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October 2026

ADMIN TEAM MESSAGE

As we enjoy the beginning of Autumn we can see God's beauty in the falling leaves, feel his love in the warmth of the sun and hear his grace in the sounds of joy in our children. It has been an eventful start to the new school year. Our Curriculum Evening and family BBQ was a great opportunity for our school community to meet the teachers and learn about the exciting teaching and learning plans for this school year. Thank you for taking the time to join us!

We end the month of September with reflection during the Truth and Reconciliation week and the honoring of Orange Shirt Day. We begin the month of October with Read In Week from October 5 through 9 and look forward to many guest readers visiting our school throughout the week, along with our SC Read-a-thon running October 13 through 23.

As we look to the season of Thanksgiving, we thank God for all of the gifts that he has given us. In this spirit, our students will take part in a Food Drive from October 1 through 9 to aid an Edmonton Catholic school in need. We thank God especially for the gift of your children and your continued support as we strive to provide the best learning environment possible.

Thanksgiving Prayer

We thank you, Father, for the gift of Jesus your Son who came to our earth and lived in a simple home. We have a greater appreciation of the value and dignity of the human family because he loved and was loved within its shelter. Bless us this day; may we grow in love for each other in our family and so give thanks to you who are the maker of all human families and our abiding peace.



STAY CONNECTED and follow us on:

Website: <https://www.ecsd.net/schools/8237>

Instagram: @st_mary_elementary

https://www.instagram.com/st_mary_elementary/?hl=en

Important Dates

September 28	Healthy Hunger Hot Lunch - Subway
September 29	Wear your Orange Shirt in recognition of Truth and Reconciliation Day
September 30	Truth and Reconciliation Day - NO SCHOOL
October	Hispanic Canadian Heritage Month
October 1	St. Mary Professional Development Day - NO CLASSES
October 1-9	ECSD Snack Food Drive for a school in need
October 2	Custodian Appreciation Day
October 5	World Teacher Day
October 5-14	Alien In-line Skating - Kindergarten to Grade 6
October 5-9	Read-in-Week - "Let Stories Soar"
	Please contact your teacher if you would like to read to your child's class
October 9	Thanksgiving Day Celebration in the School Atrium at 12:45 p.m. - All are Welcome!
October 12	Thanksgiving Day - NO SCHOOL
October 13-23	School Council Read-a-thon - watch for information coming home
October 14	Lifetouch Individual Photos
October 17-23	Catholic Education Week
October 18	Catholic Education Sunday
October 19	NO CLASSES - Referendum Day
October 26	Hot Lunch - Pizza - Orders must be placed by Wednesday, October 21 @ 11:59 PM
October 30	Halloween Activities - Come in your costume - parade at 1:00 p.m.
	(Please do not send food or candy to be distributed)
November 1	All Saints Day
November 2	All Souls Day
November 4	Grade 5A to No Stone Left Alone Ceremony at Beechmount Cemetary
November 5	Fall Parent/Teacher/Student Led Conferences
	Book Fair
November 6	Book Fair ends
November 9	Hot lunch - A&W - Order deadline Wednesday, November 4, 11:59 PM
November 10	Remembrance Day Liturgy 10:45 –11:15 a.m. All are welcome!
November 11-13	Remembrance Day Weekend/Fall Break - NO CLASSES
November 14	Classes resume
November 16	Metis Day
November 18	Lifetouch Picture Retake Day
November 20	Grade 1A, 1/2A, & 2A - Creative Caravan In-school fieldtrip
November 23	Hot Lunch - Pizza - Order deadline Wednesday, November 18 @ 11:59 PM
November 25	Schools Observe Holodomor Memorial Day



VOLUNTEERING IN THE SCHOOL

Edmonton Catholic Schools appreciates the services of all its volunteers. In order to ensure your safety and the safety of all our students, all volunteers must complete a Volunteer registration form. Forms were sent home with your child in the first days of school and are also available in the office.

Along with completion of the registration form, **all visitors to the school MUST identify themselves before entry into the building, sign in at the office and wear a visitor badge while in the building.**

We appreciate this may be an inconvenience, however it is required to ensure the safety of all students, staff, visitors and volunteers.

SCHOOL FEES

Government approved school fees charged are used in student programming and/or services throughout the school year. Your child's school fees were made active for payment on September 15 in the parent Powerschool Portal

<https://powerschool.ecsd.net>. Payment of fees was requested by the end of September 2026. Bus fees are available for payment through the parent portal on a monthly or yearly basis.

GETTING TO and FROM SCHOOL SAFELY

Please review this resource from Alberta Health on getting to and from school safely.

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Alberta/Pages/getting-to-and-from-school-safely.aspx>

Drop Off & Pick Up

Please do not park in the bus lane at any time.

The church across the street allows parents to use their lot before and after school.

You are welcome to use the DROP & GO lane if you are stopping to let out students only – this is not for parents who wish to get out of their vehicle.

Please follow the link <https://arcg.is/1H4ieS1> or use the QR code to view the map explaining which zones are for parking and which are for driving through only. Parking is available in the church lot during pick up and drop off.



LUNCHES

We encourage children to bring their lunch with them as they arrive to school in the morning as to limit disruption to learning and work flow. **Noon drop offs of fast food items are discouraged. All essentials for eating their lunch should be packed as the school does not provide disposable supplies - cutlery etc. for student use.** Healthy lunches are encouraged together with reducing disposable waste.

As was the procedure last school year, students will have recess first from 11:54 am - 12:14 pm and will eat their lunch from 12:14 pm to 12:34 pm.

STAY HOME WHEN SICK



As students and staff return for another exciting school year the health, safety and well-being of all students and staff remains a top priority.

Parents are asked to monitor your child for symptoms daily before coming to school. This is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of illness. **Anyone who is exhibiting symptoms of illness, including fever, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, new or worsening cough, or shortness of breath, should remain at home until their symptoms have improved and they have been free of fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, and they feel well enough**

to resume normal activities. If your child becomes sick at school, parents/guardians will be called to pick them up. If your child is away from school for any reason, please call the school office to let us know.

At our school we are,

- Encouraging students to wash their hands regularly.
- Prioritizing frequent cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces.
- Ensuring proper ventilation is extremely important to us. We have installed the ASHRAE-recommended MERV 13 filters in our school, and our HVAC systems are running for extended periods of time. We continue to reference and implement ASHRAE guidance where practicable within the limitations of existing infrastructure across the Division.
- Respecting individual choice regarding masks. Our priority is supporting a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment.
- Reporting illness to Alberta Health Services when school-wide student absentee rates are over 10% due to illness so they can investigate and advise. This has always been our division practice.

The health, safety, and well-being of our students and staff remain our top priority.

REPORTING YOUR CHILD'S ABSENCE

Need to report a student absence? ECSD uses the SchoolMessenger SafeArrival system. Download the app, visit the website, or call in anytime. It's a quick and convenient way to keep your school informed. Find all the details at <https://www.ecsd.net/reporting-absences>. In this app you can also view messages sent out from your school which can help you stay informed.

BUSSING 2026-2027



All NEW applications, changes to bussing addresses, or cancellations requests **must** be completed online through the following link

<https://ecsd.mybusplanner.ca/>

Parents are asked to monitor their Powerschool Parent portal weekly to obtain their child's route information and check for any changes to the schedule. Bus pass fees for 2026-27 are all \$70.00 for both Yellow bus and ETS, with no additional family plan discount. Bus payments are made through the Powerschool parent portal. Eligibility for bussing this school year, as changed by the Alberta Government, requires access for bussing to be at least 1.6 kilometers from the school.

Bus Passes This school year there will be no bus passes issued to students. Bus drivers will take attendance of their passengers according to their updated running boards.

Bus Delays Bus delays are posted on the division website through the BusPlanner website

<https://ecsd.mybusplanner.ca/Alerts> or can be accessed through the bus delay app [BusPlanner Delays App](#) on your mobile phone. Students are encouraged to be at their stop at least 5 minutes before their pick up time. If a bus **does not arrive within 10 minutes** of its scheduled time, please ensure your child knows to notify an adult. No matter how late a bus runs behind schedule, the driver finishes the route. But we do recommend that after 20 minutes, you make other arrangements.

Any questions on bussing should be directed to our Transportation Department directly at 780-441-6078.

BIRTHDAYS & Healthy Food Choices at School

Edmonton Catholic Schools is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's well-being, and the ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Any food and beverages served at school for special celebrations will be from the "Choose Most Often" or "Choose Sometime" categories as outlined in the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth (2008). Along with this, parents will be notified in advance so they may inform the teacher if they would not like their child to consume the food provided. To respect and support parents in their role as providers for their children and in consideration of severe allergies, we ask that **NO food be sent to school for birthdays or to be shared with other students at any time.** The office and teachers will acknowledge birthdays in their own way and we will leave the birthday parties for home. Thank you for your support with this.

ALLERGY ALERT

In support of our students with severe allergies that can cause serious illness - or worse, we'd like to make the whole community aware that we have several students with nuts and nut product allergies. Students with these allergies are identified for staff in cases of emergency and many of the children have been taught to be 'on guard' for their personal safety. We would also like to ask you, the parent community, to please consider these children when making choices about lunches and snacks for your own children.

Thank you for your support and understanding.

TOYS AT SCHOOL

We know students often enjoy bringing special toys and treasures from home to share with friends. While we appreciate their excitement, we kindly ask that toys remain at home unless they have been specifically requested by the classroom teacher.

Toys brought to school can sometimes become lost, damaged, or create distractions and disagreements among students. We have noticed that some students are even making trades during school. Keeping toys at home helps us maintain a safe, focused, and positive learning environment for everyone.

Thank you for your support and partnership. If your child would like to share something special with their classmates, please encourage them to check with their teacher first.

DOGS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

While we are a dog loving community, there are some safety considerations during drop off and pick up at school. If you are bringing your dog during these times, please ensure that you are in control of the dog and maintaining a safe distance from the students. Please [click here](#) to see the Edmonton City Bylaw regarding No dogs allowed on school grounds and some other public locations. Consider determining a meeting spot with your child/children if you will be bringing your dog to pick up or drop off. Although we know you may have a friendly dog, sometimes a situation can cause an unpredictable response from the pet. Please pass this message along to anyone who may be picking up students.

YMCA CHILD CARE at ST. MARY for 2026-2027 (Before & After, Kindercare & 4 Year Olds)

St. Mary continues to have YMCA Before and After School Child Care as well as Kindercare morning and afternoon programs for this school year, along with a 4-year-old program. As the daycare operates independently from the school, for more information please visit <https://ymcanab.ca/programs/child-care> or contact their director, Beth Pede at 587-710-7815 or by email at beth.pede@northernalberta.ymca.ca or northernalberta.ymca.ca.

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

School Council and Parent Advisory Council meeting minutes are posted on the St. Mary website www.stmary@ecsd.net within days of the meeting. Please visit the website link

<https://stmary.ecsd.net/search?search-term=school+council+minutes&file-type=&exclude-search-term=>

to review. Please watch for notification of the next school council meeting.

PARTNERSHIPS - EDMONTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Do you want a free Edmonton Public Library Card? Signing up is very easy and is found under PowerSchool under School Engage. Please click on this [link](#) to find out more information or to watch a video on how to sign up.

EDMONTON CATHOLIC Translation Services

Did you know Edmonton Catholic Schools offers translation services through our One World...One Centre Intercultural Staff? These services are available in multiple languages, including Amharic, Arabic, Bosnian, Croatian, French, Tagalog, Russian, Spanish, Serbian, Tigrinya, and Ukrainian. If language assistance is needed for important school interactions, such as parent-teacher meetings or help translating Division messages, please contact One World...One Centre @ 780-441-6060. Intercultural Staff helps bridge communication between families and school staff. Learn more: ecsd.net/languagesupport.

NEED LANGUAGE SUPPORT?

Our Intercultural Staff can help with translation

Russian

Bosnian

Spanish

Tigrinya

Tagalog

Amharic

Serbian

Arabic

French

Ukrainian

Croatian

Contact your school for assistance



Food Drive

in support of

ECSD SCHOOL
SNACK PROGRAMS

ITEMS NEEDED:

- Snack Pack Size Crackers
Goldfish, Ritz, etc.
- Granola Bars
- Fruit Bars
- Apple Sauce/Fruit Sauce
- Fruit Cups
- Fruit Snacks

DONATIONS
ACCEPTED UNTIL

October 9, 2026

Join us for READ IN Week - October 5-9, 2026!



The theme for 2026 is Let Stories Soar!

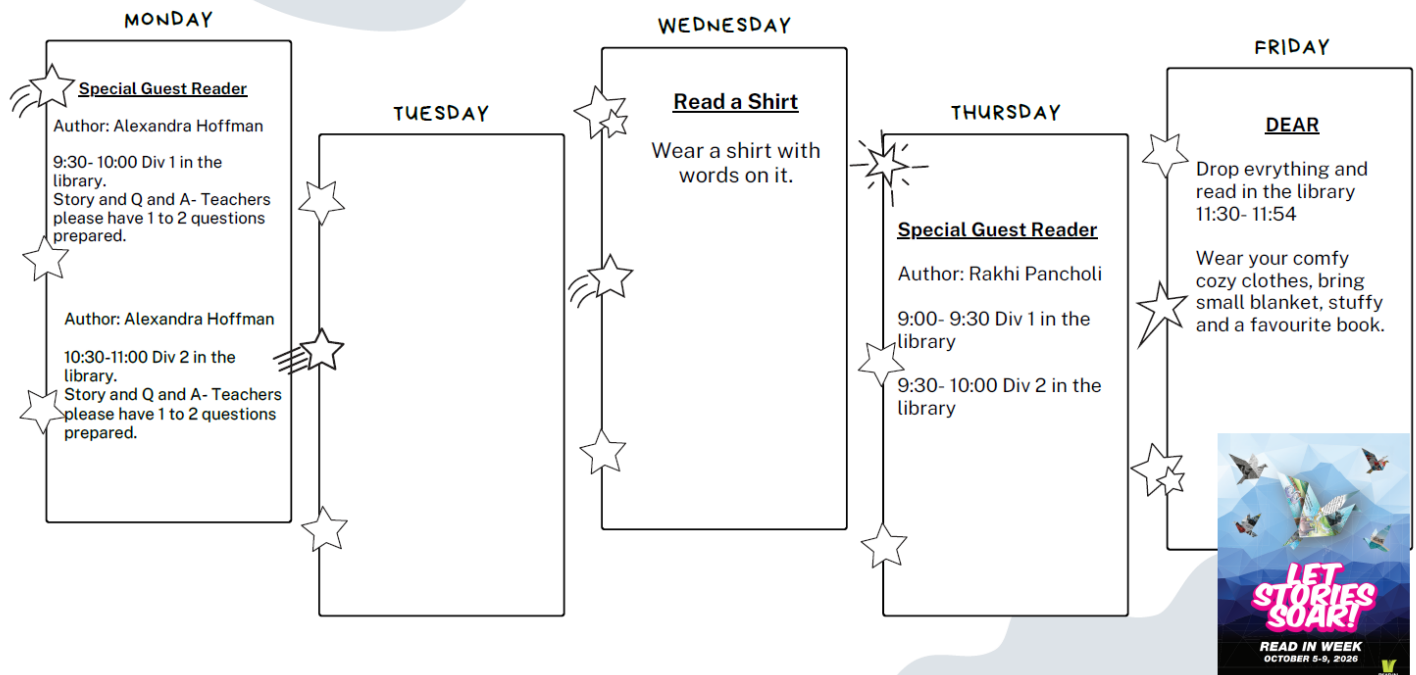
When we read, we open doors to new adventures and discoveries. This year's Read In Week theme, Let Stories Soar, celebrates how stories can take us to amazing new worlds and open our minds. Whether you're reading a book, diving into a comic or listening to a story, you can let your imagination soar. The magic of storytelling is always within your reach, ready to take you anywhere you want to go!

Several activities are planned throughout the week including teacher swap reading with buddy classes, special class projects, and students guessing a staff's favourite book display (whose book is whose). Special activities are noted in the chart below with more to come!

If you are interested in sharing your love of reading with your child(ren)'s class, please contact their classroom teacher(s) to arrange a time.

READ IN WEEK 2026

LET STORIES SOAR!!



TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION DAY - September 30 - NO CLASSES

***STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY - Thursday, October 1, 2026
NO CLASSES***

ALIEN IN-LINE SKATING - October 5 - 14

This year again, Alien In-line Skating will be at St. Mary from October 5 through 14 with their Learn to In-line Skate program. All students from Kindergarten through Grade 6 will take part as part of their physical education program. All equipment is provided by Alien In-line. However, if you wish, you are able to send a CSA, CPSC etc. approved helmet for your child to use. **All students MUST wear socks to skate.** Due to health reasons, students without socks will not be permitted to participate. It is suggested to send an extra pair of socks for your child's use to ensure dry socks when skating. Please watch for more information and scheduling coming home with your child.

THANKSGIVING DAY CELEBRATION - October 9 @ 12:45 p.m. Atrium

Please join us on Friday, October 9 at 12:45 p.m. in the school atrium for our Thanksgiving Day Celebration.
All are Welcome!

THANKSGIVING DAY - MONDAY, October 12 - NO CLASSES

SCHOOL COUCIL READ-A-THON - October 13-23

This year again, the St. Mary School Council will be doing a Read-a-thon fundraiser. Please watch for information coming home with your child in the next few days.

PICTURE DAY - October 14



Lifetouch Photography will be at St. Mary on Wednesday, October 14 to take individual student photos. If you are able to assist, please leave your name at the school office.

Individual picture retakes will be on Wednesday, November 18.

REFERENDUM DAY - October 19 - NO CLASSES

OCTOBER HOT LUNCH - October 26

October's hot lunch through Healthy Hunger is on Monday, October 26 - Subway.

The order deadline is Wednesday, October 21 at 11:59 p.m.

Thank you to our School Council for arranging the hot lunch program this school year!

HALLOWEEN ACTIVITIES - October 30 - Grades K-6



We look forward to our Halloween parade which will take place on

Friday, October 30 @ 1:00 p.m.



Halloween gives us the opportunity to dress up as our favourite character or things! It is also important to remember that Halloween is for everyone and that means being inclusive so that everyone feels welcome and comfortable. Here are some things to keep in mind when picking out your costumes:

- **Respect Everyone:** Choose costumes that do not make fun of someone's religion, race, culture, gender, abilities or other aspect of their identity.
- **Avoid Stereotypes:** Focus on costumes that celebrate the uniqueness and diversity of our world without relying on stereotypes or exaggerations of certain groups of people.
- **Be sensitive:** How will your costume make others feel?
- **Get Creative:** Halloween is a chance to be creative!
- **Include Everyone:** Encourage your friends to choose inclusive costumes too!

Remember, we want to be kind, celebrate diversity and make everyone feel welcome! Please come and witness the creative costumes! **Just a reminder, we ask that students not wear full face masks which hinder vision and are a safety risk or carry incorporate replica weapons. Replica weapons are never allowed at school.**

In keeping with our procedures, please DO NOT send food or treats to distribute.

TERRY FOX RUN 2026

On Friday, September 18, all students and staff at St. Mary took part in the Terry Fox Run for Cancer Research. We are thrilled to share that the **total of \$1128.50 was raised in both cash and online donations**. This incredible achievement would not have been possible without your generous donations and unwavering support. Thank you for coming together to honor Terry's legacy and for making a difference in the fight against cancer. Your contributions will help fund vital research and support for those affected by this disease. Together, we've made a meaningful impact. The donation link remains open until the end of the month at <https://schools.terryfox.ca/136802>. A special Thank you to our YMCA daycare staff who provided music during the run and helped cut up the oranges that were a treat for students after the run.



ECSD CROSS COUNTRY RUN - September 21

On Monday, September 21, 42 students in the St. Mary X-Country run team participated in the ECSD Cross Country Run event at Rundle Park. What a beautiful setting, running one to two kilometers through the tree lined route through the park! Congratulations to all the enthusiastic running club athletes for their excellent effort and results. We are so proud of everyone's efforts. Way to go St. Mary!



ORANGE SHIRT DAY - September 29

On Tuesday, September 29, students at St. Mary will continue on their journey of learning leading up to the National Day for Truth & Reconciliation. Students will explore the questions: What is Truth & Reconciliation? Why do we wear orange in September? What is your commitment to Truth & Reconciliation? How will you continue your journey?

Students will participate in a variety of activities to deepen their understanding of what residential schools were, how the Indigenous children and their families felt, as well as what it means to apologize. They will be challenged to think of ways that they can help to live in friendship with the Indigenous people of the land.



Every child matters!

September 30 National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

**NO CLASSES are held on Wednesday, September 30
in Recognition of Truth and Reconciliation Day**

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES for Parent and Students

Edmonton Catholic Schools works closely with [Recovery Alberta](https://www.recoveryalberta.ca/) Mental Health and Addiction Services to support the mental health needs of students. Through this partnership, each school has access to either an ECSD or Recovery Alberta Mental Health Specialist who can provide support to students at school based on individual referral.

More information is available through Quick Links to Community Health and Well-being resources:

<https://www.ecsd.net/ahs-mental-health-parent-information>

From ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH

Primary School Youth Ministry



STM GAME-ZONE

**DROP-IN EVENT
GRADE 1-6
THURSDAY AFTERNOONS**

12:30-3:30 PM

ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH
210 HADDOW CLOSE NW

KIDS CAN HANG OUT, HAVE FUN, AND BE KIDS AT CHURCH WITH SOCCER, PING-PONG, FOOSBALL, CRAFTS, DRAWING, BOARD GAMES, FREE SNACK AND MUCH MORE!

ST THOMAS MORE
YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH MINISTRY
GRADE 7-9

DUC IN ALTUM

"CAST OUT INTO THE DEEP"

Every 2nd and 4th Saturday
5:30-8pm | Starting Oct 10

Following 4:30 Mass	210 Haddow Close NW Our Lady of the Rosary Rm.
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Scan this QR code to join our email list



What is DUC IN ALTUM?

"Duc In Altum" is the Latin phrase "**Cast your net into the deep**" (Luke 5:4) that Jesus commanded Peter

Duc in Altum is a place for Gr 7-9's to:

- Play games
- Make friends
- Eat yummy food
- Talk about life
- Talk about God and the Catholic Church
- Go on trips
- Go on Retreats
- And more...



HIGH-SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY

Verso L'alto

"to the Heights"

2ND & 4TH SATURDAYS | 5:30-8 PM
STARTING OCT 10 | AT ST. THOMAS MORE CHURCH

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it **ABUNDANTLY.**"
- John 10:10

Do you ever feel **out of place?** alone? unloved?

Have you ever done something you **didn't want to do?**

Have you considered **Jesus has a plan for you?**

We invite you (and any other Gr. 10-12's) "**to reach higher**" (Verso L'Alto), to come explore the faith and to ask the questions you have about the church, your life, and God.

Scan this QR code to stay up to date




SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION at ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH

Registration information for Sacramental preparation is posted on the St. Thomas More Parish website. Please see the following link <https://stm.caedm.ca/sacraments/> for calendar of dates and registration forms.

St. Thomas More Catholic Church
210 Haddow Close NW
Edmonton, AB T6R 2P3
Phone: 780-434-6313

