

St. Alphonsus School News

Fall Term 2022



**Fall Fun for
Everyone!**

From The Principal

Ordinary

In our church year we have just shifted from Ordinary time to the Advent season. Ordinary in this context means “counted” like ordinal numbers. It is a time where there are no major holidays coming: Lent leads to Easter, Advent leads to Christmas. Ordinary Time can sometimes feel like the weeks we cross off until something bigger and better comes along.

In everyday use, ordinary can mean something similar. Definitions use different terms: standard normal, nothing special, routine. Ordinary’s connotations are dull and boring. Ordinary is not to be desired. It’s the same old, same old. Ordinary is the status quo, something you take for granted. Ordinary is something to be tolerated while we wait for the extraordinary to happen.

Yet, this fall has been so ordinary that it feels extraordinary. We are back to doing things that were part of our routine for many years, things we used to take for granted. Over the last few months, we have been shaking the cobwebs off and engaged in the activities and events that were so commonplace a few years ago. I have caught myself thinking more than a few times, “What did we used to do....?” Thankfully, we have enough folks around who remember the details, indeed all the minutiae, that made up our ordinary school experience. I am sure these feelings echoes at home too, especially as you look to the holiday season and re-starting all the familiar traditions and gatherings. So, the ordinary has shifted from being taken for granted to being taken with gratitude. Our time away from regular life has given us a renewed perspective on what we should value and appreciate.

Hopefully, this shift to gratitude is one we can sustain. The seemingly mundane parts of our life contain many blessings if we can just look at them with fresh eyes. Now that travel is a thing again, we can easily see the beauty in new places. Our challenge is finding the beauty in the everyday moments, keeping alive the extraordinary excitement we feel in our return to normal, ordinary life. The spirit is present everywhere.

As we journey through this season of Advent, I invite you to look forward with fresh eyes on the ordinary times. Seeing the beauty in our day-to-day will allow us to enjoy each normal moment. After all we have been through, I think we can agree that normal and ordinary are very wonderful things that need to be cherished.

Peace,

Christine McInnis

Understand this well: there is something holy, something divine hidden in the most ordinary situations, and it is up to each one of you to discover it.

— Josemaria Escriva



**APPRECIATE EVERYTHING,
EVEN THE ORDINARY...
ESPECIALLY THE ORDINARY.**

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School Plan 2022-23

One of the tasks of the school administration is to develop a plan in consultation with the various members of the community, including staff, students and parents. Many of the initiatives pursued by schools require a long-term approach for implementation. As a result, most school plans encompass more than one school year. This practice has been the case in our school; these goals will continue forward into subsequent school years.

Goal 1- Mental Health

Supporting Student Mental Health: Assessing current practices and developing a school wide plan for the delivery of mental health initiatives.

- This goal is a continuation from last year, as we felt it merited continued work in light of our experiences with and observations of students. We looked at our programming last year and added some additional pieces. We will continue to evaluate current programming at different grade levels, investigate programming options that come available and adjust our programming as needed.
- Teachers will meet regularly to discuss strategies to support all students' mental wellness.
- Our resource program will continue to explore options at the divisional and community levels for students with more profound mental health issues.

Staff will take part in additional in-service sessions related to mental health in order to build our capacity for managing the increase in student mental health issues.

Goal 2 -Numeracy Education

Numeracy Education: To deepen students understanding of numerical concepts.

We will identify areas of strength as well as challenge in our students understanding of math concepts at all grade levels.

Teachers will implement best practice in numeracy education, as determined through research.

Teachers will seek opportunities to share interesting ideas, both within our staff as well as with colleagues in other schools.

Teachers will attend professional development in this area, both at MTS PD Day and during the year as opportunities arise

Ongoing Priorities

The Staff will continue to work on our most recent priority areas including **Technology, Sustainability** and **Indigenous Education**.

Although these are not officially on our plan, we want to capitalize on the gains made in these areas and use this momentum to continue work in these areas.



Looking Back

September

September started with a fun **Meet the Teacher/Terry Fox Family Walk** event on the 15th. Families got a chance to talk to staff and then joined in a walk through the community in honour of Terry Fox and the Marathon of Hope. As well, there was pizza and drinks aplenty!



At our first school mass on September 20th our grade four students received their **Bibles** as part of the liturgy. Congratulations, friends! I wish you well on your journey to learn more about our faith.



From September 26th to 29th we marked the second annual National Week for Truth and Reconciliation. All classes spent time learning about indigenous history, especially residential schools.



October

On October 4th our grade seven and eight classes went to the Forks and St. Boniface Cathedral for our annual **Junior High Retreat** Day. The theme of the day was Seeing Beauty in our World. It was a perfect day for prayer, games and team-building.



Our **Student Led Conferences** took place on October 18th and 20th. This year we experimented with having both in-person and virtual options for families. As always, these conferences provided an opportunity to celebrate student learning and to set goals for the school year. Feedback from the students, parents and teachers was positive. We came out of the conferences feeling a sense of direction and purpose.

On October 22nd, the school hosted a **Volleyball Tournament**. There were eight teams in competition, both boys and girls. The day went very well and all the athletes and coaches were thankful for the opportunity to enjoy some time on our courts.



The **Dress Up and Dance** on October 29th was a ton of fun. It was so nice to get this event happening again! Our committee has a report later in the newsletter.



November

On Thursday, November 10th the students participated in a **Remembrance Day Prayer Service**. It was a great opportunity to remember the people who have sacrificed so that we might live in peace and freedom. It was a beautiful service with story, prayer, scripture and song. The students seemed to sense that it was a time of deep reverence and respect. Thank you to the parents who were able to join us.

We also held the first post-restrictions **Junior High Dance** on November 10th. Participation from all of the Catholic Schools was very high, with more than 200 students enjoying the evening.



Our school's **Annual General Meeting** took place on Wednesday, November 16th. It was an opportunity for the board and the administration to discuss our plans with the parent community. I have included the School Plan Summary and a Financial Report from the board in

this newsletter for parents who were unable to attend the meeting.

On Friday, November 25th our **first term report cards** went home. Parents had an opportunity to review them with their children. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

Looking Forward

December

Advent assemblies will take place each week during Advent. Our next assembly will be on December 12th at 8:45 AM. Family members are always welcome to attend.

We will be having our annual **Christmas Gift Drive** on Friday, December 9th, where we gather presents brought in by the students for local missions. An information letter with details about the project has been sent home with your child. Parents are welcome to join us for the gift wrapping and to indulge in a little hot chocolate.

Our **Christmas Concert** will be on Wednesday, December 21st at 7 PM. Please mark your calendars and join us for either the afternoon dress rehearsal (1 PM) or the evening performance. You won't be disappointed!

The **last day of school** before Christmas is on Thursday, December 22nd. It will be a Red/Green colour day for students in anticipation of the big day.

Open House

Please mark your calendars for our school Open House on Sunday, January 29th. We will be returning to an in-person format for this year, yea! If you have friends or family that are interested in seeing the school and perhaps having their children attend here, this is an excellent opportunity for them to check it out.



From the Music Room

From the Music Room Term 1 2022-23

The Music Room has been busy place as unique and united students learn and grow together, strive for excellence always (in all ways), and have fun!

The Four Essential Learning Areas in Music

The K-8 Manitoba Music Curriculum provides a framework to “support, nurture and inspire every learner as a music-maker”. Musical Language and Performance, Creative Expression, Understanding Music in Context and Valuing Musical Experience, are the four areas identified to promote musically literate individuals. These essential learning areas in music are intended to work simultaneously, with classroom activities tailored to the unique circumstances of each learner and learning environment.

Kindergarten

Students are establishing a foundation for meaningful musical experiences as they are exposed to making music in a school setting. Basic concepts, such as high and low pitch, fast and slow tempo, and loud and soft dynamics are explored through songs, stories, and games. Students demonstrate their creative responses to music during movement activities and through visual art. Awareness of our unique singing voices, and becoming familiar with playing percussion instruments together, are areas of emphasis.

Grades 1-3

Fundamental ensemble skills, such as starting and stopping together, maintaining a steady pulse, and following the conductor’s cues, are emphasized, when singing and playing simple folk tunes. Using Orff instruments (a collection of xylophones, drums, and other non-pitched percussion instruments), elements of melody, harmony, rhythm, and expression are explored. Students are guided in purposeful listening for accurate intonation and awareness of patterns and structures in music. Specific terminology and systems of writing notation are introduced and practiced, to communicate musical ideas effectively.

Grades 4-6

Students build on the concepts established in earlier years to create, perform, and respond to music with greater complexity. Specific instrumental techniques are introduced and practiced. Independence and autonomy in performance and ensemble skills, are demonstrated when co-creating in small groups. Students use standard notation and tablature when composing and interpreting music. Specific vocabulary is applied when analyzing songs and discussing musical topics. In Grade Four, students are working with electric keyboards. The Grade Five Class is demonstrating their musical skills on the ukulele, while the Grade Six Class is developing their guitar technique and knowledge.

Grades Seven and Eight

The Junior High Arts program at St. Alphonsus allows for in-depth learning in Music and Visual Art. Smaller class sizes and scheduled double periods of music promotes student-lead inquiry into a wide range of topics. Creative collaboration is evident in these classes. Students use artistic decision-making and problem-solving when making music together, using a variety of available instruments. They show versatility and curiosity when applying theory concepts and when analyzing music.

Choirs and Christmas Concert

Enthusiastic singers have begun to meet regularly as a **Junior High Choir** and a **Grades 4-6 Choir**. These ensembles will be performing as opportunities arise and providing leadership during school Masses. We are working diligently on our **K-6 Christmas Concert** to be performed (live!) on **December 21st**. Stay tuned for details.

Mary Arkle
Music Teacher

Physical Education Across the Grades

Kindergarten—Grade 2

This term the early years students were involved in activities to practice and develop some of the fourteen basic movement skills. In particular, we worked on galloping, running and skipping. As well, we learned to use different equipment and played a variety of cooperative and low organized games. We discussed and practiced the rules and routines we use to play safely and fairly in the gym.

Grades 3-5

During the first term the grade three to five students were involved in the following activities: various sport lead up games, fitness challenges and low organized games. The skills we have focused on developing this term include manipulation skills: passing throwing and catching. We have also worked on the movement skills of running and moving in the gym through our various games and activities. We have also worked on fair play concepts and what that looks like in the gym.

Grade 6-8

Students in grades six—eight were involved in the following activities: volleyball, fitness challenges and low organized games. We have focused on developing manipulation skills such as overhead and under-hand passing and serving. Our fitness challenges have helped the students to identify some goals to work on during the year to improve their overall fitness.



From the Gym

Now that we have emerged from restrictions, the fall has been a very busy time in the gym. All the classes are settled into our routines and are enjoying being physically active.

The primary classes have been working on moving safely in the gym. We have been playing cooperative games and are developing a sense of fair play. We are learning to use a variety of equipment and have been concentrating on throwing and catching activities. Our elementary friends have been playing volleyball lead-up games, participating in fitness challenges and enjoying a variety of low organized games. Our older students have been playing volleyball, working to assess and improve their fitness level and participating in different games and activities.

Our annual Terry Fox Family Walk was held on Thursday, September 15th. It was a great day and everyone enjoyed the pizza after the walk was finished. Thank you to everyone who participated and a special thanks to those who donated to this worthy cause.

Volleyball season is just finishing up. We had five teams on the go (two boys teams and three girls teams) with more than 50 student athletes involved. Through the season the players participated in a number of tournaments (including two hosted at our school) and over 40 league games. Our developmental teams concluded their season with tournaments for boys and girls on November 17th and 18th. Both teams had a remarkable season. We had playoffs for our grade 7/8 teams during the week of November 21st-29th. Thank you to everyone who came out to cheer our teams on. Thank you to Mrs. Toews, Mrs. McInnis, Mrs. Rayner, Mrs. Seaman, Madame Laird, Madame Curwain and Mrs. Ireland for all of the time dedicated to coaching the teams. As well, thanks to Mr. Beilman and Santi Galapon who refereed through the season. I am sure the athletes appreciate it; I know I do!

Our next inter-school sport is basketball. That's all for now. If you have any questions or concerns about the Physical Education program, please come by the gym or call me at the school. Take care and stay active!

Blake McInnis
Physical Education Teacher



French Update

What an exciting first term! All classes have been actively engaged in a wide variety of language-based games/ activities that assist students in learning new vocabulary related to our classroom themes.

Here is what the grades have been up-to:

Grade 1

The grade one class has shown a keen interest towards learning French. Students actively participate in all routine activities and songs related to: the days of the week, months of the year, colours and counting to 10. Their exposure to new themed vocabulary taught this term continues to grow. The class listens carefully to oral instruction while using visual cues to help them with comprehension. During our unit on "L'automne" students were successful at correctly naming and labelling Fall colours in French. Great work!

Grade 2

In French, the grade two class is an attentive group who pays attention to explanations and uses visual cues to help with comprehension. During class students take part in a variety of songs, games, and language-based activities to help enrich their language development. The grade two class has shown great enthusiasm towards learning French, especially during our current unit "La Famille". Students are able to visually and orally name and identify family members in French, such as ma maman, mon papa, ma sœur, mon frère, mon bébé, ma grand-mère and mon grand-père. Their family portrait activity indicated good comprehension of basic vocabulary taught in class. Bravo!

Grade 3

This first term, the grade three class has shown a keen interest in learning the French language. Students are increasing their ability to follow directions given in French and speak simple words and phrases during our calendar routine. During our unit on "Les Saisons," students were able to identify and label each season and match them accordingly to the corresponding weather in French. Currently, students have been taking part in a variety of language-based activities; les sondages, lotto, and memoire, all relating to our class story *Les animaux du zoo*. Keep up the fabulous work!

Grade 4

Throughout the first term, the grade four students have exhibited a genuine interest in French class. They are able to recognize and read simple words related to our classroom calendar while *Les mini-profs* direct the class through our calendar routine. During our unit "L' école", students were asked to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of newly taught vocabulary through their write-ups. The class was able to correctly identify and name different rooms within a school, as well as different objects found within those rooms. Super work!

Grade 5

The first term the grade 5 students continue to make steady progress during French class. They are able to recognize, read, and respond in written form to simple questions related to our classroom calendar. In writing, students are increasing in their ability to revisit past texts to assist in further understanding present material. The class continues to work at properly using a French/English dictionary in search of French words and definitions, as well as deciphering appropriate gender before a word (le, la, les). Students are beginning to show a good understanding of the oral language and make a better effort to express themselves using simple vocabulary taught in class. Currently, students are working at utilizing prepositions in their sentence structures related to their art project on "La Maison".

Grade 6

During the first term, the grade six class has made a good effort in applying themselves during class time. They continue to build a strong sight word vocabulary and develop good comprehension skills through our *Message du Jour* journal entries. Students are increasing in their ability to decipher text independently and accurately respond using proper spelling and sentence structure. The class is working at showcasing their knowledge and ability to create proper sentence structures using the verbs "faire and jouer" through their detailed and well-organized Prezi presentations. Great work this term!

Grade 7

This term, the grade seven class focused on the introduction of regular "er" verbs and their proper conjugation forms. Students were asked to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of "er" conjugations through their Halloween Art activity. Presently, the class is beginning to work with the text "Habiller Dans le Noir". Students will be working at properly sequencing the story in French, filling in missing information, properly conjugating "er" verbs within the text, and creating their own silly version of the story utilizing proper vocabulary, spelling and sentence structures. Bon travail!

Grade 8

This term, the grade eight class has shown some progress in reading and writing taught vocabulary through their cahier entries. The beginning of term, students focused on a piece of text that they had read and re-read to help improve comprehension and fluency. Using the story, the class was able to fill in the blanks using proper vocabulary and "er" conjugated forms creating their own version of the "Frankenstein" story, corresponding to their pictures created using collage imagery. Presently, the grade 8 class is reviewing regular er verbs. Next reviewing re, & ir French verbs, as well as, working at identifying and utilizing the conjugated forms of Aller, Faire, Avoir & Être.

REMINDERS

Email: kcurwain@stals.ca

French classes are days 1, 3, & 5 of the school cycle

Halloween Dress Up and Dance Event 2022

After the hiatus, it was very exciting to hold the 24th Annual St. Al's Family Halloween Social on Saturday, October 29th! Older students missed having this school community event while younger students had the opportunity to experience it for the first time. The response was amazing, and the event was sold out.

It was great to see staff and students, along with their families, dressed up in costume. The Pumpkin Patch showcased the creativity of the carving skills of many parents, and the raffle tables were filled with prizes!

Sincere appreciation to the following: those who contributed items for the raffle table and the Pumpkin Patch, those who volunteered their time the night before and throughout the evening during the social, and the Halloween Social Committee for all their hard work and energy. Thank you to Mrs. McInnis, Mrs. Resendes, and Mr. Lambert who always support the committee to ensure the set up, clean up, and logistics run smoothly.

Finally, a big thanks to all who came out and supported this event to make it such a success!

Christine Grosshans



PALS

Hello everyone, as your PALS Chair, I work alongside with the other executive members-Diego Beltran (Co-Chair), Lindsay Ruffeski (Minutes Recorder), Betty Pagani-Kwiatkowski (Treasurer), and Jennifer Doer (Co-Treasurer)- and other parents to plan and execute all the annual events and activities for the school.

This past summer we had the pleasure of hosting the year end school BBQ and was very well attended!

This fall PALS hosted the Wine Tasting and Halloween Social and both were very well attended.

All of the three events held this year could not have been made possible without the help of parent volunteers! Thank you for all your help and support.

We will continue with our spring Glenlea plant sale. Thank you, Michelle Davison for making this happen! PALS is in a solid financial position to meet 2022-2023 year's school commitments. The Munch a Lunch program has started up again and kids will be enjoying Jeffery's Restaurant in December. We are planning the end of year BBQ in June 2023, stay tuned for more information in the coming months.

If you find yourself with a Tuesday evening off and feel like chatting with other parents from the school, come to a PALS meeting. Our meetings are in person. If you would like to join, please email the school and we will add your name to the list. Our next meetings are scheduled for: January 10, 2023, February 14, 2023, March 14, 2023, April 11, 2023, May 9, 2023. Meetings start at 7 pm and generally run about an hour.

PALS would like to wish you and your family a very blessed, safe and merry Christmas and all the best in the New Year!

Ciao!

Joseph DiMartino

PALS Chair



Student ership

Welcome back, Student Leadership!

This school year marks the return of student leadership committees. Earlier in the fall, students in grades 7 and 8 were invited to put forward their interest in participating in student lead groups to help plan and organize activities at the school. Over 30 students came forward to offer their help planning various activities.

So far the grade 8 group o from the dance committee helped host a successful interschool junior high dance. Many of our students enjoyed an evening of music, dancing, socializing, and snacks along with grade 7 and 8 students from the other Catholic schools in the city. It was a fun and memorable evening.

Our canteen committee has also been hard at work. They helped run the canteen during the competitive volleyball tournament as well as during the junior high dance.

Additionally, student activity groups planned activities for all students, from nursery to grade 8, to participate in within their classrooms for Halloween and Advent/Christmas.

There are a few groups that haven't had a chance to put their creativity and skills to work yet... But there is still a lot of time left in the school year! We look forward to seeing what fun ideas they will come up with! Thank you everyone for your interest and hard work!

Lead-

Gala is on the Way!



School Board News

As a board we are thrilled to see such a great start to the 22/23 school year! As a board, we continue to brainstorm about new ways to keep our school the vibrant place that we all enjoy. In the first term we have held 3 board meetings as well as our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on November 16th.

At the AGM, we said goodbye to two outgoing board members, Michelle Luedtke and Christina Love. Michelle and Christina, we wish to thank you for your years of service on behalf of the Board and the entire school community!

Portfolios for the 2022-23 school year are as follows:

Chair: Dawn Gerbrandt

MCSGS Portfolio, Strategic Planning: Sam Pellettieri

Finance, Strategic Planning: Richard Avila

Recording Secretary: Craig Rowbotham

Public Relation: Jean Dalman, Françoise Cassidy

Open House/Member at Large: Kelly Melchor

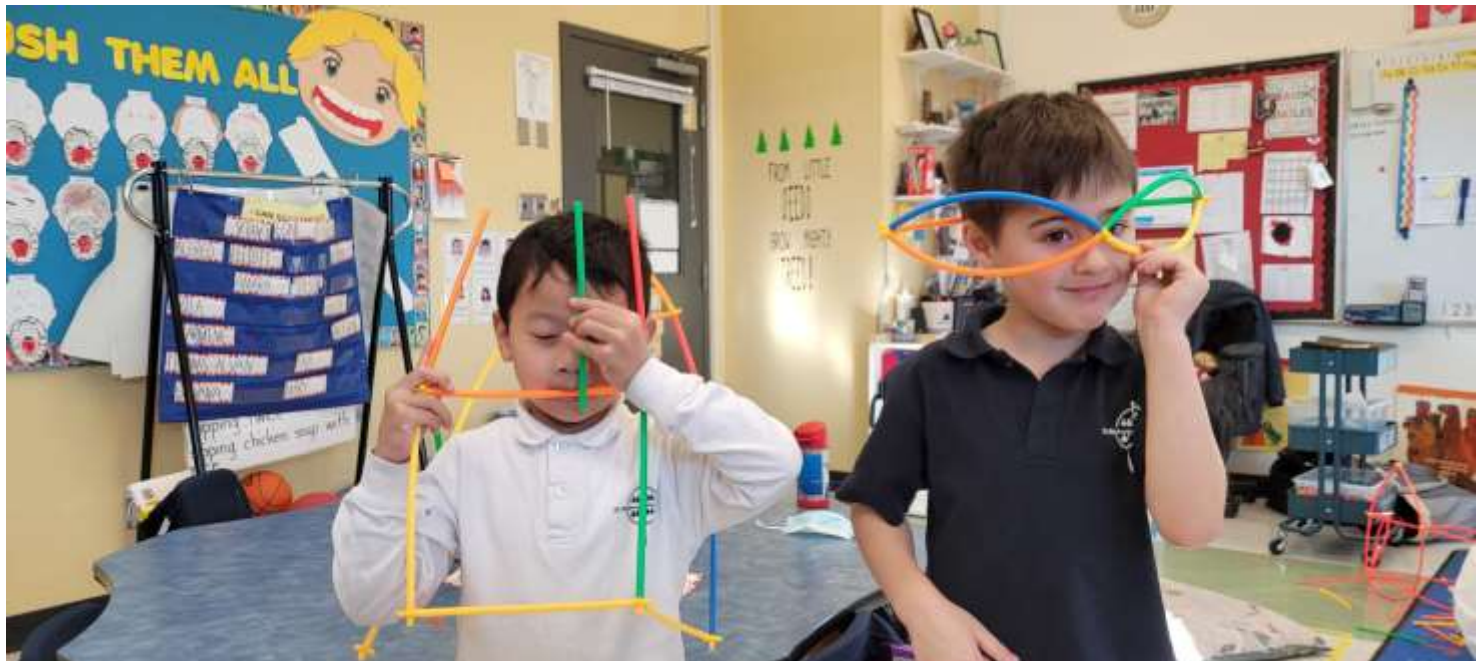
Human Resources: Paul McDonald

Principal: Christine McInnis

Pastor: Father Greg Mulligan

Parents and parishioners are welcome to attend the open portion of Board meetings, which are held monthly. Check the calendar on the school website for further details.

Dawn Gerbrandt
Chair, St. Alphonsus School Board of Directors



School Board News Cont'd

Financial Report for the year ended June 30, 2022

For 2021/2022 enrollment stayed stable from 2020/2021 levels.

Academic revenue decreased due to the prior year having more safe school funding for COVID support , offset in part by inflationary increases in government grants.

Other revenue increased because of Before and After, Alternate Kindergarten & Nursery program returning to pre-COVID usage.

Prior year's expenses were lower due to Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) reducing salary costs. This was partially offset by increased wages, higher insurance costs and higher snow removal costs in 2021/2022.

In 2021/2022 \$81,900 was spent on capital purchases which included starting the roofing project and a new phone system.

Summarized Financial Statements		
Balance Sheet	June 2022	June 2021
Current Assets	\$ 2,008,901	\$ 2,020,207
Capital Assets	634,535	672,441
Total Assets	\$ 2,643,436	\$ 2,692,648
Current Liabilities & Debt	\$ 445,637	\$ 464,713
Net Assets	2,197,799	2,227,935
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$ 2,643,436	\$ 2,692,648
Statement of Revenues & Expenditures		
Academic Revenue	\$ 1,982,109	\$ 2,039,905
Other Revenue	255,238	224,418
Expenses	(2,267,483)	(1,818,981)
(Deficiency) Excess of Revenues over Expenses	\$ (30,136)	\$ 445,342

If you would like to see the complete financial statements please make a request at the office.

As always, a huge thank you again to all the individuals and groups that contribute to the success of our School!

If you have any questions please forward them to the office.

Sincerely yours,

Kim Le Heiget, CPA, CA
Finance Officer

Advent and Christmas at St Alphonsus Parish



*Celebrate Advent
& Christmas
at St Alphonsus Parish*

315 Munroe Avenue
Corner of Brazier and Munroe
Parking lot of Donalda Avenue

Confession Opportunities this Advent

- Tuesday, December 13 at St Alphonsus - 7.30 pm
- Wednesday, December 14 at Holy Redeemer - 7.30 pm
- Thursday, December 15 at St Joseph the Worker - 7.30 pm
- Sunday, December 18 at St Gerard - 7.30 pm
- Tuesday, December 20 Blessed Sacrament - 7.30 pm

Christmas Masses 2022 at St Alphonsus

- | | | |
|---------------|------------------------|------------|
| • December 24 | Mass at 7 pm and 9 pm | (Saturday) |
| • December 25 | Mass at 9 am and 11 am | (Sunday) |
| • December 31 | Mass at 5 pm | (Saturday) |
| • January 1 | Mass at 9 am and 11 am | (Sunday) |