

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we prepare to enter Holy Week, we are reminded that this is the most sacred and powerful time in the Catholic calendar. Holy Week invites us into the final days of Jesus' earthly life—from the joyful entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to the glorious resurrection on Easter Sunday. Each day carries deep meaning, and through reflection, we are called to walk alongside Christ in His suffering, sacrifice, and ultimately, His triumph over death.

Here's a glimpse of the journey:

- **Palm Sunday** – Jesus enters Jerusalem, greeted with palm branches.
- **Monday** – He clears the temple, calling us to righteousness.
- **Tuesday** – He teaches and is anointed in Bethany.
- **Wednesday** – He is betrayed by Judas.
- **Holy Thursday** – He shares the Last Supper and prays in the garden.
- **Good Friday** – He is crucified and dies for our salvation.
- **Holy Saturday** – He is in the tomb, a day of silence and waiting.
- **Easter Sunday** – He rises from the dead, bringing hope to the world.

This week is an invitation for all of us to pause and reflect: *What kind of day did I have today? Was it a Good Friday day—filled with struggle—or an Easter Sunday day—filled with joy and renewal?* In the rhythm of our lives, we find pieces of every day of Holy Week. And through Christ, we find meaning, strength, and the promise of new life.

Congratulations to our badminton athletes and best of luck to those competing in zones this weekend! We are so proud of your efforts and sportsmanship.

We're also excited to share that **St. Francis has been selected for Value Scoping**, a process that will determine whether we receive a modernization or a brand-new school. This is an incredible milestone for our school community, and we're looking forward to what lies ahead.

Other exciting updates:

- Our choir and band students just returned from a retreat in beautiful Banff, where they learned from expert clinicians and grew in their musical gifts.
- A group of 20 students will be heading to New York this Thursday on a school trip, with the highlight of attending **Easter Sunday Mass at St. John the Baptist Church**.

As we approach Easter break, we have a few staffing updates:

- We send our prayers to **Mrs. Sward** as she begins her maternity leave.
- A big thank you to **Mr. Monaghan** for his time supporting our Grade 8 students—your contributions have been greatly appreciated.
- After the break, we look forward to welcoming **Miss Couture** and **Miss Miller**, who will be joining our teaching staff as the new teachers for 8TS and 8CP.

May you and your family have a blessed Easter filled with peace, love, and the joy of Christ's resurrection.



Jackie Kraemer, Principal, St. Francis Junior High School



Big Dreams and Big Changes are on the way for St. Francis Junior High School



There is something exciting happening at St. Francis Junior High and it's not just the amazing programs or packed hallways. On Thursday, April 10, 2025, the Holy Spirit Catholic School Division and the Board of Trustees, along with a representative from the Government of Alberta, gathered to share some big news: Phase 1 of Value Scoping Funding is officially underway! SF VS1The project, led by our Board of Trustees with the support of Lethbridge-East MLA, Nathan Neudorf, will see initial funding of \$50,000 for early planning work.

This money will be used to determine the current state of St. Francis Junior High and help create a plan as to whether a modernization or a complete new build will be warranted.

"We have to answer some important questions with this upcoming inspection," said Holy Spirit's Board Chair, Dr. Carmen Mombourquette. "Can this building and all the areas within the building, particularly the basement areas, be made functional and safe? If the answer is no, then a modernization won't be enough and we would have to look at a new construction."

The St. Francis building has been around since 1957 and, while they have seen a few updates over the years, it's starting to show its age. From leaky roofs to outdated plumbing and electrical, the school is ready for some changes.

"This is super exciting for St. Francis and is a long time coming," said Principal, Mrs. Jackie Kraemer.

"Starting in September 2025, we're going to be over one hundred percent capacity. Thanks to our phenomenal staff at St. Francis, we have a lot of innovative programming, so we're excited to have a new place to be able to house all of that."

SF VS2Lachlan Calder, a Grade 9 student, is just one student out of a group who wrote heartfelt and meaningful letters to MLA Nathan Neudorf asking for help.

"Modernizations are critical and essential for our school considering we've had damage from our leaking roof many times over the years, no air conditioning, and no modernization of any kind since the late 1950's," Lachlan read. "A modernization at St. Francis school would allow students to have state of the art facilities, take pride in their school, and focus fully on their learning."

This new opportunity could unlock some exciting possibilities for St. Francis. The funding could see the possibility of a bigger gym, an upgraded fitness centre, better fine arts spaces, and modern classrooms to support awesome programs like Sports Academies, French Immersion, E-Sports, and more.

"This project is about building a space where our students can thrive," said Superintendent of Schools, Ms. Chantel Axani. "The approval of this funding brings with it a tremendous opportunity to reimagine what's possible for St. Francis Junior High School. We can begin planning a facility that truly reflects the energy, talent, and potential of our students and staff."

For now, Phase 1 will take about six to eight months, and by February 2026, a decision by the Alberta Government is expected to be made about what will happen next — whether it is a major modernization or a brand new school altogether.

St. Francis and Holy Spirit look forward to what the future holds following this significant announcement, which will set the school up for long-term success and empower our students and staff to reach their fullest potential.



Holy Spirit Catholic School Division

Welcome to Spring!

Anthea Boras, Deputy Superintendent



Welcome to Spring! *"See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone. Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come."* — Song of Solomon 2:11-12

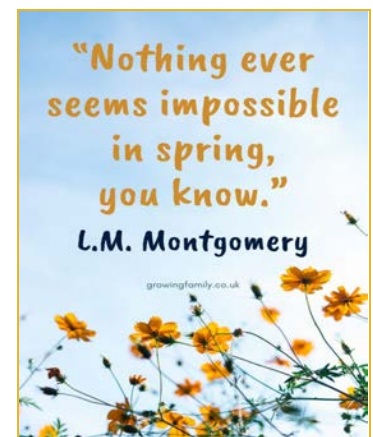
As the seasons change, it's a great time to refresh our focus on well-being and renewal. We are fortunate in Holy Spirit School Division to have 100% employer-paid benefits through the Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan (ASEBP), which provides valuable resources to support our overall wellness.

This month, ASEBP's Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) is rebranding to GreenShield Health. If you haven't already, you should receive a welcome email directly from GreenShield. Please note that this is a branding change only and does not impact the programs and services offered. You can learn more about EFAP [here](#).

In addition to EFAP, ASEBP offers a variety of wellness resources to support your whole-person well-being. Their Wellness Program provides access to mental health supports, financial wellness resources, and health coaching. You can also explore tools for physical wellness, including virtual physiotherapy, nutrition guidance, and digital fitness programs. ASEBP's [Wellness Hub](#) features articles, webinars, and self-care strategies to help you maintain balance in all aspects of your life.

As we step into a new season, take some time to prioritize your well-being and explore the many resources available to support you.

God bless ~ Anthea





“Share the Mission” Award Call for Nominations!

Recognizing Those Who Inspire – Nominate Someone Today!

Do you know someone who makes a difference in our school community? The **Share the Mission Award** is your opportunity to recognize those who go above and beyond to serve, lead, and inspire!

This prestigious award honors community members, parents, students, and school staff who:

- Provide outstanding service to students
- Set high standards through leadership and dedication
- Contribute to the faith-filled atmosphere of our schools
- Lead within the community and parish organizations
- Live out the values of the Holy Spirit Catholic School Division

Nominations are open until **Friday, June 6, 2025**. If you know someone who deserves to be recognized, submit your nomination today! The recipient will be honored at the division's Opening Mass.

Nominate now! Use the [online nomination form](#) or contact Rhonda Kawa at kawarh@holyspirit.ab.ca for more details.

Let's celebrate those who truly make a difference!

Canteen

The canteen offers regular menu items including hamburgers, chicken burgers & wraps, pizza subs, hot dogs, nachos, muffins, cookies, chips and various beverages. There are also exciting daily specials such as cheezy garlic fingers on Monday, mini pizza on Tuesday, etc. The daily special menus are posted on the daily announcements. Payment can be by cash, debit tap, or through buying prepaid canteen cards on [School Cash Online](#). Canteen cards can be purchased in increments of \$20.00. Your student can then purchase items at the canteen by just telling the canteen staff their name and that they have canteen funds. The staff will keep track of your student's spending and will let them know when funds are getting low.

CANTEEN
news

Canteen Specials



Monday: Cheesy Garlic Fingers - \$5.25

Tuesday: Mini Pepperoni Pizza - \$5.75

Wednesday: Weekly Special

Thursday: Alternating each week, Beef and Cheese Tacos - \$5.25,
and Chicken Burgers - \$5.50

Upcoming Weekly Specials

April 16 KD - \$2.50, Smoothie - \$3.00

No School April 23rd

April 30 Baked Spaghetti - \$4.50

May 7 Taco in a Bag - \$6.15 (Order through School Cash Online)

May 14 Chicken Nuggets - \$5.00

Wildcat Athletics News

All practices and games are on the [St. Francis Athletic Calendar](#) (clickable link).
Refer to it often for up to date changes.



- **BADMINTON: Zones** - April 12th

School Fees

School Cash Online

Holy Spirit School Division uses [School Cash Online](#) for the payment of all school items such as fees, canteen cards, club/athletic fees and spirit wear.

Additional fees for upcoming option classes and co-curricular activities will be added as they are applicable.

If you have already registered for School Cash Online at another school in the Holy Spirit School Division, you will see the 2024-2025 St. Francis school fees in September. If you are new to Holy Spirit, you will need your student's ASN to register which can be found in PowerSchool.

If you prefer to pay by cash or cheque you can always do so by coming into the office. (Credit and debit cards are no longer accepted.)



St. Francis Junior High uses [PowerSchool](#) as its student information system. It provides parent and student portals which gives users access to real-time information including attendance, grades and assignment descriptions and report cards.

Be sure to log in to your Parent PowerSchool portal often to monitor your student's academic progress. If you are unsure of how to access PowerSchool please contact the school at 403-327-3402.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CHECK OUT THE [SF SCHOOL CALENDAR](#)

- April 14:** Beginning of Quarter 4
- April 18:** Good Friday - No School for Students
- April 21-25:** Easter Break - No School for Students
- May 1:** School Dance, 5:00pm
- May 7:** Marian Mass, 8:30am

Registration & Transportation Information

Reminder to complete your registration forms for the 2025/2026 school year.

Transportation Forms will be sent out early May 2025

For more information please contact the school office, 403-327-3402

Please inform the office of any address changes as soon as possible!

As we welcome Jesus on this Palm Sunday,
may His presence in our lives bring us hope,
strength, & courage to face life's challenges.

Wishing You a Blessed
Palm Sunday!

April 13, 2025



WishesMsg.com



Proclaim! Pilgrims of Hope

Spiritual
Development
Day 2025

Holy Spirit Catholic School Division Spiritual Development Day 2025

On Tuesday, March 18, we were fortunate to gather at Catholic Central High School for this year's Spiritual Development Day. It was truly a blessing to have the time to celebrate the Mass, and to hear from three varied keynote speakers through the course of the day. I want to extend my thanks again to all who had a hand in the success of the day, from those who assisted behind the scenes and with set-up, to all of our staff who came and engaged with the day. I wanted to also thank those of you who were able to take the time to respond to our survey tool (126 of you!), and to share a couple of quick highlights:

- **Dr. Troy Davies** - Staff appreciated his passionate faith, and deep analysis of the images, along with his discussions of the Prodigal Son, Our Lady of Guadalupe and the personal story about his son. They also appreciated the ideas of 'Through the cracks, the light gets in' and 'sharing our light does not diminish our own, but makes it grow.'
- **Dr. Matt Hoven** - Staff appreciated the interconnection of sport and faith, as shown by Fr. David Bauer, as well as the distinction he drew between hope and optimism. The quote "Make use of technique, but let the spirit prevail" resonated.
- **Fr. Troy Nguyen** - Staff felt that Fr. Nguyen's presentation was inspiring and engaging, and appreciated his demeanour, humour, and relatability. His use of the Camino de Santiago as a metaphor for seeking beauty in suffering and everyday life uplifted those in attendance. "Slay your dragons" and the relationship between fasting, prayer, and almsgiving from his homily was also frequently mentioned.



We will be taking a more in depth look at the results and trends at our upcoming District Religious Education Committee meetings as we endeavour to meet your needs in planning next year's event.



Did you know?

There are over 1633 English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners in Holy Spirit Schools, who make up about 29% of the total student population. Chances are, you have a few EAL learners in your class!

Holy Spirit Catholic Schools English as an Additional Language (EAL) Program Overview

The English as an Additional Language (EAL) program serves students whose primary language is not English. These English as an Additional Language learners (ELLs) may be:

- **Foreign born** – Immigrants or refugee students who have moved to Canada and speak or are exposed to a language other than/in addition to English at home.
- **Canadian born** – First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) students, Francophone students, or Canadian-born children of immigrants who live in homes in which they speak or are exposed to a language other than or in addition to English.

These EAL learners are supported in their regular classroom and depending on need, may receive targeted support in specialized EAL classes or through small group programming with other EAL learners.

How can we support our EAL learners and their families?

- Provide a safe, stable, and welcoming environment for the student. Recognize how school procedures such as practice fire drills and lockdown procedures can be traumatic for the students.
- Know the students' country of origin, language(s) spoken at home, family traditions, favorite foods, etc. This helps build relationships with the students and can support pro-social behaviours.
- Understand that learning styles may be influenced by previous educational experience and that support should be individualized accordingly.
- Be consistent with rules and expectations.
- Support students in understanding and developing routines, such as teaching them how to use a lock, and showing them the location of washrooms, entry/exit door for recess/boot-room, and where to catch the bus or meet their parents after school. Pairing them with a classroom buddy

can also facilitate friendships and promote a welcoming atmosphere.

- Understand that some students react to trauma by acting out, while others may become more withdrawn. Pay as much attention to the students who are withdrawn and quiet as to those who are acting out.
- Participate in Professional Development opportunities that promote cultural understanding.
- Talk about your own cultural background with the students and share some of the traditions that your family follows.
- Choose educational materials (books, visuals, etc.) that represent the makeup of students in the classroom rather than just one ethnicity, so that they can see themselves in their learning.
- Discuss in your professional learning groups tips and strategies that work well with your learners, and implement them in your interactions with the student(s).
- Understand that some of the things these students have faced in their young lives is beyond comprehension. Be their greatest champion!

Using AI to Support Effective Assessment Practices

As teachers continue to balance improving classroom assessment with limited time, AI can be a powerful tool to support effective assessment practices. From planning to analysis, AI can help teachers streamline their work while enhancing clarity for students. Here are just three ways AI can help:

1. Learning Progressions & Success Criteria

AI can help teachers unpack curricular outcomes and generate clear, developmentally appropriate learning progressions. With a simple prompt, AI tools can suggest success criteria aligned with curricular expectations, supporting teacher clarity in what success looks like at different stages of learning. Myron Dueck shares his eight-step process for unpacking learning outcomes with the help of generative AI in his article [“How to Unpack a Learning Standard Using ChatGPT.”](#)

2. Blueprint Existing Assessments & Exams

Blueprinting assessments can make the shift towards outcomes-based assessment easier by aligning existing assessments to curricular outcomes. Teachers can use AI to create a blueprint of an assessment they already use, identifying how each question connects to specific learning outcomes. This helps ensure essential content and skills coverage, reducing overlap or gaps and ensuring greater assessment validity. Existing tests and exams can be uploaded with almost instantaneous analysis of the connection to curricular outcomes.

3. Analyze Depth of Knowledge (DoK)

AI can quickly review test questions and suggest their corresponding Depth of Knowledge levels. This analysis supports a balanced assessment design that includes recall, skills application, strategic thinking, and extended reasoning, helping teachers ensure assessments reflect a range of cognitive complexity. For more information on Webb's Depth of Knowledge Framework, [Structural Learning](#) has a great description with examples.

When used thoughtfully and appropriately, AI can act as an effective collaborative planning partner—saving time, sharpening focus, and supporting sound assessment design, leading to better student outcomes. Of course, AI will never replace teachers and their critical role in planning for and delivering instruction and assessment. Teacher professional judgment and sound pedagogical reasoning remain essential to ensure AI tools *support*, rather than replace, instructional decisions.

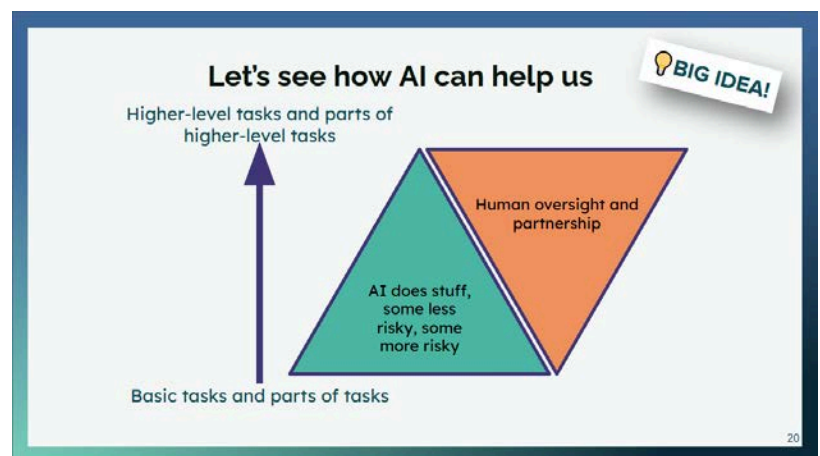


Image credit: Janet Bell

AI Resources & Information

[Amii](#) (Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute) - [Free K-12 AI Literacy Resources](#)

[ATA Statement on Artificial Intelligence](#)

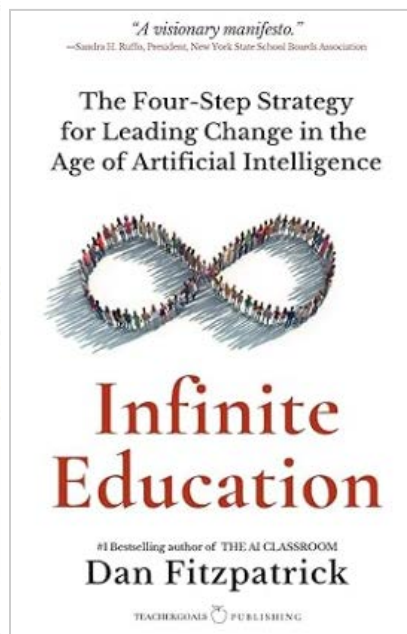
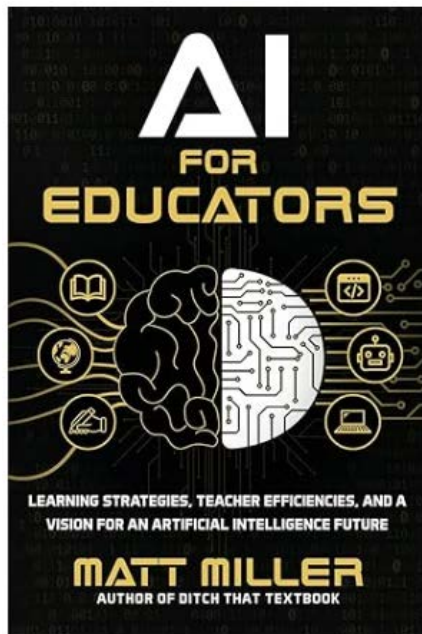
[ASBA Artificial Intelligence Policy Guidance](#)

[UNESCO AI Competency Framework for Teachers](#)

[AI For Educators by Matt Miller](#)

[Antiqua Et Nova](#) - The Vatican's Note on the Relationship Between Artificial Intelligence and Human Intelligence (Education Sections: 77-84)

Resources to borrow from the PD Centre Library



Email LearningServices@holyspirit.ab.ca to borrow a copy!



Understanding and Engaging with Indigenous Elders

What Is An Elder? An Elder is a respected community member, often recognized for their wisdom, cultural knowledge, and life experience. They are trusted advisors, spiritual guides, and keepers of Indigenous traditions and teachings. *"Age does not determine being an Elder. For example, Kendrick Fox is considered an Elder due to his numerous accomplishments and his status as a war veteran. He is frequently called upon to participate in many ceremonies."* - Emily Fox

How Do You Become an Elder?

Becoming an Elder is not a title that is self-appointed; it is earned over time through a deep understanding of culture, spiritual practices, and the respect of the community. Elders are recognized for their contributions and wisdom, often chosen by others within the community.

Please be aware of self proclaimed Elders. Practices would be to contact your Niitsitapi Facilitator of your school to help guide you in selecting the elder that you would like to work with and invite to your schools.



What Is the Role of an Indigenous Elder?

An Indigenous Elder plays a vital role in preserving and sharing cultural knowledge, guiding the community, and providing spiritual leadership. They help transmit Indigenous ways of knowing and being, particularly to younger generations, and are invaluable in fostering cultural continuity.



How to Engage with an Elder

1. **Build relationships:** Before inviting an Elder to your classroom, meet with them to get to know them personally. Building a respectful relationship is key.
2. **Greeting Elders:** Always greet Elders when they enter your school. It is customary to offer them a drink and a snack as a sign of hospitality. Also offer a nice comfortable place or chair to sit at.
3. **Respect Their Knowledge:** Treat Elders with the same respect as you would any professional, such as a scientist or educator. They are sharing invaluable cultural and spiritual knowledge. Trust the knowledge of the Elder and *A big NO NO is do not question their integrity.

4. **Know Your Elder:** Take the time to understand your Elder's background and where they come from. This helps in honoring their traditions appropriately.
5. **Prepare Your Elder:** Before an Elder visits your class, inform them about the topics you're learning. Many Elders have specific knowledge, and they may prefer to speak on areas they are more familiar with. You can also consult a Niitsitapi Facilitator to help you find an Elder whose knowledge aligns with your teaching.
6. **Cultural Protocols:** If an Elder is coming to perform ceremonies, such as face painting, ensure students are prepared by understanding the dress protocol (e.g., long sleeves and skirts). We need to prepare the school community about the protocols of the face painting ceremony and the proper protocols which can be considered parallel to the etiquette example of Ash Wednesday.
7. **Respect and Patience:** Always be respectful and patient when speaking with an Elder. Many Elders speak Blackfoot as their first language and may need time to translate their thoughts into English. Prepare your class for this and encourage them to listen attentively.
8. **Ask for Permission:** Before sharing an Elder's knowledge, always ask for their permission. Respecting the knowledge they impart is critical. *Always reference the information that you share, by including the Elder, knowledge keepers, and Niitsitapi Facilitators that you have received the information from. *Nothing About Us, Without Us!!
9. **Honorarium Protocol:** Speak with your Niitsitapi Facilitator then they will speak to the principal to arrange for honoraria and gift for the Elder, which is part of the reciprocal transaction. Ensure this is submitted at least three weeks in advance. *"On behalf of our class/school we would like to honor you by presenting this gift for sharing your knowledge."* - Emily Fox
10. **Handling Items:** When handing items to an Elder, always do so directly, never toss or throw them. This shows respect and care. Also, never point at an Elder. Treat the Elder like you would treat your own parents/grandparents.

By following these guidelines, you will help create a meaningful, respectful relationship with Elders and enrich the learning environment for your students.



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YABBA YOUTH FITNESS CLASSES

Youth fitness class that will help your kids learn how to lift weights properly in a fun and safe environment while building healthy habits that will last a lifetime.

Start date: May 16th
6 classes total

Kids: ages 3-7
@ 4:10-4:40pm

Pre-teens: ages 8-13
@4:50-5:30pm



**PARTNERED WITH
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Email yabbafitnessprogram@gmail.com to register or for more information