

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER



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October 2007

"A single grateful thought toward heaven is the most complete prayer..."

--G. Lessing

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

It's hard to believe we're already into our second month of school. Time flies when you're having fun!

Having an 'attitude of gratitude' is so important. As H.E. Manning states, "Gratitude consists in a watchful attention to the particulars of our state, and to the multitude of God's gifts, taken one by one. It fills us with a consciousness that God loves and cares for us, even to the least event and smallest need of life. It is a blessed thought: from our childhood, God has been laying His fatherly hands upon us, and always in benediction, and that even the strokes of His hands are blessings, and among the chiefest we have ever received."

Although we focus on gratitude during Thanksgiving, it is not limited to this feast time alone. Each day, we need to take time to reflect and be thankful for all of God's gifts. I am sincerely grateful for so many things. Among these are:

- The students' enthusiasm, laughter and willingness to share their lives with us each and every day.
- The interested and supportive parents, parish and community members of St. Joseph's Catholic School.
- The dedicated, competent and caring staff of our school.

Together, we can make things happen. Happy thanksgiving!

Your Partner in Catholic Education,

Christina Brown
Principal.

Welcome!

Please join me in welcoming our new co-op students from ADHS – Desmond Patrois, Jessica Kilby and Natalie Connors. Desmond is working along side of our two custodians. Jessica is working in the office, and in the grade one and three classrooms. Natalie is working in Mrs. Barclay's kindergarten classroom.

Father Mitch Beechey has been appointed as the parish priest of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. We look forward to working with him!

We are also pleased to announce our newest Bishop, His Excellency Bishop Mulhall.

MEET THE TEACHER BBQ



The Meet the Teacher Barbeque, hosted by St. Joseph's School Council, on Wednesday, September 27th was a huge success!

We are so appreciative to Mrs. Kristine Dewar for all her time planning and organizing the BBQ and to the many parents, staff and student volunteers who contributed to the success of the evening. Mr. Fridgen provided a lively DJ service to us during the BBQ. For this, we are grateful! Thank you also to Mayor Terry Gibeau and his wife, Betty, for celebrating the new schoolyard improvements with us.

SOCIAL JUSTICE PRESENTATION



Yesterday, our grade seven and eight students had the opportunity to participate in a presentation led by Mr. Bruce Munroe, a former principal, and Ana Dela Cruz who is from the Dominican Republic. The theme of the presentation was their experiences in the Dominican Republic and ways we can, as a school community, make our students more cognizant of the difficulties and challenges that similar young people face in the D.R. Part of the presentation included the viewing of a CD that was put together by a former Bishop Smith CHS student.

We are grateful to Mr. Munroe and Ms. Dela Cruz for their time and enthusiasm. The response to this social justice opportunity was very positive!

FLAG FOOTBALL TOURNAMENTS



Our Flag Football Team, under the leadership of Mr. Hisko, will

participate in the annual tournament on Thursday, October 4th at Mat-e-way Park in Renfrew. We wish them the best!

CROSS COUNTRY RUN

Junior and Senior Cross Country Teams will compete in a cross country tournament on Wednesday, October 10th. We will cheer all our participants on!



PARISH NEWS

Eucharistic Celebrations

St. Joseph's and John XXIII Catholic Schools gathered as a community of believers to celebrate an opening school mass and the Feast of St. John Chrysostom on Thursday, September 13th. It was a wonderful way to begin a new school year.

Many classes have opted to attend each first Friday Mass at 9:30 a.m. at St. John Chrysostom Parish. Our attendance this Friday will be a great opportunity to reflect upon Thanksgiving together.

St. John Chrysostom Parish News

Sunday, October 14th is the Harvest Festival in the Parish Hall. A hot Roast Beef Dinner will be served from 11:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.



Confirmation candidates and their parents are to meet in the parish hall after 10:30 a.m. mass on Sunday, October 21st. The Sacrament of Confirmation is scheduled for Saturday, November 3rd at 4:30 p.m. This is for both parishes.

SAFE SCHOOLS

Our schools are safe places for our students and the adults that work with them. Safe arrival programs, anti-bullying projects, visitor sign-in procedures and fire drills are a few of the numerous activities we engage in to ensure that our children are safe.

Lock-down Procedures

This year, all Catholic schools in Renfrew County will be adding "lock-down" procedures to their list

of safety procedures. A lock-down is an exercise that involves all students, staff, local police services and visitors to the school. This procedure is used in the event of an emergency incident outside or inside of the building.

Later this month, our school will be practicing this drill with the help of our local police services. The drill will begin with an announcement from the principal. Staff and students will immediately find an area (classroom, gym or library) and move quickly and silently to this safe location. Staff and students will remain quiet for the duration of the exercise and no communication will be made with the office or other classrooms. At the completion of the drill, the principal will make another announcement indicating that the exercise is complete. Classes and regular activities will resume.

Fire Prevention Procedures



This year, October 7th to October 13th has been designated as 'Fire Prevention Week'. The purpose of this week is to raise awareness of fire safety.

Every year, representatives from the local fire department visit the school to conduct an inspection of the school's fire drill procedures. We generally have three drills in the fall and three in the spring. We will conduct our third fire drill for this year during Fire Prevention Week.

The Fire Safety Council encourages you to develop, with your child, an awareness of fire prevention at home, home escape plans and the hazards of fire.

Student Pick-Up At the End of the Day

As you are aware, primary and junior students participate in afternoon recess from 2:50 to 3:05 p.m. We moved recess to allow for larger blocks of teaching time in the afternoon. Although recess is at the end of the day, it is still considered part of the school day. Dismissal of students remains at 3:05 p.m.

Any parent or guardian wishing to pick up their child early is asked to notify the appropriate

classroom teacher and/or office in advance. ***All parents/guardians/visitors are to report to the office upon arrival.*** We greatly appreciate that you wait for your child(ren) at the front of the school or in the front hall to eliminate confusion. Please refrain from entering the schoolyard, specifically at recess time. Teachers on duty find it difficult to keep track of who is to go with whom and when. Mrs. Duhn and I will gladly call upon your child(ren) to meet you.

Thank you for your assistance and support of our continued efforts to "sustain safe school environments characterized by warmth, hospitality, good humour and joy"!

HEALTHY HAIR CHECK

We can work together to prevent the spread of lice by taking a few precautions listed below:

- Do not share hats and toques.
- Do not try hats on in a store.
- Do not share combs and hairbrushes.
- Do not use another person's hair ornaments.
- Do bring a pillow to a sleep over.
- Do clean headphones before using.
- Do keep hats, toques, mitts and scarves inside coat sleeve.
- Do a regular head check at home.

We are very grateful to Mrs. Giambianco for volunteering her time to help us with this activity.



SCHOOL SPIRIT DAY

School Spirit Is Alive!

Tease those tresses and spike that hair because Friday, October 19th is Wacky Hair Day!

Wednesday, October 31st is “Black and Orange Day”. We encourage everyone to dress in black and/or orange to celebrate Halloween.

STAFF DRESS DOWN DAYS

Each Friday, our staff will dress more casually. In doing so, they will contribute a toonie to put toward a charity.

PARENT-TEACHER INTERVIEWS

Parent-teacher interviews will be held during the evening of Wednesday, October 24th. We look forward to reviewing your child(ren)’s progress with you. Interview times will be determined at a later date. Once they are established, we will be sure to notify you. If you are unable to make it during the time provided, please let your child(ren)’s teacher(s) know. Alternate arrangements will be made.



SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR

Our school will be hosting a Scholastic Book Fair beginning on Monday, October 22nd through to the afternoon of Thursday, October 25th. Monday and Tuesday are reserved for browsing. On these days, teachers will take their students through the gym where students can create wish lists. Items may be purchased on Wednesday from 9:15-11:45 a.m., 1:00-3:00 p.m. and 3:30-8:00 p.m. Early Thursday morning, students may make last minute purchases. The fair will be packed up by lunch hour.

Thank you very much to our chairperson, Mrs. Ray.



PICTURE RETAKES

Picture retakes are scheduled for the afternoon of Thursday, November 1st.

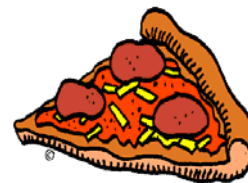
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY DAY

All members of the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board will join in a day of inspiration, dialogue and celebration during the system-wide Professional Activity Day on Friday, October 26th. There will be no school this day.

This year’s Christian Community Day will be an extra special day since it is Mr. Keon’s, our Director of Education, last day with our Board. We wish him the best in his retirement! He will be missed.

PIZZA

Every Thursday is Pizza Day. Pizza will be sold to students for \$1.50 a slice. For convenience, a sheet of ten coupons is available through School Council for \$15.00.



Cheques for pizza should be made payable to St. Joseph’s School Council. We respectfully ask that pizza and milk orders not be combined on the same cheque as milk orders are handled separately and from different accounts.

Coupons or money for pizza are due on Wednesdays. The kindergarten Class A students will receive their pizza on Wednesdays as well. Order forms are attached. Additional forms are available from the school office.

Thank you to Mrs. Quinn and Mrs. Anita Brown for organizing our pizza days!

HEALTHY SNACK PROGRAM

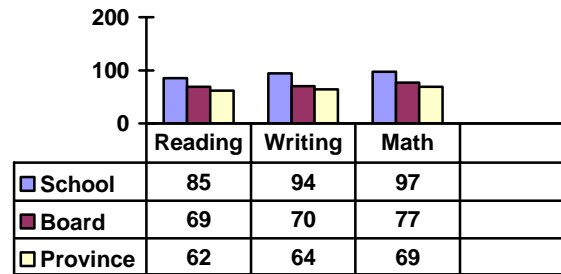
Once again our school is fortunate to be able to benefit from the Food For Learning Partnership Grant. Mrs. Kwiatkowski began the program in September. All students will receive a healthy morning snack every Friday.

Your support is required to sustain our wonderful healthy snack program. In-kind and/or monetary donations will be greatly appreciated. In-kind donations include healthy foods (i.e. fruit, vegetables, granola bars etc.) and or utensils that may be needed to prepare snacks.

Thank you to Mrs. Kwiatkowski for her time and interest in this program. Thank you also to Mrs. Barclay’s kindergarten class who helped organize the yogurt pops to be delivered to all classes.



Grade 3 Overall Results



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

On Wednesday, October 31st, the grade 8 classes will host a bake sale. All proceeds will go toward supporting a social justice initiative, Operation Christmas Child.

2006-2007 EQAO RESULTS

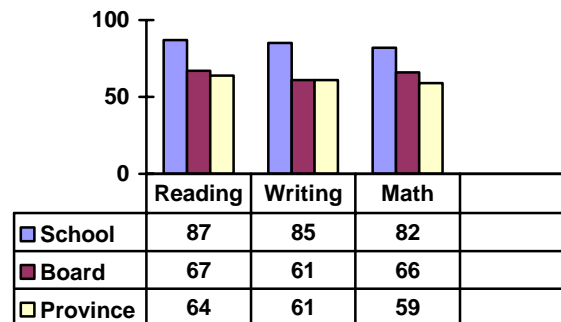
A total of seventy-two students (33 grade 3 and 39 grade 6 students) from St. Joseph's Catholic School participated in the Provincial Assessments of Reading, Writing and Mathematics in 2007.

Individual Student Reports outlining the results of the assessments have been released and shared with parents of last year's grade three and six students. The reports identify the overall achievement level in each strand.

I am pleased to provide you with this year's results. As you can see from the charts below, our school's results at levels three and four were wonderful! We are well above Board and Provincial results.

When I compared our grade six results with their overall grade three results from 2003-2004, I noticed significant improvement was made in the three year period of time. The reading score increased by 34%, the writing score increased by 32% and the math score increased by 14%. This is outstanding! Congratulations to all students, staff members and parents for your awesome achievements!

Grade 6 Overall Results



Experience has shown that data inform professional practice and provide a catalyst for improving student achievement. Thus, detailed school results will be evaluated and analyzed. A School Action Plan will then be developed in collaboration with staff to maintain and improve student achievement in reading, writing and math and plan interventions for students where necessary.

TEACHER PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL



Each year, the Teacher Performance Appraisal Model mandated by the Ministry of Education must be implemented. This teacher evaluation program recognizes and celebrates the excellent work of teachers in our Catholic School Board while providing an opportunity for professional growth and dialogue.

Parents may participate in the teacher/parent communication portion of this evaluation process by completing a Parental Input On Teacher/Parent Communication For Performance Appraisal Process survey and submitting this survey in an

envelope marked “**confidential**” to the school principal. This survey will form part of the dialogue between the principal and teacher during the appraisal process.

The survey may be requested from the office or printed from the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board Website <http://www.rccdsb.edu.on.ca>.

WITH SINCERE GRATITUDE



❖ Thank you to Miss Hebert and Mrs. Duhn for creating such beautiful festive bulletin boards in our front hall.

- ❖ I'm truly grateful to Miss Hebert for organizing the Books of Thanksgiving that will be part of the offertory during masses this weekend.
- ❖ We appreciate the thoughtfulness of Mr. Jamie Dewar and Mr. Peter Landon for installing new volleyball posts in the intermediate yard. The new court is well used!



FAMILY FAITH

It is often asked if it is possible to see in the customs of Halloween, evidence of Christian faith, of hospitality, playfulness and generosity and of a healthy remembrance of the dead in anticipation of the great homecoming of heaven.

Halloween or Hallow's Eve

Hallows is another word for Saints. We may end October with Halloween but it is also a way to begin November, the church's month to remember the dead. Start by conducting some research on your patron saints. Patron saints are the success stories or heroes of our faith. We need heroes. Our children need heroes.

PRAYER

Gratitude for the Little Moments

“Exhaust the little moment. Soon it dies. And be it gash or gold, it will not come again in this identical disguise.”
-Gwendolyn Brooks-

Gratitude, yes
For all the big things
That stand tall,
Thick with abundance,
Joy, fruitfulness,
I cannot help
But applaud
Their presence...

But deep thankfulness
For the bite-sized
Pieces of my life?
I had not thought of them,
Those little snippets of time
So easily consumed
In the hurry and blur
Of pretentious days.



