

## December





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## Our Lady of the Assumption School A Community of Hope and Learning

### **DECEMBER 2023**

### PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

### PD Days Feb 1 & 2 for IB PYP

I am so excited to share with the OLA community that we are in the process of becoming an Inter Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP)!

The PYP is a curriculum framework designed to foster inquiry-based learning, international-mindedness, and holistic development.

Key advantages include:

- -Global Perspectives
- -Inquiry Based Learning
- -Holistic Development
- -Transdisciplinary Learning
- -Learner Profile
- -Assessment for Learning
- -Teacher Professional Development
- -Community Engagement

Becoming an IB PYP school offers a framework that goes beyond traditional academic learning, emphasizing global awareness, inquiry-based exploration, and the development of well-rounded individuals, making it a valuable choice for schools aiming to provide a comprehensive and forward-thinking education.

Ms. Swark and Mrs. Calder have completed the Head of Schools and PYP Coordinator training and teachers will be completing the Teacher Training on Feb 1 and 2.

This means all OLA students, Kindergarten through Grade 6, will have **PD Days on Feb 1 and 2**. This is a change from the original calendar. ELP will have regular class on Feb 1.

As we continue our IB PYP journey, we will be updating our OLA families.

### ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Welcome to December -- and welcome to Advent! We have begun the holy season of waiting and preparation for the coming of Our Lord, and I pray your waiting will be a time of joy, hope, love, and faith.

We continue to grow in our Catholic social justice teachings this month. The theme for December is Option for the Poor. This is really just a fancy way of saying we watch out for people who do not have enough. During Christmas, this often -- and very appropriately -- takes the form of donating food, gifts, or money to people in need.

However, there is another way to interpret option for the poor: we can look for those who are poor in spirit! Some are poor in love, in generosity, in kindness, or in comfort. They may express this through a seeming lack of social skills, or we may never see it in their outward behavior. But God calls on us to look for those who treat us poorly and treat them as friends -- to extend to them the kindness and love that may be lacking in their own lives.

It's a tough ask, but God does not call us to do things that are easy! Christmas is when Jesus abandoned Godhood to take the form of a helpless infant, so that He too could reach out to a humanity poor in hope, love, and faith. This Advent, consider if there are places and times you and your family can follow his example and do the same!

### This month's verse:

Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed.

-Proverbs 19:17

### **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE**



It's a BLAST is now accepting registration for before school and after school childcare at OLA. Child care will be starting after Christmas break. Please call the office at 403-320-3988. Visit https://itsablastprogram.com/ for information.

### SOCK DRIVE



Our annual sock drive is up and running. Please consider donating new socks for those less fortunate. We are also collecting new warm, winter wear (hats, scarves, mitts, gloves, etc.), until December 15. You can bring your

donation on Dec. 7, during our Christmas Bingo Night or give to the classroom teacher.

Thank you for helping to make someone's Christmas a little bit warmer.

### SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR

The Scholastic Book Fair is coming to our school! What a better way to promote reading to our students than by supporting this important literary event. We invite your entire family to participate by purchasing the latest and greatest in children's books. Your support of this event is vital in helping us obtain new books and resources for our school library and classrooms.

### **BOOKS MAKE GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFTS**

You'll find hundreds of quality books at our Book Fair with a wide assortment for all reading levels. Watch for a Book Fair Flyer that provides a preview of only a FEW of exciting new titles.

Don't forget to mark the Book Fair dates on your calendar! We look forward to seeing you during our Scholastic Book Fair and thank you, in advance, for supporting this great literary fundraiser. Mostly, thank you for believing in books and the importance reading has on your child's future.

Book Fair Dates:

Wed, Dec. 6 from 3:45 - 4:30 pm Thurs, Dec. 8 from 5:45 - 7:30 pm (during Christmas Event) Location: Library

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR BOOK FAIR

Looking for a few volunteers to help out at the book fair during the day on Wednesday, December 6. If you can spare a couple of hours between 10 a.m. -4 p.m. please email me at <u>buggb@holyspirit.ab.ca</u> Thank you

### **GROWTH MINDSET**

As you know, this year, your student is learning about developing a growth mindset. What does that mean? <u>A</u> growth mindset is the underlying belief that abilities can be developed through effort and practice. Children with a growth mindset persist in the face of challenges because they understand that effort and hard work can change ability and intelligence. A fixed mindset is the belief that intelligence is static, and cannot be changed. When children have a fixed mindset, they tend to give up easily when they encounter obstacles, because they believe that they don't have what it takes to learn hard things.

This month, our theme is I love a challenge! Students will be encouraged to try things that are tough for them and see them as learning opportunities, rather than sticking with things they are already good at. You can help by encouraging these things at home!

### **CHRISTMAS FUN NIGHT**

School Council is excited to host a Christmas Bingo the evening of Dec. 7 from 6:00 – 8:00pm. They are still looking for a few volunteers to help the evening run smoothly. Please email Mrs. Calder, calderm@holyspirit.ab.ca if you are able to help.

### CARDS FOR SALE

Cards (Christmas and birthday) will be for sale at our School Bingo Night. All funds raised will go to build St. Odilia School in Zambia. Cards will sell for 1 for \$1 or 3 for \$2.

### LOST AND FOUND

Our blue lost and found bin is located at the bottom of the stairs near the east entrance to

the school. If your child is missing any clothes, outerwear, shoes, or lunch kit, please have them check out the box. Please remember to label all your child's belongings with both their first and last names so that items can be



returned if they are misplaced. We also strongly urge that children take home all their winter outerwear for use over the Christmas break.



### SCHOOL COUNCIL NEWS

Thank you to everyone who donated winter clothing for our winter clothing exchange. We are so thankful for the generosity of our OLA community!

We have several exciting Christmas events happening in December:

On Thursday December 7 we welcome families to join us in the gym for a Christmas Bingo! The Bingo will begin at 6:30pm but come early to visit the book fair that will be running in the library. There will be many prizes and turkey's to be won. Free glitter tattoos will be available. Plus, you can purchase snacks from the concession, so remember to bring some small change. We look forward to a fun and festive evening at OLA!

On December 21 the staff and students of OLA will be treated to a free Christmas Lunch provided by school council. The students can also look forward to a visit from Santa and Mrs.Claus!

Our next school council meeting will be held online Wednesday January 17th.

Next hot lunch will be January 25th. More details to come.

We want to wish everyone in our OLA community a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! - From your school council: Deena MacWilliam, Selestia Jackson and Michelle Dormer



Did you miss out on registration in the Fall for Sacraments? No problem we will be running a Boot Camp for First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation

The First Reconciliation Boot Camp will run: Sunday, 14 January from 12:00 pm till 3:00 pm OR Sunday 21 January from 12:00 pm till 3:00 pm at Assumption Church Hall. Snacks will be provided.

The First Eucharist Boot Camp will run: Sunday, 4 February from 12:00 pm till 3:00 pm OR Sunday, 11 February from 12:00 pm till 3:00 pm at Assumption Church Hall. Snacks will be provided.

The Confirmation Boot Camp will run: Sunday, 18 February from 12:00 pm till 3:00 pm AND Sunday, 25 February from 12:00 pm till 3:00 pm at Assumption Church Hall. Snacks will be provided.

Registration forms available on line at: www.allsaintslethbridge.org There is no cost for this class and for more information please email Cyndi at educationallsaints@shaw.ca **Pre-registration is required** 

# Christmas BINGONGHT

### **GREAT PRIZES AND FUN FOR ALL**

37 60 🜟 13 30

33 5 27 48 53 21 70 57 68 56



Get ready for a festive and fun-filled Family Christmas Bingo Night!

December 7, 2023 Doors open at 6pm Bingo starts at 6:30pm Door Prizes Tons of prizes and turkeys to be won

Free Glitter Tattoo Booth

Concession of goodies will be available - Bring small change

> Our Lady of the Assumption School Gym

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"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you..."

Jeremiah 1:5a

### Build! Pilgrims of Hope

### St. Margaret of Castello 1287-1320 (Feast Day: April 13)

Margaret was born in Perugia, Italy in 1287. We know that she was born with a medical condition known as dwarfism, was blind, and had other physical disabilities as well. Her parents, who were nobles, hid her from the public and eventually walled her into a room adjacent to the chapel. It was there that she began her spiritual journey, attending Mass and receiving the sacraments. She became devoutly spiritual during this time of solitude and when she was about 16, her parents took her to a church at Castello, where miracles were said to have happened, seeking for her to be cured. When this did not occur, they abandoned her there.

Consequently, she spent time living amongst the poor of the town before being taken in by a religious family. She joined the Dominican Third Order of Castello, and spent the remainder of her life in prayer, and performing acts of penance and charity to those around her. Her devotion and holiness were so well known in her community that upon her death in 1320, they demanded that she be buried in the local church. She was canonized by Pope Francis in April of 2021, and her incorrupt body still lies in that church in Castello 700 years later.

### "Building" In Our Schools

It's important to remember and honour those who have served before us - be it in our community or in service to our country. With the help of Mrs. Alvarez and Mrs. Picton's students, St. Teresa of Calcutta School held a Remembrance Day service, while St. Mary School in Taber hosted = a Community Remembrance Day ceremony. On November 9th, a special Mass was held at St. Basil Catholic Education Centre to honour retired staff for their work and support of Catholic Education. *"I thank my God every time I remember you..."* Philippians 1:3



"For we are God's servants, working together ... " 1 Corinthians 3:9a

### Corporal Works of Mercy - Advent -

As we enter Advent this month, we would like to highlight a resource and a request.

In Holy Spirit, we have a divisional license for the <u>FORMED</u> platform. This service provides abundant Catholic content for your use with your staff, students, or your own formation. For <u>Advent</u>, they have two new series, an interactive Advent calendar, as well as some Advent FAQs. *Rooted* will be a daily Advent reflection video series, while *Drawing Closer to God* is a Catholic art show for kids!

You will also know that we are working collaboratively this year with Chalice to support the St. Odilia building project. A number of schools are working on fundraising efforts through Advent to support this initiative, and recall that you can also make individual donations through <u>SchoolCashOnline</u>. If you or a community partner would like to make a larger contribution, please let us know!



"...the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel." (Matthew 1:23)

Pope's Prayer Intentions - For people with disabilities

- Let us pray that people with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusion programmes that value their active participation.

### Catholic Social Teaching – Participation –

Through the course of this year, we will look each month at one of the Catholic Social Teachings. The aim of Catholic Social Teaching is to shine the light of the Gospel on our contemporary world, allowing us as disciples of Christ to look at the world around us with new eyes, and to take action.

Last month, we looked at subsidiarity - the idea that we should seek to address needs at the most local level and create solutions with those around us. Participation is closely linked to subsidiarity. As part of our living together, we also believe that each person is entitled to participate in making decisions that affect their lives, and to actively involve those around us in those processes, whether economic, social, or political. This is a way of balancing the dignity of each person with the pursuit of the common good.

As Pope Benedict XVI noted in Caritas in Veritate,

Subsidiarity respects personal dignity by recognizing in the person a subject who is always capable of giving something to others.

The Pope's Prayer Intention this month is for people with disabilities - that they may be at the centre of our societies and that we value their active participation. St. Margaret of Castello shows us the importance of this, and the positive impacts that those with disabilities have on all of us.

Learn more about Participation with one of these resources:

The Religion Teacher - <u>Participation</u> Caritas EU - <u>Participation</u> USCCB - <u>Participation</u>



*"Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received."* (1 Peter 4:10)

VIEW FULL SIZE

### Gospel Reading: Mark 13:33-37

"What I say to you I say to all: 'Watch!'" - Mark 13:37

Whenever something exciting is coming in our lives, we wait for it with great anticipation. If it is a birthday or a holiday, there is a lot to do to prepare for it. We put all our energy into the preparations without hesitation because we know how much fun it will be when the day comes. Today's scripture reminds us to prepare ourselves with this same excitement and anticipation for Christ's coming. Since it is the season of Advent, we are preparing to celebrate Christ's birth. But we are also called to be prepared every day of our lives. Jesus wants us to be ready to meet him any day, any time, anywhere.

An Advent wreath helps us count the four weeks of preparation for Christ's birth. Does your family have an Advent wreath or another Advent tradition that helps you count the days until Christmas?



### Prayer:

Dear Lord, show me how I can best prepare my heart and mind to meet you whenever you come.

#### December 8, 2023

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

#### Gospel Reading: Luke 1:26-38

"Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." — Luke 1:38

People sometimes mistakenly believe that this feast is about when Mary became pregnant with Jesus. Instead, this feast day is about MARY's birth. From the very moment when Mary began to grow in the womb of her mother, St. Anne, she was without sin. Mary received this special grace from God so that she could live unselfishly her entire life.

God knew that Mary would accept his plan to bring Jesus into the world as a human baby, so he prepared a perfect soul for her so she would become the Mother of his perfect Son.

Can you pray the Hail Mary? The first part of that prayer comes from the words the angel Gabriel said when he appeared to Mary.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.



#### Prayer:

Sweet Mother Mary, please help me to trust and obey God just like you did.

Download this month's Saint Prayer Card - St. Margaret of Castello



### **Gospel Readings**

### December 10, 2023

#### Gospel Reading: Mark 1:1-8

"...prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths." — Mark 1:3

Preparing is what everyone seems to be doing this time of the year. People are buying presents, writing cards, making cookies, and decorating homes. These ways of preparing to celebrate Jesus' birth are lots of fun. But how are we preparing our hearts? There are many special things we can do during Advent, such as a Jesse Tree which reminds us of Jesus' lineage. We could do Advent meditations as a family to help us think about Christ's coming. We could find a way to serve those in need together. Or we could just pray together as a family in front of our Christmas tree and ask Jesus to help us prepare our hearts for Christmas. Whatever we choose, let us find a special way our family can "prepare the way of the Lord."

What will we do as a family this Advent to prepare our hearts for Jesus' birth?

### Prayer:

Dear Lord, please help us to prepare our hearts in a special way as we prepare to celebrate your birth.

### December 17, 2023

Gospel Reading: John 1:6-8, 19-28

"Rejoice always." — 1 Thessalonians 5:16

During this time of year, there are many things that can make us feel happy. We enjoy seeing friends and family. We may like looking at Christmas lights that decorate people's homes. The festive food that seems to be present everywhere is extra yummy. But today's scripture calls us to venture beyond "happy" into "rejoicing!" There are so many blessings around us that our joy should be abundant and directed to our God who gives us all good things! Let's share our great joy with those around us, so the light of Christ will shine during this Advent season and continue through the upcoming Christmas season."

What will we do as a family this Advent to prepare our hearts for Jesus' birth?

### **Prayer:**

Dear Lord, please help us to prepare our hearts in a special way as we prepare to celebrate your birth.

### December 24, 2023

4th Sunday in Advent

### Gospel Reading: Luke 1:26-38

"Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God." — Luke 1:30

There are times when I do things that I know must disappoint God. There are other times that I've done things that I hope are very pleasing to God. But can you imagine being told directly by an angel that you have found favor with God? That would be amazing! Mary was someone very special to God. He wanted her to carry his Son. She always tried to do everything in her life to please the Lord. During this last day of Advent, ask Mary to pray for us to have the same desire she did, to do everything in our life to make God happy.

### **Prayer:**

Dear Lord, thank you for showing us through Mary such a beautiful example of faith.

### December 25, 2023

### Gospel Reading: John 1:1-18

Today is a day of great rejoicing! Jesus is born! He has come to teach us how to live with love and compassion. He was here when the whole world was created and he is here right now! Let us spend today and the rest of the Christmas season praising him for his goodness to us.

#### **Prayer:**

Dear Jesus, thank you for continuing to love us. Thank you for being the Word of God that speaks to us of your love.

#### Sources:

NOVENA TO ST. MARGARET OF CITTÀ DI CASTELLO The saint who was abandoned by her own parents Meet St Margaret of Castello, the pope's unexpected canonization St Margaret of Castello Experience at the NCPD Race for Belonging In My Heart: The Life of Saint Margaret of Castello Margaret of Castello - the unwanted saint 2023 Daily Prayers for Families

### 2nd Sunday in Advent

### 3rd Sunday in Advent

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in

darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8.12b)

### The Nativity of the Lord







## **ADVENT CALENDAR 2023**

### BRING YOUR FAMILY CLOSER IN WELCOMING JESUS!





Courtesy of the Archdiocese of Montreal.

Do something good for others as a family; help care of the poor, lonely and isolated

catholicyyc.ca/RENEWAL

### **All Saints Parish**

# **ADVENT 2023**



### **Penitential Services**

Wednesday, Dec. 6	7:00pm St. Augustine, Taber
Thursday, Dec. 7	7:00pm St.Ambrose, Coaldale
Wednesday, Dec. 13	7:00pm St. Peter, Milk River
Thursday, Dec. 14	7:00pm <b>St. Martha's</b>
Saturday, Dec. 16	10:00am All Saints @ Assumption
Wednesday, Dec. 20	7:00pm St. Joseph, Vauxhall

Thursday, Dec. 21

7:00pm St. Catherine, Picture Butte

### Reconciliation

Saturday 3:30 - 4:30 pm 6:00 - 6:30 pm Sunday 4:30 - 5:30 pm Tuesday 6:00 - 6:30 pm

at Assumption at St. Basil's at Assumption at St. Basil's 8:00 - 10:00 pm at Assumption



### **Fourth Sunday of Advent Mass Times**

Saturday, December 23

5:00 pm at Assumption 7:00 pm at St. Basil's

### Sunday, December 24

7:30 am at St. Basil's 9:00 am at Assumption 11:00 am at St. Basil's



### **Christmas Mass Times**

### Sunday, December 24

6:00 pm at Assumption & St. Basil's 9:00 pm at Assumption & St. Basil's Midnight at Assumption

### Monday, December 25

7:30 am at St. Basil's 9:00 am at Assumption 11:00 am at St. Basil's Christmas Day Masses include a blessing of Christmas toys.



### **Eucharistic Adoration**



Seeking peace and quiet during the hustle and bustle of Advent? Eucharistic Adoration is a good way to prepare for Christ's birth.

Every Tuesday at Assumption Church from 8:00 to 11:00pm. Live-stream available from 8:00 to 9:00pm

First Friday, Dec. 1 and every Friday in Advent we will have Eucharistic Adoration at Assumption. Adoration will begin after the 9:00 a.m. Mass and will close with Benediction at 8:00 p.m.

**Reconciliation will be available during Adoration:** Tuesday from 8:00 to 10:00pm Friday from 10:00 a.m. until noon.

### Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Friday, December 8 9:00 a.m. at Assumption Church 7:00 p.m. at St. Basil's Church

### **Anointing Mass**

Saturday, December 9 10:00 a.m. at St. Basil's Church Lunch will follow in the hall

### **Our Lady of Guadalupe**

Thursday, December 12 5:15 p.m. at Assumption Church with ATA & parish 7:00 p.m. at St. Basil's Church

### **Polish Mass**

Sunday, December 17 Confession starts at 11:00 a.m. Mass to follow Assumption Church

### **Croatian Mass**

Sunday, December 17 Confessions at 3:30 p.m. Mass at 5:00 p.m. St. Basil's Church

### St. Patrick's Church

St. Patrick's is open every 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month for prayer and Adoration. In December it will be open the 2nd & 16th from 10:00am until noon.

Rosary at 10:10am Litany of Mary at 11:00am



### The parish office will be closed

December 23 until January 2. There will be a priest on call at the hospital.

**Donations** can be dropped off at the parish office through the mail slot in the door. Please do not leave donations in the mailbox.

Merry Christmas from the Staff of All Saints Parish

### School Advent Masses

Masses will be at the school unless otherwise stated.

Dec. 6, 9:30am St. Paul School

- Dec. 7, 9:30am St. Teresa of Calcutta School
- Dec. 13, 9:30am Catholic Central High

Dec. 13, 12:30pm St. Francis Jr. High

- Dec. 20, 9:00am Ecole St. Mary
- Dec. 21, 9:15am Assumption School @ Assumption Church

Parent and grandparents are welcome to join the elementary school Masses.



### The Legend of the Candy Cane

In the 1600s a candy maker wanted to make a candy at Christmas time that would serve as a witness to his Christian faith. He wanted to incorporate several symbols for the birth, ministry and death of Jesus. He began with a stick of pure white hard candy, the peppermint sick. The white symbolized the virgin birth and the sinless life of Jesus. He made the candy hard to symbolize the that Jesus is the solid rock and the foundation of the church. and represents the promises of God. The candy maker used the form of the hook making the form of a "J" to represent the name of Jesus, who came to earth as our Saviour. He thought it could also represent the staff of Jesus, the Good Shepherd. The candy maker then added red stripes. He used three small stripes to show the stripes of the scourging Jesus received, by which we are healed. The large red stripe was for the bloodshed by Christ so that we could be forgiven and have the promise of eternal life. The flavour of mint is similar to hyssop. In Old Testament times, hyssop was associated with purification and sacrifice. It was also used at the cross as they gave Jesus a drink of vinegar before He gave up His Spirit.

### **St. Nicholas Family Party**

Saturday, December 9 10:00am to 2:00 p.m. Assumption hall. Come for crafts, snacks, singing and possibly a visit from St. Nicholas.



### Soup Suppers

Fridays, December 1, 8, 15 & 22.

6:00pm in Assumption hall. Bring a soup and share your culinary talents with the parish community. Everyone is welcome.

### Family R n' R

Sunday, December 10 Watch for more information.

### Youth New Years Eve Party

Sunday, December 31 9:00pm in St. Basil's hall. Watch for more information.



Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Saturday, December 30 5:00 pm at Assumption 7:00 pm at St. Basil's

### Sunday, December 31

7:30 am at St. Basil's 9:00 am at Assumption 11:00 am at St. Basil's 6:00 pm at Assumption

### New Years Masses The Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Holy Day of Obligation

Sunday, December 31 8:00 pm at St. Basil's

Monday, January 1 9:00 am at Assumption 11:00 am at St. Basil's



### Motivation...Discipline...Respect



### Winter Classes January through April

In Person: January 9 & 10 6:00pm to 7:30pm

### Limited Spots Available Beginners (6ys+)

### 12ys+ Beginners & Intermediate

Registration Packages available at:

### www.lajudo.com

Questions? Contact Angie at lethjudo@gmail.com

### Ability Skate is a new sensory-friendly public skating program specially designed for our Lethbridge residents with disabilities. Stay healthy & active by bringing your mobility devices, skates & safety gear to this slow-paced time on the ice!

ABILITY

Civic Ice Arena 905 6 Ave S

### Sundays

SK

December 3 | 10 | 17 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM **Tuesdays** December 5 | 12 | 19 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Admission | FREE

www.lethbridge.ca/leisure