



St. Theresa

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

engage | embrace | empower
minds | faith | community

HANDBOOK

Principal– Laurie Kardynal-Bahri

Assistant Principal– Peter Rachmistruk





At St. Theresa Catholic School, we Engage Minds, Embrace Faith & Empower Community by:

- ♦ Being responsive to the developmental needs of middle-school students *
- ♦ Providing a dynamic, innovative and faith-infused learning environment
- ♦ Inspiring students to explore a wide-range of complementary courses
- ♦ Encouraging student voice and choice
- ♦ Providing opportunities to be involved in the local and larger community
- ♦ Developing independent, involved and empathetic citizens who understand the importance of faith in their lives.

Message from the Principal:

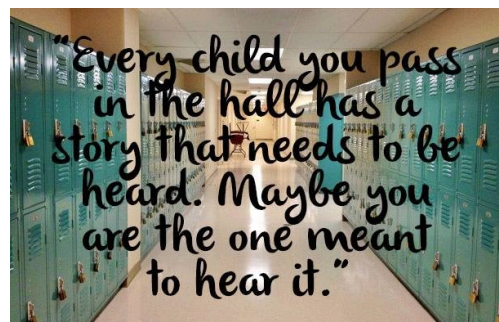


Mrs. Laurie Kardynal-Bahri

I have a deep passion for working with students in this age group, as I have spent most of my career immersed in teaching and guiding them. It can be a wonderful time for them to explore new things, and yet frustrating as they navigate the many challenges that adolescence presents. Middle school students are growing in their maturity, but still need an appropriate level of encouragement and support. Before reading about the middle school model, I always wished that I could better meet the needs of these unique and amazing individuals, and allow them the opportunity to flourish academically, spiritually and socially.

After being transferred to open up St. Theresa and reviewing the middle school research, I realized that this was the answer to what I had been thinking about. The research supported my belief that it is important to foster independence and resiliency in our students, and ignite their love for learning through many varied opportunities, from academic, to optional courses to extra-curricular.

The result after much hard work by all involved, is that St. Theresa has become a school where we embrace the true middle school philosophy within a Catholic context, which has been proven through research to be the best way to support students of this age. We provide an engaging learning environment, ripe with opportunities to explore such as CTF options for 5 & 6, languages, Sport for Life and Performing Arts, as well as 25 different options for 7 & 8. There have been ample extra curricular sports, clubs, and events such as the Genius Fairs, Business Fair, Talent show or Fun Run. These are opportunities where students expand their learning and build a sense of autonomy and self advocacy. They learn more about themselves and who they are, and maybe even more about what they want to become one day. The beauty of this, is that they have exposure to all of these opportunities within a faith-filled environment.



I am proud of St. Theresa Catholic School in its' entirety, and I THANK YOU for entrusting your children to our care. Your support and commitment to working with our staff to help guide your child in this awesome middle school environment, speaks volumes. Our children are our most precious resource, and we need to work together to build citizens of the future. After all, they're the ones who will be looking after us when we are in a retirement home.

Parish-School Connection:

St. Theresa is partnered with 2 parishes in Sherwood Park. We endeavor to maintain a close, supportive relationship with both parishes and their priests. St. Theresa holds liturgies and celebrations in both the Roman Catholic and Ukrainian Catholic rite.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church

13 Brower Dr, Sherwood Park, AB T8H 1Y7

(780) 467-5470

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 Church

Located at Madonna Catholic School.

1500 Main Blvd, Sherwood Park

Telephone: (780) 464-4177

Email: FrRendy@shaw.ca

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 from all generations. It offers programs and activities that promote the Spiritual, Educational, Cultural and Social needs of the Parish.



Our Patron Saint- St. Theresa de Liseux:

"Do Little Things With Great Love" Feast Day: October 1

Patron of the Missions

1873 - 1897

At the age of 14, on Christmas Eve in 1886, Therese had a conversion that transformed her life. From then on, her powerful energy and sensitive spirit were turned toward love, instead of keeping herself happy. At 15, she entered the Carmelite convent in Lisieux to give her whole life to God. She took the religious name Sister Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face. Living a hidden, simple life of prayer, she was gifted with great intimacy with God. Through sickness and dark nights of doubt and fear, she remained faithful to God, rooted in His merciful love. After a long struggle with tuberculosis, she died on September 30, 1897, at the age of 24. Her last words were the story of her life: "My God, I love You!"

The world came to know Therese through her autobiography, "Story of a Soul". She described her life as a "little way of spiritual childhood." She lived each day with an unshakable confidence in God's love. "What matters in life," she wrote, "is not great deeds, but great love." Therese lived and taught a spirituality of attending to everyone and everything well and with love. She believed that just as a child becomes enamored with what is before her, we should also have a childlike focus and totally attentive love. Therese's spirituality is of doing the ordinary, with extraordinary love.

She loved flowers and saw herself as the "little flower of Jesus," who gave glory to God by just being her beautiful little self among all the other flowers in God's garden. Because of this beautiful analogy, the title "little flower" remained with St. Therese.

Her inspiration and powerful presence from heaven touched many people very quickly. She was canonized by Pope Pius XI on May 17, 1925. Had she lived, she would have been only 52 years old when she was declared a Saint. (Littleflower.org)



Parent-School Connection:

Parents are encouraged to be active members of our school community. Parent involvement leads to student success

Parent engagement matters. Study after study has shown us that student achievement improves when parents play an active role in their children's education, and that good schools become even better schools when parents are involved. It is recognized that parent engagement is a key factor in the enhancement of student achievement and well-being.

Students are more likely to be motivated, to earn higher grades, to have better behaviour and social skills, and to continue their education to a higher level when their parents are actively engaged in supporting their success at school.

It is equally important to recognize that parent involvement takes many forms.

- serving on school councils and Parent Involvement Committees (PLCs)
- volunteering for field trips and school activities
- making sure there is a quiet place set aside to do homework,
- helping with homework
- meeting with teachers
- talking to your child about their day at school.

(Ontario Ministry of Education)



Reconciliation Policy



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.

It is my **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 a **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 honor 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 outside. 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.

Find the full policy at: <https://stt.eics.ab.ca/students/school-policies>

Homework

<https://stt.eics.ab.ca/students/school-policies>

The Purpose of Homework

Homework is an extension of the student's daily activities. The amount of time each student will spend doing homework may vary according to grade, ability and study habits. Communication with the teacher is encouraged if you need more information.

Homework is assigned:

- To reinforce lessons taught during class time;
- To teach students to budget their time;
- To help students develop self-reliance and good study habits;
- To enable parents to see their child's progress;
- To strengthen the ties between home and school, particularly when parents can help with assignments in some way.

Parents Can Help by:

- Providing a quiet, regular place to work.
- Helping the student organize his or her time for assignments.
- Being the "audience" for any assignments.
- Providing information and knowledge for projects.
- Having a positive attitude about school.

The support and interest of parents will have a large influence on students' attitudes toward homework. If you have questions about the assignments your child is bringing home, don't hesitate to talk to his or her teacher.

INCOMPLETE HOMEWORK

Students are expected to complete all assigned homework as outlined by their teachers. In the event that students are unable to do so as a result of an emergency, parents are asked to make contact with the teacher ahead of time to explain the circumstance. In some cases, an extension may be granted for the completion of the assignment within a period of time deemed appropriate by the teacher. If a student does not complete homework, he/she will be asked to report to the Opportunity Room (during lunch hour) on the same day to complete his homework.

Regular Bell Schedule:

8:40	Bus Arrival	2 min.
8:40	Warning Bell	5 min.
8:45	Homeroom/Religion	10 min.
8:55	Block 1	45 min.
9:40	Block 2	45 min.
10:25	Recess/Nutrition Break	5 min.
10:30	Block 3	45 min.
11:15	Block 4	45 min.
12:00	Lunch/Recess Gr 5, 6 outside	25 min.
12:25	Recess/Lunch Gr 7, 8 outside	25 min.
12:52	Bell (return to lockers, go to class)	5 min.
12:55	Block 5	45 min.
1:40	Block 6	45 min.
2:25	Nutrition Break	5 min.
2:30	Block 7	45 min.
3:15	Dismissal	
	Bus Arrival - 3:22-3:32	

Early Wednesday Schedule:

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8:40	Bus Arrival	2 min.
8:40	Warning Bell	5 min.
08:45	Homeroom	10 min
8:55	Block 1	37min
9:32	Block 2	37min
10:09	Recess/Nutrition Break	5 min.
10:14	Block 3	37min.
10:51	Block 4	37min.
11:28	Lunch/Recess Gr 5, 6 outside	24 min.
11:52	Recess/Lunch Gr 7, 8 outside	24 min.
12:16	Bell (return to lockers, go to class)	3 min.
12:19	Block 5	37min.
12:56	Block 6	37min.
1:33	Nutrition Break	5 min.
1:38	Block 7	37min.
2:15	Dismissal	
	Bus Arrival - 2:22-2:32	

Core Curriculum

We are proud to provide strong academic opportunities within a Catholic, faith-centered environment. The mandated Alberta Program of Studies is taught for all core subject areas of Math, Science, Social and Language Arts. We will provide time to core subject learning while focusing on developing foundational knowledge, skills and attitudes.

We believe that middle school is a transitional time between primary and high school, where students begin to learn independence in a focused and scaffolded way. Therefore,

- core courses are only taught by 2 select teachers for one class. For example, one teacher teaches Mathematics and Science, while another teaches Language Arts and Social Studies.
- Specialist teachers teach additional courses such as Physical Education, Fine Arts and 21st Century Learning.
- Teachers will be engaging in collaborative planning throughout the school year to ensure the highest quality of educational programming.
- Teachers will looking for ways to make cross-curricular connections between the different subject areas.

To read more about the Alberta curriculum, visit: [http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/mychildslarning/Programs of Study](http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/mychildslarning/Programs%20of%20Study) <https://education.alberta.ca/programs-of-study/programs-of-study/>



Grade 5 & 6— Mandatory Complementary Courses

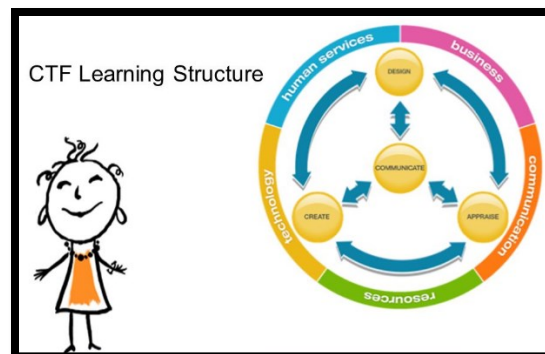
Fine Arts— Consists of Music and Art- Throughout the grades, an articulated Fine Arts program involves students as creators, performers, historians, critics and consumers. The Fine Arts enable students to enhance the depth and breadth of their expression and intuitive response to fine art.

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.

Special Programs

Career & Technology Foundations— Options for grades 5-8

- CTF is a unique and new curriculum for students in grades 5-9, being launched in September 2014. 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 is designed to be flexible and adaptable. Schools 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 choice and exposure for middle school students; therefore students will be able to take option courses within the Career and Technology Foundations (CTF) streams. These options will run for 2 blocks a week, and for approximately 3 months at a time. Students in grades 5 & 6 will pick 3 out of 5 options. (Except for the Sport for Life and Performing Arts students who do not pick additional options)



Sport for Life Program - Grade 5-8



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.

Please visit our website for more detailed information: <http://stts4l.weebly.com/>

Performing Arts Program

The Performing Arts have the power to engage students in a dynamic educational experience, where they can uncover and explore their God-given talents. The arts allow for students to develop creativity, ingenuity, empathy and innovation, which are the keys to success in today's complex, changing world. Students will have an in-depth experience through:

- Drama
- Music
- Movement and Dance
- Supplemental classes in Media and Set Design

The mission of the Performing Arts Program is to provide students exposure to a variety of performing arts in a Catholic environment. Students will work towards a culminating project(s), such as a Broadway Musical.

For more information about the Performing Arts Program, visit <https://stt.eics.ab.ca/programs/unique-programs>



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 playschool to grade 11, 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 Jean Vanier 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 communications skills in both English and Ukrainian, the program offers students a distinct advantage when entering post-secondary studies and future careers.

Cafeteria/Hot Lunch Program:

Taste of St. T's

We are pleased to have a fully functioning cafeteria to serve our students 5 days a week.

- To order visit <http://sttheresaschool.org/hotlunches.net> Access code is STSP
- Parents can order healthy hot lunches for their children online, without having to worry about sending money to school, or what they might choose.
- Parents have input in assisting what their children will be eating for lunch.
- An added bonus is that the cafeteria will keep students from wanting to go to nearby facilities for lunch.