


















PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD

# March 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<b>1</b> Girls Bball game here vs STC  School Council meeting 7 pm <i>Our Voice counts...</i> 	<b>2</b> Elder visit	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> 	<b>6</b> Grade 2 Retreat Assumption Church 9:00 – 2:00  Girls Bball game at SPFA	<b>7</b> Lenten Celebration Hosted by 20 @ 10:20am  Boys Bball game at St Teresa	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Boys Bball game at St Martha's  	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> Daylight Savings Time Spring Forward  	<b>13</b> Spiritual Development Day  	<b>14</b> No School  	<b>15</b> Lenten Celebration 10:20am – 1D  Girls Bball game here vs CSM	<b>16</b> Last day to order Via Cibo hot lunch   Boys Bball game here vs St Paul	<b>17</b> Basketball Jamboree Wear <b>GREEN</b>   Pizza 73 fundraiser	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> 	<b>20</b> Lenten Celebration 10:20am – 5B 	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 	<b>23</b> Spring Photos  Grade 6 Orientation SFJH – 9:00 – 10:45  Hot Lunch Via Cibo	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> 	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 9:15 am Lenten Mass Assumption Church  Div Board Mtg 6:00 pm	<b>30</b> Grades 4, 5 & 6 SFJH play 9:30 – 12:30  	<b>31</b>  Lethbridge Regional Science Fair & Science Olympics <small>March 31st – April 1st 2023, Lethbridge</small>	



## MARCH NEWSLETTER

### PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

March is an exciting month. While we look forward to enjoying the remainder of 2022-2023 and have so much yet to learn, we are beginning to plan for the 2023-2024 school year. Thank you to those families who have already completed their registration update forms. We use the information you provide in your forms to help us plan classes and staff for the upcoming school year.

Please consider completing those forms at your earliest convenience. If you require any assistance in completing your forms, please contact the school office.

AEAM Surveys have been sent by the government to families via mail. If you have received your survey, please consider completing it online or on paper and return via mail. The deadline for submission has been extended to March 17, 2023. The data collected from these surveys helps the school and the school division set goals and allocate resources.

### Upcoming in March

We are looking forward to these amazing opportunities this month...

1. Elder Visit. Elder Mr. Kevin Healy will be visiting classes on Thursday March 2.
2. Alberta Health Services will be presenting our Grades 4-6 classes with Brain Waves. Throughout the Brain Waves program students explore important injury prevention messaging on topics like concussions and how to properly fit their helmets. The program also gives teachers and students a common language to talk about brain awareness and brain health - all while having fun!
3. Science Fair - Will be held at OLA on March 22.
4. Lenten Mass at All Saints Parish (Assumption Church) Wednesday March 29 at 9:15am.
5. Grades 4-6 students will be attending a performance of High School Musical at St. Francis Junior High - March 30.
6. Grades 1-3 will attend a performance of Little Mermaid in April.

### ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

As we begin the season of Lent, many of us come to a greater awareness of our sins and shortcomings -- and as always, it is easy to be aware of the shortcomings and failings of others! In that spirit, it's important to remember our school's faith plan theme for March, which is...

### **FORGIVENESS**



The season of Lent asks us as Catholics to reflect on our shortcomings and failures -- but it asks us to do it in a very specific light: that of God's all-encompassing and loving forgiveness. We do not grieve our sins as people with no hope of redemption, but in the awareness that Christ has already suffered and borne the penalty for our guilt. This month, see if you can find time to genuinely apologize to your children -- and to genuinely forgive them when they try your patience! Let us remember we are all children of God, equally beloved and equally flawed.

The season of Lent offers us a wonderful opportunity to consider how we speak about, speak to, and interact with those we don't like or respect. This month, see if you can encourage your children to look for something they like about or do something kind towards a classmate they've never gotten along with -- maybe even one who has been unkind to them. The more we reflect God's love in the world, the closer we come to Christ on the cross, perfect in His love and suffering.

### **Verse of the Month**

*"Be kind and compassionate to one another,  
forgiving each other, just as in Christ God  
forgave you."*

*-Ephesians 4:32*

### ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY

It is that time of year where Alberta Education is conducting their annual Alberta Education Assurance Surveys. Please know that the survey is voluntary. However, we do strongly encourage your honest participation as your responses help identify school and jurisdiction areas of strength and growth.

Surveys have been mailed to parents/guardians of students in Grades 4, 5, and 6. You are invited to go online with the Random-Access Code (RAC) listed on the correspondence provided, or to fill in the paper copy and mail it back to Alberta Education. Parents/guardians with more than one student in an eligible grade will receive a separate survey invitation package for each child. All surveys are asked to be returned before March 17, 2023.

Additional notes to consider in filling out the survey:

- A response of “Don’t Know” indicates that the question being asked is applicable to you/your student, but that you do not know the answer to that question.
- A response of “N/A” (not-applicable), or simply leaving the question blank, should be used if you are uncomfortable answering a question or if the question does not apply to you/your student.

For more information about the Alberta Education Assurance (AEA) Survey’s purpose, how it is used by schools and jurisdictions, what topics are addressed in the questions, and who you can contact for further information, please visit: <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-education-assurance-survey.aspx>.

Lastly, please be aware that translated versions of the survey are available upon request. If you need a version in another language, send an email to Alberta Education’s System Assurance Branch at [EDC.SystemAssurance@gov.ab.ca](mailto:EDC.SystemAssurance@gov.ab.ca).

In the meantime, don’t hesitate to contact us at the school if you require any additional assistance. Thank you in advance for your feedback.

### SPRING PHOTOS



Smile! Lifetouch Photography will be here on Thursday, March 23, 2023. Just like in the fall, all students will have their photo taken and parents will have an opportunity to purchase photo packages through Lifetouch Canada Inc.

### REGISTRATION AND UPDATES

Individual emails with your link to register your child for the upcoming school year have been sent out. Thank you to those who have already completed the form. We ask that you complete the online ‘Registration Update Form’ as soon as possible. If you require assistance, please call the office.



### CATHOLIC CENTRAL MUSICAL



The Addams Family  
March 10, 11, 14,  
16-18 at 7:30 pm.  
March 11 and 12 at  
1:30pm. Tickets  
\$22.50 and are  
available through  
the CCH website.  
Surcharges may  
apply.

### ST FRANCIS JUNIOR HIGH MUSICAL

High School Musical  
March 30 – April 5.  
Weekend matinees  
at 2:00pm and  
evening shows at  
7:00pm. Tickets are  
\$15.00 and  
available through  
SFJH website.



### SCHOOL COUNCIL UPDATE

Our next Hot Lunch will be on **Thursday, March 23rd** from Via Cibo. Orders must be submitted through School Cash Online by **March 16th**.

We are excited to announce an upcoming Pizza 73 Fundraiser in March. It will be held on **Friday March 17th** (St. Patrick’s Day). Please see the poster for details.

Our next online School Council meeting is scheduled for Wednesday March 1st. All are welcome to attend!

# March

## Arise! Pilgrims of Hope



*“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.”*

Psalm 23:6

### St. Hildegard of Bingen 1098-1179 (Feast Day: September 17)

Abbess, artist, author, composer, mystic, pharmacist, poet, preacher, theologian—where to begin in describing this remarkable woman? Born into a noble family, she was instructed for ten years by the holy woman Blessed Jutta. When Hildegard was 18, she became a Benedictine nun at the Monastery of Saint Disibodenberg. Ordered by her confessor to write down the visions that she had received since the age of three, Hildegard took ten years to write her *Scivias* (Know the Ways). Pope Eugene III read it, and in 1147, encouraged her to continue writing. Her *Book of the Merits of Life* and *Book of Divine Works* followed. She wrote over 300 letters to people who sought her advice; she also composed short works on medicine and physiology, and sought advice from contemporaries such as Saint Bernard of Clairvaux.

Hildegard’s visions caused her to see humans as “living sparks” of God’s love, coming from God as daylight comes from the sun. Sin destroyed the original harmony of creation; Christ’s redeeming death and resurrection opened up new possibilities. Virtuous living reduces the estrangement from God and others that sin causes.

Like all mystics, Hildegard saw the harmony of God’s creation and the place of women and men in that. This unity was not apparent to many of her contemporaries. In 2012, Hildegard was canonized and named a Doctor of the Church by Pope Benedict XVI. Her liturgical feast is celebrated on September 17.

### Holy Moments In Our Schools

At their weekly Gospel reflection time, a blindfolded student had to stay focused on and follow the voice of God instead of the ‘voice’ of poor choices and turning away from God. (Matthew 4:12-17) Bringing faith to life happens at St. Patrick Fine Arts!



### The Spiritual Works of Mercy – Lent

So far in this school year, we have explored a variety of the Spiritual Works of Mercy:

- **Admonish the Sinner** - journey together while being supportive of others when they need correction. Learn to walk more closely with Christ.
- **Counsel the Doubtful** - listen to counsel and instruction, witness to God’s love in your actions. Accompany friends who are struggling by helping them reorient towards Christ.
- **Pray for the Living and the Dead** - join together in praying for your fellow Christians in the Body of Christ, and the communion of the saints. Pray with and for others.
- **Instruct the Ignorant** - be open to learning more about your faith. Look for ways to increase your formation and speak with others about our beliefs.
- **Forgive Offenses** - while it can be difficult, we are called to forgive others as God forgives us. We are freed when we forgive.

As we continue through our Lenten days, we can draw inspiration from the saints as we engage in fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, and seek to grow in our own mercy towards others.

“Believing means entrusting oneself to a merciful love which always accepts and pardons, which sustains and directs our lives, and which shows its power by its ability to make straight the crooked lines of our history.” (Lumen Fidei 13)

#### Sources:

[St. Hildegard of Bingen](#)

[The Fruit of the Holy Spirit: What Is Goodness?](#)

[St. Hildegard’s advice for building healthy self-confidence](#)

[Home Page](#)

### The Fruit of the Spirit – Goodness

What exactly is goodness? The word ‘good’ is used so frequently in our everyday lives that it almost loses its meaning. For example, how many times a day do we say, “good morning” and “good luck” and “good work”? But, the Bible tells us that the word ‘good’ actually means holy, pure and righteousness. Literally goodness is godliness.

Goodness can often be seen in our actions, but our heart also has to be pure. The goodness of Christ is to be demonstrated in our lives every day. Psalm 23:6 says, “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

God calls us to be filled with goodness from the inside out, being holy in what we do and say because Christians should have a heart that seeks goodness. We are not to just do good works, because doing good works without a good heart is empty. The ‘goodness’ described as a fruit of the Spirit is not merely moral behavior, but an excellence of character. This goodness is only possible through God’s grace and mercy.

Goodness is not about doing elaborate things to gain recognition. Oftentimes, it is the small acts of goodness we do throughout our day that mean the most to those around us. Is your friend having a bad day? Write them a note to let them know how much you care about them. Is someone putting you down? Pray for them.

It is in these acts of goodness that we reflect Christ’s character and possess the fruit of the Spirit. While it may seem like no one notices, God does. Ultimately, when we show goodness, we bring glory to God’s name.

*“According to St. Hildegard...In the story of the creation of the world, God considers all his work—including humankind—to be very good.”*

- Marzena Devoud



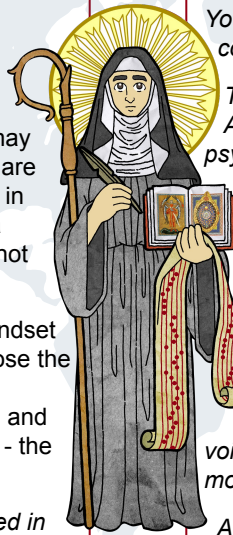
# Reflecting on the life of St. Hildegard...

## St. Hildegard Showed “Goodness”

As a Benedictine nun, Hildegard advocated and practiced moderation and balance—two things we recognize today as being important for well-being. As we have seen, she was also “good” at a great many things! Sometimes, we may be hard on ourselves, and overlook the ways in which we are both good at things, as well as good - holy inside and out, in what we say and do. While she thought of each of us as a ‘living spark’, a glimpse of the radiance of God, we might not always feel the same.

In [this article](#), the author delves into the effect that our mindset and beliefs can have on us when we think negatively, or lose the balanced sense of self. She references St. Hildegard of Bingen’s sense of harmony between body, soul and mind, and how important it is to look at ourselves fairly but positively - the way that God sees us. As she writes,

*In a letter addressed to her friend Father Bertulf and quoted in a book by Hildegard Strickerschmidt, the German abbess stresses the danger of self-criticism. She writes, “You remind me of a man who looks at his face in the mirror, but does not rejoice because he is overwhelmed by doubts about his beauty.*



*Your heart then looks like a building visible from afar, but covered with fog ...”*

*The mental fog that St. Hildegard speaks of in the Middle Ages is a concept commonly used in contemporary psychology. Under the influence of negative thinking, we are unable to see our positive character traits.*

*Aren’t we dissatisfied most of the time with our own appearance when we look in the mirror? This inferiority complex, which destroys the joy of who we really are, can also affect our spiritual and intellectual life.*

*In her letter, St. Hildegard describes the abbot’s goodness, which was clear to everyone around him but which he himself was unable to appreciate. A little negative inner voice was poisoning his spirit, preventing him from making the most of his gifts.*

*According to St. Hildegard, we must seek the talents that lie dormant in us, rejoice in them, and cultivate them. God created humanity out of love, and made us his partners. In the story of the creation of the world, God considers all his work—including humankind—to be very good. St. Hildegard of Bingen, pray for us!*

## Gospel Readings

March 5, 2023

2nd Sunday in Lent

### Gospel Reading: Matthew 17:1-9

“This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased, listen to him.” — Matthew 17:5

During the Transfiguration, Jesus reveals his true glory to his closest friends. Similar to his baptism in the Jordan, the Father speaks from heaven to announce that Jesus is his “beloved Son.” Like a proud parent, God the Father is telling us that he is delighted by his son. He also tells us to “listen to him,” so we can follow Jesus and live how he lived: paying attention to the poor and the outcast, fighting for what is right, and bringing comfort to those who are hurting. If we listen to Jesus and follow him our hearts will get bigger and we will grow into everything God wants us to be.

*Dear Lord, help us to walk in Jesus’ footsteps, and to listen to him. Give us courage to follow him wherever he leads us!*

**How can you improve your listening skills, to better hear God’s voice?**

March 12, 2023

3rd Sunday in Lent

### Gospel Reading: John 4:5-42

“Jesus answered and said to her, ‘If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.” — John 4:10

We know that water is important in the Bible - it is used to cleanse, to baptize, to give life, and to promote growth. What Jesus was saying to the Samaritan woman, and to us, is that HE can cleanse us, HE baptizes us and removes our sin, HE gives life through his name, and that HE carries us through our growth in the sacraments and our love for him. Jesus is the living water that is poured into our hearts and reaches every corner of our being!

*Dear Father, thank you for this living water that you offer so freely to us. May it bring us into a deeper love for you.*

**What are some of the ways water is used in our Church’s rituals?**

March 19, 2023

4th Sunday in Lent

### Gospel Reading: John 9:1-41

“We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if one is devout and does his will, he listens to him.” — John 9:31

Many of us want to make our requests known to Jesus and then we want him to answer them exactly the way we want. But that doesn’t require much faith. In fact, it is almost as if we are blind to what it is that God may want for us. We choose only to see things the way we want. But Jesus wants us to open our eyes and take a step of faith, seeing him as the Son of God, who came to show us how to live and love. If we can step into that understanding of him, then we will be more willing to listen to his response to our prayers, even if it is not the answer we wanted. This is truly living out God’s will in our lives.

*Father in heaven, thank you for loving us so much so that your answer to our prayers is always what we need, even if it’s not what we imagined. Please teach us to accept your answers with patience and gratitude.*

**Share a time when your prayers were answered. Then try to think of a time when they were not answered the way you wanted them to be. How did you feel about God in both these situations?**

# Gospel Readings

March 26, 2023

5th Sunday in Lent

## Gospel Reading: John 11:1-45

"Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you.'" — John 11:21-22

When things are going your way and life seems good, it is easier to believe in Jesus, isn't it? But when things get tough and you are full of doubt, it may be easy to question Jesus. Martha shows us, in today's Gospel, what great faith looks like. She knew and loved Jesus very much. She saw how God had worked miracles through him. She saw how Jesus had brought peace and forgiveness to so many. No matter how hard her life seemed at the moment of her brother's death, she did not lose faith in Jesus. It made her believe even more. We, too, are called to this great faith. Whether things are good or tough, Jesus is always the same. He is always there for us and he loves us very much. We just have to have faith and believe.

*Dear Lord, thank you for always being with us through good and difficult times. Please give us the faith to know you are with us even when we can't feel it.*

**Talk about a tough time in your life when you felt God's presence.**

Download this month's [Saint Prayer Card](#) - St. Hildegard of Bingen



## The Annunciation of the Lord

The feast of the Annunciation is celebrated on March 25, nine months before Christmas. This feast celebrates the day the Angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and asked her to be the Mother of Jesus. Mary was an ordinary girl from a simple town. Yet, God chose her from all time, and set her apart to be the mother of His Son. She was preserved from the stain of original sin from the very moment of her conception. This is the doctrine of *The Immaculate Conception*. Through her yes, Mary teaches us what our response to God should be. Being "Full of Grace" did not diminish Mary's ability to say no. She could have said no to the Angel but she freely chose to say yes.

*"Mary showed complete trust in God by agreeing to be used as an instrument in his plan of salvation. She trusted him in spite of her nothingness because she knew he who is mighty could do great things in her and through her. Once she said "yes" to him, she never doubted. She was just a young woman, but she belonged to God and nothing nor anyone could separate her from him."*

— St. Teresa of Calcutta —



March



Arise!  
Pilgrims of Hope Journal

### WEEK ONE

God helps us to persevere through our challenges. How were you able to focus on God this week?

Additional Sources:

[The Annunciation: The Handmaid of the Lord](#)

[Home Page](#)

# March

## WEEK TWO

Mercy is the foundation of the Church's life. When did you receive a second chance this week?

Do not, O Lord,  
withhold your mercy  
from me;  
let your steadfast love  
and your faithfulness  
keep me safe forever.

Psalm 40:11



## WEEK THREE

The Eucharist reminds us that we are not isolated individuals, but one body. When did you taste the goodness of the Lord this week?



## WEEK FOUR

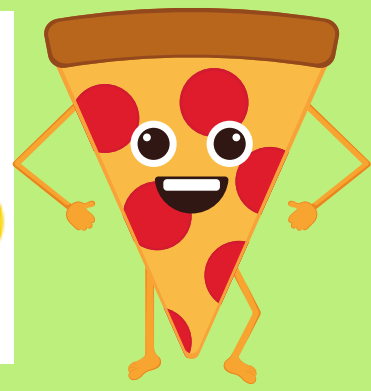
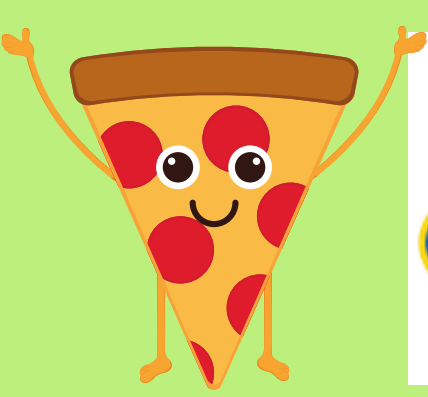
Christ is "the light which conquers darkness, and we are asked to keep alight the little flame that was entrusted to us on the day of our Baptism." Pray for God's help in keeping your flame alight.



O God, by whose grace your servant Hildegard,  
kindled with the Fire of your love, became a burning and shining light  
in your Church: Grant that we also may be aflame with  
the spirit of love and discipline, and walk before you as children of light;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

St. Hildegard of Bingen, pray for us

Prayer Source:  
[Novena To St. Hildegard Of Bingen](#)



## **OLA is having a Pizza 73 Fundraiser on March 17th!!**

- All orders must be placed online via website or App using the code: **73SCHOOL**
- Store locations: 538 Mayor Magrath Drive S or 417-21 A St N
- There is a minimum order of **\$30** (Before tax and delivery). For every order over \$30 the school will receive \$5.



Money raised goes towards school activities and events, field trips, Neuromaker Tech, hardship fund and classroom gifts.





# LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT BEGINNER PIANO LESSONS FOR YOUR KIDDO? 🎹💕

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+



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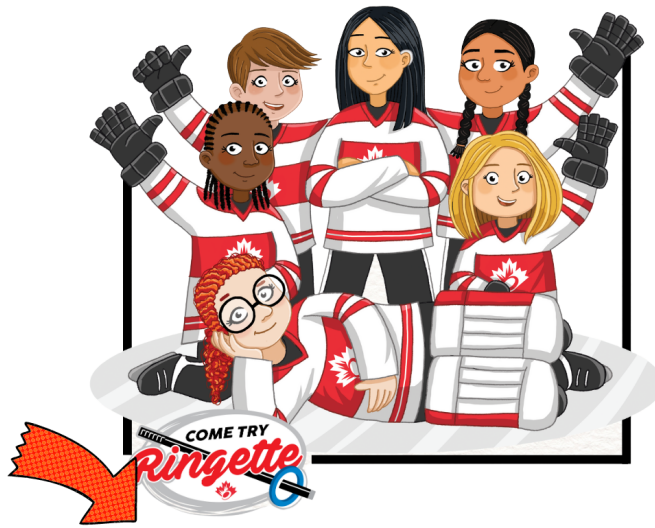
[www.prairiepiano.ca/pianoblastoff](http://www.prairiepiano.ca/pianoblastoff)

**Include Discount Code: OLAPIANO23**

For FREE movie tickets and an incredible

discount when you enrol before March 25th!





# Lethbridge

March 11 from 11:15 am  
ATB Centre

Registration and Dressing 11:15-11:45

ON ICE 11:45-12:45

Please register in advance @ [cometryringette.ca](https://cometryringette.ca)

All ages and skill levels are welcome!