

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we step into the blessed season of Advent, a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the wonderful achievements of our school community and look forward to the joyous events planned for December.

Last month was a testament to the talents and spirit of our students. We were all immensely proud of our choir's stunning performance alongside the symphony. Their voices not only filled the church with beautiful melodies but also our hearts with immense pride. Additionally, our school's volleyball teams represented us exceptionally well at their final tournament jamboree. We are grateful for the students' achievements, but also for the staff for sharing their gifts, talents, and time to create opportunities for our children to shine.

Upcoming Events:

1. *School Family Night & Parent Mixer (December 13, 6-8 PM)*: We are excited to invite you to our School Family Night on December 13th, from 6 to 8 PM. This evening promises to be filled with crafts, music, and various activities, offering a wonderful opportunity for families to bond and celebrate the Advent season together. In conjunction, the School Council will host a Parent Mixer, providing a great chance for parents to connect and enjoy some festive cheer. For our younger attendees, a movie will be shown in the gym, ensuring fun for all ages.
2. *Sock it to 'Em Event & Book Collection*: In the spirit of giving, we continue to support the 'Sock it to 'Em event and our gently used book collection. These initiatives are wonderful ways to teach our children the importance of compassion and generosity, especially during this time of year.
3. *Annual Turkey Dinner (December 20, lunch time)*: In collaboration with the School Council, we are delighted to host our annual turkey dinner for the school community on December 20th at noon. This event is a highlight of our Advent celebrations and a beautiful way to share in the joy and fellowship of our school family.
4. *Advent Mass (December 7, 9:30 am)*: We warmly invite all parents and family members to join us for our Advent Mass on December 7th. The grade 5/6 class will be leading this opportunity for our school community to gather in prayer and reflection, preparing our hearts for the coming of Christ at Christmas.

As we move through these busy and exciting weeks, let us remember the true essence of Advent - a time of hopeful waiting and thoughtful preparation. May this Advent be a time of peaceful reflection and joyful anticipation for you and your families. We look forward to celebrating this special season with you and wish you all a peaceful and blessed holiday season.

God Bless  
Patti Pilsner





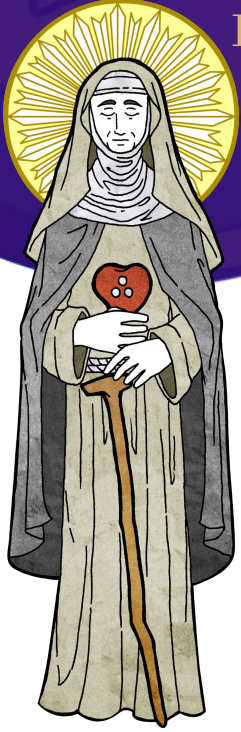
# HELLO December



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 1st Sunday of Advent	4 PD Day No School for students	5 Pokémon Club	6 Pizza Hot Lunch	7 Advent Mass 9:30am Gill to Legacy Lodge	8	9
10 2nd Sunday of Advent	11	12 Pokémon Club	13 Christmas Family Event 6:00 pm	14 Advent Celebration 1:15pm	15 Choir to Legacy Lodge	16
17 3rd Sunday of Advent	18 Christmas Accessory Day  Advent Celebration 9:30am	19 Christmas Sweater Day Pokémon Club Picton/Alvarez to Legacy Lodge	20 Christmas Hat Day  Christmas Turkey Lunch	21 Grinch Day  Kindergarten Pajama Day and Party	22 Christmas Jammies Day	23
24 4th Sunday of Advent	25	26	27	28 Last day to order pizza hot lunch	29	30
31				<p>Classes resume on January 8th Happy New Year God Bless</p>		

# December

## Build! Pilgrims of Hope



*"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you..."*

Jeremiah 1:5a

## St. Margaret of Castello 1287-1320 (Feast Day: April 13)

Margaret was born in Perugia, Italy in 1287. We know that she was born with a medical condition known as dwarfism, was blind, and had other physical disabilities as well. Her parents, who were nobles, hid her from the public and eventually walled her into a room adjacent to the chapel. It was there that she began her spiritual journey, attending Mass and receiving the sacraments. She became devoutly spiritual during this time of solitude and when she was about 16, her parents took her to a church at Castello, where miracles were said to have happened, seeking for her to be cured. When this did not occur, they abandoned her there.

Consequently, she spent time living amongst the poor of the town before being taken in by a religious family. She joined the Dominican Third Order of Castello, and spent the remainder of her life in prayer, and performing acts of penance and charity to those around her. Her devotion and holiness were so well known in her community that upon her death in 1320, they demanded that she be buried in the local church. She was canonized by Pope Francis in April of 2021, and her incorrupt body still lies in that church in Castello 700 years later.

## "Building" In Our Schools

It's important to remember and honour those who have served before us - be it in our community or in service to our country. With the help of Mrs. Alvarez and Mrs. Picton's students, St. Teresa of Calcutta School held a Remembrance Day service, while St. Mary School in Taber hosted a Community Remembrance Day ceremony. On November 9th, a special Mass was held at St. Basil Catholic Education Centre to honour retired staff for their work and support of Catholic Education. *"I thank my God every time I remember you..."* Philippians 1:3

*"For we are God's servants, working together..."* 1 Corinthians 3:9a



## Corporal Works of Mercy

### – Advent –

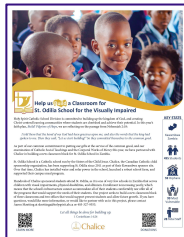
As we enter Advent this month, we would like to highlight a resource and a request.

In Holy Spirit, we have a divisional license for the [FORMED](#) platform. This service provides abundant Catholic content for your use with your staff, students, or your own formation. For [Advent](#), they have two new series, an interactive Advent calendar, as well as some Advent FAQs. *Rooted* will be a daily Advent reflection video series, while *Drawing Closer to God* is a Catholic art show for kids!

You will also know that we are working collaboratively this year with Chalice to support the St. Odilia building project. A number of schools are working on fundraising efforts through Advent to support this initiative, and recall that you can also make individual donations through [SchoolCashOnline](#). If you or a community partner would like to make a larger contribution, please let us know!



*"...the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel."* (Matthew 1:23)



[VIEW FULL SIZE](#)

Pope's Prayer Intentions - For people with disabilities  
- Let us pray that people with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusion programmes that value their active participation.

[Home Page](#)

*"Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received."* (1 Peter 4:10)

## Catholic Social Teaching

### – Participation –

Through the course of this year, we will look each month at one of the Catholic Social Teachings. The aim of Catholic Social Teaching is to shine the light of the Gospel on our contemporary world, allowing us as disciples of Christ to look at the world around us with new eyes, and to take action.

Last month, we looked at subsidiarity - the idea that we should seek to address needs at the most local level and create solutions with those around us. Participation is closely linked to subsidiarity. As part of our living together, we also believe that each person is entitled to participate in making decisions that affect their lives, and to actively involve those around us in those processes, whether economic, social, or political. This is a way of balancing the dignity of each person with the pursuit of the common good.

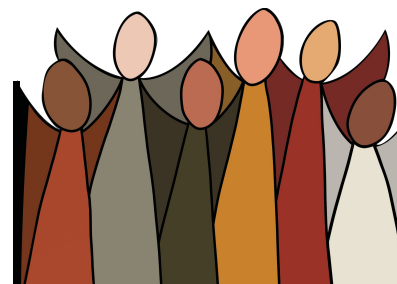
As Pope Benedict XVI noted in *Caritas in Veritate*,

*Subsidiarity respects personal dignity by recognizing in the person a subject who is always capable of giving something to others.*

The Pope's Prayer Intention this month is for people with disabilities - that they may be at the centre of our societies and that we value their active participation. St. Margaret of Castello shows us the importance of this, and the positive impacts that those with disabilities have on all of us.

Learn more about Participation with one of these resources:

- The Religion Teacher - [Participation](#)
- Caritas EU - [Participation](#)
- USCCB - [Participation](#)



# Gospel Readings

December 3, 2023

1st Sunday in Advent

## Gospel Reading: Mark 13:33-37

“What I say to you I say to all: ‘Watch!’” — Mark 13:37

Whenever something exciting is coming in our lives, we wait for it with great anticipation. If it is a birthday or a holiday, there is a lot to do to prepare for it. We put all our energy into the preparations without hesitation because we know how much fun it will be when the day comes. Today’s scripture reminds us to prepare ourselves with this same excitement and anticipation for Christ’s coming. Since it is the season of Advent, we are preparing to celebrate Christ’s birth. But we are also called to be prepared every day of our lives. Jesus wants us to be ready to meet him any day, any time, anywhere.

An Advent wreath helps us count the four weeks of preparation for Christ’s birth. Does your family have an Advent wreath or another Advent tradition that helps you count the days until Christmas?

### Prayer:

*Dear Lord, show me how I can best prepare my heart and mind to meet you whenever you come.*



December 8, 2023

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

## Gospel Reading: Luke 1:26-38

“Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” — Luke 1:38

People sometimes mistakenly believe that this feast is about when Mary became pregnant with Jesus. Instead, this feast day is about MARY’s birth. From the very moment when Mary began to grow in the womb of her mother, St. Anne, she was without sin. Mary received this special grace from God so that she could live unselfishly her entire life.

God knew that Mary would accept his plan to bring Jesus into the world as a human baby, so he prepared a perfect soul for her so she would become the Mother of his perfect Son.

Can you pray the Hail Mary? The first part of that prayer comes from the words the angel Gabriel said when he appeared to Mary.

### Prayer:

*Sweet Mother Mary, please help me to trust and obey God just like you did.*

**Hail Mary**, full of grace,  
the Lord is with thee.  
Blessed art thou among women  
and blessed is the fruit  
of thy womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
pray for us sinners,  
now and at the hour  
of our death.  
Amen.



Download this month’s [Saint Prayer Card](#) - St. Margaret of Castello



# Gospel Readings

December 10, 2023

2nd Sunday in Advent

## Gospel Reading: Mark 1:1-8

“...prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.” — Mark 1:3

Preparing is what everyone seems to be doing this time of the year. People are buying presents, writing cards, making cookies, and decorating homes. These ways of preparing to celebrate Jesus' birth are lots of fun. But how are we preparing our hearts? There are many special things we can do during Advent, such as a Jesse Tree which reminds us of Jesus' lineage. We could do Advent meditations as a family to help us think about Christ's coming. We could find a way to serve those in need together. Or we could just pray together as a family in front of our Christmas tree and ask Jesus to help us prepare our hearts for Christmas. Whatever we choose, let us find a special way our family can “prepare the way of the Lord.”

What will we do as a family this Advent to prepare our hearts for Jesus' birth?

### Prayer:

*Dear Lord, please help us to prepare our hearts in a special way as we prepare to celebrate your birth.*



December 17, 2023

3rd Sunday in Advent

## Gospel Reading: John 1:6-8, 19-28

“ Rejoice always.” — 1 Thessalonians 5:16

During this time of year, there are many things that can make us feel happy. We enjoy seeing friends and family. We may like looking at Christmas lights that decorate people's homes. The festive food that seems to be present everywhere is extra yummy. But today's scripture calls us to venture beyond “happy” into “rejoicing!” There are so many blessings around us that our joy should be abundant and directed to our God who gives us all good things! Let's share our great joy with those around us, so the light of Christ will shine during this Advent season and continue through the upcoming Christmas season.”

What will we do as a family this Advent to prepare our hearts for Jesus' birth?

### Prayer:

*Dear Lord, please help us to prepare our hearts in a special way as we prepare to celebrate your birth.*



*“I am the light of the world.  
Whoever follows me will never walk in  
darkness but will have the light of life.”  
(John 8:12b)*

December 24, 2023

4th Sunday in Advent

## Gospel Reading: Luke 1:26-38

“Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.” — Luke 1:30

There are times when I do things that I know must disappoint God. There are other times that I've done things that I hope are very pleasing to God. But can you imagine being told directly by an angel that you have found favor with God? That would be amazing! Mary was someone very special to God. He wanted her to carry his Son. She always tried to do everything in her life to please the Lord. During this last day of Advent, ask Mary to pray for us to have the same desire she did, to do everything in our life to make God happy.

### Prayer:

*Dear Lord, thank you for showing us through Mary such a beautiful example of faith.*



December 25, 2023

The Nativity of the Lord

## Gospel Reading: John 1:1-18

Today is a day of great rejoicing! Jesus is born! He has come to teach us how to live with love and compassion. He was here when the whole world was created and he is here right now! Let us spend today and the rest of the Christmas season praising him for his goodness to us.

### Prayer:

*Dear Jesus, thank you for continuing to love us.  
Thank you for being the Word of God that speaks to  
us of your love.*

### Sources:

[NOVENA TO ST. MARGARET OF CITTÀ DI CASTELLO](#)  
[The saint who was abandoned by her own parents](#)  
[Meet St Margaret of Castello. the pope's unexpected canonization](#)  
[St Margaret of Castello Experience at the NCPD Race for Belonging](#)  
[In My Heart: The Life of Saint Margaret of Castello](#)  
[Margaret of Castello – the unwanted saint](#)  
[2023 Daily Prayers for Families](#)



Nov 27, 2023

Friends of Sock It To 'Em,

Attention: Principals and Head Caretakers:

CUPE 290- Caretakers, Maintenance, and Support Staff of Lethbridge and area schools, and Nord-Bridge Seniors Centre are still collecting socks for those less fortunate until December 6<sup>th</sup>! Please start to deliver your socks the week of Dec. 4<sup>th</sup> to Nord-Bridge Seniors Centre - 1904 13 Ave. N. The giveaway is December 14<sup>th</sup>. All donations of new socks will help local charities: Harbour House, Woods Homes (The Teen Shelter), Seniors of Nord-Bridge, Salvation Army, Streets Alive, The Homeless Shelter and Immigrant Services. We already have many donated but are looking for more. Lets add many more to our record of 124,000 pairs of socks.

If you plan to donate money to this campaign instead, the deadline is December 6<sup>th</sup>. **Money donations can be made payable to "Nord-Bridge Senior Citizens Organization"** *(with a note specifying Sock It To 'Em)* **If you need anymore information contact either of the phone numbers listed below.**

Please refer to the "SOCK IT TO 'EM" poster for more information. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Gail Petrie  
Phone: 403-327-6520

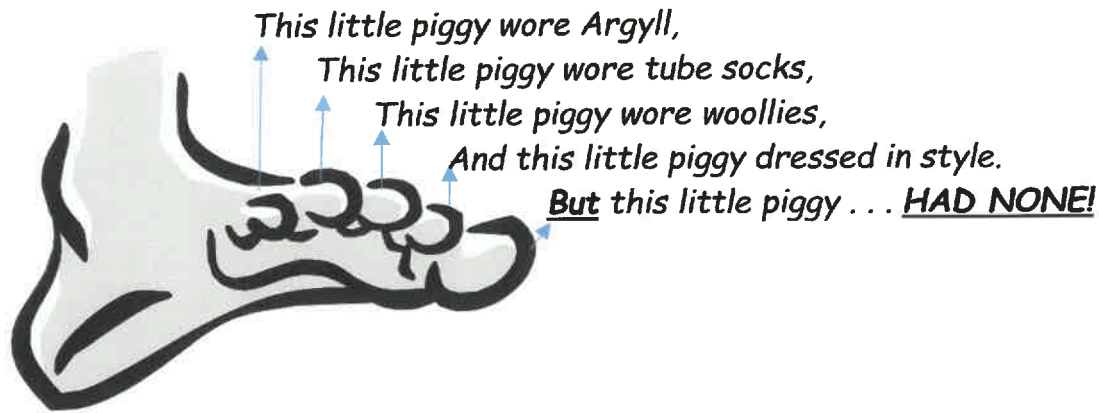


Charlene Kocken  
Phone: 403-329-3222



**"The Friendly Centre"**

1904 – 13 Avenue North Lethbridge, Alberta T1H 4W9  
Telephone (403) 329-3222 Fax (403) 329-8824 Email: [friendly@nordbridgeseniors.com](mailto:friendly@nordbridgeseniors.com)



It's time for  
**23<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL  
OPERATION:**

**SOCK IT TO 'EM**

**From November 1 to December 13, 2023**

**Nord-Bridge Seniors Centre, the Caretakers,  
Maintenance & Support staff in Lethbridge & Area  
schools are collecting *NEW SOCKS* to be  
donated to local charities and those less  
Fortunate for Christmas.**

***Please* join them and make Someone's Christmas  
a little bit warmer!**

**To donate, contact any Custodial staff at  
your local school.**

**QUESTIONS?**

**Call Gail Petrie (403) 327-6520**

**Charlene Kocken (403) 329-3222**

**-Nord-Bridge Seniors Centre**

**-Lethbridge School District #51**

**-Holy Spirit School**

**-Palliser Regional School**



## Digital well-being and your child

Kids these days are growing up digital. They're using technology (like smart phones, tablets, TVs, computers, and video games) to play, learn and spend time with friends. They're doing things online that many adults did in-person when they were growing up.

As a parent or caregiver, you play an important role in helping your child develop a healthy relationship with the virtual world. This is known as *supporting their digital well-being*. It means helping them enjoy the benefits of technology, while lowering the risks of harm.

Supporting digital well-being isn't about enforcing strict limits on technology use. Instead, it's about building kids' skills to use technology responsibly and safely, and in ways

that promote their overall well-being. Here are some practical things you can do.

### Teach digital citizenship

Show your child how to be a good online citizen. Explain why it's important to protect personal information online and model the behaviour you want them to follow. For example:

- Ask your child for their permission before you share photos or videos of them online. Remind them to do the same for other people.
- Involve your child in setting up accounts for apps, games, and streaming services. Help them understand the privacy settings and permissions you're setting up.



# Healthy Children

- Talk about what appropriate behaviour looks like and feels like online. Emphasize respect and kindness.

## Have open conversations

Talk with your child about what they're doing online. Having open and honest conversations builds trust and boosts the chances your child will come to you if they have an uncomfortable experience or problem. Try these ideas:

- Ask your child for their views on different apps, games, and social networks. Listen to their opinions, even if they're different from your own.
- Join your child in digital experiences. For example, play video games together or try a new app. Watch how your child is engaging with digital media—ask them questions and talk about what you notice.
- Remind your child that you're there for them, always. Encourage them to come to you if they need help handling an online situation.

## Try media agreements

Consider making a [family media agreement](#)—it can help to set clear expectations around technology use and online safety. Work together to land on something that's in line with your family values and flexible enough for each person. For younger kids, talk through limits on time and content. For older children, be open to negotiation. Let them take responsibility for shaping and respecting the rules.

## Promote meaningful experiences

Try not to dwell on the amount of time your child is spending on devices. Instead, focus on the quality of their online experiences. Help

## December 2023 Family Newsletter

them take part in digital activities that are engaging and interactive, instead of passive or solo. Here are some ideas you can do together:

- Video call a long-distance family member
- Watch how-to videos to learn new skills (like crafts, magic tricks, or recipes)
- Use digital tools to set goals and challenges for physical activity
- Try apps to explore interests and hobbies (like history, space, or nature)

## Prioritize time offline

Try not to let digital devices interfere with offline activities in your home. Try these tips:

- Go screen-free for most meals and snacks. Shift the focus to family conversations.
- Encourage everyone to put their devices away at least an hour before bedtime, and to keep them out of bedrooms.
- Aim for a few days each week with less time on devices, and more time being physically active. Play outside or go for a nature walk. Try active games, yoga, or dance.
- Put away your own digital devices when your kids are around, especially if they're interacting with you. Give them your full attention—they'll appreciate you for it, and you'll set a great example.

### For more information, go to:

- [Digital technology: Tips for parents](#)
- [Media and your child: Making choices](#)
- [MediaSmarts: For parents](#)

**Did you miss out on registration in the Fall for Sacraments?  
No problem we will be running a Boot Camp for  
First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation**

**The First Reconciliation Boot Camp will run:  
Sunday, 14 January from 12:00 pm till 3:00 pm OR  
Sunday 21 January from 12:00 pm till 3:00 pm  
at Assumption Church Hall.  
Snacks will be provided.**

**The First Eucharist Boot Camp will run:  
Sunday, 4 February from 12:00 pm till 3:00 pm OR  
Sunday, 11 February from 12:00 pm till 3:00 pm  
at Assumption Church Hall.  
Snacks will be provided.**

**The Confirmation Boot Camp will run:  
Sunday, 18 February from 12:00 pm till 3:00 pm AND  
Sunday, 25 February from 12:00 pm till 3:00 pm  
at Assumption Church Hall.  
Snacks will be provided.**

**Registration forms available on line at:  
[www.allsaintslethbridge.org](http://www.allsaintslethbridge.org)**

**There is no cost for this class and for more information please email Cyndi at  
[educationallsaints@shaw.ca](mailto:educationallsaints@shaw.ca)**

**Pre-registration is required**