



170 Skinner Road  
Waterdown, Ontario  
L0R 2H7  
(905) 523-2328

*"A proud feeder school to St. Mary Catholic Secondary School"*

SUPERINTENDENT: M. HUCAL  
PRINCIPAL: D. YOUNGER  
PRINCIPAL INTERN: A. CAIELLA

TRUSTEE: C. CORNALE  
PASTOR: VERY REV. W.L. FATHER. LOBSINGER, EV, PP  
SECRETARY: M. RATH

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## ***ST. THOMAS "WILDCATS" - JANUARY 2016***

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### **PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE**

On behalf of the staff of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School, this opportunity is taken to thank each of you for your generous donations and support of the Christmas initiatives that took place at school this year. Your generosity, support and kindness helped to make our Christmas Season special and memorable. Countless families will have benefitted from your generosity and corporal acts of mercy. Best wishes at this time are extended to each of you for a new year filled with joy, health, hope and peace! The new year is God's gift and blessing to us. We welcome the days and weeks to come and look forward to the challenges and learning opportunities that the year brings. We strive to work in partnership with you to always make learning a successful and rewarding experience for your children. May God continue to bless you throughout 2016.

### **A PRAYER for the NEW YEAR:**

Dear Lord,  
As we begin a new year,  
We turn our thoughts to how we can  
Touch and be touched, love and be loved,  
Forgive and be forgiven, heal and be healed,  
So that the goodness of our lives becomes  
A shared blessing for others;  
We ask that Your grace fill us  
With the courage and conviction to  
Be Merchants of Hope for those  
With whom we live and work  
And those we teach.  
Amen.

<http://stth.hwcdsb.ca/153210--Happy-New-Year-from-St.-Thomas-the-Apostle-CES>

### **SCHOOL LITURGY**

On Friday, January 8, 2016, at 9:30 am we will celebrate the Eucharistic Adoration as a school community in our school gym. Please keep this date in mind and join us.

### **JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION for 2016-2017 SCHOOL YEAR**

Parents wishing to register their child in Junior Kindergarten (FDK Year One) for September 2016 are asked to contact the school's Administrative Assistant, Mrs. Rath, to make an appointment (905)523-2328. Mrs. Rath will schedule an appointment in February for you to visit the school, complete the necessary forms and submit the required documentation.

If your child is currently in Junior Kindergarten (FDK Year One), you do not need to register him/her again.

<http://stth.hwcdsb.ca/151579--Full-Day-Kindergarten-Registration-for-New-Students>

Parents/guardians will need to provide:

- Baptismal Certificate
- Birth Certificate
- Proof of Residency
- Proof of up-to-date Immunization
- Immigration papers, if applicable

Age of Admission: Children are required to be 4 years of age on or before December 31, 2016.

### **CONGRATULATIONS FATHER WHITFIELD**

Congratulations to Father Whitfield who was ordained a Priest on December 19, 2015 at St. Thomas the Apostle Church.

### **VOLUNTEERING AT SCHOOL AND FOR TRIPS**

Parents/guardians require a Vulnerable Sector Screening Form to volunteer or help with trips. You can get a letter from the office that will ensure a reduced rate. Once you receive the completed Vulnerable Sector Screening Form, please give it to the office staff to take a photocopy for Board records. If you have not completed any of the above for this school year, please contact Mrs. Rath at the Office for further direction. Your assistance with this process is greatly appreciated.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Parents/guardians are asked to call the school prior to 9:10 a.m. on every day of an absence. Please advise of the reason for being absent and if your child is ill, please advise of the symptoms your child is experiencing.

Please note that our answering machine is available to receive messages outside of school hours.

### **DRESSING FOR WINTER WEATHER**

Winter is upon us! Though we have been spared harsh weather conditions to date, we know what is inevitably coming. Please ensure that your child comes to school prepared for cold weather with a hat, mittens, scarf, boots and a warm coat (snow pants where necessary). Please label your child's clothing so that there is no confusion. Also, ensure that your child has a pair of indoor shoes. Wearing boots of any kind indoors is not permitted.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

When schools are closed or buses cancelled due to extreme weather conditions, details will be announced through the following Hamilton and area media outlets:

- 900 CHML/Country 95.3 FM/Y/108 FM

- 1150 CKOC/K-Lite 102.9 FM/820
- CHAM/WAVE 94.7 FM
- CH Morning Live (Channel 12)
- CBC Hamilton - [www.cbc.ca/hamilton](http://www.cbc.ca/hamilton)
- The Hamilton Spectator - [www.thespec.com](http://www.thespec.com)
- Twitter - <https://twitter.com/HWCDSB>
- Facebook - [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

Parents/guardians should take notice of the following guidelines:

- In the event of impending severe weather conditions, parents should consider the safety of their children in deciding whether or not to send them to school
  - Parents should stay tuned to the Hamilton and area radio stations for weather reports and School Board announcements
  - Parents, who in spite of bus cancellations, drive their children to school, should ensure that their children can get into the school and will be required to make the necessary arrangements for the safe return home of their children at the end of the day or in the event of an early closure. Buses which do not run in the morning will not run for the rest of the day.

### **FAMILY LITERACY DAY**

Family Literacy Day is a national awareness initiative created by ABC Life Literacy Canada in 1999 and held annually on January 27 to raise awareness of the importance of reading and engaging in other literacy-related activities as a family.

Taking time every day to read or do a learning activity with children is crucial to a child's development. Even just 15 minutes a day can improve a child's literacy skills dramatically, and can help a parent improve their skills as well.

Barbara Reid, award-winning Canadian author and illustrator, is named Honourary Chair of Family Literacy Day 2016!

<http://abclifeliteracy.ca/family-literacy>

Mrs. Byrne, STTA Teacher Librarian, has arranged for an author visit.

As part of our literacy focus, a **SNUGGLE UP AND READ DAY** has been planned for January 28, 2016. More details will follow regarding the day's theme which will include an overarching message about the wondrous joys of reading!

On this day, staff and students from FDK-Grade 4 are invited to wear their pajamas to school and participate in this event. Parents, guardians and grandparents are invited to come to school (9:30-10:30) and snuggle up with their child to read their favourite books.

Remember to check out TumbleBook Library, a completely free online catalogue of read aloud books that are sure to delight both young and old alike:

Our school online access is <http://www.tumblebooklibrary.com/Default.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2f>

User name: **stthomasschool**  
Password: **books**

### **JANUARY AWARDS CEREMONY**

The January Award Ceremony will be on Thursday, January 28, 2016 at 2:40pm in the gym. All are welcome. December Award Winners: <http://stth.hwcdsb.ca/153055--December-Award-Winners>

January foci will be the virtue of 'Community', the Seven Habit 'Think Win Win' and, as always, the school motto 'Lead, Learn, Love and Leave a Legacy'.

### **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**

St. Thomas the Apostle Before and After school program is a school-based Catholic Child Care program designed to support and complement the programs of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School. We provide care for children attending school all day from ages 4 to 12 years of age. The program offers a variety of activities which includes recreation and games, arts and crafts, reading, music, time to work on homework and free time for the children to pursue their own interests in a safe, friendly environment. Please contact the program through the main office of the

school (905) 523.2328 or the Before and After School Program (905) 525-2268 Ext. 2628 for more details on how they can support the child care needs of your family.

### **SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FAIR**

This school year, all students in grades 4 through 8 will participate in the St. Thomas School Science Fair which will be held in early February. Classroom teachers will guide their students throughout this scientific inquiry process. Packages with detailed information and dates will be sent home during the first week back to school.

### **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY DAY:**

A reminder that Friday, January 29, 2016 is a Professional Activity Day; No school for the students on this day.

### **GRADE 8 GUIDANCE - High School Choices**

The Grade 8 students have begun their preparations for high school and will be completing their course selection and registration forms shortly. Please keep in mind that Catholic Education and the Christian community experience does not end with Confirmation in Grade 8. The religious education and training as well as the community experience offered by St. Mary CSS, our Catholic feeder high school is one that is unparalleled. Last year, many of our Grade 8 students made the choice to attend St. Mary Catholic Secondary School. We hope and pray that our families will continue to make this choice. St. Mary CSS has been very proactive in meeting the needs of the Flamborough community-often fine tuning their level of service to meet the unique needs and requests of our community. We have enjoyed and flourished in the community building days hosted at St. Mary Catholic Secondary School and will continue to do so in the weeks and months ahead.

The Grade 8 option sheet and registration day is scheduled for Friday, January 8, 2016. St. Mary CSS staff will help guide our grade 8 students through this process during the school day. Please do not hesitate to contact Mrs.

Pongetti at St. Mary High School with your questions. Mrs. Pongetti will coordinate family visits or tours of St. Mary High School with school staff.

### **STUDENT SAFETY and ACCESS to the SCHOOL**

Access to the school can be provided via a remote access camera which is engaged when you approach a door off of the school parking lot and press the button located near the door. You will be greeted by someone at the main office and asked the nature of your visit along with a request to report to the office to check in.

For our families that are using the Before and After Care program. Please note that entry to the school is granted by the supervisors of the program and the expectation is that you report to the appropriate room, pick up your child/ren and exit the building. It is not appropriate to wander the building in an effort to access your child's classroom at this time since all classrooms are locked when staff members depart for the day. The custodial staff cannot afford to dedicate time to open doors for you as we are in a building that requires cleaning in a large number of areas and the focus of the cleaning effort is to clean, not permit classroom access. First and foremost, this is a security issue and we want to ensure that our custodial staff are safe during the afterhours.

For our families who have children participating in clubs and after school team practices, our club supervisors and coaches have been instructed to escort the team/club members to the middle door off of the parking lot. This will take place to ensure that the children are picked up at the end of the practice/event session by a parent or guardian waiting in the Kiss and Drop lane.

Please do know that these requests are made in the interest of building security and student safety.

### **GRADE 8-QUEBEC TRIP ON-LINE REGISTRATION**

Grade 8 parents, on-line registration and payment for Quebec is open. The students have each been assigned a username and password and this information will be sent home with your child on January 4th. Please log in and change this information at <http://www.explorica.ca/my-account> immediately. If you have any question, please contact Mrs. Shannon.

### **HEAD LICE - Reminder**

Head lice is not a reflection on the state of cleanliness; it is a reoccurring problem that is easily transmitted. Head lice spread easily through direct head-to-head contact and indirectly by sharing things like hats, combs, hairbrushes and headphones. Head lice that live on people do not live on pets such as cats and dogs.

When checking for lead lice, use a bright light. Use a magnifying glass if you have one. Spread the hair with a comb and look at the scalp. Lice crawl very fast, but they do not fly or jump. Also, look for eggs on the hair close to the scalp. They are often found on the hair behind the ears or where the hair meets the neck. Look for open sores and scabs on the head.

**For more information, contact Hamilton Public Health Services (905)546-2489) or <https://www.hamilton.ca/public-health/health-topics/head-lice>**

### **CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL**

The next Catholic School Council (CSC) has been scheduled for Monday, January 11, 2016 at 7:00pm in the Learning Commons. All parents/guardians are welcome to attend.

### **PATHWAYS AND CAREER PLANNING**

The 'What's Your Path? What's Your Passion?' committee, comprised of representatives from both the Catholic and Public School boards along with community professionals, has arranged for a series of workshops about future careers and pathway planning. The kick-off event for all students and parents interested will be on Tuesday, January 19, 2016 at 7:00pm. The location will

be St. Thomas Church Parish Hall at 715 Centre Road, Waterdown.

Following this kickoff event, a series of weekly workshops will be hosted at which parents and students can hear professionals speak about their careers in various industries. A full schedule of workshops can be found at:

<http://stth.hwcdsb.ca/152931--What's-your-Path?-What%27s-Your-Passion?>

### **STTA ROBOTICS TEAM**

Congratulations to the STTA Robotics Team. The team came in third place at the recent regional competition at St. Mary CSS. The team is now moving on to the Provincial Championship in Waterloo, Ontario on Saturday, January 30, 2016. We wish the team well. Thanks again to team captain Duke and Mrs. Shannon for their leadership.

<http://stth.hwcdsb.ca/152377--The-STTA-Robotics-Team-Soars!>

### **KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS FREE THROW CHALLENGE**

Stay tuned for the annual Knights of Columbus Free Throw Challenge on Saturday, January 23, 2016 from 8:30-11:00am in the STTA school gymnasium.

### **SCHOOL CASH ONLINE**

Thank you again for everyone's patience as we continue to perfect the cash online system. Our continued efforts will ensure a seamless and accountable way to track payments and maintain financial integrity.

### **2016 STTA FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE**

On February 10, 2016, we will begin a major fundraising effort and we are asking for the support of all our families. We are depending on this fundraiser to provide things our annual school budget does not cover. The funds raised will help with the purchase of:

- Indoor Recess Equipment for all classrooms (Playing Cards, Chess/Checkers, Jigsaw Puzzles, Lego, Board Games, Dice, etc)

- RAZ Kids License (online Reading Program <https://www.raz-kids.com/> - half the cost absorbed by school Superintendent, Mr. Hucal
- Book Room Independent Reading Collection, all levels
- Gathering Carpets, Grades 1-4
- Guided Reading Collections
- Additional Lego for Robotics Team
- Mature Shade Tree: FDK Playground
- Outdoor Natural Prayer Garden
- FDK Play-based Learning Equipment
- Bulletin Boards, Second Floor Jr/Int Hallway
- Additional Technology Needs

We will be selling World's Finest Chocolate's Peanut Free Variety Pack. Each case contains chocolate covered almonds, mint meltaways, caramel whirls, pure milk chocolate, bars and almond bars. We also have a number of totally nut free combination boxes available.

We have timed this 'chocolate initiative' to coincide with Valentine's Day and the arrival of the Easter Season.

The profit margin for World's Finest is exceptionally large: in essence, the school reaps 50% of the proceeds of all sales.

This initiative is completely voluntary and optional. Students will not be allowed to sell any products without the signed permission of a parent or guardian.

The potential to realize our purchase objective is very high and the items listed promise to enhance the experiences, both instructional and co-instructional, for all students in the school.

More information will be coming home in the coming weeks. The kickoff assembly will be February 1, 2016. Permission letters will be sent home to allow for student participation.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bxz6hJm4QDDrRVVkdVFUMVFSelU/view?usp=sharing>

Thank you in advance for your support.

**THE LAST WORD(S)** (to lead us into 2016)

"The beginning is the most important part for that is the time character is being formed."

-Plato

"The object of a new year is not that we should have a new year.

It is that we should have a new soul."

-G.K. Chesterton

"Maybe this year...walk through the rooms of our lives not looking for flaws, but potential."

-Ellen Goodman

"Decide that you are not going to stay where you are."

-J.P. Morgan

"You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."

-Dr. Martin Luther King

"Stay away from what might have been, and look at what can be."

-Marsha Petrie Sue

"Everyone who got where he is had to begin where he was."

-Robert Louis Stevenson

"Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbours, and let each new year find you a better man."

-Benjamin Franklin

"Start doing what's necessary; then do what's possible: suddenly you are doing the impossible."

-St. Francis of Assisi

"For last year's words belong to last year's language and next year's words await another voice."

-T.S. Eliot

"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; all things have become new."

-2 Corinthians 5:17

"For I know the plans I have for you...to prosper you and not to harm you, to give you hope and a future."

-Jeremiah 29:11



MAY YOU SHINE  
THE LIGHT OF  
CHRIST IN THE  
NEW YEAR!

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