



January 2024

# Newsletter

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for a wonderful first four months of the school year and to extend warm wishes for a restful and blessed Christmas surrounded by loved ones. As we begin 2024 we are quickly approaching the midpoint of the school year. Towards the end of January our junior high students will be preparing for midterms and final exams. We wish them all the best in their preparations. Please watch the google calendar for exam schedules and details to come.

At this time I would like to share with you a prayer for children at school that was recently shared with me. This prayer really resonated with me as a parent and as an educator and I have found myself coming back to it regularly during the lead up to Christmas. I hope you find it as profound and insightful as I do.

*For my Children at School  
Lord, as I gaze upon these children, I feel inadequate.  
Can I rise to the challenge of loving them into adulthood?  
Please help me to:  
Give this child reasons to believe I am trustworthy.  
Offer this child more time than luxuries.  
Teach this child why something is wrong rather than giving them a rule.  
Give this child the words "please", "thank you", and "sorry" and the ability to use them.  
Paint this child a lasting memory of me smiling.  
Be courageous enough to say "no" sometimes so this child feels safe.  
Teach hope and patience by not giving them everything they want.  
Show this child the hurt they can cause so that they learn to be compassionate.  
Demonstrate pleasure in the ordinary things so that they feel easily content.  
Talk naturally to you in front of them so that they learn how to pray.  
Show them how easy it is to pick up litter rather than complaining about it.  
Care for other people so that they learn to be just.  
Allow them to grow up at their own pace so they learn to enjoy themselves.  
Give them enough freedom not to feel afraid of the world.  
Navigate social media with them so they can make good choices.  
Teach them your goodness so that they begin to enjoy you.  
Respond to them with mercy first and judgment second.  
Give them confidence that love brought them into the world.  
Show them that I love and respect their parents and grandparents.*

*When I fail to be the leader I should be, forgive me, guide me, and inspire me to do better. Thank you for the trust you have placed in giving us this child, your gift to our lives.*

Amen

Yours in Christ,  
Brent Christensen



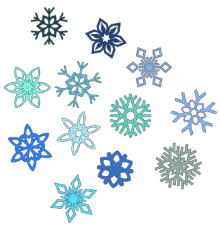
Principal - Mr. Brent Christensen

Associate Principal - Mr. Bruce Gal

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Parents/Guardian our monthly newsletters are available on our website: [sjs.holyspirit.ab.ca](http://sjs.holyspirit.ab.ca)



# January 2024

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 <i>New Year's Day Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God</i>	2 <i>Feast of St. Basil the Great</i>	3	4	5	6
<b>Christmas Break December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023 - January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024</b>						
7 <i>Epiphany of the Lord</i> 	8 <i>Baptism of the Lord</i>  Back to School	9	10	11 Grades 6-9 Mass 8:45am-9:45am	12  <b>SV Boys and Girls Tournament @ Vulcan</b>	13
14	15	16	17 Spirit Day-Twin Day  Grade 9 ELA (K&E) PAT Grade 9 ELA PAT Part A	18 Office Hours 3:30pm-5:30pm	19	20
21	22	23	24 Last Day of Quarter 2  <i>Hot Chocolate CHALICE fundraiser</i>  Board Meeting	25 Grades 1-3 Mass 8:45am-9:45am Grade 7 Math Midterm Grade 8 Math Final  <i>Parent Council Meeting @ 6:30pm</i> <b>JV Boys and Girls Little Storm Tournament @ SMT</b>	26 Grade 7 Science Midterm  <b>SV Boys and Girls Tournament @ FLVT</b>	27
28	29 Grade 8 Social Final Exam Grade 9 Science (K&E) Grade 9 Science PAT	30 First Day of Quarter 3	31 Spirit Day-Beach Day 			

### January Athletic Report

As the calendar flips to another year, we welcome January and look forward to a hectic month of basketball. Besides a very busy schedule of practices, all of our teams will play the majority of their league games this month. Currently our teams are sitting with respectable records in league play, with the JV Boys and Girls both undefeated thus far. Some of the tournaments that are upcoming this month include both SV Boys and Girls teams in Vulcan on January 12-13. As well, January 26-27 will see all of our teams competing in tournaments with both Junior teams competing at the Little Storm Tournament in Taber and the Senior teams travelling to Lethbridge for the FLVT Tournament. League finals will be the first two weekends in February and depending on how our senior teams finish they could possibly qualify for the Zone Championship Tournament on March 1-2. Best of luck to all of our athletes and coaches as they continue on with the basketball season.

Sincerely,  
Bruce Gal

## Junior and Senior Basketball Tournaments 2024

JV Boys: Barnwell Dec. 15 and Little Storm Jan. 26-27  
JV Girls: Barnwell Dec. 8 and Little Storm Jan. 26-27  
SV Boys: Cat's Classic Dec. 1-2, Big Storm Dec. 8-9,  
Vulcan Jan.12-13 and FLVT Jan. 26-27  
SV Girls: Cat's Classic Dec. 1-2, Vulcan Jan. 12-13 and FLVT Jan. 26-27



### League Championships:

Feb. 2-3 JV League Final Tournament Boys @ RI Baker Girls @ St. Catherine  
Feb. 9-10 SV League Final Tournament Girls @ St. Joseph Boys @ TBD



### Programs and Events

Event Series: Spectrum: A Grief Support Group for Teens  
Spectrum: A Grief Support Group for Teens (RSVP)  
January 16, 2024 @ 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm

A program that helps teens who are grieving the loss of a family member due to death, divorce, deployment, or trauma. This set of sessions is for teens 13-15 years of age. Limited to 6 participants, one teen per family.

Registration Deadline January 2nd.

Weekly on Tuesdays at 3:30 at The Hub (no group on February 20 due to winter break).

Start Date: January 9th  
End Date: March 5th

#### DETAILS

Date: January 16, 2024  
Time: 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm

### Spectrum: A Grief Support Group for Teens

Event Category:	LOCATION
Children & Youth	Coaldale 2107 13th Street Coaldale, Alberta T1M 1C5

STAFF  
Amanda Fontaine  
Phone  
403-331-4763  
403-405-4466

## Resolution ideas for kids & families

Mindful eating  
Limit video games  
Drink more water  
Laugh out loud  
Read a new book  
Stay happy  
Learn to forgive and forget  
Love yourself  
Stop drinking soda  
Be respectful of all  
Explore new things  
Laugh out loud  
Learn a new hobby  
Declutter my room  
Do a random Acts of Kindness



A huge thank you to everyone who participated in the December Youth Mass and joined us for our Annual Christmas Party . . . You truly made the 3rd Sunday in Advent a joyful celebration and a great time was had by all at the party! A special thanks to our supporters for making this possible: St. Ambrose CWL and K of C; Coaldale Food Market; Red Apple Store; ReMax (Scott Lowater); Tim Hortons; Kinsmen; Costco; Save-On Foods; Real Canadian Wholesale, Superstore; Anonymous Donor. Bless You for your generosity in supporting our youth.

Take the next step with...

# Holy Spirit Catholic School Division

## 2024/2025 REGISTRATION



### Re-Registration Starts January 15, 2024

Families with students currently enrolled in our system should expect an email during the week of January 15-19, 2024 asking that the online "Registration Update Form" be completed for each child attending one of our schools in the 2024/2025 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 1, 2024

All Early Learning to Grade 12 students who are new to the division and wish to enroll for the 2024/2025 school year are invited to register online starting on Thursday, February 1, 2024.



- 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, 2024.
- **Grade 1** registrants must be 6 years of age on, or before, December 31, 2024.
- **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.



# Holy Spirit Catholic School Division

## Annual Education Assurance Report Summary 2022/2023

### Fiscal Stewardship

Our finances must always reflect our values. To support excellence in learning and ensure that all students receive the opportunities to become the persons God created them to be, financial allocations must support a maximum allotment of dollars to the classroom and equity in the distribution of these dollars.

The 2022/2023 actual operating expenditures for the school division were \$65,412,762. Of this total, nearly 77% was focused on ECS to Grade 12 instruction:

ECS	\$3,043,467
Grades 1-12 Instruction	\$47,218,941
Operations & Maintenance	\$10,055,664
Board & System Administration	\$2,455,496
Transportation	\$2,639,194
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$65,412,762</b>

### Fall 2023 Supplemental Measures Summary

Measure	Holy Spirit Roman Catholic Sep			Alberta			Measure Evaluation		
	Current Result	Prev. Year Result	Prev. 3 Year Average	Current Result	Prev. Year Result	Prev. 3 Year Average	Achievement	Improvement	Overall
Diploma Exam Participation Rate (4+ Exams)	17.8	n/a	60.4	3.5	n/a	56.6	n/a	n/a	n/a
Drop Out Rate	1.5	1.2	1.4	2.5	2.3	2.5	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
In-Service Jurisdiction Needs	82.3	85.8	85.4	82.2	83.7	84.3	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
Lifelong Learning	85.7	82.8	80.1	80.4	81.0	76.8	Very High	Improved Significantly	Excellent
Program of Studies	87.6	84.3	85.5	82.9	82.9	82.6	Very High	Improved	Excellent
Program of Studies - At Risk Students	83.7	81.8	84.6	81.2	81.9	83.4	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
Rutherford Scholarship Eligibility Rate	86.5	86.8	82.1	71.9	70.2	68.3	Very High	Improved	Excellent
Safe and Caring	91.2	90.8	91.4	87.5	88.8	89.1	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Satisfaction with Program Access	77.6	75.9	77.2	72.9	72.6	73.9	High	Maintained	Good
School Improvement	80.6	78.0	82.1	75.2	74.2	77.9	Very High	Declined	Good
Transition Rate (6 Year)	70.8	73.7	73.2	59.7	60.3	60.2	High	Maintained	Good
Work Preparation	87.7	85.2	85.4	83.1	84.9	84.5	Very High	Maintained	Excellent

### Division Profile

- 16 schools and 1 outreach centre
- 5,076 students from Kindergarten to Grade 12
- 225 children in Early Learning Programs
- 498.33 FTE staff members
- Proudly serving the communities of Bow Island, Coaldale, Lethbridge, Picture Butte, Pincher Creek, Taber and surrounding areas

### For More Information

St. Basil Catholic Education Centre  
620 12 B Street North, Lethbridge, AB T1H 2L7  
Phone: 403-327-9555

Division Reports, Plan and Financial Information can be found on the division's website at:  
[www.holyspirit.ab.ca](http://www.holyspirit.ab.ca)

Follow us on social media: HolySpiritRCSD



## Priorities and Successes

#### Priority 1: Staff and students will grow in their faith and experience the richness of Catholic Education.

In 2022/2023, the division began a new Three Year Faith Plan, "Arise! Pilgrims of Hope."

Results we are most proud of:

- 98.5% of staff felt the Faith Plan theme inspired and helped.



Indicator (OurSchool Survey)	Elem(4-6)		Jr./Sr. High	
	21/22	22/23	21/22	22/23
Their school is a Catholic community that helps them understand the Catholic Faith	94%	95%	88%	89%
They are encouraged & given the opportunity to live their faith in the school & community.	95%	95%	87%	87%

#### Priority 2: First Nations, Métis and Inuit education for all.

Our Graduation Coaches, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Facilitators, administrators and staff, continue to support and build strong relationships with our Indigenous students. In 2022-2023, we continued to engage in reconciliation practices within our schools and the community by renewing and fostering relationships with Indigenous Elders, parents, families and students, both on- and off-reserve to support this priority.

Measure	Holy Spirit	Province
3-Year High School Completion	73.6%	57.0%
6-Year Transition Rate to Post-Secondary	41.9%	35.5%
Rutherford Scholarship Eligibility	68.9%	43.9%

#### Priority 2: High quality instruction rooted in sound research and effective assessment practices to support growth for all learners.

Our staff continues to recognize the importance of foundational skills by providing multiple opportunities for real life learning. Our results show the success we've had through deep dives into the curriculum and engaging our students in relevant learning experiences.

Measure	Holy Spirit	Province
Education Quality	90.7%	88.1%
Welcoming, Caring, Respectful & Safe Learning Environment	89.3%	84.7%
Students engaged in their learning	86.9%	84.4%
Access to Supports & Services	82.3%	80.6%
3-Year High School Completion	90.4%	80.7%

#### Priority 4: Foster a culture of wellness that is foundational to support learning.



Fostering a holistic approach to support students' spiritual, physical, mental, emotional, and academic health, we work closely with a variety of provincial and local partners to devise targeted initiatives that build student capacity in this area.

Indicator (OurSchool Survey)	Elementary		Jr./Sr. High	
	21/22	22/23	21/22	22/23
Students with a positive sense of belonging	74%	71%	63%	65%
Students with positive relationships	81%	83%	79%	81%
Students that value school outcomes	91%	91%	65%	69%

# January

## Build! Pilgrims of Hope



*"If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,' and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that?"*

James 2:15-16

### St. Martin de Porres 1579-1639 (Feast Day: November 3)

Martin de Porres was born in Lima, Peru in 1579. His father, a Spanish nobleman, abandoned the family, and so Martin was raised by his mother, a former enslaved person from Panama. Martin grew up in poverty and eventually became an apprentice to a barber-surgeon. During this time, there was prejudice and discrimination against those of mixed racial heritage, which made Martin's life very difficult. This even extended to the religious life, as he was not allowed to become a full member of a religious order and could serve only as a lay volunteer.

Martin, however, was not deterred by this discrimination. He joined the Dominicans as a volunteer, taking on kitchen work, cleaning, and laundry in addition to his barbering so that he could live in the religious community. He considered all of this work to be holy, and during this time many miracles occurred. At the age of 34, Martin was placed in charge of the infirmary, where he cared for both the sick of the Dominicans as well as the larger community of Lima. He was known for his patience and compassion in this role. During his life he also was well known for the collection of funds to serve the poor and hungry, and he also founded a residence for orphans in Lima. He was also well known for his care for animals, and is often shown with them in his imagery. When he was canonized in 1962, he became the first black saint of the Americas.

### "Building" In Our Schools

This past month, our Holy Spirit Catholic School Division joined together to celebrate the season of Advent through our Advent Blessing videos. For each week of Advent, a video was created that included a Gospel reading, reflection, artwork, and music, all provided by students within the Holy Spirit Catholic School Division. The videos were a shining representation of staff and students joining together in remembrance and celebration of the arrival of Jesus, and in the hope of his return.



### Corporal Works of Mercy — Give Drink to the Thirsty —

While often connected to Feed the Hungry, the Corporal Work of Giving Drink to the Thirsty is actually a separate work. If we think about the context of Christ's time, we recognize the scarcity and importance of water in the arid land He inhabited (something we know about in our area as well!). Water is often referred to in scripture, both in concrete and spiritual ways. If we think about the concrete action of giving drink to another, we can see in it a gracious act of hospitality, a thoughtful expression of love, and a desire to seek the good of the other. We all know the importance of water to our bodies, how clean water impacts health, and how access to water is limited, not just in far away places but also very close to home.

Consider one of the following practical suggestions from the USCCB:

- We take it for granted that we have access to clean water. Donate to help build wells for water for those in need.
- Organize a group to collect bottled water to distribute at a shelter for families.
- Make an effort not to waste water. Remembering to turn off the water faucet when you are brushing your teeth or washing dishes can help, especially in regions suffering from drought.



#### Pope's Prayer Intentions - For the Gift of Diversity in the Church

Let us pray that the Spirit help us recognize the gift of different charisms within the Christian community, and to discover the richness of different ritual traditions in the heart of the Catholic Church.

[Home Page](#)

### Catholic Social Teaching — Preferential Option for the Poor —

Through the course of this year, we will look each month at one of the Catholic Social Teachings. The aim of Catholic Social Teaching is to shine the light of the Gospel on our contemporary world, allowing us as disciples of Christ to look at the world around us with new eyes, and to take action.

Last month, we looked at participation - the belief that each person is entitled to participate in making decisions that affect their lives. This supports subsidiarity, the dignity of the human person, and the pursuit of the common good.

This month, we are considering the Option for the Poor and Vulnerable, also known as the Preferential Option for the Poor. As Development and Peace Canada suggests,

The moral test of any society is based on how the most vulnerable people are treated. God loves all people, but prioritizes and calls us to a unique concern for the poor.

Throughout scripture, we see constantly that God is keenly interested in those at the margins, and He calls us to live in solidarity with them, prioritizing their needs so that they can fully participate in society and have hope for a better future. Each of our recent Popes, St. John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, and Pope Francis, have written extensively about this - and we see it constantly lived out by the saints, including St. Martin de Porres.

Learn more about the Option for the Poor and Vulnerable with one of these resources:

- [Option for the Poor and Vulnerable](#) (YouTube)
- [Preferential Option for the Poor](#)
- [Option for the Poor and Vulnerable](#) (usccb)



*"Always consider others as more holy and more worthy than you, at the same time strive to be as holy as you can be."* (St. Martin de Porres)

# Gospel Readings

January 7, 2024

Epiphany of the Lord

## Gospel Reading: Matthew 2:1-12

"They were overjoyed at seeing the star..." — Matthew 2:10

The Magi were called to find the child that had come into the world as a king. They knew that he was the chosen one. They made many sacrifices in order to find him, and most likely encountered hardships on their journey. They didn't quit. They didn't give up. They persevered. Can you imagine their joy in finally arriving at their destination, the place where the child lay in his mother's arms? It must have been the greatest blessing they'd ever known. We can have that same joy when we seek out Jesus in our lives and find him.

How do you seek Jesus in your life? When you find him, how does it make you feel?



### Prayer:

*Lord, teach us to look and search for you in our lives with the same desire that the Magi had when they set out on their journey.*

January 14, 2024

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Gospel Reading: John 1:35-42

"Speak Lord, for your servant is listening." — 1 Samuel 3:10

Many times we enter into prayer with a long list of requests—things we think God should do for us because we know what's best. But in today's scripture, God is the one calling out to Samuel. When Samuel realizes that it is the Lord speaking to him, he doesn't say what he wants. Instead, he says that he is ready to hear what God wants of him. As usual, the Bible is setting an example for how we should live our own lives to grow closer to God. The next time you feel like sitting down with your list for God in prayer, try something new. Sit and listen to what God wants to say to you.

What are some places where you like to pray? Do they help you quiet yourself enough for you to hear God speaking to you?



### Prayer:

*Dear Lord, help me to quiet myself in prayer to hear what you want to say to me.*

Download this month's [Saint Prayer Card](#) - St. Martin de Porres



[Home Page](#)

# Gospel Readings

January 21, 2024

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Gospel Reading: Mark 1:14-20

"Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." — Mark 1:17

This is a little confusing, isn't it? The men that Jesus called to follow him were fishers of fish. What did he mean when he said he would make them fishers of men? Jesus hoped that these men he chose would set such a beautiful example of their faith in God that it would attract other people to also want to follow Jesus. This is something that we are all called to do. If we love Jesus and try to live our lives reflecting his light, then we too will become "fishers of men."

What is one thing Jesus' disciples did then that we can still do today to help people know and follow Jesus?

COME  
**AFTER**  
ME and I will  
make you  
**FISHERS**  
of MEN.  
MARK 1:17

### Prayer:

Lord, help us to love you so much that all we do, say, think, and feel will radiate the love we have for you. Please allow that light to touch those we meet each day, so that they too will want to follow you.



January 28, 2024

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

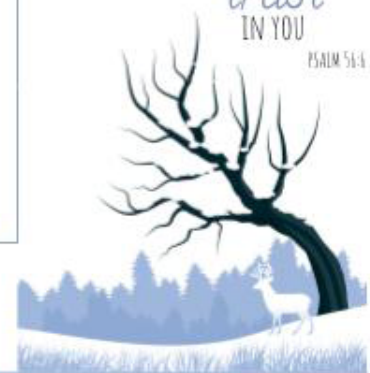
## Gospel Reading: Mark 1:21-28

"A new teaching with authority. He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him." — Mark 1:27

Has there ever been a time in your life when you felt the presence of evil? Maybe a TV show scared you, or you met someone who was really mean. In today's Gospel, Jesus shows us that if we ask anything in Jesus' name, especially against evil, that he can make that evil go away. What an awesome God! All we have to do is ask! So the next time you are feeling afraid or hurt, call on the name of Jesus and see what happens.

When do you feel most fearful? Remember to call on Jesus and he will help you!

...WHEN I AM  
*afraid*  
I PUT MY  
*trust*  
IN YOU  
PSALM 56:4



### Prayer:

Dear Lord, your name is above all names. You are Lord, Prince of Peace, King of Kings, Lamb of God. We love you and praise you for your powerful presence in our lives.

### Sources:

[St. Martin de Porres Quotes](#)  
[Story of Saint Martin de Porres](#)  
[Saint Martin de Porres](#)

[7 fascinating facts about St. Martin de Porres, the first black saint of the Americas](#)  
[Martin de Porres](#)





Holy Spirit Catholic Division  
Presents:

# Resiliency & Self-Care

January 16th, 5:30 pm

**Essie's Ballroom**

Sandman Signature, 320  
Scenic Drive S, Lethbridge Ab

Join us as Lethbridge Family Services will  
present for a night of learning and good (free)  
food!

Please RSVP at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7R9L8CC>

