

# St. Mary's School

*Ecce Ego Sum Mitte Me*

*January 2025*



## Principal's Message

Mrs. Michelle Nevil

Happy New Year!

Welcome back to the 2025 school year! January has always been one of my favorite months. It's a time when students are typically productive and focused, diving into their studies with renewed energy after the holiday break. Now that I am in the JR/SR High School, January takes on an added layer of importance. It's not just about productivity but also about reflection, review, and demonstrating knowledge in preparation for exams. I look forward to supporting students through exam week and helping them navigate the conclusion of their semester or midterm experience.

As we transition to the start of a new semester, I am excited to continue supporting our students in their academic and personal growth. One of my key roles as principal at St. Mary's is academic counseling—ensuring that our students are on the right path as they prepare for life after high school. Whether their next steps involve post-secondary education, trades apprenticeships, entering the workforce, or traveling abroad, my goal is to guide and empower them.

My role is to help students see the endless possibilities that await them and to connect them with the right resources and people. Most importantly, I want to help them recognize their unique potential. The world needs their light, and it is our responsibility at St. Mary's to ensure they see their brilliance—or, at the very least, to let that light shine in.

As Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).

My New Year's promise to you, as part of this learning community, is to listen, lead with compassion, and bring light to every situation. Whether it's offering a fresh perspective, finding a solution to a challenge, or simply highlighting the good around us, my mission is to foster understanding and connection. While the outcomes may not always align with our expectations, they will help us grow and move forward together.

This month marks the beginning of "Survey Season" in the education world. Our students are currently completing the Our School Survey, and in February, students, teachers, and parents will participate in the Alberta Education Assurance Measures Survey. I encourage everyone to take part in these surveys—they play a vital role in shaping decisions at the school level and directly influence my work as principal.

If you have feedback or ideas, I invite you to share them with me. You can make an appointment by calling the office or reaching out via email. My door is always open, and I look forward to hearing from you.

May God bless you in 2025. May His light shine upon you and through you.

Mrs. Nevil  
Principal

January 6th:  
1st Day Back at School

January 16th :  
Soup Day @ 11:30 AM

January 20th - 28th:  
Exam Week/Break

January 29th:  
1st Day of Semester 2

# SMS Annual Ski Trip - March 3, 2025

Our annual ski trip is scheduled for **Monday, March 3rd** at Castle Mountain for students in grades 6-12. We have spots available for 35 students. The first 35 to pay and submit forms are guaranteed spots. We will need a minimum and if there is enough interest we could book a second bus. Forms can be picked up at the office starting January 9th.

**Parent Volunteers Needed:** We will need to meet a 1:8 supervisor to student ratio to make the trip work. As a result, we will need parent volunteers who are capable of comfortably skiing Huckleberry chair terrain at minimum. If you are interested, please complete the volunteer sign-up form. This is not a free ski day for volunteers as everyone will have scheduled terrain and responsibilities throughout the day. We will review the number of volunteers needed once final student numbers are confirmed. For more information please contact Mr. Van Uden or Miss Vienneau.



## Volunteer at the 1A Basketball Provincials



**VOLUNTEERS  
NEEDED**



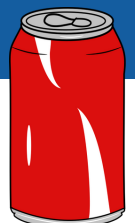
We are hosting the 1A Basketball Provincials here at St. Mary's School on **March 19th - 22nd**. To ensure that this event runs smoothly, **we are looking for volunteers** to help with score-keeping, door admissions, etc. We need as many volunteers as we can get.

We are also looking for food donations and help to maintain our coaches/officials room.

Please contact our school office at 403-223-3165 or reach out to our Athletic Director, AJ Bergenhenengouwen.

## Bottle Drive Fundraising

We have an account at the Taber Bottle Depot to help fundraise for the upcoming Basketball Provincials that St. Mary's will be hosting this year. If you would like to contribute to this account, you can drop off your empty pop cans, bottles, etc and let the staff know to submit the proceeds into the **St. Mary's Basketball Provincials** account. Thank you in advance for your contributions.



# News from our St. Mary's Band Booster Club

Congratulations to all the students who performed at the St. Mary's Christmas Concert on December 18th. There was a wide variety of music that kept the audience entertained. Thank you to everyone who came out to support our young musicians. It is always great to perform in front of a full gym.

It's not really that far away. The St. Mary's Spring Concert will be held on Wednesday, May 14th at 7pm in the school gym. Please keep this date open for our students.

The St. Mary's Jazz band is looking for new members. It is a great time for any band student from grades 6 to 12 to join. We rehearse every Tuesday from 3:15 to 4:15. If you are thinking of joining, bring a friend! The more the merrier.

The St. Mary's Band Booster Club will be selling Ben's Beef Jerky as it's last fundraiser of the year. Order forms will go out January 13th. The jerky comes in original, Teriyaki, Smoky River and Sweet and Spicy and is \$25 a bag. Order forms and payment must be returned to the school no later than Friday, February 7th. Jerky will be delivered the first week of March. Please see any Junior or Senior Band member in February to place your order.

The next executive meeting of the St. Mary's Band Booster Club goes Tuesday, February 25th at 7pm in the band room. Any interested parents are welcome to attend.

## Parish Connection: St. Augustine Church

ALTAR SERVER NEW YEAR'S PARTY (Sunday, January 19 from 11:00AM-1:00PM at St. Mary's School): Inviting all Altar Servers and their families to a POTLUCK and fun event! Come join us to gather and socialize as we begin a new year!"

St. Augustine's Confirmation Class at St. Mary's School - Taber on Sunday, January 26th @ 5:30PM. This Confirmation Class is hosted/led by Mr. & Mrs. Van Uden.



Saint Augustine's  
*Smoked Brisket*  
Feast  
& Gift Basket Draws  
February 2, 2025  
Saint Augustine's Parish Hall

Presented By:  
THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE  
OF CANADA  
FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

Two Dinner Sitzings; at 4:00pm and 6:00pm  
Ticket Prices: Adults... \$20 • Kids 6-10... \$10 • Kids Under 6... Free

For tickets please ask a CWL member,  
or contact the Parish Office: 403-223-2226

# SMS SOUP DAY

January 16th @ 11:30 AM

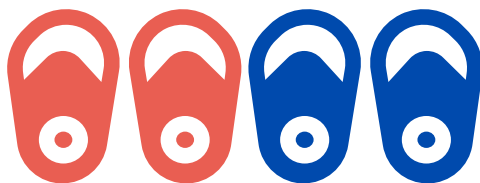
If any parents would like to bring a pot of soup, please contact our school office at 403-223-3165



## SEEKING BREAKFAST SPONSORS

We love our SMS Breakfast Program. We serve a variety of options: Milk, juice, cereal, granola bars, fruit, breakfast sandwiches, etc.

We are seeking for a few more individuals or small businesses who would be willing to sponsor or make a donation to our breakfast program. If you are interested and would like more details, please contact our school office at 403-223-3165



## PULL TOGETHER

We are continuing to collect pop tabs to help build hospital equipment and wheel chairs. Check out the recent Facebook posts regarding pop tab donations. We had a significant donation and were able to contribute 120,452 tabs to the cause.

Thank you to everyone who has collected tabs for us.  
Let's see how many more we can collect by June 2025



## Donate School Supplies



We accept all gently used school supplies throughout the school year. 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! We are currently **running low on the basics like pencils, erasers, sharpeners, etc.** If you have any gently used supplies laying around at home taking up space, we would gladly accept them and pass them on to our students.

## 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](http://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.

January 6, 2025

RE: Student Attendance During Exam Week

Dear Parents & Guardians,

Friday January 17<sup>th</sup> is the last day of regular classes in the first semester at St. Mary's School. The exam schedule, including both final and mid-term examinations, commences January 20<sup>th</sup> and continues until January 28<sup>th</sup>. **Please be aware that all exams begin at 8:45am.** Please be diligent in ensuring students arrive on time for exams as late entries often cause significant disruption to students already writing and important writing details are communicated at the beginning of every exam. Additionally, students will not receive extended time when arriving late to an exam.

Students who miss an exam will not be permitted to rewrite the exam unless they have communicated to their teacher the nature of the absence prior to the exam. In cases of emergency circumstances, school administration will intervene on behalf of the student to ensure a reasonable solution. The exam make-up day is only for students who have rescheduled exams prior to exam week. Students who do not communicate the need for a rescheduled exam in advance, will not be permitted to write on the exam make-up day.

As a reminder, regular classes do not run during the exam schedule and students will not be under teacher supervision after the completion of their exams. The school library will remain open during the exam schedule as a quiet place for students to study. While the school remains open for administration purposes, students are to leave after the completion of their exams. Please contact school administration for clarification or inquiries.

Exams can bring extra stress upon students. While the school staff works faithfully to prepare students for exams, parents and guardians ought to ensure that students are studying, getting enough sleep, and managing stress. Please contact the school's counseling services for support regarding the strategies parents and guardians can utilize for students during exams.

Sincerely,

Josh Van Uden  
Associate Principal  
St. Mary's School





# Bright Futures Begin Here

## Holy Spirit Catholic School Division



### 2025/2026 REGISTRATION



#### Re-Registration Starts January 13, 2025

Families with students currently enrolled in our system should expect an email during the week of January 13-17, 2025 asking that the online "Registration Update Form" be completed for each child attending one of our schools in the 2025/2026 school year.

Parents/guardians who are hoping to register younger siblings new to the division will also have the opportunity to do this at the same time that they re-register older students.

#### New Student Registration Starts February 3, 2025

All Early Learning to Grade 12 students who are new to the division and wish to enroll for the 2025/2026 school year are invited to register online starting on Monday, February 3, 2025.

- Through play, our **Early Learning Program** is designed to stimulate the growing curiosity of children 3 and 4 years of age.
- **Kindergarten** is designed for children 5 years of age on, or before, December 31, 2025.
- **Grade 1** registrants must be 6 years of age on, or before, December 31, 2025.
- **French Immersion** is also available. Enrollment starts:
  - in Kindergarten/Grade 1 at École St. Mary in Lethbridge.
  - in Grade 1 at St. Michael's School in Pincher Creek.



#### For More Information

Contact our Early Learning Supervisor to discuss Early Learning or your child's specialized programming requirements by phone (403-381-8495) or email ([earlylearning@holyspirit.ab.ca](mailto:earlylearning@holyspirit.ab.ca)).

To inquire about Kindergarten, you can contact your local school.

Contact our French Language Consultant to discuss French Immersion programming by phone (403-331-4458) or email ([urquhartw@holyspirit.ab.ca](mailto:urquhartw@holyspirit.ab.ca)).

Contact your child's school, or visit the division's website ([holyspirit.ab.ca](http://holyspirit.ab.ca)), if you need assistance with the online registration process or have any questions.



## Holy Spirit Catholic School Division

...where children are cherished and achieve their potential.

# January

## Proclaim! Pilgrims of Hope



*"In this life no one can fulfill his longing, nor can any creature satisfy man's desire. Only God satisfies, he infinitely exceeds all other pleasures. That is why man can rest in nothing but God."*  
- St. Thomas Aquinas

### St. Thomas Aquinas 1225-1274 (Feast Day: January 28)

St. Thomas Aquinas, patron saint of academics, students, and Catholic schools and Doctor of the Church, is widely considered to be one of the most influential theologians in Catholic history. Living in the 1200s, Aquinas was born in what is now Italy, into a powerful and wealthy family. He had an extensive education in his youth, and at the age of 19 decided to join the Dominican Order. His family made many efforts to prevent him from following through on this choice, but his persistence was unstoppable. In 1245, he went to continue his studies at the University of Paris, where he met Dominican scholar St. Albert the Great. He completed his education there, becoming a prolific writer as well. For the remainder of his life, he continued to teach and to write, composing hymns that are still sung today alongside many philosophical volumes. The largest and most well known of these is his *Summa Theologica* (Summary of Theology), which was written as a guide of the Catholic theological basics. This gave rise to the theological approach known as Thomism. Thomism focuses on the complementary nature of faith and reason, the virtues as a framework for moral life, and uses logical reasoning for the existence of God. G.K. Chesterton referred to this view as a philosophy of common sense. St. Thomas Aquinas died in 1274, with his *Summa Theologica* left unfinished after a mystical experience caused him to abandon it. He was canonized by Pope John XXII in 1323, and proclaimed a Doctor of the Church in 1567.

## The Apostles' Creed

*"...[He] descended into hell..."*

In the biblical word, 'hell' is the scriptural description for the place of all the dead. The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains (CCC 633-634) that Jesus had to "free the just who had gone before him." This meant that he was able to spread salvation and redemption to the holy men and women who had gone before him in time. His death and resurrection, which we profess at Mass and which are the cornerstone of our faith, were shared as much with those who died before him as with us today. Further, when Christ is resurrected, he arises in a whole new way — just look at some of the things that he does. The Gospels report that people like Mary Magdalene and Clopas did not at first recognize him, that he bore the marks of his crucifixion wounds, and that he ate with his disciples after the resurrection! This might seem like a little thing, but as Janet Schaeffler writes,

*Perhaps the problem with the years of Jesus' physical life on earth was that he seemed so human that people couldn't*

*believe he was God. Now, in his risen state, it is tremendously important that people remember that he is human...the resurrection doesn't mean that finally Jesus went back to being God again. He never ceased being God. But he never ceases being human.*

As St. Athanasius said, "we no longer die as those condemned but as those who will arise." This gives our three year faith plan theme — Arise! Pilgrims of Hope — a whole new meaning.

As we seek to become *Pilgrims of Hope* this year, let us continue to contemplate the Creed, and how our proclamation of the Creed unites us to one another and to all Christians through time and space.

## "Proclaiming" In Our Schools

In late November, Pope Francis announced that during this year the Church will be canonizing two new saints, who you will be familiar with from our journeys with the saints in the past two years. Both Blessed Carlo Acutis and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati are going to be joining the ranks of the saints! Throughout this year, there will be Jubilee celebrations for many different groups within our Catholic communities, from police to deacons, marching bands to migrants. Blessed Carlo Acutis will be canonized during the Jubilee of Teenagers (April 27), and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati will be canonized during the Jubilee of Young People (August 3). Both of these saints-to-be are great witnesses to our faith and models for us all. For more information on the Jubilee, you can visit the official website [here](#).



### Pope's Prayer Intentions — For the right to an education

Let us pray for migrants, refugees and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected.



January 2025

## Updates

## Happy New Year!!

- **Old's College Dual Credit Applications:** Open until **February 14, 2025**. Interested in registering for a Winter Term 2025 course? Email Miss. Amakobe at [amakobev@holyspirit.ab.ca](mailto:amakobev@holyspirit.ab.ca)
- **Lethbridge Polytechnic Dual Credit Orientation:** January 15, 2025 - Students enrolled in Winter Term 2025 dual credit courses will receive further details via email.
- **Skills Canada Competitions:** Showcase your skills in trades and technology fields! Events include regional, provincial, and national competitions. Participants demonstrate their skills in carpentry, welding, plumbing, graphic design, robotics, culinary arts, and more!  
Key registration dates:
  - **Regional Skills Canada:** Opens 8:30 AM, **January 8, 2025**.
  - **Girls Exploring Trades & Technologies:** Opens 8:30 AM, **January 15, 2025**.
  - **Provincial Skills Canada:** Opens 8:30 AM, **January 15, 2025**.
- **Southern Alberta Collegiate Institute (SACI):** Offering **Automotive Service** and **Heavy Equipment Technician Apprenticeship** seats for RAP students or those who have completed SACI courses. The eight-week program runs from **May 5 to June 27, 2025**.

## Program Details

- **Work Experience Program:** Open to Grade 10–12 students with part-time jobs, summer positions, or volunteer work. Earn up to 15 high school credits through this program.
- **Green Certificate Program:** A structured program supported by Alberta Education and Agriculture & Forestry. Students can earn up to 16 diploma credits while working in agriculture and gain credentials for careers in agribusiness.
- **Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP):** Allows students to earn up to 40 high school credits while gaining on-the-job training for an apprenticeship.
- **Special Projects:** Earn up to 15 high school credits by completing an individual or group project outside the regular curriculum.
- **Workplace Safety Course:** A prerequisite for earning credits in the programs above.
  - **Work Experience:** HCS3000/HCS3010 Workplace Safety Systems course & signed Work Agreement form. AND **Green Certificate:** AGR3000 Agriculture Safety course.
- **Dual Credit:** Earn both high school and post-secondary credits simultaneously. In partnership with Old's College and Lethbridge Polytechnic, these courses help students explore career pathways.
- **Career Services:** In collaboration with Careers the Next Generation, students gain career awareness and experience through paid internships and community partnerships. [Create a student profile!](#)

Mark Boschee  
Off-Campus Coordinator  
Career Centre, East Campus on Tuesday/Friday  
Cell: 587-220-4258  
Email: [boscheem@holyspirit.ab.ca](mailto:boscheem@holyspirit.ab.ca)

Vero Amakobe  
Career Practitioner  
Office on Campus, West on Tuesday/Thursday  
403-327-4596 ext 312  
Email: [amakobev@holyspirit.ab.ca](mailto:amakobev@holyspirit.ab.ca)

Taber Public Library



# Trivia Night



*at Taber Legion*

**JANUARY | 23**

**6:30 PM**

for teams of up to 6 players  
all ages and groups  
welcome. Small prizes to be  
won.

