

December 2016 Parent Newsletter

Luke 2:12 -And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger



Principal's Message

Merry Christmas!

As we prepare in anticipation of our Lord and Saviour, we look ahead to an exciting month of culminating activities. Our first semester Drama students perform "Kiss Me Kate" the evenings of Dec 14-17 @ 7:30PM, the Student's Union is currently planning for the Winter Formal Dance on the evening of the 9th, while our musicians rehearse for their concerts on the nights of Dec 1 & 8. Our last week before the break has us attending our Advent Mass at the Basilica on the 20th and we will wrap up 2016 with 'Mac's Got Talent' the morning of the 23th. Please remember that early dismissal will be on Friday, Dec 23 and Thursday, December 22 will be a full day.

As we approach this busy and important part of the year, we sometimes forget why we celebrate the season of Christmas. I invite you to stop and reflect upon what Christmas is truly about. When I take the time to do this, it seems that my worries about buying that "perfect gift" for everyone whom I hold near and dear disappear.

Christmas is about the Christ child and the promise he brought to the world through his birth. With all the hustle and bustle of the Christmas season and with the bombardment of the thousands of commercials enticing us to buy that "perfect gift", it is comforting to know that no matter what gift we give to those we love, it pales by comparison with the love we feel for and receive from them.

My Christmas message is that there is no greater love than that given to mankind by Jesus Christ, and that by his lesson, we learn to share our love with our families, friends, colleagues, and neighbors.

On behalf of the staff of Archbishop MacDonald High School, I wish you and your loved ones a joyous and meaningful Christmas season and may you all be embraced by the love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Mr. John Fiacco
Principal

December Events

- Dec. 1 Concert Choir, Glee Club, Jazz Band Concert @ 7pm
- Dec. 8 Grade 10 Band, Grade 11-12 Band, Honour Band @ 7pm
Art Show @ 7pm
- Dec. 9 Winter Formal Dance
- Dec. 14-17 Year Play-Kiss Me Kate-7:30PM at L'unitheatre at La
Cite Francophone
- Dec. 16 NAIT –PLT
- Dec. 20 Christmas Mass at the Basilica
- Dec. 22 FULL DAY OF CLASSES**
- Dec. 23 EARLY DISMISSAL**
Mac's Got Talent
- Jan. 9 First day back from Christmas Break**

Upcoming Dates....

Jan.16-31- Diploma Exams/Final Exams (Please see next page for Exam Schedule. Also located on the front page of our website)

Jan.20- Last day of Classes

Feb. 1- P.D Day- NO CLASSES

Feb. 2- First day of Classes- Semester 2- Day 1



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
16	17	18	19	20
English 30-1 Part A (9am to 12pm)	Social 30-1 Part A (9am to 12pm)	FLA 30-1 Part A (9am to 12pm)	<u>Regular Classes</u>	FLA 30-1 Part B (9am to 12pm)
<u>NO grade 12 classes</u>	<u>NO grade 12 classes</u>	<u>Regular Classes</u>		<u>Last Day of Classes</u> <u>Set Up Gym</u> (26 x 12 rows = 312 desks)
23	24	25	26	27
English 30-1 Part B (9am to 12pm) English 10-1 (9am to 12pm)	Social 30-1 Part B (9am to 11:30am) Social 20-1 (9am to 11:30am)	Math 30-1 (9am to 12pm) Math 10C (9am to 12pm)	Biology 30 Biologie 30 (9am to 12pm) Biology 20 Biologie 20 (9am to 11:30am)	Chemistry 30 Chimie 30 (9am to 12pm) Chemistry 20 Chimie 20 (9am to 11:30am)
English 20-1 (1pm to 3:30pm)	Social 10-1 Etudes Sociales 10-1F (1pm to 3:30pm) FLA 20-1 (1pm to 3:30pm)	Mathématiques 10F Math 20-1 (1pm to 4pm)	Science 10 (1pm to 3:30pm)	CCAT Exams (1pm to 3pm)
30	31			
Physics 30 (9am to 12pm) Physics 20 (9am to 11:30am)	<u>Tear Down Gym</u> <u>Desks Moving</u>			
Science 30 (1pm to 4pm)				

Archbishop MacDonald

January 2017 - Exam Schedule

Junior Girls Volleyball City Champions

Archbishop MacDonald would like to congratulate our junior girls volleyball team for an incredibly successful season! The team finished their regular season in second place after winning gold in two of three tournaments. They easily won their playoff games and went to the City Finals Championship to play the only undefeated team in the division. After giving up the first two sets the team rallied back and won the next three to win the banner! Mrs. Suda and Miss Taylor are so proud of their team for their dedication all season! Congratulations girls!

Mac Drama in collaboration with the Mac Music Department

Kiss Me Kate takes us to backstage world of the Ford's Theatre in Baltimore during the summer of 1949. The Cast is rehearsing a musical version of Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew and the backstage events of the company begin to reflect some of the onstage action. The lines between actor and person begin to blur and we have cause to ask: "Is theatre really just life after all?" Kiss Me Kate is a comedic and high energy show with fantastic music by Cole Porter. The cast, crew, and orchestra have been hard at work since Sept and would love your support during the run of the show.

Dec 14th-17th at 730PM at L'unitheatre at La Cite Francophone

University/ Institution Visits & Information

Dec 16 – NAIT will be here during the PLT



2017 MARMOT BASIN SKI TRIP NOTE:

52 MARMOTEERS HAVE SIGNED UP FOR THE TRIP AND THE ROOMS HAVE BEEN RESERVED FOR ALL OF THEM. –Mr. Caron

November 14, 2016

Dear Parents and Students:

Our MAC Music mid-term concerts are just around the corner. On behalf of the students we would like to invite you to attend the concerts on December 1st and December 8th. Both concerts will be held in the school Atrium and will begin at 7:00 pm.

December 1, 2016

Concert Choir
Glee Club
Jazz Band

December 8, 2016

Grade 10 Band
Grade 11-12 Band
Honour Band

Students are required to participate in the concerts with their class as part of the evaluation for their courses.

Admission
for these concerts is
FREE with the donation of an unperishable food item
or
an unwrapped toy.

All donations will go towards Christmas hampers for needy families in our school district.

We hope to see you at the concerts!

Best wishes for a Happy and Holy Christmas!

Lyndsey Olsen
Choral Director

Dale Chapman
Instrumental Music Director

Arthur Milan
Honour Band, Jazz Band Director

Students' Union President's Message

Dear Parents/Guardians;

The beginning of this school year has started off on a high note with events led by S.U. that have truly engaged the entire student body at Archbishop Macdonald. We started with our Students' Union Retreat, where we welcomed new and excited Members At Large. We achieved success in giving students a wonderful welcome with our excellent 'Mac It Up!' event to start up the school year and an enjoyable time with our Halloween 'Night to Dismember' Dance. As we head into a very busy December with S.U. busily working on the 'Masquerade Ball' Dance and Mac's Got Talent, we are reminded that engaging students within the school community as everyday leaders has brilliant outcomes on their willingness to share in the sense of understanding and belonging present at Archbishop Macdonald. Continually striving to educate and engage students has been an impactful and rewarding mandate that S.U. hopes to focus upon for the upcoming months. From our Students' Union Team, we would like to wish everyone Happy Holidays and a blessed New Year.

Cheers,

Navneet C.

Students' Union President 2016-2017

Chaplain's Corner

The season of Advent is truly an amazing one. As we move through these weeks leading to Christmas we are called to provide hope, grow in our faith, exude joy and permeate love to the world. The beginning of the school year has been so blessed with rich, vibrant community building; MAC is truly a special school. Two things to remind you of and encourage you to support. First, all parents are warmly invited to attend our Christmas Mass at St Joseph's Basilica (10044 113 St NW) on December 20th at 10:00am. Secondly, Christmas truly is a time of charity and we are looking to support the Mustard Seed in providing a basic need that is often forgotten about when people look to donate...underwear and socks. We encourage you to send your child to school with a package of modest and practical underwear and/or socks during the days of December 12 to 21. These two reminders/requests are in the spirit of Advent rooted in hope, faith, joy and love. Merry Christmas! Mr. Ferguson

December Athletics

Volleyball

Congratulations to our Jr. Girls Volleyball team who won City Championships this season! We are so proud of your development and growth through the season, and look forward to your continuous success in the years to come! Special thanks to coaches Mrs. Suda and Ms. Taylor for their dedication over the season.



Archbishop MacDonald recently hosted its annual Jr. High Feeder Tournament, and various Jr. High Schools attended. The Feeder Tournament is the largest tournament Archbishop MacDonald's hosts, with 12 teams competing. Congratulations to St. Rose Girls and Edmonton Christian Boys for playing the tournament undefeated and earning your gold medals! We look forward to seeing many of you in our school next year!

Swim Team

Divisional's for the swim team are Wednesday, November 30th, where 50 swimmers will be competing. Swimmer's standings and times will be posted in the next month's newsletter. Good luck swimmers!

Basketball

As the Christmas season approaches, our basketball teams are working harder than ever to ensure their success in the season to come. Many teams have scheduled exhibition games, and are working tirelessly to prepare for upcoming tournaments. As undefeated City Champions, our Sr. Girls have moved up into Division 1, while our other teams still remain in Division 2. We wish the Sr. Girls the best of luck in their new division, and wish all teams success in their season!

Athlete of the Month - Nicole F.



As December approaches, the Sr. Girls Basketball Team are training harder than ever before. As new members of Division 1, the bar has been raised to new levels the athletes are striving to surpass. Grade 11 Sr. Girls MVP Nicole F. has been a member of the team since her grade ten year, and has found great success in the previous season. Nicole earned herself a spot on the starting line-up, and showed all who watched the passion and love she has for the game. Along with scoring half the points in their City Championship Game, Nicole had amazing statistics throughout the whole season.

Nicole says, "I will do my best to make sure every member of the team has memorized the offensive plays that our coach has given us, in order to ensure that we are ready for any challenge that may come our way. I will also do my best to guide the new players by answering all of their questions to the best of my ability, so that they have a clear understanding that will help them play confidently."

Victoria S.



WE ARE CALLED...

TO BE LEADERS OF HOPE AND MERCY

December 2016

“Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come...

And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.” ~ Mark 13:35-37

The month of December is joyous for many reasons in Edmonton Catholic Schools. Our schools enter the exciting time of Advent, which has us anticipating the birth of Jesus. This scripture passage is one which is often used during Advent. Jesus is giving his disciples a message of hope about the coming of the Messiah, assuring them that they should keep faith in God’s promise, even during challenging times. It calls for us to be alert and to prepare a place for Jesus in our daily lives.

Classrooms will be abuzz with activities that help students to prepare just such a place in their lives for Jesus and explore the great gift of love that our Father has given us in the person of His Son over the four weeks of Advent. In this year where *We are Called... to be Leaders of Hope and Mercy* in Edmonton Catholic Schools, we are reminded of what hope truly means as we prepare for the birth of our Savior.

Our schools and sites also turn their attentions to mercy through their many social justice projects. Our annual *We Care Challenge* is one way in which this occurs. Many of our schools and sites carry out a variety of engaging activities to raise funds for the Edmonton Catholic Schools Foundation and Catholic Social Services’ Sign of Hope Campaign. Other schools will collect socks and mittens, build hampers, and raise funds for the many organizations in Edmonton and beyond that help people in need.

We have several exciting enrichment opportunities for students who are passionate about music through our All-City Choir and All City- Band Programs. These highly committed students come together regularly to hone their skills as ensembles.

There are several occasions for people to enjoy these spectacular groups at their Christmas concerts. The concerts start at 7:30 pm: All City Choir @ St. Joseph's Basilica- Dec. 5, Junior All City Band @ John L. Haar Theatre (MacEwan)-Dec. 7, Senior All City Band @ U of A Convocation Hall – Dec. 13.

Our Council of Elders hosts a Sacred Pipe Ceremony four times a year to welcome and honour each new season hosted at a Nehiyaw Pimatisiwin (Way of Life) School. The winter ceremony will be held at Our Lady of Peace School on Thursday, December 15. This is a time to celebrate friendships, welcome new friends to the circle, and to ask God/Creator for his blessings. If you are interested in attending the Sacred Pipe Ceremony, please contact The Council of Elders office at 780-471-2360.

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There are many times where we report our accountability to the public. There are two major reports of this nature which will be presented at the November 29 Public Board of Trustees Meeting, our *Audited Financial Statements, August 31, 2016* and the combined *Annual Education Results Report 2015-2016 and Three-Year Education Plan 2016-2019*. Once approved by the Board of Trustees, the reports will be posted on our public website on the ***Annual Reports and Results*** page at https://www.ecsd.net/AboutUs/annual_reports/Pages/default.aspx.

As we turn our eyes towards Christmas and the birth of Jesus, we also reflect upon the willingness of his mother, Mary, to humbly serve our God. Her incredible faith, echoed in her joyous acceptance of the news that she was to give birth to the Messiah, reminds us that God calls on us, too. Pope Francis shared the following thought on Twitter - "Mary is the woman who says yes, a yes of surrender to God, a yes of surrender to her brothers and sisters. May we follow her example." (02/13/16) Mary's 'yes' changed our world!

I wish you all a blessed Advent and a Holy Christmas as you turn your eyes towards a lowly manger in the town of Bethlehem and the precious gift of love to be found there!

Sincerely,

Joan Carr
Superintendent

Amoris Laetitia Chapter 3

Looking to Jesus: The Vocation of the Family

As a member of two music ministry groups, I am fascinated with the many ways that the themes found in favorite hymns and songs celebrate the ‘Word of God.’ Whether *Sing to the Mountains*, *Sing a new Song*, or *Go Tell it on the Mountain*, the message of God found in each musical piece touches the heart of the Gospel message we proclaim. Pope Francis opens this chapter by reminding us that the core of the Gospel message, the Kerygma, “is what is most beautiful, most excellent, most appealing and at the same time most necessary.” (58). Pope Francis outlines the need for us to enter more deeply into the Word of God “which we must hear again and again in different ways, and which we must always announce in one form or another.” (58). Very much like how I hear a similar message via different hymns and songs, I can learn more and interpret nuances differently because of the various styles of music. As for the message our Pontiff states: “nothing is more solid, profound, secure, meaningful and wise than that message.” (58). This chapter explores in great detail, through many illustrative scriptural examples, the Church’s teachings on marriage and the family.

“Our teaching on marriage and the family cannot fail to be inspired and transformed by this message of love and tenderness; otherwise, it becomes nothing more than the defence of a dry and lifeless doctrine.” (59). Echoing the call for a pastoral approach to deepening our understanding of family and marriage encountered in chapter 2, Pope Francis posits that “the Christian family can be fully understood only in the light of the Father’s infinite love revealed in Christ, who gave himself up for our sake and who continues to dwell in our midst.” (59). Through sharing beautiful examples of Christ’s love, mercy, and compassion, the chapter goes into great detail about how marriage and family life is to be viewed as ‘a gift’ from the Lord.

In reminding us of God’s divine covenantal love for all of humanity, our salvation history, we recall that “through his Church, Christ bestows on marriage and the family the grace necessary to bear witness to the love of God and to live the life of communion.” (63). In several examples such as: the miracle at Cana, friendship with Lazarus and his family, and sympathizing with grieving parents over the loss of a child, Jesus “demonstrated the true meaning of mercy, which entails the restoration of the covenant.” (64). Jesus models ‘gratuitous love’ in the face of sin and in doing so models how we are called to do the same in our relationships. Pope Francis reinforces this point through recounting the nativity narrative where “the incarnation of the Word in a human family, in Nazareth, by its very newness changed the history of the world.” (65). Mary said ‘yes’ to have the Word conceived in her womb. Joseph too said ‘yes’ in naming Jesus and watching over mother and son. We witness the struggles and toil of a family, who despite the harshness and challenges life can sometimes bring, such as exile, persecution and humiliation, hold their communion with God with humility and love. “The covenant of love and fidelity lived by the Holy Family of Nazareth illuminates the principle which gives shape to every family...on this basis, every family, despite its weaknesses, can become a light in the darkness of the world.”(66.) This is truly a hope-filled message. From the example of the Holy Family, we next examine several documents of the church,

such as Second Vatican Council's Pastoral Constitution, *Gaudium et Spes*, which promotes the dignity of marriage and family. We learn that in marriage "Christ the Lord makes himself present to the Christian spouses in the sacrament of marriage and remains with them." (67). Through the incarnation, Jesus "assumes human love, purifies it and brings it to fulfilment. By his spirit, he gives spouses the capacity to live that love, permeating every part of their lives of faith, hope and charity." (67). This is central to the foundation of the Christian family.

Pope Francis cites the work of Blessed Paul VI (*Humanae Vitae*) which brings out the "intrinsic bond between conjugal love and the generation of life: married love requires of husband and wife the full awareness of their obligations in the matter of responsible parenthood" "the exercise of responsible parenthood requires that husband and wife, keeping a right order of priorities, recognize their own duties towards God, themselves, their families and human society." Pope Francis furthers his views through citing Saint John Paul II's *Familiaris Consortio* which "defined the family as 'the way of the Church...how spouses, in their mutual love, receive the gift of the Spirit of Christ and live their call to holiness.'" (69). This is echoed by excerpts from Pope Benedict XVI's *Deus Caritas Est*, where he states "marriage based on an exclusive and definitive love becomes an icon of the relationship between God and his people...God's way of loving becomes the measure of human love." Further, in *Caritas in Veritate*, Benedict XVI stresses the importance of love in society "as a place where we learn the experience of the common good." (70). The message is consistent in all cases: love is at the heart of our existence. Marriage and the family are rooted in love; a love that is radiated and witnessed through Jesus.

The chapter progresses to a detailed examination of marriage including the nuptial mystery, sexuality, imperfect situations, the ministry of marriage, procreation, and the sanctity of life. The message of the "Church's teaching is meant to help couples experience in a complete, harmonious and conscious way their communion as husband and wife." (82.) The chapter then explores the role of family and the Church. Pope Francis asserts that "the Church is a family of families, constantly enriched by the lives of all those domestic churches...the church is good for the family and the family is good for the Church. The safeguarding of the Lord's gift in the sacrament of matrimony is concern not only of individual families but of the entire Christian community." (87.) Pope Francis assures us that "the experience of love in families is a perennial source of strength for the life of the Church." (88). Examples of the beauty of marriage, the value of family and the profound sense of God's covenant of love with humanity are abundant in this chapter.

Just as a song sounds better when others join in and lend harmony, Pope Francis' shared wisdom on marriage and family life in this chapter is succinctly captured in his closing words: "The beauty of this mutual, gratuitous gift, the joy which comes from a life that is born and the loving care of all family members – from toddlers to seniors- are just a few of the fruits which make the response to the vocation of the family unique and irreplaceable, both for the Church and for society as a whole." (88). What a wonderful song these words would make!

Tim Cusack, Assistant Superintendent, Learning Services Innovation