

SAINT MARY SCHOOL

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On Sunday December 3, we will begin the season of Advent. Advent is a very important time in our faith as we begin a new liturgical year and prepare for the coming of Jesus. The Advent wreath is a symbol of our waiting. As each week passes, we light another candle as we prepare our hearts for the birth of Jesus. A deliberate observance of Advent prepares us for a richer experience of Christmas.

Our board theme this year is Our Story ~ Our Journey. There are many Advent traditions that help us to make natural connections between key words in theme and Advent. The story of salvation is told through the Jesse Tree. It focuses on tracing the storyline of God's family, and it is also a means by which we remember God's family and our place in it.

On behalf of the staff of Saint Mary's, I would like to wish you all an Advent season full of hope, joy and peace. For those of you who are traveling over the holidays, may God bless your travels and return you home safely.

Merry Christmas,
Mrs. B. Heeneman & the Staff of Saint Mary's



Advent Prayer

*Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
ever faithful to your promises
and ever close to your Church:
the earth rejoices in hope of the Saviour's coming
and looks forward with longing to his return at the end of time.
Prepare our hearts and remove the sadness that hinders us
from feeling the joy and hope which his presence will bestow,
for he is Lord for ever and ever. Amen.*

Happy Retirement Mrs. Begg!

It is with mixed emotions that the staff and students of Saint Mary's School say good-bye to Mrs. Begg. Mrs. Begg retires at Christmas and her last teaching day will be Friday December 22, 2017. While we are happy that she will have more time to spend with her family and friends, she will be greatly missed by the Saint Mary's School community! We wish her all the best and hope she comes to visit us often! Saint Mary's welcomes Ms. Bond who will be teaching the grade 1/2 class beginning in January.



Saint Mary's Christmas Concert



A Christmas tradition is our school Christmas concert and Saint Mary's students will present a variety of performances for your enjoyment on **December 14, 2017 at 6:00 pm**. Please bring a non-perishable food item to contribute to our food drive or a new pair of mittens, socks, hat or scarf if you haven't already done so. More information will be coming home with your child from his/her classroom teacher.

Advent Mass @ Saint Mary's School



Father Sercely will be at Saint Mary's School to celebrate mass with our school community on December 8 @ 9:15 a.m. Mrs. Godard's Gr. 4/5 class will be taking the lead organizing the mass. All are welcome to join us ... we would love to have more parents, guardians and grandparents attend our school masses.

Staff Appreciation Christmas Gifts



It is getting closer and closer to the holiday season and the staff of Saint Mary's School are asking that instead of spending money on a gift for them, if you would please put your money towards a larger cause such as your choice of charity. We appreciate you thinking of us but with so many people in our community and in the world desperately needing assistance it would make us very happy to know that you provided support to others.

Intermediate Basketball Teams

Congratulations to our Intermediate Boys and Girls Basketball teams. On November 28 both they competed at Riverside for the area tournament. The teams are to be commended for their good sportsmanship, skill development and effort. Thank you to their amazing coaches Mrs. Godard and Mr. Foxcroft for a great season! Go Mustangs!

Saint Mary's Support St. Vincent de Paul

Our Saint Mary's School community has always done an amazing job of supporting the St. Vincent de Paul Christmas Food Drive. A special thank you goes out to Mrs. Webster and her Grade 2/3 class for spearheading this activity again this year and to those students who decorate the delivery boxes. Check out the food donation box in the front foyer of the school on your next visit. A food donation calendar was sent home but you may send any type of non-perishable food or other items (facial tissue, toilet paper, diapers, soap, etc.) in at any time. There is such a need for this service to our community. Your support is not only greatly appreciated, but also desperately needed.



Inclement Weather...



Blizzards, freezing rain, -40 temperatures...ah, winter in Muskoka! Just a reminder, for bus cancellation information, listen to the local radio stations (Moose 99.5 / Moose 105.5/ Hunter's Bay 88.7) check our board website <http://www.smcdsb.on.ca> (we are listed under "District of Muskoka" not the Simcoe County zones) or the school's transportation consortium website <https://www.mybustoschool.ca>. Even if the buses aren't running, the school is open for drop off by parents after 8:20 a.m. and parents must come in to sign their child in. If the inclement weather day is a food day (Monday, Wednesday, Friday) the food is cancelled and your child will be given a credit for the next month. Milk will continue as usual but your child will need a lunch. All students need to be picked up by 3:30 p.m. at the latest.

Support for Families...



From time to time families may find that things are very hard financially and it is a struggle to provide adequate food, warm clothing or even shelter for their children. The St. Vincent de Paul Society is a very dedicated, caring group of people whose mission is to provide assistance in a completely confidential manner. Families in need may leave a message with the St. Vincent de Paul Society at 705-789-0008 and someone will be in touch to provide more information and the assistance that is available. If you wish to make a donation to this self-less organization, you may call the same number and leave a message.

Hat & Mitten Tree



As we enter the season of Advent, the Saint Mary's community will work to answer God's call to help those in need. We are collecting new hats, mittens, socks and scarves to donate to others in need. Please send new items to school with your child and they will be used to decorate the tree in the front hall. Thank you to Ms. Hetherington and the 7/8 class for organizing this endeavor.

News from the Leadership Team!

Hot Chocolate Day!

We will be selling hot chocolate for \$.50 on December 7 during the lunch hour. Our proceeds will go to a local charity (e.g., Salvation Army or Table Food Bank).

Christmas Sweater Spirit Day!

We are having a Christmas sweater day on December 22nd. We invite all students to wear a fun sweater to school.

From Our Trustee...

You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. Luke 2:12



The Association of Catholic Bishops of Ontario have issued a couple of pastoral letters on the subject of

Catholic Education. The first, from 1989, was titled "This Moment of Promise" and the second in 1993, "Fulfilling the Promise". The third pastoral letter will be published in 2018 and will be called "Renewing the Promise". You may remember being asked to participate in a process of gathering information about the current strengths and challenges to Catholic Education last spring. Catholics from across the province were asked to answer some questions in the first round. That information was collated and then in round two, we were asked to indicate which we thought were most important.

In November, each Catholic School Board in the province was invited to send a team of 14 people to a Symposium in Toronto. Each team included: parents, teaching staff, union reps, principals, vice principals, the director, student trustees and the Board Chair. We were also joined by many of Ontario's bishops, including Bishop Miehm. Throughout the day we spent time in our school groups and then in groups where we were mixed in with a cross-section of people from other groups.

There were so many great discussions around the room and ideas on how to build on the wonderful system that we currently have. I look forward to meeting with the committee again in the new year to discuss how we will implement some of the great ideas in our schools, and to the publication of the Bishop's pastoral letter.

I hope to see many of you at Christmas Masses and Concerts this month. It is always so much fun to witness the joy and excitement of children at this time of year!

Merry Christmas!
Carol Corriveau-Truchon

Mass Schedule for Christmas & New Year's

December 24 @ 4:00 pm	St. Mary's Church, Huntsville
December 24 @ 7:00 pm	St. Kateri Church, Baysville
December 25 @ 10:00 am	St. Mary's Church, Huntsville
December 31 @ 4:00 pm	St. Mary's Church, Huntsville
January 1 @ 9:00 am	St. Mary's Church, Huntsville
January 1 @ 11:30 am	St. Kateri Church, Baysville

Dates to Remember...

- Dec 3 First Sunday of Advent
- Dec 4 CSCC Meeting @ 6:30 in library
- Dec 7 Leadership: Hot Chocolate at Lunch (\$0.50)
Family Movie Night Featuring "Cars 3"
6:00 pm (Doors open 5:30 pm)
- Dec 8 Advent Mass @ 9:15 am in gym ***New Time
- Dec 12 Reconciliation in Library in afternoon
- Dec 13 Rosary Team to Saint Mary's
Gr. 7 & 7/8 Visit to St. Dominic
- Dec 14 Christmas Concert @ 6:00 pm
(***Inclement Weather Date is December 19)
- Dec 22 Leadership Spirit Day: Christmas Sweater Day
- Jan 8 Welcome back! Classes Resume

December 2017 Newsletter

Dear Saint Mary Families,



This year we wish to continue to foster the link between our school and church communities by supporting the Saint Mary’s Knights of Columbus Advent Food Drive. For the past seven years, we have worked together to fill hampers for those who are in need in our own community. Please contribute what you can to make this year as successful as in the past.

Please keep the following calendar handy (perhaps on your fridge!). We are suggesting one type of food item each day, but any items are welcome any day! Also, there may be items to donate that are not mentioned in the daily list. All donations are appreciated.

Mrs. Webster’s grade two/three class will be promoting the food drive through posters and daily announcements. Donations will be accepted beginning November 27th until December 14th. Thank you for helping us to support families in our community!

November / December 2017

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
27 Canned fruits and vegetables	28 Soups and Condiments	29 Breakfast items – Cereal, Oatmeal, Jam, Pancake Mix	30 Coffee, Tea	1 Free Choice Friday!
4 Canned Salmon and Tuna	5 Pasta and Sauce	6 Soap – handsoap, dish soap, toiletries, toothpaste	7 Drink Boxes Lunch items	8 Free Choice Friday!
11 Cookies and Crackers	12 Paper Products (toilet paper, tissue, paper towels)	13 Beans and Rice	14 Bring a food item to the Christmas Concert!	

Please remember to check the expiry dates on all items before donating.

Thank you so much for your support!





CRISIS SERVICES ENHANCEMENT

July 11th, 2017

On behalf of the Child and Youth Mental Health Planning Table and Core Service Providers for the Nipissing, Parry Sound and Muskoka service area, I am pleased to announce the launch of our child and youth crisis line, effective Tuesday, July 11, 2017.

The Child and Youth Crisis Line will be available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week and can be accessed across Nipissing, Parry Sound and Muskoka through a single toll-free number: 1 844-287-9072 provided by the 211 Ontario Network.

All calls to the Crisis Line will be received by trained respondents at 211 Ontario Network who will collect information about the crisis and make arrangements for a response by a Crisis Clinician, from Hands TheFamilyHelpNetwork.ca (Hands) or Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions (Family Connexions). From 8:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. on weekdays, calls will be forwarded to Hands or Family Connexions for a response. For calls received after 9:00 p.m., a next day appointment will be organized by 211 Ontario Network with the appropriate agency. In cases where an urgent response is required, emergency services will be accessed via a live linkage between 211 Ontario Network and the appropriate emergency service.

To further support this service, Family Connexions/Hands will offer scheduled telephone crisis interventions every Saturday, Sunday and on statutory holidays beginning Saturday, July 15, 2017. The telephone support crisis sessions, which will be booked through the crisis line, will provide more flexible access to crisis services and in an alternative setting to a hospital emergency department, for children and youth.

Changes to crisis services are a direct result of a Core Services Gap review completed and presented to the Planning Table last year and to create a regional response. The first phase, which included harmonizing the crisis hours to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Friday across the Nipissing, Parry Sound and Muskoka districts, was implemented April 2017.

We appreciate your ongoing support as we work together to bring improved access to mental health services for children, youth and families in our communities.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeffrey S. Hawkins".

Jeffrey Hawkins, B.A., M.S.W., R.S.W.
Executive Director
HandsTheFamilyHelpNetwork.ca

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Dermenjian MEd, CPsych.".

Michelle Dermenjian, M.Ed., C.Psych.
Director, Child and Youth Services
Hands TheFamilyHelpNetwork.ca