



HAMILTON-WENTWORTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

ST. THOMAS SCHOOL

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"A proud feeder school of St. Mary Catholic Secondary School"

Principal: Mr. D.Younger
Superintendent: Mr. M. Hucal
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Trustee: Mrs. C. Cornale,
Pastor: Very Rev. W.L. Lobsinger, EV, PP
Secretary: Mrs. M. Rath

ST. THOMAS "WILDCATS" DECEMBER – 2016 NEWSLETTER

Loving God, during this holy season of Advent
We ask for Your blessing on all families.
Let Mary's openness to Your wondrous ways
Be an inspiration to place all trust in You.
Let Joseph's courage provide hope
During times of anxiety and uncertainty.
Let Jesus' life ignite all families
With a spirit of light and love.
May the grace that encircled the Holy Family
Widen to embrace all families.
For this we pray, Amen

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

As the frenzy and commercialism of Christmas approach, Catholic communities around the world prepare during this season of Advent, a time to do something different from the usual preparations: pause, reflect, and get spiritually creative. Take time to reflect on Mary's hope and faith as she responds with a simple and loving "Yes" to God's plan for her as the mother of Jesus. The Holy Family models faith, hope, trust, patience and humility for all families. During Advent look and listen for times when God speaks to you in many ways: the voice of a friend or loved one, the laughter of children, a quiet moment, a choir, the soft ringing of bells, or a wonderful scene from nature. Just as Mary and Joseph listened and trusted, we look to God during this Advent season to help us do the same. We ask God to quiet our minds and hearts at this time. We have so much to do-- Help us, Lord, to seek quiet spaces and hear Your voice each day as we continue Your work as 'Merchants of Hope and Mercy' for all those in our midst.

God bless you and your families during this season and onward. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

Mr. D. Younger
Principal

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

The annual STTA Christmas Concert will take place on Thursday, December 15, 2016 at 6:30pm in the school gym. Parents/guardians are asked to have students arrive no earlier than 6:00pm. Children will congregate in their classrooms while waiting for their performance and will return to the class until the end of the entire show. Staff will be supervising while families enjoy from their seats in the audience. A sincere thanks to the staff members of STTA for sacrificing their personal time so that our school community can enjoy the talents of the students.

NURSING STUDENTS: FINAL DAY

A sincere appreciation is extended to the McMaster University Third Year Nursing students who shared their time and talents via the project: 'Nurturing Positive Climates and Wellness at St. Thomas the Apostle CES'. Their work at the school culminated with the Baroque Music Research Project, testing the impact of playing Baroque Music for children during Independent Reading. Baroque was selected because research suggests its 60-80 beats per minute match that of a human heart in a calm, relaxed state that is ready for learning.

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

A team of priests will visit the school on December 1, 2016 to bestow the sacrament of Penance on students. Students will be given the opportunity to sit with one of the visiting Priests for Confession, Penance and Reconciliation.

ROBOTICS COMPETITION

On December 10, 2016, the STTA Robotics Team will be participating in the regional Robotics Competition. We wish the team well and know that each member will represent the school as ambassadors of character. Thanks Coach Shannon.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING

The next Catholic School Council Meeting will take place on Monday, December 5, 2016 at 7:00 in the school Learning Commons. Mr. T. Tigani will be visiting to bring information about the *Out of the Cold Program* and a call for support. All parents and guardians are welcome.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

Tickets are available for families to purchase via School Cash Online. The event is Saturday, December 10, 2016 in the school gym. Breakfast includes pancakes, syrup, fruit cup, juice, water and coffee. 9:00-12:00. Open dining with last seating at 11:30am. Lifetouch will be on hand for the photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus.

ADVENT MASS

The staff and students will be celebrating the Advent Mass on Thursday, December 8, 2016 at the church. Together with the Guardian Angels CES population, we will share in the Holy Eucharist. Students will be transported by pre-arranged buses.

REGIONAL BOARDS VISIT

A team of representatives from regional school boards will be visiting the school on Thursday, December 8, 2016 to visit classrooms and observe technology enabled learning in action. As a Microsoft Showcase School, STTA continues to share staff members' expertise with colleagues from across the province.

SCHOOL CASH ONLINE

Thanks to all families who continue to use the School Cash Online system. Special thanks to Mrs. Rath, school administrative assistant, for her tireless efforts in fielding all calls, questions and concerns. The system is designed for a seamless payment process without cash transactions.

To date, the school has an extremely large percentage of families currently registered. To register:
<https://hwcdsb.schoolcashonline.com/>

STTA MEDIA TEAM

The STTA Media Team and the Student Council Executive produce a televised news program once a week in place of morning announcements.

Through the technology of Adobe Connect, the entire program is broadcast to each classroom in the school and viewed on SMARTboards. It is amazing to observe the team behind the scenes. Each member has a role to play such as director, anchor, co-anchor, weatherman, sports reporter, script writer, headlines, etc.

Each broadcast also includes guest reporters from classrooms who report on updates and exciting events around the school.

The frenetic energy prior to, during and after each show is reminiscent of an actual professional news broadcast.

Congratulations to the STTA Media Team.

CHRISTMAS PLAY AT ST. MARY CSS

Students from FDK to Grade 5 attended a Christmas performance at St. Mary Catholic Secondary School during the morning of Wednesday, November 30, 2016.

The play was Peter Pan. The reviews are in: it was a spectacular smash!

<https://stth.hwcdsb.ca/186537--STTA-and-Peter-Pan>

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SITE (LMS)

Parents/ Guardians are reminded to check their child's site regularly to gather pertinent information regarding the events that are taking place in and outside of the classroom. If you have not yet signed up for the notification alert when a new post has been added, please consider doing so.

PFLC POTLUCK

Visit our school's Parenting and Family Literacy Centre this week to learn more about the centre's upcoming 'Christmas Potluck Celebration' on December 21, 2016. The centre, operated by Miss Patty, continues to burst at the seams with visits by parents, guardians, caregivers and their little ones. It is a centre grounded in early learning and rooted in joy and community.

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR 2016

The last day of school for 2016 will be Friday, December 23. This date marks the start of the two week Christmas Holiday Break. Classes will resume on **January 9, 2017**.

A FOND FAREWELL

It is with sadness that we announce that Mr. MacDonald, Kindergarten Teacher, will be leaving at the end of December. We express our genuine appreciation for his time and effort in supporting the learning needs of countless students. We wish him every success along his new journey.

WELCOME BACK

We welcome Mrs. Asselin back to STTA when we return from Christmas Holidays. She is returning from her maternity leave and will be rejoining Mrs. Maslowski in Kindergarten.

WELCOME

We welcome Miss Pollice who is teaching the Grade 2/3 classroom while Mrs. Fleet is away. We also welcome Mrs. Scott to our Educational Assistant Team.

ROOTS OF EMPATHY

Roots of Empathy is a research-based program that nurtures the personal, social and emotional development of students.

A newborn baby and his/her parent are partnered with a classroom. Through multiple visits, the facilitator assists the children in learning about the emotional responses of the infant. In doing so, children develop their own emotional maturation while also developing a greater sense of empathy for others in the world around them.

Currently, Roots of Empathy is underway in Mrs. Shannon's class, Mrs. Maslowski/Mr. MacDonald's class and Mrs. Haynes/Mrs. Kenyon's class.

'Empathy is seeing with the eyes of another, listening with the ears of another and feeling with the heart of another.'

<http://www.rootsofempathy.org/en>

3 ON 3 HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

Congratulations to the students who represented the school at the annual '3 on 3 Hockey Tournament' in November. Thanks Coach Shannon and Olivia and Kiera

who played for another school and helped bring them to the championship game.

FLAG FOOTBALL

Congratulations to Coach MacDonald and the Senior Team who came in second place at the recent Vanier Cup Invitational at McMaster University.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Thanks to all parents who were able to conference, either in person or over the phone, with teachers. These conversations are critical to ensure a collaborative and seamless approach. Working together, we help all students reach their full potentials and realize the fullness of humanity of which our Lord Jesus Christ is the model.

FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN OBSERVATION VISITS

FDK classrooms have been welcoming parents and guardians for observation visits. Each visit is intended for parents to observe little ones in the act of play-based learning and personal/social/emotional development. Parents and guardians are experiencing a 'day in the life' along with the opportunity to discuss current growth and next steps for their children with the FDK Educator Team.

ST. NICHOLAS VISIT

St. Nicholas will be visiting the Kindergarten classrooms on December 6, 2016.

MICROSOFT YOUTH SPARKS EVENT

Representatives from Microsoft will be working with students on Saturday, December 3 at the school. The facilitators will be enhancing students' knowledge about Minecraft and its applications.

SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION CLINIC

The Grade 7 and 8 students will receive immunizations on Monday, December 12, 2016.

BLOOM OR DOOM INITIATIVE

Thanks to all staff and students for their efforts in recycling and stewardship of the earth initiatives. Congratulations to Mrs. Anderson and Mrs. Richardson for being the school's first recipients of the Golden Recycle Bin. Two classrooms win the honour each week based on their environmentally conscious efforts.

ST. MARY IMPROV GROUP

The St. Mary CSS Improve Group will be visiting the school to entertain the students on December 22, 2016.

The LAST WORD

We must restore hope to young people, help the old, be open to the future, spread love. Be poor among the poor. We need to include the excluded and preach peace.

-Pope Francis

<https://twitter.com/Pontifex>

POPE FRANCIS' NEW YEARS RESOLUTIONS (from 2015)

1. Take care of your spiritual life, your relationship with God, because this is the backbone of everything we do and everything we are.”
2. “Take care of your family life, giving your children and loved ones not just money, but most of all your time, attention and love.”
3. “Take care of your relationships with others, transforming your faith into life and your words into good works, especially on behalf of the needy.”
4. “Be careful how you speak, purify your tongue of offensive words, vulgarity and worldly decadence.”
5. “Heal wounds of the heart with the oil of forgiveness, forgiving those who have hurt us and medicating the wounds we have caused others.”
6. “Look after your work, doing it with enthusiasm, humility, competence, passion and with a spirit that knows how to thank the Lord.”
7. “Be careful of envy, lust, hatred and negative feelings that devour our interior peace and transform us into destroyed and destructive people.”
8. “Watch out for anger that can lead to vengeance; for laziness that leads to existential euthanasia; for pointing the finger at others, which leads to pride; and for complaining continually, which leads to desperation.”
9. “Take care of brothers and sisters who are weaker ... the elderly, the sick, the hungry, the homeless and strangers, because we will be judged on this.”
10. Make sure your Christmas is about Jesus and not about shopping”

