all items not used by the center were purchased by ROTEX who utilized the unused items around the world. Students also learned about how The Mustard Seed helps individuals as part of a wholistic process in an effort to help them overcome the challenges they were facing. Students were inspired to seek other opportunities to help The Mustard Seed organization as well as others like The Mustard Seed. Students asked when they would be able to do something like this again as it was very inspiring.

Religion 35 students had the opportunity to utilize their gifts by helping students at Monsignor William Irwin School. Students were placed in a variety of classes where they had the opportunity to help students throughout the day. Students from both schools really enjoyed the interactions and bonding that took place. Students from both schools asked if they could do this again soon. One area of special note was the Ukrainian student from MMM who really helped a young Ukrainian student who had just arrived at MWI and knew very little English.

As a class social justice project for service to those in need, our students researched and chose, Home Instead, an in-home senior care service organization that provided services to seniors to help them age safely at home. Students wanted to give to seniors alone during the holidays. The students collected and donated gifts to seniors and made Christmas cards. In total, 60 gifts and cards

were donated. The students were extremely humbled by the response of the organization. Home Instead was brought to tears by their donation. They were overwhelmed by the generosity of youth and were grateful for being chosen by our school. The experience demonstrated to the students the impact that their actions had on others and most expressed the desire to donate to Home Instead again.

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

Students collected Toonies for Terry for the week leading up to the Terry Fox Run, and then the entire student body ran around the school grounds in their respective grade levels. Students ran for a specific family member and/or friend, and the school community raised \$300 in support of the Terry Fox Foundation and cancer research. By participating in the run and specifically in the name of someone they knew (family or friend), students realized that cancer affected almost everyone. They learned about an important Canadian and the impact one individual could have on millions of people.

During Read In Week, students brought new books to be donated to St. Vincent de Paul Society for new families arriving in Canada from Ukraine. Guest readers also brought in their favourite books to share with students and then donate. Students recognized that new families from Ukraine would have had to leave behind most of their possessions, including their books and that it would be nice to receive new books when they arrived here.

As a school, we collected cereal boxes to donate to St. Vincent de Paul Society. At our Thanksgiving celebration, the students brought all the boxes of cereal collected to the gym where they placed them in front of the cross, and Father said a blessing of thanks. As always, we were overwhelmed by the generosity of our school community. Bringing the collection of food to the celebration was a visible sign of the generosity of the students and our school community. Students were proud of the food items they brought, knowing that their contributions went directly to help those in need in our community.

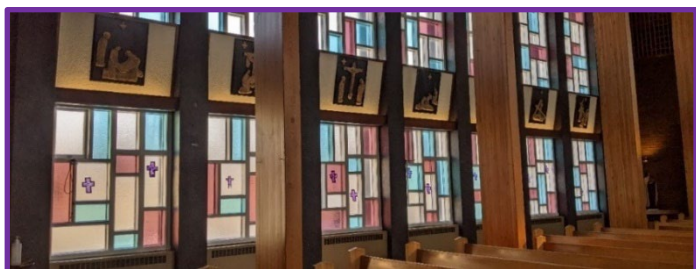
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Throughout the month of May, our Grade 3 students, along with the Grade 1 and 5 students, participated in garden building. The Grade 3 students created their own compost, which they used in all the garden beds to prepare them for planting. They created rain barrels and watering cans using recycled materials to provide a system to water the garden and plants. The teachers and students eagerly prepared garden beds and planted seeds in hopes of beautifying our school community. The students learned how to make composite and use it appropriately to prepare garden and flower beds for our school community. They excitedly checked on their gardens daily to weed and water. They were proud of what they had accomplished, especially as their flowers and vegetables were beginning to grow!

On June 23rd, OLMC celebrated our namesake with a day of wellness and gratitude for our students. Students participated in a gratitude nature scavenger hunt, used their "sit spots" to colour as well as share a snack with a friend in our outdoor classroom, created bracelets of the "Fruits of the Spirit," and participated in a mindful yoga session. Students were able to experience the gift of wellness and the importance of having gratitude in their lives.

OUR LADY OF PEACE

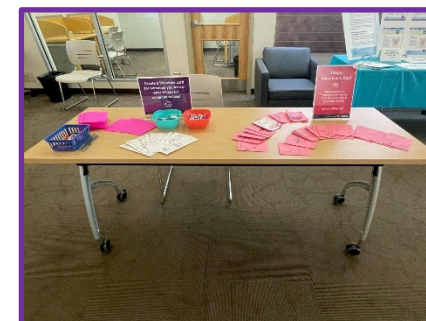
The Grade 2 and 3 class at Our Lady of Peace took the time to thoughtfully create purple stained glass crosses to donate to our local parish, St. John the Evangelist. The students took their time and prayed upon it as they themselves prepared their hearts for Jesus' death. As well, they considered what Lenten promises they could make to live their lives more like Jesus. The church decorated their windows with the art as a meaningful way to remember the Lenten season.



OUR LADY OF THE PRAIRIES

Our staff and students collected non-perishable food items during the month of October for Scare Away Hunger. Students made comments like, "felt proud to carry a heavy bag of food so other kids could eat," "I want to feed others," "I want to make sure no one goes hungry," "it makes me feel good," and "happy." As the classroom bins began to overflow with food donations, students felt good that they were able to help others. Students brought these classroom food donations to the gym on Monday, October 31st, for our school Halloween parade so that we could visually see what was collected school-wide. They were excited to support the less fortunate.

A class spent time making Valentine's cards for the local Lois Hole Public Library. In total, 25 cards were made. These cards were put on display for patrons to take and enjoy on February 14th. The Lois Hole Library was inspired by our students' cards and made a card making station as well. The students were very excited to create cards for others. They were very focused as they worked on their cards and were sure to make them look nice. It was hoped that these cards would have a positive impact for someone who maybe did not receive any other cards for Valentine's Day.



Every month, students sent art to the seniors at a Touchmark Seniors Home. Students reflected on the importance of caring for the elderly and looked forward to putting a smile on their faces. Students learned empathy and the importance of thinking of others. Students practiced thinking of others and putting others first.



OUR LADY OF VICTORIES

Students learned about the life of Terry Fox and his ongoing goal to raise money for cancer research and treatment. The students donated Toonies for Terry, wore red, and gathered in the field to participate in a 20-minute run together. All students were dedicated to running or moving for as long as they could, just like Terry. They worked together to support one another, cheering everyone on, holding hands with young students, or even giving them piggyback rides to help them keep going. They learned about the dignity of human life, perseverance, and the importance of advocacy and donations to help a public cause.

Students designed around 220 Easter cards to deliver to the neighbourhood. Along with these cards, the community received a letter inviting them to donate their gently used materials to our school's "Loose Parts" program, which also saved these items from ending up in the landfill. Students reflected on the images and lessons of the Easter season, to love one another, care for your neighbours, and glorify Jesus for his sacrifice. The students enjoyed the fresh air and walk around their community and were excited to help by collecting donations for our "Loose Parts" program.

SIR JOHN THOMPSON

On September 22nd, during our ILearn morning, we held our annual Terry Fox Run. The money was donated on behalf of SJT to the Terry Fox Foundation for cancer research. Truly Terry's memory lives on in our society. Our Physical Education Leadership students promoted the event on our social media and created segments on our school morning broadcast. The whole school participated in a walk around our school field and were challenged to donate a Toonie for Terry. Our students had a great time, and their homeroom teachers took the time to hand out stickers for each student where they put who they were running for. Many students have had cancer touch their lives and it was heartwarming to see the messages such as, "I'm running for my Grandfather/Grandmother," "I'm running for my Mom and Dad's friend..." We raised nearly \$200 in our Toonie for Terry fundraising! This whole school event

served to teach our students about the sacrifice and legacy of one man's fight against cancer and his cross country run to gain public awareness. Our students saw what one person could do and were challenged to find their cause and work for the betterment of all in their lives.

In November, we continued our long-standing relationship with the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation Dreams for Kids Campaign and Catholic Social Services Sign of Hope. Our Grade 8 EAP students took the lead in organizing fundraising events during our ILearn Thursday sessions where our students chose their learning sessions. These fundraising efforts were conceived, planned, and carried out by our students under the guidance of our teachers. These included, a 3 on 3 basketball tournament, escape room, watch a movie for charity, carnival for social justice, bake sale, and a donut sale. Our community partners donated items for our bake sales including Safeway, Save On Foods, and Tim Hortons. Our school also received many direct donations from our parent community and their businesses including a \$1,000 donation from Volvo of Edmonton. Our parent community supported the fundraising efforts as well by buying raffle tickets at our parent/teacher interviews and supporting our school-wide Krispy Kreme donut fundraiser. Our students were made aware early on of the need that this Foundation supports for ECSD children and youth in need throughout the city and the good works of Catholic Social Services in the Edmonton community. Being able to support other families in need was of particular importance to our students as they have been acutely aware of the difficulties facing many of families in our city and in some cases added to the importance as they themselves knew someone who had been in direct benefit of these organizations. The notion of giving of themselves without any thought of benefit for themselves was an important lifelong value that we instilled in our students.

This year in EAP Science, students continued their goal of making our school aware of the importance of recycling that was started last year. Our students collected batteries, felt markers, pens, and recyclable containers. They organized specific well labelled receptacles in each classroom to collect these items to be properly recycled. The EAP students continued to promote the initiative throughout the school on posters and by creating public service announcements in our morning broadcasts. This project had a great impact as students were thinking about the specific of what type of recycling goes in its proper collection receptacle. The second year of this initiative had the students using the money

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raised from recyclable containers to support our community garden initiative. With some support from the school and parent council, our students met with administration and devised a plan to grow and harvest vegetables in our community garden area. The science students planned to connect with St. Angela School to conduct a science fair where they would be explaining their recycling project and our community garden initiative. This community connection with a neighboring elementary school was a natural extension of the project.

The Social Justice Club at Sir John Thompson raised money for Edmonton's Food Bank. After being flooded with donations during the holiday season, food banks often struggle to help those in need in January due to a sharp decrease in donations. For that reason, the Social Justice Club chose the Food Bank as the recipient of the funds from their latest fundraiser, freeze-dried candy sales. Students were incredibly excited to buy this delicious treat and supplies sold out quickly. Our school community was made aware of the ongoing need to support the Food Bank. Our students responded to this call for action by enthusiastically supporting this event.

During our Mental Health Awareness Day, the students saw a presentation from YESS (Youth Empowerment Support Services). YESS offers a variety of supports to youth aged 15-24 with a focus on assisting those who were at-risk of being unhoused. The Social Justice Club felt that this organization would be great to support and constructed a campaign of awareness in our school. They made posters and taught our students about this organization and the value they provided to our most vulnerable youth. They sold cotton candy throughout the month of April and raised over \$500 to donate to YESS. The student population felt that they became more aware of the challenges faced by many youths in Edmonton today.

The school Social Justice Club hosted a trivia contest to raise awareness in the week leading up to Earth Day on April 22nd. Students were active participants in searching the school for the trivia question each day that raised awareness of the basic facts about Earth Day.

SISTER ANNATA BROCKMAN

As an Advent initiative, our students prepared Christmas hampers for families in our ECSD community. Each child was asked to contribute a specific food item for their classroom hamper. As a school community, we created 31 Christmas hampers for families in need. Staff of SAB delivered the hampers to St. Teresa of Calcutta School. Students gained a greater understanding that there were many families that experienced food scarcity in the Edmonton area. They gained an appreciation that by working together their small actions could impact others in small ways. This was a meaningful act of service that our students participated in during the season of Advent.

The Grade 3 classes made cards for seniors in our community. Some were sent to a gentleman who lost his wife a few months prior and was struggling with loneliness day-to-day. These cards were sent one by one and were received sporadically to spread some love and cheer, so he felt like he was not alone. The rest of the cards were given to a seniors home so we could spread some kindness and love throughout that community. In total, over 100 cards were created and sent. The students talked about how they felt so good that they could make a difference in the community even though they are so young.

As part of the Sister Annata Brockman school-wide "Be an Upstander" initiative, our Grade 2 students chose to investigate the topic of food scarcity. They learned that even though food was one of our basic needs, many children and families around the world do not have access to the food they need for survival. The students gained a deeper understanding of this topic through watching videos, reading books, and interviewing people in our community. After they reflected on what they had learned, they collectively decided that they wanted to make a difference. We reached out to several schools in Edmonton and found a school that could use recess snacks for their students. The students shared what they had learned with their families and then brought in boxes of individual snacks that would later be delivered to Our Lady of Peace School. The students were 'upstanders' by finding a need in their community and undertook an action to make positive change. The Grade 2 students were surprised to learn that food scarcity exists in Edmonton. They learned that all children might not have a snack



and the lack of nutrition may affect their focus and learning. They realized that as a team they could make a difference in the lives of others.

Our school is a yearly contributor of backpacks containing winter essentials for the Warm Hands, Warm Hearts Campaign. The school was graciously donated new backpacks from the Principal of Our Lady of Peace School to use for this project. Thanks to our school community, the school's Leadership Team was able to stuff 100 backpacks full of winter supplies to help some of our city's most vulnerable during the cold winter months. The Warm Hands, Warm Hearts organization, as a whole, was able to deliver 600 backpacks across the city. In addition to the backpacks, we were able to give 6 bags full of children's winter gear to Goodwill in support of WIN House. Through photos taken from the day the backpacks were handed out, the Leadership students could see their work and organizational skills go towards vulnerable citizens in Edmonton. As donations were taken in as a class, links to individual Religion courses could be made, and gave perspective on unsheltered individuals within the city of Edmonton.

Sister Annata School Leadership students sold, sorted, and delivered Candygrams for Valentine's Day. The sales raised \$427.33 that the students decided to donate to the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation. The Leadership students learned about organizing a fundraiser, the difficult choice of choosing a charity, communication skills, and interacting within our school community (adults and children). Some students also discovered that the Foundation helped families of students that were in need in our own School Division.

Staff and students participated this year in a campaign called, "Rock Your Socks," in honour of World Down Syndrome Day. Staff and students wore fun, wacky, and even mismatched socks to show our recognition and support of persons with Down Syndrome. As Lent had already begun, the Leadership Team put forward an almsgiving project where homerooms throughout the school collectively donated hundreds of pairs of adult socks that were distributed by Sacred Heart Catholic Church of the First Peoples to some of our city's most vulnerable citizens. Through this combined project, students learned recognition, respect, and support of two important groups. First, we were called to protect people and secondly, our Catholic tradition instructed us to put the needs of poor and vulnerable people first. A Deacon from the church shared his perspective and

gave the Leadership students an idea of how something as simple as socks would go a long way towards helping Edmonton's most vulnerable citizens.

Students went to two seniors' residences located next to each other. Students helped seniors in planting plants in their gardens. They spent time talking and getting to know the seniors. Students were impacted just by being able to lend a hand in their community. They were so happy to work alongside seniors and get to know some of the elders in their community. They were given a renewed sense of pride on how it felt to help out in the community in an act of service for others.

ST. ALPHONSUS

The Student Leadership led fundraising for the Terry Fox Foundation and run. The students were delighted to participate in this event. They were all very proud to wear on their shirts who they were running for. They ran as fast and as long as they could.

Our staff made six hampers for six of our families at Thanksgiving. This was a staff project.

Our staff drew names at Christmastime. Staff bought a toy that they thought the person whose name they drew would have enjoyed as a child. As part of the social gathering, staff unwrapped the gifts and guessed who might have pulled their name. The gifts were then donated to the United Way Tower of Toys. Some of our students would have been the recipients of this donation.

Leadership went around to sell popcorn for the last day of school before the Christmas break. They explained to students that there were young kids that needed shelter and that YESS was a safe place for them to go. Students were made aware that there were kids like themselves in need and that they needed to look out for one another.

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ST. ANGELA

In 1980, Terry Fox set the bar high for himself when he started his Marathon of Hope saying, "Nobody is ever going to call me a quitter." St. Angela School proudly took part in this year's Terry Fox School Run to continue Terry's legacy. Our students learned more about Terry Fox and his commitment to raising much-needed funds for cancer research. Students learned that they could advocate and lobby for issues that were of importance to them and their families.

All classes collected items for the Edmonton Food Bank in conjunction with our Thanksgiving liturgy. Students had opportunities to reflect on food scarcity and how it impacted families in our community. Students also learned about the Catholic social Teaching of Preferential Option for the Poor.

The school participated in the Halloween Howl, which was a run to raise money for diabetes research. The Alberta Diabetes Foundation was selected as there were staff and students in our school who were living with diabetes. A donation page was set up in our school's name and we raised \$1,100. Students learned more about diabetes and the impact it has on the life of one of our own students in Grade 1. The student, her dad and teacher were featured on Global News to share her story. We also had a researcher from the U of A share the gains that were being made in diabetes research right here at the U of A. The Green STEM students were encouraged to use their skills to continue to solve challenging medical problems in the future!

The staff and students collected new and gently used items for the Edmonton local inner-city community as part of the Warm Hand, Warm Hands Project. Items collected included hats, mitts, scarves, toothbrushes and toothpaste, deodorant, soap, socks, and gift cards. Students felt empowered to contribute to the well-being of our local community. Classes discussed homelessness in our own community and the importance of being advocates for change. The act of collecting items symbolizes our desire to create a more socially just society for all.

ST. ANNE

The students recognized that there were families in Edmonton that did not have enough food for a big Thanksgiving dinner. The staff focus was on teaching the students that we could help others by donating food to our local food bank. Our Leadership students wrote announcements and delivered them on our daily morning announcements asking fellow students to bring in a food item. A notice went in the October Newsletter for parents letting them know what was needed at the Edmonton Food Bank. Each class collected their items in boxes and a staff member delivered everything to the Edmonton Food Bank. As the food came into the school one item at a time, students were able to see that if everyone pitched in a little bit the impact could be huge. Classroom boxes were brought to the front of the school so students could see the amount of food that would be donated from our school. The students look forward to giving a donation every Thanksgiving.

Three Grade 5 students requested to have an Art Club for their Grade 5/6 class and raise money to help other kids in school. They wanted to involve the community by raffling their art. With adult guidance, they decided to have a raffle for their art at the Christmas Concert. They worked on art projects for five weeks during recess. They learned that the ECS Foundation helped kids at school with food and supplies as well as many other things. They raised \$84 for the ECS Foundation. The students felt empowered because their idea was heard and developed. The parents that supported the art raffle were impressed to hear that this was completely a student-led initiative. The students learned they could make a difference.

Grade 2 students created Christmas cards for seniors at the neighbouring Dickensfield Capital Care Center. They were not able to deliver them in person, however, the teacher was able to drop them at the front desk to be distributed amongst the residents. The students had a classroom discussion about what it might be like to be indoors with no visitors. They understood that this needed to happen because the seniors needed to stay safe and healthy. They made approximately 30 special Christmas cards to share with people that might be feeling lonely.



The school had a special Lenten Prayer Box where students could come and draw or write a prayer for someone or something during the season of Lent and place it into the box. The idea for sharing prayers came from our Ash Wednesday Liturgy with the priest of St. Mathew Parish, when he encouraged all students to pray more during Lent. The students understood that they could speak to God about ways they wanted to help others through prayer. They made a physical connection to praying by writing it down and placing it into the box.

ST. AUGUSTINE

Together with their Grade 3 buddies, the Grade 6 students initiated a school yard clean up. They felt called to protect and restore their community. Students learned the value of caring for God's creation and teamwork with their Grade 6 buddies. By sharing the load and working together, St. Augustine students built community and felt proud of themselves after clean-up. As a result of this clean-up, more garbage cans were added to the field and the community used them instead of waste collecting in the school yard.

Hunger is an issue that is widespread, especially during holidays such as Thanksgiving. Throughout the month of October, our students and teachers had open conversations in class about hunger, the need for food during the holidays, and how God calls each and every one of us to help when we can. Through many discussions on how we could help, our students decided on bringing food donations for the Edmonton Food Bank for Thanksgiving. The students and their families were called upon to bring non-perishable items to donate to the Edmonton Food Bank in the weeks before Thanksgiving. We felt so blessed that so many of our amazing families donated multiple items to help those in need. We were so grateful to have such a strong community that was willing to come together to help. The impact of having our students donate to different charities such as the Edmonton Food Bank, created a wonderful snowball effect within the school and our surrounding community. Our students were so excited and proud of themselves that they were able to come together and help those in need. They got to see first-hand how much we could accomplish when we worked together as a team and how something that may feel small to us, could mean the world to someone in need.

ST. BENEDICT

Our Beacon of Light Committee, along with the support of the Kindergarten, 5B and 6A classes, held a Winter Clothing Drive for the Bissell Center. New and/or gently used mittens, gloves, and toques were collected to help keep those in need warm during the cold winter months. Warm clothing was collected on our Tree of Collection in the library. God made us to be part of communities, families, and countries, so all people could share and help each other, especially the poor and vulnerable. Students were able to create posters for the warm clothing drive to display around the school. Students learned about the importance of giving to those in need.

Buddy classes from Kindergarten to Grade 6 made Valentine's Day cards/pictures for seniors that were delivered to Capital Care Lynnwood, and doctors/nurses at the U of A Hospital. Students were able to understand the impact of their words to help those who might be struggling in the workplace or feeling alone on a holiday such as Valentine's Day.

Students from St. Benedict School collected food bank items for the Edmonton Food Bank and our school community to help those who were less fortunate. The food was collected and then given to families in need to have a warm dinner for Thanksgiving, as well as for the Edmonton Food Bank. Food bank items were displayed and blessed at our school Thanksgiving Celebration. Teachers discussed with their classes the need to help those who were less fortunate than us. Students were able to discuss a time that they may have felt hungry, and how that made them feel. Grade 5 students collected and sorted the foodbank items.

ST. BERNADETTE

Over 150 cards were made by students from Kindergarten to Grade 6. Foam heart shapes with notes of love and kindness and ribbons were created for distribution to the neighbouring community. The kindness craft cards were distributed door-to-door by Kindergarten and their Grade 4 buddies in just one hour on Monday, February 13th. All students felt genuinely happy to spread the

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message of kindness and love to the community. Grade 4 and Kindergarten were especially delighted to deliver cards to the mailboxes and loved it when some school neighbours opened their doors to thank the students personally. Students gained the understanding that we could be a part of the community and have an impact.

ST. BONAVENTURE

As a school community we gathered outdoors and walked around our field together for the Terry Fox Foundation. The students continued Terry's Dream. His words, "Even if I don't finish, we need others to continue. It's got to keep going without me," were our motivation. This was an annual activity for us and most students looked forward to it. Pride was felt by the Grade 6B class as they decorated many running shoes to put on our display board. Raising money was important but gathering as a school community and promoting the Terry Fox Run gave the kids purpose.

Our students collected non-perishable food items during our Thanksgiving Day Celebration for the St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank at St. John Bosco Parish. Posters were handmade by our Grade 5 students and given to each classroom as a reminder. Our Grade 6 broadcast anchors reminded all students how important it was to help those in need. Many of our students were recipients of food hampers throughout the year. This was an important opportunity for them to give to the community as well. The fact that the non-perishable items would go to our community church made our students feel as though they were serving each other.

As per our annual tradition, we collected donations for War Veterans of Canada. Many of our students were far removed from the war, consequently this acknowledgment was important. During Remembrance Day, we made an effort to speak historically about those who fought for our freedom, and we made connections to present day wars. This was of vital importance since empathy for others and an understanding of our freedom must be felt and appreciated to keep peace in the world.

This year we assigned prayer intentions for each class to focus on during the four weeks of Advent. Our classes were divided into four groups, one for each week of Advent. Students prayed prayers of Hope on week 1. They performed Peaceful Actions during week 2. They prayed Prayers of Love for the 3rd week and then practiced Joyful actions during the 4th week of Advent. This was a school-wide project and each class looked forward to their special week. They listened to what fellow schoolmates had to say and took their prayer or action seriously. This was a unique way to live the Advent Wreath rather than just lighting the candle and praying.

During Advent, our school collected socks and mitts for The Mustard Seed. As each student brought in a pair of socks or some mittens, they were given an ornament to put on our school Christmas tree. The tree was full of ornaments. Many of our families struggle financially and were often recipients of socks and mitts themselves. It was heartwarming to see how many students brought items. They were excited to see our Christmas tree get filled with ornaments and even more excited to see the huge bin of donations that we collected.

January was dedicated to Church Tours. Each grade level had a turn bussing to St. John Bosco Parish and were greeted by one of the church assistants. The church assistant spoke about St. John Bosco specifically and then had a Scavenger Hunt with the students as they learned many details about the Catholic Church. Our students LOVED the Church Tour. They had a small group visit and learned many wonderful details that they would not have learned by attending Mass. Many of our students felt closer to God and were proud to be Catholic. So many of them were happy to learn about the Church in such a fun way.

The Grade 3B class made close to 30 Christmas cards for a local seniors home in attempts to provide love and Christmas cheer. The intention was to do something nice for someone that they don't know. Often we do good deeds and immediately see the result of it. This class worked hard on cheering up an older person without ever having met them. Many students thought that this was a special feeling.

ST. BONIFACE

Being our brothers' and sisters' keepers, we continued our tradition of participating in the Terry Fox Run. As a school, we met as a community to give background on Terry, what he did, and why we continued his legacy today. We reflected on acting as a community in order to end this disease and improve survival chances of everyone who was affected by cancer. Every student was asked to bring in a Toonie for Terry and we met this goal by raising \$328. This was a great project for our students as they learned about Canadian history through a truly great Canadian, but also about cancer and how the efforts of one person could have a significant impact. All participants determined who they were running for and during this time it became obvious that a majority of us had been affected by cancer.



The school collected cereal for St. Francis of Assisi School and their breakfast program. We were able to collect over 150 boxes of cereal for the program. The students were quite sheltered here and lived in a high socio-economic area. We did this last year as well but for many it really was a surprise and an understanding of how lucky they were.

All monies collected from our Christmas Carnival, Candygrams, and front row seating and reserved parking for our Christmas Concert went to the ECS Foundation Dream Builders Campaign. We raised over a \$1,000 for the project. For a school of less than 160 students, we were very proud of this. Our students were amazed at the money raised and delighted that it was going to such a good cause. All classes watched the Foundation's promotional video, and it was explained to them how Dreams for Kids had supplied the milk for the breakfast program at another school. They were again shocked that so many students went to school hungry without breakfast, so they were delighted and happy to help.

As part of their Science/Social unit, the Grade 3 class made a carnival of arcade games from cardboard. The students began this project by creating their own "nation" in groups during Social Studies. They created a name for their nation and a flag with colours/symbols that represented the key elements of their nation, as well as imports, exports, and the rights/responsibilities of its citizens. They then created an arcade game that represented their nation, utilizing the skills they learned over the last two building and testing units in Science. They then decided to organize and run a quarter carnival for the entire school which our community got behind and fully supported. In total, \$168 was raised for Dreams for Kids for the ECS Foundation. As our students were very familiar with the Foundation and the good works that it does, they were incredibly excited to get behind this project and support the Foundation.

Kindness at its best! Incredible kindness was displayed by Grade 2 and Grade 6 students as they visited our local senior center. It was heartwarming to see these young minds come together to brighten the day of the residents. The students captivated the audience by singing joyful songs that filled the center with Christmas favourites. The smiles on the seniors' faces were priceless, and the students' enthusiasm was contagious. In addition to the musical performance, the students engaged in a craft activity with the seniors, creating beautiful artwork together and fostering intergenerational connections. Witnessing their empathy and genuine care for others, filled us with pride and hope for the future. When young children spent time with seniors, a beautiful sense of community and a profound call to family was created. This intergenerational interaction fostered a unique bond that transcended age barriers and bridges the generational gap. The wisdom and life experiences of the seniors served as a guiding light for the young ones, imparting valuable lessons, stories, and perspectives. Through shared activities, a nurturing environment emerged, where friendships were formed, compassion was nurtured, and empathy was cultivated.

The students, filled with compassion and gratitude, dedicated their creative energy to crafting special Valentine's cards for the brave veterans who selflessly served our country. The classrooms buzzed with excitement as the students poured their imagination onto colourful cards, carefully selecting words and designs that would express their appreciation. With each stroke of a crayon and every heartfelt message penned, the students embraced the opportunity to demonstrate their admiration for the veterans' sacrifices and dedication. These

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personalized Valentine's cards became tokens of respect, love, and remembrance, showing the veterans that their service was valued and cherished by the younger generation. The project not only nurtured the students' creativity but also instilled in them a profound sense of patriotism. It was a beautiful gesture that brought together the innocence of childhood and the profound appreciation for the sacrifices made by veterans. This act of giving allowed them to experience the power of kindness, compassion, gratitude, empathy, and citizenship while shaping them into compassionate individuals who were committed to making a positive difference in the world.

ST. BRENDAN

The Grade 1/2 Combined class and Generation classes at St. Brendan collaborated to create Christmas Cards. They used paper, stickers, decorations, colouring tools, and their imaginations to create beautiful cards. In the cards, they wrote, "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Love St. Brendan School." The approximately 40 students each made at least one card, but some students made 2-3 cards. On December 13th, they delivered the cards to mailboxes on homes surrounding our school community. A mailman even stopped and gave a little chocolate treat and some residents even popped out of their doors to say thank you and Merry Christmas! One resident gave us a candy cane and chocolate treat. It was hoped that this action inspired students to create Christmas cards for their family, friends, and neighbours. The students enjoyed spreading Christmas cheer to our St. Brendan neighbours! We also hoped we spread joy to the neighbours on the 3rd week of Advent. Students were very excited to make the cards and be able to spend time with the Generation students. They felt excited when delivering the cards and were all smiling. We learned that Jesus wanted us to show kindness and spread joy during this Advent season. It was hoped that students felt joy as they built an appreciation for our community neighbours.

During Random Acts of Kindness Week, February 13th to 17th, students, and staff, in both elementary and junior high, were asked to donate winter items for the Bissell Centre. On Wednesday, February 15th, students handed in gloves, scarves, ski pants, socks, toques, neck warmers, and warm clothing. In total, the following

items were collected: 3 hand warmers, 6 coats, 2 pairs socks and a bag of socks, 10 neck warmers, 3 coats, 3 pairs of boots, 2 snow pants, 26 toques, and 37 pairs of mittens. These items were donated to the Bissell Centre the next week. Students felt happy and generous to donate winter items from our community in support of the Bissell Centre. They realized these warm items were needed, especially in our Edmonton winters.

ST. CATHERINE

Our Junior High Recreational Leadership class organized a "watch party" in the school gym on November 23rd when team Canada played against Belgium in the FIFA World Cup. The students organized a snack sale where the money raised was donated to the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation Dreams for Kids. We raised \$375 for the Foundation. Our Rec Leadership students worked very hard to organize an amazing watch party for our Grades 4-9 students. It was an exciting time where we gathered together as a school community and celebrated proudly, wearing red and white, our team Canada! Participation in this project and the project's success made our students very excited to organize another "watch party" in the near future. It took great planning and organization before during and after the event, but it was very successful. Our students were very proud and we as a school community were very proud of them too.

Our Grade 2 class participated in a "Bend the Rule" day where if they brought in a donation to go towards the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation Dreams for Kids, they could bring a teddy bear to school for the day. They raised \$13.75. Students were excited to participate and felt very proud of their donations.

The Grade 7-9 Horticulture option class planted and sold flowers and vegetables for a Mother's Day plant fundraiser to raise money for the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation Dreams for Kids. Students gained a great sense of pride in their actions of planting, caring for, and then selling the plants. They had carefully nurtured the vegetables and flowers since January. They raised \$217 for Dreams for Kids.



ST. CECILIA

Following a presentation from the Chaplain from the Edmonton Remand Centre Correctional Facility, students created bookmarks with wonderful art and messages of hope and faith for inmates at the Remand Centre. There were enough bookmarks created that they were also given to inmates at the Edmonton Young Offenders Centre. Many recipients made comments about how amazing the artwork was and that the bookmarks made them feel special. In a plain institutional environment where one was surrounded by steel and brick, a little bookmark bursting with color brought life to inmates who may have felt alone at Easter. The students recognized that choices made can have a significant impact on an individual's life but also on the lives that they were connected to. A small gesture could have a positive impact on someone who was not necessarily in a positive place.

Students and families contributed items used to create 250 lunches for Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples. The packed brown bag lunches included a sandwich made by the students, cookies and a juice box which were delivered to the Parish. Students gathered as a community to prepare a meal for a person in need. Together they felt a strong connection to those who struggled with basic needs. Prior to making the lunches, the students participated in a small celebration of our faith.

Staff participated in a toy drive and sandwich making for the Sacred Heart Catholic Church of the First Peoples. In total, 150 lunches were made and delivered to the Parish. The toys collected were from staff members and their families. The items used to create the lunches were contributed by staff members and families. In one afternoon, half of the staff wrapped 79 gifts while the other half of the staff packed brown bag lunches that included a sandwich, cookies, and a juice. The staff gathered in a faith celebration prior to the afternoon events. We grew closer as a community as we came together to support our brothers and sisters who were less fortunate.

Students contributed \$2 each to watch Canada participate in the World Cup of Soccer. The money collected was donated to the ECS Foundation Dream Maker Fund. The students recognized this charity that was targeted for this fundraiser.

They understood that funds collected would be used to help students in ECSD and would be used to support students in schools, similar to ours. In total, nearly \$800 was collected and donated to the Foundation.

The St. Cecilia Pop Up Shop was a combined effort with the SRO at St. Cecilia and Archbishop O'Leary. New and gently used items were collected totalling over 1,200 pieces. Prior to Christmas, a Pop Up Shop was created for St. Cecilia students to shop for themselves and for family members. Students used some of the items as gifts for family members who may have otherwise not been able to receive anything. The buzz and energy in the shop was so positive. Students were excited to be able to get something for themselves and family members. The staff were also able to put together packages for families identified as having larger needs. There were so many items left over that these were donated to the Free Store for Ukrainian Newcomers operated by Ukrainian Canadian Social Services supporting new families arriving to Canada.

ST. CHARLES

For our Thanksgiving celebration, hosted by the Kindergarten classes, we collected non-perishable food items to give to Sacred Heart Catholic Church of the First Peoples. When the non-perishable food items were dropped off, the members of the church were overjoyed. They told our teacher that their food bank shelves were almost empty and that they badly needed more food to help the members of their community. We donated 45 boxes of food. The Kindergarten students felt a sense of pride for organizing and participating in our Thanksgiving Celebration. They organized all the food that was donated, carried in food items in the procession, and put them into banker boxes to take to the church. They learned how to take care of others, help others, and have compassion for others.

The Grade 6 students at our school created cardboard carnival games to strengthen their understanding of probability. The students then organized a carnival on Halloween day to allow the students of St. Charles to play their games. Each student was asked to bring a \$2 donation as an admission fee, with all money going to the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation Dreams for Kids.

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We raised approximately \$400. The students were excited to share their creations with the school and felt proud to know that the money they raised helped to provide aid to students and families in our schools.

As part of the Grade 1 Social Studies curriculum, students learned about rights and responsibilities of people. A right was what was needed to live and be safe, healthy, and comfortable. This inspired the students to lead a social justice project that benefited Sacred Heart Catholic Church of the First Peoples. The church has a long history of supporting people in need. The school-wide initiative was to collect new pairs of underwear, and warm socks for both adult men and women. Let Your Light Shine Forth was shown by our school community! With their generosity and support we collected and donated 315 pairs of socks; 41 pairs of men's underwear; 87 pairs of women's underwear; 31 pairs of children's socks, and 23 pairs of children's underwear to the church. The students also made connections of learning about Jesus, and how we could show kindness, empathy, and respect towards others. Kindness and thoughtfulness could make a difference in many lives.

Our Kindergarten classes led a school-wide snack drive as our Lenten project. We collected individual snack items and then created snack bags by putting 7-9 different snacks into one Ziploc bag. Students in every grade donated snack, and the Kindergarten classes assembled 261 snack bags. The snack bags were packed up and donated to Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples to be included in the bagged lunches they handed out everyday. The students felt empowered to collect and make snack bags for others who were hungry or did not have as many snacks.

ST. CLEMENT

In conjunction with ECSD School Opening Mass celebrations, all staff were invited to bring in non-perishable food items to donate to the Edmonton Food Bank. These items were made visible in the front entrance of our school building as students and families returned to classes. The provocation invited students to inquire by asking questions such as, "Why was there a can of soup on the table?"

Various staff members and students had authentic opportunities to dialogue about supporting each other in our local community.

In preparation for the annual Terry Fox Foundation event, staff and students were encouraged to bring in a Toonie for Terry as a gesture of solidarity with all peoples, past and present, who were affected by cancer. Our school community raised over \$400 in donations. Each year we strive to bring the message of this Canadian Hero to life so that the students continue to deepen their understanding of what it means to make sacrifices, show determination, face challenges and be inspired to make a difference in the world. Terry Fox was an excellent model of all the IB Learner Profile Attributes and allowed us to establish/revisit key principles of being knowledgeable, caring, principled, open-minded, reflective, balanced, communicative, and thoughtful.

We held our 2nd Annual "Read & Feed" to support the Edmonton Food Bank. The challenge was to launch a love of literacy in conjunction with READ In Week. Students and staff participated in class versus class challenges to explore the IBLC and get back into action with the books! Food donations of non-perishable items were counted, stacked, and displayed in towers throughout the IBLC. Nearly 500 items were collected, boxed, and shared out. Students were highly inspired by and invested in the competitive aspect of this initiative. There was friendly banter to make predictions about the collections. Many teachers incorporated math concepts of patterning, graphing and geometry by using these items as manipulatives.

Our school attended our 2nd Annual No Stone Left Alone event at St. Joachim's Cemetery. Prior to the event, each student in the school, from K-9, was invited to paint a poppy on a stone that was provided to use from the NSLA Foundation. Our goal was to paint 988 stones to be placed on the grave sites of veterans. On the day of the event, our Grade 9 Jazz Band musicians played the national anthem and an individual student played both the "Last Post" and "Rouse" on the trumpet. Students from Grades 6-9 were able to take on the speaking roles of the formal ceremony before the poppy stone placement occurred. Students also got to meet and dialogue with two current members of the CAF. Once again, this event was integrated into all subject areas for students to "unpack" and deepen their levels of understanding. In Religious Education, students explored the concepts of Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy and how we were called in



service for the common good of each other and our common home. Through a study of the history of the poppy, as a Remembrance Day symbol, students then had opportunities to express their gratitude and appreciation by painting the rocks to be shared. Following the event, students wrote letters of reflection to express their personal thoughts, feelings, and experiences.

The St. Clement "Service as Action Project" has become a yearly tradition and exciting project. During Random Acts of Kindness Week, our students engaged by jumping aboard the Kindness Express spreading kindness in Edmonton. This initiative honours organizations and groups throughout our community and beyond who devote their time and service to others. In promoting learner agency, students facilitated and led the dialogue regarding what organization(s) they wanted to thank. The students created and designed a personalized card expressing gratitude and some sang songs to those who served the local and greater Edmonton community. To support students in understanding the purpose of this project and the learning intention, we led with this inquiry question, "How does the service and care from diverse organizations make a positive difference for me/my family/people or citizens of Edmonton/globally?" The students in our school reached out to others in the community to thank them for their kindness, dedication, and service to others. Students journeyed throughout the city with hearts of love to places including Edmonton Food Bank, the Dr. Gerald Zeller Centre, the Laurier Senior Center, Ben Calf Robe School, City of Edmonton Waste Management, and Lumen Christi Catholic Education Centre. The true Charger spirit was alive as the students enjoyed their time designing and creating kindness cards to bring smiles to many people throughout the city. Our students recognized that through learner agency, they had a voice and that they could make a difference in the world and in the lives of people right here in our city. These beautiful moments of love that were shared show us all that we truly were leaders of hope and mercy. These real-life Random Acts of Kindness had our students overflowing with joy, love, and a lived faith experience. This experience embodies the phrase, "Love is Central to All We Do For One Another." A special thank you to our students and parents for truly making a difference for others. At each grade level students explored a provocation that invited them to see a community need and planned a response to it. Students were engaged in a variety of hands-on activities to share their gifts and talents. They got to experience seeing the "fruits of their labour" by seeing the people and places they wanted to support.

ST. DOMINIC

Students wrote comments and/or positive wishes for staff members. These were left all over the staffroom tables. Students thought beyond themselves, seeing how kind words made a difference in the lives of others.

Students collected school supplies for One World One Centre for students new to our country. Students gained awareness of students arriving to a new country without tools for learning.

Together with the students in Grade 2, Grade 1C created Christmas cards for Canadian Armed Forces members serving throughout the world by mailing them to a central address in Belleville, Ontario. As a class, Grade 1C was able to make 23 Christmas cards. Sending holiday greeting cards to our troops was one way to demonstrate gratitude and ensure members knew they were remembered during the holiday season. This project helped Grade 1 students develop empathy, gratitude, and a sense of community. It allowed them to contribute to the well-being of others and encouraged them to be compassionate and thoughtful individuals.

This past December, the Grade 2 students wrote positive letters and notes, and made Christmas cards for the residents of St. Michael's Long Term Care Facility. In total, about 80 cards and letters were made. By doing this, the students did their part in supporting a central, social, Catholic institution in their community. The students, though young, could still participate in society, by doing their part to support other community members. This project impacted the students as it made them think about other groups in their community, the elderly, and those adults who needed extra support and care. During a class discussion, many students talked about feeling good after completing the positive notes and cards. Some mentioned how it was nice to share their faith and belief in God with others during Christmastime through making cards and letters.

In the month of February, students from Grade 6 completed a school-wide community project of spreading kindness to friends, family, and staff at the school. The students prepared speeches to present to each class that helped advertise a Candygram project. During the project, the Grade 6 students were

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involved in the collection of \$1 donations from each class. They were then involved in organizing the candygram kindness messages that students and staff sent to each other within the school. The students made sure every child and adult in the school got a kind message or positive compliment to cheer up their day. The students finally attached yummy lollipops and personally delivered the Candygrams to each class. By the end of the process, the students raised a total of \$890 for the Make A Wish Foundation and sent out over a 1,000 Kindness Candygrams in our school. While the students were figuring out where they should donate the money, the students really felt impacted when becoming informed about the Make A Wish Foundation. Within their class speeches, they spoke with a lot of passion towards wanting to help these sick kids. While arranging the entire project, the students were so excited to write, hand out, and even receive a kind message from a friend or admirer. The students' outlook on helping their school and city community impacted them on a generous and, for some, a personal level.

A used book sale was run by our Grade 4 students. We collected books from our school community. We then sold the books for a dollar each. The money raised went to the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation to help children in need. The students felt empowered and liked that their work was making a difference. They were encouraged to think of how we could work to support our friends in need. They learnt the value of working together for the common good and how small acts of many could contribute to one powerful act with a greater impact. It helped them to understand all the needs there were within our community.

Grade 5C leaders participated in numerous activities to assist the school community each day in learning 10-minute activities. They participated in a Bucket Break where they took two students from each Grade 2 class to lead them through a calming and focus activity. Grade 5C leaders also took 2 students from each Grade 3 class to go through a story to discuss some mental health strategies. They became Math Facts Mentors and took 2 students from each Grade 1 class to lead these students each day by playing a game to improve Grade 1 math fact recall. Grade 5C leaders also participated in "Keepin Our School Clean" activities where they would complete various cleaning tasks. The Grade 5 leaders were able to gain experience and practice in empathy. All other students were able to experience hands on learning to develop skills and strategies to use in the classroom.

Over the course of the year, a Grade 3 class along with two Grade 5 classes, collected juice boxes, cans, and so forth from the classrooms in the school. At the end of the year, a donation was made to support cancer for kids, a hospital that helps others, and so forth. The students were proud to collect and donate to a charity. They felt that they were part of a worthy cause.

The students and staff of the school collected tabs from cans for Tabs for Tots. Once the bin was full, the tabs were taken to the Elks Association in Edmonton. In 1999, the Elks and Royal Purple Lodges of Alberta started this new fund-raising program where pull tabs from pop cans, juice cans, baby formula cans, and any can that had a pull tab opener were collected and sold to a scrap metal company. The funds raised were then used to purchase much needed equipment for pediatric wards, neonatal units, delivery rooms, children's ward, and so forth in hospitals in Alberta. Students saw the value of the collection when they saw a picture of a child using a wheelchair, scooter, and so forth. They felt proud that they had made a difference in someone's life.

Grade 1 students participated in a school-wide clean-up event to support the city's clean-up drive. With enthusiasm and a strong sense of responsibility, these young students came together to make their school and community a cleaner and healthier place to live. Armed with gloves and garbage bags, they eagerly picked up litter in the schoolyard. Through this activity, they learned about the importance of taking care of their environment and the impact of their actions on the overall cleanliness of the city. Grade 1C students took pride in their contribution knowing they had made a positive difference and were setting an example for others. With teamwork and a commitment to a cleaner future, these young environmental stewards inspired their classmates and the entire school community to take action and support the city's clean-up efforts.

During the week of May 8th to 12th, the Grade 2 students cleaned up the schoolyard and collected refuse. This project brought forth an opportunity to discuss ways in which we could care for our environment and the earth. Many students promised to be upstanders when seeing others commit an act of littering.



ST. EDMUND

The Grade 2 students lead this initiative as they explored their central idea, “Diversity in Human Experiences Spark Movements to support Change.” The students prepared announcements to teach our school community about Terry Fox and the Terry Fox Foundation. They identified some unique leadership qualities in Terry Fox, and we were all inspired by his perseverance, not only to raise awareness about cancer, but also to find a cure. To continue his legacy, the school organized a run, where students were encouraged to donate a Toonie for Terry. We were able to raise \$646.50 for the Terry Fox Foundation. Students were able to learn more about the impact cancer has on individuals, families, and groups of people. Students discussed the initiatives we could take to raise awareness about cancer as well as how funds could lead to more cancer research. Students connected this to their own lives by choosing someone they knew that were affected by cancer and ran for them.

Our Equity, Diversity, Anti-Racism, and Inclusion Leadership group sold Dilly Bars and Freezies to raise funds for Catholic Social Services (CSS). St. Edmund IB World School has a partnership with CSS. We were blessed to have members of the organization come to our school to teach us about the work CSS does to improve the lives of those in our community and beyond. Students felt empowered to raise both funds and awareness of the services that Catholic Social Services provides. Students developed an increased awareness of the varying needs in our local and global communities.

The Grade 4 students lead the way with our school for a Coats for Kids Campaign. They collected warm coats for those in need. We were able to have representatives from the United Way come to our school to accept our donations and meet with our students. This was an amazing experience for our students. They were able to hear from the representatives from the United Way and learn more about their organization and those who they help.

Our school family worked hard in the month of December to raise funds to support the ECS Foundation Dream Builders Campaign. They raised just over \$2,400 that we proudly donated to the Dream Builders Campaign. To raise these funds, our students held a variety of events. A Movie Day was held where

students paid \$5.00 to watch a movie during class time. Another fundraising event was a raffle to win front row seats to our Christmas Concert, tickets were \$5.00 each. Our EDIAR Group held an art sale where they sold student art for \$10.00 per piece. As well, the MYP Foods students sold home made treats at our Christmas Concert. Watching our students work together at a variety of grade levels to run so many campaigns was incredible. We were so proud of their efforts and that they were able to see their work pay off through the support of other students in our ECSD community.

Throughout the month of November and December, our students donated new or gently used winter hats, scarves, and mittens. Each donated item was hung on our giving tree in our front foyer. Those who needed warm winter wear were able to help themselves to the item. It was wonderful to see our students gather items and watch them go to their peers and school family members. Our students realized that we were each on our own journey and at times needed the support of those around us.

The Kindergarten classes, under the leadership of their teacher, collected gently used books and held a used book sale over lunch hour the week of December 19th to 23rd. The proceeds from this sale were donated to Santa's Anonymous. Prior to the start of this sale, the students were visited by a representative from Santa's Anonymous who read them a book about gift giving and receiving and were reminded about how special this could be for everyone for both those who give and those who receive. The students were very proud of themselves. They enjoyed watching the students come to "shop" and were so excited to hear their self-made audio recorded announcement over the Intercom in the morning. With the goal of not only learning about giving but also about fundraising and monetary works, the students wrapped this concept up very well.

The school collected cereal for another ECSD school, St. Francis of Assisi, to increase the opportunity for students to participate in the breakfast program. Students learned that when you were blessed with an abundance, it was important to share with those who were less fortunate. They understood that not everyone had regular access to food consistently and we needed to check in on our brothers and sisters.

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ST. ELIZABETH

Our Grade 1 classes made one giant card to thank the Rotary Club of Edmonton South for making a pancake breakfast for our whole school! Our students were grateful for the breakfast and wanted to show their appreciation in a way that they could!

In lieu of a staff gift exchange, staff instead picked names and purchased toys for each other based on what they thought the person would like. Then all the toys were donated to Santa's Anonymous. This was a staff project.

Our Grade 3 class wrote letters to Canadian soldiers right before Christmas. It reminded our students that not everyone got to be with family at Christmastime and that they should appreciate what they had.

ST. ELIZABETH SETON

In November, various classes in our school created art and cards for the Kingsway Legion to celebrate as well as thank veterans and serving military members for their service to our country. This yearly tradition at our school ensures students remember as well as thank those who have kept us safe and protected our freedoms/rights in Canada. The students loved making these cards, it allowed them to express thanks to all the veterans. Some classes watched videos and students gained even more appreciation of veterans.

The Grade 5 students along with their Grade 3 buddies, made 40 Christmas cards for the seniors at Capital Care McConnell Place North. Each student designed an Ugly Sweater Christmas card. Along with the Christmas card, 40 small ball tree ornaments were also included. The cards were distributed to the Alzheimer/Dementia Day program clients along with some being distributed to long term residence. Students gained a better understanding of what dementia was and how it affected the elderly. Some students were also able to make connections to grandparents who had dementia. It also helped make a connection to the community in that many students did not know about day

programs and long-term care facilities that helped seniors. Many students asked if they could make cards again.

The Grade 1A and 4A's worked together to create Christmas cards wishing our surrounding neighbors in the Seton community a Merry Christmas. Once the weather improved, we went out and delivered the cards and enjoyed a nice afternoon together. The students were excited to create the cards and were also excited to walk around the neighborhood and deliver the cards to the various homes.

As a Lenten project, staff and students brought in snacks, games, and money so that Easter care packages could be given to students in need at our school. The packages consisted of snack foods like fruit cups, juice boxes, crackers as well as other non-perishables. As well, coloring books, decks of cards, Uno cards and other items for leisure time were also given. Enough money was raised so each package also included a \$25 gift card from Walmart. Students felt a sense of pride in contributing to help make others feel special and valued at Easter. The recipients of the packages were grateful and appreciative. They felt a sense of community and knew others cared.

The Grade 7C class at our school, along with the Student Council students, created a social justice initiative that allowed them to fundraise for The Mustard Seed. The coordinator from The Mustard Seed was welcomed into the school and gave a short presentation to the class. He then brainstormed with the class how they could help. Students discussed many ideas but came up with the final idea to sell Freezies for the month of May. A group of students from the class spent their lunch recesses and after school time to sell to the students at our school. The initiative lasted the month of May and students were able to provide The Mustard Seed with \$650. After debriefing the social justice project that took place in May, students were asked how they felt about the project and if they learned anything. Students learned the value of helping others out and the impact that helping has on others. They were proud of what they could do and were amazed at how far a bit of dedicated work can go. Students were already discussing the next social justice initiative that they could partake in.



ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Students had the option to trade in Halloween candy for fruit in our Fruit for Loot initiative. The candy that was donated was taken to The Mustard Seed Mosaic Centre. We chose this organization as they were in our community, and we wanted to share with our brothers and sisters in our community. The students were excited, and we ran out of fruit in 2 days! They came with bags full of their candy to exchange for fruit knowing that they would be helping to keep their bodies healthy but also to help give a treat to someone in our community.

The school participated in the Dream Builders Challenge to raise funds for the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation. We had a hot chocolate sale where we raised \$196.75. We also asked for donations for a movie and snack afternoon raising \$154.05. In total, \$350.80 was raised from both events for the Foundation Conquer Hunger Fund. This was our way of giving back even though we also use the Foundation for our breakfast program here at our school. Students understood the generosity of others that helped feed our community and they also understood that they were able to give back to such a good cause.

For the month of November, staff at the school grew a mustache to raise funds for Movember. If students could, they were asked to bring in a donation for the Movember Fund. At the end of the month, we came together as a school, where all staff and students wore faux mustaches, and the staff that grew real mustaches shaved them off at the school-wide assembly. Students learned about men's health issues such as cancer, mental health, and so forth. Students loved coming together to watch the shaving assembly. Students also learned the meaning of donations and whatever they were able to donate counted towards the Movember fund.

At St. Francis of Assisi School, we had our students decorate Valentine's Day/Random Acts of Kindness cards which we delivered to houses around the Balwin and Belvedere communities. Our walk took place on Tuesday, February 14th. Each grade was given a street in our school community to deliver to. Approximately 280 cards were created, and hand delivered. This project fell in line with Random Acts of Kindness and the 7 Sacred Teachings. The eagle, in the 7 Sacred Teachings, demonstrates love so we chose to deliver the cards on

Valentine's Day. Students learned that even the simple act of delivering a hand-made card could brighten someone's day. Students took pride in creating the Valentine's Day cards they delivered.

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER

The "FX Reaching Out with Care and Kindness," aka "FX ROCKS," organized a food drive to support the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in conjunction with Annunciation Church. The food items were on display at the Thanksgiving Celebration held on October 5th, officiated by one of the Division Chaplains. Special guests included Grade 1 students from the neighbouring Annunciation Catholic School, who were accompanied to the gym by members of the FX Football Team. The students gladly brought in their donations and were eager to see the items displayed around the altar at the Thanksgiving Celebration. The school football team joined together with the Grade 1 students at Annunciation School for our Thanksgiving Celebration. It was a great opportunity for our football players to experience being role models. With staff supervision, they headed across the field to pick up the Grade 1 students and bring them to our celebration. During the celebration, they sat next to their assigned "buddies," and after the celebration, they spent some time in the Grade 1s' classrooms seeing their art projects and other schoolwork. The football team transported and sorted the food at Annunciation Parish for the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul to administer as they deemed appropriate. They were also involved in the food drive itself along with the rest of the student body and saw a visual of their efforts when the mound of food was on display during the Liturgy. It was meaningful for the students to have the visual of the food to truly appreciate the scale of their generosity and the need to continue the tradition of this food drive.

We held a sock drive for the Stollery Children's Hospital during Advent. A friend of our school told us that the Stollery was in desperate need of socks and baby sleepers. We were told that when anyone from infants to teenagers came in on an urgent basis, they often did not have the usual "comfort" clothing to lounge in as they recover in the hospital. We set up large donation bins around the school and collected the socks. This was eye-opening to many of our staff and students alike. Those lucky enough to reach a point of recovery needed to be comfortable

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and basics, such as socks, slippers, and warm sweaters, were so critical in finding that comfort and being able to focus on recovery. Lounging at home, many of us have experienced changing out of work/school clothes and throwing on our "comfortable clothes." We wanted to be able to provide that opportunity for the children recovering in the Stollery; an opportunity we took for granted was already available.

Each holiday season, the school comes together to participate in the "Battle at the Bill: The Matt Cook Christmas Classic," where students face off against teachers in a charity hockey game to raise funds for the comfort and care of young cancer patients and their families. The game was held at Bill Hunter Arena on the morning of the last Wednesday prior to Christmas break and typically, almost the entire school community is involved. Like most years, our 2022 organizing committee chose to support the Matt Cook Foundation and Stahl Peterbilt's Glider Toy Drive. Our fundraising efforts were in the name of two former students. The Matt Cook Foundation strives to make the circumstances more comfortable for young adult in-patients fighting cancer, while also attempting to improve the situation for their families. We chose the name, "Battle at the Bill: The Matt Cook Christmas Classic," as Matt Cook was a St. Francis Xavier High School student who embodied the 'Caritas Christi' motto of our school by dedicating his life to serving his community. This year, the game raised \$6,357.90, which was donated directly to the Matt Cook Foundation. On November 25th, 2015, the St. Francis Xavier family lost a Grade 11 student and attendee of the Lacrosse Academy to his battle with cancer. In the name of this student, St. Francis Xavier was always excited to unite with Stahl-Peterbilt to help put toys under the trees of families in need. The Stahl family includes several St. Francis Xavier alumni and Stahl Peterbilt was often a loyal and generous supporter of the Mike Dea Classic, our annual Western Canadian Basketball Tournament. The opportunity to contribute to an honorable initiative alongside the Matt Cook Foundation and the Stahl-Peterbilt family was an invaluable experience for the students and staff of St. Francis Xavier each year. Though the game has altruistic roots, the opportunity for our staff and students to come together, enjoy the entertainment, and honour the lives of two really special students helped all involved to reflect on and consider what was truly consequential during the holiday season.

The Environmental Club organized a Thrift Store with hundreds of donations of clothing, footwear, headwear, and accessories. They collected them from staff and students, categorized and priced everything, and then sold the collection to other staff and students. The main idea was to keep clothing out of the landfill and to take care of "our common home." An offshoot of this initiative was what to do with the revenue generated and extra clothing that did not sell as all the clothing was donated. Our Environmental Club decided to donate this money and extra clothing to YESS, Youth Empowerment and Support Services. A representative from YESS came to collect the clothing and funds, as well as presented to our Environmental Club students on the importance of YESS and the value of our Thrift Store initiative. The students said they felt productive and liked that they had made a difference. It was a lot of hands-on work, and they were able to see donations roll in and a tangible effect on the organization they chose to support due to the presentation provided. Many hands made light work as the club was able to come together, share duties, and pull off an effectual initiative. It was especially valuable to see not only how they could help make a difference for the health of "our common home" but also support another initiative at the same time.

Every 6 weeks or so, our students walked around the community and collected garbage. This included our city field, around Annunciation Parish (just north of us), and moving south towards the Jasper Place Sports Annex, Jasper Place Bowl, and the City of Edmonton tennis courts. As a school, we knew we had a responsibility for our "Common Home," but we were also aware that we had an injection of 1,300+ students and staff impacting our surrounding community each weekday from September to June. This causes increased foot traffic and increased vehicle volume and we understood we needed to be respectful of our neighbours' space but also contribute to the well-being of the community. We often heard, "Wow there is a lot of garbage out here. Why do people do this?" We hoped this exclamation translated into students modelling good behaviour and keeping our community clean. Surely, much of the garbage came from other sources that were not our student body, but undoubtedly, we were not completely innocent. We did feel there was less garbage as we moved throughout the school year, and we believed this was a product of students realizing the consequences of their actions as they were expected to help clean the neighbourhood. They saw how much better the community looked when it was clean, and they understood they had a role to play in that.



Following in the footsteps of our Patron Saint, St. Francis Xavier, the school community held its annual 24-hour Bike-a-thon on March 10th. The theme chosen for this year's Bikeathon was FX Tour de FRIENDS, a combination of the epic biking Tour de France and world renowned tv sitcom series, FRIENDS. The focus was on the FRIENDS at St. FX supporting FRIENDS in our school and greater community through volunteerism, service, social justice, and missionary work alike. Students from Grades 10 through 12 created teams of 10, campaigned for funds, and then packed the gym for 24 straight hours of high energy fun and games, dancing, interactive entertainment, snacks, camaraderie, and lots of biking! Altogether a combined total of 450 students and 50 staff rallied together for this outstanding fundraising campaign and together raised a total of over \$101,000! The money raised this year was distributed to four organizations throughout our community and greater Edmonton. The funds were distributed as follows: 65% of our funds went to support the ECSD Foundation Dreams for Kids; 25% went to Catholic Social Services in Edmonton to support the Refugee Relief Fund and Lenten Campaign; 5% went to the Edmonton Food Bank to help curb food scarcity within our city; and the remaining 5% was kept at St. Francis Xavier High School to help support struggling students within our own building. Signing up to participate in a school-wide event of this magnitude required dedication, commitment and perseverance, and the students at St. FX didn't just reach their goal but surpassed it. By doing so, we provided incredible support for so many within our city, all while making meaningful relationships and everlasting high school memories.

To bring awareness to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, our Aboriginal Studies 10 and 30 classes created 200 red ribbon dress pins and sold them by donation throughout the week leading up to Red Dress Day on May 5th. Students were able to fundraise \$300 and donated these funds to "Esquao: The Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women" which provides a variety of opportunities for Indigenous women living in Edmonton. Our general student body received continuing education on the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in our country. Awareness could bring about action. The students in the classes who created and sold the red dress pins expressed a feeling of being useful and attempting to bring good in the face of tragedy.

ST. GABRIEL CENTRE FOR DIVERSE LEARNING

Our Positive Behaviour Supports High School Program collected recyclable bottles from classrooms every 2 weeks to support The Mustard Seed in providing meals to Edmonton's most vulnerable. This social justice project was crucial in contributing to the well-being of a community as a whole. By taking on this project our school was supporting local initiatives and helping address the specific needs in Edmonton. When communities came together it helped create a sense of pride for both our school and city. It also supported student engagement with local challenges that our city faces and helped create a stronger sense of community. By participating in bottle collection, the students became aware of the impact they personally could make on a local issue. This helped them to see how their actions could lead and inspire others to act. Additionally, they learned about local organizations and the services they provided to our most vulnerable Edmontonians. This social justice project supported how at Edmonton Catholic Schools we are living out the five marks of Catholic identity.

One of our colleagues was a volunteer at the Cross Cancer Institute and brought forward the idea of uplifting cancer patient spirits by having our student body make cards for them during Random Acts of Kindness Week. For our student population, card giving was an attainable way to reach out to someone experiencing the challenges of being a cancer patient. The cards provided the cancer patients with something that was tangible and reminded them that there was hope and people were thinking about them. The students were excited to be making cards for inpatient cancer patients at the Cross Cancer Institute. A few of our students were motivated to make multiple cards as they understood how this simple gesture could uplift the spirits of a cancer patient. Some students had even taken it a step further, making the cards more heartfelt by adding their own creative spin, such as filling the card with hand drawn pictures and folding up paper crafts to go along with the card. After starting this project, we had some students who did not quite understand why writing "get well soon" was not an appropriate comment to put in a card to a cancer patient. This provided a learning opportunity to discuss how writing this comment did not accurately reflect what might be the outcome for some patients. The project presented a good opportunity to have an open conversation about an illness as serious as cancer and what it meant for individuals living through it. Patients really

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appreciated receiving the cards! They said that the cards meant a lot and hit home. Overall, the patients and the staff at the Cross Cancer Institute thought it was a thoughtful idea for students to reach out and say something encouraging to them.

ST. GERARD

The staff and students at St. Gerard School shared a thank you canvas in which all students and staff signed to the St. Alphonsus Parish and the Parish Priest for supporting our Catholicity and faith formation. The students at our school discussed the importance of our faith formation in our schools as well as the importance for a grateful heart.

The students and staff at our school shared a Thank You canvas with the Good Shepherd Knights of Columbus for their donation of a pancake breakfast to the school. The canvas was distributed to each class for all students and staff to sign. The importance of community participation in our school and sharing a grateful heart for the gift provided was reviewed.

Students and staff at St. Gerard pursued activities to learn and reflect on Black History. Multiple activities occurred throughout the school including Black History projects where students researched prominent individuals who played a distinctive role in bringing awareness to the plight of the people and brought a vision of inclusion and appreciation for diversity. Other projects included stories that were shared about diverse individuals of African American heritage; Black people's role in art, music, and sports as well students created artwork. Students were directly involved in asking questions, researching, and discussing/reflecting on different events. Students were also celebrating important roles and contributions individuals of Black heritage shared.

Students completed projects and participated in discussions regarding the importance and value of Acts of Kindness. Students participated in a variety of activities, discussions and research on the importance and value of sharing Acts of Kindness. Students engaged in creating poems and artwork which was placed around the school. Kind words were shared in 'Praise and Gratitude' jars located

in the classroom. Students provided support in 'buddy grades' 4. They researched and discussed acts of kindness which had occurred around the world, and their impact on establishing a stronger and more united society. Students also made cards to share with 'buddy' groups 6. Every grade and student (134 students) participated in diverse activities at their grade level. Students commented that the school was a safe and caring place to be. They were able to learn more about their 'buddy' and wanted to provide greater help and support. Students stated that they discovered small acts of kindness, such as reading with a friend, helping a student with an art project, or playing with a student made both themselves and the other student feel better. It was a win-win!" said one student. Many students noted that small acts of kindness made the school a more welcoming and caring place to be.

ST. HILDA

Students participated in the Terry Fox Run and raised money for cancer research. The students gained a profound understanding of the fact that our physical and mental well-being, as well as our very existence, were graciously bestowed upon us by the benevolent mercy of the Divine. They also realized that life was a fleeting and precious gift, and it was our duty to extend a helping hand to those who were less fortunate and grappling with their health. By mobilizing their efforts towards fundraising for cancer research, the students aspired to bring solace and comfort to those who were afflicted, as well as their loved ones. They also hoped that their contributions would pave the way for breakthroughs in scientific research that could ultimately lead to a cure for this debilitating disease.

Students collected food to support the St. Theresa Parish Food Bank. The students came to an awareness that there were individuals who did not have access to fundamental necessities crucial for survival. As a result, the students were compelled to prioritize the needs of others over their own, which provided them with the opportunity to unite as a community to benefit the greater good.

Black Heritage Day was a culminating activity for Black History Month at our school. This was an engaging student initiative aimed at educating the school community about the diverse regions of Africa. The event showcased a

comprehensive presentation on topics ranging from climate and industry to culture and cuisine, while also featuring traditional attire and captivating cultural dances. The initiative was an extracurricular project that fostered a sense of empowerment and strengthened community bonds. It also effectively broke down potential barriers arising from differences in ethnicity, religion, and skin color, thereby promoting inclusivity and fostering a sense of unity.

ST. JEROME

During an outdoor nature walk, students in Grade 3 picked up garbage in and around our community. Students were proud to help clean-up and take care of their environment. They were shocked to learn how much garbage there was and kept asking, "Why can't people just put this in the garbage?"

Students made 120 Christmas cards for the Military. The father of one of our students was in the Canadian Forces and he was going over to Ukraine on a Mission. He took the Christmas cards to pass out to fellow members serving in Ukraine at Christmastime. Students showed compassion, appreciation, and gratitude towards the members of the military for sacrificing their lives and for being away from their family during Christmas. From reading their messages, it helped them to have a better appreciation for their own freedom and a higher respect for those who serve in the war.

A toy raffle was held at our Christmas Family Fun Night. People bought raffle tickets with all the funds donated to the ECS Foundation. A total of \$282 was collected! Parents and students were excited to enter the draw with parents happily donating their money to the ECS Foundation, an excellent cause!

Students donated toiletry products for our Toiletry Christmas Tree Project with all donations going to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Students and staff were excited to see the tree become more & more decorated with toiletries. Students said they felt happy to share with other people who needed these items.



The Grade 2 students made cards for seniors to cheer them up and tell them that they were appreciated. As a class, they read a story about how seniors often feel old, tired and may not want to socialize with others. A total of 20 cards were made to let them know we were thinking of them, and we appreciated all they did to make our city a better place. The cards were delivered to Jubilee Nursing Home for

residents who did not get a lot of visitors. The students said they felt sad that many older people feel tired and sad when they get old, and they wanted to do something nice to cheer them up. Making cards for the seniors made them happy to share nice messages of God's love with others. They learned that it was important to show care and love to others and to help them/remind others that God loved them. They also realized that even though they were young and in Grade 2, they could still spread God's love through kind actions and encouraging words.

Students created 40 cards for nurses and patients at the Cross Cancer Institute. A class prayer was created for the patients asking God to send his love and support to those who were fighting against cancer. In the patient cards, students drew spring flowers, as well as printed off a flowers word search to put in the cards. For the nurses, students expressed their appreciation for all the hard-work and support they gave the patients. Students felt that nurses worked hard for their patients and that the patients were people who deserved to feel loved. Even though they were going through a hardship in their lives, they needed to be supported not only by family and nurses but God as well. The students were feeling overjoyed that they would be making someone's day by this act of kindness.

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The Grade 4 class wanted to do a Social Justice Project with a focus on almsgiving. First, they had an in-school presentation by a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. The students made posters, advertised to both the student and parents (via SWIFT) that they were collecting food for the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Once all the food was in, the students sorted and counted the food. They

collected a total of 141 items. The students shared that they felt excited, interested, confident and very proud to do this project. They also said they felt appreciated by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul because the Society said thank you to them for collecting the food. The students expressed that they learned how important it was to help the poor. They also realized that not everyone could afford food and they were, therefore, very lucky to not have to worry about food and being hungry. This project helped them to be more sympathetic towards the poor, appreciative for people and organizations like St. Vincent de Paul, who help others. Lastly, the Grade 4 students said they were now more grateful for what they had.

ST. JOHN BOSCO

Students raised money for the Terry Fox Foundation and participated in the Terry Fox Run as a school community. Students dressed in red and white to show their pride for this Canadian Hero. Students felt empowered and encouraged to make a positive impact for the Foundation financially and through active participation in the Terry Fox Walk.

The St. John Bosco school parent community have always been supportive and generous in helping those in need. As a continuation of our ongoing Catholic Social Teachings, specifically in the way of Social Justice service learning, the SJB Student Leadership Team led a school-wide Christmas Hamper social justice project to help support families in need within our community during the

Christmas season. Each grade level team of teachers, coordinated and worked with their students and their families for the sponsorships of a family based on a list of various food items. Gift cards, a turkey and bag of fruit for each family were donated by local businesses and through donations gathered by the school. The Leadership Team organized and packed each of the hampers so that they were ready to be delivered to the families. We fed 8 families within our SJB community! The students were amazed and overjoyed to witness and sort the abundant amount of food donations collected. They were fully immersed in the social justice project by discussing the need for families in our community, making posters, and going on broadcast to promote and encourage everyone to participate in this important project. It sparked an interest in investigating other social justice projects they could lead.

Grade 3 students participated virtually in the No Stone Left Alone ceremony. Afterwards, students created postcards to a Canadian veteran. They wrote messages of gratitude and peace. They were then given the opportunity to give their postcard to an active member of the Canadian Navy. There were 89 students that participated. Students became globally minded citizens when they learned about the impact soldiers had made in their own communities as well as communities around the world.

The Grade 4 students created Christmas cards to spread peace, love, joy, and hope to the residents of Extendicare Eaux Claires in our community. The students collaborated while making the cards to demonstrate their compassion for others who felt lonely during the holiday season. The students recognized how small deeds could make an impact on others. The students realized how many members of our community needed support and wanted to reach out to them to brighten their holiday season.

As a fundraiser for the Hope Mission, Kindergarten families and the Grade 1-6 students had the option to purchase Kindergarten students' artwork on a Christmas card. They could purchase a bundle of 5 for \$10. Of these funds, \$7.25 per bundle purchased went to the Hope Mission to buy Christmas dinners for the homeless. The Hope Mission Christmas dinners cost \$2.70 each. Students understood that some people did not have food to eat, especially at Christmastime. Students felt sad and empathy for others. They were happy to

paint their pictures to help raise money for a Christmas dinner for the less fortunate.



Staff, students, and their families made a visible presence and support for our city's homeless, who needed our good works, at the We Care Market Place. Praying for them was just not enough when we could really do something tangible for them. Each grade level collected items such as mitts, lip chap, socks, and toothpaste from January 9th to February 19th. On Sunday, February 26th, we joined the

people at Clansman Park and prayed together before we distributed our collected items. It was a fulfilling and rewarding experience for our students, parents, and staff. Many families came out to support and participate this year. Our students were active in songs, prayers and helped each station give items to those lined up for help. It was an emotional and gracious time to connect with those less fortunate who expressed gratitude for our friendship and conversations. The students were excited to help by filling their grade level buckets. On the distribution day, many families came out with staff to distribute. Our students were excited to share, have conversations and help the people waiting in line. Some families made connections with the organization to come out on a different Sunday to serve and connect again.

Our 6th year of supporting Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child was a huge success. As a community, we collected 250 boxes to send to students in countries in need. Many students were proud to share and came to our foyer to add their boxes to our Tower of Light. We built a tower of boxes to help others by sharing our "light". Our school community showed the true spirit of helping others. It was so exciting to see our students bring their boxes and see so much joy on their faces when they added to our tower. Thank you again to the St. John Bosco families who helped from all the children around the world. It was important to help and give to others in need. Many joined in our daily broadcast to pray and to share what it meant to them to help others by creating a box.

The SJB Leadership at our school hosted a One and Fun "Snowball" Sock Toss during Random Acts of Kindness Week in February. Students were encouraged to donate a pair of new, warm socks for women, men, or children to help make a difference. Students who brought in socks were provided the opportunity to participate in a "Snowball" Sock Toss with their peers in the gym during designated recess breaks the week of February 13th - 17th. The students had a ton of fun and it was a huge success! There was a mountain of socks collected and the boxes were overflowing! The sock donations were delivered to the Bissell Centre for those in need of warm socks during the winter season. We appreciated and wanted to thank all the SJB students and their families that donated socks to this social justice initiative. We also wanted to thank the SJB student leaders and teachers for their initiative in helping to organize this school-wide event. Students learned that there was a great need for socks to be donated for those in need and those experiencing homelessness. They were amazed at how many were collected and the amount of people that they were able to help. We incorporated physical activity by having the donated socks used in a dodgeball game for students.



Our Grade 3 students focused on how to display the Fruit of the Holy Spirit through their actions by creating Kindness cards. By completing this social justice project, each Grade 3 homeroom spread the virtue of love both within the school and throughout the wider community. They created 86 handmade cards to offer art and messages of kindness. This social justice project was initiated with the intention of uplifting others and demonstrating the importance of community connections. Each student created a poem about love or a friendly message to pass along to residents and show each person that they were thought of and special. The students got to hand deliver their personal Kindness Cards on a walk around the Mayliewan community to our neighbours. The Grade 3 students did not only bring joy to others but also practiced empathy, compassion, and gratitude. It was important to recognize the power of small acts of kindness and how they could make a big difference in someone's day or create a ripple effect of positivity in

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the community. These were valuable life skills that could benefit our students and their community in the long run.

In total, \$1,308.30 was raised by the Grade 6 students through Candygram sales. The funds were raised for the Guardian Angel Fund through the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation Dreams for Kids. Students participated by purchasing Easter Candygrams on April 11th and 12th. Candygrams were sold for 1 dollar each and students could choose to purchase for their class or friends from other classes! Each student then delivered their purchased Candygrams. A BIG thank you to our Grade 6 students who organized this Social Justice Service Learning project and led the whole school in spreading kindness during Easter! Way to go!! Our Grade 6 students were able to take on a leadership opportunity throughout the school. They created posters, went on broadcast, and visited each homeroom to inform our community about this social justice project. During recess time, Grade 6 students volunteered to take orders from their peers ranging from Kindergarten to Grade 6. They also donated recess time to count and distribute the Candygrams to each class. Students were excited to help make a difference for the Guardian Angel Fund. Throughout the process, students raised awareness of anxiety and depression, which this program aims to support.

The Grade 1 students learned about how the needs of people could differ depending on various factors such as emotions, age, physical needs, and so forth. They were challenged to think of ways to use helpful actions to positively affect others and provide for others when in need. Upon reflecting on the book "Princess Peepers," they decided to collect used prescription glasses to send the gift of vision to those in need who could not afford to purchase glasses. The students supported the Edmonton Lions Club initiative, "Lions Recycle for Sight." Our school community donated old prescription glasses from March 1st to 17th. When given to the Lions Club, the donated eyeglasses were sorted, refurbished, and sent to third world countries for distribution. Students felt proud as they had an impact on the well-being of others. They learned about the importance of serving others. Many students became forward-thinkers about other ways that they could positively influence their community and people around the world.

The Grade 2 students wrote letters of peace addressed to the Canadian soldiers. The students had the opportunity to reflect on the role our Canadian military

plays in their lives. They showed appreciation and gratitude through written words and pictures.

The school participated in a winter clothing drive organized by the Grade 5 students called, "Share your Light and Love – Donate a jacket or item of Winter Clothing for Kids and Adults." Proverbs 19:17 says, "When you help the poor you are lending to the Lord – and he pays wonderful interest on your loan!" The Grade 5 classes discussed things they could say and do to be disciples of Jesus. An idea that was shared by one student quickly found its way into the hearts of many. The students asked their peers to bring in warm jackets, winter boots, and gloves to donate to The Mustard Seed. These winter items provided warmth to the less fortunate in the winter months. Students made posters to post around the school and went on broadcast to get the word out to their peers. Donations were accepted from January 16th to 31st. A goal of 150 winter items was set by the students and this goal was surpassed! The project was a great success, and an outstanding number of items were collected. The students checked the donation boxes every morning to organize and total up collected items. They were excited and empowered to lead this social justice project. They learned that one small idea could grow and end up making a huge impact on those around our community. They realized that many families had an overflow of extra winter clothing that was in very good condition and sometimes brand new. They were grateful for all the support and amazed to learn how many adults and children were in need that they were able to help.

ÉCOLE ST. JOHN XXIII

The school held an assembly and Terry Fox Run to raise \$2,800 for the Terry Fox Foundation. Students had classroom activities that showed the importance of supporting others in their community.

The students and staff collected non-perishable food items to help support the families of St. Teresa of Calcutta School. Grade 9 students also provided hours of service packaging the items for delivery. This project not only brought awareness to food insecurity but allowed all stakeholders to grasp that this was not only a



global issue but one that took place locally. It was a meaningful way to help others in immediate need.

The "STJ Elves Project" brought our junior high students together to plan, prepare, decorate, and fill a shoebox with items for students at St. Gerard School. The Foods students baked hundreds of cookies to deliver with the gifts. All junior high delivered their shoebox gift to St. Gerard and spent the morning reading and learning alongside a new "friend". Awareness and understanding regarding the local need for support was brought to their attention. This act of service went beyond providing another child with a gift and allowed our Grade 7-9 students to engage with the recipient by showing kindness and helping them feel connected to the cause.

During Advent, elementary students collected non-perishable food items to support the St. Justin Snack Program. The goal was to provide their students with healthy food and access to a snack program to help with food insecurity. Social Justice initiatives allowed all stakeholders to make meaningful connections to their community. Students also gained awareness and spent time collecting, organizing, and packing items.

A drama production was held, and all monies collected at the event were donated to the Youth Empowerment and Support Services (YESS) an organization selected by the students themselves. Students gained awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the services the organization offered as well as knowing they made a difference for other teenagers through their donation.

ST. JOSEPH

St. Joseph High School created its first Black Student's Association. The Association was involved in connecting with BSA groups from around Edmonton and made efforts to attend the Black Student's Summit hosted by other groups. The members came up with an idea to fundraise by selling chocolates during Black History Month. These funds were used to offset costs hosted by the BSA. During Black History Month, the group hosted a school-wide guest speaker, Neville Wright. He spoke on his experience as an Olympian and Black Athlete. The

group came together and connected about ancestry, birth country, and traditions while working on a bulletin showcasing the diversity within the group. One of our projects was to create a board highlighting the Black students in our own student body. The theme of the board titled, "Be a part of our history," mirrored our open house and created wonderful conversations between members and prospective students as they toured our school. Members also wore shirts with logos created by themselves. Students were excited to use the funds generated to host events to spread awareness of their group. They would like to see the group grow with more members and allies. They would also like to work with other groups within the school community to co-host events moving forward.

The school Religion Department organized an Easter bookmark creating, colouring, and decorating session to create bookmarks for inmates at the Edmonton Remand Centre. Many students participated and wrote messages of Hope, Love and Faith. Students felt that they were doing a nice thing for people in need. They asked questions about how they would be received and why we were helping this group of people. The Edmonton Remand Centre Chaplaincy stated that there were enough bookmarks for every inmate in the Edmonton Remand Centre and enough for the youth at the Edmonton Young Offenders Centre. Inmates were very happy to receive the bookmarks and the chocolate. Many made comments about how amazing the artwork was and the fact that the bookmarks were individually made by students made them feel special. In a plain institutional environment where one was surrounded by steel and brick, a little bookmark bursting with color brought life to inmates who may have felt alone at Easter. The Remand Centre Chaplaincy asked that the school consider this again for the inmates next year.

ST. JUSTIN

The Kindergarten and Grade 1 students initiated a food collection during the Thanksgiving season. Food was collected for two weeks and then delivered to the Edmonton Food Bank. Students felt empowered to be able to help other children who were experiencing food insecurities. They learned that if they each did one small thing or donated one small thing, they could have a big impact.

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Our school continued our long-term relationship with St. Joseph's Auxiliary Hospital. Students created Christmas themed decorations, bookmarks, and cards for the residents of the hospital. In total, 180 cards were created, and 210 items were delivered to the residents. These were incorporated into the personal programs of the residents. The students had sincere discussions about how some people were lonely and how reaching out to them could make a big difference in their lives. In their discussions, they talked about their own family, experiences, and feelings. They were able to empathize with the people in the hospital, placing themselves in that situation. They learned that even a small gesture could make a big difference, that everyone deserved to be loved and remembered.

The Grade 6 students at St. Justin School made Candygrams for all the other students who attended St. Justin. Our school serves a community of low-income families. The parent council donated money for the Candygrams which were then assembled by the Grade 6 class and included a personalized message of inspiration for every student. The Grade 6 class then distributed the Candygrams on Valentine's Day. Students were surprised and excited to receive the Candygrams. They enjoyed the treats but were especially pleased with the inspirational messages.

During Advent, an Advent calendar was created and sent out to all classes at the school. For each week, classes had to volunteer for three activities that were on the calendar. Activities that were done were geared at helping members of our school communities, for example, the school secretary, janitor and librarian, and the neighbors around the school. Students could sign up for shovelling snow, cleaning tables in the learning commons, restocking supplies for the classrooms, and helping to organize the books in the library. After completing the 3 activities, students were asked to do a reflection on how the activity helped those in our school community and neighbors of our school. Students were also asked to reflect on how they could continue in the spirit of this action by continuing to help others who were in need. By doing this activity students recognized the things that other people were doing to help them everyday that often went unnoticed. They also came to understand that by gathering as a community helping others could be rewarding and fun.

Grade 5 and 6 students went through an inquiry process to learn about the topic of Immigration. Our student population included a substantial number of

students from recently immigrated families, and it was a topic many could relate to. Students began by building on background knowledge. Students then participated in a discussion and did a text-to-self and text-to-world connection by answering questions to link what they already knew about immigration and to think about their own experiences or experiences of others they might know immigrating. The next step was learning more about immigration. A speaker from EISA who worked weekly at our school and assisted newly immigrated families, gave a presentation to the students about what she does and the major needs of families who come to Canada. She also provided students with resources so they could continue their research and learning about immigration. Students then started their own research and were given specific criteria as well as having to choose a topic which was the need they felt was most important to new families immigrating to Canada. Students then had to present their research by creating a poster with all their information and their idea of an action the school could do. The Grade 5 and 6 students then had a gallery walk where they walked around and saw other students' ideas. They also shared their project with the Grade 1 students in the school. After the gallery walk, they were asked to vote on an idea they felt was most impactful and could be done at our school. The students decided on an idea to sell items and donate the money to a charity that would help with providing immigrant families with food services. The St. Justin Market was created where students made or brought old items to sell. All items were sold for a dollar and the proceeds were donated to Catholic Social Services to help immigrant and refugee families. Students created posters to put up in the school to share the event with the other grades and made a slideshow to share on announcements. This market took place during the school day. A mini stand was also set up at the school's 50th anniversary open house for students to sell items and showcase their project. A bulletin board was also created to show the project and the steps the students had been involved in. After the market, students participated in a reflection about their inquiry experience. They also shared what they learned about immigration, the needs of new immigrants, and how this affected our own community. A big takeaway from this project was that immigration could be a different experience for many people. There was discussions on push and pull factors and how not everyone came to a new country by choice. Students learned that the process to come to Canada could be long and had many steps, and there were many barriers for new families coming to Canada. Many of their own families spoke another language and we recently got several new students from the Ukraine who did not speak much English.



Students had to learn to navigate and help those students learn. They also learned about many resources that were available for families to help support their needs which lead them to discover there were ways they could help immigrant families. They chose their action because they felt it would help the most people, however they found out there was several different ways to support different needs of immigrant families.

ST. KATERI

The Grade 5 and 6 Student Leadership Team created 12 Christmas cards to bring to the Laurel Heights Retirement Residence to spread cheer and love during the Christmas season. The Leadership Team spent time with the residents after school and played games with them, sang Christmas carols, and enjoyed hot chocolate together. The students felt incredibly happy as they could see the joy and happiness they were spreading to the residents. They learned a lot about being patient, kind, and being a good listener as they learned how to play games and heard a variety of stories from the residents.

After contacting The Mustard Seed to gain insight into what types of items were needed, our school Leadership Team collected donations of socks and toiletries from each class to donate to The Mustard Seed for those experiencing homelessness and poverty. Each class filled up two large tote bags, one for socks and one for toiletries. Students experienced the importance of giving and they felt good about getting to provide much needed items for those who were struggling to access basic necessities. They learned about the difference between a want and a need and that those experiencing homelessness or poverty may not have access to basic needs. They learned about one way they could demonstrate charity during the Lenten season.

Grade 4B students wrote poems for the Meaning of the Home Project. Since 2007, the Meaning of Home Contest continues to raise awareness of the need for affordable homeownership in our community, and \$10 from every entry (poem) goes to local Habitat for Humanity to help support affordable home ownership. The Meaning of the Home project has had a profound impact on Grade 4B students, as their participation in the project not only empowered them to

express their creativity through poetry but also instilled in them a sense of social responsibility, as they contributed to the local Habitat for Humanity project. It helped to cultivate a deep understanding of the importance of affordable home ownership and community awareness.

The Grade 3B and 6B students created activity packs for patients spending Easter at the Children's Stollery Hospital during Lent. It brought students joy in knowing that they could help make the children's stay more tolerable. Students were grateful when nurses and parents of the children at the hospital reached out to give thanks for these gifts and shared with our students how much they impacted the children.

ST. LEO

Kindergarten to Grade 6 students from St. Leo created Christmas cards and decorations for the Edmonton Aboriginal Senior Center. The students wanted to give back by helping seniors prepare for the Christmas season and bring joy through handmade cards with a message inside. They learned various ways we could give back to the community and serve in the image of God. Students picked a vulnerable community such as seniors who often have limited visitations from families. They were excited to create decorations and cards to bring joy and happiness during the special liturgical season.

Kindergarten students created positive affirmation hearts and kindness cards with their Grade 6 buddies. The students decorated their hearts and placed them all around the school. The cards that were created were delivered to houses in the community to spread joy. The students communicated and collaborated with their buddies in a respectful manner while creating the hearts and cards. Many Kindergarten students wanted to make multiple cards to hand out to the community. As we walked to pass out the cards, the Grade 6 students were amazing leaders and role models for the Kindergarten students. The students were excited and proud to hang up their hearts and pass out cards to spread joy to others.

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ST. LUCY

On September 23rd, the St. Lucy community united to carry on Terry Fox's legacy and make a difference! All staff, students, and their families were invited to participate in St. Lucy's annual Terry Fox Walk (same day as National Terry Fox School Run Day). For the month of September, several Grade 2 and 4 students assisted with the planning of our annual Terry Fox event. They were responsible for delivering the daily Terry announcements, counting out Terry tattoos, and "I'm running for...." stickers, as well as cheering everyone on. These students followed in Terry's footsteps by being incredible leaders! Our school community helped keep Terry's dream alive! The total amount raised was \$737.70. Great job shining your light, St. Lucy! Our students learned facts about Terry Fox. We worked as a school community to raise money for cancer research and were inspired by Terry's perseverance in achieving his goal. The students took pride knowing they contributed to Terry's legacy.

St. Lucy students and staff collected non-perishable food items throughout the week of October 3rd to 7th, which was distributed between our families in need and the Edmonton Food Bank. As one of our Division Chaplains said in his Little Liturgy, "we are called to be people of love and to give freely in that love rather than for acknowledgement." We were learning the importance of "in giving we receive," and garnering an appreciation for all that we had on a daily basis including a roof over our heads, clothes to wear, food in our bellies, an opportunity to learn in a safe and caring environment, and especially, the love of our families. Through sharing what we had with others, the students gained an appreciation for what they had and understood the role Jesus entrusted us with in being His Disciples on Earth. By following in His footsteps, we were walking and living our Faith, not just learning about it. In having the students take an active role in participating in the initiative by assisting with the collection of the food, they developed an awareness, as well as an acknowledgement of how truly lucky they were to not have to go without.

The Grade 2A class at our school collected 117 pairs of glasses in support of the Lions Club "Recycle for Sight" program. The donated eyeglasses collected by our school will help improve the quality of life for children and adults living in low- and middle-income communities around the world. Many will experience

corrected vision for the first time, enabling them to lead productive working lives, support their families, attend school, and advance their education. No matter their condition, all glasses were welcomed. The lenses (if not usable) were given to a recycling company that uses them in highway construction as an aggregate substitute for asphalt. We learned about the importance of our senses, especially vision, and found out how expensive glasses can be to purchase. Most importantly, the students learned a lot about St. Lucy as she is the Patron Saint for the blind, as well as the namesake for our school.

There were ten families in our school that were identified as families who were struggling financially by not being able to pay school fees, for bus passes, and field trips. We gave the families dry and canned food collected at Thanksgiving as well as gift cards donated by St. Charles Parish and Wolski Design Group. Each organization donated \$1,000. Our Grade 6 Leadership Team wanted to create the hampers. Families picked them up and we delivered two hampers.

Students collected items that were most needed to serve those at the Hope Mission. Each grade, K-6, was responsible for a specific item. These items included underwear, razors, gloves, socks, toothpaste, and toothbrushes. We collected for approximately two weeks. After that time, all items were delivered to the Hope Mission. We started with describing the purpose and values of the Hope Mission so students were aware of what their mission was and where their donations were going. Students were learning the importance of living a life of service to those in their community.

During the period of May 17th - May 26th, the Grade 2A and 2B students collected snack food items for St. Francis of Assisi School. The students were very happy to have collected four large boxes of granola bars, pudding and fruit cups. Students felt proud to have helped other students within the Edmonton Catholic Schools community and felt the call to serve God.

ST. MARIA GORETTI

Our school collected monetary donations from students and staff in support of the Terry Fox Foundation's cancer research. Our students learned about empathy



and compassion. Many of them had a personal connection to someone in their life who has experienced cancer.

Our school held a “Bring and Buy” sale to raise funds for our bursary student at the Burundi English School in Bujumbura, Burundi through the Tanbur African Aid Society. Families were asked to donate new or gently used items which were then made available for purchase by our students as Christmas gifts for their family. Funds raised supported the tuition and exam fees our bursary student was required to pay. Our students felt empowered knowing they were helping someone less fortunate attain something that they themselves received for free.

ST. MARK

Students participated in our annual Terry Fox Run. Students all took part and dedicated their participation to a loved one who was affected by cancer or to Terry Fox. Our small community school raised a significant amount of funds for cancer research. All students were given time to reflect and understand why continuing to support this cause was important. This has been a great long-standing tradition at St. Mark. Students felt empowered that we could make a small difference. They were reminded why this was such an important cause. Many really got into it and trained hard prior to the run at school and at home.

Team Leadership option students created hearts with messages of love in December that they placed on all the lockers of our student body, “Locker Hearts LOVE” Notes. The students loved these the next morning when they came to school. It was a real pick me up for many of our students who needed it. They also did part 2 of this project in February, by hand-crafting individual Valentine’s card for all students and staff in the building. It was very much appreciated by all. Students and staff felt loved and appreciated. The Team Leadership students who created these were proud that they could put smiles on the faces of others. Our school needed to feel extra loved, and their mission was accomplished.

Team Leadership students created hand-crafted Candygram Christmas cards which they sold to their peers to raise money for a Christmas fundraiser for the Catholic Social Services Sign of Hope Campaign and the Edmonton Catholic

Schools Foundation Dreams for Kids. They gave up their lunchtime to sell and promote our project. Each card was unique, and the students/staff were able to purchase these amazing pieces of art for friends, staff, and their families. Students who created these cards felt empowered that they could create change through their imagination and art. Students who received the cards felt love from their peers. We ensured that all students in our school received a card. Everyone involved learned that we all needed reminders at times that we were cared for and that we mattered.

Students and staff brought in food and beverages over the course of a month to donate to food hampers which we distributed to our St. Mark families in need. We came together to create 15 large hampers and staff personally delivered them the week prior to these families in need. Some families came to the school for pickup. It was a wonderful long-standing tradition. Students felt empowered that they could assist families in need. It made them appreciate all they had in their homes. They learned that not everyone was as fortunate as they were. It made them see the power of giving to those in need and how it felt great to do so.

As a fundraising called “Carnival for a Cause 2023 (fundraiser for Ukraine),” Team Leadership students designed, created, and built carnival games for a morning carnival where all other students had an opportunity to come and play their games. Those students and some staff purchased tickets (gave donations) and all proceeds were used to assist the people of Ukraine. It was a great success for the students who created the carnival games, and it ended up being an excellent fundraiser to assist those in need. This was a project which had become a staple at St. Mark and will continue for the 2023-24 year. The impact on students was tremendous. Students who created the games felt empowered that they were able to use their work to raise funds to assist those in need. Students who bought tickets to play the games were proud that they could contribute to assisting the people of Ukraine. All in all, it was a very successful social justice project on behalf of St. Mark.

Let Your Light Shine Forth

ST. MARTHA

The school participated in the Dream Builders Challenge associated with the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation. The school hosted a Christmas Concert on December 1st and gave the opportunity for families to win "best seats in the house". We collected \$2 per ticket for a draw. Another challenge was to have students bring in donations to be able to break school rules, we called it Break the Rules Day. Lastly, as an entire school community, we collected food items and created food hampers for those in need within our own school community. All classes, students, and their families, were able to participate for this great cause. We collected 9 hampers! This project had an impact on students as it gave them a better understanding of the challenges we or others face in this world, it helped develop respect for others, promote fairness, and to learn how to make positive change in their community.

As part of our St. Martha feast day activities/celebration, we partnered with The Mustard Seed and created breakfast bags for individuals experiencing poverty and homelessness. This workstation had an assembly line where students bagged packaged oatmeal, a spoon, sugar packages, coffee cream, Milk2Go, and an orange. At the end of the day, we were able to make over 200 breakfast bags! Through this experience, students understood that there were people in our community facing many hardships one of them being, poverty. By helping to feed the less fortunate, students were hopefully encouraged to remember this experience and increase empathy and overall wellbeing. Volunteering teaches students to be more compassionate and sensitive. It could also improve their happiness, build skills and confidence. It was with hope to build capacity in leadership roles for students to one day take action on their own or with their own families.

ST. MARTIN

St. Martin students decorated paper bags in the spirit of Christmas to be filled with items and distributed through the Free Store for Ukrainian Newcomers operated by Ukrainian Canadian Social Services. Students learned about the

meaningful impacts that acts of service could have on others. By participating, they were able to extend warmth and joy to the people receiving the donations.

ST. MARY

The staff and students at our school gathered on a sunny September morning to Try Like Terry. The entire school community, and parents included, participated in the Terry Fox Run. Three different run routes were laid out in the fields to accommodate all levels of runners. Donations were collected online and, in the classrooms, too. Approximately \$1,800 was collected to honour Terry Fox and contribute to his legacy. Throughout the week leading up to the Terry Fox Run, our morning announcements included Fox Facts! Through these short daily presentations, the students were made aware of the impact this Canadian hero had around the world. It was obvious about the need to continue the legacy of Terry Fox as the need for research dollars to find a cure was still much needed. Everyone could contribute and Try Like Terry!

On Thursday, October 29th, the staff and students at our school honoured the Indigenous community. Through our participation in Orange Shirt Day, which honours Truth and Reconciliation, we stood together in prayer for all our Indigenous sisters and brothers and in particular those little souls who never made it home. Throughout the days leading up to September 30th, our morning announcements included stories and lessons about Indigenous communities. Through story, song and video presentation, the students became aware of the rich culture that Indigenous people offer to our community and that they needed to be celebrated and honoured. Through a variety of educational activities, we prayed for Truth and Reconciliation.

The students collected boxes of breakfast cereal for ECSD schools who offer a breakfast program. They collected 235 boxes of cereal throughout October in the celebration of Thanksgiving. The students were very generous in their giving to those in need. They watched in excitement throughout the month as the stacks of cereal grew each day. Many classes incorporated lessons on the need for good nutrition for all students and our responsibility to help those in need within our School Division.



Throughout the month of "November, We Remember", we took the time to honour those who went to war to enable us to live in this free country we call home, Canada. The entire student body wrote approximately 300 postcards to the veterans living at the Kipnes Veteran Centre here in Edmonton. The postcards were warmly received by the Centre staff and residents. The students wrote very touching and meaningful messages of thanks to the veterans. The students expressed a real spirit of gratitude and appreciation to the retired veterans. Knowing that retired military personnel would be reading their postcard messages gave the students a sense of pride and joy.

The 51 Grade 5 students participated virtually in the No Stone Left Alone Ceremony. Due to very low temperatures the students were not able to attend the ceremony at Beechmount Cemetery. On the day of the ceremony, the two Grade 5 classes gathered and participated reverently within our classroom to watch the live feed. We followed along with the ceremony in full participation, listening to the various speakers, singing O Canada, and standing for the moment of silence. Following the live broadcast each student wrote a letter to an unknown soldier thanking them for their service. These letters were delivered to the No Stone Left Alone organization where they were used to promote the program to show others the deep connections that students made to those who served. Although unable to attend the event in person this year, the virtual presentation was meaningful for the students. Listening to the speeches and seeing footage of children across Canada laying a poppy on a veteran's tombstone showed them how important these events were so that we may never forget the sacrifices of so many. The follow-up activity of writing the letters allowed the students to put their thoughts into print which were shared by the No Stone Left Alone organization.

Throughout Advent, the students donated a variety of non-perishable food items to the food bank run by St. Vincent de Paul Society within the St. Thomas More Parish. We collected several boxes of food and donated them. As well, some of the extra food and gift card donations were given to those in need within our school community. Students were always very happy to donate food to those in need and wanted to help others. They felt proud to carry their food donations to the collection area and add to the growing piles of cans, boxes, and bags. This

reminded them of how fortunate they were to have extra food to share with others in need.

The school knew the importance of sharing our collections with the ECS Foundation; therefore, we had a "Holly Leaf Spiritual Wish Board" and for every spiritual wish/prayer that was written on a 'holly leaf', one dollar was donated by the student to the Foundation. The holly leaf hedge was a beautiful collection of heartfelt prayers written by the students and their families. To read the thoughtful messages of hope, love and gratitude that were on the holly leaves was touching. The students were seen scanning the growing holly hedge, which was on a prominent display in the foyer, looking for their message of hope and reading the many messages of love from others.

For our staff Christmas party, we had a gift exchange and the toys we exchanged with each other were all donated to Santa's Anonymous. The gifts were wrapped in recycled wrapping and went on display in the school under a "Santa's Anonymous" tree for the students to see. Approximately 30 gifts were taken to the Santa's Anonymous depot in Edmonton. The students knew that this pile of gifts was going to be donated to Santa's Anonymous. We asked our students and families to donate throughout the year, so it was good for them to see that the staff donated as well.

The Grade 2 students from our school went to Lifestyle Options in Riverbend to read stories and sing Christmas carols to the senior residents. The students created 30 letters and 30 Christmas cards to share with the residents. The students showed respect and love for the seniors that they visited. The seniors welcomed them into their social room and read their cards and letters with interest. The students also sang carols and had chats with the seniors. Intergenerational bonding was very unique and meaningful to all.

School staff chose the ECS Foundation as one of the charities to support during Advent. The staff chose to participate in a "Survivor" game throughout the month of December and donated to enter the game as well as an opportunity to make further donations for extra immunities too. This was a staff only initiative. All cash donations by staff participants were donated to the ECS Foundation which could impact our students as all schools could be supported by the ECS Foundation.

Let Your Light Shine Forth

Four different classes within our school created 120 cards hand-made greeting cards, with messages of kindness and love that were handed out to the neighbours within the neighbourhood of our school during Random Acts of Kindness week 2023. The students worked with their in-school buddy class to create these cards. The Grade 6 and Grade 3 student buddies worked together as did the Grade 5 and Grade 1 student buddies. Working together on the cards was a friendship building activity that was carried into the streets as together they hand delivered the cards to the neighbourhood. The students knew the importance of spreading acts of kindness to all even those they did not know but folks who would appreciate finding a special card in their mailbox from a St. Mary's student.

The staff of St. Mary's spent some time after school one day creating a beautiful booklet of caring messages for seniors at the Rivera Retirement Residence. They each decorated a few pages which were included in the booklet that was given to the seniors. It was good to gather the school staff to work together on a good will project. Knowing their messages of support, kindness and the thoughtfully decorated pages would be enjoyed by the elders of the community was comforting.

The Grade 5 students made 100 sandwiches for the Boyle Street Community. The teacher had secured funding for such a project. The students made each sandwich carefully and attached a message of love to each Ziploc bag. The students also brought in 30 cans of soup to be donated to the Marian Centre. The students were proud that they would be helping the less fortunate people living on the streets of Edmonton. Recently, we had been downtown on a field trip, and witnessed firsthand some of the people we could help through our actions. We continue to pray for these people and pray that they felt our love and support.



The Grade 2 and Grade 6 "Buddy Classes" worked together to support The Mustard Seed. The students brought in a variety of healthy ingredients to make sandwiches. In total, 300 sandwiches were made and taken to The Mustard Seed to be given out to their guests at lunch. The Director from The Mustard Seed also visited the school and did a presentation to the students on the services provided by the centre. The Grade 2 and Grade 6 buddy classes lived out their baptismal mission as priest (sacrifice), prophet (teach), and king (serve). The students made sure to add a little 'love' to each sandwich before tucking it in the Ziploc. The Mustard Seed

Director was able to share stories of the impact this healthy food had on the people who often have little nourishment each day. The students said, "it felt good to do good for others."

During our school morning announcements, we shared with our students that the entire staff of St. Mary's would be making sandwiches for the less fortunate of Edmonton. Our staff gathered during Holy Week to make sandwiches for the Boyle Street Community. Students made Happy Easter cards to accompany the sandwiches. In total, 150 sandwiches were made and delivered in downtown Edmonton on Wednesday, April 5th. We wanted the students to understand that all our staff knew the importance of sharing our good fortune with others. Sharing was caring especially throughout Holy Week as we recalled the Passion of Christ.

The students from Grade 5 collected food throughout Lent. This non-perishable food was taken to the St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank which was located at St. Thomas More Parish. Care was given to select healthy foods to allow everyone in need good quality food items to enjoy. Students were given the opportunity to think about the need in our community and to help the less fortunate through this collection. They felt proud that the food items they brought from home could help others.

The Grade 2 class had a jar set out during Lent for 'Almsgiving'. The students brought in any spare change they had at home or were given for tasks completed at home. Each day a few more coins were added to the class jar set on the prayer table. The Grade 2 students were happy to add their extra coins and see the collection of donations grow each week. They knew the money was going to the less fortunate among us in our community. The money totalled \$35 and was donated to the Catholic parish in Devon, Santa Maria Goretti.

St. Mary students
Down Syndrome Day
Lots of Socks

students learned
as well as the World
theme, "With Us, Not
learned about some
with Down Syndrome
created posters and
community about
that by wearing
on World Down
could help spark

conversations with others. This campaign helped further develop the inclusive community at the school.



celebrated World
by participating in the
Campaign. The Grade 4
about Down Syndrome,
Down Syndrome Day
For Us," where they
inequality that those
face. The Grade 4 class
educated the school
Down Syndrome and
brightly coloured socks
Syndrome Day, we
educational

food on the table and other school communities as well. We ended up collecting enough to create food packages for 20 of our own families in need and to share 20 cereal boxes and 30 pasta packages with Ben Calf Robe School, for their families. We had over 100 students that were displaced from Ukraine, so our community knew that needs were high for our families. Many families had donated over the two-week drive early in the school year to help.

Students collected items such as mitts, gloves, toothpaste, toothbrushes, crosswords, treats and socks for the 162 residents of the Shasta Care Community facility. The facility opened on December 5, 2022, and students created Christmas goody bags and cards to spread some Christmas cheer. Items were collected until December 16th, and the care bags were delivered in the week of December 20th. Students shared their gift of generosity with those in need and who did not have as much as we did. They felt the power of the Holy Spirit as they collected items and wrote cards for those who did not have family to spend the holidays with.

The students sold hot chocolate to support the purchase of fire alarms, smoke detectors, and emergency blankets to the City of Goodness Center in Misto Dobra, Ukraine. Firefighter Aid Ukraine delivered the funds collected through this fundraiser. The City of Goodness provides support and care to 230 children who have been orphaned, many with disabilities. The organization also provides supports to mothers so they can reunite with their children. The school raised \$273.30. Half of our school population was of Ukrainian descent and over 100 just came from Ukraine because of the war. This small act gave the students an opportunity to feel like they were helping people back in Ukraine.

The Grade 1B and 4A classes, decided to do a Lenten Promise related to Alms Giving. Both classes decided to collect items for the Women's Shelter WINGS. This shelter was a safe place for women and children who needed to leave their unsafe home situation. Our goal was to collect 40 bags of items that were ready to go for when these women would go to the shelter, such as soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, hairbrushes, and toques/gloves/socks, basically everyday items. Both classes collected and made 41 bags along with cards of encouragement. Students realized that there were people who had to leave home because they were in unsafe situations. When they left, they left with nothing and this did not just affect women, but also their children. The students got to see the value of

ST. MATTHEW

Our school collected donations at our three Christmas concerts for the ECS Foundation and Catholic Social Services Sign of Hope Campaign. Each charity received 50% of the total donated which was \$1,200, that was \$600 for each charity. Students learned that when community gathers, it was an opportunity to collectively contribute to a charity or good cause, especially when an event, like our concert was free of charge.

All school families were asked to bring in either cereal boxes or packages of pasta to help those in our own school community who were having trouble to putting

Let Your Light Shine Forth

giving and understanding what it meant to truly give to those who had nothing. They felt very proud to do something like this.

ST. MONICA

Snack time was an important part of the 100 Voices program. Not all families were able to send snacks for their little ones. As such, we reached out to our staff and parent community and invited them to bring in snack items that could be shared with those children who did not have a snack. The majority of what was collected went to the Ben Calf Robe 100 Voices program. Discussions were had with the students about how not all of our friends could bring a snack to school. This made the students feel sad but then proud when they could bring in a box of snacks to share. It was the beginning teachings of the idea that we needed to support those who were less fortunate than ourselves.

The 100 Voices students created watercolor hearts to be given to seniors for Random Acts of Kindness Week. Simple positive quotes were printed and placed on the back of the hearts. About 75 hearts were created. The students learned about the importance of bringing joy to someone's day. They were excited to know that their hearts would make someone else's heart fill with joy. The students received a card back from one of the seniors and this made them very excited.

The 100 Voices students learned that some families did not have hats, mittens, and socks to keep them warm in the winter. We then gathered these items on our caring tree (Christmas Tree) in December. The items were then given to our FSLW to distribute as needed to those families in need. The students felt happy and proud that they could help other people feel warm.

ST. NICHOLAS

Students volunteered at the Edmonton Food Bank. A small group of fourteen students went once a month to help with various jobs at the Food Bank. They

filled boxes for families, organized shelves with food as well as sorting through donated food. Our school was fortunate enough to receive items from the food bank, and our students were giving back by helping some of the organizations that helped us. Students reflected that the experience was very pleasurable. They witnessed lots of teamwork and hardworking people, learned new skills, saw how warehouses and food banks worked stating that it was very organized, and the system was very efficient. Students realized that it was a blessing to have food whenever they needed it and to share their blessings. They realized that they could volunteer even if it was not direct help but putting action to agencies that helped a larger sum of people.

A group of fourteen students from St. Nicholas took part in many different activities and opportunities to volunteer in the community. One in particular that the students enjoyed was going to the Beverly Senior Center. Here the students had a firsthand chance to see the loneliness, pain, and sadness that seniors experienced. They played various card and board games, some just chatted and listened to stories, while others enjoyed snacks and hot chocolate. After returning to the school, the students wanted to make Christmas cards to send to the seniors with personalized messages. Over 30 cards were handmade and signed by the students and sent for the seniors to enjoy on Christmas morning. Students expected it to be kind of boring and repetitive since they did not have much experience with the elderly. However, when they went there it was quite the opposite. They had fun playing games, listening to the seniors' stories, and one senior excitingly read their poems. The students experienced joy and how it felt to be with the elderly. It was very comforting. It was a pleasure going there and they wanted to go again.

For No Stone Left Alone, students and staff held a service at Little Mountain Cemetery to honor every Canadian veteran that had passed. Students made painted rocks as well as laid poppies on the graves of fallen soldiers. This experience showed students the importance of Remembrance Day, and how we must continue to honour and remember those that fought for our freedom. Some students felt sentimental, sad, blessed, and grateful for their freedom during the experience.

Fifteen students from St. Nicholas went to Beverly Senior Housing and asked to spend time with the residents. They played games, chatted, listened to



stories/music, and shared cookies and juice. Both the seniors and students were very happy to have spent time together. Students indicated that they had fun and felt closer to the seniors. They felt that they had made their day brighter and wanted to return to the residence in the future.

ST. OSCAR ROMERO

In November, our student community decided to support our fellow Catholic School, St. Gerard School and their snack and lunch program. St. Gerard School typically receives grants that provide food for their school community, from daily snacks, lunches, and even additional snacks to be sent home for the families over breaks. This year, our school made our school community aware that there was a gap between the funds that they needed to fully support their snack program. Within class groups, our students collected non-perishable and perishable food items to add to St. Gerard's Snack program. Classes were given a "bingo card" list of items that were most wanted. Announcements throughout the week shared information about St. Gerard School and the difference our "Snack Attack" snack drive would have for those students. The Social Justice students counted and organized the items. Our school collected over 1,344 portions of snacks! Together the Social Justice Team packed boxes and went to St. Gerard to see the students that would be the recipients of their efforts. Before embarking on this initiative, the Principal of St. Gerard School, came to St. Oscar Romero to share with us information about the school. Our students instantly felt the need to support the children of the school. During the snack drive, students had friendly competition comparing who collected the most items throughout the week. This gave students a sense of how much our school was collecting as a whole and encouraged each student to bring what they could. When we finally were able to head to St. Gerard, our Social Justice Team was ecstatic to finally meet the children they had been working so hard to raise food for. The team went to many classes throughout the school and shared with them that they had collected food items for their school snack program. The high school students were very proud of their efforts and felt compelled to return to see the elementary students in the future for another initiative.

Students in our school felt very passionate about Women's Rights and Equality. October was Women's History Month in Canada. To support females and raise awareness about the contributions that women made throughout history, our students found facts that were inspiring to them. These facts were shared over announcements throughout the month of October. Social Justice students also created posters and posted them around the school. Before the campaign, many students were not aware of the impacts that specific Canadian women had on our history. Students learned about the hardships that were faced by women in the past. They were encouraged to imagine the strength, tenacity, and persistence it took for those women to overcome the barriers at that time and achieve the great things that they accomplished. Many of the women that were featured were best known for fighting for equality for people of all sexes and all races.

To raise funds for the ECS Foundation Dream for Kids, St. Oscar Romero's Social Justice Team put on a Christmas Bake Sale. During the Christmas Music Concert, social justice students set up a Christmas themed bake sale with hot chocolate and multiple types of cookies. All cookies were made by the students themselves. Students decided the price list and actively advertised and sold cookies during the concert and during lunch the next day. In their short few hours of sales, students raised \$176.75 which was donated to the ECS Foundation Dreams for Kids. They chose this charity because of the many "Dream Funds" that support students and families within our School Division. Students learned a lot about the ECS Foundation when they researched and chose it as the charity for this event. During the Christmas Concert bake sale, students explained to parents who the charity supported and gave some information about the different Dream Funds. This connected students to the cause and made their bake sale meaningful. The school community, including the music students, staff, and parents, were all proud to see this happening alongside the Christmas concert and felt it brought a special atmosphere to the event.

Students brought awareness to the importance of standing up against bullying and reaching out for support during our Pink Shirt Day Event. Throughout the week, students shared information about Pink Shirt Day and why it was important and encouraged others to wear pink that day. For students that couldn't wear pink, the social justice team printed and cut out tiny pink t-shirts which were given to those students to pin to their shirt to show their

Let Your Light Shine Forth

commitment to stand up against bullying. Our Social Justice Team also created a bulletin board and posters around the school that shared different ways to reach out against bullying or receive support such as calling the Kids Help Phone. Students were encouraged to recognize that bullying was an issue that they had the power to address by simply speaking out when they saw it or by being caring and supportive of their fellow classmates. Students showed their commitment and were given a feeling of togetherness and solidarity by wearing pink and wearing the mini pink t-shirts. Our school community showed their adamant belief that they were anti-bullying.

We celebrated St. Oscar Romero Day, the feast of the canonization of St. Oscar Romero, a man of justice and charity, by inviting sixteen local social agencies to share information about their good work with our school population. Students were able to attend two sessions. We hoped that learning about the charitable giving and justice work of these agencies would inspire our students to give their time to serving others. We had agencies who worked for/with those experiencing poverty or were currently unhoused as well as those who needed food or support as they endured physical ailments. Participants received a handwritten thank you card created by the Social Justice group and a small gift from the school. Students were surprised at the work of some of the agencies and moved to compassion for those being served. Students realized that they were very fortunate to have their family and resources. Students were inspired to volunteer time to agencies for Christian Service hours or in the Christian Action Project research about one of these agencies.

The school signed up for the City of Edmonton School Yard Clean-Up Initiative and we were one of 70 schools city-wide that participated in this event. The Social Justice team led groups to pick-up garbage around the schoolyard. The city provided bags and gloves for the school as well as best practices and safety recommendations for the clean-up. Student Social Justice Leaders gathered a group of students, shared the safety tips and began picking garbage in an assigned area of the school. Students returned to the garbage bin outside the school to count the number of bags collected. All student helpers were entered into a draw for prizes from the school. Also, the City of Edmonton did a draw and recognized school participation with a certificate. Students felt a sense of pride in cleaning up the school yard. They learned to care for the land that we lived on and showed pride in taking care of our school community. There was also

camaraderie between students as they worked together to gather garbage and met some new peers that they did not usually interact with. Students took this experience and remembered to be diligent in finding garbage cans for their own garbage when they were outside in the schoolyard and might be more inclined to pick-up garbage when they walked by.

ST. PAUL

A Cereal Drive was held for St. Francis of Assisi School supporting full tummies to support their day!

Staff and students walked to our community parish for our Thanksgiving Mass. As always, it was such a special time for us to gather together as a school community of faith. The Priest and staff at St. John the Evangelist Parish, invited the residents of the Roozen Family Hospice Centre, next to the church, to come outside and wave hello to our students. Our students brought flowers and cards to the residents as we built a bouquet for them to have at their Centre. At the Hospice, their symbol is the “sunflower” which represents strength and hope. We hoped that this small gesture brought much joy to the residents and staff. Students were overjoyed with the impact this small gesture had on the residents and staff of the Hospice. Students asked many questions and engaged in acts of social justice with the centre over the school year.

ST. PHILIP

Students from Kindergarten to Grade 6 participated in the Terry Fox Run as an entire school body. Students were encouraged to bring in a Toonie for Terry. A total of almost \$800 was raised by our school community with donations of toonies and online donations. The Terry Fox Run is always a powerful school-wide event that engages all students and allows them to further explore the legacy of this Canadian hero. Many students in Grades 3-6 also did research and writing projects on Terry Fox to further their understanding.



Students in our Faith Leadership Group held a bake/hot chocolate sale on the evening of our Demonstration of Learning to raise money to buy materials and supplies to create Christmas artwork and decorations to be shared with the seniors and residents at the Dickensfield Extended Care. Students then met afterschool to paint, create and prepare the decorations for delivery to Dickensfield for the Christmas season. In total, 25 pieces were prepared by students for the residents. Students and parents were so supportive of this idea and the students were very successful, raising almost \$400. They were able to share their gift of creativity with those who may be alone or unable to celebrate with their loved ones. Students were excited to know that their creations would spread cheer and joy with others and that the giving of their time was impacting the lives of others. It was a very appreciated activity.

Staff and students organized a raffle for front row seats and parking in the lot as well as a silver collection for the Christmas concert to raise money for the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation Dreams for Kids. A total of over \$700 was raised! The generosity of the school community was very evident and supporting the cause was important to our school community. Students on the Leadership Team created posters and advertisements to promote the raffle/silver collection. It was important to them to get the message to as many people and so they contributed to the ideas of sharing the raffle with the school administration team. The students were excited to support an organization that gave back. Some of these same students collected tickets and donations the afternoon and evening of the concert.

ST. PIUS X

Students from Kindergarten to Grade 6 were encouraged to bring in cereal boxes to help support the Edmonton Food Bank as they have supported our school in times of need and support a lot of our families as well. Students were genuinely excited to participate in the Cereal Box Collection project and have embraced our Pay it Forward theme for this year.

Students in Social Justice extended a coffee and/or hot chocolate treat to their teachers and staff of our school indicating that they meant something to the

students at the school for Bell Let's Talk Day. They decorated coffee labels with positive affirmations and gave a sparkly stylus pen to each staff member to wish them a sparkly day. Students gave back to the school community and showed appreciation for the work our school learning team did for them on a daily basis. Students had a positive experience that made their spirit and light shine.

A Dodgeball and Skittle Ball Memorial Tournament was held to raise funds for the Make a Wish Foundation and the Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation in honor of a former student. The tournament embraced the struggles that each of our student's faced daily due to many family challenges whether that be newcomer from a new country or trauma. Students learned to embrace being a kid and to give back to kids that were also fighting their own battle. They also learned leadership and sportsman like conduct in a game situation.

The St. Pius X Social Justice Student Club put on an ice cream sale. All students in the school were able to order an ice cream for one dollar and the proceeds went to the Edmonton Humane Society. Social Justice presented this initiative on broadcast, made posters, sorted, and delivered ice cream, and then made sure the whole school yard was cleaned up after the treats were enjoyed outside. In total, \$247 was raised. The students made the decision to fundraise for the Edmonton Humane Society and they researched what impact the funds would have on the animals. They felt pride in the parts they played in this project and in the amount of money raised.

ST. RICHARD

The first day of school we created a parade to say hello and welcome the seniors from Sakaw Terrace to our school family. All the students came out and sang a song to the seniors across the street. They realized the impact of having a positive affect on someone else. It helped to create community and the students were excited to work with the seniors again.

The students participated in a run for the Terry Fox Foundation. Our principal offered to dye his hair to encourage students to bring in donations. They each did some reflection on those that they knew that were affected by cancer. They

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learned they could work together to reach a goal. They also learned that everyone was personally affected by cancer and other serious illnesses.

The Grade 3 and 5 students went over to participate in a sing along with the senior residents at Sakaw Terrace Seniors Center. The Grade 1, 2 and 6 students made Christmas cards that were delivered to the residents. The sing a long was a beautiful way to build connection and bring joy. The students commented on how much the residents seemed to enjoy the time together and it made them feel proud of bringing that joy. They made a greater effort in the singing of the songs then they ever had in class which showed their joy in sharing.

Grade 6 worked on composting food scraps to put the nutritious dirt and soil back into our community gardens to grow food! The students learned about lifecycles and ecosystems by investigating the effect biotic factors have on abiotic components. They also learned about how we could turn waste into usable material!

The Grade 2 students organized St. Richard's Food Bank Collection for St. Theresa Parish. In class, we discussed how fortunate we were with what we had and how many needy and hungry children and families there were who had very little. The Grade 2 students posted signage and did daily morning announcements on the intercom, encouraging students and staff to open their hearts and bring contributions for the parish food bank. Our whole school contributed food! The Grade 2 students felt joy in helping others. They learned how fortunate and blessed they were, that they could all share what they had with others no matter how little, and that by being kind, caring, sharing, and leading with their hearts, shone their light and showed they followed in Jesus' footsteps. When everyone worked together, great things could be accomplished. Small actions together made a big difference! Children could bring change to the world!

All grades participated in picking up garbage and recycling from within our schoolyard, as well as throughout residential areas surrounding the school. Garbage and recycling were put in separate bags. Students felt like positive contributors in their own communities. Some were even able to pick up garbage from their own front yards. Students also were able to compare what could be recycled and what needed to be thrown out. Several students noted that there

was more garbage than they expected, and some were worried the garbage might have harmed animals if it remained on the ground.

Our school's Eco Club learned about deforestation and its effects on climate change and animal habitats. They wanted to share what they learned with their school community. It was decided that bins would be created for each classroom and a short presentation would be provided on why it was important to save trees and ways that we could help. Students explained that trying to reuse paper that may normally be thrown out or recycled could make a difference. Students could be overheard reminding their friends to put paper into the "Good On One Side (GOOS)" paper bin, or to use paper from the GOOS bin instead of getting new paper. Students reminded each other that animals were losing their habitats or that there was too much carbon in the atmosphere and helped each other make better choices.

The Grade 5 students visited grandfriends at Sakaw Seniors Residence and helped to plant plants in the Residence garden alongside their grandfriends. This activity allowed the students to create relationships with their elders and their dedicated time really brought out joy in the elders' lives. Students learned how to plant plants and maintain a garden, they also learned how to water plants and how to care for them ensuring they could survive. The students also learned how to be cooperative with elders and how active listening to them was beneficial because they had experience with many different things. Overall students loved this experience and were very happy and proud of the hard work they had done.

ST. ROSE

There was a tradition at St. Rose School, that we started the school year by collecting cereal for the ECSD elementary schools in our area that ran breakfast/snack programs. Each year, the classes built pyramids with the cereal boxes to determine which class had donated the most. This year we had over 130 cereal boxes which were given to three ECSD elementary schools in our area. This was a tradition in our school and our families knew that this fundraiser would occur every October. Our students loved giving to others and were shocked that there were schools nearby that feed their students a snack or breakfast.

The students of St. Rose ran the Terry Fox Run in September and raised \$866.29. The students enjoyed that lovely day. We ran/walked through the communities of Crestwood, Parkview, and Laurier Heights. Before the run/walk students watched a video on Terry Fox and his mission. Each student had to fill out a, "I am running for...." sticker. Many of the students were running for a Grade 7 student in our school who was battling cancer.

Our Rainbow Club was looking for a charity to support. Because the Rainbow Club supports inclusivity, they decided to look for an organization that supported their focus as well. This was how they came upon the Youth Empowerment and Support Services, also known as YESS. They had a hot chocolate and cookie sale and raised \$250 in the beginning of December. The impact on the students was tremendous. They researched many organizations and came up with one that supported youth that had run away from difficult situations. Many of the students in this organization had problems being accepted for who they were and felt supporting YESS was a way of supporting others like themselves.

Each year our families support elementary students by collecting new winter wear such as jackets, boots, mitts, hats, and so forth. This year we added Shoe Boxes of Love to the fundraiser. Shoe Boxes of Love were filled with a winter hat and matching waterproof mittens, small essentials and treats for students in Kindergarten to Grade 4. During this time, our students held a bake sale that raised \$300. They purchased items for the Shoe Boxes of Love. In the last week of school, our Leadership Team went to an ECSD elementary school and served a pancake meal to the students and gave them the Shoe Boxes of Love. The 346 items of winter clothing were given to two elementary schools in our area. Our students were touched by the excitement of the elementary students where they served pancakes and gave out the Shoe Boxes of Love. They came back with stories about how one child had never had pancakes and another child who was surprised they could have as much whipped cream as they wanted. They were also delighted to hear the screams of delight when they opened the Shoe Boxes of Love. They had so much fun mingling with the students and hearing their stories. It made them feel grateful for accomplishing this fundraiser.

Our students filled out 100 Christmas cards for the staff at the Misericordia Hospital. The students had to write Christmas wishes and messages in the cards. They were delivered to staff members. Unfortunately, the students did not see

the impact of staff receiving the cards, but they did gain an understanding of the importance of thanking others who selflessly give of themselves in stressful situations. They also researched the types of occupations in the hospital and tailored the cards to these positions.

The students had a "break a rule" day at the beginning of December to raise funds for the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation Dream Makers Fund. Teachers created a list of up to three 'rules' students could break if they paid a certain amount of money. For example, they could sit in the teacher's chair for \$5 or make food in the Food's Lab if the class came up with \$30. The students raised \$1,693.20. Our students were informed what the ECS Foundation Dream Maker Fund was and how it supported ECSD students. The students were impressed by the amount they were able to donate to help others.

After some Sunday Masses at St. John the Evangelist Parish, our students served pancakes to the parishioners in support of the Knights of Columbus. This was an ongoing event that continued to the end of the school year. Our students, under the guidance of the Knights of Columbus, collected money, served, and cleaned up after the pancake breakfast. The



students were so enthused by this event. The Parish Priest came to our school to search for volunteers, and we always had many. The students loved that he asked them to come, and he recognized them during Mass by bringing them out in front of the altar during the pancake day. Our students felt that they were needed, and the Priest made it fun for the students. They wore chef hats and used all the utensils. Our students saw church as a fun place, and many offered to have their name on the list for the next pancake breakfast.

The students, through a United Way Grant, created Care Cupboards filled with basic necessities like books, granola bars, deodorant, combs, hair ties, socks, brushes, and so forth for other schools in need in ECSD. These items were provided to elementary schools and refilled with the extras that our school fundraised for. The students delivered the Care Cupboards to the schools and

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were amazed by the areas that surrounded many of the schools. They learned that not all schools were situated in places like St. Rose. They were able to mingle with the students and enjoy the excitement of those receiving a Care Cupboard.

ÉCOLE ST. STANISLAUS

During the month of October, our students decided they wanted to complete a food bank donation to the Edmonton Food Bank. The Grade 5 and 6 students felt that this was an initiative that they wanted to support as October was the month of giving thanks. We were able to create hampers for many families in our school community so they could enjoy a family meal. We received so many donations and were able to have the Edmonton Food Bank pickup over 10 boxes of food for other families outside of our school community. The students researched the top ten items that they could ask for as a donation so that they could create hampers. A couple of the students contacted the Food Bank to ask what they were in desperate need of. This was powerful as they had a presentation from the Food Bank and were able to make a real connection to how the food was received, delivered and how many people used these donations.

Each month our school committed to have our students participate in an act of service within the community. For the month of December, our Grade 6 students selected YESS (Youth Empowerment Support Services) and decided to do a sock drive! As a school community, we collected over 420 pairs of new socks. This benefited the greater community for the winter the months ahead. The students organizing this event, researched what project they wanted to complete, and discovered that socks were the most undonated item which began the conversation of what project they wanted to support. They created a year plan of items other than food to help. They realized that it was not just about donating food and clothing, but instead, they needed to research to find out who and how they could support various organizations.

This year, as a school project, we wanted to share the joy of the Christmas season and share our shining light by making cards and ornaments. These gifts were shared with the community at large and were shared with the following agencies, Sisters of Providence, Good Samaritan Seniors home, ERCSS daycare, Enjoy

Church, and Greenfield Community League. As a whole school, we focused on how we could be peacemakers and share the gift of smile, a card with a message and the ornaments. The students realized that sharing peace did not mean you needed to purchase something. They spent a lot of time thinking about the messages for the cards and the details for the ornaments that could help brighten someone's day. This allowed them to realize that we all have social responsibility to help other members of the community with simple acts of kindness.

As a staff, we chose to support Santa's Anonymous by donating gifts that we would have wanted as a child and making a difference in a child's life. This project had an impact on staff as we needed to purchase a toy for a staff member that they would have wanted as a child. We wrapped the gift and did the Christmas gift exchange as a staff. We then donated over 50 toys to Santa's Anonymous and on Saturday, December 17th, we donated our time to deliver toys to children less fortunate.

As a school community wanting to support other schools that were less fortunate, we completed two projects. The first project we completed was a food drive to create Christmas hampers for families in need at St. Stanislaus and J.H. Picard. For our second project, knowing that food was essential for students to learn, we also completed a snack drive to support the snack program at St. Gerard School. Students learned that food was essential for them to learn and that not all students or families had this opportunity. We shared the importance of having the basics for every child in a school to learn and grow. Many of our students did not know that there were students the same age as them that did not have healthy snacks. As a school, we also realized that we could help more than just one school. We were able to create hampers for families at St. Stanislaus and donated food to our sister school J.H. Picard for their food hampers. Students noticed a real need this year with food and lack of basic resources for some of our families.

Grade 6 students had the opportunity to share the true meaning of Christmas. Each student was able to purchase a toy, make cards and write special messages for a Kindergarten student at St. Elizabeth School. On Friday, December 16th, the students went to visit the school with toys, books, and treats in hand. Each student hand delivered the gift, read stories, played games, and even had milk and cookies with their new Kindergarten friends. Before leaving they sang

Christmas carols to the students in both English and French. It was a very powerful and meaningful morning spent with our new friends at St. Elizabeth. The students had to choose the students they would be purchasing a gift for. They had the opportunity to write cards messages and watch the excitement as the children opened the gifts. They also had the time to engage in play time with the students. It was truly so much fun for everyone and this was an experience they will never forget.

The Kindergarten students hosted a birthday party for students at St. Leo School. We wanted to teach our students about making a difference in the world through one small action. The St. Leo students came to our site and the Kinder along with Grade 5 students were divided into stations. All the students moved through the activities, teaching collaboration, socialization and of course making new friends. The Grade 5 students took on a leadership role while building community within the school and with new friends from St. Leo. The Kindergarten students fundraised and purchased gifts for all their new friends to celebrate the birthday. There was so much fun for everyone, sharing cupcakes, juice, and activities. It brought joy to those students that maybe didn't experience that very often. Students felt so proud of themselves that even at the age of 5 they could make a difference and were able to see the impact almost instantly. They were able to celebrate with new friends, laugh, and play games at various stations. The lesson of giving something up or doing something kind during Lent made it more meaningful for them as they truly understood the significance of self-sacrifice.

ST. TERESA

The school participated in our annual Terry Fox Run in support of the Terry Fox Foundation. Students learned about Terry Fox and his incredible drive, determination, and kindness. They learned about Terry's journey during daily announcements, watched videos, purchased symbolic paper shoes, collected donations, and participated in literacy/religion/art activities based on Terry Fox. Our school raised just over \$862. Cancer affects all of us in some way. Students shared stories of family members, friends and even their own journey with cancer. This sad connection inspired us even more to continue Terry's legacy to help cure cancer. They wore stickers with the names of people they were running

for as they participated in our school's Terry Fox Run. Students learned that one person could make a difference and to use Terry's strength to help their own mindset when faced with challenges.



In December, our school collected food and money donations to create Christmas food hampers for families in our school community that were in need. This was an annual social justice project for our school. Each class created a hamper, and each student in our school was asked to contribute a non-perishable item to complete the hamper that was given

to a family in our school community. This year, we created and donated 16 hampers. In addition to food hampers, monetary donations were collected to purchase grocery gift cards and supplementary perishable food items. The monetary collection totaled \$1,100. Participating in social justice projects such as preparing Christmas hampers gave our students the ability to live out the motto of our namesake, St. Teresa of Avila, to be the hands and feet of Christ to others. The Grade 2 students shared reflections of joy, warmth, joyfulness, and happiness for helping those in need.

The Grade 2 classes unpacked the BIG question, "How can we follow Jesus' example to serve others?" Inspired by the book, "The Mitten Tree," students decided to address the needs of warmth and love by collecting winter items for those in need. All classes in the school were invited to share in the experience by donating new gloves, mittens, scarves, and hats. Items were placed on trees in the school atrium and, by the end of the project, the branches of two trees were completely covered with clothing items. Each morning, before items were placed on the trees, the Grade 2 students extended their hands and said a prayer over the clothing



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asking for Jesus to bless the items and keep the recipients safe and warm. Upon reflection, the Grade 2 students said that the trees were not only full of clothing items, but also decorated with Love, Hope, Faith, and Peace. Children's items were taken to the Bissell Center and adult items were taken to Hope Mission. Students commented that the project made them feel happy because they did something good. The poor would be warm and happy knowing that God and someone loved them. Students were serving God by giving and helping their poor neighbours.

Our Grade 1 students were excited to collect 100 cans for the Edmonton Food Bank to celebrate "100 Days of School." As we received cans, students grouped them in tens so that they could see what 100 cans of food looked like! They challenged themselves to try to raise an extra 100 cans. In total, we donated 210 cans. Students learned about the importance of the Edmonton Food Bank and were excited about being able to help many families.

ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA

St. Teresa of Calcutta students participated in the annual Terry Fox Run on Friday, September 23rd. As a school, we raised \$314.05 in our "Try Like Terry" challenge. Our "Try Like Terry" challenge ignited incredible school spirit while supporting cancer research and students showing off their very best "try." Students learned to always try their best despite any challenges they might face in life along the way. They learned that despite obstacles, like Terry, they could leave their own legacy and let their light shine!

A social justice project involved visiting the Churchill Retirement Residence over the year to gather with the residents to engage in social activities each month. The class involved had 23 students. The first visit was in November, where students made a Christmas craft ornament with the residents. In December, students sang Christmas Carols and brought the residents Christmas cards. Each month, students went to be social with these residents. The students felt proud to be engaged in this activity. They felt that the elderly had dignity and the students respected them. The students learned, through verbal interaction, traditions, values, and humor with the residents. The students changed their

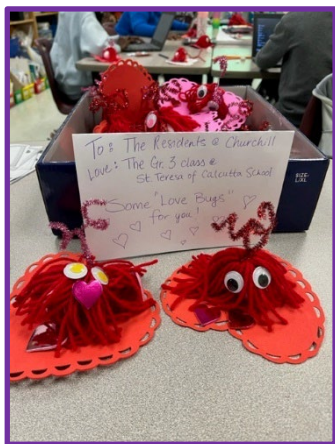
outlook by allowing a relationship with the elderly and engaging with them. They looked forward to the visits!

A Thankful tree was created in our school and remained on display throughout the school year. A class, brainstormed ways that they could be thankful and come out to visit the thankfulness tree. Students were encouraged to give thanks in a variety of ways such as for family, for community helpers, and so forth. Students could either write or draw ways that they were thankful on the sticky notes provided and added their thankful sticky notes to the tree. This was done throughout the year. Whenever a student was feeling thankful, they could add their thankfulness stickies to the tree. We were leading a social justice initiative with a theme of "Thankfulness." With Thanksgiving having just passed in October, we wanted to encourage the message of thankfulness beyond just Thanksgiving by having students practice gratitude throughout the entire year. We were hoping these short activities could begin conversations of thankfulness in your class.

We decided to visit Revera Retirement Residence, The Churchill, a senior residence once a month to interact with these seniors. On November 18th, we visited and made a Christmas ornament with the seniors and then placed them on the Christmas tree on the second floor at the residence. We shared cookies and hot chocolate with them. It was a fantastic visit, and the seniors and students were looking forward to the next visit! The students were excited to go and when they arrived, they were anxious to see the seniors. They had fun interacting, helping, and decorating the ornaments. They learned patience, creativity, and enjoyment this trip! They were asked if they wanted to meet again the next month, and it was a complete YEAH!!!

Our staff and students brought in new socks, mitts, and scarves for the homeless and newly homed citizens of Edmonton. These were donated to the George Spady Society. Together we collected 178 pairs of socks, 7 pairs of gloves, and 2 hats for those in need. As we were collecting these new items, the students used these items to decorate the Christmas tree in our Learning Commons. Students loved seeing the tree fill up with new socks as they brought in more and more newly donated items. The parents were also happy to see this tree fill up as they entered the school area. As our school is often visited by the homeless in our

community, the students understood that providing them with socks to keep warm was an act that was very important.



Once a month, students from a class met with the residents at the Churchill Retirement Residence to interact, talk and do things with the residents. In February, the visit was cancelled due to an outbreak at the residence. The students were very disappointed that the field trip was cancelled as they looked forward to these visits. The students sent the residents the "Love Bugs" they made of yarn and foam pieces since they could not give the crafts to them in person. The residents were in love with the Love Bugs that they received. The students looked forward to seeing the residents in March. They learned about the isolation the

residents felt during the pandemic and really felt empathy due to the visit being canceled. Empathy was taught through discussions about feelings and emotions.

St. Teresa of Calcutta has been very blessed over the years to receive funding to support our students and families by the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation. Our students chose to give back to the ECS Foundation School-Wide Lenten Project. Students collected \$291 to donate back to the Foundation. A raffle of two donated art pieces was given to two students as part of the project. Students were so thankful for the tremendous generosity of the ECS Foundation. As a student body, they personally decided on this Lenten project giving back as a way of thanks for the many years of support to our school community. Students felt grateful and thankful for the ECS Foundation continued supports.

The Grade 3A class continued with their monthly trips to the Churchill Senior Residence. In April, we visited the seniors bringing them Easter cards and engaged with the seniors by reading Easter stories to them. We visited the patio with the seniors, where we were scheduled to visit in May to plant flowers with them. The students were eager to take their drawn and colored cards to the residents. By participating in the walk to and from the residence, the students were actively increasing their powerful healthy benefits. They happily walked

along, chatting amongst themselves. Along the way, they eagerly asked, "Are we almost there?" Upon arriving, the students appeared to be interested, curious, and enthusiastic. When giving their cards to the residents, the students appeared to proudly give and read their cards to the seniors. The students read Easter books to the seniors showing inference, reviewing, and questioning.

Throughout the year, the Grade 3 students made cards for our community and delivered them. Approximately 150 cards were made, and more cards were made to the end of the school year. We focused on bringing joy to our neighbours and spreading God's love and mission of inclusion and togetherness. The students came to care about others in our community. We learned that kindness could bring joy to those around us. We wanted to stay involved as well as spread joy and love throughout the Boyle Street community.

Students walked to The Churchill Senior Residence and planted flowers with the residents on their rooftop patio. Fun was had by planting spring flowers, shrubs and getting dirty hands! The residents served Freezies as a cool treat before students returned to school. Students were always eager to visit with the residents and their outlook changed from visiting the elderly to enjoying spending time with their older friends!

At the beginning of the school year, the students of the Grade 6A class chose to donate money to the Zebra Centre (Child and Youth Advocacy Centre). They decided to raise money by collecting and then recycling bottles, cans, and cartons over the course of the entire school year. Every few months, the classroom teacher brought the collection to the bottle depot. There the collection was exchanged for money. As of June 1st, students raised around \$200. An online donation was made to the Zebra Centre in the name of the class. The students of 6A, who were often on the receiving end of other people's social justice efforts, learned that no matter how little they had, they still could make a positive difference in the lives of others in their community. In this way, students lived out the motto of their school's namesake, Mother Teresa. More specifically, they learned that in order to make the world a better place, they did not need to do great things, rather they could do small things with great love!

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ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

Over the month of October, students donated food to the Edmonton Food Bank and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Older grades built towers of all the contributions for a visual representation. Students were motivated by their peers, through seeing their donations build daily. There was a palpable sense of pride.

For the Lenten season, students at our school shared Jesus' teaching of "Love thy neighbour" and caring for the marginalized by creating bookmarks for the inmates at the Edmonton Remand Centre. All classes were invited to create a bookmark and we were able to send over 800 to the Centre. This was appreciated by the inmates and their appreciation was shared by the Chaplain Team of the Centre. Students learned that caring for others does not always mean helping their friends or people that they normally associate with but sometimes it meant letting others know that they had not been forgotten by simply writing a message to them.

For the Christmas season, Grade 8 music students shared their gift of music with residents of Harmony at Rutherford Retirement Home. During this performance, students also handed out Christmas cards created by students to help the residents during the holidays where many may have felt alone. The students felt a sense of community and strength as they shared their gift. They learned that by giving, they themselves felt happiness.

The staff and students at the school were inspired to do more for the community. During Lent, they held a "Youth Eager to Serve or YES day." Their goal was to raise \$1,200. They surpassed their goal and raised \$4,060, feeding 1,500 people!!!! YES day served to be an authentic social justice initiative which we hoped to do again. This opportunity empowered students to give back to their community.

ST. THOMAS MORE

Students donated Toonies for Terry to continue raising awareness for cancer and for cancer research. The whole school watched various videos of Terry and his journey through his cancer, cancer treatment and the grueling expedition of running across Canada. Although he did not make it across Canada, his impact on Canadian's today is significant. The whole school was eager to run outside for an entire block to show solidarity and care for the life and dignity of the human person. Through teaching, the students understood the impact that cancer had on Terry and how he overcame such a significant life event until his passing. Through discussions, the students related it to their lives and the challenges they had faced in the past, currently facing and/or may face in the future. They learned that no matter what negative life event happens, there were ways to overcome it and have a positive outlook on it or life in general. They also understood that no matter the age, negative life events such as cancer can impact them, their friends or loved ones. Through this, the students learned to be more compassionate of the people around them, as they did not always know what might be impacting them.

ST. TIMOTHY

During the month of September, we took on our first school-wide social justice project, the Terry Fox School Run. Every class took the time to learn about Canadian hero Terry Fox. Each class had a different activity to complete focusing on who Terry was, what he did, and the importance of cancer research. The week leading up to our school-wide run, some students from each class shared their activity over announcements. At the end of September, we went outside as a school and ran around our school field to honour and remember Terry. For some students it was a reminder of Terry Fox, while for others it was new information. Students were excited to learn more about him through the different activities in each grade. Students worked hard on their activity and were proud of the work they got to share over announcements and on our social justice bulletin board. Students also learned where the money went that was raised, and how it helped in many ways for people who have cancer or had cancer. Our goal was to



encourage leadership in our students and create positive agents of change in our wonderful school community. One small action can make a change in a positive way!

For the month of October, Socktober, the students in Grade 2 were challenged to collect socks for the Bissell Centre for homeless people of Edmonton. The class decided on a number that they felt was attainable, 100 pairs, and as a group they wrote letters to their parents explaining the project. As socks were brought into our classroom, we tallied them and created a bar graph showing just how many pairs we collected and how many more we needed to reach our goal. After the first week of collecting, the students in Grade 2 thought it may be fun to challenge the rest of the school to bring in socks as well. The challenge was on!! In total, the school donated 177 pairs of socks to the Bissell Centre. As a class we were discussing how we could be more like a disciple of Jesus and the students decided this was the perfect opportunity to follow in the footsteps of the disciples. As the students watched the number of tallies grow and the bar graph get higher and higher, they were so excited and felt a sense of accomplishment. During the last week of October, the weather grew colder and one of the students commented that it was sure a good thing that we were collecting socks as some people were probably going to have cold feet.

St. Timothy students and staff collected canned goods, pasta, pasta sauce, Christmas chocolates, and snacks to create 8 Christmas hampers for families at our own school. Students were very happy to help their own community. Students understood that there were families in need and that we could all help each other.

Students in the Grade 5/6 class collected mittens and toques to donate to YESS. Students researched and selected YESS as the organization to donate to. Students named the project 'Snowvember' and encouraged other students in the school to help meet the goal. Altogether, students collected 75 pairs of mittens, 75 toques, and 5 scarves. As students made the decision on which organization to help, students felt not only empowered, but motivated to participate. Students learned how one person's ideas and actions could spread kindness to a larger group of people. A representative from YESS did a presentation for the students, and student perspectives on homeless youth within the city were changed. Students

felt encouraged to continue to help people within our city after this project and learned ways that this was possible.

The Grade 1 and 2 students created 45 Christmas cards. After creating the cards, they delivered them to the neighbours that lived around the school. The students were very excited to deliver the cards. Many of them knew the people that lived in some of the houses that we delivered to. We saw many people come to their mailboxes and smile and wave when they collected their cards. The students were proud of their cards and so happy that they could make so many people smile and feel so special.

Faith Friends, one of our student clubs, learned about the Valentine's Day for Vets Initiative. Students created their own Valentine's cards, and they were sent to the Veterans. Students discussed how we should always remember our Vets throughout the school year not only during Remembrance Day. They felt like they were making something for the vets to make them happy. Some students said that they will remember the vets throughout the school year now and not just on Remembrance Day.

Our school started off this project with a kick-off assembly, where students learned about Jump Rope for Heart and the importance the Heart and Stroke Foundation had for all of us, including kids. We set a monetary goal to reach at the end of five weeks. Throughout these five weeks, students were given more facts and information about this cause over announcements, talked in class about the 'EASY' healthy habits they could do daily to keep their bodies and minds healthy, and practice posters were set up around the gym for students to practice new skip rope techniques and tricks. At the end of the five weeks, we had a Jump Rope for Heart afternoon, where we shared how much money we raised, then students were split into cross grade groupings where teachers lead them through different stations that got their hearts pumping! At the end of this project, students had a greater understanding of the importance of a healthy heart and brain. They learned new and fun ways that they could keep themselves healthy and happy at home as well as at school. They learned that people of all ages could be affected by heart and brain issues. They also learned the signs of a stroke! Students spent the jump rope afternoon fully invested in participating in the stations, sweating, laughing, and learning ways to stay active and healthy!

Let Your Light Shine Forth

Students completed a general schoolyard cleanup. Helping the community and the Earth were topics discussed. Students felt pride for their school and community. Pictures of each student were taken and displayed for the month on a school bulletin board for all students in the school to see.

The Chalice School Connections Campaign brought meaningful awareness among students on poverty and it inspired compassion and nurtured the spirit of stewardship. It hoped to build meaningful connections by pairing our school with another in Africa. Both schools then exchanged introductions and interesting information through student-made videos. Both schools prayed for each other during Lent. Finally, our school raised funds to help with a specific need for our sister school. During our Lenten social justice project, students had to put themselves in the shoes of those students at our sister-school in Africa. Throughout the weeks leading up to Easter, students had special ways to work such as no technology for a day, no chairs for a day, no school supplies for a day, and so forth. Students were surprised at how not having these privileges affected their day to day learning at school. They reflected after each activity and were encouraged to share these with parents.

ST. VINCENT

As part of our St. Vincent Feast Day, students collected toiletry items to donate to the Youth Empowerment and Support Services (YESS). They also decorated the bags that the toiletry items would be placed into before being delivered. Based in Edmonton, Youth Empowerment and Support Services (YESS) provides immediate and low-barrier 24/7 shelter, a drop-in resource centre, temporary supportive housing, temporary independent cohort housing, and individualized wrap-around supports for young people aged 15–24. Their mission was to walk beside traumatized youth on their journey towards healing and appropriate community integration. Students learned about Youth Empowerment and Support Services and that they help provide support to young people in our community. One of the best ways to develop cultural literacy and help our students understand how they can fully participate in Catholic Social Teaching was through social justice projects and activities that develop a mindset of concern for our society's inequity in wealth, education, and privilege. Students learned best when they

were passionate about a subject, and they brainstormed more ideas of social justice projects that could be completed during the year.

Our school came together in thanksgiving the week before Thanksgiving. We prayed and gave thanks to God for all we had. As part of this celebration, our school community donated non-perishable food items for the Edmonton Food Bank. Each class collected items in specially decorated boxes throughout the week in preparation for Thanksgiving. "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gifts!" - Corinthians 9:15. This was a social justice project that happened at St. Vincent each year at Thanksgiving. For those students who had been with us for years, it was a project that they looked forward to. It gave students the opportunity to give to those who were less fortunate. It gave us all a moment to stop and think about how we could serve others. Our hope was that this service and giving would spark a desire to help the less fortunate always.

ST. VLADIMIR

Our school Leadership Team was made up of students from Grades 4-6. The group met 1-2 times per week to create special school events and projects. Our school has a close relationship with our neighbouring school, St. Francis of Assisi. When we heard that their school was looking for donations of warm socks, our students started working on a campaign to collect socks right away. The Leadership Team created posters asking for sock donations. They wrote announcements to broadcast to our school population each week, wrote letters to their families telling them why we were collecting socks, and spread awareness throughout our school community by wrapping boxes to collect the socks in placing them around the building. The campaign was very successful, and we collected 4 large boxes of socks for the St. Francis of Assisi community. To celebrate our successful donations campaign, St. Vladimir staff and students were invited to



wear Christmas socks to school on Friday, December 9th. All the students in the school were very excited about this project. The students cheered when we filled our first box of socks and excitedly pointed out and explained the project to visitors. Each day the students brought in numerous pair of socks. No one brought one pair, they generously donated packs of socks of various sizes and colours. The week of our collection was very cold, so we spent time discussing how important it was to have winter clothes. The students felt happy that they could help someone stay warm in the winter. The Leadership Team was very proud of all their work. They helped load the socks into a car for delivery and started planning the next social justice project right away!



Our school has a Student Leadership Team comprised of students from Grades 4-6. The group meets weekly at lunch recess to discuss and prepare school-wide events and social justice projects. At the beginning of February, the group decided they would like

to make cards to thank health care workers for all that they did to help people. The students worked hard each week to make cards and included inspirational messages for the health care workers. The Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute was contacted to distribute the cards and a nurse volunteered to come talk to our Leadership group and pick up the cards. The nurse visited our school on February 14th. She discussed aspects of her job, answered questions that the Leadership students had about her profession and then she let the students use her stethoscope and ask her specific questions. The students made approximately 30 cards to thank health care workers for their hard work in caring for people. Our Leadership students were very excited to meet a nurse and pass their cards directly to her. The Leadership students initiated this project on their own. They were very proud of their cards and messages but were very excited when they met a nurse in person to give her the messages. The nurse told them that her job had been very challenging over the past few years and these messages would be very uplifting for many staff. The students beamed with pride when they heard this.

In March, our school had a fundraiser called “Break the Rules”. Every Friday, students were invited to bring \$1 to break a class rule to raise funds for the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation. Each class from Kindergarten to Grade 6 decided their own rules that could be broken. Some of the fun options included wearing a costume all day, bringing a favourite toy from home, chewing gum in class, watching a movie, and bringing a personal device to school. The students raised \$276.85 for this fundraiser. Teachers explained that the ECS Foundation helped many children in our Division but the generosity of this Foundation had also been received by our own school community. The students understood that this project helped offset costs for future field trips and bus costs. The students were very excited to “Break rules” every week and participation was very high each week.

Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works
and give you glory to your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)



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