



69 Douglas Avenue
Red Deer, Alberta T4R 2L3
Phone: 403-341-3777
Fax: 403-346-1699
www.holyfamilyschool.ca

Dear Holy Family School Families,

Today brings our first day since the announcement that schools are closed indefinitely and instruction for all students will be delivered on line in Alberta to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

We know that this is not easy for you. We have all been impacted by COVID -19 in some way. We know that many students wanted to be in school. The staff at Holy Family School wanted to be there to greet you and your child. Our staff wanted to talk to our students about their Spring Break and wanted to dive back into teaching and learning. We wanted to feel the excitement of the first day back from Spring Break. However, these are extraordinary times.

We want to let you know that both the school and Red Deer Catholic Regional Division, [COVID-19 Information](#), wish to stay in communication with you and we will keep you updated on the latest developments, resources and any impact on schools and learning.

While things are changing rapidly, here is what Holy Family School can share right now: **Staying Connected** - With the end of the Spring Break, our staff are back at work. This week, our focus is reconnecting - school teams are working with each other, establishing work from home spaces, identifying technology capacity and most importantly, reaching out to their students and families. This week, students and families can expect to hear from teachers and receive lessons in the area of literacy and numeracy. Watch Edsby, Google Classroom, emails, phone calls, and/or social media feeds. This will likely look different depending on the grade and the practices already established for teacher to student and/or teacher to parent communication. As well, our Social Media Team will continue to share ideas and encourage you to stay connected by sending in pictures or videos.

Continuation of Learning - We know there are many questions that you have regarding the continuation of learning. The Minister of Education has provided us with guidelines: Student learning during COVID-19 <https://www.alberta.ca/student-learning-during-covid-19.aspx>. In accordance with these guidelines, you can expect to be receiving information from your child's classroom teacher that will outline instruction in the area of literacy and numeracy with about 5 hours of instruction per week. All of our staff are committed to learning in this new platform and providing instruction as well as making themselves available to provide support. In addition to this, we would like to suggest that students read every day, this can be silently, out loud to a family member or pet or even a stuffed animal. It is also fun for students to read aloud, record themselves reading, go back, and listen to themselves read.

Help Stop the Spread - It is vitally important for all of us to monitor and follow the direction of medical officials. [Alberta Health Services: COVID-19](#)

Access to Technology - Thank you for completing the Home Resource survey prior to the break. We were able to distribute necessary resources to families. We ask you to ensure that all school technology is strictly being used for educational purposes. We are very sensitive to the varied and complex needs of our students and are committed

Where all Students Learn Through Christ

to finding ways to support access to learning for all students. Please let your child's teacher know if you require technology.

Students with Special Education Needs - Our Inclusive Learning staff is working to ensure that continuity of learning plans include strategies to support students with specialized learning needs. The school cannot provide in person support during this period of school closure and social distancing. We are exploring opportunities for connection with students with special education needs.

English Language Learners - We recognize the unique needs of our English Language Learners and are working to ensure that continuity of learning plans include strategies for English Language Learners. Our Inclusive Learning staff is working to explore additional learning resources to support English language development.

Access to Schools and Playgrounds - Access to all school buildings is completely restricted at this time. Please know that the front door will be unlocked from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm to receive deliveries or pick up of required resources. We will be adhering to the guidelines for school facility access outlined in Student learning during COVID-19:

<https://www.alberta.ca/student-learning-during-covid-19.aspx> We know that our school playground and field are an important space in our community. However, please know that the City of Red Deer oversees the play structures and they are currently taped off with caution tape as they are not being cleaned and as a result are not a safe place for children to play. [City of Red Deer: What has changed?](#)

Our Faith - Grandin Media has shared a list of masses within our Archdiocese that will be saying mass on Sunday streaming online. Here is your chance to visit another parish in the comfort of your own home. <https://grandinmedia.ca/online-mass> As well, please visit our [Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ](#) digital portal that families can access to support religion programming at home.

Mental Health and Well-being - This is a stressful time for families and many parents are balancing work with taking care of children. Our School Based Wellness team will continue to share Mindset Monday and other physical activities and that you can practice at home. Our School Counselor (nicole.may-sholdice@rdcrs.ca) or Family School Enhancement Counselor (katherine.seymour@rdcrs.ca) are available to talk on the phone, through email or even Google Meet should you have any questions or concerns or feel like they can be a support to your child(ren) or family. Please send them an email to make arrangements. We are sharing Alberta Health Services: Help in Tough Times [online resources](#) that provide information and tips to support student, staff and parents mental health and well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. World Health Organization's document: [Coping with stress during the 2019-nCoV outbreak](#). We would also like to share this [resource](#) from one of our partners for Indigenous students and families.

We know that for our grade 5 students this is a challenging time. Students are concerned about their learning, their last year of elementary school and transition to Middle School. We will continue to be in communication with our Middle Schools and share information as it becomes available.

In these times, there is much uncertainty and significant alterations to daily routines, structures, and changes to social interactions with important people in our lives, which can result in accumulated stress.

Please know that each and every one of you are missed and that the staff at Holy Family School will pray for everyone every day. We look forward to connecting with you in a new way and we will see each other soon. For me this personally brings me great hope.

Lord, thank You for lighting the way in this uncertain time. We depend on You, not only for our salvation, but also for our day-to-day peace and provision. We ask the Holy Spirit to guide the work in our communities as we strive to meet the many needs. In Jesus' name, amen.

Please stay safe and healthy.

Rori-Lynn Daniel/Melissa Meyer
Holy Family School Administration Team