



St. Joseph the Worker School December 2017 Newsletter

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Happy Advent Season to all! It's hard to believe that December and the new liturgical calendar year is already upon us. I pray that we can make some time to reflect on the message of Advent - that Advent is actually about two comings – a celebration of one that already occurred, and a waiting and preparation for something truly incredible still to come. Pope Francis shared these wonderful words: “Let us rediscover the beauty of being together along the way: the Church, and the whole of humanity, the people, the civilizations, the cultures, all together on the paths of time.”

“The journey is never finished,” advises Pope Francis. “Just as in each of our own lives, there is always a need to restart, to rise again, to recover a sense of the goal of one’s own existence.”

In truth, we all know that it is much easier to get pulled into the glare and glitz of consumerism than to see Advent as an opportunity to restart and recover a sense of what our true earthly goals are. Our Pope yet again calls us to turn away from the emptiness of consumerism and our disposable society in his *Laudato Si* encyclical that all CISVA schools continue to focus on this year: ***Care for Everyone in our Common Home***. The Pope aptly states, “...when people become self-centred and self-enclosed, their greed increases. The emptier a person’s heart is, the more he or she needs things to buy, own or consume.”

May everyone experience a happy and blessed Advent season that is filled with generosity, self-reflection and preparing. Our time on this earth is brief; let us use our time wisely and bring joy and hope to all in our ever-increasingly fragile world.

Yours in Christ,

Paul Fraser

Interim Report Cards Sent Out

As mentioned in our 'Meet the Teacher' general meeting in September, the focus of our reporting out is more geared towards inquiry based learning and integrating what they call "student curricular competencies" into the various learning areas. If you have any questions about your child(ren)'s reporting, please contact their teacher directly.



White Christmas Guardians Gala: An Amazing Evening!

Our recent Guardians Gala fundraising event was a great success on many levels. Between our beautiful venue, having some fun in live auction with Mike (our favourite auctioneer), tasty food, and a fabulous assortment of generously donated items, it was a well organized event that was enjoyed by all who attended. Many thanks go out to our new Gala Committee Chair – Calina Hung, as well as our PEC Coordinator – Marina Crego. Many hours of tireless work went into the success of the evening. Well done to all who were involved in the evening, both in the forefront and behind the scenes in organizing the event. We look forward to hearing the final amount that was raised for the school.

Grades 1&2 Generosity

Our school would not be what it is without the generosity of our entire parent community. This support comes in many different ways. We would like to thank a special Grade 2 family who donated a brand new fire-proof safe to our school office AND we thank a Grade 1 family who were inspired by our planting of a school tree (to celebrate our CISVA theme) and then donated another tree for future students to enjoy. On behalf of our school - thank you!

Spirit Day Toy Drive: Many Thanks to All!

We are wrapping up our November Fundraiser! Our Toy Drive was in support of Children's Hospital and Richmond Christmas Fund. Dozens and dozens of toys came flowing in over the past week and we are so grateful of our family's generosity. Thanks go to Mrs. Whitlock, Mrs Withers and the Kindergarten class for organizing this worthwhile initiative.

Professional Day: December 8 (No Classes)

A reminder that there will be no classes on Friday, December 8 (this Friday) as staff members continue their training in the Revised Curriculum and application of Core Competencies into the new learning model. Classes will resume on Monday, December 11.



Food Drive For St. Vincent de Paul Society

In the spirit of giving, St. Joe's will be having its annual food drive week! Throughout the week of December 11- December 15, each class will attempt to bring in at least 130 non-perishable food items. Our school goal is to bring in 1200 items (that's actually an average of 150 per class) and we are hopeful that we will reach it. Please send the food items with your child any time during the week of December 11-15 and watch our "food pyramid" in our school foyer grow!

Spirit Day Dress Down Day for December - Extra Information

Connected directly to the St. Vincent de Paul Food Drive (December 11-15), we will be having our monthly Spirit Day (non- uniform day) on **Tuesday, December 12**. The Spirit Day will be for our food drive efforts for the week. **No toonie is necessary on this day**, since your generous food donations during the previous week represent the "giving" portion of the Spirit Day.

NOTE: (if you also wish to donate cash to assist with the St. Vincent de Paul hampers, there are "giving" envelopes available in front of the altar in the church).

St. Joe's Christmas Celebration 2017

Our annual Christmas sharing afternoon and evening is fast approaching! We will have two celebrations on **Wednesday, December 20**. After our traditional Seniors' Luncheon is complete, we will share the Advent spirit with an exciting Christmas musical program, followed by some K-7 Christmas cheer prepared by each of our classroom teachers.

The afternoon Christmas Celebration will begin at 1:00pm. Please note that dismissal on this day is:
-when the afternoon celebration ends and **IF** a parent/guardian is present to pick up the student **OR**
-at 3:00pm (our regular dismissal time)

We will then gather again in the evening for a **7:00pm celebration**. Please remember that all children need to attend the evening event, and they should arrive 15 minutes prior to the start of the celebration (6:45pm). We'll see you there!

Speech Arts for 2017

Watch for the permission form and details during the first week of January. Speech Arts is a wonderful opportunity for students in Grades 1-4 to practice oral speaking and presentation skills. All students in Speech Arts will participate in our School Speech Arts Presentations and a smaller group of students from each category will represent the school at our Tri-School Speech Arts Festival.

School Closures

This is a reminder of our school procedures with regard to school closures due to snow or other reasons. If there is a school closure, a closure posting will be made on our school website (and you will receive an instant email if you are properly subscribed to the office blogs). If no web blog is posted, the **school is open as usual**. If you feel, at any time, that it is unsafe to travel on your street, please do not feel that you have to get to school even if we are in session. We believe it's best to err on the side of caution when deciding if it is safe to take to the streets after a snowfall.

Gift Cards for Your Christmas Shopping

It's an easy solution if you're thinking of giving something to family and friends, both local and overseas, for Christmas. All proceeds from the gift cards directly benefit the school and the tuition assistance program. Order forms are available in the Church Gathering Space at the gift card table or on the St. Joseph the Worker Parish website (www.stjworker.org)