

St. Mary's School

Ecce Ego Sum Mitte Me

September 2025



Principal's Message

Mrs. Michelle Nevil

Hello SMS Parents, Guardians, & Community Members,

This year, our school community has begun a new faith plan **“Open Wide the Doors.”** This plan invites us to reflect on how we welcome and accept others, all in the light of Christ. As we move forward, we also carry with us the friendships and learning built together last year. My hope is that we continue to honor those lessons and relationships while growing together in faith. Our focus this year is on three important areas that help us become better people—so that, through our actions, others may see that we know God and strive to live His love:

- **Be Welcoming** - We are blessed to have new students and staff joining our school family. Let's show them that our doors are open wide, and that this is their home too. The words we use matter—let's choose language that invites others in and makes them feel that they belong.
- **Make Connections** - This journey is about building deeper connections—with God, with inner peace, and with one another. Let's celebrate our diversity, accept each person as they are, and remember that we too are made in the image of God. Just as you are, you are enough.
- **Practice Humility** - Humility allows us to forgive, to notice when someone needs a friend, and to offer even the smallest acts of kindness. A smile or a simple hello can make a world of difference.

Above all, please remember this: **you are loved by God, you are valued by our staff, and you belong here.** We are so glad to be walking this journey together.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Michelle Nevil

Principal

September 2nd:
1st Day of School

September 9th:
Picture Day

September 18th
SMS Opening Mass
at St. Augustine
@ 10:30 AM

September 24th:
Welcome Back
BBQ - 5-7 PM

September 26th:
Terry Fox Run

September 29th:
Division PD -
No Students

September 30th:
National Day for
Truth & Reconciliation
No School

Join us in welcoming our Practicum Student Teachers



Mrs. Arbour

My name is Jelayna Arbour and I'm so excited to be teaching ELA 7, ELA 9, and Film Studies 9 this fall at St. Mary's School in my final professional semester as an intern teacher! Before going to the University of Lethbridge I studied Film and Video Production at SALT, so I hope to bring some of that creative energy to the classroom. In my limited spare time I like to attend open mic, get way too competitive at board game night, read in the park, and spend time with my family.



Mr. Church

My name is Peyton Church, and I'm excited to be teaching ELA 6, Social Studies 10-1, and New Media/Greek Mythology 9! I am currently going into the final year of my degree at the University of Lethbridge, half of which will be spent teaching at St. Mary's! I've lived in Central Alberta for most of my life, and was raised on two cattle farms. In my spare time, I enjoy skiing, hiking, and watching as many movies as I can. I'm very much looking forward to the school year!



Mr. Feser

My name is Rhett Feser, and I am a PSIII student at the University of Lethbridge, participating in my practicum at St. Mary's School. I am a Physical Education Major and am excited to be teaching Social Studies 20-2, Physical Education 7 and Physical Education 8 in my time at the school. Originally, I am from Unity, Saskatchewan. I grew up and went to school there. I was fortunate enough to be able to play baseball collegiately as well as professionally across the globe. This allowed me to live in many different places, such as Utrecht, Netherlands and Adelaide, Australia, while granting me the ability to enjoy and appreciate these parts of the world. Coaching led me to discover my passion for teaching. I coached college baseball for four years and am currently an assistant trainer with the High-Performance Team with Pronghorn Athletics and the University of Lethbridge. I am grateful for the opportunity given to me by St. Mary's School as well as the surrounding community and am very excited to get to know and learn with all the students, staff and community members I get to work alongside every day.



Mr. Greer

My name is Liam Greer, I will be teaching science 9 and 14. I have grown up in agriculture and work in the feedlot industry, my passion for teaching extends to new hire's and horses as well as students. I am a Physics major at the U of L and dabble in engineering projects.



Mr. Sproule

Hi, I'm Mr. Sproule. I am in my final year of a Science and Education Degree and will be teaching Science 9 & 10 at St. Mary's this semester. My favourite hobbies include travel and sports. In the past few years I have been lucky enough to visit Thailand, Costa Rica, and several countries in Europe. In the winters I am an avid skier and enjoy golfing in my spare time during the summer months. I am looking forward to being a part of the St. Mary's community this year!



News from our St. Mary's Band Booster Club



Any student who is using a school instrument is reminded to get their instrument rental sheets in, signed by a parent, and their \$70.00 rental fee into the school so that they can be issued an instrument right away. Grade 6 parents are reminded that if they are providing their own instrument, it needs to be at the school by Monday, September 22nd.

The St. Mary's Band Booster Club will be holding its Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, September 16th at 7:00 in the band room. Although this meeting will not be long, it is very important to the ongoing strength of the St. Mary's band program. We have almost 100% of our instruments rented out to students. It is important that we start adding to our inventory to ensure all of our students have the opportunity to take band. All students who are in band are asked to have at least one parent at this meeting so we can get this year off to a good start. We will also be discussing our band activities for all grades as well as looking for volunteers for our executive positions. These are very simple, but important positions and please consider helping us out.

The St. Mary's Band Booster Club will begin our first fundraising activity of this year in the last week of September. We will also be selling Dieleman's chocolates and gift products at that time. Funds raised from that project will go into the students' individual accounts. More information will be available in a few weeks.

The St. Mary's Jazz Band will hold its first rehearsal on Tuesday, September 16th from 3:20 to 4:20 in the band room. Students registered in band class at St. Mary's from grades 7-12 are welcome to attend. Traditionally, only saxes, trombones, and trumpets play in the jazz band, but we will accommodate any instrument played in the St. Mary's Band. In addition, drummers, piano players, electric and bass guitar players are welcome. Anyone interested in playing in the Jazz Band must be enrolled in band at St. Mary's. If you are interested, please see Mr. Makarchuk before this date.

All band students, from grades 6-12 will be completing a Home Performance Assignment every month. Students will be required to take their instrument home and play for a parent, grandparent, or other adult and have them fill out an evaluation form. Students will also be completing a self evaluation of their performance. Forms will be available the second week of September and are due back the first school day of the next month. (September's form is due October 1st) Grade 6's do not have to complete the September assignment.

Grade 6-8 band students will be required to fill out a weekly practice sheet. Students need to practice 70 minutes per week to receive full marks. Sheets are available in the band room. Grade 7-8 students start practice sheets September 8th, while grade 6's will start October 6th.



2025

Picture Day!

WHAT'S NEXT:



Your student is photographed on Picture Day*



Proofs are sent home with your student



Order packages and more on mylifetouch.ca

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

St. Mary's School

Tuesday, September 09, 2025

SMS MASS CHOIR



WEDNESDAY SEPT 10

WEDNESDAY SEPT 17

3:30PM - 4:30PM

BAND ROOM

SMS



OUR SCHOOL WAS SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INDIGO LOVE OF READING FOUNDATION'S ANNUAL ADOPT A SCHOOL FUNDRAISER! EVERY DOLLAR RAISED IN-STORE AT INDIGO MEDICINE HAT MALL AND CHAPTERS LETHBRIDGE BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 5 - OCTOBER 5, 2025 WILL GO DIRECTLY TO OUR SCHOOL TO HELP FILL OUR SHELVES WITH NEW AND DIVERSE BOOKS. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR SUPPORTING OUR SCHOOL AND FOR HELPING TO INSPIRE A LOVE OF READING IN OUR STUDENTS!

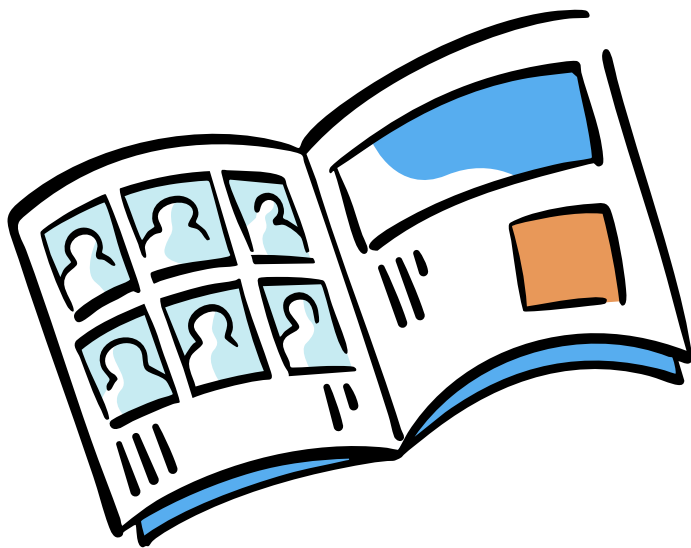


SCAN HERE TO DONATE TO ST. MARY'S!!

Parish Connection: St. Augustine Church



2024-2025 Year Books Are Available



Come grab your copy of the 2024-2025 Yearbook.

We have extra copies available for purchase (\$40)

YEARBOOK

POEDs at SMS

Definitions:

POED: Personally Owned Electronic Devices we are referring to personally owned cell phones, tablets, laptops, and wearable technology such as smartwatches or earbuds.

The following will be the policy followed at SMS:

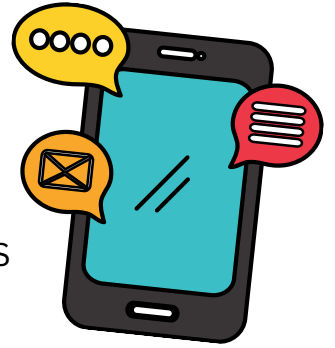
Grade 6-9

SMS will be moving to a “no cell phone use during the school day” policy for Grades 6–9. Students may bring phones to school, but they must remain stored in lockers during the day, including morning wait time and lunch breaks. If a student needs to contact home, they may use a classroom phone or receive special permission to use their own device.

POEDs Not Permitted during the following:

- 8:00-3:15 (12:05 on Fridays)
- No POEDs in the atrium in the morning or at Lunch time

Cell phones may be stored in the locker or in the office, but NOT IN POCKETS



Grade 10-12

POEDs Not Permitted during the following:

- 8:30- 11:33 (12:05 on Fridays)
- 12:12- 3:14

It must be more than an arm’s length away from the student, and silenced or powered down and not seen and not heard.

POEDs Permitted during the following:

- 8:00-8:30: School is open for Breakfast Program
- 11:33-12:12: Lunch
- When they have a spare, they are allowed to have them in the hallway, atrium and library.
- Flex Time in the classroom under the teacher’s supervision

If the parent/guardian needs to contact the student, please call our school office at 403-223-3165. We will get your child for you.

SMS Parent Council

St. Mary's School Council is having their AGM and regular meeting on September 24th at 7:15 PM, right after the Back to School BBQ.

The meeting will be in the school library.

Please consider joining.

Our School Council encourages all SMS Parents & Guardians to attend.

Order School Clothing

If you are looking to order some school clothing, you can do so by following these steps:



1. Go to smt.holyspirit.ab.ca
2. Click on "School"
3. then on "School Merchandize"
4. Click on "Fotees Custom Apparel"
5. Click on St. Mary's
6. Proceed with your order.



Note: please allow approximately 3 weeks delivery time to the school.

Donate School Supplies



Just a reminder that we accept all gently used school supplies at our school. We place these items out for everyone to access for FREE! It helps to save items from the landfill and with the cost of everything lately, every little bit helps!



HOLY SPIRIT SMT & SPT 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

Aug 25 First day for staff
Aug 29 Opening Mass

O – 5
I – 0

AUGUST '25						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

SEPTEMBER '25						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Sept 1 Labour Day
Sept 2 First day for students
Sept 24 Div. Board Meeting
Sept 29 Div. PD Day
Sept 30 National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

O – 20 (25)
I – 19 (19)

Oct 13 Thanksgiving Day
Oct 14 Spiritual Dev. Day
Oct 15 Div. Collaboration Day
Oct 29 Div. Board Meeting

O – 22 (47)
I – 20 (39)

OCTOBER '25						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

NOVEMBER '25						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Nov 10 Wellness Day
Nov 11 Remembrance Day
Nov 26 Div. Board Meeting

O – 18 (65)
I – 18 (57)

Dec 17 Div. Board Meeting
Dec 18 Last day before break
Dec 19 School PD Day
Dec 20-31 Christmas break
Dec 25 Christmas Day
Dec 26 Boxing Day

O – 15 (80)
I – 14 (71)

DECEMBER '25						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

JANUARY '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Jan 1 New Year's Day
Jan 2-4 Christmas break
Jan 5 First day after break
Jan 28 Div. Board Meeting

O – 20 (100)
I – 20 (91)

Feb 16 Family Day
Feb 17 & 18 Non-operational Days
Feb 19 & 20 SWATCA
Feb 25 Div. Board Meeting

O – 17 (117)
I – 15 (106)

FEBRUARY '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

MARCH '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Mar 9 School PD Day
Mar 13 Div. Collab Day
Mar 25 Div. Board Meeting

O – 22 (139)
I – 20 (125)

Apr 2 Last day before Easter break
Apr 3 Good Friday
Apr 6 Easter Monday
Apr 7-10 Easter break
Apr 13 First day after break
Apr 22 Div. Board Meeting

O – 16 (155)
I – 16 (142)

APRIL '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

MAY '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

May 15 School PD Day
May 18 Victoria Day
May 27 Div. Board Meeting

O – 20 (175)
I – 19 (161)

Jun 24 Div. Board Meeting
Jun 25 Last day students
Jun 26 Last day for teachers

O – 20 (195)
I – 19 (180)

JUNE '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

JULY '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

No students
Stat Holidays
School PD/Div. PD/Spiritual Dev./Collab. Days
Div. Board Meetings
First and last days for students
First and last days for teachers



NOTICE TO PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF RELIGIOUS PERMEATION

Section 58.1 of the *Education Act* requires a school board to give notice to a parent or guardian when courses of study, education programs, institutional materials, instruction or exercises include subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion. All of the schools in this division are Catholic Separate Schools, the essential purpose of which is to fully permeate Catholic theology, philosophy, practices and beliefs, the principles of the Gospel and teachings of the Catholic Church, in all aspects of school life, including in the curriculum of every subject taught, both in and outside of formal religion classes, celebrations and exercises. Every course of study and educational program, all institutional materials, instruction and exercises will at all times include subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion.



FAIR NOTICE LETTER

Dear Parents / Guardians,

The Holy Spirit Catholic School Division is committed to providing safe learning environments for all students, staff, school visitors and community members. When a student behaves inappropriately, principals use progressive discipline to help a student take responsibility for their actions, change their behavior and learn from their mistakes.

When students' behaviors pose a potential threat to safety or serious harm, the Southwest Alberta Regional Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Protocol assists administrators in taking the necessary steps to protect the well-being of students and staff. This protocol ensures that schools can respond promptly to worrisome behaviors or threatening incidents, such as possession of a weapon or replica, bomb threats or plans, verbal, written, or electronic (internet, text) threats to harm oneself or others, as well as other acts of violence, including fire-setting.

The protocol requires trained division staff and community partners to work together as a team to complete an Assessment of Risk to Others (ARTO) whenever a student threatens to harm others. The ARTO process leverages the team's knowledge, skills, and experience to assess the level of concern and identify appropriate interventions to protect individuals from harm and ensure a safe environment in both the school and the community. A multi-disciplinary approach is used to address these concerns. Please be advised that the school team will take positive and proactive measures to address all known threats or high-risk behaviors. If you are invited to a meeting to discuss safety concerns about your child, please be assured that our protocol is being followed and that our primary goal is ensuring safety.

The Southwest Alberta Regional VTRA Protocol outlines how a school should respond immediately to threatening behavior. Principals may first assemble a School Threat Assessment Team, ideally comprising the principal or associate principal, a school-based counselor or jurisdictional lead, and local police. If the situation is serious, the principal may also consult the Superintendent of Schools and involve members of the Community Threat Assessment Team. This team may include representatives from local police, children's mental health organizations, or Child and Family Services, among other community agencies that collaborate with us to enhance school safety. Parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible during the Stage I - VTRA Process. If parents/guardians cannot be reached, but a safety concern persists, the threat assessment may proceed. Personal information shared during this process will respect and balance each individual's right to privacy with the need to ensure everyone's safety.

This letter complies with procedure 2 of *Administrative Procedure 322: Violence Threat / Risk Assessment (V-TRA) Protocol*, which states that parents/ guardians will be provided with "fair notice" that each threat will be taken seriously. Should you wish to further review this Administrative Procedure, please visit our website at www.holyspirit.ab.ca.

If you have any questions regarding the Holy Spirit Catholic School Division's use of the Southwest Alberta Regional V-TRA Protocol, please contact the Director of Support Services at the St. Basil Catholic Education Centre. We appreciate your support in ensuring our schools are safe environments for our students, staff and community partners.

Sincerely,

Chantel Axani, Superintendent of Schools

OFF-CAMPUS NEWS

CCH EAST
Rm 154



September 2025

Off-Campus Education provides programs and services for Holy Spirit School Division Students during their high school years. We offer 3 Off-Campus programs, 3 Workplace Safety Courses, Dual Credit Courses, Career Services, Post Secondary Services and Scholarship Services. These programs and services are available to all high school students in the Division.

Work Experience & RAP Students – Submit Your Summer Hours

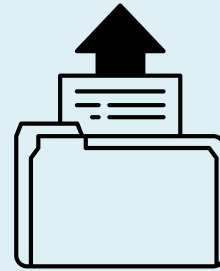
Please submit your summer work hours as soon as possible!

Email your hours to: hsoffcampus@holyspirit.ab.ca

Be sure to include:

- Your full name
- Employer name
- Total hours worked
- Dates covered

Submitting your hours on time helps ensure your credits are recorded accurately!



Fall 2025 Dual Credit Seats Available

Seats are still available for these exciting Dual Credit programs starting this fall:

- Introduction to the Trades
- Introduction to Electrical Trades
- Introduction to Construction

These programs allow students to explore careers in the trades while earning both high school and post-secondary credits.

Interested? Contact:

Vero Amakobe, Career Practitioner

📞 403-593-2903 | ✉️ amakobev@holyspirit.ab.ca



Dual Credit Orientation – Fall 2025

All students, parents, teachers, and staff are invited to attend the Dual Credit Orientation at Lethbridge Polytechnic on **Tuesday, September 2, 2025.**

The event includes a campus tour, team introductions, and a tech overview.

- **In-Person Session:** 6:30–8:30 p.m. at the E.C. Fredricks Theatre
- **Online Session (Condensed):** 5:00–6:00 p.m.

This orientation is **mandatory for first-time Dual Credit students.** Returning students are welcome but should ensure their login credentials are active.

Register [here](#)

Mark Boschee

Off-Campus Coordinator

Career Centre, East Campus on Tuesday/Friday

Cell: 587-220-4258

Email: boscheem@holyspirit.ab.ca



Vero Amakobe

Career Practitioner

Office on Campus, West on Thursdays

403-327-4596 ext 312

Email: amakobev@holyspirit.ab.ca

STUDENT GRANTS, AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS EXPLAINED

TABER PUBLIC LIBRARY AND SHARLA KANE



LET SHARLA GO THROUGH WHAT STUDENTS WILL NEED TO DO FOR THIS TYPE OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT LATER. OPEN TO PARENTS OF ALL GRADES

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8
6:00 PM
TABER PUBLIC LIBRARY



HEALING HEARTS FAMILY RECOVERY

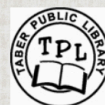


Support Group Info Night

Hi! I'm Joanne. I created a support group to help families that have a loved one struggling with addiction - I provide tools and strategies that can help encourage your loved one toward positive change, guiding families from chaos to hope. If you're curious about the group, or would like to get to know me, I hope you'll come say hi:

WHEN: September 18th at 6:30pm

WHERE: Taber Public Library



Discover new ways to initiate positive change

Joanne Feist | healingheartswithjo.com



THE SKY IS NO LONGER A LIMIT

Spread your wings with the Air Cadets, a free youth program for ages 12-18

Join us for our Fall recruitment night! Sept 24,
7PM at the Cadet Hall. 7211 50th St Taber AB