

St. Alphonsus School News

Second Term - March 2021



Term Two,...lots to do!

From The Principal

Rooted and Growing

Over the past months, I have thought a great deal about the origins and evolution of this school community. When we first began planning for the school's anniversary, we reached out to the community hear from our members past and present. Former staff and alumni have reached out to share different stories, from the very early days right up to the present, describing both good times and more challenging periods. Along with the stories have come photographs that capture the many moments that have come and gone over these 100 years. So many memories!

As you are aware, the theme of this 100th Anniversary Year was chosen as Rooted and Growing in our Faith Community. Although we considered other themes, in the end the choice was clear cut. The image of a tree: alive, deeply rooted, strong and yet flexible, fruitful, so suited our thinking about this school community that other ideas fell quickly to the wayside.

Our community is alive through its members, both past and present. The spirit of the community is made present through the actions of students, staff members and parents who are engaged in its mission and embrace its vision. This vision is a real presence, not simply words on a page. Often after touring the school new families will remark on the good feelings they had within the building, the spirit of welcome that is part of our charism.

Our deep roots are evident in the school's history. From our humble beginnings on the corner of Brazier and Munroe, we have continued to grow through the last 100 years. That growth stretches across decades, including the Great Depression, two World Wars, Vatican II, the Sixties, economic ups and downs, a new millennium, and now a global pandemic. The deep roots nurtured by our early founders give us strength, allowing us to flourish and to be flexible when buffeting by the everchanging winds of the world around us, while remaining grounded in our beliefs.

And fruitful, yes fruitful! Our students have gone forward to take their place in the broader community, as leaders, professionals, artists, politicians, doctors...the list goes on and on. Alumni of our school do fulfil our mission to build community by caring for others and contributing to society in a whole host of ways. One of the more endearing aspects of this fruitfulness is when alumni return, bringing their own children and grandchildren to the school to begin the cycle again, from seed, to sapling to strong upright tree as a new generation takes root in the school community.

Through all these musings, I come away with a sense of awe and gratitude. I am amazed at a century of service to Catholic education and the community. I am filled with gratitude for all the women, men and families who have made this school such a remarkable place. And in the end, I am humbled and proud to be part of its ongoing growth.

Happy Birthday, St. Alphonsus School!

Peace,
Christine McInnis

I pray that you may have your roots and foundation in love, so that you together with all God's people, may understand, how wide and long, how high and deep, is Christ's love.

Ephesians 3:17



Our Lenten Tree—It began as a bare trunk at the beginning of Lent and has sprouted leaves with prayers and thoughts from all of the students as the weeks progressed.

Looking Back

December

Our **Advent** assemblies went online this year. They allowed us to spend some time in prayer together as we headed towards the Christmas season.

We held our annual **Gift Drive** on December 10th. Although we couldn't gather in the gym, the day was a huge success anyways. This event has been a long-standing tradition at our school, with good reason: providing gifts for kids in need gives us a warm feeling in our hearts, while the treat provided by PALS has the same effect on our tummies. The gifts that were gathered for local missions were gratefully received.



Our Christmas Concert took a different shape this year, with the Grade 6 students heading up a **Christmas Video Project**. Mr. Cox found creative, fun ways to include all of the classes safely. Mr. Hart was a great help in videoing the scenes and in post-production editing. The students were proud to share the results with families, just in time for Christmas.



January

The calendar year began with our Grade 7 & 8 friends in **Remote Learning**. Thankfully, they were able to rejoin us on January 18th.

The **100th Anniversary** of St. Alphonsus School happened while they were away on Sunday, January 10th. We still have some plans in the works to help celebrate this momentous milestone over the year. Hopefully, as vaccinations increase and restrictions are lifted we can gather and celebrate together. The school students enjoyed a special treat once our junior high friends were back with us.



Our annual **Open House** took place via Zoom on Sunday, January 24th. It was well attended by prospective parents and students. Of course, it was a new experience for everyone, but overall we were all pleased with the event. Thank you to Dawn Gerbrandt and Kelly Melchor from our Board who helped coordinate the event answered questions and made the new people feel welcome. Your commitment speaks volumes to people looking for a school community.

February

February was **I Love to Read Month**. Our readers moved online this year. This year we entertained many guest readers including Doug Speirs, Terri Apostle, Justice Colleen Suche and Caroline Barghout! Thank you to Patti Resendes for contacting all the readers and coordinating the visits. As well thank you to Danielle Patrick and Gyan Reyes who organized some in-school activities and inter class rivalries, all in the name of reading!



Catholic Schools Week took place from February 7-12th. Over the week classes wrote letters of support to shut-ins, parishioners and neighbours. As well, each student made a Gala craft to share with participants in our Virtual Gala. Of course, it wouldn't be Catholic Schools Week without Bingo! The silly dress themes added a good measure of fun to the week.



Over the week, each class was engaged in a **Charity Challenge**, collecting items for a local organization. The families did an amazing job and all classes exceeded their goals! Great job, everyone! As a result, the staff donned school uniforms for a day.



The weather was very cold, so we had to move our outdoor activities into the following week, which simply extended the festive mood. Grades 5-8 students enjoyed the **Amazing Saints Race** developed by Graca Resendes, while the K-Grade 4 students enjoyed **Olympic Style Stations**.

We had our **Ash Wednesday** prayer service on the 17th. The students, and staff and parents in attendance prayed together. Our teachers acted as ash ministers and helped to maintain the spirit of reverence to mark the beginning of Lent.



Our first ever **Virtual Gala** took place on Saturday February 27th to celebrate the school's 100th Anniversary. Families were treated to an amazing package, including a charcuterie board loaded with treats, adult dinners, pizza, wine and sparkling juice, dessert and a lava cake, a balloon arch, a candle and more. The presentation was followed by a dance party hosted by DJ Gord Corrigan who had everyone up a dancing in their living rooms. More information on the event is included later in the newsletter.



March

Festival du Voyageur Week was held from March 9th-12th. We started off the day with soup provided by Michelle Davison, yummy! The week was filled with in-class crafts, our door games and bannock. The grand finale of the week was a visit from a food truck....Beavertails for everyone!. Merci Beaucoup to Madame Curwain for coordinating all of the activities through the week.

Looking Forward

Events in the spring will be dependent on public health orders, of course. We will keep families posted as things shift and, hopefully, we will get in some of the fun activities we all enjoy in the spring. You know we are always trying to think outside of the COVID box to find creative ways to make learning enjoyable.



From the Gym Playground

Life in the gym (or rather NOT in the gym) has been going smoothly. All things considered, we had a relatively mild winter, with very few days that required us to stay indoors. For the most part, with the exception of our more fashion conscious junior high students, everyone was prepared to brave the weather and seemed to enjoy the fresh air activity break in their days.

The rink was a very exciting addition to our repertoire of activity choices. Primarily we used it for pleasure skating and hockey, but we snuck in a bit of broomball and milk jug curling just to keep things interesting.. Who knows, we may need to bring it back for a post COVID encore.

Now that the weather has turned a bit warmer, students are enjoying our great space playing a variety of active games including football, basketball, badminton and four square. We are considering how to get Running Club up and running safely. Stay tuned for more details after the break, once we hear if we are allowed to venture out into the neighbourhood .

That's all for now. If you have any questions or concerns about the Physical Education program, please feel free to email me or call me at the school. Take care , stay safe and stay active!

Blake McInnis
Physical Education Teacher



Français

1 ière année

Throughout the second term, the grade 1 class continues to make steady progress in the French program. Students demonstrate active listening and viewing skills that help to improve comprehension. The class really enjoyed taking part in a variety of chants and poems associated with our units on *L'hiver*, *les vêtements* and *les formes*. During our unit on Shapes, the class was able to demonstrate their knowledge of various shapes by naming, identifying and labeling the different types of shapes in French including les cercles, les rectangles, les carrés, les ovales, les étoiles and les triangles. Fabulous job creating your shape art!

2 ième année

The grade 2 class is an eager group who listens attentively and actively participates in all French lessons and activities. During our unit on *Les Moyens du Transport*, the class demonstrated their knowledge of different types of transportation and where they are found through the completion of their flipbooks. Students were able to recognize, identify and label the modes of transportation and match them accordingly to their corresponding location in French. Students continue to work at using French vocabulary and phrases modelled by the teacher. I encourage the class to make more of an effort to speak French, especially when asking to use the bathroom or get a drink of water.

3 ième année

The grade 3 class continues to work on curricular outcomes through a variety of language-based songs, chants and activities. During our calendar routine, students have demonstrated their ability to identify and name the days of the week, months of the year, weather and temperature. The class continues to listen carefully and can generally make sense of what is said in class with little prompting. Students enjoyed taking part in our study of *Les Parties du Corps*. Their Name Monsters and body part write-ups demonstrated growth in writing skills and reading comprehension. Wonderful job!

4 ième année

In French, the grade 4 students continue to be active participants in all written and oral activities. This term, the class has worked on being able to recognize, read and correctly create simple sentences related to our classroom theme *Les Voyageurs*. During our unit on clothing and body parts, students demonstrated a good understanding of vocabulary and sentence structure through their silly posters. Using taught phrasing, the class was able to independently create simple sentences describing the different articles of clothing their Voyageurs were wearing, and on which body part. Fantastique!

5 ième année

The grade five students continue to show a keen interest in learning French. This term, students have begun to utilize the taught vocabulary from previous lessons and French/ English dictionaries independently as a reference tool for their writing tasks. Students have been working at recognizing, differentiating between and using pronouns (je, il, & elle). To end our unit on "Ma Famille", the class was asked to create a Family Tree. Students were asked to create sentences describing each member of their family using the proper form of *avoir*, *être* and *specific adjectives*. Currently, students are working at utilizing their posters as a means of oral communication and comprehension. Speaking skills are steadily improving!

6 ième année

The second term, the grade 6 class has shown a good interest in all activities during French class. Students' knowledge and understanding of the language continue to grow through our *Journal entries* and study of thematic units, such as *French Speaking Countries* and *Les Voyageurs*. During our unit on Festival, the class focused on a piece of text that they had read independently and demonstrated comprehension through matching

the text to the proper correlating images. Students were then able to independently reference the French text to assist in writing their paragraph on *Les Voyageurs*. Currently, the grade 6 class is working at utilizing their written paragraph as a means of oral communication and comprehension. Keep up the good work!

7 ième année

Throughout the second term, the grade 7 class has made good effort in partaking in all classroom language-based activities. In writing, the class was able to showcase their knowledge and ability to properly conjugate ER, RE & IR verbs, as well as, use them correctly in simple sentences in their cahier entries and in-class assignments. In turn, students have been able to recognize and decode words when reading simple sentences. Students are currently working on rough drafting a game board that uses the proper conjugation forms for er, re & ir verbs in the present tense. Can't wait to see the final products!

8 ième année

The grade 8 students continue to show progress working towards the French curricular outcomes. Overall, the group shows an interest in learning the French language and actively takes part in all class activities. Throughout the second term, students have been focusing on the proper structure of Passé Composé with Être. The group was able to showcase their knowledge and ability to properly create the passé composé through the completion of their Stop Motion Movies. Students were able to correctly identify the auxiliary verb correlating with a particular pronoun and the proper use of the past participle. Bien fait!

Festival du Voyageur

This years' Festival Du Voyageur was a week long celebration that ran the week of March 16- 19th, including many of our most infamous activities. The student body enjoyed indulging their taste buds on the traditional French dish *Soupe aux pois*, while taking part in various crafts relating to either the French or Indigenous Cultures. Kindergarten to grade 2, created their very own version of Léo la tuque (Festival Du Voyageur Mascot). Grades 3-4 put their carpentry skills into action creating a threading work of art. Grades 5-6 enjoyed putting together their very own Dream Catchers, while the grades 7-8 classes found a new appreciation for the art of Bead Work creating their own Rosettes.

The week could not have been complete without having played some outdoor games such as, Bison Hunt and Capture la ceinture. A new addition to our festivities, students from grades 5-8 were given an opportunity to test their baking skills, baking bannock over an open flame. What a thrill!

To finish off the week, all students and staff enjoyed taking a run out to the "Beaver Tails" concessions truck for a taste of delicious *Croque s'enoie*.

A great big thank you to Michelle Davidson for her generous donation of Pea Soup that fed the whole school community. As well, another big thank you Mr. Clint Pinder for his donation of fire pits and wood that made our Bannock Day possible. Our Festival Week was an absolute success due to your generosity!!!

Hé, Ho!



From the Music Room

Greeting to the school community! The second term of the school year is completed. Although it's the shortest term, the extended hours of darkness and the chilly winter temperatures can make it seem like the longest. But we survived and we're happy to greet the spring and enjoy Spring Break.

Below, I have outlined what each of the grades has been working on during the second term. If you have any question or concerns regarding this information or any aspect of the music program, please contact me at the school. I'd be happy to speak with you.

I wish you blessed Lenten season and an enjoyable break.

John Cox
Music Teacher

Kindergarten

The kindergarten students have continued to learn and grow in their knowledge and appreciation of music. The main learning focus of the second term has been the concept of rhythm: the length of musical sounds. The students have been introduced to a **ta** (a quarter note), a **ti-ti** (two eighth notes together), and a **sh** (a quarter rest). The students can recognize these symbols, clap the sounds they represent, and clap the patterns of ta's, ti-ti's and sh's they see on rhythm flash cards. They have also learned that each of the simple songs they kept the beat to last term has its own rhythm, and that they can clap that rhythm or play it with rhythm sticks by 'following the words'. With the concepts of beat and rhythm now planted in their musical minds, the students are ready to explore the relationship between beat and rhythm. This will be the learning focus of the third term. The students have continued to sing with enthusiasm. They learn songs quickly and sing well as a class. That, along with their joyful participation in movement activities and musical games means our time together is lively and always passes too quickly.

Grade 1

In the second term, the grade one students further developed their xylophone playing skills. They've identified the melody notes in the song *See Saw* as G and E, and, drawing on their knowledge of beat and rhythm learned in first term, can play the song with added accompaniment (a two-note chord called a bordun, bells and other percussion instruments). Movement continues to be a part of the program. The students have been learning to move to the beat with a partner and as a group. The students enjoy music, and they are growing in their musical knowledge.

Grade 2

In the second term, the grade two students continued to develop their skills on the xylophones. Based on the skills acquired last term they can now play several songs with (la/A, so/G, mi/E) with added accompaniment. They have also begun to explore how a song sounds when it is changed from a major key to a minor key, and how to use different types of borduns (solid, broken & and arpeggiated) to support the song. Singing and movement continue to be an important part of the learning. The students are learning to sing in canon format with old favourites like *Row your Boat* and *Frere Jacques*.

Grade 3

In the second, the grade three students continued to develop their skills on the xylophones. They can now play five-note songs involving la/A, so/G, mi/E, re/D and do/C with added accompaniment (bordun and percussion) and can transpose these songs to different keys. They continue to sing with enthusiasm and are exploring the challenge and fun of singing in canon format. Their musical knowledge and skills are growing steadily.

Music (cont'd)

Grade 4

In the second term, the students have continued to develop their recorder playing skills. They began the term learning more complex BAG tunes and soon added E, D and high C to their playing range. Their recorder playing skills have greatly improved. Some learning time was devoted to reviewing the instruments of the orchestra and learning about the great composers in preparation for our visit to the concert hall in May to hear the WSO perform. Over the term, the students have participated with enthusiasm in music class.

Grade 5

In the second term, the students have continued to play the ukulele. They have expanded their chord repertoire and continued to develop their strumming skills as they learned to accompany a variety of songs played on the recorder. In the last month of the term, the students have begun the study of *Tablature*: a form of musical notation for stringed instruments. This will allow them to play melodies on the ukulele, which in turn will enhance their finger dexterity on the instrument. The students are enthusiastic about playing the ukulele and about all things musical.

Grade 6

In the second term, the students have continued with guitar. The major focus has been on playing melodies on the first, second, and third strings and accompanying these melodies with chords, bass and drums. The students' chord knowledge is growing and they have learned how to add a simple bass line to the arrangement. They've even added a little electric guitar just to spice things up. The students have maintained an enthusiasm for the guitar and for music in general.

Grade 7

In the second term, the students have continued to work together to select and rehearse songs. A number of current pop tunes have been added to the repertoire. The singers and band members are increasingly adept at learning new songs and establishing a version of the song that works for the group.

Grade 8

In the second term, the students have continued to work together to select and rehearse songs. The singers and the musicians are playing more confidently and taking on songs that are more rhythmically challenging. The students have continued to work together and have put effort into honing their skills as musicians and singers.



From the Parish

HOLY WEEK at St Alphonsus

- Palm Sunday -

Saturday, March 27	Reconciliation - 9.30 am to 10 am Reconciliation - 3.30 pm to 4.30 pm Mass at 5 pm
Sunday, March 28	Masses at 9 am and 11 am

- Tuesday - March 30

Chrism Mass at 7.30 at St Boniface Cathedral livestreamed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05HtQLzkFjw>

- Holy Thursday - April 1

No Morning Mass - Morning Prayer at 9 am
Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7pm
Reconciliation 8.15 pm (following Mass)
Adoration until 11 pm in the Hall

- Good Friday - April 2

No Morning Mass - Morning Prayer at 9 am
Children's Way of the Cross - 11 am
Reconciliation at 11.45 am (after Way of the Cross)
Celebration of the Lord's Passion at 3 pm
Reconciliation 4.15 pm (after Passion)

- Holy Saturday - April 3

No Morning Mass - Morning Prayer at 9 am
Blessing of the Food at 2 pm in the Church
Reconciliation after 2.15 pm (after blessing of the food)

- Easter Vigil - April 3 at 9 pm

- Easter Sunday - April 4

Masses at 9 and 11 am

Yearbook

Determining what picture to place or what to write in a yearbook often seems harder than imagined. With a camera/pen in hand, the last thing you'll want to be doing is gazing at a blank page. A thoughtful yearbook picture and or message will add to how your friends/peers will remember you years down the road. Plus, out of everything in a yearbook, it's the snapshots from the those who went through school with you that are the most meaningful. This year, COVID has presented many challenges for the yearbook team, from gathering candid to dealing with not having retakes from Lifetouch. Still, our crew has been hard at work capturing what will surely be one of the most unique years in our school's history.

As we know, St. Alphonsus is celebrating it's 100th year. This year's yearbook will have photos from years gone by as a keep sake for everyone who has been part of the school community. If you have a fond memory that you would like to share, we want to hear from you. We look forward to gathering experiences from families, staff, and students, both past and present. If you have a story to tell, pictures to share or memorabilia from days gone by, please email us at 100th@stals.ca.

Thank!

St. Alphonsus School Yearbook Team.



Virtual Gala

After the disappointing cancellation of Gala in 2020 due to the Pandemic, the St. Alphonsus Gala Committee vowed to make sure that, no matter what, St. Alphonsus School would have a 100th Anniversary Gala in 2021 to celebrate its milestone year, and celebrate we did! Thanks to our committee's perseverance and creative minds a virtual gala was organized that allowed our school community to come together even though we were still physically apart.

St. Alphonsus School's 100th Anniversary Gala held on February 27th was an extraordinary night. Family and friends of the school enjoyed a delicious meal from Calabria Market and dessert from Dolce Bake shop while the kids had fun smashing the piñata cake from Pinky's Bake shop. The virtual event hosted by Amazing Entertainment began with a beautiful video tribute of our school and its exceptional faculty and alumni that was so touching you couldn't help but smile and it maybe even brought a little tear to your eye. Christine McInnis kept the tradition alive, drawing the lucky \$1000 draw winner, CONGRATULATIONS JONATHAN LEMUS! As the evening progressed we all had fun sipping on drinks, taking fun photos in the virtual photo booth, bidding on the amazing silent auction prizes while watching everyone dance the night away to the music played by the one and only DJ Gordo of Body Bounce. Celebrating virtually allowed all the kids to join in on the fun to make it that much more special.

Thanks to the support of this outstanding event and our generous sponsors we are excited to announce that the St. Alphonsus Gala raised over \$50,000 for our school and its programming! RECORD BREAKING!

We would like to extend a giant thank you to our committee, Cheryl Nelson, Lisa Pruys, Susie Cruz, Kevin Dzendzara, Giselle Pagani, Sheila Ewasko, Kathleen Hayton, Christine McInnis, Melanie Bilenky and Melanie Norbury for all of the hard work to make this happen, THANK YOU!! Also to our event sponsors House of Silk and Body Bounce. Their generous time and support is greatly appreciated.

Thank you to everyone who kept an open mind and supported this event during these challenging times. Our Gala committee wishes everyone good health as we navigate the last phase of this pandemic and we look forward to getting plans started for Gala 32, in hopes that we will all be together again.

Warm Regards,

Melanie Bilenky & Melanie Norbury
Gala Co-Chairs



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