

# St. Francis of Assisi Middle School

## DECEMBER -Advent- NEWSLETTER



### Advent: A Season of Preparation and Hope

As we light the first candle on the Advent wreath, we are reminded of the profound beauty and hope this season brings. Advent is a time of preparation, reflection, and joyful anticipation as we ready our hearts to celebrate the birth of Christ. It is an invitation to pause amid the busyness of life and embrace the true meaning of Christmas.

The Advent season reminds us that giving is not about extravagance but about love, compassion, and kindness. Whether through acts of service, words of encouragement, or quiet prayers, we are called to reflect the love of Christ in our lives. Let us remember that the most meaningful gifts are those rooted in charity and grace.

This year, we are blessed to come together as a school community to celebrate an **Advent Mass** at **St. Mary's Church** on **Tuesday, December 10, at 10:30 AM**. We warmly invite all families to join us as we share in this sacred time of worship and gratitude, led by our **Grade 6-1 TAG** class and Mrs. Loendorf.

May this Advent season be a time of renewal, hope, and peace for all our families. Let us walk together, with hearts open to the light of Christ, as we prepare to celebrate the true joy of Christmas.

Wishing you and your family the blessings of Advent

*Inspired by Christ on a Journey to Encounter, Nurture and Serve.*



## KUDOS - Celebrating

- **THE GIVING TREE** Thank you to our families who donated gift cards to support the Catholic Social Services Giving Tree Campaign. We will still accept \$25 & \$50 Walmart Gift Cards until December 6th.
- **SCHOOL FEES** Thank you to all the parents/guardians who have paid their school fees, **84.6%** have submitted payment! We greatly appreciate families paying fees; this is assisting us with school budget planning.
- **STUDENT UPDATE FORMS** Thank you to all the parents/guardians who have completed their student update forms, **85%** are now completed and submitted.

## FAITH FACT FRIDAY - Did you know?

Every Friday during morning announcements, we share interesting facts about our patron saint, St. Francis of Assisi, and our Catholic faith. In October and November, we explored the life and legacy of St. Francis, his creation of the Christmas Nativity Scene to help people reflect on God's miracles. In December, our focus shifts to the Advent season and preparing for the coming of Jesus. Ask your child about what they've learned during Faith Fact Friday!

## STUDENT PROJECTS: CTF & Band Showcase Week

We are excited to highlight the amazing work our students have created in their CTF (Career and Technology Foundations) classes!

- **CTF Showcase:** Student projects will be on display in the Learning Commons from **December 2-6**, giving the school community a glimpse into the creativity and hard work happening in these classes. Parents are welcome to visit the showcase from **3:15 to 4:00 PM each day**.
- **Band Performance:** On **Friday, December 7th**, our Band students will cap off the week by working with clinicians in the afterschool and performing at **7:00 PM**. All parents and families are warmly invited to attend the evening performance.

**We look forward to celebrating our students' achievements with you!**

## WAY OF THE WOLF (WOTF) STUDENT RECOGNITION- Be Loving!

St. Francis of Assisi Middle School is a Christ-centered learning environment whose members are called to Be Loving, Be Joyful, Be Humble and Be Forgiving. These four pillars are the foundation we build upon as our students transition throughout our school and guide them in years to come. We ask that students strive to...BE Loving, BE Joyful, BE Humble and BE Forgiving.

Staff were encouraged to nominate students who have demonstrated being **LOVING!** in November. Throughout the month, our faith team has also taught the students that we are called to be loving in our actions, our thoughts, and our words, in an engaging lesson.

Nominated students will come down to the gathering area on Friday, December 6th to try their chances on the spinning wheel.

**My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. - John 15:12**

## SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY - #InspiredToServe

As we embrace the season of Advent, our school community is focused on serving those in need through our **#InspiredToServe** initiative. Our staff has selected four local organizations to support, including a senior's lodge, and we invite you to join us in spreading joy and making a meaningful impact.

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Please watch for a detailed letter coming soon with more information on how you can participate in our holiday charity drive. Your generosity will make this season brighter for those who need it most.

### PICTURE PERFECT - Your Voice on School Photos

Thank you to all families who provided feedback through our recent school photo survey. Two years ago, we partnered with Edge Imaging based on parent input and the need for an efficient, high-quality solution. Your continued feedback helps us ensure this decision meets the needs of our community.

**We Asked:** About photo timing, quality, ordering process, and options.

**We Heard:** Parents appreciate the earlier fall photos (100% approval), with 81.5% satisfied with the overall quality and ordering process. Some parents requested expanded ordering options and better alignment for family rewards across schools.

**We Did:** We're meeting with Edge Imaging to explore these ideas. They have been responsive to feedback and continue to provide efficient, professional service—completing 700 photos in just one day! Your voice makes a difference. Thank you for helping us improve and grow!

### STUDENT DROP-OFF & PICK-UP - Bus Lanes

We kindly remind everyone to keep our **bus lanes clear** during **morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up** times. Recently, our bus drivers have experienced delays due to cars parked in these areas, and we've also observed an increase in unsafe behaviours, such as:

- **Individuals crossing the street outside designated crosswalks.**
- **Drivers making illegal U-turns.**

These actions pose significant safety risks to our students, staff, and community members. We ask for your cooperation in ensuring the safety of everyone by:

1. **Avoiding parking in bus lanes.**
2. **Using designated crosswalks.**
3. **Following traffic laws and school zone protocols.**

If you know others who assist with drop-off or pick-up, please share this message with them. Thank you for helping us maintain a safe and efficient environment for our students.

### SCHOOLGY - Supporting Student Success in Term 2

Thank you for regularly checking Schoology and staying engaged in your child's progress. Your involvement is key to their growth and success, and our teachers value your partnership in keeping students on track.

Term 2 is a great time to set goals for improvement. Encouraging strategies like reducing NHIs (Not Handed In assignments) and catching up on missing work can make a big difference.

Together, we can make Term 2 a successful and rewarding experience for every student!

### COMMUNICATION - Celebrating Parent Collaboration

We want to take a moment to express our gratitude for the incredible participation and collaboration shown by our parents during the **November Parent-Teacher Conferences**. Your engagement is essential in supporting our students' growth and success.

We also deeply value the spirit of **positive communication** that so many of you demonstrate—whether through respectful emails, thoughtful phone calls, or meaningful face-to-face conversations with our staff. These interactions reflect our shared commitment to working together in the best interests of our students.

Thank you for being active partners in creating a supportive and thriving school community. Your efforts truly make a difference!

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## STUDENT COUNCIL - Christmas Dance Fun & Parent Help Needed -December 12th!

We are excited to announce that our students have voted for a Christmas Dance, organized by our Student Council! The dance will take place on **Thursday, December 12th**, and admission will be a non-perishable food item or a cash donation for our local Food Bank. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to celebrate while giving back to the community. To make this event a success, we need parent volunteers to assist with:

- Coat and cell phone checks
- Supervision
- Decorating

A sign-up document will be shared soon—stay tuned! A big thank-you to our School Council for their support in planning and running the canteen, which will offer candy bags, pop, water, and pizza slices for purchase. Thank you for helping us make this a memorable event for our students while supporting a great cause!

## SCHOOL COUNCIL - Christmas Dance Fun - Parent Volunteer Opportunity.

Student Council is planning a Christmas Dance for December 12th, and the students have asked for our assistance to ensure it is a successful event. We need several parent volunteers, please sign up [HERE](#).

- Thank you to all of the parents who attended our last meeting. All are welcome to join!
- Our next meeting will be Monday, January 13 @ 7:00 PM

## GENERAL INFORMATION - Division Calendar

School Division calendars for the 2024 - 2025 school year, please click [here](#).

## PARENT QUICK LINKS -

- [PowerSchool/School Engage - LINK](#)
- [Schooly - LINK](#)
- [Rycor - school fees LINK](#)

## SCHOOL INFORMATION - School Hours / Student Entry

- Office Hours - open 8:00 - 4:00 pm on school days
- Bell Schedule -
  - First block starts @ 8:50 AM
  - Lunch 11:39 - 12:39 PM
  - Last block ends @ 3:15 PM
- Student Entry/Exit- As in previous years, we will continue the practice of having students enter and exit from their respective grade doors. We found that this practice made for safe and smooth transitions for our students in the mornings and afternoons.
  - [Grade Level Entry/Exit Doors Link](#)
  - Student Doors - Open at 8:30 a.m.

## RYCOR - School Fees DUE NOW

St. Francis of Assisi Middle Mandatory School Fees are now due.

- **CTF/Options Fee - \$25** This fee supports the delivery of Option Classes for all grade levels
- **PAC (Parent Council) Fee - \$35** This fee supports year-end field trips, etc. for all grade levels
- **Grade 9 Farewell Fee - \$10** (Grade 9 students only) This fee supports the celebration of our graduating Grade 9 students

How do I use RYCOR Online Payments?

1. Visit our school's website
2. Click on the "Quick Links" tab to access PowerSchool.
3. Sign in using your PowerSchool Username and Password. If you have forgotten either/or, click the link "Forgot username password?" and follow the instructions or contact the school office for assistance.
4. Click on the link, 'School Fees and Forms', on the left side.
5. Please follow the instructions provided on the screen when you are taken to RYCOR.

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If you have questions, please contact the school's financial secretary.

\*RYCOR can only be accessed via PC/Tablet, the program does not work using the PowerSchool App

## POWERSCHOOL - Student Update Forms PAST DUE

- Thank you to those parents who have completed and submitted their Student Update Forms.
- Student Update Forms are a requirement from Alberta Education and are mandatory to submit, even if you have no changes. Forms are now accessible in PowerSchool.
  - **These forms were DUE SEPTEMBER 30th.**
  - Please log in to your account to update your records. Even if you have NO CHANGES a form must be submitted.
- Once you have set up your account, remember to save your username and password.
- Don't hesitate to contact the school if you have difficulty accessing the parent portal.
- The PowerSchool site is accessed at: <https://www.stfrancisschool.ca/parents-students/powerschool>

## UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES - Mark your calendars

- December 1 First Sunday of Advent - HOPE (light a purple candle)
- December 2 TERM 2 STARTS
- December 2-6 CTF & Band Showcase Week ( CTF display in Learning Commons)
- December 2-6 Junior Basketball Tryouts - visit Athletic Calendar for details
- December 3 Gr 9 SKILLS Alberta Exploration Days
- December 3-5 Grade 6, 7 and 8 Sendero Presentations
- December 5 P.O.D. Youth Ministry @ Camille 7:00-9:00 PM
- December 6 Way of the Wolf - Be Humble Student Recognition
- December 6 Band Workshop (afterschool) & Showcase Performance (@ 7:00 PM)
- December 8 Second Sunday of Advent - PEACE (light the 2nd purple candle)
- December 9 Term 1 Honour Roll Certificates sent home
- December 9-11 Gr. 9 RCMP Anti-Bullying Presentation
- December 9 & 11 Grade 9 Mock Interviews
- December 10 Advent Mass @ St. Mary's - 10:30 AM led by 6-1
- December 10 Term 1 Christian Spirit Awards @ Advent Mass
- December 12 National Day of Prayer in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples
- December 12 School Dance for all students (support our local Food Bank)
- December 12 P.O.D. - Youth Ministry @ Sacred Heart 7:00-9:00 PM
- December 13 NO SCHOOL - Professional Development Day for staff
- December 15 Third Sunday of Advent - JOY (light the pink candle)
- December 20 Last Day of Classes before Christmas Break
- December 20 Merry & Bright Student Recognition
- December 21- January 5 CHRISTMAS BREAK
- January 6 School Resumes

We thank you for your support and are so grateful to work together with you. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions on how to enhance our school community.

Yours in Christ,

Mrs. Rori-Lynn Daniel - Principal

Mr. Kelly Jacobson - Vice Principal

Mrs. Kathleen Robinson - Vice Principal

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