



St. Joseph the Worker School December 2019 Newsletter

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Happy Advent Season to all! It's hard to believe that December and the new liturgical calendar year (Year A for the detail-oriented folk) is here already. Every year, we try to make some time to reflect on the message of Advent – a message of preparation for TWO comings: a celebration of one that already occurred, and a waiting and preparation for something truly incredible still to come. We are told to wait and prepare for not only the celebration of Jesus' birth on December 25, but also for His Second Coming that was promised. Jesus told us that the time of His coming is not known to the world, but that we are to joyfully prepare ourselves in the meanwhile. How do we prepare? We live our lives with joy and love in our daily actions.

So, we wait for Christmas Day. And we hopefully make moments, between the frenzied shopping trips and house preparation, to ponder the difference between being spiritually awake and asleep. We know all too well that between the frenzy at the mall and the various office and home parties, it is easy to get numbed to the true reason for the season.

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 this ever-increasingly busy world of ours.

Yours in Christ,

Paul Fraser

"Whatever else be lost among the years, let us keep Christmas still a shining thing: Whatever doubts assail us, or what fears, let us hold close one day, remembering its poignant meaning for the hearts of men. Let us get back our childlike faith again."
--Grace Noll Crowell

Masquerade Guardians Gala: What an Amazing Evening!

Our recent Guardians Gala fundraising event was a great success on so many levels. Between the fun theme, action in the 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 PEC Fundraising Coordinator – Monica Sagastume, as well as the Gala Committee Chair – Calina Hung. 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. It seems we met our Gala fundraiser goal of \$40,000. We look forward to hearing the final amount!

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 and the Kindergarten class for organizing this worthwhile initiative.



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 9th - December 13th, each class will bring in non-perishable food items. Our school goal is to bring in 1200 items and we are hopeful that we will reach it. Please send the food items with your child any time during the week of December 9th -13th 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 9th-13th), we will be having our monthly Spirit Day (non-uniform day) on **Tuesday, December 10th**. 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 week represents 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).

Reason For The Season - Coming Next Friday!

St. Joe's Parish will be holding our annual “Reason for the Season” celebration on **Friday, December 13th from 5pm-9pm**. Everyone is welcome to attend and bring a friend who is not at St. Joe's, to show them what we are about! We'll have a petting zoo (for real this time!), as well as great food, Christmas crafts, and our famous interactive Downtown Bethlehem. Please put it on your calendars and plan to attend!

Parish St. Nicholas Breakfast - Sunday, December 8th

St. Joe's Parish is hosting jolly St. Nick on Sunday, December 8th from 8am to 10:30am. The amazing Richmond Centre Santa will be with us for pictures and fun! Enjoy a wonderful breakfast. Both breakfast and photos with Santa are by donation.

St. Joe's Christmas Celebration 2019

Our annual Christmas sharing afternoon and evening is fast approaching! We will have two celebrations on **Wednesday, December 18th**. 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:

- 1) when the afternoon celebration ends and **IF** a parent/guardian is present to pick up the student **OR**
- 2) at 3:00pm (our regular dismissal time)

NOTE: As shown in the December calendar, there is **NO HOMEWORK CLUB** on December 18.

We will then gather again during the evening of December 18th 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 2020

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 a 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 the streets in your area, 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 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). There are also order forms at our school office, so please drop by to see what cards are available.