

December 2009
Issue 95

Holy Family Matters

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Central Office News & Events December 2009



Advent, the season upon us....

Life is a constant Advent season: we are continually waiting to become, to discover, to complete, to fulfill. Hope, struggle, fear, expectation and fulfillment are all part of our Advent experience. The world is not as just, not as loving, not as whole as we know it can and should be. But the coming of Christ and His presence among us—as one of us—give us reason to live in hope: that light will shatter the darkness, that we can be liberated from our fears and prejudices, that we are never alone or abandoned. May this Advent season be a time for bringing hope, transformation and fulfillment into the Advent of our lives.

Connections 11-28-93

ADVENT QUICK FACTS

- * The Church's liturgical year begins with the first Sunday of Advent.
- * ★ Advent begins on the Sunday nearest November 30, which is the feast of St. Andrew, and lasts until December 24.
- * ★ The word Advent comes from the word *adventus* which means "coming."
- * ★ Advent is a season in the Church year when we remember how the Word of God became human in the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem, which we celebrate on Christmas. During Advent we also reflect on and celebrate how Jesus comes into our lives and is present with us every day.
- * ★ Advent is a time of hoping and working for a change of heart. We focus on being more open to the love of God in our lives, and the salvation offered through Jesus.
- * ★ The Advent wreath is a tradition of the season. It is a symbol of our hope in Jesus Christ, who is the Light of the world. The design of the wreath symbolizes the following:
 - ★ The circle and evergreens remind us of God's everlasting love which has no beginning and no end.
 - ★ The four unlit candles remind us of the four thousand years before Christ's birth, a time of spiritual "cold and darkness" as humanity awaited the birth of the Messiah. They also represent the four weeks of Advent.
 - ★ It is customary to use three purple and one pink or white candle. The purple reminds us of the need for sorrow for our sins. The pink or white candle reminds us of the joy and hope we share in Jesus, the Light of the World, whose birth we celebrate at Christmas.
 - ★ Advent begins with the lighting of one purple candle on the first Sunday of Advent. The pink candle is lit the third week when the Advent focus shifts to the special joy of the Christmas event. The increasing light of each week reminds us that Christmas is nearer, and Christ's presence continues to grow and brighten our lives. It also reminds us that by being Christ's light today, we can brighten the "darkness" we find in our lives and in the world around us.



AISI
Dana Laliberte

As part of our AISI Project “Listen to What the Kids Say – the 21st Century Learner”, we have been working with Shirley Stiles, an educational consultant from Edmonton. She is working with two groups – the Principals and the Vice-Principals.

The Principals are working on the Education Plan – looking at their school data and determining one instructional focus for the school. Everything they do is to be connected to that instructional focus so that school improvement is evident around student learning and achievement. Their “Key Messages” from their last meeting were:

1. We discussed the importance of data to improve student achievement.
2. We looked at refining our Instructional Focus.
3. We practiced having hard conversations.
4. We analyzed ourselves as “communicators”.
5. We learned a protocol for making claims about supervising teaching and learning.
6. We read an article about leadership and school culture.

The Vice-Principals are heading up a district initiative that will result in a new student information System that includes report cards, to provide better information to students and parents about their learning and progress. Their “Key Messages” are:

1. We value and used all the feedback we received from staff, parents and students.
2. We decided to purchase PowerSchool as our system after reviewing several vendors and getting references about them.
3. We examined a variety of report cards to determine which aspects will meet our criteria.
4. Our next step will be to share draft report cards prototypes with you and get your feedback.

We have exciting work ahead of us and look forward to working with students, parents and staffs as we work to improve student learning and engagement.

This month saw the first ever presentation to the Board around “21st Century Learning”. Thanks to Sheila Dillman and her grade 3 Science students from Rosary School, the Board members got to experience learning centers first hand. They walked away with an appreciation of “Rocks and Minerals”. So did the students’ parents and grandparents

who attended. The students even say a song about metamorphic and sedimentary rocks!



FNMI
Vanessa Malegana

The First Nation, Metis and Inuit Coordinator position at St. Andrews is still vacant in High Prairie and any inquires can be made to St. Andrews school at 780 523 4595.

Driftpile Regional hand game committee is working to put together a cultural hand games instructional dvd that explains the history, rules, and how to play the games to name a few things. Nine school divisions have confirmed their participation the regional tournament this year in June.

St. Andrews hosted their first Cultural Awareness session in November and is hosting two more with Elder Margaret Cardinal who spoke to five 1st year teachers and other interested staff at St. Andrews school in High Prairie. Two more cultural awareness sessions with Margaret are scheduled for the year, one in January and one in March,

Cultural awareness is also being held with Holy Family School whole staff featuring the Fallen Feather DVD: Residential School Legacy by division FNMI Coordinator. First one is scheduled for November 30th and next one in March.



From the Staff at Central Office, we wish you all a safe and wonderful Christmas!

Holy Family CRD #37 Enrolment

	<u>Sept 30, 2009</u>	<u>June 30, 2009</u>	<u>Sept 30, 2008</u>
Good Shepherd	435	443	449
Glenmary	470	419	421
Holy Family	211	225	230
Rosary	167	158	173
St. Andrew’s	560	539	546
St. Stephen’s	231	243	245
Ecole Providence	75	74	72
Cyberhigh	104	83	70
Total ECS - 12	2253	2184	2215

Next regular Board meeting of HFCDR #37 will be at Central Office in Peace River, Tues. December 15 at 10:00 a.m. Board meetings are open to the public.