



ÉCOLE **MOTHER D'YOUVILLE** SCHOOL
5330 Rue Parc Beaumont, AB T4X 1W4 Phone: 780.929.0792



February 2018 Newsletter

"We are people of the Way" "Learn the Way"

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

As we approach the season of Lent, we are reminded that this special season provides all of us with a time to prepare for what is the foundation of our faith—the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this, our first year, our school community will embark upon the liturgical season of Lent with the distribution of ashes and their own Lenten promises. These promises will be their focus for the forty days of Lent and will be a reminder that Lent is a time to change the things in our lives which separate us from Jesus. Some of us will choose to give-up something, remembering each time we deny ourselves of the huge sacrifice that Jesus made for our sins.

Others may choose to add something to their daily lives that will bring them closer to Jesus, like extra time given over to prayer or volunteering extra time in the community. Whatever the case, we know that keeping our resolutions are difficult and that sometimes we may slip, but it is a good lesson for our staff and students to keep on trying and not to give up.

It is my hope that by all of us taking time from our busy schedules to develop our relationship with God, we can use the Lenten season to develop a greater appreciation of the life that God is calling each of us to lead. Thank you for your continued support!

Jim McMullen, Principal

UPCOMING SCHOOL EVENTS

- Thursday, February 1
 - Thursday & Friday, February 8 & 9
 - Tuesday, February 13
 - Wednesday, February 14
 - Thursday, February 15
 - Monday, February 19
 - Tuesday, February 27
 - Wednesday, February 28
- 2nd Semester begins for Jr. High
Teachers' Convention - **No School**
Shrove Tuesday - Pancake Lunch for Students
Ash Wednesday Liturgy - 9 AM - *Join us!*
Grade 6 Field Trip - Telus World of Science
Family Day - **No School**
Grade 5 & 9 - Round 2 Vaccines
EMDYS Open House - *Details to follow!*

We will be sending out a request for parent volunteers for our Shrove Tuesday event as well as a volunteer request for the upcoming book fair. Parents are encouraged to join us for our Ash Wednesday Liturgy at 9 AM on February 14. To conclude the month, we will be hosting an Open House at the school on Wednesday, February 28. It's time that our parents, parishioners of St. Vital and school neighbours came to see the new school. Please plan to drop in for a visit! More details regarding the evening will follow.

**BOOK
FAIR
COMING SOON!**

Students will have an opportunity to shop for books and support us in filling our Learning Commons shelves with new books during the last week of February. Please watch for more information on the Book Fair event and how you can help out. A volunteer sign up will be out soon!

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LENT

We are finalizing our student and staff plans at the school for how we want to observe Lent as a school community. Our plans will reflect the three 'pillars' of Lent - namely, Almsgiving, Prayer, and Fasting. Please continue to pray for our school community as we build our knowledge and deepen our faith.

ARRIVAL TIMES

Our busing arrangements see our students begin arriving at the school between **8:30** and **8:35 AM**. For our students who walk to school or for those who are dropped off, again, please time your arrival between **8:30** and **8:35 AM**. Our doors open at **8:30 AM** every morning and we are expecting that students are in their 1st period class ready for announcements and prayer by **8:40 AM**. If for some reason your child is arriving after this time, please have them use the main school doors on the northside of the building and please ensure that they check in at the office before proceeding to their class. Please contact the school office at 780-929-0792 to report an absence.

2017-2018 EMDYS COUNCIL

Congratulations to the parents who were selected to serve as executive members for the first ever École Mother D'Youville School Council. Please take a moment to read the introduction letter from our School Council Chair - Mrs. Vicki Comstock.

Dear Parents,

I am extremely excited to introduce you to the very first EMDYS School Council.

For those of you who don't know me, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Vicki Comstock, the chair of your School Council for the 2017 - 2018 school year. My family recently moved to Beaumont from Okotoks, Alberta when my husband was transferred to Edmonton with his job. We loved the small town feel of Okotoks and searched for another community that would provide the same lifestyle. I have a daughter (Lucy) in grade 8 and twin boys (Nic and Charlie) in Grade 6. My husband, Jamie, and I are very excited to be living in Beaumont and are thrilled to be part of a growing community where our children have an opportunity to attend the brand new École Mother D'Youville School.

The other newly elected members of your school council are:

Vice Chair: Amanda Mackney

Secretary: Wendy Bendoritis

Volunteer Coordinator: Marla Krankowsky

Member at Large: Michelle Yarrow

Some of the exciting discussions that will be taking place at future school council meetings will be regarding a school playground, upcoming school events and ongoing plans to involve and enhance our school community.

“The Government of Alberta recognizes the value of parents and the community to be engaged in the education of children. It is through school council that parents, community members and school staff have a means of participating in decisions that impact student learning success.” (Alberta School Councils' Association)

As a parent, you always have a voice that you can share with School Council. As School Council Chair, I am available to hear your questions and/or share them with School Administration. Sometimes your questions may lead to a larger discussion at School Council meetings. I am including my email address vjcomstock@shaw.ca. Please feel free to email me with questions or concerns. Topics that you would like to see discussed at meetings should be emailed at least two weeks prior so they have time to be approved.

One of my goals as Chair is to get as many parents out as possible to these meetings so that together we can build a strong school community. I understand that families have many time commitments so I am sharing the School Council meeting dates in advance to give people an opportunity to plan their attendance. Meetings start at 7 PM and are approximately 1½ hours.

Meeting Dates: February 20, 2018, March 13, 2018, April 17, 2018, May 15, 2018 and June 5, 2018

I look forward to representing you as the EMDYS School Council Chair and meeting you in person. Feel free to contact me anytime with questions or concerns, even if it's just to say hello.

Blessings,

Vicki Comstock, Chairperson
École Mother D'Youville School Council

STAR CATHOLIC STUDENT TRAVEL

The Board of Trustees of St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic Schools are asking for parent input regarding school board sanctioned student travel. We encourage you to share your thoughts about this matter by clicking on the link below to respond to a brief, four question survey. We would appreciate receiving any feedback by Tuesday, February 13. Thank you! [Student Travel Survey](#)

JR. HIGH COURSE CHANGEOVER

Some of our complementary courses for our Jr. High students have now concluded. January 31 signifies the transition point from the first to the second semester. During the first week of February, final marks for Semester 1 complementary courses will appear on *connectEd*. Courses that have concluded will have a Term 1 mark and a Final mark. Complementary courses that are full-year offerings will not have a Final mark but will instead have a Term 2 mark reported prior to spring break and then a Final mark in June. As usual, please continue to access the 'real-time' marks for your student through the connectEd parent link on the EMDYS web site at <https://mdy.staratholic.ab.ca/>

One change of note in our complementary course offering will be the introduction of 'MindUP' which will be offered for one period each week to all of our students in Grades 8 & 9. Mrs. Arlie Bouchard (Family School Liaison Worker) and Mr. McMullen will be facilitating the course. An introduction for the course can be found in the 'FSLW UPDATE' section.

PARENT and STUDENT ANNUAL SCHOOL SURVEY

As an annual check-up on the education system, the Accountability Pillar provides an opportunity for Alberta Education and school authorities to ensure that we are equipping students for success.

The Accountability Pillar uses a set of 16 indicators. Data on these indicators consists of surveys of students, parents and teachers on various aspects of education quality, student outcomes such as dropout and high school completion rates, and provincial assessments of student learning.

From January to the end of February, Alberta Education will be conducting the annual Accountability Pillar Survey. Every year, Alberta Education surveys parents of students in grades 4, 7 and 10. Therefore, in January, parents of students in grade 7 at École Mother D'Youville School will receive a survey from Alberta Education. In February, students in grades 5 - 9 and all teachers will be completing their surveys online at school.

All surveys are anonymous and ask questions about experiences with your school. Your participation in the survey helps provide important information on the quality of education your child is receiving, so we encourage you to return your survey promptly.

Survey results will be available to school authorities in May 2018, and will be reported publicly as part of our 3-Year Education Plan and Annual Education Results Report. Thank you again for your feedback.

ASH WEDNESDAY - VALENTINE'S DAY

Did you know that for the first time since 1945, Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday will fall on the same day? This will mean that the festivities usually associated with Valentine's Day at the school will see some changes.

Ash Wednesday is a somber occasion that marks the beginning of the 40-day period of Lent. On this day, Christians attend services and receive ashes upon their forehead, usually with the words "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return"; alternatively, the priest may speak the words, "Repent and believe in the Gospel."

The ashes serve as a powerful symbol demonstrating the wearers admittance of their failings and are a visible symbol of penance. As well, the ashes, along with the words spoken by the priest, remind us of our mortality, humble our hearts, and emphasize our need for Christ in our lives.

The tone set on Ash Wednesday is meant to stay with us throughout the season of Lent. Lent is a specific time built into the church year that calls us to simplify our lives. It is a time to leave behind the frivolities and distractions of our day to day lives and focus ourselves on our relationship with God. It is a time of penance and self-examination. Consequently, the tone of Ash Wednesday and Lent does not harmonize with the festivities usually associated with Valentine's Day, particularly how it is often celebrated in the school setting.

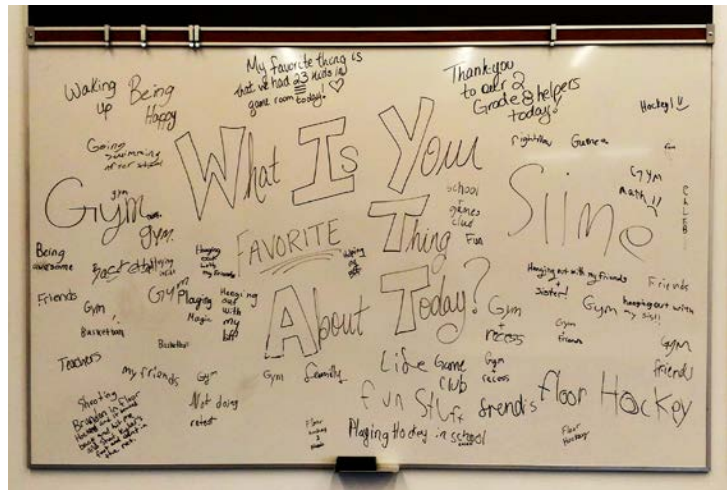
What *does* match the feel of Valentine's Day is Shrove Tuesday. Shrove Tuesday, also referred to as Mardi Gras, or Pancake Tuesday, is often associated with celebrations and indulging in food that one will not partake in over the next 40 days. It is the complementary nature of these two days that makes Shrove Tuesday the logical alternative day to hold Valentine's Day celebrations!

FSLW UPDATES

Games Room - Lunchtime Club

*"Play is the highest form of research" -
Albert Einstein*

Once a week each grade has the opportunity to take part in game room. This lunchtime program fosters and encourages social interaction between peers in a safe environment while having fun experiencing new and old board games. Research has indicated undirected play allows children to learn how to work in groups, to share, to negotiate, to resolve conflicts, and to learn self-advocacy skills. During this time, students are asked to focus and celebrate positive events in their week. This program has been a great success in its first few weeks and has an 80-100% occupancy each day. The students have certainly created a culture of fun and play during this time. I would like to send out a special thanks to several students in Grade 8 who have offered their time during Games Room as peer mentors.



MindUP CURRICULUM - Grade 8 and 9

We are excited to announce that École Mother D'Youville School will be offering a comprehensive, classroom tested, evidence based program called MindUP. Young people today are no strangers to stress. Whatever the circumstances, the stress they experience could interfere with their ability to learn without anxiety. MindUP addresses obstacles to productive learning by offering self-management tools, while at the same time MindUP works to make learning joyful and fun.

The MindUP classroom is a positive and optimistic environment that promotes and develops attention and awareness of oneself and others. Students will learn about their brain and how it functions and in the process they will gain insight into their own mind and behaviours as well as those of the people around them. Students will participate in a curriculum that will help them develop self-regulation and focus, an improved ability to work well with others and improve relationships with themselves, and with the community. Research has shown that students who are engaged in the MindUP program are more optimistic, empathetic, compassionate and have lower levels of stress and anxiety.

GROUPS

During the months of February to April there will be several groups offered to students at the school. They include:

Starbound A small group curriculum that will help girls jump-start their journey to unleashing their unlimited potential. Girls will learn to develop healthy relationships, enhance their communication skills and discover that they can make a positive difference in the world.

Building Champions A fun-filled game plan to help boys of upper elementary and middle-school age build trust, respect, and peer connections, Building Champions covers the topics boys most want and need to become better

friends, classmates, and citizens. Numerous hands-on and interactive experiences maintain group members' interest and allow them to practice targeted skills while learning.

Building Blocks of Teamwork This is a collaborative play group in which children work together to build LEGO models. Instead of building LEGO by themselves, Children work in teams of three. The task is divided into different roles, such that social interaction is necessary to participate. By doing this, children practice key skills of collaboration, joint attention, fair division of labour, sharing, turn taking, eye contact, gaze following, verbal and non-verbal communication. Group sessions facilitate natural opportunities to practice social communication, social support, social problem-solving and conflict resolution skills.

Boys Council A small social - emotional group designed to empower boys to identify and manage their feelings; understand and accept difference; learn about boundaries and how to set their own personal boundaries; practice group social skills; and identify their own male positive supports in their lives.

Kids Have Stress Too The goal of the program is to help students understand stress and its impact on health and learning. The program teaches students practical techniques for coping with stress and how to address the signs of stress before they get overwhelmed by them.

If you have any questions at all about FSLW programming, I would love to answer them for you. I can be reached at the school by phone (780 929-0792) or by email: Archie.Bouchard@starcatholic.ab.ca *Thanks for your support!*

EMDYS ATHLETIC UPDATE

We have a busy month for our Jr. High Boys Basketball team and we hope to see you out cheering them on!
Games start at 4:15 PM.

February 6	HOME game vs. Pigeon Lake
February 13	AWAY game vs. Norwood
February 20	AWAY game vs. Griffith Scott
February 27	HOME game vs. Clear Vista
February 28	AWAY game vs. Centennial

ST. VITAL NEWS

Tuesday, February 20th is the 2018 Archdiocesan Day of Confessions. Father Arlan will be in the parish office between 10 AM and 4 PM to hear confessions.

Holy Trinity Youth Rally for youth grades 7-12 on Saturday, February 24 from 10 AM - 9 PM. Cost is \$45. Register by February 3rd to get a T-Shirt.

SOCIAL MEDIA - SCHOOL UPDATES

Please stop by and "like" the École Mother D'Youville School Facebook page and follow École Mother D'Youville on Twitter. EMDYS social media sites will have all the latest information directly from the school.



Prayer for Lent

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, You have made the sun to light the day and the moon and stars to light the night. Help us walk in your light. During this season of Lent, renew us through the gift of your Holy Spirit. Help us grow in faith, hope, and love. During this special time, we remember that Jesus died and rose from the dead, so that we might be free to

love. Help us grow to be the people you call us to be --

- letting go of old habits of selfishness, - forgiving those who have hurt us,

- giving quality time to our families, - spending time in quiet prayer.

AMEN.