

UPCOMING DATES:

Feb 1st – New Student Registration Starts.
Feb 3rd – NO KINDERGARTEN
Feb 9th – Valentine's Day Dance 6-7:30pm
Feb 13th – 100 Days of School
Feb 14th – Red and Heart Day
Feb 15th – Pink Shirt Day
Feb 20-24th – NO SCHOOL – Reading Week
Feb 21st – Shrove Tuesday
Feb 22nd – Ash Wednesday
Feb 28th – Solid Color Day.



Mme Bouchard Message 2023 February

Dear ESM Families,

We are at the midpoint of the year. It is a good time to look back to see all we have accomplished. It is a good time to check in with our goals, to see how we are doing towards achieving them. It is also a good time to look forward as there is so much in store.

Our last School Council meeting was great. It is an exceptional group of parents and guardians taking time out of their busy schedules to plan great things for our students. We received feedback about Spaces, our digital reporting platform. We received some good feedback from some, and frustration from others. Parents requested another Spaces Parent Evening to help them navigate their child's Spaces. **Please mark your calendars for February 16th, at 6:00pm. Spaces will be hosting an information evening to help parents work with Spaces.** We are hopeful that this will help to answer questions. Be sure to pre-register. Here is the link: https://myblueprint.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_fDB9dpznQlWdsp9Vg_RdrQ We are also looking into hosting a couple of Parent Evenings where we parents can learn about important and relevant topics. More information to come soon.

We are also very excited to host a **Family Valentine's Dance, on Thursday, Feb. 9th from 6-7:30pm.** Come out, let's dance and spend some time together. We will be selling glow sticks and small candy bags to raise money for our School Committees to support student activities (Leadership, Wellness, Faith and Sports Committee.) There will be a \$1.00 entrance fee if you are able to. If not, all are welcome. It will be so much fun. Don't forget your water bottle!

Our grade 6 Basketball season is up and running. We will celebrate 100 Days at School on Feb. 13th, Valentine's (Red and Heart Day) on Feb. 14th, and Pink Shirt Day on Feb. 15th. There is no school for students the week of Family Day, Feb. 20th-24th. It looks to be another busy month!

New student registration begins on February 1st, 2023. We welcome new students to such an incredible school community where faith is at the center of all we do. ESM has a beautiful culture, the learning is incredible, the students and families are wonderful, staff is committed and caring, and it is a great place to be. "Love is spoken here."

Alberta Education is conducting the annual Alberta Education Assurance Surveys until March 3, 2023. These surveys help guide our school. Parents of students in grades 4 will receive a survey mailed to their homes directly from Alberta Education. Also, all students in grades 4 and all teachers will complete their surveys online through their schools. More information will be sent directly to grade 4 parents. We thank you for your help in answering the questions as the feedback helps to shape the direction of our school.

February is the month of friendship, kindness, acceptance, family and love. We wish you a fantastic February and we pray for you and your family.

Sincerely,

Mme Bouchard

Mr. Harper's February Message 2023

Welcome to February! February is a month to celebrate family and loved ones and marks the beginning of Lent!

In January, the grade 1DI class put together a wonderful celebration about the Baptism of the Lord. We talked about the Holy Spirit, some of the Spiritual Works of Mercy, and prayer. Throughout February, we will continue to learn about the Fruits and Gifts of the Spirit and talk about prayer, which will help us on our faith journey to arise as pilgrims of hope. Learning to be mindful, gracious, and kind helps us to keep in mind that God is in our hearts always.

Ash Wednesday this year falls during the Family Week break, on February 22nd. This means we will not celebrate Ash Wednesday during Mass at the school. Please look at your parish website for information about Ash Wednesday Mass. We are hosting our Lenten Mass at the school on March 1st at 9:00 AM. Father Kevin will join us in the gym, and our 5BI class will be helping with Mass. Please join us if you are able. Each week after that, we have classes hosting Lenten celebrations for the school.

I would like to wish you a wonderful month of February. May you and your family stay safe and feel God's love and blessings throughout the year.

And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. 1 John 4:16



TEACHER FEATURE

Please welcome Mrs. Nicole Fuller to ESM!



Hello! My name is Nicole Fuller, and I am the new Grade 5 teacher. I am so excited to join the ESM family and to help out Mrs. Stevenson while she is taking care of her new little one. I have been teaching for almost a decade and I last taught grade 5 at Nicholas Sheran School. I love learning, reading, and discovering new things all the time! When I am not working with kids at school, I love spending time with my husband and two sons. We love board games, hockey (Go Flames Go!), movies and travelling. Before my boys were born I travelled around the world to places like Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mexico, and Hawaii.

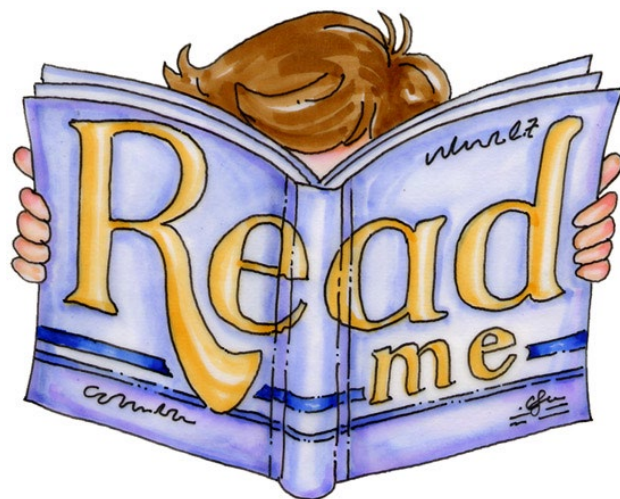
I am thrilled to be a part of Ecole St. Mary and I am excited to get to know you all.

Volunteers needed for the Scholastic Book Fair

We are hosting a Scholastic Book Fair on Tuesday, March 21, (during the Day) Wednesday, March 22 and Thursday, (during the Day and evening) March 23, during Parent Teacher interviews. If you are available and interested in volunteering for this great event please email Mrs. Bugg at buggb@holyspirit.ab.ca

During the days on Tuesday, and Thursday, 21st and 23rd, the book fair will be open to students wishing to purchase products from the Fair. If you are interested in offering a helping hand anytime during school hours on those days, or on the evenings, Wednesday, March 22, 3:00 - 7:00 or Thursday, March 23, 3:00 - 7:00 p.m. please let Mrs. Bugg or the office know.

Thank You,
Mrs. Bugg





REGISTRATION 2023-2024

Re-Registration is OPEN! **Please ensure this is complete as soon as possible.** This allows us to have our numbers in and better plan for next school year.

New Student Registration opens on February 1st. This is for students/families who are new to the division. Please see the notice below as to the age a child must be to attend each program.

Please note:

*If you need to register your child for the current school year (ex: you recently moved into town) please call the school office directly for help with this.



School Clothing Store will open in February!

Please watch your email and our Facebook page for dates, more information and the website link!

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.

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.



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 January our winners were: Jayden 1DI & Zara 5BI

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.

Let your Voice be Heard!

The City of Lethbridge is asking for your assistance with community engagement on the harmonizing of school and playground zones.



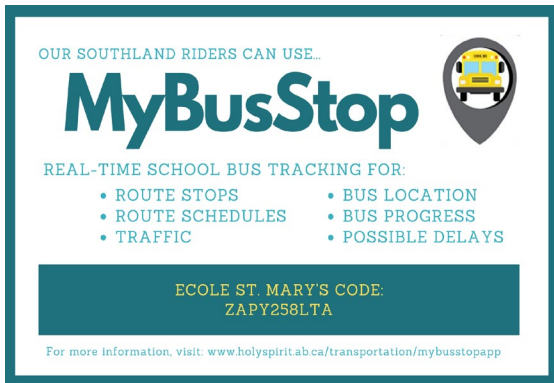
The link below will lead you to information about the project and a survey.

<https://getinvolvedlethbridge.ca/harmonizedplaygroundzones>

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 January the winning house team is: Silver Dolphins



SCHOOL BUS

Our Code is: ZAPY258LTA

Please download the ap for the most up to date route changes and delays.

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/>

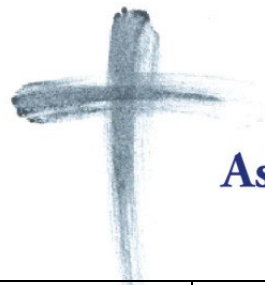
ATTENDANCE

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 (leave a voicemail or email esmooffice@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.

February 2023



Ash Wednesday
— Lent Begins

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Girls Basketball game	2	3 NO KINDERGARTEN	4
5	6	7 Boys Basketball game	8 Girls Basketball game	9 Valentine's Day Dance 6-7:30pm	10	11
12	13 100th Day of school	14 Red and Heart Day Valentine's Day	15 Pink Shirt Day Girls Basketball game Div. Board meeting	16 Boys Basketball game	17	18
19	20	21	22 Ash Wednesday	23	24	25
		Reading Week – NO SCHOOL				
26	27	28 Solid Color Day Boys Basketball Game				

March 2023

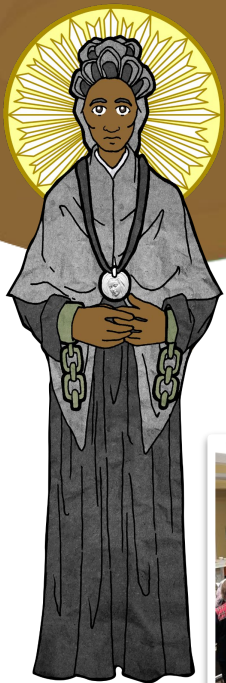


Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Lenten Mass 9am @ ESM Girls Basketball game	2	3 NO KINDERGARTEN	4
5	6	7 Boys Basketball game	8 Girls Basketball game School Council 6pm	9 Boys Basketball game	10	11
12	13 NO SCHOOL Spiritual Development Day	14 NO SCHOOL Div. PD Day	15	16	17 Boys & Girls Basketball Jamboree	18
19	20	21	22 Interviews & Book Fair	23 Interviews & Book Fair	24	25
26	27	28	29 Div. Board meeting	30	31	

February

Arise!

Pilgrims of Hope



"Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.."

Mark 11:25

St. Josephine Bakhita 1869-1947 (Feast Day: February 8)

Born in the Darfur region of southern Sudan, Josephine was kidnapped at the age of 7, sold into slavery and given the name Bakhita, which ironically means 'fortunate'. During this time, she was treated with inhumane cruelty, being beaten and forcibly scarred. She was resold several times, finally in 1883 to Callisto Legnani, an Italian official in Khartoum, Sudan. Two years later, he took Josephine to Italy and gave her to his friend Augusto Michieli. Bakhita became the nanny to their young daughter. During this time, they went to stay in Venice with the Canossian Sisters. This was Bakhita's first encounter with Christianity, and she felt drawn to the Catholic Church. She was baptized and confirmed in 1890, taking the name Josephine.

When the Michielis returned from Africa and wanted to take Josephine back with them, the future saint refused to go. During the ensuing court case, the Canossian Sisters and the patriarch of Venice intervened on Josephine's behalf. The judge concluded that since slavery was illegal in Italy, she had actually been free since 1885. Josephine entered the Institute of St. Magdalene of Canossa in 1893. In 1902, she was transferred to the city of Schio, where she assisted her religious community through cooking, sewing, embroidery, and welcoming visitors at the door. She soon became well loved by the children attending the sisters' school and the local citizens. She once said, "Be good, love the Lord, pray for those who do not know Him. What a great grace it is to know God!"



Holy Moments In Our Schools

On Tuesday, January 17, 2023, we were fortunate to host our annual Retired Staff Mass at St. Basil Catholic Education Centre. This was rescheduled from November due to inclement weather conditions. We were blessed to have so many retired staff in attendance (approx. 40) and to recognize their service to Catholic Education in southern Alberta. Their witness is a model to us as we "Arise" this year, and seek to live in community, spiritual unity and relationship with one another.



The Spiritual Works of Mercy – Forgive Offenses

To forgive offenses is one of the seven spiritual works of mercy. It is also variously known as to "forgive all injuries" and to "forgive sins." There are at least three major spiritual benefits: the one who forgives is liberated from bitterness and resentment, the one who is forgiven receives mercy and a new beginning, and the community experiences conflict resolution and the restoration of harmony.

Jesus gave the great commandment: Love God and love your neighbor. Because of our flawed human nature and our propensity to sin, everyone who offends against love and relationships is harmed or broken. The way to return to love, mend relationships and heal offenses is to forgive. Forgiveness is the flip side of the love coin.

Forgiving others is difficult at times because we do not have God's limitless mercy and compassion. But Jesus teaches us that we should forgive as God forgives, relying on him to help us show others the mercy of God by:

- Letting go of grudges
- Saying sorry is something we learn as kids, but how often do we really mean it? Forgiveness transforms hearts and lives
- Participate in the Sacrament of Penance
- Pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet

Sources:

[Saint Josephine Bakhita](#)

[St. Josephine Bakhita](#)

[Fifth spiritual work of mercy: To forgive offenses willingly](#)

[The Spiritual Works of Mercy](#)

Adapted from: [Weekly Devotional: Fruit of the Spirit – Self-Control](#)

[Home Page](#)

The Fruit of the Spirit – Self-Control

What exactly is self-control? The Greek word translated as 'self-control,' egrateia, is derived from two other Greek words—en and kratos. En means 'in' and kratos means 'strength' or 'power.' The Bible typically refers to self-control as 'temperance,' meaning self-restraint or moderation.

Displaying self-control is often a matter of responding rather than reacting. When we react to a situation, we let our emotions take control. We are more likely to become defensive and say hurtful things. Responding, however, involves developing a thoughtful response that is guided by reason more than emotions.

Self-control also relates to the temptation to sin in our lives. We may at times lack the self-restraint to stop when we should, finding ourselves tempted to overindulge. Many worldly temptations can be strong, but our spiritual self-control can be stronger with the help of our faith.

There are two proverbs that explain the difference of not having self-control versus the value of having it. In Proverbs 25:28 we are told, "Like a city whose walls are broken down is a man who lacks self-control." But, in Proverbs 16:32 we learn, "It is better to be patient than powerful. It is better to win control over yourself than over whole cities."

With God's help, you can increasingly conquer your temptations and learn to embrace the fruit of self-control. The more we pray, study the Bible and draw closer to God, the more we will have the ability to demonstrate our own self-control.

"If we had no hope in the Lord, what would we do in this world?"

- St. Josephine Bakhita



Reflecting on the life of St. Josephine Bakhita...

Forgive Offenses

Josephine endured unimaginable hardships in her life, but she showed mercy. "If I were to meet the slave traders who kidnapped me and even those who tortured me," she once said, "I would kneel and kiss their hands, for if that did not happen, I would not be a Christian and religious today. The Lord has loved me so much. We must love everyone." In the face of inhuman trials, she only saw the face of Christ. Pope John Paul II, speaking in Sudan after her beatification:

"She thus became a model of virtue and holiness of life for Christians. To religious believers everywhere she speaks of the value of reconciliation and love, for in her heart she overcame any feelings of hatred for those who had harmed her. She learned from the tragic events of her life to have complete trust in the Almighty who is always and everywhere present, and therefore she learned to be constantly good and generous to everyone."



Self-Control

The circumstances of St. Josephine's life were marked with trauma, so much so that she forgot her birth name. The name that was ironically given to her, Bakhita (fortunate), became over time a marker of her identity as a child of God. St. Josephine, in her extraordinary love and forgiveness, was known to have said:

"If I were to meet those who kidnapped me, and even those who tortured me, I would kneel and kiss their hands. For, if these things had not happened, I would not have been a Christian and a religious today."

The people of her town in Italy loved her, and thought of her as a mother. She exuded grace to those around her, and despite the scars that she carried, never lost faith. She is a model for us of self-control and forgiveness, and a witness of hope and trust in God.

Gospel Readings

February 5, 2023

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Gospel Reading: Matthew 5:16

"...your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father." — Matthew 5:16

We are blessed by the Lord all the time. How do we show God that we are grateful for the blessings he showers on us? One way is to begin by saying thank you for our blessings and remembering God has given them to us - we haven't earned them on our own. Today's Gospel shows us that if we listen to God and his commands, he will surprise us with blessings, just like Simon Peter was surprised by the HUGE catch of fish. Sometimes we'll receive enormous blessings that we can't miss (like Peter's catch of fish), but other times the blessings and graces will be small and it will take some thinking to recognize them. Let's not forget to thank God for those little gifts too!

Dear Lord, thank you for loving me so much that you bless me all the time. Please make my heart more grateful for the gifts of your love and your blessings that are in my life.

What are some things in my life that are blessings from the Lord?

Are there times I don't feel grateful for God's blessings? Why?

February 12, 2023

6th Sunday in Ordinary time

Gospel Reading: Matthew 5:17-37

"...he has set before you fire and water to whichever you choose, stretch out your hand." — Sirach 15:16

Did anyone ever warn you "Don't touch the stove; it's hot!" or "Don't go in the deep end of the pool without your life jacket"? If so, it was probably someone who loved you very much. And wanted to make sure you stayed safe. Did you obey?

The first reading today reminds us that if we choose to obey God's warnings, we can avoid a lot of trouble for ourselves and others. But if we choose to disobey, we can get hurt and sometimes even hurt others at the same time. God loves us more than anyone else in the world - after all, we are his precious creation!

When we have a decision to make, we can ask ourselves WWJD - What Would Jesus Do? Jesus obeyed his Father in all things, even the most difficult. He trusted that ultimately God wanted what was best for him and the world. God wants the same for us and we can trust him.

Dear Jesus, help us to choose to obey God in all we do.

What is one good decision I have made already today?

February 19, 2023

7th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Gospel Reading: Matthew 5:38-48

"When someone strikes you on your right cheek, turn the other one as well...Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go for two miles." — Matthew 5:39, 41

In today's Gospel, Jesus challenged the people to go beyond loving those who are kind to them, to loving their enemies as well. That is a hard teaching! Most times, we want to get back at people who hurt us, but this is not the way God wants us to respond. God sent Jesus to us as an example. Do you remember what Jesus said when he was being crucified? "Father, forgive them for they don't know what they are doing." Only with the help of the Holy Spirit can we follow Jesus' example in returning love for violence.

Dear Lord, send your Holy Spirit to us so we can love even those who are hardest to love.

Has someone done something for me that was extra loving - more than I deserved or expected?

Gospel Readings

February 26, 2023

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Gospel Reading: Matthew 4:10

"...Jesus said to him, 'Get away, Satan!' It is written: 'The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.'" — Matthew 4:10

During the season of Lent, we try to make extra sacrifices to show God that we love and serve him above all other things in our life, like our possessions. This can really help us to grow closer to God, but Satan does not want us to be close to God. He will tempt us to take the easy road instead of the right road. We must guard our hearts and minds against these temptations so we don't start believing that money and power and identity are better than living like Jesus taught us. We can do that by talking with our family about what we will give up during Lent or what extra good things we want to do more of during Lent. That way we can help remind each other of what we promised to do or not do for these next 6 weeks. Lent can be a time of coming to understand God and the love he has for us and for everyone else, so, don't let Satan steal that away from you.

Dear Lord, you made the ultimate sacrifice for us by giving up your son and allowing him to die. Please give us the grace to embrace our sacrifices this Lent so that you may know and feel our gratitude.

How have you been tempted in your life? What can you do to resist temptation?

Download this month's [Saint Prayer Card](#) - St. Josephine Bakhita



Traditional Lenten Practices



PRAYER

The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines prayer as, "...the rising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God." (CCC 2559)

In short, prayer is how we communicate with God.



FASTING

Choose an item to "fast" from during Lent. For example, you may want to fast from a specific food or treat. Fasting is not limited to food. You may want to fast from unkind words as an opportunity to grow in charity, or from media to devote time to relationships.



ALMSGIVING

Like fasting, giving can be approached in several different ways. Money can be collected. Food, necessities, and toys can be bought or given to other children in need. We can also give of our time by helping others.

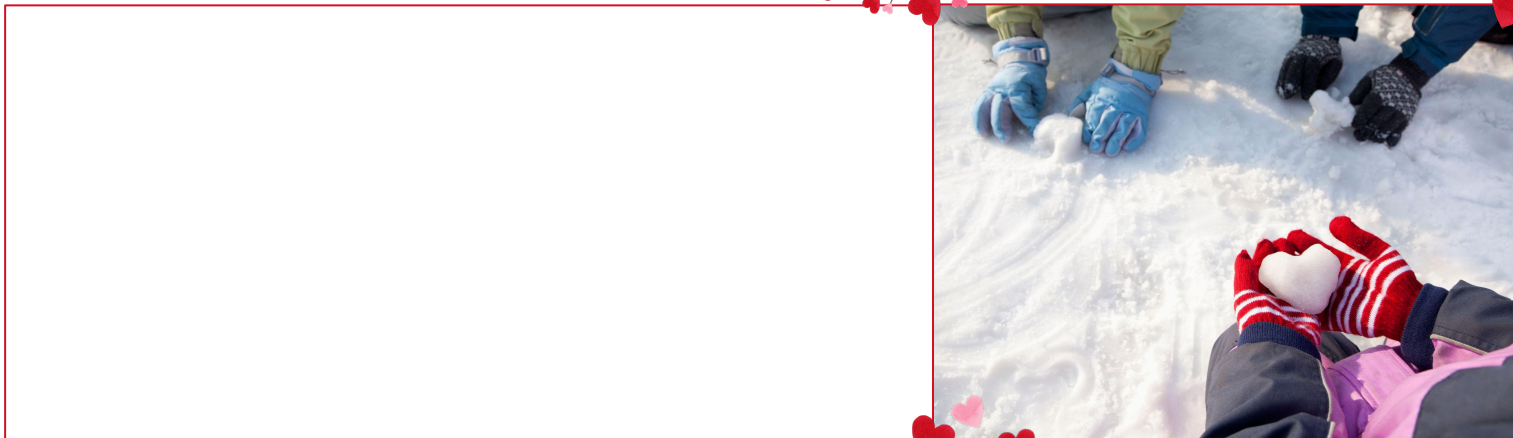
February

Arise!

Pilgrims of Hope Journal

WEEK ONE

What are you learning about God?



Additional Sources:

[Prayer to St. Josephine Bakhita](#)

[Home Page](#)

February



Arise!

Pilgrims of Hope Journal

WEEK TWO

What experience do you treasure?



WEEK THREE

What do you need to mute in your life in order to hear God's voice?

WEEK FOUR

What negative thoughts were you able to release today?



St. Josephine Bakhita, you were sold into slavery as a child and endured untold hardship and suffering. Once liberated from your physical enslavement, you found true redemption in your encounter with Christ and his Church.

O St. Bakhita, assist all those who are trapped in a state of slavery; Intercede with God on their behalf so that they will be released from their chains of captivity.

Those whom man enslaves, let God set free. Provide comfort to survivors of slavery and let them look to you as an example of hope and faith.

Help all survivors find healing from their wounds. We ask for your prayers and intercessions for those enslaved among us. Amen.

2023 OUTDOOR SOCCER REGISTRATION

Online Registration opens February 1, 2023 – March 5, 2023



www.lethbridgesoccer.com

403-320-5425

Boys and Girls

U4 – U7 (Co-Ed) \$125.00

U9 & U11 (Male and Female Divisions) \$190.00

U13 - U18 (Co-Ed) - \$190.00

Season will run April – June 2023



LFC Competitive information available online at www.lethbridgesoccer.com or visit our Facebook Page at Lethbridge Soccer Association. LFC Registration for evaluations will open online February 1, 2023



february 25, 2023

coldest night of the year

it's cold out there #cnoy23



The **Coldest Night of the Year** is a winterrific family-friendly walk to raise money for local charities serving people experiencing hurt, hunger, and homelessness. Team up, fundraise, walk, and **gather for good**... because it's cold out there.

walk / donate / volunteer / share / cnoy.org



Invites you to join in this family-friendly walk in the cold.

Location: Festival Square

Time: 4:00 pm - Registration

5:00 pm - Start of Walk

6:00 pm - Warmup snack

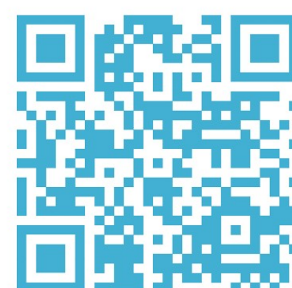
7:00 pm - Heading home

Sign up today at cnoy.org/streetsalivemission

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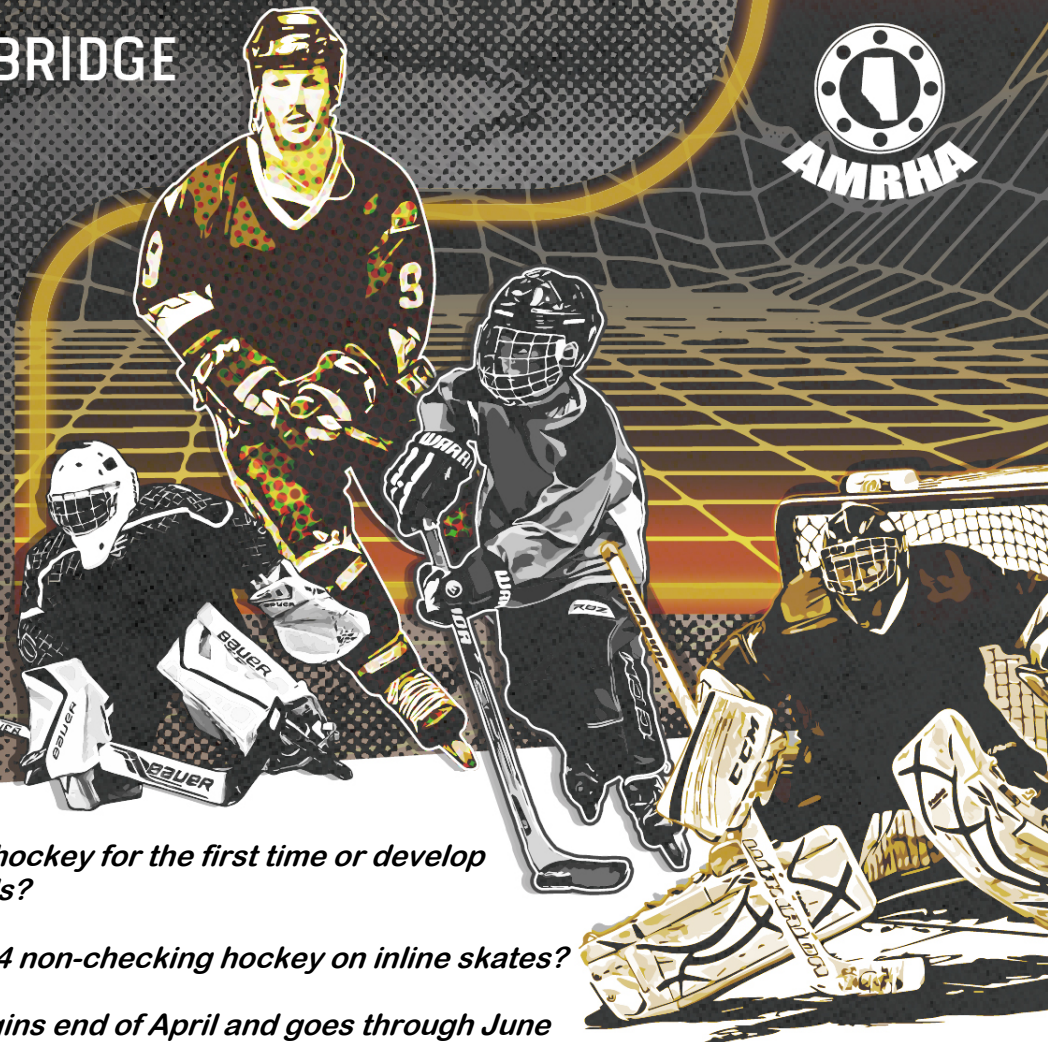
scan+go!

[https://cnoy.org/
register](https://cnoy.org/register)

ROLLER HOCKEY LETHBRIDGE



**ALL
THRILL
NO
CHILL**



Want to get into hockey for the first time or develop your hockey skills?

Want to try 4-on-4 non-checking hockey on inline skates?

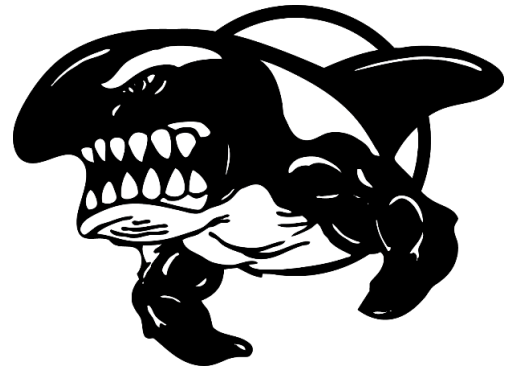
*2023 Season begins end of April and goes through June
Ages 7 to Adult!*

www.rollerhockeylethbridge.ca for more information and registration link

LETHBRIDGE ORCAS

Looking for the perfect summer activity for your child...

Come join the Lethbridge Orcas Summer Swim Club.



2023 Registration Dates

Returning Swimmers – March 1

New Swimmers – March 15

Summer Swim Club runs from May 1st to Mid Aug for the 2023

Swimming is a lifelong sport that can be used to achieve personal growth and development physically, psychologically and socially. The Lethbridge Summer Swim Club is a local non-profit organization that offers a swim program presenting this opportunity for your child to experience.

Scan the QR Code or go to www.lethbridgeorcas.com for more information and to register today!



For more information please email orcasecretary@gmail.com