

St. Martha Newsletter December 2018

On behalf of the staff of St. Martha Elementary, we would like to wish you a joyous and holy Advent and Christmas season. May 2019 be filled with prosperity and good health for you and your family!

Advent 2018

*We're waiting for Jesus like Mary, we're waiting for Jesus the Lord.
Come down, Lord Jesus! Come quickly, Lord Jesus!
The whole world is waiting for Love.
(The Whole World is Waiting for Love, Marianne Misetch)*

This hymn presents such a beautiful picture of our season of Advent. It is so simple; we are waiting for the arrival of God's greatest gift of love for us, his Son, Jesus. As we are anticipating the birth of the Messiah, we feel the same hope, joy, and peace that Mary must have felt as she prepared for his arrival.

May this time of waiting bring you many opportunities to pause with your family and reflect on the wonderful gift that is coming to us with the impending birth of Jesus. May this Advent provide you with many occasions to see God's abundant love in your life!



December Events at St. Martha

- Monday, December 10.** -Please return any completed Satisfaction Surveys to school with your child.
-Christmas Concert ticket forms will be sent home.
- Wednesday, December 12** -Grade 1 Field Trip to the Telus World of Science
-Christmas hamper items are due.
- Thursday, December 13** -St. Martha is a host site for a district meeting. Parking around the school will be at a premium.
-Christmas Concert ticket forms due.
- Friday, December 14** -HEB Volleyball Tournament
-Hot Lunch and PJ Day!
-ECSD Trustee Visit
- Saturday, December 15** - HEB Volleyball Tournament
- Monday, December 17** -Christmas Concert tickets will be sent home.
- Tuesday, December 18** -St. Martha Christmas Concert at 7pm. Students will need to be at the school by 6:30pm.
- Wednesday, December 19** -Mundare sausage order pick up day from 5:30-7:30pm at St. Martha.
- Thursday, December 20** -Full Day of classes: Early dismissal cancelled. Full day of classes for all 100 Voices to Grade 6 Students.
- Friday, December 21** -Early dismissal.
-No classes for Kindergarten and 100 Voices students.
-School office will close for Christmas at 12:30pm.
- Monday, January 7th.** -Classes resume for all students.

Announcements:

- 100 Voices and Kindergarten Registration:** We will begin accepting registrations for the 2019-2020 school year for eligible students in the 100 Voices and Kindergarten classes beginning on January 14th, 2019. Registration Forms will be available at the school office.
- Student Late Arrivals:** All students arriving after the 8:12am bell should use the main door to the school where they will be greeted by Mrs. Wagner for attendance.
- Parking and Traffic During Student Drop-Off and Pick-Up:** We have witnessed several instances where parents are dropping off or picking up their children and they are parked in the bus zone or on the cross walk. Additionally, there have been several complaints recently about parents making U-turns in front of the school where the driver drove onto the sidewalk nearly hitting a student pedestrian. We would like to encourage parents to be mindful of the parking signage posted around the school and to avoid making U-turns in the drop-off area. For several years now, the St. Martha School Advisory Council has been working diligently to advocate for better lighting in this area and for flashing lights at the cross walks. If there are any parents who witness unsafe driving, please feel free to call 311 and register a complaint with the City of Edmonton.
- Christmas Hamper Volunteers Needed for 1 Hour:** The SAC needs volunteers on Sunday, December 16th from 8:30-9:30am to transport Christmas Hampers from St. Martha to St. Francis Xavier School. If you can help, please come to St. Martha on Sunday morning at 8:30am.



St. Martha Christmas Concert

Miracle at Midnight

Tuesday December 18, 2018 at 7:00 P.M.

This year the St. Martha Christmas Concert will be performed by our grades 1 to 6 on Tuesday, December 18th at 7 p.m. Students should arrive between 6:30 and 6:45 p.m. and go to their classrooms.

Front doors will open at 6:30 p.m.

Please have your child wear the following for the dress rehearsal and concert:

Handbell players wear white tops. The rest of the students can wear their Sunday Best except for the students with acting parts in the play. These students have their own special costumes.

Due to limited space (maximum capacity of the gymnasium is 565 people), and with students numbering approximately 210, we are allocating 2 tickets per family to attend the concert (this includes parents, siblings and relatives). All guests are welcome to attend the dress rehearsal on Tuesday December 18th at 9:30 a.m.

Please confirm your child's attendance on the slip below, in addition to the number of guests planning to attend the performance. Please return the bottom portion of this page to your child's teacher no later than Thursday, December 13th. Late forms will be subject to ticket availability. Any additional tickets available, will be distributed after all families have received their initial two.

The slip, confirming your number of guests, will be sent home on Monday Dec. 17th, 2018. Please remember to bring your tickets with you to the performance on Tuesday December 18th.

Thank you for your support and understanding in this matter.

Sincerely,

St. Martha Staff

_____ (child's name and grade) will/ will not
participate in the 2018 Christmas Concert.

_____ Number of guests attending (2 tickets per family, not including performers)

_____ Additional tickets if available (maximum 2)

_____ Family Name

_____ Phone Number

_____ student's class



WALKING TOGETHER IN GOD'S LOVE

December 2018

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
(*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*, JM Neale translator)

Advent is upon us as we begin the month of December, and it is a time filled with joy and promise. The activities in our schools mirror the sentiments of the Advent season as we excitedly prepare for the celebration of Jesus' birth. Although our activities are vastly different today, this anticipation links us back to the Jewish people all those years ago. Our Messiah is soon to arrive, and it is a time of hope for the future!

Each fall, many of our schools and our staff participate in the ***We Care Challenge***. This outstanding endeavor raises significant funds for two Catholic organizations, the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation's Dreams for Kids campaign and Catholic Social Services' Sign of Hope campaign, that have tremendous impact on our ECSD community and beyond. Special thanks to our students, staff, and families for participating in this endeavor.

As I am writing this newsletter, we are preparing for the presentation of our [2018 Audited Financial Statements](#) and our [Three Year Strategic Education Plan 2018-2021 and Annual Education Results Report 2017-2018](#) at our November 27 Public Meeting of the Board. After that meeting, you can click on the links above or visit www.ecsd.net to view those reports.

Our All-City Choir is having their Christmas Concert on December 3 at 7:30 pm at McDougall United Church (10086 MacDonald Dr NW). The All-City Band's Christmas Concert is on December 12 at 7:00 pm at the Myer Horowitz Theatre (8900 114 St NW). Tickets are \$5 at the door, and these concerts will be amazing!

The District Satisfaction Survey will run from November 26 - December 7. Every household will receive one parent survey per child enrolled in an Edmonton Catholic School. Please respond to each survey separately from the point of view of each child's educational experience. You can either return your parent survey to your child's school or use the postage paid envelope and Canada Post. If you don't receive your survey, or if you would like more information about a question as it relates to your school, please phone the principal.

This year's Hour of Code event takes place from December 3-7. This is the fifth year that Edmonton Catholic Schools will be participating. Hour of Code is a global movement that is supported by Code.org with the purpose of reaching tens of millions of students in 180+ countries through a one-hour introduction to computer science and computer programming.

We live in a world surrounded by technology, and we know that whatever fields our students choose to explore as adults, their ability to succeed will increasingly depend on understanding how technology works. This is a great time to introduce our students to computer programming and for them to see how coding is part of the way the world works. Coding and Computer Science also help to enhance literacy and numeracy skills through computational thinking, collaboration, and problem solving. Our goal is to have 27,000 student and teacher coders participate!

As 2018 comes to a close, I wish you many opportunities to spend time with your family and friends reflecting on the many graces and great love that God has shared over this past year. In 2015 at the World Meeting of Families, Pope Francis shared the following thoughts on the gift of Jesus to the Holy Family:

"And His Son, where did He send Him? To a palace? To a city, to start a business? He sent Him to a family! God came into the world in a family. And he was able to do this because this family was a family that had its heart open to love, that had the doors open to love." (09/27/15)

Have a blessed Advent and Christmas season!

Sincerely,

Joan Carr
Superintendent

December 2018

Dear Friends,

In December, we celebrate the event that changed history – the birth of Jesus. On Christmas Day, we will hear these words from the Gospel of Luke. *“And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn”* (Luke 2:7).

Last year in my Christmas message I offered you some opportunities to make room for Jesus in your hearts, by listening to the Word of God both at home and in your schools. I ask you to continue to make room for Jesus not only by listening but also by your actions. That is why I am very pleased that Edmonton Catholic Schools has chosen *“Walking Together in God’s Love”* for its theme this year.

This theme finds its source in the words of the prophet Micah. *“He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?”* (Micah 6:8)

Children and youth who attend our Catholic schools are given an opportunity to practice the way of life outlined by the prophet Micah. Through the modeling that they receive from their parents, teachers and support staff they learn to live the Christian way of life. They are encouraged to act with justice in their dealings with all they meet, not only at home and school, but also on the field, court, ice, streets – everywhere. In this way they are of service to others. Youth and children are fortified in their witnessing by the love of God, which leads them to act with kindness. Lastly, they are inspired to walk humbly with God through acts of worship. In our Catholic Schools, students are given the opportunity to learn about the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. They are introduced to the parish and to the life of worship. As Christmas draws near may we come, like the shepherds, to worship Christ!

To all the staff, students and parents of the Edmonton Catholic Schools, I pray that you have a Blessed Christmas!

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

✠Richard W. Smith
Archbishop of Edmonton

Chapter 3: Gaudete et Exsultate

As we continue to explore Pope Francis' most current Apostolic Exhortation: *On the Call to Holiness in Today's World*, this month we reach chapter three. This chapter is at the center or heart of the exhortation both literally and figuratively. Chapter Three: *In the Light of the Master*, focuses on the life lessons Jesus shared during the Sermon on the Mount. After explaining how to live a blessed life, Jesus says, "Rejoice and be glad!" (MT 5:12) This is the title of Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation on holiness in everyday life.

Living our faith is a lifelong journey. The Beatitudes are a roadmap that steer us towards holiness. Also referred to as Blessed are..., the Beatitudes demonstrate what it means to be blessed or holy. Pope Francis uses these to remind us of the practical ways we are called to holiness in our everyday life while doing so joyfully. Let's review the Beatitudes. While reading, call to mind that Jesus spoke these words to his people who were being persecuted and judged on his behalf. This was a difficult and challenging time:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

(MT 5: 1-12)

Jesus is encouraging all of us to give ourselves to God and live a life that is filled with virtue. When we do so, we receive true life: the happiness which we were created for. If humankind would live out these Beatitudes, life would be simpler, just, peaceful, empathetic, loving, and joyful. People would put their trust in God first and foremost. Today this continues to be a path that "goes against the flow" and is often opposite to society's message. We are constantly called to challenge this and live our lives with mercy and forgiveness. This involves serving others and it also includes forgiveness and understanding. These are two central themes to Pope Francis' papacy and reach the heart of this exhortation.

Pope Francis' Exhortation encourages us to look deep within and ask the questions:

Where am I on the path to holiness?

How do I rejoice and be glad in my faith journey?

God Bless,

Kathleen Nguyen, Elementary Religious Education Consultant

Edmonton Catholic Schools



St. Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Elementary School

WITH CHILDREN, COMES HOPE

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November 6, 2018

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“At the end of our lives, we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made or how many great things we have done.

We will be judged by ‘I was hungry and you gave me to eat.

I was naked and you clothed me. I was homeless and you took me in.’

Hungry not only for bread – but hungry for love.

Naked not only for clothing – but naked of human dignity and respect.

Homeless not only for want of a room of bricks – but homeless because of rejection.”

Mother Teresa

Dear Friends,

On behalf of St. Teresa of Calcutta staff, students and families, we can't thank you enough for your incredible generosity! Our food bank is replenished and overflowing now from the food that you donated.

Thank you for sharing love and doing one small deed at a time! May God Bless you.

Sincerely,


Kyle Porter

Principal

St. Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School



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www.stteresaofcalcutta.ecsd.net