



SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS SCHOOL

May 2020



News from the desk of Mr. Ellchuk:

This weekend would have been the highlight of our school year with graduation activities. Unfortunately, with the COVID pandemic, those activities had to be postponed until a later date. We are hoping that we can have a form of Graduation activities at the end of August. The tentative date is August 29. However, nothing can be confirmed until the gathering restrictions are lifted by the Chief Medical Office of Alberta. In the meantime, members of our teaching and support staff created a display of our graduates on the north side of the school. Thanks for putting this together.

On Wednesday, Education Minister LaGrange announced that the province is looking at three options for returning to school in September. They are:

- Normal school operations are able to resume.
- Schools are partially re-opened, with some level of restrictions.
- Teacher-directed at-home learning continues.

The grocery gift cards and certificates are available to any STA family that requests one. The gift cards and certificates have a value of \$100 and will be available each month until the end of June. We have confirmed participation with IGA and Hall's Grocery. This is a program that is similar to what other East Central Catholic schools (and also Provost Public school) are doing with the remainder of their Nutrition Grant (Breakfast Program) funds. These funds cannot be carried over to the next school year and must be used to help our students and families. If you are interested, please contact me directly, send me an email or call me and I will provide more details for you.

The first construction meeting for the building of the new school occurred this week and activity will begin on-site after the May long weekend. Thank you to the parent and community volunteers that have been removing the playground equipment so that we may use it on the new school playground.

Teachers continue to prepare work for their classes and individual courses. This will continue into mid-June. It is important that students put in an honest effort to complete this work so that they can be better prepared for the next school year. Final report cards will be emailed on June 26. Course selection forms have been sent to all Grade 9-11 students for choosing their courses next year. These forms should be completed by May 8. This information will be used to create next year's schedule and teaching assignments.

We thank you for your patience and will continue to update you. The best place for information will be the school website. An update letter is added to the website 2-3 times a week.

<https://www.sta.ecacs16.ab.ca/>

The new information can be found on the website under the STA COVID-19 heading Student or parents can contact me directly at les.ellchuk@ecacs16.ab.ca



HOME STA COVID-19 ABOUT US NEW

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St. Thom

Hello Parents:

We have a different type of newsletter this month!!!

Share Lent...

Way to go students! We raised \$217.41 for Share Lent in the short time we were in school for Lent. What a big difference a few coins can make!

STA Website...

Continue to check the website for the latest updates from Mr. Ellchuk. Most links and forms can be found on our website as well.

Congratulations...

To the Grad Class of 2020. We have 23 graduates this year.

As many are well aware, the STA grad class of 2020 would have been celebrating a milestone this weekend. Their graduation celebration was scheduled for Saturday, May 9th. Unfortunately, they are not able to have their graduation at this time, but we still want them to know we are very proud of them. They have worked so hard throughout their school years and have been an important part of our school community. Be sure to drive by the school and look at the display that honours these special young adults. It will be on the front lawn as long as the weather allows it to be. If you know some of them, send them a message and let them know you are thinking of them and praying for them, and tell them how special they truly are. **CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2020, WE ARE VERY PROUD OF YOU!**

Rachel Angeltvedt

Connor Degner

Cheyenne-Jill Flad

Logan Groves

Jessica Heck

Jonathan Ibach

Eric Koch

Jill Meier

Dawson Parsons

Danae Putz

Brynn Sieben

Rhedyn Wick

Alysa Bolz

Hailey Ens

Abigail Grierson

Ashtyn Heck

Sara Heck

Austin Klein

Luke Letain

Ashley Neth

Joshua Paulgaard

Aliya Schug

Brooklynn Werenka





News from the Teachers...

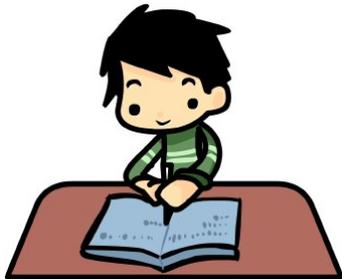
Mrs. Dallyn: Tuesday mornings just haven't been the same without this energetic, imaginative bunch! The Jr. Kindergarten kids are making their way through the remainder of the alphabet. The students took home their letter books. The students learn how to identify the upper and lower case form and things that start with each letter. To develop their fine motor skills, each letter has a simple craft to colour, cut and glue. Now that the weather is nice I am sure there is a lot of playing outside, and enjoying having their older sibling's home to have fun with!

I won't even know who my kinder kids are when I see them again- they will have grown so big! We left school excited about our 'trip to Ireland' (which we never got to take), celebrated the sacrifice Jesus made for us at Easter and have almost finished up our Farm theme. May is all about celebrating our Moms, Community Helpers, which seems even more important this year, and butterflies! These kids are continuing to build their sight word tool box at home and putting their skills to the test working on guided reading. We finished up numbers to twenty and did some pattern work before Easter and now we have entered into addition! Before the end of May we will learn about 3D shapes. I know there will be a lot of learning about what our surroundings outside have to offer and enjoying time with our Families!

Mrs. Olson: The grade one class has continued to celebrate a new VIP each week! We've also been working on narrative and expository writing, spelling, journaling, and reading from our next reader! We recently wrapped up our math unit on geometric shapes, and will move onto addition and subtraction to 14 very soon! Although we are sad to have missed our annual Mother's Day Tea this year, we still completed a few activities and crafts to celebrate our Moms. Thank you again to all the parents who have been working hard to keep us on track during this time!

Mrs. Drader: Even with the drastic change in the way students are learning these days, our little Second Graders at STA are still "plugging away" and getting their school work done from the safety of home! For them, math, language arts, and religion lessons have been the focus these past weeks. The class has just finished a 2-digit subtraction unit in math and are currently learning all about the wonderful world of geometry and 2D shapes and 3D objects! They are busy completing weekly spelling and mad minute tests, as well as journal writing assignments, and reading comprehension activities.

Many of them are racking up the minutes for our class "Home Reading Program" for a chance to be our Grand Prize Winner in early June! In religion, the class has also begun a bit of first holy communion preparation. They are familiarizing themselves with the parts of the Mass, the foods used at Mass, and the meaning of the Eucharist. Thanks again to all of our parents who have had to take on the role of "teacher" these days! Hats off to you!



Mrs. Foley: Grade 3 has looked very different over the past couple of months! We miss each other and being in our school classroom dearly, but the way the students (and parents/guardians of course!) have adjusted to our new "normal" is worth much recognition! Distance learning for the grade three students has consisted of bi-weekly pick up packages focused mainly on numeracy (math) and literacy (spelling, reading, writing, language, and phonics). These packages consist of the daily work that would have been completed in the classroom setting, supplementary games/activities to go with the concepts covered, and links to teacher created videos and online learning resources. Through this method, the students have wrapped up their unit on Fractions, completed the whole Geometry unit, and are now starting into Multiplication and Division in math. In reading, the students have dived into the novel "The Mouse and the Motorcycle" by Beverly Cleary and have thoroughly enjoyed following the many adventures of the main character, Ralph the mouse. The focus in writing has been on narrative and expository while practicing adding detail to these two types of written work. The first five weeks of at home learning have flown by and with the warmer weather outside, summer break is so close we can feel it!



Miss Yeo: The grade 4 class has been doing excellent work in both their math and ELA! The students have been writing expository paragraphs about the 5 National Parks in Alberta. Can you list them all? There is Banff, Jasper, Wood Buffalo, Waterton, and Elk Island National Park. Their creative stories have been about being invisible, an amazing Easter trip, and a genie who could only grant 2 wishes. There are some awesome imaginations and stories being written! In math, the students zoomed through a unit on making graphs. We are now starting our unit on large multiplication and division. The students have joined Miss Yeo in Google Classrooms to do some math together. It is so great that through technology and socially distant walking, that we still get to see each other. I am thankful for that! Take care everyone!

Mr. Cairns: For the month of May the grade fives will be wrapping up multiplication and division and will be moving on to fractions and decimals in Math. They have been working really hard at home and are catching onto the material quite well with the help of their new 'teachers'. In ELA we have looked at some poetry and we will be going on to a novel study based on the Jerry Spinelli book, Maniac Magee. Things have definitely been different these last few months, but we are going to get through this together!

Mr. Cazes: The Grade 6 class is starting to really enjoy this nice weather we are starting to receive. The grade 6 class is still working diligently and moving forward with Math, English, Religion, and some Physical activity challenges. We are reading interesting reading comprehension stories and journaling about our at home experiences. We have been crushing our mad minutes and working through Perimeter, area of rectangles and volume of rectangular prisms. Some of the things that the grade 6's have been doing outside school work include: creating workout plans, baking, yard work, going for long walks, rollerblading/biking. Way to go kids! You're staying positive and active.

Mrs. Mercer: "Reading gives us someplace to go when we have to stay where we are."

— **Mason Cooley**

Truth! As our school's reading remediation teacher I'm keeping busy with my constant reminders to students to get lost in a good book. Raining outside? Read. Windy outside? Read. Gorgeous, sun-shiny day? Find some shade and read. Some of my students message me videos of themselves reading a good book (my favourite), some of my students send me emails and reviews, some of my students are on the receiving end of recommendations and books sent home; whatever the case, I know all of my students are doing the best they can in this almost unbelievable phase of our lives! Read!





Mr. Stang: I am currently teaching Science 7, Science 8, Science 9, and Religious Studies 15. All the instructions are being provided using Google Classroom. Smartboard recordings, images, videos, demonstrations, and word documents are all being used to assist with instruction. The students are doing quizzes online. The students and parents are communicating with me through Google Classroom or email.

Mr. Taming: The students in Mr. Taming's classes (English Language Arts 7, English Language Arts 8, Social Studies 8 and Religious Studies 8) have been doing an amazing job being flexible, committed and creative to help keep learning going during these challenging times. The Grade 7 and 8 students have been working hard from their homes on their assignments via Google Classroom and have risen impressively to the challenge of adapting to distance learning. Mr. T would like to thank each and every student and their families for their wonderful commitment to learning. We are all in this together- fantastic work everyone! It has been strange to have such an empty, quiet school building for so long- we miss you all! Stay well and take care!

Mrs. Bouma: Math classes have been utilizing Google Classroom to stay connected on a daily basis through video lessons, examples and assignments. We have enjoyed some Google Meets as well to get together and "see" each other and ask questions. It is so nice to see each other's faces and hear each other's voices. All the classes are just wrapping up some very important units and concepts that will help them for Math next year. Some students have been doing a great job working independently and giving a wonderful effort. Hats off to them!

Miss Yuen:

In English 9 the students are reading the novel *The Chrysalids* by John Wyndham. The novel discusses the themes of segregation, prejudice, religion, and the desire to feel like you belong. Currently, the students are almost done the novel, with 12/17 chapters read.

For ELA 10 we've just completed our novel study of *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. Considered a classic novel (and one of my favourites) this novel discusses themes of childhood innocence, racism, and prejudice. Our next unit is the Shakespeare play *Romeo and Juliet*, which we've just started. A good introduction to Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet* has themes of young love, prejudice, and how ultimately fate/fortune controls our outcome in life.

For ELA 30-2 we read the novel study *Night* by Elie Wiesel. This novel, set during WWII, shows the horrors of the concentration camps through the perspective of our Jewish narrator. The novel itself has themes of faith/loss of faith, hope/despair, and the importance of family.

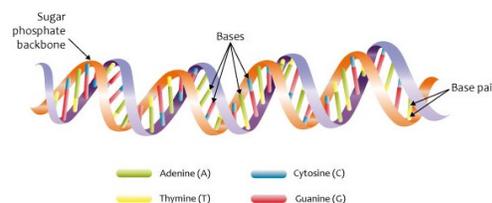
For ELA 20-2 we read the novel study *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck. The novel, centered around our two main characters Lennie and George, brings the themes of friendship and dreams/hopes for the future with an undercurrent of The American Dream.

Currently both classes are reading the modern play *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller. In the play we're following Willy Loman, an aging salesman with dementia who has tried to follow the American Dream but ultimately has failed.

Mrs. Appel: In both Biology 30 and Chemistry 20, The students are doing an exceptional job of watching the instruction videos and completing the notes and assignments on google classroom. We are also enjoying our live stream video meetings through google meet. We even did some virtual and video link labs. Chemistry 20- just completed a topic on acids and bases, including Arrhenius, reactions, strong and weak, monoprotic and polyprotic acids and bases. They also learned about empirical characteristics and indicators. We viewed colourful illustrations and videos of color changes of indicators and reactions of acids with reactive metals such as magnesium. We are going on to qualitative reactions and stoichiometry shortly.

Biology 30- we wrapped up the topic on embryonic development. It was a fascinating look at the development from conception to a fully developed infant. The students viewed some interesting video links showing the fetus developing in the womb. We are now nearing the end of the topic about DNA, mitosis and meiosis. We looked at virtual slides of the stages of the cell cycle.

Fun fact: did you know that the amount of DNA in the nucleus of one of your body cells is analogous to 150 km of string stuffed into a lunch box!



Mr. Zilinsky: In Social Studies students are continuing to work diligently through their course material. We are using the Google Classroom platform to continue in our lessons. Daily lessons are uploaded each morning which includes the daily assignment or task, PowerPoint slideshows with notes to highlight key topics, and video clips that help to supplement learning. Students also complete a test at the end of each chapter of study.

In Social Studies 7, we have been exploring the history of our country by learning about the events that helped shaped Confederation, as well as events that occurred following Confederation, including the history of the Métis people, Louis Riel, the Red River Settlement, and the settling of the west.

In Social Studies 10, students have just finished learning about the historical legacies of globalization in Unit 2 of their studies. We have been exploring topics related to the impact of historical globalization on indigenous people around the world, as well as the impact on First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples in Canada.

In Social Studies 30, students are exploring ideologies that have rejected principles of liberalism, including fascism in Germany and communism in the former Soviet Union. Students were also asked to complete a project in which they researched an ideology of their choosing, and they also completed a source-based essay assignment.



Mr. Mercer: These past seven weeks have been quite different. Life is certainly more enjoyable when the students are around. Playing badminton or slow-pitch solo is not much fun at all. In my math classes I have been recording daily lessons and the students have the unfortunate task of listening to my voice via their computer. Lucky for them they have the ability to fast forward or mute when needed. My students have remained engaged and done a good job of keeping up even though the weather has started to get nice. I look forward to the day when we can get back to school playing sports outside, seeing the kids on the golf course and on the diamonds on the weekend. Keep on keeping on!

Students' Union...

The student body can look forward to some activities put forth by the Student Union in the very near future. Watch your email for a weekly challenge or activity. Take your picture and send it in to show us your results or challenges. Each week will be a new theme/idea. They will be lots of fun and we're excited to see the student involvement. Stay tuned to your email each week.

Livestreamed Sunday Mass

We invite the faithful to join celebrations of the Mass 'virtually,' through video livestreaming from their own parish or from St. Joseph's Basilica with Archbishop Smith.

Sunday Mass at the Basilica is livestreamed at 10:30 a.m. each week. Find it on the [*Archdiocese of Edmonton Youtube Channel*](#) or on Facebook at [*facebook.com/archedmonton*](#) or Twitter at [*twitter.com/archedmonton*](#)

World Catholic Education Day Thursday, May 21

Archbishop Smith will celebrate a livestreamed Mass for World Catholic Education Day at **9 a.m. on Thursday, May 21**. This mass will also be broadcast on Telus Optik TV **Channel 8915**.

Bishops across Alberta and the NWT will be celebrating special liturgies for Catholic education in their dioceses throughout the week.



Student Projects shared by parents: Enjoy!!!

