

December

# Grandin Gazette

Faith, Language and Culture in the  of the City

## JOY AND GOOD TIDINGS

As the Christmas season approaches, students and staff at Grandin have settled in and are hard at work. We are so proud of our students and the gains they have already made this year. Please be sure to join us for our *Celebration of Learning* on Wednesday, November 28th. Thanks to our parents for your support and encouragement.

Students will enjoy many festivities in December – from choirs singing around the City of Edmonton to our second annual *Christmas Market*. Our Christmas Concert will be held at St. Joseph Basilica for the first time in many years. It should be a beautiful home coming.

Of course, children will also experience the joy of Christmas giving through many social justice projects. Please consider donating to our *Giving Trees* which are set up on the first and second floors. Many classes will be bringing cheer to the seniors at St. Joachim, the Basilica and Rosedale Manor. Grandin students have built great relationships with seniors in the community and are great ambassadors for our school.



**EACH TIME YOU LET GOD LOVE OTHERS  
THROUGH YOUR FAITH,  
IT IS CHRISTMAS TIME.**

As we enjoy the busy Advent season, we pause to count our many blessings and give thanks for the gift of our wonderful staff and students.

Wishing all our families the love, peace and joy of Christ this Christmas and always,

*Lorelei Hironaka*  
Principal



*Mark Huculak*  
Assistant Principal



## IMPORTANT DATES

### Book Fair

Tuesday, November 27  
Wednesday, November 28

### Demonstration of Learning

Wednesday, November 28

### Grade 4 Bible Presentation

Friday, November 30

### Advent Celebration

9:15 a.m. in the School Gym

Tuesday, December 4

### Christmas Concert

Grades 1-3 6:40 p.m. - 7:20 p.m.

Grades 4-6 7:35 p.m. – 8:10 p.m.

Wednesday, December 5

### Spanish Bilingual Mass

Corpus Christi Parish – Students Only

Friday, December 7

### Grade 5/6 Bible Ceremony

Friday, December 7

### Free Footie with the Eskis

Wednesday, December 12

### Early Learning Christmas

Concert – 100V and K

6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, December 12

### Hot Lunch – Lunch Lady

Friday, December 14

### Grandin Christmas Market

Wednesday, December 19

Thursday, December 20

### Full Day of School

Thursday, December 20

### Christmas Choir

CBC and Norwood

Thursday, December 20

### Half Day – Dismiss 11:28 a.m.

Friday, December 21

## TOURTIÈRE DAY

Many thanks to everyone who made the traditional Grandin tourtière-making week-end such a success. With new pie crusts from **Crust Craft** and Christmas tunes to keep everyone humming, we managed to put together 780 pies by about noon! We are so blessed to have such great community partners – **NAIT's Culinary Art Student Association** and **Chef David Whitaker, The Italian Centre Shop, John Wiley** and **H and R Transport** (that's the biggest freezer we've ever seen!).

It was so nice to see so many volunteers – Grandinites from the present and the past! What a fun time....and what a well-oiled tourtière assembly line!

Special, special thanks to our Tourtière Coordinator **Wendy Bosch** for her incredible organizational skills, her can-do attitude and her cheerful smile. You've managed to make this event better each year!

Please read our Grandin School Fundraising Society pages for more great news about Tourtière Day from our coordinator Wendy Bosch.



## REPORT CARDS AND CELEBRATION OF LEARNING

Report cards at Grandin were posted electronically on PowerSchool on Friday, November 23rd. It is imperative that parents take time to review their child(ren)'s progress report. Then, on Wednesday, November 28<sup>th</sup>, parents and children are asked to join us for a Celebration of Learning from 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. and again from 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (Teachers take their dinner break from 5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m., but our Book Fair will remain open in the gym over the dinner hour.) Come and celebrate what your child has learned and set goals for next term! Please remember to also bring your donations for the Grandin Christmas Market at this time.

## BOOK FAIR

While at Demonstration of Learning – please stop by our Book Fair in the gym. Barefoot Books will be back with a selection of Spanish books too! Thanks Amanda Proctor for keeping the Scholastic Book Fair going for our children!

## ADVENT CELEBRATION – TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4TH

Join us as we begin the Advent season on Tuesday, December 4<sup>th</sup> in the school gym. Each class will receive an advent wreath and candles as we begin the countdown to Christmas Day.



## DISTRICT SURVEYS

Your child should have arrived home with the **Edmonton Catholic District Satisfaction Survey**. This survey has gone out earlier this year, so that schools can use this information to target improvement efforts in the same year the survey was administered.

Your input is valued by Grandin administration and staff, so please take a few minutes to complete the survey.

Last year, Grandin School had a fantastic response rate which helped ensure that the survey gave a true picture of what Grandin families think is great about our school, and what areas we should focus upon moving forward. Many of this year's school goals were based on parental feedback from last spring's District Survey.

Each class who successfully returns 80% of the survey responses will enjoy a popcorn and movie party!

## GRADE 1-6 CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Our wonderful music teacher Athena MacGregor will lead our Grade 1-6 Christmas Concert, on Wednesday, December 5, at St. Joseph's Basilica.

There will be two concerts on December 6<sup>th</sup>, a Grade 1-3 Concert and a Grade 4-6 Concert. Families are welcome to attend both concerts, even if you do not have a child in primary or upper elementary. There will be a short intermission between the two concerts for those who would like spend time visiting in the church lobby. Those who wish to slip out politely after the Grade 1-3 concert are most welcome to do so.

Regular Wednesday mass ends at the Basilica at 6:00 p.m. **Grandin parents have been asked to arrive for the concert after 6:15 p.m.** to give parishioners time to vacate the Basilica and parking areas.

Grades 1-3	6:40 p.m. – 7:20 p.m.
Intermissions	7:20 p.m. – 7:35 p.m.
Grades 4-6	7:35 p.m. – 8:10 p.m.

Parking will be available south of the Basilica, east of the Basilica by the Sicilian Pasta Kitchen and in the Grandin parking lot.



## EARLY LEARNING CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Our 100 Voices and Spanish and French Immersion Kindergarten classes will hold their Christmas concert on Wednesday, December 12<sup>th</sup> in the school gym, starting at 6:00 p.m. Our early learning teachers will send out letters to their families with more details about this special Christmas event.



# GRANDIN CHRISTMAS MARKET

Grandin is holding its second annual *Christmas Market* just before the break on December 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Please read on for the details of this amazing event that helps our students experience the 'joy of giving' while appreciating the benefits of 're-using'.



## HELPING YOUR CHILD AT HOME

### Read-Alouds at Bedtime

#### What are the benefits of reading aloud?

There are so many! Here are just a few:

- Children hear effective reading.
- Books spark conversation.
- Young children develop book sense (direction of print, recognition that letters represent sounds and that words hold meaning).
- Children realize that books are fun!
- The routine of bedtime stories creates time to connect with your child(ren).

#### Tips for Reading Aloud:

- Look at the title and cover and **make predictions** about the book.
- Read with **expression**.
- Encourage your child to **look closely** and **talk about the pictures**.
- **Ask questions** and **talk** about the book before, during or after reading!
- **Reread** books: children love to hear their favourites again and again!
- **Don't stop** reading aloud to your child(ren) just because they are readers themselves!

If you want your child to love reading, read great books aloud to them daily!

### Gratitude Corner

Thanks to our school chaplain, Mlle Ariane Hossack, for organizing Student Faith Day, the Bible Presentation Ceremonies and our Family Social Justice Evening in January.

We are blessed.



# Social Justice Update

LET US LOVE, NOT WITH WORDS BUT WITH DEEDS – POPE FRANCIS

## THE GIVING TREE

Taking our understanding of Catholic Social Justice to new levels, the students of grade 5 and 6 are visiting other classrooms to explain the 'why' behind the Giving Tree, informing their peers about the needs of those who live in poverty here in our own Edmonton community.

Students are asked to bring new or very gently used winter gear (scarves, mittens, toques and socks) to decorate the *Giving Trees* located on each floor.



## FAMILY NIGHT AT THE BASILICA - FRIDAY, JANUARY 18TH



As part of our Social Justice plan, we are preparing a very special family night in the hall at the Basilica on the evening of Friday, January 18<sup>th</sup>.

Our staff and students are excited to create a fun community event that will help raise money for **Puerto Rico Relief** and the **Archdiocese of Tombura-Yambio** in the Sudan.

Bring your own board game and enjoy other cultural activities. There will also be delicious baked goods for sale.

Help us brighten up the winter, and the lives of many in the world who are less fortunate than us here in Canada.

## GRANDIN SERVICE AROUND TOWN

Please be sure to return fieldtrip forms for the many service-oriented social justice opportunities for Grandin students during Advent, including:

Visiting patients at the General Hospital – 1B

Entertaining the Seniors at Manoir St. Joachim – KA, KB, KC

Serving lunch to the Seniors Group at the Basilica – 3A, 3B

Christmas concert for CASS (College of Alberta School Superintendents) – 56A

Christmas joy at Rosedale Manor /City Hall – Christmas Choir

A singing Christmas presentation at CBC / Norwood Care Facility – Christmas Choir



# Preparing for the Future!

Opportunities for Grandin Students to Get Ready for the World of Work

## TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Thanks to our generous School Fundraising Society, our students will have access to 30 new Chromebooks shortly after Christmas. Our teachers are busy attending professional development sessions, and sharing great ideas with each other, to make technology a meaningful learning tool in our school. It will be wonderful to have more devices to share among the classrooms!

## HOUR OF CODE – DECEMBER 3-7

Our Tech Coach, Mlle Raquel Karam, is leading our school's week-long *Hour of Code*. Students will be engaging in many challenging tech applications. Please ask your homeroom teachers about what is planned for your child's classroom! There will also be a school-wide "unplugged" challenges throughout the week.

## SCIENCE NIGHT – JANUARY 16

Grandin School is pleased to host a special evening for our families on January 16<sup>th</sup>. In conjunction with the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta, Grandin students will have the opportunity to engage in hands-on activities related to engineering and geoscience. These activities enhance the elementary science curriculum, and are also a source a great fun and interest for adults.



Please sign up by clicking [HERE](#) or go to [goo.gl/7C7iis](http://goo.gl/7C7iis)

## APEGA SCIENCE OLYMPICS

Our grade 2 and 3 Spanish Bilingual classes have signed up to participate in the APEGA Science Olympics. This involves creating a special project at school and a weekend extravaganza at the University of Alberta Butterdome on Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup>.

## UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA MATH FAIR

Some of our classes will be attending the University of Alberta Math Fair this year. This is a great opportunity for our students to see how Mathematics can be used to solve real world problems and....actually be fun!

The Math Fair & Unfair is a popular biannual event for elementary and junior high school students held on the campus of the University of Alberta. The Math Fair component of the event is hosted by Elementary Education students (teachers-in-training) taking our MATH 160 course. The MATH 160 students create and prepare dozens of puzzles and games, and engage with the children during their visit to stimulate problem solving and logical reasoning. The Math Unfair component of the event is hosted by graduate students from the Department of Mathematical Sciences. The graduate students invite the children to try a variety of two-player games and encourage them to develop strategies for playing well.

– University of Alberta Community Engagement Website





# The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Grandin Christmas Market

**Wednesday, Dec. 19 & Thursday, Dec. 20**

The Grandin Christmas Market is an annual special event where students have the opportunity to shop for Christmas presents for their families. At the market, students select gifts from donated items which are then wrapped by volunteers and taken home for Christmas morning.

Each year students take great care in selecting the "perfect gifts" for their family members. They express great joy in telling why they selected the gifts they did and excitement in the anticipation of their loved ones' reactions to their gifts.

## **DONATIONS**

Grandin families are asked to donate new or gently used items for the Market. There is no set limit on the amount you can donate, however it is suggested that you donate at least one item per person your child will be buying for (ex; if your child is buying for 4 family members we ask that you donate at least 4 items).

**Donations will be collected at the Celebration of Learning on November 28.** Additional items can be brought to the school until December 17.

Donations of Christmas wrapping paper, tissue paper, bows, gift bags and tape are also greatly welcomed.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR NEW OR GENTLY USED DONATION ITEMS:** toys, games, craft items, scrapbook supplies, aprons, place mats, puzzles, baby toys, picture frames, books, posters, candles, candle holders, vases, etc.

PLEASE NOTE: for health reasons we cannot accept unsealed make up, clothing, pierced earrings, shoes, hairbrushes or hair accessories. Please do not send movies, games, magazines or books that have inappropriate messages, pictures or themes. Stuffed animals are welcome but they must be clean and very gently loved.

**WE ANTICIPATE BEING SHORT OF GIFTS FOR DADS, TEENS AND BROTHERS.** Suggestions for donations: golf balls & tees, hats, tools, ties, coffee mugs, candy, CDs, movies, games, etc.

**All items must be clean and in good shape.** (ex; ensure all puzzle pieces are included) Remember, the items you donate will be a Christmas gift for a child's loved one, chosen from the heart.

**Families are asked to contribute \$0.50 for each item being purchased by their child.**



# The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Grandin Christmas Market

Please complete the following information so we know who your child is buying for at the Grandin Christmas Market. Return it along with your money to your child's classroom.

Your child's teacher will discuss with your child which family members they are buying for.

Your child **does not** buy for him/herself.

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher's name: \_\_\_\_\_

My child is buying for:

Parent/Guardian's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sibling (s) name(s)/age(s):

Additional family members:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Total money sent at \$0.50/family member: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return your child's form and payment to their teacher before **Friday, December 14/18**.

**Volunteers are needed to run the Grandin Christmas Market.**

Please sign up to volunteer at <http://signup.com/go/bTjVOTS>.



# 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

## FREE FOOTIE

Grandin has two Free Footie teams again this year – Grade 3-4 and Grade 5-6. During the month of December, both teams will have a chance to try out some fun, no-contact football drills with the Edmonton Eskimos at Commonwealth Place. It's been a great season so far. Grandin students are great team players and good sports. You make us proud.

## CHESS CLUB

Chess Club is up and running on Tuesday noon and Thursday after school. Many thanks to Richard Pua who provides this great opportunity for our students.

## PIANO LESSONS

Five Grandin students are taking piano lessons after school, thanks to the Heart of the City Music Program. We are very blessed to be able to provide this opportunity to our students thanks to dedicated University of Alberta Music students.

## ZUMBA

Zumba Club has been very popular this year. It's a great way to keep warm and get some exercise as the weather turns cold. Thanks so much to our parent volunteer, Janet Vancaesele, for her enthusiasm and great moves!

## DANCE CLUB

Students are also enjoying Señora Astora's dance on Thursdays after school. What a wonderful opportunity for some great dance instruction! Our dance club did a super job entertaining us at the Hallowe'en parade.

## BROADCAST

Grandin Broadcast has a fresh new look. Students are creating advertisement, videos and posters for broadcast each Friday. Our students have come up with some super ideas to make Broadcast even better in the new year!

**Have fun! Join a Club!**



# Grandin School Parent Council

## Grandin School Fundraising Society

The **next meeting** of both our parent organizations was held on **Wednesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>**. Mme Hironaka will present our Provincial Achievement Results and our School Accountability Pillar, as well as the School Wishlist for the upcoming year. Come and find out about the many school spirit and fundraising events that are upcoming!

### School Council Executive:

**Co-chairs: Christie Oswald and Kristin Zelyck**

**Vice-chair: Sarah Bisbee**

**Secretary: Tina Uribe**

### Fundraising Society Executive:

**Chair: Andrea Boehm**

**Vice-Chair: Kristen Zelyck**

**Treasurer: Desiree Thomas**

**Secretary: Tina Uribe**

### MEETING DATES

#### 6:00 PM START

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6

TUESDAY, MARCH 12

MONDAY, APRIL 15

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22

## Next Meeting

Wednesday, January 9 at 6:00 p.m.

Please join us if you can!



# Tourtières – A Grandin Tradition

## School Fundraising Society

Dear Parents,

At the beginning of the 2018/2019 school year, Ecole/Escuela Grandin School once again started its preparation for its annual Tourtière fundraiser. The French meat pies are made and sold to the Grandin School parents, the Oliver community and patrons from the City. This year the parents and grandparents of **Grandin made 780 pies, with a net profit of \$10,000.** This money will go towards reading programs, books, musical instruments, new technology, among many other things.

There are many people to thank in this fundraiser.

**NAIT** again, in conjunction with their **Culinary Art Student Association**, was a tremendous help in providing their kitchen space and expertise guiding our parents in prepping vegetables and preparing the meat feeling for the pies. Our sincerest gratitude goes to **Chef David Whitaker** for taking the time each year to help our school.

This year, we are excited to have the support of **Crust Craft**, an Edmonton based high capacity bakery. Not only was the dough perfectly made, it was also pre-rolled into tops and bottoms, saving us hours of rolling time. Dealing with Crust Craft was a pleasure.

**H&R Transport**, and in particular **John Wiley**, supplied/donated their refrigerated trailer and time again this year as a portable freezer for assembly day.

The **Italian Centre Shop** happily supplied 140 bread trays to store the pies properly and easily in the refrigerated trailer.

The time given by the parents of Grandin School. Many parents and grandparents came out to volunteer their time, from picking up bread trays, prepping and cooking hundreds of pounds of vegetables and meat at NAIT for the pie filling, setting up the gym for assembly day, transporting the pie filling back to the school and assembling hundreds of pies on a Saturday and then moving the pies from the refrigerated truck to the school freezers on Sunday.

And finally, I would like to thank Ms. Lorelei Hironaka and Ms. Colleen Segin for giving us so much of their time. Lorelei gave up her weekend to make pies on Saturday and help with the transfer on Sunday, while Colleen is the voice on the phone taking pie orders, making payments and handing out the pies daily.

In particular I would like to give a shout out to a number of families who went above and beyond not only this year but in past years, some of which are moving on from Grandin. They will be sorely missed. We also have a number of families who do an amazing job selling the pies to friends, family and co-workers - without these sales, we would not be successful. Thank you!

The Hernandez family  
The Oswald family  
The Nayar family  
The Boehm family

The Marin family  
The Uribe family  
The Marten family

The Schneider family  
The Vallerand family  
The Hammermeisters

The Romero family  
The Campeau family  
The Holowitski family

These are the real unsung heroes who have given their time and effort and which I can't thank enough for bringing the project to fruition.

*Wendy Bosch* - Parent & Tourtiere co-ordinator

# ...Thank you, Wendy!



Staff, Students and Parent of Ecole Escuela Grandin

9844 – 110 Street, Edmonton, AB T5K 1J2 780 482-3676 [www.grandin.ecsd.net](http://www.grandin.ecsd.net)

# 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](http://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](mailto: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, 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



# 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

## 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](http://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



# WALKING TOGETHER IN GOD'S LOVE

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

## CHAPTER 3: Gaudete et Excultate

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:

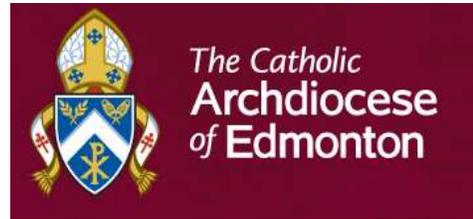
Where am I on the path to holiness?

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

God Bless,  
Kathleen Nguyen, Elementary Religious Education Consultant  
Edmonton Catholic Schools



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

