



Dear Parents and Guardians,

It's hard to believe November is already upon us. We started the new month with All Saints' Day, also called All Hallows, a solemnity that is celebrated on November 1 in many parts of Western Christianity.

Our school community will soon gather to offer tribute to the many sacrifices made for our freedom. This special day will fall this year on Friday, November 9. The Remembrance Day Service will be held in the gymnasium at 11:00am. Mr. Whelan is busy preparing his Grade 6 class, who are in charge of the Remembrance Day Service. All are invited to attend and pay their respects to the women and men who sacrificed and gave so much for our freedom.

Our Term 1 Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held on Thursday, November 15. It is an important opportunity for families to connect with our classroom teachers after 2 months of classes. Good communication between the school and parents is essential not only to share learning, but to ensure that we are successfully meeting the emotional needs of your children whom you have entrusted to us.

This November's Spirit Day efforts will support a Toy Drive for BC Children's Hospital and the Richmond Christmas Fund. More details will be shared during our Thursday, November 22nd school assembly. As always, parents are welcome to join us as we discuss more about this new initiative with the students.

In closing - I found myself reading (yet another) article about the challenges that smart phones can pose. But this particular article got my attention more than others because of the unexpected angle it provided. I found myself in parts of the article and wanted to share the article with you. I have included it at the end of this newsletter in "parent updates".

May everyone have a happy and blessed November,

Paul Fraser,
Principal

Reminder- it's time for Winter Uniforms (and Coats)!

Just a reminder that all students must wear their winter uniforms. Please refer to your Parent Handbook for uniform details and information on when St. Joe's moves back to its Spring uniform. Warm jackets

(preferably with hoods!) and proper outdoor shoes are a must, as the students still go outside, even if the weather is less than ideal.



Cross Country 2018

After many weeks of training, the St. Joe's Cross Country running team competed in our 7th Annual Salmon Run at Garry Point Park. New for this year, our runners also participated in the CISVA Cross Country Finals at Swangard Stadium in Burnaby. With 32 schools participating, it was quite the event! A big thank-you goes out to our coaches for their hard work and help. Thanks also to our many parents who assisted us this year with supervision during the practices.

New Parent Gathering- Great Times!

The annual New Parent Gathering was held on October 3rd. It was very well attended by our many new families who had the opportunity to pray, learn more about our school community and get to know each other better in a light, social atmosphere.



Remembrance Day Service 2018

We will hold our annual Remembrance Day service for St. Joe's School on **Friday, November 9th**. At 11:00am, all grades will gather in the gym and the Grade 6 class will lead us in a memorial for all of the fallen soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice so that we may continue to live in freedom. All families are invited to attend the service.

REMINDER: There is no school on **Monday, November 12** (as Canada observes Remembrance Day).

Guardians Gala is Just Around the Corner!

The biggest St. Joseph the Worker Gala Fundraiser of the school year will be held on **Saturday, November 17th** at the **Westin Wall Centre** in Richmond. This year our theme is 'Hollywood' with all the flash and fun that goes along with it!

Gala tickets are \$70. For details, please see the Gala package and Gala Newsflashes that are sent out to each school family.

Parent-Teacher Conferences - November 15

Parent-Teacher Conferences are set for Thursday, November 15. Time slot requests have been sent out via backpack mail and final times will be sent home before the Remembrance Day long weekend.

Scholastic Book Fair

We will be holding the first of our twice-annual Scholastic Book Fairs during the upcoming Parent-Teacher Conferences. All families are encouraged to spend some time in our Book Fair, which will be held in the Music Room. All proceeds from our Book Fair help us to buy books for both our library and for our classrooms, so make sure you visit!



Reconciliation Celebrations for Grades 3- 7

We will once again be taking a school-wide exploration of conscience and forgiveness during the days leading up to Advent. For Grades 3-7, this exploration will manifest itself in an opportunity for classroom-wide confessions with Father Pierre, Father Joe and Father Manoj during the Advent season. Reconciliation dates are set for December 4, 5 and 6.

Early Morning Drop-Off Concerns

As the days get colder and the mornings become progressively darker, it is important to ensure your children are properly supervised prior to school. This means that no unsupervised children are to be dropped off prior to supervision commencement at 8:30am. **Dropping children off early and instructing them to wait in the gym if there is a volleyball practice is not an option.**

If your work schedule involves an early drop-off, please make the necessary arrangements with either family members or with another school family to ensure your children are kept safe and warm in the mornings. Thank you for your assistance regarding this important safety concern.

Distracted Parenting?
By Erika Chistakis

Our society may be reaching peak criticism of digital devices. Even so, emerging research suggests that a key problem remains underappreciated. It involves kids' development, but it's probably not what you think. More than screen-obsessed young children, we should be concerned about tuned-out parents.

Stats tell us that parents now have more face time with their children than did almost any parents in history. But the engagement between parent and child is increasingly low-quality. Parents are constantly present in their children's lives physically, but they are less *emotionally* attuned. To be clear, I'm not unsympathetic to parents in this predicament. My own adult children like to joke that they wouldn't have survived infancy if I'd had a smartphone in my clutches 25 years ago.

Yet for all the talk about children's screen time, surprisingly little attention is paid to screen use by parents themselves, who now suffer from what [the technology expert Linda Stone](#) more than 20 years ago called "continuous partial attention." This condition is harming not just us, as Stone has argued; it is harming our children. The new parental-interaction style can interrupt an ancient emotional cueing system, whose hallmark is responsive communication, the basis of most human learning. We're in uncharted territory.

Child-development experts have different names for the dyadic signaling system between adult and child, which builds the basic architecture of the brain. Jack P. Shonkoff, a pediatrician and the director of Harvard's Center on the Developing Child, calls it the "serve and return" style of communication; it is referred to as a "conversational duet." The vocal patterns parents everywhere tend to adopt during exchanges with infants and toddlers are marked by a higher-pitched tone, simplified grammar, and engaged, exaggerated enthusiasm. Though this talk is cloying to adult observers, babies can't get enough of it. Not only that: one study showed

that infants exposed to this interactive, emotionally responsive speech style at 11 months and 14 months knew twice as many words at age 2 as ones who weren't exposed to it.

Child development is relational, which is why, in one experiment, nine-month-old babies who received a few hours of Mandarin instruction from a live human could isolate specific phonetic elements in the language while another group of babies who received the exact same instruction via video could not. According to Hirsh-Pasek, a professor at Temple University and a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, more and more studies are confirming the importance of conversation. "Language is the single best predictor of school achievement," she told me, "and the key to strong language skills are those back-and-forth fluent conversations between young children and adults."

A problem therefore arises when the emotionally resonant adult-child cueing system so essential to early learning is interrupted—by a text, for example, or a quick check-in on Instagram. Anyone who's been mowed down by a smartphone-impaired stroller operator can attest to the phenomenon. One consequence of such scenarios has been noted by an economist who tracked a rise in children's injuries as smartphones became prevalent. These findings attracted a decent bit of media attention to the physical dangers posed by distracted parenting, but we have been slower to reckon with its impact on children's cognitive development. Toddlers cannot learn when we break the flow of conversations by picking up our cellphones or looking at the text that whizzes by our screens.

Occasional parental inattention is not catastrophic (and may even build resilience), but chronic distraction is another story. Smartphone use has been associated with a familiar sign of addiction: Distracted adults grow irritable when their phone use is interrupted; they not only miss emotional cues but actually misread them. A tuned-out parent may be quicker to anger than an engaged one, assuming that a child is trying to be manipulative when, in reality, she just wants attention. Short, deliberate separations can of course be harmless, even healthy, for parent and child alike (especially as children get older and require more independence). But that sort of separation is different from the inattention that occurs when a parent is *with* a child but communicating through his or her nonengagement that the child is less valuable than an email. A mother telling kids to go out and play, a father saying he needs to concentrate on a chore for the next half hour—these are entirely reasonable responses to the competing demands of adult life. What's going on today, however, is the rise of *unpredictable* care, governed by the beeps and enticements of smartphones. We seem to have stumbled into the worst model of parenting imaginable—always present physically, thereby blocking children's autonomy, yet only fitfully present emotionally.