

September

Grandin Gazette

Faith, Language and Culture in the  of the City

HEARTS FULL OF THANKS AND GIVING

The year is off to a great start! Students have settled into their new classrooms, and are already hard at work learning skills that will ensure their future success. Our teachers are working hard organizing another wonderful Student Faith Day this month, and have begun their professional development journey into Learning Sprints.

This month we celebrate Thanksgiving and reflect on our blessings. We thank the many parents who attended our Parent Council and Fundraising Society AGMs – your input into the school will be invaluable over the coming months. We also recognize staff this month with Custodial Appreciation Day (Oct 2) and World Teacher Day (Oct 5).

The Grandin community has made us proud once again – giving with generous hearts. We raised a record \$3100 for the Terry Fox Run. Father Robert and the Edmonton Fire Fighters cheered us on during the run – the first of many Social Justice projects planned for this year.

GIVE THANKS FOR UNKNOWN BLESSINGS ALREADY ON THEIR WAY...

Parents are invited to celebrate Thanksgiving at the Basilica with us on Wednesday, October 4th, starting at 1:15 p.m.

We will also be updating the robotics equipment after on Oct 4th – if you are able to come out at 4:30 p.m. and lend a helping hand, this would help get us set up for the year!

On behalf of all the dedicated staff at Grandin, we wish our families a happy and blessed Thanksgiving holiday.

Lorelei Hironaka
Principal

Mark Huculak
Assistant Principal



IMPORTANT DATES

Read In Week
October 1 – 5

Custodian Appreciation Day
Tuesday, October 2

Catch-Up Immunizations
Tuesday, October 2

Thanksgiving Mass
Basilica 1:15 p.m.
Wednesday, October 3

Robotics Updating Bee
4:30 p.m. - Library
Wednesday, October 3

World Teacher Day
Friday, October 5

Thanksgiving Monday
No School
Monday, October 8

School Pictures
Wednesday, October 10

School Council/Society
Wednesday, October 10

Mental Health Symposium
Monday, October 15
M. Huculak and student leaders

Hot Lunch – Lunch Lady
Friday, October 19

Student Faith Day
Friday, October 26

Halloween Parade
Wednesday, October 31

GRANDIN STAFF 2018-2019

100 Voices – Rachel Evans (Teacher) Ashley Santos (Early Learning Facilitator)

French Kindergarten – Lisa Bussière
French Grade 1 – Lorraine Champagne
French Grade 2 – Natalie Kuhn
French Grade 3 – Ariane Hossack
French Grade 4 – Raquel Karam
French Grade 5/6 – Hélène D'Astous

Spanish Kindergarten – Maria Juan Garcia
Spanish Grade 1 – Amanda Thomson / Carmen Claydon
Spanish Grade 2 – Aitana Ruiz Reig
Spanish Grade 3 – Emmy Obén
Spanish Grade 4 – Marianella De Merchant
Spanish Grade 5/6 – Mark Huculak / Nancy Pinto

Music Grades 1-6 – Athena MacGregor
Learning Coaches – Carmen Claydon/Amanda Thomson



TA-OT – Marnie Babiy
TA-BT Jessica Jabour (Welcome!)
TA-BT Anitha Kandasami-Obaloker
TA-BT Harmony Nimchuk
EA – Ivette Handal
EA – Katherine Porta
EA – Evelyn Astora (Welcome!)



Head Custodian – Ruby Mayta
Senior Custodian – Mesfin Tesfaye
Light Duty Custodian – Etalem Getachew

Administrative Assistant – Colleen Segin
Assistant Principal – Mark Huculak
Principal – Lorelei Hironaka

SCHOOL HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday:

Thursday

First Bell: **8:25 a.m.**
Recess: 10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.
Lunch Recess: 12:05 p.m. – 12:25 p.m.
Lunch: 12:25 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.
Afternoon Recess: 2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.
Dismissal: 3:15 p.m.

First Bell: 8:25 a.m.
Recess: 10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Dismissal: **11:28 a.m.**

No classes for Kindergarten/100 Voices

Kindergarten 8:25 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
100 Voices 8:15 a.m. – 11:17 a.m.

100V Parent-Staff Check-In Time 11:10 a.m.-11:17 a.m.

Supervision outside starts at 8:15 a.m. each morning. **Please do not leave your children unattended on the school grounds before staff wearing an orange or pink safety vest are outside supervising the children.**



READ-IN WEEK OCTOBER 1-5

We will be welcoming guests into our classroom during Read-In Week from October 1-5, including our trustee Alene Mutala and members of the U of A Bears and Pandas.

Parents are also invited to come in and read to classes. Please contact your homeroom teacher for more information. We look forward to having you share your favourite books with the children.

IMMUNIZATIONS – OCTOBER 2

This year, Alberta Health Services is making some major changes to its immunization program.

In the 2018-2019 school year, public health nurses will be reviewing the immunization records of all Alberta students from Grades 1-9. You will be contacted if your child is missing immunization information. With your consent, your child can be offered the immunizations they are missing at school: You will continue to have the final decision on immunizing your children.

Grandin: **October 2 (afternoon)**, January 8 (afternoon), April 2 (afternoon)

In the 2019-2020 school year, Alberta is moving from a three-dose vaccine schedule in Grade 5 to a two-dose vaccine schedule in Grade 6 for both HBV and HPV. Therefore, our grade 5 students will not receive vaccinations this year unless they are missing immunizations and parents consent to have them administered at school.

THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION— WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 3

Parents are welcome to join us for our Thanksgiving Mass at St. Joseph's Basilica on Wednesday, October 3rd. **Mass will begin at 1:15 p.m.** Students will be walking to the Basilica from school, so please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. The grade 2 classes are leading this celebration.

SCHOOL PICTURES OCTOBER 10

Individual school pictures will take place on Wednesday, October 10th. Please watch your email for information that will explain important details. A reminder that individual pictures take place in October and a class picture will take place later in the year. Ordering pictures will take place online through the ICON photography website.



CCAT EXAMS GRADE 6 – OCT 15-26

Every year, grade 6 students take part in the Canadian Cognitive Ability Test (C.C.A.T). This year the students will take tests over a period of two weeks from October 15th to October 26th. Grade 6 students will write this test during their English Language Arts time with Señorita Pinto.

STUDENT FAITH DAY – OCTOBER 26

Friday, October 26th will be our third annual Student Faith Day. Father Robert and a team of teachers lead by Mlle Hossack are putting together plans for another wonderful day of learning and celebration. More information will be sent out via KSwift – but parents can mark their calendars now as we will need lots of volunteers!



HALLOWEEN PARADE – OCTOBER 31

Our traditional Halloween parade will take place in the afternoon at 2:30 p.m. All other celebrations will take place in your child's classroom. Please watch for information from your child's teacher for detail.

IXL AND MATHLETICS



Students from grades 4-6 now have access to IXL Learning, an adaptive website for mathematics which is correlated to the Alberta curriculum. Parents should have received student user names and passwords from their homeroom teachers.

Students from grades 1-3 will have access to another math website called Mathletics (NetMaths in French).

These websites provide our students with much needed "mastery practice". The programs automatically track learning and provide important feedback to students, teachers and parents.

RAZ-KIDS AND JE LIS, JE LIS LITTÉRATIE



We have also renewed our *Raz-Kids* subscription for grades 1-6. This program is a wonderful tool for reading comprehension, and has both English and Spanish books. Parents can download the Learning A-Z app for quick access to the program at home.

Our French Immersion primary students will have access to the titles of *Je Lis, Je Lis, Littérature*.

Login information for Raz-Kids (except for Grade 1 French Immersion – who begin ELA in grade 2), should have already been sent home.

We will send home access codes to *Je Lis Je Lis Littérature* this month.

NUTRITION STUDENTS

M. Huculak is working with the University of Alberta School of Community Health to bring student volunteers to Grandin starting this month. These students will be working with classes to deepen their understanding of good nutrition and physical literacy – a wonderful opportunity to ensure our students receive a well-rounded education.



MENTAL HEALTH SYMPOSIUM

M. Huculak is also taking a team of students to the Edmonton Catholic Student Health Symposium this month. Students will return and organize special projects this year in our school. Another great opportunity for student leadership at Grandin!

SPRINTS

Grandin teachers are quickly becoming provincial leaders in *Learning Sprints*, with a focus this year on both mathematics and literacy. *Sprints* are short, laser-focused improvement cycles based on helping teachers adopt evidence-informed practices to improve student learning. The approach is based on research that shows *collective teacher efficacy* is one of the most impactful factors on student learning. We are so proud of our teachers and their dedication to life-long learning.

Parents can learn more about *Learning Sprints* at

<http://www.agileschools.com/about-learning-sprints/>



“Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better.”

— Professor Dylan William

GIFT FROM OUR TRUSTEE

Our trustee Alene Mutala stopped by with a gift for our school. We are sure glad that Ms. Mutala feels at home here at Grandin. We look forward to her visit during Read-In week...and at our district's Faith Formation Afternoon with staff this month.



VISITOR SIGN-IN / STUDENT SIGN-OUT

A reminder to sign in and out when coming into the school. In the case of an emergency, this allows us to ensure the safety of everyone in the school. Also, please remember to sign your children in and out when leaving early or for an appointment during the day. Your cooperation is much appreciated.

PARKING LOT SAFETY

We are again asking for your cooperation in ensuring the safety of our staff and students. Although the expanded space is tempting, **please do NOT use the parking lot to drop-off or pick-up your children.** We can now make arrangements during the year for volunteers to have parking. Thank you for putting safety before convenience.



BUSING ISSUES AND STUDENT PICK-UP



Throughout the year, there are bound to be bussing issues from time to time. If you have a question or an issue specific to bussing, please call our **Transportation department at 780 441-6078**. You can also connect directly to our bus carriers through this number.

Parents picking up their children, who are registered for bussing, are asked to **contact the office directly** so that this can be recorded on the **bus attendance sheet**. Otherwise, busses can be held up as they wait for school staff to find your children. Many thanks.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

The boys and girls washroom are now scheduled to be completed by the end of October, due to some changes requested by the City of Edmonton. The work remaining is contained within the washroom space, so the downstairs hallway is safe for children and staff. We are looking forward to beautiful, new and modern washrooms downstairs soon!

Our parking lot will be slightly reduced in size this month – we are asking Facilities to move the fence over 43 feet to the south. This will provide us with the extra stalls for staff, and still room for play space on the tarmac.

We anticipate work on our front entrance (door 8) and parking lot entrance (door 5) to begin in late October. Plans are in place to keep the passageway to the gym accessible at all times during these upgrades.

Gratitude Corner

Thanks to Michelle Burney for organizing our Hot Lunches for this year, as well as to the many parent volunteers who make this treat possible.



Grandin Clubs and Teams

THIS YEAR WE WILL AGAIN BE OFFERING MANY LUNCH HOUR (AND A FEW AFTER SCHOOL) CLUBS FOR THE CHILDREN. KEEP WATCHING THIS PAGE FOR UPDATES AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES

CHESS CLUB

Richard Pua is running Chess Club again this year on Tuesdays at noon and on Thursdays after early dismissal.

FREE FOOTIE

Grandin will be participating in Free Footie once again this year. Our uniforms and equipment will be dropped off on October 3rd.

Many thanks to Señorita Pinto for her excellent organization of this wonderful school team. This year, we welcome Sebastien from grade 5 as the coach of our grade 3-4 team, assisted by Mme D'Astous and Mlle Kuhn. The grade 5-6 team will be coached by Señorita Pinto.

Practices this year are at NOON – Mondays for grades 5/6 and Tuesdays for grades 3/4
Games are Wednesdays after school. A schedule has been sent home with players.

ZUMBA

Many thanks to Janet Vancaesele who has started up our first Zumba Club on Fridays! The club will be open to all grades starting in October. Great fun and exercise to some wonderful Latino music. Come join the fun!

DANCE CLUB

We are also looking forward to our very first Dance Club sessions on Thursdays after early dismissal. Our very own Señora Astora will be leading this opportunity to learn Salsa and Hip Hop. Permission forms were sent home via KSwift.

Have fun! Join a Club!



Grandin School Parent Council

Grandin School Fundraising Society

The **Annual General Meeting** of both our parent organizations was held on **Monday, September 17th**.

We thank the following parents for stepping up to fill executive roles on our **School Council**:

Co-chairs: Christie Oswald and Kristin Zelyck

Vice-chair: Sarah Bisbee

Secretary: Tina Uribe

We also thank the following parents for taking on executive roles on our **Fundraising Society**:

Chair: Andrea Boehm

Vice-Chair: Kristen Zelyck

Treasurer: Desiree Thomas

Secretary: Tina Uribe

MEETING DATES

6:00 PM START

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6

TUESDAY, MARCH 12

MONDAY, APRIL 15

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22

Next Meeting

Wednesday, October 10th at 6:00 p.m.

Please join us if you can!



Greeting Card Fundraiser

School Fundraising Society

The Grandin School Fundraising Society is offering the sale of Greeting Cards with **your child's artwork** on the front. The cards are 4.25" X 5.5" and are printed on heavy cardstock. Cards come in packages of 20 and include envelopes.

Each package of greeting cards is being sold for \$25 (cheaper than Hallmark!).

The proceeds from this fundraiser will help fund the "**Artist in Residence**" program at Grandin this year which will produce artwork that will be displayed all along the fences outside - beautifying our school and the Grandin neighbourhood too!

Make sure to check your child's agenda to find the order form and a copy of their artwork!

All orders are due on or before October 9.

Thank you for your support!



Saint Joseph Basilica
Children's Ministries
2018-2019



CATECHISM SCHOOL

We, at the Basilica, are privileged to have a team of gifted, generous volunteers who allow us to offer a basic catechetical program for children in preschool through grade eight. We meet on alternate Sunday mornings from the end of September to the beginning of June from 9:00am to 10:15am. Using the *Gospel Weeklies* series the children reflect on the Sunday gospel and explore associated teachings, prayers and practices of the church. This forms the backdrop for all sacramental preparation.

Registration will take place Sunday, September 9th before and after all the morning Masses and Monday evening, September 10th after the 5:30pm Mass. You will need to bring a copy of your child's baptism certificate at that time. The registration fee is \$50 and covers all materials for both catechism school and sacramental preparation. This year we will be offering a parent group at the same time. Preregistration (with a \$10 saving) is available by individual appointment until August 31st. Please contact Bonnie at the parish office (780-488-7295 Ext.230) to set up an appointment or for more information.

Registration: Sunday, September 9th from 8:00am to 2:00pm or Monday, September 10th from 6:00pm to 8:00pm in the Parish Hall. Baptism certificate is needed. First class and parent orientation is Sunday, September 30th in O'Leary Hall.

RCIA ADAPTED FOR CHILDREN

Children, aged seven and older, can prepare for Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist with their parents. These preparation sessions take place within catechism school and the sacraments are celebrated at the Easter Vigil. Registration is by individual appointment with Bonnie.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Preparation for First Reconciliation and First Communion (grade two or older) and Confirmation (grade six and older) is a partnership of home, parish and school. The school provides the remote preparation and the family, the proximate preparation. The local parish supports the parents in accompanying their children and offers children a peer community. In response to the Canadian bishops' directive (issued in 1982 and underlined in our archdiocesan Standards for Sacramental Preparation) that parents request the sacraments for their children we gather parents for an orientation and registration meeting. There are two parent/child sessions, a special rite of enrollment at Mass, and a retreat for each sacrament. In addition, confirmation candidates undertake ten hours of community service and sponsors share the journey from day one.

FIRST COMMUNION	
Parent Orientation	Sunday, February 3 rd – 9:00am in the Parish Hall or Monday, February 4 th – 7:00pm in the Parish Hall
Rite of Enrollment	Sunday, February 10 th at the 12:15pm Mass
1 st Communion – Parent/Child Session 1	Sunday, February 10 th - 10:00am to Noon or 1:30pm to 3:30pm
1 st Communion – Parent/Child Session 2	Sunday, March 24 th - 10:00am to Noon or 1:30pm to 3:30pm
First Communion Retreat	Saturday, May 4 th - 10:00am to 2:00pm
First Communion Celebration	Sunday, May 5 th at the 12:15pm Mass

CONFIRMATION	
Parent Orientation	Sunday, October 28 th - 9:00am in the Parish Hall or Monday, October 29 th - 7:00pm in the Parish Hall
Rite of Enrollment	Sunday November 25 th at the 12:15pm Mass
Confirmation – Parent/Child Session 1	Sunday, November 25 th - 10:00am to Noon or 1:30pm to 3:30pm
Confirmation – Parent/Child Session 2	Sunday, April 7 th - 10:00am to Noon or 1:30pm to 3:30pm
Confirmation Retreat	Saturday, June 1 st - 10:00am to 2:00pm
Confirmation Celebration	Sunday, June 9 th at 3:00pm

For all questions and inquiries, please contact Bonnie at the Parish Office.
Call 780-488-7295 Ext. 230 or email Bonnie.Kirk@caedm.ca

FIRST RECONCILIATION	
Parent Orientation	Sunday, October 14 th - 9:00am in the Parish Hall or Monday, October 15 th - 7:00pm in the Parish Hall
Rite of Enrollment	Sunday, October 21 st at the 12:15pm Mass
1 st Reconciliation – Parent/Child Session 1	Sunday, October 21 st - 10:00am to Noon or 1:30pm to 3:30pm
1 st Reconciliation – Parent/Child Session 2	Sunday, November 4 th - 10:00am to Noon or 1:30pm to 3:30pm
Reconciliation Retreat	Saturday, November 24 th - 10:00am to 2:00pm
Celebration of 1 st Reconciliation	Saturday, December 8 th at 10:00am



Hot Lunch

Healthy Hunger Fridays

Each month there will be one or more Hot Lunches available to be ordered online. These lunches are delivered to the school and the children get to enjoy a nice hot meal. Lunch are ordered online.

To sign up and order, go to:

www.healthyhunger.ca

or call 1-800-818-6260 or 780 800-5588.

We are listed under "E" for Ecole/Escuela Grandin.

1. Register Student
2. Login and add your children to the account
3. View all upcoming lunch dates
4. Place order and make payment online



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to deliver hot lunch each month. If you are able to volunteer on the day of hot lunch between 12:05 p.m. and 12:45 p.m., please click the "I can volunteer" checkbox when ordering your child's hot lunch. Or, send an email to grandinhotlunch@yahoo.ca.

Many thanks to Michelle Burney for organizing these special lunches—and giving parents a well-deserved break every few weeks!

DATES

The Lunch Lady
Friday, October 19

Subway
Friday, November 9

Jugo Juice
Friday, November 30

The Lunch Lady
Friday, December 14

Opa
Friday, January 11

Panago
Friday, January 25

Edo of Japan
Friday, February 8

Lunch Lady
Friday, March 8

Subway
Friday, April 5

Panago
Friday, April 26

Jugo Juice
Friday, May 24

Opa
Friday, June 14



Mabel's Labels FunScrip



Parent Society Fundraisers



Ecole Escuela Grandin

is fundraising with Mabel's Labels!

Please visit campaigns.mabelslabels.com and search for our organization name to place your order and support our fundraiser.

Labels for the Stuff Kids Lose!®

Mabel's Labels are dishwasher, microwave and laundry safe personalized labels.



1-866-30-MABEL (62235) | fundraising@mabelslabels.com



FundScrip

An easy way to support your school

Fundscrip is an easy way to have money donated towards the school simply by buying everyday items. See below for details.

**Do you ever buy Gas, Groceries, or Gift Cards?
Now Grandin can receive a percentage back
when you do!**

With over 230 Retailers, it's easy to help out!

E-gift cards are emailed to you upon receipt of payment. You can sit down at Boston Pizza, order a gift card, and pay with it at the end of your meal!

If you sign up for Electronic Fund Transfer, payments are instant and you'll save us the 2% credit card fee!

Buy your groceries at Safeway, Superstore, or Sobeys? Buy a gift card first, and Grandin will receive a percentage of your purchase back at no extra cost to you!

Traditional gift cards can be mailed right to your house for just the cost of a postage stamp

Fundscrip



FundScrip Quick Start Guide

1

How to Sign Up

1. Go to www.fundscrip.com and click on **Support Your Group**



2. Complete the information in the **Support Your Group** section and be sure to enter our group's **Invitation Code**. The code for our group is shown in the grey box below.



3. Raising funds for an individual? Identify them by entering their name in the Last Name field after your name, separated by a hyphen.



4. Click the link in the confirmation email you will receive to complete your registration, then login and place orders to support our group!

Invitation Code for our Group

TBCBKC

Click here to **Support Your Group**. Watch your Inbox for the confirmation email from FundScrip.

2

How to Place an Order

1. Go to www.fundscrip.com and click **Login** (top right)



2. **Login** by providing your email address and password
3. Click on the green **Buy Cards** button to begin adding gift cards to your cart



When you have finished adding gift cards to your cart, you need to finalize your order.

1. Choose our group as well as the *campaign* you want to support
2. Choose a payment method:
 - **Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)** > *Direct debit from your account. The best and easiest way to pay. No fees. Requires application and void cheque.*
 - **Online Bill Payment Service** > *No fee, but funds must be received by FundScrip prior to processing. Please allow 3 business days.*
 - **Credit Card** > *Earnings reduced by 1.99%.*

3. Choose a distribution method:

Grandin is participating in direct shipping. Up to 4 gift cards valued at \$500 or less can be sent to any Canadian address through lettermail for a low cost of \$0.85(plus tax).

Better yet, consider taking advantage of e-gift cards, which are emailed for free and can be accessed as soon as your payment is processed (EFT is designed to be immediate).

4. Check out and you're done!

We will send out semi-annual updates as to the success of our fundraising efforts, so you can keep an eye on how much you've helped!

Using Fundscrip for your weekly gas and grocery purchases can earn \$600 or more each year to support our children!

Remember: You can ask Friends and Family to support our group too!

Set it and Forget it!



Set up a **Recurring Order** and never worry about forgetting to place your order again!

Your Feedback is Appreciated



Win Lunch With the Principal

If you read this newsletter, print, sign and return this form to your child's teacher. Your child will be entered to win a lunch with the principal, Mme Hironaka.

Child's Name: _____

Class: _____

Parent Signature: _____

We welcome your feedback. Please write us and share what you like, what you would like to see in the future, what you hope for our school!





WALKING TOGETHER IN GOD'S LOVE

October 2018

*Praise to the Lord all of you, God's servants. Blessed be the name of our God now and ever.
From the rising up of the sun, May the Lord be praised,
Praise to the name of the Lord! (Praise to the Lord, Klusmeier)*

The lyrics of this beautiful song, which we often sing at church, offer us a lens to explore what it means to walk humbly with our God. If we act justly and love tenderly, then our life's journey, with Him always at our side, becomes an act of praise. This is the heart of what happens when we walk together in God's love.

Edmonton Catholic Schools is growing! As I write this newsletter, our enrolment is at 43,200 students, an increase from last year, with a final count being done on September 28. It is truly a cause for celebration that an ever-increasing number of families are entrusting us with the awesome and sacred responsibility of nurturing their children and helping them to grow to their fullest potential as members of the Body of Christ.

We were delighted by the announcement from Alberta Education that the scheduled modernization for our Ben Calf Robe K-9 School will now be a replacement school instead. Plans for this new facility will increase the capacity to 700 students and will include a cultural learning space.

Archbishop Smith and Bishop Motiuk joined us for a joyous celebration on September 19 for the site blessing and ceremonial ground breaking at our newest addition to ECSD, Divine Mercy Catholic Elementary School in the Orchards. A beautiful, innovative learning space for that community will open in September of 2020.

We are very fortunate to have the leadership of two District Chaplains in our District. Father Julian Bilyj, who also serves as the pastor of St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Parish, has served our students and staff as a teacher and Chaplain since 2014. Father Glenn McDonald is a new addition to our team this year. Father Glenn is a priest of the Congregation of St. Basil. He was raised in Airdrie, Alberta; trained as a mechanical engineer at the University of Alberta, and was ordained at St. Basil's Church, Toronto in 2008. For the past five years, he has been serving as Chaplain at St. Joseph's College at the University of Alberta. In addition to his work at ECSD, Father Glenn will be assisting at St. Alphonsus Church / St. Clare Church.

The Archdiocese has just appointed Father Andrew Leung, CSB as the Archbishop's Delegate for Catholic Education. We look forward to him joining us to celebrate and form our faith!



WALKING TOGETHER IN GOD'S LOVE

Edmonton Catholic Schools has partnered with Alberta Health Services to create a series of videos that will provide parents with information about a variety of mental health topics and strategies to use at home to support their children. These videos are supported through the Regional Collaborative Service Delivery. Each month a new video will be posted on www.ecsd.net on the Mental Health page. The first video, *Breaking the Cycle of Anxiety*, is now available.

Last spring, we announced that we would be implementing a dual credit Aviation Program in partnership with WestJet and Mount Royal University. The program has now officially launched, and we have 16 students from across the District who are taking advantage of this excellent learning opportunity.

There are many ways for you to keep informed about the many wonderful things that are going on in our District. Visit www.ecsd.net, or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

I wish you all a blessed Thanksgiving, enjoying time with your loved ones and celebrating the goodness of God in your lives!

Loving God,

Who created and sustains the universe, who loved us all into being, and who gives us every good thing,

We thank you for the blessings that you bring into our lives.

We thank you for the gift of life itself, and for the fresh start of each new day,

We thank you for our friends, our families, and our neighbors whose human love is an image of your divine care.

Help us to recognize all the good things, and magnify our desire to share what we have with others,

so that they too may be grateful to you.

Amen.

(adapted from A Thanksgiving Prayer, www.americanmagazine.org)

Sincerely,

Joan Carr
Superintendent

Gaudete et Exultate of the Holy Father Francis: A Call to Holiness in Today's World

Chapter One - The Saints Who Encourage and Accompany Us

In March 2018, Pope Francis released an Apostolic Exhortation on the Call to Holiness in Today's World. In that Exhortation, Pope Francis commends "parents who raise their children with immense love, men and women who work hard to support their families, the sick, the elderly religious who never lose their smile" (7), as people who are living out their holiness. The Pope guides us in the direction of the Saints, who like us, were not perfect, but who never stopped trying to live out their call to holiness. When reflecting on these Saints' lives we need to focus on the big picture of what they accomplished rather than on their fragile, and at times imperfect, existence.

Here are a few highlights from the Exhortation that led way to some 'Aha' moments:

"Let us be spurred on by the signs of holiness that the Lord shows us through the humblest members who share a living witness by means of faith and charity" (8).

"We should not grow discouraged before examples of holiness that appear unattainable" (11).

For us, God's lay faithful, this means that we are to follow our own path and use the unique and special gifts He has given **each** of us. Pope Francis stresses that we are not meant to copy others' acts of holiness, but to create our own. These acts can be subtle or grand, but both have value, and both are essential in today's world.

"A Christian cannot think of his or her mission on earth without seeing it as a path of holiness"(19).

The saints lived their lives by following their various paths, and sometimes not everything they did was authentic or perfect; it is their lives in totality that need to be contemplated. Our lives too, need to be seen as a mission that we allow to be transformed by listening to God. Our lives may not always be perfect, but their totality will demonstrate our call to holiness.

"Our lives do not have a mission; our lives are a mission" (27).

Friends, in our lives we are often called to many tasks; being a parent, grandparent, brother, sister, friend, daughter, son, boss, etc. As such, we tend to live our lives in a hurried and busy manner! Pope Francis asks us to slow down and remember that rushing through our lives is not living our lives as a mission, but that it is living our lives to the fullest that is our mission! It is how we carry out our day to day tasks, how we do our jobs, and how we raise our children or how we care for our aging parents, just to name a few.

Sometimes it might feel as if we are living our lives as a *mission impossible*, but with faith and dedication to Christ, our lives can become a **mission possible** – "Go and make disciples baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (MT 28:19).

God Bless,

Susanna Kaup, Secondary Religious Education Consultant, Edmonton Catholic Schools



Where is God in my Life? A Reflection

by Fr. Glenn McDonald, CSB

“Where is God in my life?”

This is a question I get asked a lot as a priest. Theology can point towards an answer, but only an experience from someone's everyday life will satisfy as a response.

I am embarrassed to admit that even as a seminarian and later as a priest, I was having a lot of trouble seeing God in my own life. How could I then point out the presence of God in someone else's life? Thankfully, God began to teach me how to recognize His presence in my own life, which enabled me to help other people see His presence in their lives, too. He used a special relationship to do this.

I am very fortunate to have my grandmother living in Edmonton. Her name is Lulu. And yes, she is as adorable as her name.

During the four years I spent studying at the University of Alberta, which was only a short bus ride away from my grandmother's house, I rarely visited her. I was always too busy. I had every excuse not to go: I had homework to do; the bus would take too long; I had plans with my friends; I would go next week.

When I completed my degree and was departing from Edmonton, I had to say goodbye to my grandmother. Despite the fact that I had visited her only once a semester, she was very sad to see me go. In that moment, my degree suddenly seemed empty. I could see how precious my grandmother's presence was in my life. I had been so blind, but it was too late. It was time for me to leave the city.

Fortunately, I was given a second chance many years later, when my religious community appointed me to Edmonton. I resolved to visit my grandmother each Friday. And I did!

Our visits followed the same pattern. I would bring her flowers. She would make me a sandwich and a cup of tea. We would talk about her week, how the family was doing, and if she had heard from relatives in Saskatchewan. I would share about my work. After an hour, I would depart. Each visit was ordinary, but I always felt fulfilled when I left — like I had participated in something of great value.

In 1 John, we read, “Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.” Over time, I realized that my weekly visits with my grandma were an experience of love. An experience of genuine love is an experience of God. I became aware that these visits were one of the ways that God was present and active in my life.

What are the situations in your life in which you experience sincere love? Who are the people in your life who love you the most, with self-sacrificial, giving love? It is in these situations, and interacting with these people, that God's presence and action in your life becomes real.

Today, when a student asks me, “Where is God?” I respond with, “Let me give you an example from my own life. Her name is Lulu.”

“Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.” - 1 John 4:8

