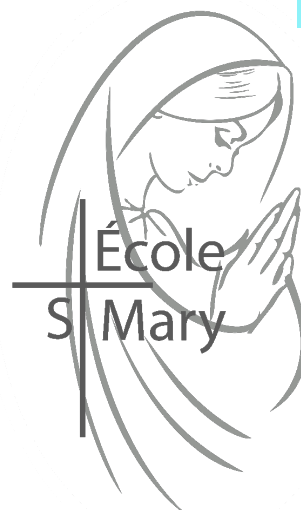


## UPCOMING DATES:

- Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Hot lunch Orders DUE  
-NO SCHOOL – PD Day
- Dec 5<sup>th</sup>** – Candy Gram Sale (50cents)  
-Skating @ Henderson 3:15-4:15pm
- Dec 7<sup>th</sup>** -Hot Dog Lunch
- Dec 8<sup>th</sup>** – Bake Sale (provided by Gr. 6's)  
-Christmas Clothing Day
- Dec 9<sup>th</sup>** – No Kindergarten
- Dec 12<sup>th</sup>** – Candy Gram Sale (50 cents)
- Dec 13<sup>th</sup>** – Christmas Character Day
- Dec 14<sup>th</sup>** - Advent Mass 9am @ ESM Gym  
– Kindergarten Christmas Evening
- Dec 15<sup>th</sup>** – Ugly Sweater Day
- Dec 19<sup>th</sup>** – Turkey Dinner Gr.1-6
- Dec 20<sup>th</sup>** – Christmas Concert  
6pm @ Southminster United Church
- Dec 21<sup>st</sup>**- Div. Board Meeting
- Dec 23<sup>rd</sup>** – PJ Day & School Bingo  
- NO KINDERGARTEN



## **December 2022 Message from Mme Bouchard**

It is already December! It is so hard to believe that we are into the Advent season and we are weeks away from Christmas and the break. Looking back, it is incredible to think of all that we have already accomplished this year. We have returned to doing many of the things we could not do over the last couple of years.

Looking back at November, it is so important that we celebrate the success of the Carnival. What a night, what an event, what an incredible community! It was so wonderful to see so many families and familiar faces in the halls again. The evening was a huge success because of the team that worked to put it together, the volunteers, parents, staff and students, and you! Thank you for your contributions, for your continued support. Thank you for being such an incredible school community that I am so proud to be a part of.

School Council purchased a new ESM t-shirt for every student and staff member. What an incredible thing to do to bring people together, to ensure everyone is included. It was a great day seeing all of the kids sporting their new ESM wear. The sea of blue was beautiful. A great big thank you to School Council for the t-shirts, this was truly a kind gesture to the community and we very much appreciate it.

We have so much on the calendar over the next few weeks. We have a candy sale to support Santa's Anonymous and Candy Grams to enhance Christmas spirit. The Advent Mass has been rescheduled to Wednesday, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am in the school gym. You are welcome to join us if you are able. There will be a Hot Dog lunch December 7<sup>th</sup> as well, a Bake Sale on Thursday, Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> to support Grade 6 Camp. After School Family Skating returns at Henderson on Monday Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> and Dec 12<sup>th</sup>. We have our Turkey Dinner on Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>. That will look a little different this year. It will be on School Cash online for \$5.00 per plate as a hot lunch, that is a discounted rate as compared to the caterer's price. The goal is for every student from grade 1-6 to get a turkey dinner lunch so you can 'Donate a Plate' if you are willing and able. School Council will be contributing toward the total to ensure everyone gets a meal. We will certainly be looking for volunteers for that day. Finally, our Christmas Concert on Dec. 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm at Southminster Church. We are very much looking forward to celebrating with you.

Focusing on the present, it is the Advent season. We focus on hope, faith, joy, peace and love. As the light on the Advent wreath gets brighter, we grow closer to Christmas. It is important to remember that in the hustle bustle of the season what the true meaning of Christmas is about. It is important to keep Christ in Christmas, to remember the reason for the season. We are blessed in so many ways. We are blessed to walk together on this Advent journey toward Christmas as a faith community. I hope that you and your family grow in your faith, that you have a blessed Christmas and from all of us at ESM we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a New Year full of happiness, health and all that you need. God Bless!

*Kiera Bouchard*



## Mr. Harper's December Message 2022

Welcome to the Advent season! Advent is my favorite time of the year...well, minus the cold weather! During this season, we need to prepare our hearts and minds for the arrival of Jesus on Christmas day. Let us do our best to set aside the busyness of the season and remember the true meaning of why we celebrate.

Each week during Gospel time, we continue to explore our faith theme: Arise, Pilgrims of Hope. We have been learning about different Saints, how to listen for God's call in our lives, and how to answer that call bravely. Saint Mary is the Patron Saint of our school, and December is the perfect time to let her lead us as an example of faithfulness and devotion to God. We ask Blessed Mary to pray for our students, families, and communities this season.

We will be celebrating our Advent Mass with Father Kevin early in December. **On December 14<sup>th</sup>** during the third week of Advent, we will host Mass here at Ecole St. Mary at 9:00 AM. The grade 4 / 5 NE class will be hosting, and the rest of the school will join them in the gymnasium. Everyone is welcome! It will be great to have the opportunity to celebrate with our community. Grade 4 / 5 GI hosted our first Advent celebration during the first week of Advent, and it was great! Thank you for such an extraordinary celebration!

Merry Christmas! We wish you and your family a blessed Advent season. We pray for hope in our God, love in our hearts, joy in the celebrations, and peace over the holidays.

May God bless you and keep you.



## LEADERSHIP:

Our Leadership team will be selling Candy Grams this December. At lunch time on Monday Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> and Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> our Leadership team will be selling Candy Canes for students to purchase for someone else, classmates, siblings or friends in other grades.



## CHRISTMAS CONCERT

This year we will have our Christmas Concert at Southminster United Church (1011 4 Ave South Lethbridge). This will be from 6:00pm-7:30pm. Doors Open at 5:30pm. Admission will be by Donation.

# ADHD Parent Sessions

This is a program designed for caregivers of children who have been newly diagnosed or suspected of ADHD that want to learn more about ADHD. This is a 4 consecutive week closed group.



Being hosted by: AHS Children's Mental Health and Addiction

Sessions will include: What is ADHD? ADHD and medication. How to talk to children about their ADHD and understanding self-regulation. Tools for effective parenting of children with ADHD. ADHD and navigating the school system. ADHD and nutrition, sleep and exercise.

Location: Children of St. Martha's School (library)

Dates: Tuesdays, January 17<sup>th</sup> – Feb 7<sup>th</sup>

Time: 6-7:30pm

Childcare provided if needed.

If you are interested in attending please contact:

Tanya Koopmans

Family First Facilitator

403-634-2712 or [Koopmanst@holyspirit.ab.ca](mailto:Koopmanst@holyspirit.ab.ca)





## **DO NOT BLOCK THE BUS LANE.**

We can't say it enough. For the safety of the students please do not block the bus lane. The buses drop off students from 3 schools and it is a busy place in the morning. Even as the snow falls and the days get colder parking is still not allowed in the bus lane. Buses need all the space and ask for your help in leaving the bus lane clear.



## **NO PARKING IN PARKING LOT**

### **Parking lot is for STAFF ONLY.**

You may park on the east side of the street. In the morning the sidewalk between the flag pole and the parking lot is a drop off zone. Hug and Go. Please do not park there for long periods of time.

**Kindergarten & ELP** – There are school buses here at 11am for the high school shuttle. Please don't block the bus lane. Park on the East side of the street and encourage your children to use good habits by using the cross walk to cross the street.

## **STUDENT DROP OFF/ PICK UP**

Students can be dropped off at 7:45am. There will be no supervision before 7:45am if you choose to leave your child unattended at the school this is your parent responsibility.

## **SAMARITAN STARS**

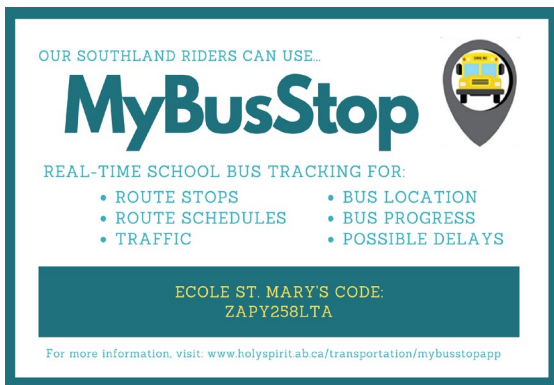
As the students do good deeds and display exemplary actions/attitudes, their fellow classmates can nominate them and put their name in the "Samaritan Stars" jar. From here we draw names to win a cheque for \$25.00 which is graciously donated by Ward Bros. Construction. Thank you, Ward Bros., for your continued generosity to our school!

**For the month of November our winners were: Allison 5BI and Kylie 1DI**

## **HOUSE TEAMS**

The students are assigned a house team (colour team) so be a part of for the year. This encourages the kids to interact with kids in other grades. Our leadership team comes up with special days and activities for students to earn points to go towards their house team.

For the Month of November the winning house team is: ORANGE TIGERS



## SCHOOL BUS

Please check online for the Bus Routes.

There has been changes and additions to routes this month. Also remind your kids to check the sign on the bus as they may not be in the same line up at the end of the day.

<https://www.southland.ca/lethbridge/>

## ATTENDANCE

Children thrive and succeed when they attend school regularly. We understand things come up, appointments made during school hours, emergencies, sickness etc. Please call the office to let us know if your child(ren) will not be at school on any given day. You can call 403-327-3098 or email [esmoffice@holyspirit.ab.ca](mailto:esmoffice@holyspirit.ab.ca)

## BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM

We are blessed to have a Nutrition grant this year to provide breakfast for those who need it. We also welcome back Mindful Munchies from the Lethbridge food bank who provide us with lunches for our students who forget or would otherwise go without. When the bell goes at 8am, students make their way to their classrooms. The kids pass by our Canteen when they come in in the morning and those who need a bit more to eat, or missed breakfast can “grab and go” a snack.

## SICK KIDS

If your child(ren) is sick – KEEP THEM HOME.

During the winter months there is an increase in sickness and we all need to do our part to take care of ourselves and others. Staying home while you are sick is the best way to not share germs with classmates and teachers.

## LOST AND FOUND:

We have a collection in our lost and found that is overflowing. Please have your children look for their lost items. We will have tables set out the last week of school for parents to also come and look.

All items left behind on Dec 23<sup>rd</sup> will be donated.



## DECEMBER 2022



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 NO SCHOOL PD Day	3
4	5 Candy Gram sale (50cents)  Henderson Skating 3:15- 4:15pm	6	7  Hot Dog Lunch	8  Christmas Clothing Day  Bake Sale (gr6 providing)	9  NO KINDERGARTEN	10
11	12 Candy Gram sale (50cents)	13  Christmas Character Day	14 Advent Mass 9am @ ESM  Kindergarten Christmas Evening	15  Ugly Sweater Day	16	17
18	19  Turkey Dinner	20  Christmas Concert @ Southminster 6:00pm	21  Div. Board Meeting	22	23 NO KINDERGATEN  PJ Day & Bingo Last day before Christmas Holidays	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS Dec 24 <sup>th</sup> – Jan 8 <sup>th</sup>						



January 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<div>CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS Dec 24<sup>th</sup> – Jan 8<sup>th</sup></div>						
8	9 First Day back after Christmas Break	10	11 6pm School Council Meting	12	13 NO Kindergarten	14
15	16 Henderson Skating 3:15- 4:15pm	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 Div. Board Meeting	26	27 NO SCHOOL PD Day	28
29	30 Henderson Skating 3:15- 4:15pm	31				

# December

## Arise! Pilgrims of Hope



“...to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior,  
who is the Messiah, the Lord..”

Luke 2:11

### St. Juan Diego 1474-1548 (Feast Day: December 9)

A beautiful picture of Mary can be seen on a cloak above the main altar in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. The cloak belonged to Juan Diego, an Aztec who lived more than 450 years ago. On December 9, 1531, when Juan was a 57-year-old widower, he was walking to Mass. A beautiful lady appeared. She told him she was the Immaculate Virgin Mary, and that she desired to have a shrine there at Tepeyac Hill. Mary asked Juan to tell the bishop of her desire.

The bishop didn't believe him, so Juan returned to the lady and suggested she send a better speaker. Mary told Juan that she chose him for this work and that she would bless him for helping her. Juan revisited the bishop. This time the bishop told him to ask his lady for a sign that she was the Mother of God. Mary then sent Juan to the top of the hill to gather the flowers growing there. Juan knew that nothing grew on that rocky hill, let alone in winter. However, Juan found gorgeous roses! He picked them and brought them to Mary, who arranged them in his cloak and told Juan to take them to the bishop. When the bishop saw Juan, he asked what he had in his tilma. Juan opened it, letting the roses fall. Imagine the bishop's surprise at seeing roses in winter! Yet he saw an even greater miracle: on Juan's cloak a beautiful, life-size image began to appear. Juan Diego remained poor, simple, humble, and devoted to the Eucharist. He spent the next 17 years traveling throughout central Mexico, bringing others to the faith and delivering Guadalupe's message that Mary loves us and wants to help us. Juan Diego was beatified in 1990 and canonized in 2002.

## Holy Moments In Our Schools

St. Patrick Fine Arts Arise Wall! Staff and students chose a word to describe a gift or talent God has given them that helps them serve the world in positive ways, and contributes to the Body of Christ.



## Advent

Beginning the Church's liturgical year, Advent (from, "ad-venire" in Latin or "to come to") is the season encompassing the four Sundays (and weekdays) leading up to the celebration of Christmas.

The Advent season is a time of preparation that directs our hearts and minds to Christ's second coming at the end of time and to the anniversary of Our Lord's birth on Christmas. From the earliest days of the Church, people have been fascinated by Jesus' promise to come back. But the scripture readings during Advent tell us not to waste our time with predictions. Advent is not about speculation. Our Advent readings call us to be alert and ready, not weighted down and distracted by the cares of this world (Lk 21:34-36).

We see many seasonal devotions during Advent, including the Advent wreath and nativity scenes. This year, Holy Spirit is also releasing a weekly Advent video for your use.

Additional Resource:  
[The Symbol of the Advent Wreath](#)



A beautiful picture of Mary can be seen on a cloak above the main altar in the [Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#) in Mexico City. The cloak belonged to Juan Diego, an Aztec who lived more than 450 years ago.

## The Fruit of the Spirit – Faithfulness

One song that you may hear during the Advent and Christmas season is 'O Come, All Ye Faithful', which is usually the final hymn sung at Midnight Mass at the Vatican. In the original Latin version of the text, the title is *Adeste Fideles*. Our word faithful derives from the Latin word *Fidei*, which also gives us the word fidelity. We might think here of reliability, obedience, loyalty, truthfulness, or constancy. As Catholics, we know of God's faithfulness towards us, his people, and how his promises to us come true (especially shown in this Advent season). We are called to be loyal and trusting in God, and when we do that, even in little ways, our faithfulness is increased by the Holy Spirit.

Paul, in Hebrews, says that "faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." (Heb 11:1). The church has described this gift of faith, brought by Jesus, as the Light of Faith (*Lumen Fidei*). This was also the name of a Papal encyclical given by Pope Francis in 2013, in which he said:

*In God's gift of faith, a supernatural infused virtue, we realize that a great love has been offered us, a good word has been spoken to us, and that when we welcome that word, Jesus Christ the Word made flesh, the Holy Spirit transforms us, lights up our way to the future and enables us joyfully to advance along that way on wings of hope.*

As we near the manger at Christmas, may we see in the newborn Jesus the great love of God, and in our faithfulness may the Holy Spirit continue to transform our lives.



*"Let not your heart be disturbed... Am I not here, who is your Mother? Are you not under my protection? Am I not your health? Are you not happily within my fold? What else do you wish? Do not grieve nor be disturbed by anything." - Our Lady of Guadalupe*

# Reflecting on the life of St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin...

## Our Lady of Guadalupe

One of the most well known titles of Mary is Our Lady of Guadalupe, as she revealed herself to St. Juan Diego in 1531. His tilma is now housed in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, one of the most visited Catholic pilgrimage sites in the world. The image, famous around the world in both Catholic and secular culture, shows a pregnant Mary, clothed in a star-covered mantle, eclipsing the sun and standing atop the moon, with a cherub carrying her train. There have been many studies on the tilma, including [detailed study of the locations of the stars and Our Lady's eyes](#), which reveal fascinating details. Our Lady of Guadalupe Patroness of Mexico and the continental Americas, as well as the namesake of the Our Lady of Guadalupe Circle, the group engaged in [renewing and fostering relationships between the Catholic Church and Indigenous Peoples in Canada](#).

Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us!



## St. Juan Diego Showed "Faithfulness"

*"I am a nobody. I am a small rope, a tiny ladder, the tail end, leaf..."* St. Juan Diego

With these words to Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. Juan Diego reveals to us his feeling of unworthiness after the bishop didn't believe him. Mary, of course, believes in him, and helps him to try again. Being told by the bishop to provide a sign, St. Juan Diego again returns to Mary and follows her instructions, in spite of the reasons not to. In each step, [St. Juan Diego](#) shows himself to be reliable, obedient, and trusting; the core of faithfulness. In each step, his faithfulness grows, and is rewarded in the end with the [miraculous tilma](#). His faithfulness becomes a model for not only the bishop, but all of the peoples of the Americas. When we find ourselves feeling small or tiny, or a nobody, we can recall the example of St. Juan Diego, whose faithfulness was multiplied exponentially and bore much fruit.

St. Juan Diego, pray for us!

Adapted from [Franciscanmedia.org](http://Franciscanmedia.org). [A Look at St. Juan Diego](#)

## Gospel Readings

December 4, 2022 2nd Sunday in Advent

### Gospel Reading: Matthew 3:1-12

"Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths." — Matthew 3:3

John the Baptist cried out in the desert for repentance, for people to turn away from sin. He knew that true repentance would "make straight" the path for Jesus, who was coming to lead people back to God. By repenting, we make the mission of Jesus so much easier! He can reveal the truth to us, and lead us to live and act like he did when he was on earth - welcoming everyone, even those that others didn't like or approve of, teaching how to share so that everyone has enough, giving people a chance to start over when they admitted their mistakes and sins, and more. This Advent is an opportunity to admit our sins, go to confession, and "make straight" the path we are walking with Jesus so we can better live how he taught.

*Father in heaven, thank you for giving us your Son to lead us in our journey toward eternal life. Help us enter into a spirit of humility and repentance this Advent!*

**Are there other things we can do to make it easier for Jesus to show us the truth? What gets in the way of our spiritual journey?**

December 18, 2022 4th Sunday in Advent

### Gospel Reading: Matthew 1:18-24

"And they shall name him 'Emmanuel', which means 'God is with us.'" — Matthew 1:23

Do you know why your parents picked the name they did for you? Often parents pick a name because the name comes from an older relative, or from an important person they admire, or maybe because your parents really loved the sound of the name. Jesus got his name because the angel told Joseph what to name him. God chose the name "Jesus" which means "God Saves" for his son. The prophets knew also that Jesus would be called Emmanuel, or "God is with us." That was not going to be his given name, but it was going to be who he was! God came to us in the flesh, as a baby, and truly was "with us" then, and now is still truly with us. He will never leave us or abandon us!

*Dear Father, thank you for giving us your Son, in the flesh. Thank you, Jesus, for giving us yourself in the Eucharist. You are truly "with us" now and forever!*

**Does it ever feel like Jesus is not with you? When that happens, think of Jesus like the sun. The sun is always there, even when we can't see its light at night or when it is hidden behind the clouds. Jesus is always still with you, even if you can't feel him.**

December 11, 2022 3rd Sunday in Advent

### Gospel Reading: Matthew 11:2-11

"Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared." — Isaiah 35:5

Jesus came to bring healing to the world. He began his ministry with many miracles, showing the power of God to heal physical problems, such as blindness and deafness. But "healing the world" did not mean that he was going to heal everyone's physical problems. He came to heal us from sin, anything that hurts our relationship with others, ourselves, and God. Sin can destroy the life of God that lives in our hearts, and for this reason it must be cured - over and over again! Rejoice today, for God sent his Son to bring life and healing to the world, to model how we can be and act in the world, and to cure our sin with his great love! Let us prepare to celebrate his birth with great excitement!

*Dear Lord, thank you for sending us your Son to bring true healing, the kind that brings true life. Prepare us to celebrate the great gift of his incarnation at Christmas.*

**What are some ways we can rejoice this week, and show our thanks to God for healing us from sin?**



# Gospel Readings

December 25, 2022 The Nativity of the Lord

## Gospel Reading: John 1:1-18

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings glad tidings, announcing peace, bearing good news..." — Isaiah 52:7

What great joy this day brings to our hearts! We are surrounded by loved ones. We are sharing feasts and receiving presents. But are we seeking the newborn king as the shepherds did? Are we proclaiming the Savior's birth as the angels did? Isaiah reminds us today to bring the good news of Christ's birth to all we meet. We can do this through our actions, words, and even our thoughts. By doing this, we share the peace that is in our own hearts, and that can be one of the greatest gifts we give this year.



*Father in heaven, thank you for the greatest gift that was ever given by anyone, your son Jesus. We sing his praises along with the angels this day, saying Glory to the newborn King!*



Download this month's [Saint Prayer Card](#) - St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin



### Sources:

[Saint Juan Diego, 1474-1548](#)

[What Is Advent?](#)

[The Fruit Of The Holy Spirit: What Is Faithfulness?](#)



Arise!

Pilgrims of Hope Journal

### WEEK ONE

The second week of Advent is focused on Peace - what has brought you peace this week?



In God's gift of faith, a supernatural infused virtue, we realize that a great love has been offered us, a good word has been spoken to us, and that when we welcome that word, Jesus Christ the Word made flesh, the Holy Spirit transforms us, lights up our way to the future and enables us joyfully to advance along that way on wings of hope. - Lumen Fidei

# December

## WEEK TWO

The third week of Advent is focused on Joy - what little moment has brought you joy this week?



## WEEK THREE

The fourth week of Advent is focused on Love - when was a time this week that you felt God's love?



## WEEK FOUR

Read Luke 2: 1-20 today. How can you be like the shepherds who spread the news of Jesus' birth?



## *A Prayer to St. Juan Diego*

Beloved Juan Diego,  
show us the way that leads to the Virgin,  
that she may receive us in the depths of her heart,  
for she is the loving,  
compassionate Mother who guides us to the true God.  
Amen.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mystical Rose,  
make intercession for the Holy Church,  
protect the Sovereign Pontiff,

help all those who invoke thee in their necessities,  
and since thou art the ever Virgin Mary,  
and Mother of the True God,  
obtain for us from thy most holy Son  
the grace of keeping our faith,  
of sweet hope in the midst of the bitterness of life,  
of burning charity, and the precious gift of final perseverance.

St. Juan Diego, pray for us.  
Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us. Amen.

THE SOUTHERN ALBERTA SKATING ACADEMY

with support from  CITY OF Lethbridge

PRESENTS

# Wishes

6pm ENMAX

FRIDAY DECEMBER 23rd

**\$12**

LOWER BOWL

**\$17**

ON ICE

**\$40**

4-PACK

Tickets available through the ENMAX Centre