



WELCOME TO OCTOBER!

We have been blessed this first month of school with such beautiful weather and the lovely colours of autumn. The children have been enjoying their time outside, during opportunities for both learning and play. Their excitement in reconnecting with friends and staff this month has been truly precious.

Our dedicated staff have worked very hard to develop routines with students in class and online – we are so very proud of our highly skilled and committed colleagues.

We also want to commend our amazing students for the wonderful job they are doing with synchronous learning – at school and online. It has been a true joy to have the voices of our students filling our halls and classrooms. We understand that it has been a big adjustment for our students to get back to routines after having been out of school for almost 6 months. Their return to school has involved many changes...masks, physical distancing, new hygiene protocol, new online learning structures/expectations ... to name a few. The children have proven themselves to be wonderfully resilient!

It is during uncertain times such as these that it is especially important to remember to be kind to one another and kind to ourselves, to be patient with and forgiving of what is beyond our control, and hopeful about the future - and above all, to trust in our Lord and God's plan.

Praise the LORD! O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever.

(Psalm 106:1)



Mrs. T. Sauer – Assistant Principal
Mrs. P. Binassi-D'Amours - Principal

SYNCHRONOUS LEARNING

(At School & Online Grades 1-6)

All parents/guardians have received an email from the ECSD regarding 'Consent for Student Participation in Synchronous Learning' through PowerSchool. **Please read this information carefully and note that this consent applies to ALL students, those learning at school and those learning at home.**

COVID-19 GUIDELINES

It is expected that students, staff, and parents/guardians are familiar with, and adhere to, the re-entry plan/protocol at the Division and school levels. Additionally, it is expected that students and parents/guardians are well versed in and follow guidelines provided by Alberta Health Services.

Parents/caregivers must assess their child for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19 every day before sending them to school. Staff will assess themselves daily for the same symptoms.

Any student/staff/parent/guardian who enters the school grounds or school building must complete a daily self assessments: [healthassessmentchecklist](#).

* Any person who selects "yes" on any of the screening questions will not be permitted to enter the school, pending testing/results for COVID-19.

FACE MASKS

*Face masks are required to be worn in all schools in grades 4-6 and by all staff and visitors who enter the school.

*Face masks are highly encouraged by ECSD for students in Kindergarten to grade 3.

*Two reusable masks per student were provided by the Government of Alberta.

*Please note (according to Alberta Education Guidelines):

When a face mask is used, hands should be cleaned before and after putting it on and taking it off. Avoid touching the mask once it is on.

Masks should be changed after they become wet or soiled. Students are encouraged to change their masks during the day and to bring masks home for washing at the end of the day.

After removing a reusable non-medical face mask that will be re-worn prior to washing, it should be placed into a clean, breathable bag or container for storage (allows for evaporation).

A wet or soiled mask that requires laundering should be placed into a sealed bag or container where it is stored until it can be taken home and washed.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

*Please ensure that you, as parents/guardians, respect the 2 metres/6 ft. distance recommended by AHS unless you are from the same household when dropping off/picking up your child(ren).

*If you are unable to maintain this distance, the use of a mask is recommended by AHS.

SCHOOL FEES: 2020-2021

Please note that currently school fee payments are on hold in PowerSchool. Once reinstated, parents/guardians will be notified.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP OF STUDENTS

***Please ensure that your child is NOT dropped off for school prior to 8:15 A.M., which is when supervision begins, as all exterior doors will remain locked.** Parents who are accompanying their children to school are asked to proceed to the appropriate exterior door and refrain from entering the school or using the main entrance. Teachers and educational assistants will greet

children at their doors and lead them into the school. **Parents are asked to wait outside of their child's exterior doors as an appointment is necessary to come into the school to meet with the teacher or visit the office.**

FAITH DEVELOPMENT DAY

Thursday October 29th is Faith Development Day for all ECSD staff. **There is no school on Thursday, October 29.**

PICTURE DAY

Picture Day, **for students attending school in person**, is Friday, October 16th.

Picture Day for **online students** is Monday, November 9 – in the afternoon. Parents must contact the office to book an appointment. Only students will be permitted to enter the school through door #6 (across from the gym). Pictures should take between 3-5 minutes; appointments times must be respected.

READ-IN-WEEK

Read-In-Week will take place from **October 5-9**. This year's theme is: Read Around the World. We are looking forward to hosting online guest readers within our classrooms to share their love of reading with the children!

THANKSGIVING LITURGY

We will be having an online Thanksgiving Liturgy on October 9th at 1:00 PM hosted by our amazing Grade 3 students and teachers. Please note that **Thanksgiving is October 12** and school will be closed.

FIRE DRILLS/LOCKDOWN PRACTICES

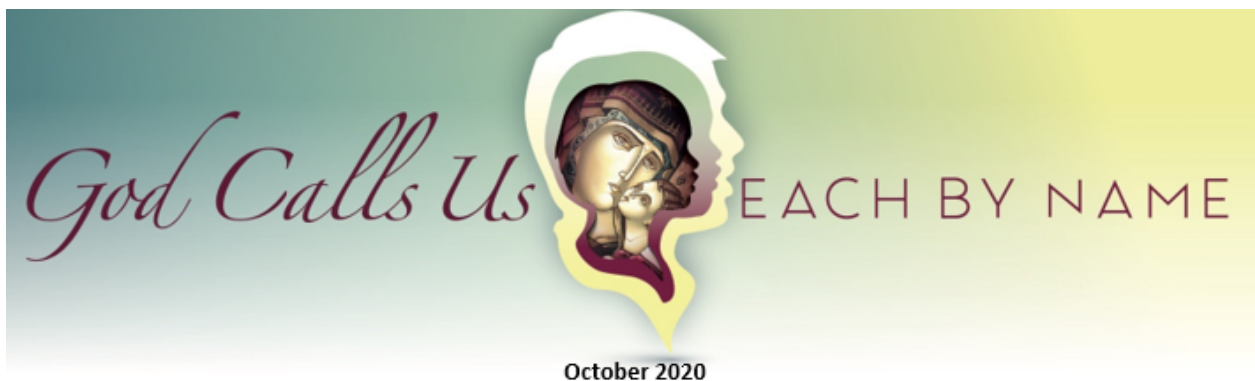
Fire and lockdown safety procedures are practiced throughout the year to ensure that our students and staff are prepared in the event of an emergency or crisis. We have already had two successful fire drills to date and will plan for one more practice before the snow falls.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

As the weeks go by and temperatures continue to become cooler, please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather, and also ensure that outer clothing and boots are labeled. The staff at St. Pius X Catholic School is attentive to changing weather conditions and adheres to the ECSD Weather Policy which suggests that students remain indoors if the temperature is -20° C or colder, or if the temperature and wind chill factor are **-20° C or colder**. Please ensure that your child is properly dressed for inclement weather.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

Parents/Guardians are invited to join us for our Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, October 14th at 6:30pm. **Options are to attend in person or online.** Please email stpxschoolcouncil@gmail.com if you are interested in attending, and indicate in your email if you will be attending in person or online.



“Joy springs from a grateful heart. Truly, we have received much, so many graces, so many blessings, and we rejoice in this. It will do us good to think back on our lives with the grace of remembrance...Let us seek the grace of remembrance so as to grow in the spirit of gratitude. Let us ask ourselves: are we good at counting our blessings, or have we forgotten them?” (Pope Francis, Homily, 09/24/15)

Our Holy Father shared these words initially when he was preaching to a group of priests and religious in New York. The message, however, is one that transcends vocation and age and whispers into all of our hearts. It is so easy to lose our sense of gratitude and joy when we are being inundated with messages of fear, anxiety, and negativity at every turn, every day. This year, more than ever, as we approach Thanksgiving, it is so important for us to take time to discern and to remember all of the goodness in our lives. There are blessings in each of our lives, and it is important that we never lose sight of them. Counting our blessings with gratitude is the first step of our journey to joy.

The beginning of September seems so long ago. There is no question that we are all learning as we move along the educational journey in Covid times. Families and schools have all been focused on making learning “work” in an environment that is drastically different than the norm, all while trying to minimize anxiety for everyone.

At the time of writing this article, our Division has an enrolment of 43,350 students with approximately 11,513 of those students participating online. Part of the understanding that we have gained as a Division is that we need proper time to be able to plan for and staff our different learning scenarios. As a Division, we have hired 96 teachers to support the learning choices that families made; thankfully, much of the cost of this is offset by the federal education pandemic funding that was announced in September. We are very proud of the way our schools and departments were able to reconfigure in the few precious days between August 28, when parents finalized their Quarter 1 learning decisions, and the first student day on September 2. In many cases, entire school timetables needed to be rebuilt and teaching assignments were changed.

October sees Quarter 2 on the horizon, and this means families will have another opportunity to choose in-school or online learning. You will receive a SWIFT K-12 message by October 5 with all of the information that you will need in order to make an informed decision for your children for the second quarter and beyond. We need to have a firm commitment from our families well before the second quarter begins on November 10 so that we can arrange our staff appropriately.

I will leave you with a thought from Pope Francis’ General Audience on September 2, 2020. “The current pandemic has highlighted our interdependence: we are all linked to each other, for better or for worse. Therefore, to come out of this crisis better than before, we have to do so together; together, not alone... Either it is done together, or it is not done. We must do it together, all of us, in solidarity.”

Have a blessed Thanksgiving!

Sincerely,

Robert Martin
Chief Superintendent

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