



February 18, 2021

## Groundbreaking ceremony commemorates start of Father Lacombe Catholic School construction

**Lacombe** — Representatives from the faith community, provincial and local government officials, and STAR Catholic School Division staff gathered on the Father Lacombe Catholic School grounds on Tuesday, February 16 for a groundbreaking ceremony to officially mark the start of the school rebuild.

In compliance with public health restrictions, the ceremony was a brief, outdoor event with limited attendees. Representing the faith community were Archbishop of Edmonton Richard Smith and Father Shimit Abraham of St. Stephen Parish. Elected officials in attendance were the Honourable Prasad Panda, Minister of Infrastructure, MLA Ron Orr, and City of Lacombe Councillor Thalia Hibbs. Division and school administration attended on behalf of STAR Catholic Schools, and the event was live streamed via social media for interested staff, students, and members of the public to view.



“Although we would have loved to host a large ceremony as we have to commence past projects, ensuring the health and safety of staff and attendees was our main priority,” says Superintendent Charlie Bouchard.

“Despite the restrictions, the ceremony was an intimate and special commemoration of such a momentous occasion. We are grateful to all attendees who braved the cold to celebrate with us.”

A modernization of Father Lacombe Catholic School was one of 20 school projects announced by the Government of Alberta in March of 2018. Initially, the plan was to modernize the original building, which was built in 1957, while keeping the gymnasium intact. However, upon initial inspection, it was determined the gym structure was unsound, and a rebuild of the entire school was approved. Construction on the project is set to begin early next month.

“We are so excited for the students, staff, and families of Father Lacombe Catholic School and eager to see construction progress on their beautiful new building,” says Board Chair Michelle Lamer.

“This project will allow us to continue to honour the great legacy of Father Albert Lacombe, as well as the history of Catholic education in the community and the province as a whole.”

*Based in central Alberta, Saint Thomas Aquinas Roman (STAR) Catholic School Division represents 12 schools that serve the communities of Beaumont, Drayton Valley, Lacombe, Leduc, Ponoka, and Wetaskiwin. The STAR Catholic Schools team of teachers and support staff are committed to giving more than 4000 students across our division every opportunity to achieve their potential in a caring, safe and Christ-centred environment.*

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