



# St. Theresa

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

**engage**

minds

**embrace**

faith



**empower**



community

## School Handbook



# TABLE OF Contents



- Welcome Message
  - Student Support Team/ Services
  - Faith
  - Mission and Vision
  - Bell Schedule
  - Parent-School Connection
  - School Policies
  - Programming
- 
- 

Welcome to St. Theresa of EICS, a thriving community that provides a nurturing, faith-filled environment that supports each student's learning journey.

We are glad to have you as part of our community.

# Message from the Principal

**Mr. Pierre Ouimet**



It is a true honour to lead such a dynamic school community as St. Theresa. Our building was once the home for Archbishop Jordan high school but was transformed in 2012 into the middle school as it exists today. St. Theresa has flourished with the extra space, facilities, and additional programs.

Elk Island Catholic Schools is a leader in public Catholic education and we at St. Theresa strive to personify that every day. The Catholic context and philosophy pervade our learning environment. We provide a diversity of learning opportunities in an inclusive and caring setting. In addition to core subjects, we are home to a Ukrainian Bilingual program, Pathways program, Performing Arts, Sports For Life, and a multitude of CTF and complementary courses. And our raison d'etre is providing all of this in a faith-filled environment.

Thank you for trusting us with the care and learning of your children. We look forward to our home-school-parish partnership in working together to help guide all students through this awesome middle school experience to achieve success.

God bless,

Pierre Ouimet

# Student Support Team



Mr. Ouimet  
Principal



Mrs. Gau  
Asst. Principal



Mrs. Lindbeck  
Asst. Principal



Mr. Casillas  
Family Wellness Worker



Mrs. Rock  
Collaborative Response  
Coordinator

FWW Program provides short-term supportive assistance to students and their parents/guardians. Services are provided free of charge and may take place at school and in-home and community settings.

The CRC in collaboration with the School Leadership team, provides leadership, assistance, and support in meeting the needs of all students.



# OUR CATHOLIC FAITH

St. Theresa is partnered with two parishes in Sherwood Park. We endeavour to maintain a close, supportive relationship with parishes and their priests. St. Theresa holds liturgies and celebrations in Roman Catholic and Ukrainian Catholic rites.

## Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church

**13 Brower Dr, Sherwood Park, AB T8H 1Y7**

(780) 467-5470

[www.olph.ca](http://www.olph.ca)

Our Lady of Perpetual Help is a vibrant community of strong faith which welcomes, worships, works and celebrates life together in Jesus Christ. From our beginnings in 1958, to the present, OLPH has been blessed with wonderful leaders, with vision and tremendous dedication, and also with an active compassionate parish family of now over 14,000 strong.

## St. Sophia's Ukrainian Catholic Parish

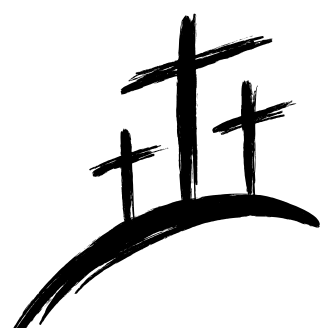
**Baseline Road and Range Road 224,**

Sherwood Park, Alberta

780-464-4177

<http://stsophiaparish.com/>

St. Sophia Parish endeavors to practice the rich traditions of the Byzantine Rite within a modern contemporary context. The parish consists primarily of young families with a healthy representation of all generations. It offers programs and activities that promote the Spiritual, Educational, Cultural and Social needs of the Parish.







# OUR PATRON SAINT

St. Therese of Lisieux, often referred to as the "Little Flower of Jesus," underwent a life-altering spiritual conversion at 14 and dedicated her life to God by joining the Carmelite convent at 15. Despite facing serious illness and periods of doubt, she remained steadfast in her faith and prayer life until her death from tuberculosis at 24. Known for her "little way of spiritual childhood," Therese emphasized the importance of great love over great deeds. She expressed this through her approach to life - attending to every task, no matter how ordinary, with extraordinary love. Remembered as the "little flower of Jesus," she was swiftly canonized as a saint due to the remarkable impact of her life and teachings on many around the world.



"Love proves itself by deeds, so how am I to show my love? Great deeds are forbidden me. The only way I can prove my love is by scattering flowers and these flowers are every little sacrifice, every glance and word, and the doing of the least actions for love."

St. Thérèse of Lisieux



# OUR Mission & Vision

At St. Theresa Catholic School, we:

ENGAGE Minds, EMBRACE Faith & EMPOWER Community  
by:

- fostering the spiritual, physical, and emotional wellness of all students and staff
- providing faith-filled learning experiences that promote student voice and choice in becoming lifelong learners and problem solvers
- developing independent, involved, and empathetic citizens whose faith permeates the community at large



# BELL SCHEDULE

8:30	Buses Arrive & Doors Open	
8:30	Warning Bell	
8:40 – 9:31	Block 1	51 min.
9:31 – 10:18	Block 2	47 min.
10:18 – 10:22	Nutrition Break	3 min.
10:22 – 11:09	Block 3	47 min.
11:09 – 11:55	Block 4	46 min.
11:55– 12:55	Lunch/Recess	61 min.
12:55 – 1:41	Block 5	46 min.
1:41 – 2:27	Block 6	46 min.
2:27 – 3:13	Block 7	46 min.
3:13	Dismissal	





# EARLY OUT

# BELL SCHEDULE

8:30	Buses Arrive & Doors Open	
8:30	Warning Bell	
8:40 – 9:20	Block 1	40 min.
9:20 – 9:58	Block 2	38 min.
9:58 – 10:01	Nutrition Break	3 min.
10:01 – 10:40	Block 3	39 min.
10:40 – 11:18	Block 4	38 min
11:18 – 12:18	Lunch/Recess	60 min
12:18 – 12:56	Block 5	38 min.
12:56 – 1:35	Block 6	39 min.
1:35 – 2:13	Block 7	38 min.
2:13	Dismissal	

# PARENT-SCHOOL CONNECTION

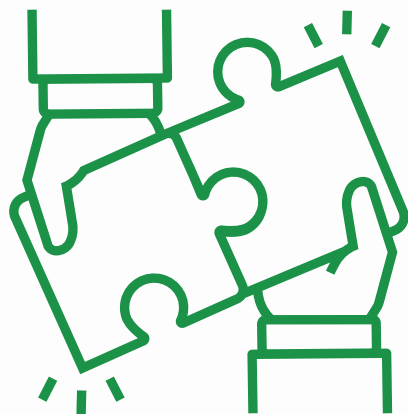
Parents are encouraged to take an active role in our school community. Parent engagement matters, as studies have shown that student achievement improves when parents play an active role in their education.

Parent involvement can take on many forms:

- attending School Council meetings
- volunteering for field trips and school activities
- ensuring a quiet space for students to work at home
- meeting with teachers
- being in regular communication with teachers
- talking to your child(ren) about their day at school

## **School Council**

Parent involvement is an integral part of the success of any school. The St. Theresa School Council meets five or six times through the school year and provides an excellent opportunity to stay informed and have a voice in school matters. Parents and guardians are encouraged to join us for our first School Council meeting in the latter part of September.



# SCHOOL POLICIES

## Academic and Assessment



Elk Island Catholic Schools emphasizes creating quality learning environments where students understand their progress and learning goals. The assessment and academic policy is based on the Alberta Program of Studies.

Formative assessments are used daily to monitor student learning, with a focus on clear learning targets and timely descriptive feedback. Students are involved in their own assessment through self and peer evaluation.

Summative assessments occur at the end of a learning period and should reflect the most recent demonstration of learning. Non-academic factors are reported separately, and group participation is assessed individually. Teachers gather assessment information through observations, conversations, and student products.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Students may be given a second chance at a summative assessment based on teacher judgment. Missing or incomplete work is addressed through communication, support, and possible consequences. Homework serves as practice, and academic dishonesty is dealt with through supervision, redoing assignments, and behavioural consequences.

Overall, the policy promotes student-centred assessment, continuous feedback, and opportunities for improvement while ensuring academic integrity and accountability.

# SCHOOL POLICIES

## Cell Phone Usage



At St. Theresa, student learning, mental health and positive relationships are key. Research is showing a link between cell phone use and poor mental health, disrupted learning, and decreased social interaction. Additionally, cell phones are often connected to cyber bullying and similar unwelcomed behaviour.

Therefore, in striving to provide all students with the best learning environment, we recommend that cell phones be left in student lockers during class time. If a student must carry their cell phone with them:

**It is not to be seen or heard during class time, including morning prayer and announcements. For grade 5 students, we have a no cell phone policy.**

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **What if I need to get ahold of my child or send them a message?**

Please contact the school office at (780)464-4001, in any instance where you need to get a message to your child.

#### **When can they use their cell phone?**

Students may check their cell phones at break time, recess, and lunch time. In junior high, they may take them outside at recess.

#### **Will a cell phone ever be used in class?**

In the event that cell phones are used for a learning activity, teachers will communicate this in advance. Cell phones would then be used for the purpose and duration of this activity as directed by the teacher.

If your child's cell phone use becomes a distraction to their learning or to the learning and/or well being of others, the phone might be confiscated for a period of time. Parents/guardians will be contacted to help find a solution to the problem.

# SCHOOL POLICIES

## Communication

Effective communication between parents and the school fosters a strong partnership that positively impacts a child's educational journey.

- 1. Be Proactive:** Initiate communication with the school proactively. Attend parent-teacher meetings, open houses, and other school events to establish relationships with teachers and staff.
- 2. Channels:** Utilize the school's official communication channels, such as email, Weekly S'More and PowerSchool Portal. We strongly encourage Parents/Guardians to contact the classroom teacher first. Email addresses can be found on our school website.
- 3. Maintain a Respectful Tone:** Communicate with teachers and staff respectfully and professionally. Maintaining a positive relationship is essential for your child's education.
- 4. Collaborate and Problem-Solve:** Approach communication with a collaborative mindset. Work together with teachers and staff to address any concerns or challenges that may arise.
- 5. Respect Confidentiality:** Respect the privacy and confidentiality of students, teachers, and staff. Please don't share sensitive information or talk about specific cases with unauthorized individuals.
- 6. Follow Up:** After a communication exchange, follow up as necessary to ensure that any agreed-upon actions are being taken.





# Discipline & Reconciliation Policy

Our call as Catholics is to protect the dignity of the human person. This is especially crucial when managing student behaviour. At St. Theresa, teaching students to be disciplined, responsible, moral and ethical citizens is a focus, as opposed to teaching them to be obedient in order to avoid punishment. Because we believe in the responsibility model of discipline, we ask students know their rights and responsibilities. Through implementing appropriate and progressive consequences, and providing opportunities to become responsible and caring members of our school community, students will learn that their behaviours and their choices can profoundly impact the experience of many others.

## Rights & Responsibilities

At St. Theresa Catholic School, we believe that all students have the right to learn in a faith-filled, safe and caring environment. With every student's right, comes a responsibility to be accountable citizens of the school.

I have a **RIGHT** to an education.

It is my **RESPONSIBILITY** to achieve my best as a student. I will attend school regularly, be on time for all classes, and act in such a way that the community will have respect for our school.

I have a **RIGHT** to a quality, Catholic Education.

I have a **RESPONSIBILITY** to listen, to learn, to practice, to complete school assignments and to accept teacher assistance when necessary. I will not disturb, disrupt or interfere with other's learning.

I have a **RIGHT** to be treated with dignity and respect.

I have a **RESPONSIBILITY** to treat others kindly.

It is my **RESPONSIBILITY** to be respectful to the school staff who are there to promote and protect the rights of all.

I have the **RIGHT** to be safe and secure.

It is my **RESPONSIBILITY** to try to stop the violation of personal rights.

It is my **RESPONSIBILITY** to report the mistreatment of other students.

I have a **RIGHT** to keep my personal property safe.

I have a **RESPONSIBILITY** to take proper care of school property and equipment, ask permission before using other's property and honour their right to privacy.

I have a **RIGHT** to a clean and well-kept environment.

I have a **RESPONSIBILITY** to care for the school environment, both inside and out-side. I will respect my environment by cleaning up after myself and others, even if it isn't my mess..

I have a **RIGHT** to choose my own actions.

I have a **RESPONSIBILITY** to make sensible decisions and accept the consequences for my decisions.

# SCHOOL POLICIES

## Learning Behaviors & Expectations

A welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity is defined as one which:

- Respects each person's worth and dignity as a unique creation of God
- Is orderly and purposeful
- Fosters caring and peaceful relationships
- Shows understanding and sensitivity to individual differences
- Is free from the threat of physical and psychological harm.

### CONSEQUENCES OF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

#### Minor Offences

These offences can be dealt with on the spot by any teacher. Minor offences include late to class, rough play, disruptive classroom behaviour, and hallway/washroom loitering. The consequence may be a warning, school service (clean-up, etc.) or a loss of privileges. The student should demonstrate a sincere effort to correct the disruptive action. Repeated minor offences may require parents to be notified of recurring problems. Any disciplinary action may take the form of a) problem-solving, monitoring or reviewing behaviour expectations with a warning; b) school community service (such as cleaning the schoolyard, washing desktops, etc.); c) loss of lunch break; d) temporary loss of privileges (such as extra-curricular activities).

Note: Repeated minor offences may be treated as a major offence.





# SCHOOL POLICIES

## Learning Behaviors & Expectations

### CONSEQUENCES OF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

#### Major Offences

These offences are serious and could lead to suspension or expulsion: a) conduct (bullying), which threatens the safety of students and/or staff; b) possession of a weapon, or a weapon found in a student's locker or desk. A weapon is anything that can be used to injure, intimidate or threaten any person; c) assaulting any person; d) theft; e) possession/use of illegal drugs, alcohol or inhalants in or on school property; f) violation of school policies pertaining to smoking, student attendance, student harassment or misbehaviour while riding on the school bus; g) willful disobedience and/or open opposition to authority; h) use or display of improper or profane language; i) willful damage to school or individual property; j) interfering with the orderly conduct of class(es) or the school; k) contravention of the code of conduct as set out in the School Act. Disciplinary action may include some or all of the following:

- parental involvement
- removal of privileges
- detention
- community service
- in-school or out-of-school suspension (maximum 5 days)
- restitution for property damage to an individual
- the Board involvement of police
- a recommendation for expulsion.

#### School Bus Behaviour Expectations

When riding the school bus, students are expected to follow all bus rules. The bus driver is responsible for student safety and has full authority to set the rules for the bus. Students who behave in a manner that breaks the rules or jeopardizes the safety of others may be suspended from riding the bus.



# SCHOOL POLICIES

## Attendance

Regular Attendance is critical for student success. Excused absences are when students are absent from school with a valid excuse and parental approval. Examples of excused absences include:

- Illness
- Medical/Dental Appointments
- Family Emergencies
- Other reasons deemed acceptable by the school administration

Unexcused Absences are when students are absent from school without a valid excuse, with/without approval parental approval. Examples of unexcused absences include:

- Babysitting
- Shopping
- Skipping Class
- Sleeping in
- Out-of-town
- Missing the school bus
- Hair Appointments

A parent must notify the office of an absence. There are multiple ways to report an absence:

1. Call the school office 1-780-464-4001
2. Email [stt@eics.ab.ca](mailto:stt@eics.ab.ca)

## Late Arrival

If arriving late the student must report to the office before going to class.

## Leaving Early

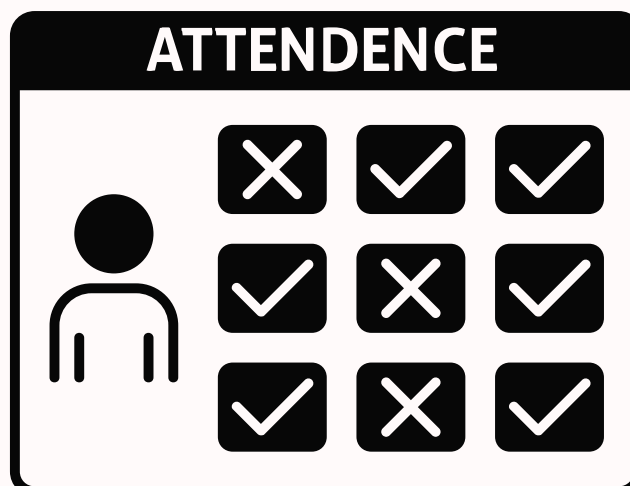
If leaving before the end of the school day, a parent must notify the office and the student must report to the office before leaving.

# SCHOOL POLICIES

## Attendance

### Vacation/Extended Absences

Today's classrooms are dynamic learning environments that are fluid and constantly changing in order to keep students engaged in their learning. Work assigned is often project-based and is designed to promote critical thinking and a deeper level of student engagement. Because our learning environments are so dynamic, it can be very difficult for teachers to put together packages for students who will be away for an extended period. Consequently, we recommend that families avoid booking vacation time during the school year. If that is not possible, or if a student must be away for truly important events or family emergencies, then parents are asked to contact the teacher to find out what general topics of study will be examined while the student is away. The student will be expected to read applicable textbook chapters and monitor work and material being posted in Google Classroom, with the understanding that the student will likely have work to make up when he or she returns to school. Note: While it is the goal of St. Theresa teachers to support all students, it is the responsibility of the student to see each of his or her teachers to find out what work was missed during an absence and to complete all missed work, assignments and exams.





# SCHOOL POLICIES

## Student Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures

Student drop off and pick up is on Brentwood Blvd. (west side of the school) or in the pull over lane on Festival Way (south side of school).

Due to safety and congestion issues, there is NO drop off or pick up permitted on the East side of school. For safety reasons, do not enter the bus lane.



# SCHOOL POLICIES



## **Closed Campus**

St. Theresa is a closed campus, which means that students are not allowed to leave the school grounds during the school day without permission from a school administrator. This policy is in place to ensure the safety of students and to help maintain a secure learning environment.

## **Food Delivery Services**

Food delivery services such as Skip The Dishes and Uber Eats are not permitted.

## **Allergy Awareness**

Because foods such as nuts can cause severe, life-threatening reactions in some people, as a courtesy, we ask that you:

- Plan to not send food items that contain nuts (peanut oil) and/or food items that may cause an allergic reaction in others
- Wash your hands if you eat food that may cause an allergic reaction before coming to school and throughout the day

Thank you for helping us provide a safe environment for all students and staff.

## **Medications**

All medications at the school must be managed in accordance with the guidelines of the Medication Management Plan. Please ensure the Medication Management Plan has been completed for your son/daughter if they need to take medication while at school. All medications must be stored in the office.

# DRESS & ATTIRE

St Theresa Catholic School is a respectful, faith-based learning environment. We ask that students dress appropriately for the various school functions and activities that they will participate in.

Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately to be outdoors for up to 30 minutes for recess every day (weather permitting).

If students are deemed to be dressed inappropriately we will start with a conversation with the student. Parents may receive a phone call as a follow up.





# PROGRAMMING

## Core Curriculum - Academic Excellence

Our academic philosophy is to foster a culture of academic excellence within a Catholic, faith-centered environment and to ensure that all students have an equal chance to reach their potential. Our goal is to create a learning environment where students are motivated, engaged, and excited about their learning.

Our students will be challenged to think critically and become problem solvers in mathematics, science, social studies, and the arts. We will provide our students with the tools, resources, and guidance needed to be successful in the 21st century.

### Grade 5 and 6 - Mandatory Complementary Courses

**Fine Arts** – Consists of Music and Art - Throughout the grades, an articulated Fine Arts program involves students as creators, performers, historians, critics and consumers. The Fine Arts enable students to enhance the depth and breadth of their expression and intuitive response to fine art.

**French as a Second Language** - Students learn basic vocabulary and grammar in a variety of themes related to their daily lives. Being able to understand and use French is an important aspect of being a Canadian and a global citizen. By learning French, students are able to develop the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to communicate in a variety of real-life contexts.

### Career & Technology Foundations - Complementary Courses for Grades 5 - 8

Career & Technology Foundations (CTF) focuses on outcomes that align with the cross-curricular competencies identified through Inspiring Education necessary for the educated Albertan of 2030. CTF brings to life the vision of Inspiring Education: students as engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit.

CTF courses create learning environments that explore occupational areas through an inquiry-based approach. This supports meaningful learning and meets the diverse needs of the students and the community. The middle school philosophy encourages exposure for middle school students; therefore students will take complimentary courses within the Career and Technology Foundations (CTF) streams.

Career & Technology Foundations courses that may be offered include:

- Art
- Construction
- Drama
- Musical Theatre
- Foods
- Fashion
- Leadership
- Robotics
- Sports Performance
- Style & Self-Care

Please note students that enrol in the Sport For Life Program or the Performing Arts Program will not have room in their schedules for additional complementary courses.



# PROGRAMMING

## **Sport For Life Program**

The mission of the Sport for Life Program is to provide students exposure to a variety of sport and recreation activities in a Catholic environment with the focus on creating life-long active and healthy lifestyles. Students will have the benefit of building athletic skill, along with leadership qualities in a faith-filled setting. This program is offered in grades 5-8.

The program is based on the Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) model, which is a movement to improve the quality of sport and physical activity in Canada through improved athlete training and better integration between all stakeholders in the sport system, including sport organizations, education, recreation and health.

## **Performing Arts Program**

The mission of the Performing Arts Program is to provide students exposure to a variety of performing arts in a Catholic environment with a focus on developing creativity, ingenuity, empathy, leadership, and innovation. The program focuses on drama, dance, music/voice, and some media/set design. Students have the opportunity to explore their God-given talents, build community partnerships, and work with experts in the field. Program Description: The program is open to all students in grades 5-8. The program reflects current trends in the industry and will culminate in a major "Broadway type" production performed in the St. Theresa Theatre in front of live audiences.

## **Ukrainian-Bilingual Program**

The Ukrainian Bilingual Program in Sherwood Park began in 1980 and has seen decades of success in academic achievement, global learning, and celebration of the rich Ukrainian heritage. From pre-school to grade 12, the Ukrainian Bilingual Program offers a highly academic program in a faith-filled cultural environment and provides children with a wealth of experiences and advantages that benefit them within the classroom walls and beyond.

The elementary school component is taught at St. Nicholas Catholic School and continues through the middle school years (grades 5-8) at St. Theresa Catholic School. The language is primarily taught through Ukrainian Language Arts and is integrated into other subject areas as well such as religion, music, health, and art. Students participate in different religious and cultural celebrations/activities which help them gain an understanding of the Ukrainian Catholic faith, with special emphasis on the Byzantine Rite. Students who have progressed through the program have developed life-long friendships as well as valuable global learning skills associated with second language study. From diversified thinking to effective communication skills in both English and Ukrainian, the program offers students a distinct advantage when entering post-secondary studies and future careers.



# PROGRAMMING

## Flexible Pathways Program

For all students, educational practices should be flexible and responsive to their strengths, needs, and learning preferences. Flexible Pathways helps create learning experiences to ensure students with complex learning needs are successful (i.e., students with a diagnosed developmental disability). This program strives to balance our vision and values of inclusive education with interventions and strategies of targeted instruction for our most complex learners.

Our Flexible Pathways program provides a half-day of targeted instruction focused on Literacy, Numeracy, Communication, and Social skills in a structured, yet flexible environment, with experienced teachers giving students the attention and support they need to succeed. Targeted instruction is complemented by inclusive and authentic learning opportunities that allow students to further explore and develop their interests in school environments with peers and appropriate supports.



# AWARDS

## Junior High Awards and Recognition (Grade 7 & 8)

Each spring, St. Theresa will host an evening awards ceremony where students will be recognized for the following awards:

### **Honors**

Awarded to each student achieving an average of 80% -89.4% in their 5 core subjects\* and no marks lower than 3 in PE and other complementary courses.

### **Honors with Distinction**

Awarded to each student achieving an average of 89.5+% in their 5 core subjects\* and no marks lower than 3 in PE and other complementary courses.

\*Core subjects include Language Arts, Mathematics, Religion, Science and Social Studies

### **Principal's Award**

Awarded to students who meet the 4E criteria: Ethical Citizenship, Entrepreneurial Spirit, Evangelism (Faith), Engaged Thinker. The award has little to do with academic achievement, rather it looks to recognize work ethic, leadership, faith, kindness, service, and other attributes that are not easily quantified.

### **Athletics**

Recognizing one Grade 8 Male and one Grade 8 Female Athlete of the Year

### **George Miok Award**

George was a former Archbishop Jordan student, a teacher, and a resident of Sherwood Park. He joined the armed forces right out of high school and engaged in Bosnia and Afghanistan. George lost his life during his second tour in Afghanistan, on December 30, 2009. His family has established a scholarship in George's memory that is supported by Jacek Chocolates here in Sherwood Park.

St. Theresa has created a program called MIOK Moments, where students are recognized throughout the year for acts of kindness, empathy, strong character, and/or service. One or two grand prize winners from our MOIK moments program are recognized during our awards ceremony.