



Newsletter

BISHOP DAVID MOTIUK CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY/JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
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MONTHLY MESSAGES

Administrators' Message



Lenten Season

The season of Lent is a time of reflection and of turning our hearts to God. We turn our attention to growing spiritually so that we can fully cherish the joy of Easter. Lent helps us to listen more and pray, just as Jesus did in the desert. During Lent, we limit activities and events in the school so that we can reflect upon and share in Jesus' experience in the desert.

Registration Season

We are now accepting new registrations for the 2021-2022 school year. As well, parents of all current BDM students will be asked to complete the Intention Icon in PowerSchool. This takes the place of the "Confirmation of Registration" form we sent in the past and also replaces the Transition Passport that was issued to grade six students choosing a different school for junior high. The letter sent to parents via Swift on Monday, February 22 explains the process in much more detail. If you have not already done so, please take a few minutes to read through the letter. We do ask that anyone planning to move their children to a different school please let us know as soon as possible so that we can assist with the transition and plan for staffing accordingly. Thank you!

Reporting Absences

We are pleased that we have not had a positive case of COVID 19 since we returned from Christmas holidays. We are doing our very best to make sure that students are always in their cohorts and are following all protocols, including staying home when they are not well. Parents, you can help us by letting us know when your children are absent with possible COVID symptoms and when you have COVID tests booked. We keep track of this information in the event of a positive test.

Big Hearts at BDM

We would like to extend a huge thank you to all of the families who supported Sofia from grade three in her drive to collect items for the Mustard Seed. Through your generosity, many items were collected that will help the homeless in our city. Thank you as well to Sofia's mom, who delivered all of your donations to the Mustard Seed on our behalf.

Spring Break

We would like to remind parents that the Thursday before Spring Break is a full day, with no early dismissal. We will dismiss at 12:15 on Friday, March 26 for Spring Break. School will resume on Tuesday, April 6

Together we will work very hard in the next weeks and then enjoy a well-deserved Spring Break and Easter weekend at the end of the month

Terry Volk	Delia de Sousa	Karen Germaine
Principal	Assistant Principal	Assistant Principal

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Chief Superintendent's Message



"Lent is a journey that involves our whole life, our entire being. It is a time to reconsider the path we are taking, to find the route that leads us home and to rediscover our profound relationship with God, on whom everything depends."

(Pope Francis, *Homily*, 02/17/21)

In his homily for Ash Wednesday, Pope Francis invites us to look to a bigger picture of the journey of Lent. It is not only a journey into the desert with Jesus as he prepares to go to Jerusalem for his ultimate sacrifice. Our Holy Father invites us to look more deeply upon the journey of Lent as one where we commit our lives to always returning to God, his love, and his mercy. The Pope shares that through the gift of the person of Jesus, God came to us so that he could take us by the hand and walk us towards the joy of salvation.

Our planning for the 2021-22 school year is well underway. As with all things over the past many months, we recognize that there is uncertainty that exists because of the pandemic. Our schools have done an outstanding job at ensuring that students and staff are safe and that all COVID risk-mitigation protocols are followed; these will continue for the duration of the pandemic.

Understanding that our mandate is to provide in-person learning, we have also arrived at a model for online learning for the 2021-22 school year for those students that would benefit from this learning option based on their learning style. This option is significantly different than the COVID-inspired online platform presently in place, and a conversation with your child's administration would be beneficial in understanding these differences as they pertain to your child's learning needs.

We are asking parents to indicate their learning stance intention (in-person or online) for each child before March 22. The Division will analyze the number of requests to establish the most efficient and cost-effective way of delivering the online experience based on family choice. By families making decisions that meet their needs early on, it will allow us to create a robust learning experience for every student. All online students will be given one opportunity to return to their community school, on February 1, 2022. There will be no opportunity for students that want online learning to enroll after the start of the school year.

Please be sure to go to your PowerSchool Parent portal to indicate your intentions for each child for next year by March 22, 2021 so that we can be sure that our staffing meets the needs of our students in both in-person and online learning. [Click here](#) to learn more

Pope Francis published an encyclical letter, [Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship](#), last fall. This month, our Religious Education Services (RES) Secondary Consultant writes about chapter 5, A Better Kind of Politics, and chapter 6, Dialogue and Friendship in Society. The article is included as an accompaniment to this newsletter.

I leave you with a final thought from Pope Francis' beautiful Ash Wednesday Homily: "Lent is a humble descent both inwards and towards others. It is about realizing that salvation is not an ascent to glory, but a descent in love."

Many blessings on your continued Lenten journey towards our God.

Sincerely,

Robert Martin

Chief Superintendent

The Superintendent's message is also available online: [Chief Superintendent's Message for March](#)

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Ms. Talarico's Message: Lent – Our Forty Days in the Desert



"Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' But he answered, 'It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour; and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'" Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him."

-Matthew 4. 1-11

Lent, traditionally a time for fasting, almsgiving, and prayer, is also a time to take stock of our lives, to prepare ourselves physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually for the death and resurrection of Christ. For many Christians around the world, Lent is one of the most important times of the year. Unlike Advent which serves as a time of celebration and of great anticipation, Lent is more frequently a time of solemn observance and preparation for Easter. From its start on Ash Wednesday, this year on February the 17th, until its conclusion on Easter Sunday, we find ourselves, like Jesus, in the desert. *As Lent is the time for greater love, listen to Jesus' thirst ... He knows your weakness. He wants only your love, wants only the chance to love you.*"

-St. Teresa of Calcutta

It is hard to imagine this barren wilderness as described in the gospel of Matthew as we remain shrouded in snow and cold. Yet, the imagery of the desert is still important; it helps us recall our need to stop and reflect; to prepare for the expected and unexpected events in our lives. Lent is an invitation for us to accompany him on that journey; the forty days that Christ Jesus prepared himself, body and soul, for his ministry on earth. Even in the midst of temptation, Jesus revealed to us what it means to live out one's humanity; what it means to be in relationship with God.

Today, Christians around the world observe Lent in many ways. Some will still observe the fast strictly, beginning with the wearing of ashes on Ash Wednesday and abstinence of meat until Easter Sunday. Others will choose to give up something trivial for Lent. At the same time, many other Christians will use Lent to study their Bibles and pray more intently, making use of devotional books, and daily reflections. And even others will act generously as a way to place others first. In whatever way you recognize Lent and however you prepare for Easter, remember always to remain fixed on Christ; to follow him, mind, body, and soul, from the forty days and forty nights in the desert, to a life dedicated to serving God and serving others.

Sandra Talarico, Manager, Religious Education Services

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Fratelli Tutti – Chapter 5 & 6: Better Politics: Truly at the Service of the Common Good



The pleading call for all societies to engage in "A Better Kind of Politics" is the focus of chapter 5 in Pope Francis' encyclical letter Fratelli Tutti. In the midst of a world pandemic, political decisions that are "truly at the service of the common good" (par. 154) are not only needed, but essential!

Pope Francis's message is clear; we must engage in politics that takes into account more than just economics. Though economic growth is a necessary consideration, stable economies are not built solely on profit; stability also relies on putting social structures in place that support human dignity. "Populist" leaders (*leaders that claim to represent the well-being of others, while in fact, pursuing their own agenda*) who show a lack of compassion for all people, undermine the principles of human dignity. A "better kind of politics" (par. 154) would see leaders do the 'right thing' in the interest and benefit of all people, not just what is popular for short term benefit or gain. A better type of leadership considers "the need for a greater spirit of fraternity, but also a more efficient world-wide organization to help resolve the problems plaguing the abandoned and suffering in poor countries" (par. 165). As a society, our goal must be to engage in "healthy politics" (par. 177) — this is where we will see true reform and peace.

Dialogue and the essential role it plays in creating a culture of "liberty, equality, and fraternity" (par. 219) is at the heart of chapter 6 "Dialogue and Friendship in Society". Each of us has something to contribute; "each of us can learn something from others." (par. 215) Currently, we live in a culture where social media exploits people's weaknesses and makes them feel less worthy. Pope Francis says that when we engage in meaningful dialogue, we learn that "no one is useless, and no one is expendable." (par. 215) A country will flourish, when economics are not the sole focus and "when constructive dialogue occurs between its many rich cultural components: popular culture, university culture, youth culture, artistic culture, technological culture, economic culture, family culture and media culture." (par. 199) When we take time to use social media for good — connecting with others, uniting in solidarity with others, and creating a sense of unity with others we "offer immense possibilities for encounter and solidarity." (par. 205)

It is in "respecting the truth of our human dignity and submitting to that truth" (par. 207) that we can build a great future for our children. This means recognizing other people's right to be themselves and accepting diversity and positive change or progress in our world. This means finding the time and energy, in a world that spins so quickly around us, to show care, generosity, and compassion for others. The simple "gift of a smile, to speak a word of encouragement, to listen amid general indifference" (par. 224) is integral to building new pathways for a world of hope; a world with compassion and understanding.

Susanna Kaup, Religious Education Services

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IB Coordinators' Message



Our IB coordinators' monthly message is available on our website: [March IB News](#). This is where you will find updates on the wonderful learning taking place in our classrooms. Please take a few minutes to look through it and to see what our students are up to!

As always we welcome questions about the IB programmes in our school. Andrea Olivieri is the coordinator for the Primary Years Programme (PYP) and Lyndsy Panizzon is the coordinator for the Middle Years Programme (MYP). They can be reached at Andrea.Olivieri@ecsd.net and Lyndsy.Panizzon@ecsd.net

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BREAKING NEWS

Transportation Update for Current Online Families



New students and individuals currently enrolled in online learning who require yellow bus transportation services for the 2021-2022 school year **must submit a Transportation Application** form. Existing yellow bus riders, including kindergarten students, do not have to apply for a bus pass for the 2021-2022 school year. The application deadline is Friday, May 21st, 2021. Please email completed Transportation Applications to [Mrs. te Velde](mailto:Mrs.teVelde)

The Transportation Applications are here: <https://www.ecsd.net/page/1263/transportation>

Please email transportationservices@ecsd.net with any questions.

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Staffing Updates



As you know, there have been a number of staffing changes at BDM over the last while. First, we would like to congratulate Mrs. Fenton, who accepted a position as principal of St. Jerome School. We welcome Ms. Delia de Sousa as our assistant principal for elementary grades. Ms. de Sousa has a great deal of administrative experience and is already making wonderful contributions to our school!

We are saddened to report that Mrs. Min has resigned from ECS D in order to pursue other areas of interest. We wish her all the best as she begins a new chapter in her career. Ms. Virata has returned from her leave and we can now confirm that she will be taking over from Mrs. Min for the remainder of the school year.

Ms. Christina Panizzon is currently on a leave. We are pleased to welcome Ms. Keziah Benko Saah to our grade five online classroom until Ms. Panizzon's return.

Mr. Loeffler has returned from his leave and will be resuming his full teaching duties in March. We thank Mr. Kurylo for taking over Mr. Loeffler's duties while he was away. Mr. Kurylo will be returning to his position as our dedicated replacement teacher.

Mrs. Petersen will be returning from her maternity leave on March 1 and will be taking over from Ms. Vukusic. Ms. Vukusic will remain on staff, offering targeted support to our online math and other classes in junior high.

Mrs. Bilotta will be returning from her maternity leave on March 1. Although Mrs. Bilotta is our grade three teacher, she will be assuming the duties of dedicated replacement teacher in elementary grades for the time being. Ms. Schindel will remain with her grade three class until the end of this school year.

We welcome all of our new and returning teachers.

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Missed Our Open House?



The Bishop David Motiuk Virtual Open House was on Wednesday, February 10. If you missed it, the information we shared is still available on our website, including the Open House presentation, Frequently Asked Questions, program information, videos and student testimonials.

We are at capacity in all grades, so new registrations are limited to resident (Catholic) families residing within our boundary area. If you know of anyone planning to register children at our school, please have them do so as soon as possible. Our morning kindergarten classes are now full. We continue to take registrations for afternoon classes. To register for kindergarten, children must be 5 years of age by December 31, 2021.

Please have interested families call the school office at 780-409-2603 for more information or they may simply complete [Online Registration Applications](#).

Families who do not meet residency requirements are placed on a waiting list. We will make decisions regarding registration for these students prior to Spring Break. Thank you for spreading the good news about Bishop David Motiuk School!

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Puddles and Spare Clothing



Even though it's still cold out, the days are getting longer and we know that spring is just around the corner. As the weather gets warmer and the snow begins to melt, we anticipate that our field will be filled with large puddles. Try as we might, we are not always successful in our efforts to keep children away from these springtime delights. With that in mind, it might be prudent to send extra clothing with children—at least until the fields dry up! Thank you!

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UPCOMING EVENTS

School Council Meeting



Our next School Council Meeting will be on Wednesday, March 3 at 6:00 pm. This will again be a virtual meeting. A link to the meeting will be posted on the School Council page of our website on the day of the meeting. Please plan to join us! All parents are welcome.

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Parent Conferences



Our Parent Conferences for students in grades 1-9 will take place in the afternoon and early evening on Thursday, March 11. Conferences for kindergarten parents will take place in the morning, afternoon and early evening on Thursday, November 11. Discussion during Conferences will focus on student achievement to date with evidence of learning from projects and assignments students have completed to this point in the school year.

Conferences will run from 1:00 to 5:00 PM and from 5:30 to 7:30 PM. Conferences will be held via Teams. Once bookings have been confirmed, teachers will send Teams invites to parents. Parents (with students) are asked to log on at their appointed time. Our online [Conference Booking Manager](#) will be open from 9:30 AM on Friday, March 5 until 3:00 PM on Wednesday, March 10. Parents who have used the Conference Booking Manager in the past may simply log in to book conferences. For parents who are using the Conference Booking Manager for the first time, simply click on the link above and register to create an account.

Staff Faith Development Day



Our second Staff Faith Development Day for this year is on Thursday, March 18. There will be no school for students on this day. Bishop David will be leading our staff in a retreat in the morning and we will join virtually with staff from schools throughout the division for our afternoon Faith formation activities.

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