



# January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
	1 						
		<b>CHRISTMAS BREAK</b>					
7	8 Classes resume	9	10	11	12 20 & 5B Mass 	13	
14	15 Re-registration begins	16	17 Office hours 4S -4:30 – 5:30 School Council virtual mtg 7:00 pm 	18 Last day to order Joe's Pizza hot lunch	19 4S & 6G Mass 	20	
21	22	23	24 Office hours 5B, 5/6T & 6G 5:00 – 6:00pm  Board Meeting 6:00pm	25 Office hours 1Duke – 4 – 5:30 Hot Lunch Joe's Pizza 	26	27	
28	29	30 Steam Day	31 comfy cozy day 	<b>February 1 &amp; 2 PD Days No school for students</b>			



## JANUARY 2024

### PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year!

It is always exciting to start anew. We have many opportunities throughout the year to start fresh. January is a nice opportunity to take the time to refocus and realign. With the Christmas break behind us, we are nearly at the halfway point of the year. Let's take this time to really focus our attention on the growth we hope to achieve this year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the numerous members of our OLA community for their continued dedication and support. We enjoyed our annual turkey dinner, thanks to the hard work of our School Council and volunteers. Santa visited with gifts for every classroom, also provided by the School Council.

Thank you to Mrs. Ellert for organizing and running our successful poinsettia sale. With the success of this fundraiser, we will continue to support opportunities for students at OLA.

We hosted our Christmas BINGO Night. It was great to have so many families join us for a fun filled evening. Thank you to school council who planned the evening. Thank you also to Mrs. Bugg who ran the book fair at that time. We truly appreciate the time and effort that goes into hosting such an event.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind families that OLA will have **PD Days** on both **February 1st and 2nd**. Our teachers are looking forward to beginning their journey to having OLA become accredited as an International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme.

With colder weather finally upon us, please remember to dress students for the weather. Students will be permitted to stay in for recess when the windchill is -20 Celsius or colder. Supervision will be provided up to -30 Celsius for students who are part of the Polar Bear Club. Permission can be provided for Polar Bear Club via the Permission Click email sent Jan. 8.

### ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

As we step into a new year filled with anticipation and reflection, we continue to celebrate the birth of Jesus. May the season's spirit of hope, love, and faith carry into the new year for each and every one of you.

This January, our focus on Catholic social justice teachings centers around the principle of "Life and Dignity." What does this mean for us? It's a reminder that every person is sacred and possesses inherent dignity as a beloved child of God. In recognizing this truth, we are called to respect and protect the sanctity of human life in all its stages.

The message of life and dignity goes beyond the physical aspect and extends to the well-being of the whole person. It urges us to value and uphold the dignity of every individual, ensuring that their basic needs are met, and they are treated with love, compassion, and fairness.

As we embark on a new year of life, learning, and growth, let's contemplate how we can actively promote life and dignity. It could be through simple acts of kindness, understanding, and inclusion. It might involve standing up for those who are marginalized or advocating for justice in our communities. Together, we strive to emulate the example set by Jesus, who came into the world to affirm the dignity of every person. In doing so, we contribute to building a world where all are treated with the love and respect they deserve.

May the teachings of life and dignity guide our actions and reflections throughout this new year and the remainder of the season, leading us closer to the true meaning of Christmas.

Wishing you all a blessed and joy-filled 2024!

### **This month's verse:**

*Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.*

*-Romans 12:16*

## WELCOME

Hello Assumption School! My name is Ms. Galbraith and I am an education student from the University of Lethbridge who will be joining Mrs. Duke's class in January. Originally from Vancouver, BC, I came to Lethbridge for its great education program and to be a part of the varsity soccer team. I am a lifelong equestrian, apples are coincidentally my favourite fruit, and I love spending time outdoors. I am beyond excited to be a part of the Assumption School Community!



## RIBBON SKIRT DAY

On January 4, we proudly wore our ribbon skirts to represent our own personal reclamation as FNMI people of Treaty 7 Territory. Ribbon skirts are a symbol of history, identity, resilience, strength, bravery, and female empowerment. It represents values and traditions as a unique culture, as well as maturity into womanhood, and independence. Wearing a ribbon skirt gives meaning which is very significant for each individual who decides to adorn one. It represents reclaiming identity, and wearing that identity proudly.

Mrs. Shade



## POLAR BEAR CLUB

When the temperature falls below -20 we will have indoor recesses. However, there are days when the sun is shining but the temperature is still below -20. For those students who would like to play outside on these colder days, they can sign up to be part of the Polar Bear Club. This club is meant for students who are properly dressed in a warm winter coat, ski/snow pants, hat, mitts and winter boots who would enjoy and benefit from some fresh air and outdoor activity. The staff will determine which days the club will be in effect and the recess may be shortened if the weather warrants it. **The students will always be supervised by an adult.** Permission forms have been sent via email.



## THANK YOU

The staff and students at OLA would like to take this opportunity to send a heartfelt THANK YOU to our amazing School Council. The visit from Santa, turkey dinner, and generous classroom gifts made our Christmas season joyous and bright.



## SCHOOL SUPPLIES

The start of a new year is a good time to check with your child and ask them what school supplies they may need to replenish. Pencils, crayons, markers, glue, etc

## REMINDERS

- School fees are now overdue.
- Nutrition Breaks – we have two breaks during the day where students eat lunch and snacks. Please discuss with your child to see if they have enough for both breaks. Also, we **do not** supply spoons or forks. If you are sending something that requires utensils, please send them along.
- During the wet, snowy days, students are asked to remove their wet footwear before heading to class. Please make sure your child(ren) have indoor shoes.

## COMFY COZY DAY



On Wednesday, January 31 students are invited to wear pajamas/cozy wear to school. Please remember the dress code is still in effect and students will still be required to go outside at during breaks.

## GROWTH MINDSET

Students will be learning about praise and feedback at school this month. Growth mindset teaches us that person praise (you're so smart!) can actually discourage people from trying their best. In a child's mind, if success means being smart, then failure must mean the opposite -- whereas of course we know that this isn't true! Failure is a step on the road to success. Process praise, on the other hand, focuses on the hard work the person has done (I can see the thought you put into choosing colors for this poster!). This type of praise is genuinely encouraging and can help kids do their very best. If you're interested in learning more about growth mindset praise, [please visit this link](#). Your kids can help too -- they will be learning how to give each other kind, useful, and genuine feedback.



**Holy Spirit**  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL DIVISION

TAKE THE NEXT STEP  
AND REGISTER SOON!

# 2024/2025 REGISTRATION

- Re-registration for **CURRENT** students starts **January 15, 2024**
- Registration for **NEW** students starts **February 1, 2024**

We invite you to come and take your next step in education with the Holy Spirit Catholic School Division where children are cherished and achieve their potential.



**EARLY  
LEARNING**



**FRENCH  
IMMERSION**



**FINE  
ARTS**



[www.holyspirit.ab.ca](http://www.holyspirit.ab.ca)



## SCHOOL COUNCIL NEWS

Thank you to everyone who came out to the Family Christmas Bingo Night. It was a huge success! Thank you to all the amazing donors who supported our school. We gave out some incredible prizes and could not have done this without their generosity. Check out the OLA Facebook page for a list of our donors. Thank you to all of our volunteers and the staff at OLA. These events could not happen without your support.

A big thank you to Santa and Mrs. Claus for coming to visit the students at OLA! There were presents for the classrooms, as well as candy canes and stickers for the students.

We had our Christmas Turkey lunch which we hope all the students and staff enjoyed! Thank you to Prime Catering for the delicious meal. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped set up and serve the food.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday January 17th online. The link will be sent out prior to the meeting.

We are excited for 2024 and will keep you posted on what school council has coming up!





# January

## Build! Pilgrims of Hope



*“If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that?”*

James 2:15-16

### St. Martin de Porres 1579-1639 (Feast Day: November 3)

Martin de Porres was born in Lima, Peru in 1579. His father, a Spanish nobleman, abandoned the family, and so Martin was raised by his mother, a former enslaved person from Panama. Martin grew up in poverty and eventually became an apprentice to a barber-surgeon. During this time, there was prejudice and discrimination against those of mixed racial heritage, which made Martin’s life very difficult. This even extended to the religious life, as he was not allowed to become a full member of a religious order and could serve only as a lay volunteer.

Martin, however, was not deterred by this discrimination. He joined the Dominicans as a volunteer, taking on kitchen work, cleaning, and laundry in addition to his barbering so that he could live in the religious community. He considered all of this work to be holy, and during this time many miracles occurred. At the age of 34, Martin was placed in charge of the infirmary, where he cared for both the sick of the Dominicans as well as the larger community of Lima. He was known for his patience and compassion in this role. During his life he also was well known for the collection of funds to serve the poor and hungry, and he also founded a residence for orphans in Lima. He was also well known for his care for animals, and is often shown with them in his imagery. When he was canonized in 1962, he became the first black saint of the Americas.

### “Building” In Our Schools

This past month, our Holy Spirit Catholic School Division joined together to celebrate the season of Advent through our Advent Blessing videos. For each week of Advent, a video was created that included a Gospel reading, reflection, artwork, and music, all provided by students within the Holy Spirit Catholic School Division. The videos were a shining representation of staff and students joining together in remembrance and celebration of the arrival of Jesus, and in the hope of his return.



### Corporal Works of Mercy – Give Drink to the Thirsty –

While often connected to Feed the Hungry, the Corporal Work of Giving Drink to the Thirsty is actually a separate work. If we think about the context of Christ’s time, we recognize the scarcity and importance of water in the arid land He inhabited (something we know about in our area as well!). Water is often referred to in scripture, both in concrete and spiritual ways. If we think about the concrete action of giving drink to another, we can see in it a gracious act of hospitality, a thoughtful expression of love, and a desire to seek the good of the other. We all know the importance of water to our bodies, how clean water impacts health, and how access to water is limited, not just in far away places but also very close to home.

Consider one of the following practical suggestions from the USCCB:

- We take it for granted that we have access to clean water. Donate to help build wells for water for those in need.
- Organize a group to collect bottled water to distribute at a shelter for families.
- Make an effort not to waste water. Remembering to turn off the water faucet when you are brushing your teeth or washing dishes can help, especially in regions suffering from drought.



**Pope’s Prayer Intentions - For the Gift of Diversity in the Church**  
Let us pray that the Spirit help us recognize the gift of different charisms within the Christian community, and to discover the richness of different ritual traditions in the heart of the Catholic Church.

### Catholic Social Teaching – Preferential Option for the Poor –

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 participation - the belief that each person is entitled to participate in making decisions that affect their lives. This supports subsidiarity, the dignity of the human person, and the pursuit of the common good.

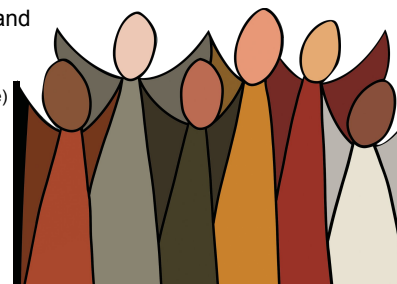
This month, we are considering the Option for the Poor and Vulnerable, also known as the Preferential Option for the Poor. As Development and Peace Canada suggests,

The moral test of any society is based on how the most vulnerable people are treated. God loves all people, but prioritizes and calls us to a unique concern for the poor.

Throughout scripture, we see constantly that God is keenly interested in those at the margins, and He calls us to live in solidarity with them, prioritizing their needs so that they can fully participate in society and have hope for a better future. Each of our recent Popes, St. John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, and Pope Francis, have written extensively about this - and we see it constantly lived out by the saints, including St. Martin de Porres.

Learn more about the Option for the Poor and Vulnerable with one of these resources:

- [Option for the Poor and Vulnerable](#) (YouTube)
- [Preferential Option for the Poor](#)
- [Option for the Poor and Vulnerable](#) (USCBC)



*“Always consider others as more holy and more worthy than you, at the same time strive to be as holy as you can be.” (St. Martin de Porres)*

## Gospel Reading: Matthew 2:1-12

“They were overjoyed at seeing the star...” — Matthew 2:10

The Magi were called to find the child that had come into the world as a king. They knew that he was the chosen one. They made many sacrifices in order to find him, and most likely encountered hardships on their journey. They didn't quit. They didn't give up. They persevered. Can you imagine their joy in finally arriving at their destination, the place where the child lay in his mother's arms? It must have been the greatest blessing they'd ever known. We can have that same joy when we seek out Jesus in our lives and find him.

How do you seek Jesus in your life? When you find him, how does it make you feel?

### Prayer:

*Lord, teach us to look and search for you in our lives with the same desire that the Magi had when they set out on their journey.*



## Gospel Reading: John 1:35-42

“Speak Lord, for your servant is listening.” — 1 Samuel 3:10

Many times we enter into prayer with a long list of requests—things we think God should do for us because we know what's best. But in today's scripture, God is the one calling out to Samuel. When Samuel realizes that it is the Lord speaking to him, he doesn't say what he wants. Instead, he says that he is ready to hear what God wants of him. As usual, the Bible is setting an example for how we should live our own lives to grow closer to God. The next time you feel like sitting down with your list for God in prayer, try something new. Sit and listen to what God wants to say to you.

What are some places where you like to pray? Do they help you quiet yourself enough for you to hear God speaking to you?



### Prayer:

*Dear Lord, help me to quiet myself in prayer to hear what you want to say to me.*

Download this month's [Saint Prayer Card](#) - St. Martin de Porres



# Gospel Readings

January 21, 2024

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Gospel Reading: Mark 1:14-20

“Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.” — Mark 1:17

This is a little confusing, isn't it? The men that Jesus called to follow him were fishers of fish. What did he mean when he said he would make them fishers of men? Jesus hoped that these men he chose would set such a beautiful example of their faith in God that it would attract other people to also want to follow Jesus. This is something that we are all called to do. If we love Jesus and try to live our lives reflecting his light, then we too will become “fishers of men.”

What is one thing Jesus' disciples did then that we can still do today to help people know and follow Jesus?

COME  
**AFTER**  
ME and I will  
make you  
**FISHERS**  
MARK 1:17 of MEN.

### Prayer:

Lord, help us to love you so much that all we do, say, think, and feel will radiate the love we have for you. Please allow that light to touch those we meet each day, so that they too will want to follow you.



January 28, 2024

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Gospel Reading: Mark 1:21-28

“A new teaching with authority. He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him.” — Mark 1:27

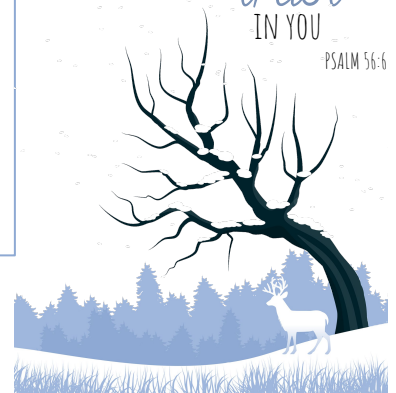
Has there ever been a time in your life when you felt the presence of evil? Maybe a TV show scared you, or you met someone who was really mean. In today's Gospel, Jesus shows us that if we ask anything in Jesus' name, especially against evil, that he can make that evil go away. What an awesome God! All we have to do is ask! So the next time you are feeling afraid or hurt, call on the name of Jesus and see what happens.

When do you feel most fearful? Remember to call on Jesus and he will help you!

...WHEN I AM  
*afraid*  
I PUT MY  
*trust*  
IN YOU  
PSALM 56:6

### Prayer:

Dear Lord, your name is above all names. You are Lord, Prince of Peace, King of Kings, Lamb of God. We love you and praise you for your powerful presence in our lives.



### Sources:

[St. Martin de Porres Quotes](#)  
[Story of Saint Martin de Porres](#)  
[Saint Martin de Porres](#)

[7 fascinating facts about St. Martin de Porres, the first black saint of the Americas](#)  
[Martin de Porres](#)



Holy Spirit Catholic Division  
Presents:

# Resiliency & Self-Care

January 16th, 5:30 pm

**Essie's Ballroom**

Sandman Signature, 320  
Scenic Drive S, Lethbridge Ab

Join us as Lethbridge Family Services will  
present for a night of learning and good (free)  
food!

Please RSVP at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7R9L8CC>





**Billy Woitte**



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# Lethbridge Family Services

Lethbridge Family Services provides highly-accredited health and social services to over 9,000 individuals and families in more than 30 communities in southwestern Alberta. The Outreach and Education team works with individuals, caregivers and professional to facilitate insight, awareness and enhance skills.

**This is a FREE event.**

Intended audience: parents, guardians, caregivers, aunts, uncles, grandparents, childcare providers, all school staff, bus drivers, parishioner's

**Please RSVP at**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7R9L8CC>

