

# Winter

## January 2021 Newsletter



**St. Leo Catholic School**  
233 Memorial Drive  
Brantford, ON

N3R 5T2

Phone:

519-753-3314

Website: [www.bleo.bhncdsb.ca](http://www.bleo.bhncdsb.ca)

Twitter: @stleocatholic

Principal:

Jennifer McLaren Gibbons

### General Information

We are a dual track school offering instruction in English for JK-8 and in French Immersion for JK-Grade 5 (expanding by one grade each year)  
Current Enrolment is 320 students

Next Meeting of School Council is  
*Wednesday, January 20, 2021 at  
6:30 online*

**SCHOOL START: 8:45 am**  
**SCHOOL DISMISSAL: 3:05**



## From the Principal's Desk

Welcome 2021! I am sure like many of you it feels great to see 2021 arrive after our struggles in 2020. I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and a

Happy New Year! Christmas is a wonderful opportunity to remember what is truly important in our lives – the gift of our families and particularly after this past year.

The new year is also the perfect time for new beginnings. It brings us a new opportunity to practice what we have learned about life during the last twelve months. It allows us an opportunity to start fresh with our friends, family and at school. It is often a time of resolutions where we decide to do things a little bit differently for this year.

Take the time to help your child set one or two goals for this year. These goals could be about attendance, reading, completing homework on time, studying for tests, working independently, etc. Write them down somewhere that they won't be forgotten. Celebrate your child's successes as they work to attain those goals throughout the school year. Don't forget to set your own goals. This month our principal awards will recognize those who demonstrate being **Courageous and Humble**. This is very fitting as we set new goals and continue to work to help others show our kindness to those in our community.

Please know how grateful we are for all of your support over the last school year while we have had to work virtually and then return to school with many new protocols and then are working virtually again. We are so very grateful for your patience and support in ensuring students meet academic goals and are working to the best of their abilities. We know it has been challenging for families but know that we see the hard work you are all doing and we are very appreciative.

I look forward to 2021 as we continue to make our school a great place to learn. Keep up the great effort Lions!!

### A Prayer for the New Year

Faithful Companion,

In this new year I pray:

To live deeply, with purpose,

To live freely, with detachment,

To live wisely, with humility,

To live justly, with compassion,

To live lovingly, with fidelity,

To live mindfully, with awareness,

To live gratefully, with generosity,

To live fully, with enthusiasm. ~ J. Rupp

## SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

Please remember once we are back to school, each day families should have students complete the self-assessment tool before they come to school. We are working to ensure that everyone stays safe and healthy at school and we appreciate the efforts of all families working together with us. The link for the assessment is <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>.

We ask that you also remember to send a mask every day for all students in Grades 1-8 (note as of this weeks announcement from Ministry students in grades 1-3 now must wear masks) and kindergarten students if you want them to wear one. As the colder weather has arrived, we encourage that each student bring more than one mask in a day to ensure students always have a dry mask to wear. We will be reminding students of our proper hygiene protocols as well and hope you will continue to remind students at home about washing hands regularly and coughing or sneezing into their elbow. Together we can work to keep everyone safe in our community.

## 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.



## PA DAY

Please note that **Monday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021** is designated a professional activity day for all staff and there will be no school that day. **NOTE: THERE WILL BE NO WORK POSTED ON BRIGHTSPACE ON THIS DAY BY TEACHERS.**



## BOOTS AND SHOES

Parents, please ensure that your child(ren) has/have a pair of **indoor** shoes to wear each day inside the school. Students will be asked to take off their outside shoes/boots before entering the classrooms. The extra pair would be used during indoor time and would be stored accordingly for that grade. Thank you very much for your cooperation in helping to keep our school clean and to minimize the risk of slips and falls.



## REPORT CARDS

First term report cards will be sent home on **Friday, February 5<sup>th</sup>** with your child(ren). Please take the time to look over the report card with your child and comment on the third page of the report. We ask that you sign and return the **bottom portion of the third page** of your report card **and the report card envelope**. Please also note that, although interviews were held in November, you may request a meeting with your child's classroom teacher at any time.



## AVENGERS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE



Thank you to the students, staff, and parents of St. Leo's for their generous contributions to our "Christmas Collections" that was held on School Cash this year - monetary donations through this collection meant we provided Saint Vincent de Paul with a \$500.00 cheque before Christmas to support families in need in our community from our school community. Your generosity to our local community truly is an example of the real spirit of Christmas. We are so very proud to be part of such a giving community. Thank you.



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

### **A POSITIVE STEP TO THE NEW YEAR**

Each New Year brings with it New Year's resolutions and an opportunity to make positive changes in our lives. This year think about how you can be a positive role model for your child and help them develop healthy attitudes and habits that will last a lifetime.

- Focus on being active, eating well and reducing stress.
- Add physical activity into your daily plans. Make it a family event and let your children choose the activities that they would like to try.
- Encourage your children to turn off the TV and to head outdoors to play instead.
- Include your kids in planning, shopping for, preparing and serving meals; visit [www.familykitchen.ca](http://www.familykitchen.ca) for tips.
- Role model positive eating habits by eating meals together as a family. Visit [www.eatrightontario.ca](http://www.eatrightontario.ca) for more tips on creating a positive home eating environment.

### **OUR PARISH**

#### **ST. PIUS X CATHOLIC CHURCH**

9 Waverly Street, Brantford, ON N3R 2K2

Ph: 519-753-8439 [www.stpius.ca](http://www.stpius.ca)

*Father John Redmond, Pastor,*

*Andrew Beach, Pastoral Associate*

St. Pius X Catholic Church is the parish connected to the St. Leo's School community. We are fortunate to have the involvement of our priests and pastoral associate in the spiritual life of our students and appreciate all their guidance and the instruction they provide. We attend mass as a whole school at the church on a few occasions during the year and are blessed to have liturgies and other celebrations of our faith attended by Father Redmond, Andrew Beach.

If your family has any questions about sacramental preparation, please contact the parish.



### **Christian Meditation**

At St. Leo School, we begin every morning with one minute of Christian Meditation following our regular morning exercises to help us enter our day in a thoughtful way. In each classroom it is also used as a form of prayer throughout the day. Ask your child to guide your family through it at home. Meditation is a way of becoming present to God and entering into prayer of the heart. Learning to pray means much more than memorizing prayers by rote, and/or learning the theory or doctrine of prayer. Christian meditation helps us enter in the actual experience of praying and enables us to fully attend to God while we pray.



Through repetition of the prayer, word or mantra, ma-ra-na-tha, which means "Come Lord" or "Come Lord Jesus", we become present to God and experience God in the depths of our hearts. It is a meaningful and authentic way to pray and helps children on their faith journey. Christian Meditation does not replace the Religious education lesson or other

forms of prayer. It is ONE form of prayer and it is a discipline that requires practice, concentration and commitment.



### **SCHOOL COUNCIL**

Our next school council meeting will be held on **Wednesday, January 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm online**. If you are interested in attending online, please let Mrs. McLaren know.

## 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**. When parking, be sure that you are not blocking the driveway for the school or residences around the school. In the past, we have had some accidents and close calls 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.



## VIRTUAL INFORMATION NIGHT @ ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

**GRADE 8 STUDENT & PARENT**  
**VIRTUAL**  
**OPEN HOUSE**  
**WEEK**

**JAN 18-22**

 **St. John's**  
College

**All families welcome!**

High school registration is just around the corner. Visit St. John's College for their virtual open house this year to see the amazing programs and opportunities that are waiting for you. Advanced Placement Programs, Co-Op/OYAP opportunities, Specialist High Skills Major Programs, etc. are all supported by a team of incredible. The link for the open house is <http://www.sjconline.ca/holdingstudents>

## KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

**ONLINE**  
**KINDERGARTEN**  
**REGISTRATION**

**JAN 4 - FEB 26**

**catholiceducation.ca**

 **BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK**  
Catholic District School Board

Information about the **NEW PROCESS** is available at the end of the newsletter.

## **WE ARE TWEETING!!**

In an effort to keep everyone informed about events in our community, St. Leo's has a Twitter account. You can follow us @stleocatholic to keep up with what is happening in our classrooms and special events in our school community.



## **ON TIME AND READY TO LEARN**

As you know, our instructional day begins at **8:45 a.m.** We have staff outside to supervise students **beginning at 8:30 am every morning.** We encourage you to drop off your child beginning at that time. While arriving late is occasionally unavoidable, habitual lateness interferes with the classroom learning environment for **all students**, not only the one who is tardy, and is to be discouraged. Additionally, there is a well-documented correlation between student success and attendance. Many studies show that the most successful students: arrive on time, attend regularly, and come to school rested, nourished, and mentally prepared to learn. We would appreciate the support in getting students to school on time so that the office can verify absences and begin morning exercises and announcements.



***Our Brant County Health Unit provided the following article to support your efforts to “get out the door on time.”***

### **Getting Out the Door on Time**

*By Professor Matt Sanders*

For many families the morning rush hour is the most stressful part of the day. So how can you and the kids get out the door on time?

The key is organization.

Get yourself ready first, before your child. To avoid last minute rushing prepare some things the night before and go to bed at a reasonable hour so you'll wake early enough.

I also recommend against having the television on in the morning. Better to make sure the children are dressed before breakfast. Perhaps when they are fully ready you can turn the television on then.

Let your child know ahead of time that you'll be going out and explain exactly what the day's activities will be and their time requirements.

Younger children can learn the importance of organization by doing things for themselves. Teaching children to get dressed by themselves is a chance to practice independent skills and it also saves you time.

You may like to try the “beat the clock” game. Your child's goal is to be ready before the alarm clock sounds off. If your child wins, he earns a small treat or reward, such as a favourite snack in his lunch box.

Tell your child exactly what tasks he must do to be ready to leave and thus win the reward. Make sure you set the timer for a reasonable amount of time and avoid giving repeated instructions or nagging your child to hurry up.

Often it will only take a two-week period of beating the clock before the rewards and the clock are phased out. Remember to always praise your child's achievements in learning better organization.

**Professor Matt Sanders is founder of the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program<sup>®</sup>. To find out more about Triple P in Alberta go to [www.triplep-parenting.net](http://www.triplep-parenting.net).**

### **EARLY PICK-UPS:**

We recognize that students may have appointments or early pick up is needed for other reasons, however, we ask that you write a note to your child's teacher or send them a message by email or in Brightspace to indicate the date and time of the early pick up so students can be ready for you at the office. The office is a very busy place and we can't guarantee students will be ready on time if you call for early pickups. We ask everyone's assistance in **not calling for early pickups after 2:15 pm** as the office is very busy at the end of the day and messages may not be picked up from the phone after this time of day.



## **HOT LUNCHES**

If you have not already signed up to access lunches through our hot lunch service, LunchBox Orders, please note that you can do so at any time. A variety of local restaurants provide healthy, tasty and fun lunches for a reasonable cost through this service. Tuesdays at St. Leo are always Domino's Pizza Day. Other providers include Bar Burrito, Swiss Chalet, La Bottega as well as others that kids know and enjoy. **Our hot lunches are offered Tuesdays, Thursdays and some Fridays.** Parents may choose as many – or as few! – lunch days as they wish and do not have to order far in advance unless they so choose. Orders are open until the Sunday at noon before the week begins.

## **Changes to your Contact Information?:**

If you have moved, have new/different emergency contacts, have changed your work phone or any other important information, please ensure you provide this to Mrs. Wood or Mrs. Monterroza at the office at 519-759-3314. This is especially important for emergency situations. In addition, our Board uses automated attendance calling – we can't reach you if our information is out-of-date! Thanks for your support in ensuring our records are accurate.



The Board is utilizing an online Kindergarten Registration tool that will make the process more convenient for parents. Online registration is open starting now until February 26, 2021

Parents will simply:

1. Create an account (**a confirmation email will be sent to your email account**)
2. Provide registration details
3. Upload a few documents (**please prepare by taking pictures of them or scanning them so you have an electronic copy ready to upload**)

The registration process **takes about 20 minutes to complete**. You can 'Save' anytime and login later to finish or upload required documents. All the information that you have entered will still be there. Just remember to choose the 'Save' button before exiting.

We recommend that parents get a head start by preparing electronic versions of the following:

- **Canadian birth certificate** (or proof of Canadian citizenship, proof of permanent residence, record of landing, or other Immigration and Citizenship documentation).
- **Roman Catholic Baptismal Certificate or, if your child is not baptized, the Roman Catholic Baptismal Certificate of the parent or guardian.**
- **Proof of home address** (a rental/lease agreement, drivers license, utility bill, proof of purchase).

**Items to remember:** If you have any difficulties or questions during the registration process, please contact the school (519-759-3314), email [info@bhncdsb.ca](mailto:info@bhncdsb.ca) or call 519-732-5282.

- You will need to use the same email address when entering your parent/guardian information that you used when you created your account. That email address is important because it is part of the attendance and information sharing processes during the school year. Other parent/guardian email addresses can be added during the registration process.
- You can upload the required documents as an 'image' or as a '.pdf' file. A quick 'smart phone' picture or 'scan' will do the trick! If you are not able to upload the required documents, complete the online registration process and provide the original paper versions to the school as soon as possible. Your child's registration is not complete until all documents are received at the school.
- If you are registering for a school that is not your home school (meaning that it is not the Catholic school in your immediate area) please complete the registration process by picking your home school. You will then be able to fill out an "Out of Boundary" form.  
If you are registering for our French Immersion program, please select the French Immersion School closest to your home from the list.