

January 2021

Blessed be a new year! 2020 was a difficult year for everyone so we pray that God will bring us love, joyful tidings, good health, and abundant blessings in 2021. May our hearts be filled with hope and faith. We wish Ms. Timko all the best as she continues life's adventures in her retirement. Ms. Nicole Maas will serve as Acting Principal, and Ms. Jessalyn Lastiwka will join her as Acting Assistant Principal. We also welcome Mrs. Eva Steinke back to our St. Benedict School family. She will be teaching our Grade 1 remote class, and Miss Megan Schmidt will take over our Grade 5 remote class.

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

Just a reminder that parents are to use the health screening tool every morning with each of their children to determine if they should be coming to school.

Daily Health Screening information can be found here:

<https://www.ecsd.net/page/8503/daily-health-screening>



ONLINE LEARNING

A reminder that students will be learning online for the week of January 4-8, 2021 as directed by the government. Regular classes at school will resume on January 11, 2021 for at school learners. At this same time, the online learners will continue their remote learning.

FACE MASKS

Please ensure that your child comes to school each day with his/her face mask. It is a good idea to send an extra one along in your child's backpack. We have a VERY limited supply of extra masks in the office. Thank you.

CTBS TESTING

Grade 6 students who are learning at school will be completing CTBS (Canadian Test of Basic Skills) testing during the week of January 11-15, 2021. Please ensure that your child comes to school well rested and having had a nutritious breakfast.

HAPPY
New Year

DRUM RESIDENCY

Aaron Zorthian, cultural instructor, has been working with our Cree language class over the past couple of months. He has been sharing his gifts of the Drum and song with the students. On January 18th and 19th, each classroom will spend time in the gymnasium to learn about drum teachings.

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING

You are welcome to join us for the next School Council meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the school library on Monday, January 18. COVID-19 safety protocols will be in place. We hope to see you there.

PARKING AT THE SCHOOL

Please help to keep our students safe! Parking is available for parents on the street across from the school and outside the bus zone on the school side of the street. Please refrain from parking in the cross walk and in front of the fire hydrant. The parking lot is for staff parking only so please do not drop off or pick up your children here. **PLEASE USE THE CROSS WALKS TO CROSS THE STREET. FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR STUDENTS, PLEASE REMEMBER THE SPEED LIMIT IS 30 KM/HR IN SCHOOL ZONES. PLEASE PROCEED WITH CAUTIONS THROUGH THE SCHOOL ZONE IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL.**



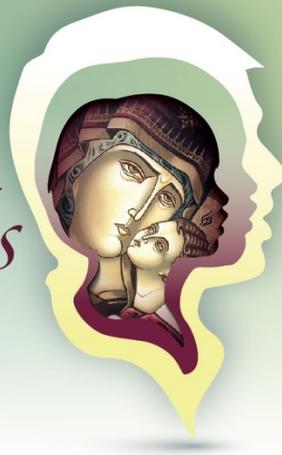
BUS FEES AND HOCKEY ACADEMY FEES are due on January 7, 2021.



NEW YEAR PRAYER:

Thank You Lord for giving me
The brand new year ahead.
Help me live the way I should
As each new day I tread.
Give me gentle wisdom
That I might help a friend,
Give me strength and courage
So a shoulder I might lend.
The year ahead is empty,
Help me fill it with good things
Each new day filled with joy
And happiness it brings.
Amen.

God Calls Us



EACH BY NAME

January 2021

Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit (John 15:5-9)

Every year, from January 18-25, Christians around the world join together for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The Canadian Council of Churches shares the following:

The 2021 theme – Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit (John 15:5-9) – calls us to pray and to work for reconciliation and unity in the church, with our human family, and with all of creation. Drawing on the Gospel image of vine and branches, it invites us to nourish unity with God and with one another through contemplative silence, prayer, and common action. Grafted into Christ the vine as many diverse branches, may we bear rich fruit and create new ways of living, with respect for and communion with all of creation. (<https://www.weekofprayer.ca/2021-week-prayer-christian-unity-theme>)

Joining together in prayer and communion with others is an excellent way to begin our calendar year, especially on the heels of repeated periods of isolation over the past many months. Visit weekofprayer.ca to learn more.

The new calendar year marks the beginning of our planning for the 2021-22 school year. This year, our planning will take on a very different look and feel. Our schools will be holding virtual Open Houses so that students and families can still get a good sense of what is offered as they make their learning choices for the next school year. You can learn more about our Open Houses by visiting our school websites. We are pleased to be taking registrations online again this year. Visit register.ecsd.net beginning January 11, 2021 to find your school and follow the steps to register if you are new to Edmonton Catholic Schools. A complete listing of Open Houses can be found there as well.

Edmonton Catholic Schools is excited to be building a new K-9 school in the Keswick and a new high school in Heritage Valley. We would like to hear your voice in naming them! The culture and ethos of the school community will evolve from the name of a Catholic school. The intention of the name is to support the mission of the Catholic school to be consistent with the mission of the Catholic Church and to establish and deepen the relationship of everyone in the school with the person of Jesus Christ as members of his Body, the Church. Visit www.ecsd.net and click on the 'name our schools' graphic to view the guidelines for submitting a name. Submissions are electronic through the site and will be accepted until 4 pm on January 31, 2021.

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In the fall, we hosted a virtual opportunity for parents and guardians to learn more about supporting their children's mental health during COVID-19 times. We are pleased to offer a follow-up virtual event on January 19 from 7-8 pm. We have moved in and out of a virtual, remote existence in the past many months, and that has posed tremendous challenges to our mental health and wellbeing. We are travelling in uncharted territory as parents and caregivers,

and in addition to paying close attention to ourselves, we need to be extra vigilant with our young people. It is our hope that this evening will give you a few more tools to help you support your families in establishing and maintaining good mental health in an increasingly digital world. Visit our website for more information on the event and register early!

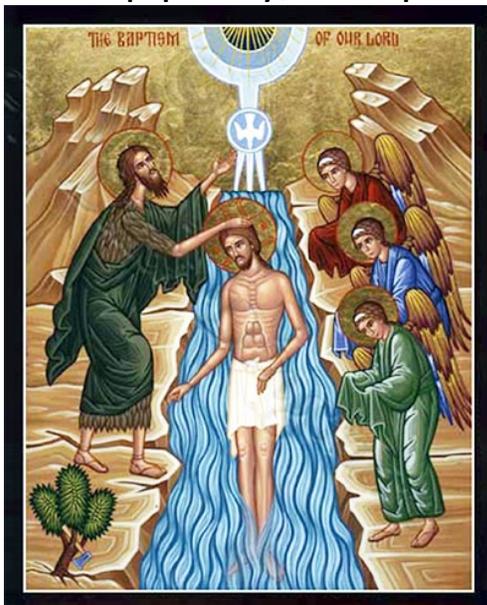
Pope Francis published an encyclical letter, [Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship](#), last fall. Beginning this month, our Religious Education Services (RES) will be sharing monthly articles on the topic to help bring it to life for our community. This month, our RES Manager, Sandra Talarico, writes about the introduction and first two chapters.

As we anticipate the Week of Prayer for Christian unity, I will leave you with a final word from our Holy Father: “To pray is to light a candle in the darkness. #Prayer rouses us from the tepidness of a purely horizontal existence, lifts our gaze to higher things, makes us attuned to the Lord, allows God to be close to us; it frees us from our solitude and gives us hope.” (Twitter, 12/15/20)

Many blessings in the New Year!

Sincerely,
Robert Martin
Chief Superintendent

Epiphany, Theophany – the showing forth of god!



Epiphany! Theophany! Two good Greek words expressing and proclaiming to the world the showing forth of God in His fullness. In the first centuries of Christianity, the feast of the Epiphany was regarded as a collective feast for it embraced other events in the life of Jesus which bore witness to His divinity – namely, His Nativity, the homage of the Wise Men from the East, the Baptism of the Lord in the river Jordan, the first miracle at the wedding in Cana of Galilee and the miraculous multiplication of the loaves. St. Augustine in his homily on the Feast of the Epiphany said: “Today we celebrate the mystery of the Epiphany on earth. Today God, by means of a star in the heavens, heralded His Nativity; and by baptism in the Jordan, He sanctified water for the renewal of humankind; at a wedding in Cana of Galilee, He changed water into wine; and with five loaves of bread, He fed five thousand people.”

In the Eastern Church (Ukrainian Catholic Church) the main emphasis of the feast is on the Baptism of the Lord in the river Jordan by John and the public manifestation of the incarnate Word to the world. Epiphany is the showing forth of God because it was there, at the Baptism of Jesus, that all three Persons of the Holy Trinity appeared for the first time. The Father’s voice testified from heaven that Jesus is the Son of God. The Son accepted His Father’s testimony, and the Holy Spirit was seen descending from the Father in the form of a dove and resting upon the Son.

“And when Jesus had been baptized, just as He came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to Him and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on Him. And the voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with Whom I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3: 16-17)

God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – plays an important role in the life and worship of every Christian. In the Eastern Church we make the sign of the cross with the thumb and first two fingers representing the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. An Eastern Catholic brings these three fingers together to signify that s/he believes not in the three Gods but in One. We are baptized in the name of the Trinity; every liturgy in the Eastern Church begins with the name of the Trinity; we are blessed in the name of the Trinity; we confess our faith in the Holy Trinity when we say in the Nicene Creed: “I believe in One God, the Father, the Almighty... I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ... I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life...”

The doctrine of the Trinity may seem incomprehensible and remote; yet it is one of the basic teachings of the Catholic Church. It is basic because it tells us so much about God, about how Christians have experienced His presence in the past and about how we may experience the fullness of His presence today. Saint Peter and the other apostles, for example, knew God in three ways. They knew God as “Father”. They knew God as: “Son” in the person of Jesus Christ. On Pentecost they experienced God as “Holy Spirit”, as a presence and power within their own hearts and within the Church.

The Trinity means that I believe in God the Father Who made me; God the Son Who saves me, God the Holy Spirit Who lives in me. God the Father: for us in love! God the Son: with us in grace! God the Holy Spirit: in us in power!

Resources: “A Byzantine Rite. Liturgical Year.” Julian J. Katrij, OSBM. Basilian Fathers Publication. Detroit, 1983.
<http://lit.royaldoors.net/2013/12/09/january-6-2014-the-holy-theophany-of-our-lord-god-and-saviour-jesus-christ/>

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Fr. Julian Bilyj
ECSD Chaplain

**Encyclical Letter: Fratelli Tutti
of the Holy Father, Francis
on Fraternity and Social Friendship
A Summary**

Introduction

Inspired by Saint Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis gives us Fratelli Tutti, a proposal for a way of life marked by the flavour of the Gospel. It is a call to love others as brothers and sisters; to recognize and love every person with a love without limits; and to encounter others in a way that is capable of overcoming all distance and every temptation. Fratelli Tutti does not claim to offer a comprehensive teaching on fraternal love but seeks rather to consider its universal scope - the dignity of each and every human person.

Chapter One: Dark Clouds Over A Closed World

The first chapter describes the dark clouds that extend to all parts of the world, hindering the development of universal fraternity and leaving many people wounded by the roadside, discarded and rejected. It reflects on the many distortions of the contemporary era: the manipulation and the deformity of democracy, freedom, justice; the loss of the meaning of the social community and history; selfishness and indifference toward the common good; the market system based on profit and the culture of waste; unemployment, racism, poverty; and the disparity of rights. While these inequities may tempt us to raise our arms in surrender, this is not the way to restore hope and bring about renewal. We must follow a culture of the other; of reviving the sense that we are a global community, and that our lifestyles, our relationships, the organization of our societies, and the meaning of our existence, matter.

Chapter Two: A Stranger On The Road

The second chapter is dedicated to this figure of the stranger on the road, wounded and cast aside amid the dark clouds of a closed world; a society that has turned its back on the suffering and care of its most frail and vulnerable. Just like the Good Samaritan, we are called to become neighbours to others, to overcome prejudices, personal interests, and historical and cultural barriers. We are called to create a society that includes and integrates the fallen and the suffering. Pope Francis calls us to rediscover our vocation as citizens of our own nations and of the world. He summons us to be builders of a new social order and to be aware that the existence of each and every individual is deeply tied to the other; that Christ is the face of the other.

By Sandra Talarico
Manager, Religious Education Services