



December 2020 Newsletter



The season of Advent is a season to prepare for the birth of Jesus our savior. Advent is celebrated over the four Sundays leading to Christmas. It is a time to slow down this busy season and enjoy the reason for the season.

Traditionally Advent can be marked by an Advent wreath or an Advent calendar. Advent wreaths are constructed of a circle of evergreen branches into which four candles are inserted representing the four weeks of Advent. Ideally, three candles are purple and one is rose.

The **purple** candles in particular symbolizes the prayer, penance, and preparatory sacrifices and goods works undertaken at this time. The **rose** candle is lit on the third Sunday, because the faithful have arrived at the midpoint of Advent, when their preparation is now half over and they are close to Christmas.

The progressive lighting of the candles symbolizes the expectation and hope surrounding our Lord's birth. Our hope is that you will take time with your family to reflect on the real meaning of Christmas. Happiness is knowing the love of Jesus and sharing that love in your home, with kindness, helpfulness, encouragement and time spent together.

We wish you joy and peace during this Advent season.

God Bless,

Mrs. McLaren Gibbons



An Advent Prayer

**God of light and hope,
look upon us in love
and fill us with the Spirit of Jesus.
Be with us during the season of Advent.**

**Keep us watchful in prayer
as we await the coming
of our Lord, Jesus Christ,
who is the light of the world,
and lives and reigns with You
and the Holy Spirit,
One God, forever and ever.
Amen**

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

We want to thank our entire school community for their efforts to ensure everyone's safety during this challenging time. We appreciate that students in Grades 4-8 are wearing their masks appropriately and are following the guidelines around mask wearing. Many parents are sending students to school with masks in our primary classes and we are working to ensure students wear them if parents send them. We continue to remind students to wash hands regularly, keep their hands away from their face and adhere to physical distancing rules.

We are noticing though that during our drop off and pick up at night, the sidewalk and areas around the school are very busy and people are not able to physically distance appropriately. **We are asking for everyone to ensure they are wearing masks on school property if they can't ensure that they can keep physical distancing of 6 meters from others.** We understand this is challenging, but our goal is to continue to keep everyone safe and we know wearing masks is an important measure. We thank you in advance for your diligence and support with this.

Finally, we want to thank families for completing the self-assessment each day online with their children. We are grateful that you are keeping students' home when they are unwell as another measure to ensure everyone's safety at school. Here is the link again to the self-assessment <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/> .

PARKING AT ST. LEO SCHOOL

We are aware of the challenges of parking in the area around our school. We would like to remind people to adhere to all parking regulations and signs on Memorial Drive and on the surrounding side streets, particularly at arrival and dismissal times. The area directly in front of the school is a **No Parking Zone**. This is where our Buses Load and Unload and must be open for our Buses. When parking, be sure that you are not blocking the driveway for the school or residences around the school. In recent weeks, we have had some accidents and some near misses due to illegal parking and unsafe driving (i.e.: u-turns in areas where children are crossing, double parking, etc.) We want to ensure the safety of all in our school community so we thank you for your anticipated cooperation in this matter. **We strongly encourage families to use the back entrance in the field (on Hemlock Court) where staff are on duty at 8:30 am to welcome students in the morning.** This entrance is an easy drop off spot and can also be used in the evening for pick up to avoid congestion in the front of the school. Please remember however to also be respectful of these neighbours and not park blocking their driveways as well.



DRESSING FOR THE WEATHER

Parents, please ensure that your child(ren) are coming to school dressed for the weather. Students are expected to wear a hat and mittens/gloves outside for recess, regardless of the grade they are in. The students will be going outside for at least part of recess whenever the weather permits. If the temperature drops below



-20° C the children will remain indoors at the break. We monitor the temperature throughout the day as the temperature fluctuates greatly. **Students should always come prepared to go outside.** An extra pair of socks may also be beneficial to have at school on days when your child's feet get very wet. Thank you very much for your cooperation in helping keep our children warm and dry this winter.



PARISH NEWS

ST PIUS X CATHOLIC CHURCH
9 Waverly Street,
Brantford , ON N3R 2K2
Ph: 519-753-8439
www.stpius.ca
Father John Redmond, Pastor
Andrew Beach, Pastoral Associate

A Message from our Pastoral Team: Christmas @ St Pius Parish

Here at St Pius Parish we're gearing up for a very different Christmas, and we're doing our best to make sure you can stay connected!

Interested in learning about our Christmas in-person or online services? <https://stpiusbrantford.ca/christmas-2020-details/>

Looking for the link to watch us online (4pm to 1am on Christmas Eve as well as 9am and 11am Masses on Christmas Day)? <https://stpiusbrantford.online.church/>

Want to register to join us in person? <https://stpiusbrantford.ca/christmas-mass-registration/>

Want to get involved in some way? <https://stpiusbrantford.ca/christmas-2020-details/get-involved/>

Questions? christmas@stpiusbrantford.ca

First Eucharist & First Reconciliation

A reminder to all parents that registration for First Reconciliation & First Eucharist in the spring of 2021 is now available. Head to <https://stpiusbrantford.ca/first-communion/> to find out more or to register. **The registration deadline is December 18th.** If you have any questions please contact the parish office at 519-753-8439 and speak with Andrew.



The next School Council meeting will be held on **January 20, 2021 at 6:30 pm virtually**. Everyone is welcome to attend online. Please let Mrs. McLaren know if you wish to attend. **Meeting at 6:30 and System Wide Council Skype Meeting at 7:00 pm**

A NOTE FROM YOUR SCHOOL'S PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE...

Holiday Tips for Keeping Your Family Safe

The holiday season may be the most wonderful time of the year. It is also a time of year where mishaps and visits to the emergency room may increase, especially for children. Protect your little ones from common holiday dangers by following some of these holiday safety tips:

- Make sure your Christmas tree is sturdy. Trees that are not secured properly can fall onto children.
- Keep trees away from sources of heat such as electrical outlets, radiators and portable space heaters.
- Practice fire safety and have a family emergency plan in the event of a fire.
- Hang smaller decorations higher up on the tree. Small decorations may look pretty but can pose a choking hazard for young children.
- When buying toys, look for ones that are well made and age appropriate. Remember to check the Government of Canada's Recalls and Safety Alerts database to see whether any toy has been recalled.
- Keep holiday plants out of children's reach. Mistletoe and holly are poisonous and can cause an upset stomach.
- Be aware of food safety guidelines to avoid accidental food poisoning over the holiday season.

For more holiday safety tips, visit the injury topics section of Parachute Canada at:

www.parachutecanada.org.



CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON:

We are very excited to hold a special Christmas Lunch with the whole school on Friday December 11th. Students will have individual hot turkey lunch delivered to their classroom. **The cost is \$7.00** which can be paid through school cash online. We look forward to celebrating the season as a school community.

CHRISTMAS VACATION

Just a reminder that **Friday December 18th** is our last day of classes before our Christmas break. This means that Christmas vacation for our students is from Monday, December 23rd until Friday, January 3rd. The first day back in the New Year is **Monday, January 4th, 2021.**

ST. LEO SOCIAL AVENGERS AND CHARITABLE DONATIONS

Avengers of Social Justice – would like to help out those in need in our community. We have placed a donation line on School Cash so families can donate a small amount to support Saint Vincent de Paul within our community. Thank you in advance for your support in helping others.

This year due to COVID restrictions we will not be holding our Tree of Warmth campaign, but hope you will consider a monetary donation through School Cash Online.

Our *Avengers of Social Justice* are asking our families to consider supporting our theme days in December and have fun before the holidays!!

Thursday December 3, 2020- Crazy Christmas Socks

Thursday December 10, 2020- Ugly Christmas Sweater or Shirt Day

Thursday December 17, 2020- Pajama Day

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION FOR SEPTEMBER 2021



New Junior and Senior Kindergarten registrations for the 2021-2022 school year will be held during the months of January and February. ***This is for BOTH the English and French Immersion streams.*** Check out our Board Website for more information as well at

<http://www.bhncdsb.ca/page/new-online-kindergarten-registration>

or contact Ms. Wood, School Secretary, for details on applying online at school: **519-759-3314.**

While families have the opportunity to register at any time during the year, we ask that you register during the month of January so that we can provide you with the information you need. Early registration also assists us in preparing staffing for the upcoming year.

If you are aware of any young students in our area who are eligible to attend one of our Catholic elementary schools beginning September 2021, we ask that you please let them know about our upcoming registration. Children of Roman Catholic Separate School Supporters have the right to attend a Catholic School within the system in accordance with the following age requirements:

(A) JK: age **four (4) years** on or before December 31st of 2021. (Born in 2017)

(B) SK: age **five (5) years** on or before December 31st of 2021. (Born in 2016)

Parents should have the following to register:

- Birth Certificate or Baptismal Certificate

- Identification with current address

Children currently enrolled in JK at St. Leo do not have to re-register for SK. They will be automatically moved up to SK for September 2020.

If you have any questions about your eligibility, or any other question related to registration, please contact the school as soon as possible at: **519-759-3314**

INCLEMENT WEATHER . . . AND BUSSING

#1. The cold wet weather has arrived. Please ensure your child is dressed for this weather. We recommend, boots, hats, mitts and a warm jacket. If your child is in primary, we also recommend an extra pair of mitts and socks!

#2. Now that winter has arrived, please check the Board transportation website for any bus cancellations and delays.

#3. Snow is fun to play with, but at the same time can be dangerous. Please remind your child/children that snowballs are **never** permitted at school.

With snowy weather on the way, we have had a few questions about how and when the decision to delay or cancel bus transportation is made. Our students' safety comes first. Please know that all transportation decisions are made for individual areas and routes across Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk counties. Decisions are not made from a Brantford office, but rather by the Manager of Transportation Services Brant, Haldimand, Norfolk, with input from the individual bus operators and others located in your immediate area. Those observations, together with your municipal information and weather forecast help make the decision to run, delay or cancel individual routes and/or zones across the district.

We understand that weather and road conditions are different across our large geographic area and Student Transportation Services does everything possible to make timely decisions that are in the interest of safety for all. Please remember to always rely on www.stsbhn.ca and your local radio station for transportation information throughout the school year.



In the event of weather that may affect school transportation, parents are asked to keep in mind the following information. St. Leo School is a **Zone 4** school with City of Brantford schools. ***If bus transportation is cancelled in Zone 4 (as announced by local radio stations), St. Leo School will be closed for students and staff.***

Decisions to cancel or delay transportation will be made prior to 6:30 a.m. and be announced prior to 6:45 a.m. Parents can access this information through the Board's website (under the Parents tab) or use the website www.stsbhn.ca. Parents can click on the "Cancellations – Closures or Morning Fog delays" icon. The website page also contains information on other sources of cancellation/delay information such as radio stations and television channels.

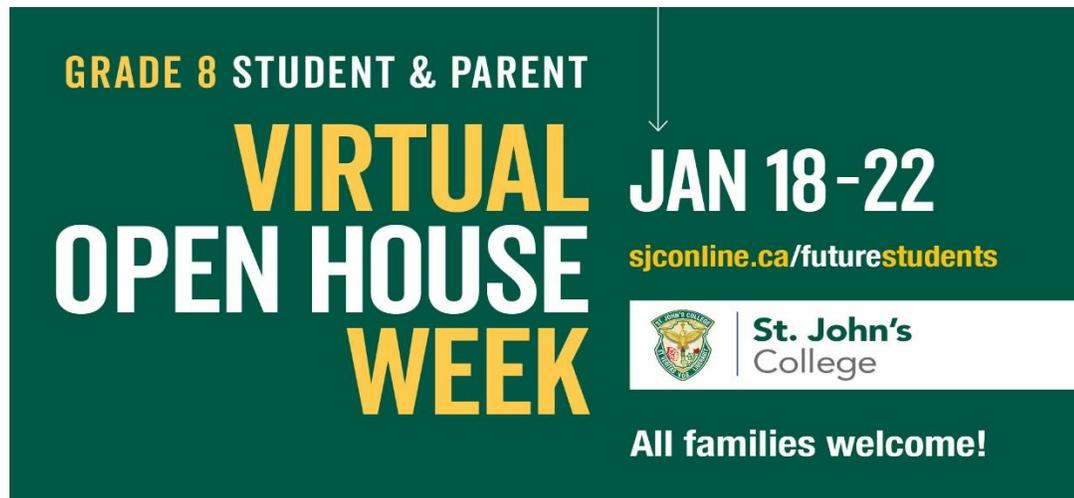


When St. Leo School requires an emergency closing due to weather conditions, each child or family of children will only be dismissed when the parent/ guardian has been contacted by school personnel.

JANUARY PA DAY

The first PA Day of the new year, for ELEMENTARY schools only, will be on **Monday, January 18, 2021.**

ATTENTION GRADE 8 STUDENTS AND FAMILIES



GRADE 8 STUDENT & PARENT

VIRTUAL

OPEN HOUSE

WEEK

JAN 18-22

sjconline.ca/futurestudents

 **St. John's**
College

All families welcome!

MINDFUL EATING FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Brought to you by Lunchbox Orders: Healthy school meals are just one click away. Place your lunch order at www.lunchboxorders.com

The holiday season can be a tricky time to keep healthy eating habits in check. There are plenty of opportunities to indulge and get sidetracked! Here are a few tips to keep in mind during the holidays.

Start the day right. A good breakfast that contains some protein (egg, peanut butter, Greek yogurt) with some fruit and a whole grain is a great way to keep yourself from “snacking” on less nutritious items through the day.

Have a nibble. Before heading to a gathering have a healthy snack that contains some fibre, this will help reduce the craving to eat everything on the food table!

Drink a glass of water. Before heading out to a party, drink a glass of water. This helps reduce your desire to snack, and will hydrate you!

Nutrient-rich snacking. In between meals, snack on fruits and vegetables. You'll be more likely to meet your nutrient recommendations, and deter munching on those higher calorie, nutrient-poor choices you may have lurking around the house.



Sources: <http://www.eatrightontario.ca/en/Articles/Holidays-Celebrations/Holiday-Eating-For-a-Healthy-Waist.aspx>
<http://www.dietitians.ca/Nutrition-Resources-A-Z/Factsheets/Weight-Loss-and-Control/How-Can-I-Survive-Holiday-Eating-.aspx>

Kitchen Skills for the Ages

Ages 3-5: Pint-Size Helpers

At this age, they'll need plenty of supervision! Make sure to choose things that don't need to be precise. At this age their best tool is their hands. Here are some ideas to get started:

- Wash fruits and vegetables
- Tear lettuce salads
- Mash ingredients, like overripe bananas
- Wrap potatoes in foil to bake
- Knead dough (you'll want to get it started for them)
- Smash graham crackers for crust
- Pouring measured ingredients into the bowl

Kitchen Skills for All Ages

Ages 5-7: Grade-school Sous Chefs

By now, you can introduce kid-friendly knives (rigid enough to cut through fruits and vegetables but have a dull edge). Also, they're just starting to read and write, so introduce them to recipes. Have them read along. Here are some other ideas for children's kitchen duties:

- Mix dry and whisk wet ingredients
- Measure and count items
- Set the table
- Crack eggs (watch out for shells!)
- Roll cookie dough or meat into balls
- Chop softer fruits and veggies
- Read aloud (or sound out) recipe steps

Ages 8-12: Budding Cooks

Preteens are becoming more independent. Lay out ingredients for simple recipes like PB&J. They won't need as much supervision, but they'll greatly appreciate any positive affirmations. Here are some more things they can do on their own:

- Peel veggies
- Toast bread
- Make sandwiches
- Wash and put away dishes
- Make their school lunch
- Unload groceries
- Mix up a simple batter on their own

Ages 13 & Up: Young Chefs

Teens will be ready to take on the challenge of mastering different equipment in the kitchen. But make sure they know proper safety skills before starting. Tips like which dishes are safe to use in the oven are helpful. Here are some skills they'll be able to handle:

- Make recipes on the stove top
- Bake on their own
- Use sharp knives
- Learn to use various kitchen gadgets
- Have full reign over the microwave
- Master class: If they're up to the challenge, designate one dinner a week as their night to be "lead cook"