

JANUARY 2015 NEWSLETTER

Superintendent: S. Pizzuti

Trustees: M. Nardini & P. DiFrancesco

Pastor: Rev Martin Vallely

Principal: C. Martino

Principal Assistant: A. D'Ascenzo

Secretary: D. Simpson

Assoc. Pastor: Rev Mike Downey

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, Magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem saying, "Where is the new-born king of the Jews? We saw His star and its rising and have come to do Him homage."

January is here! Welcome back and we hope everyone had a blessed and very wonderful Christmas with family and friends. Thank you for your generosity, your cards and well wishes during the month of December. We were very touched by the warmth of the Advent season with the support for our Advent Craft Night, the Christmas Concert, the tree of warmth, the food drive and all the Hamper donations. This really captures the true meaning of the season and we are truly blessed to have so many generous spirits fill our school community. The staff wishes everyone a very healthy, holy and Happy New Year! The New Year is a blessing from God to each of us. Celebrate your blessings and aim to make this year a very special year.

A PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

God, thank you for a new year. May everyone in our family be willing to begin anew with a clean slate. We know that you are always ready to forgive us. Help us to be willing to forgive ourselves and to forgive one another.

As we begin a new year, remind us of our truest values and our deepest desires. Help us to live in the goodness that comes from doing what you want us to do. Help us to put aside anxiety about the future and the past, so that we might live in peace with you now, one day at a time. Amen



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH

Marian Prayer Garden

Over the past year, volunteers within our St. Francis Xavier Parish have been developing a new and exciting fundraising initiative that will enhance our outdoor space by the establishment of a prayer garden, the Marian Prayer Garden, to be created *outdoors* in the area of the shrine of Mary. The Marian Prayer Garden will be a prayerful, peaceful space, dedicated to both the living and to those we wish to remember in memoriam. It will be an additional gathering space for families for special occasions, photos, quiet prayer and reflection. The garden will add to the beauty of the Church and the surrounding outdoor environment. The garden will consist of a professionally designed and landscaped space, paved with personalized paving stones. Each paving stone will be engraved with names of families, loved ones, feeder schools, parish pastors and parish groups. The paving stones will be available for purchase and come in two sizes - 4x8 inches and 8x8 inches. **The 4x8 inch stones will be sold for a donation of \$75. The 8x8 inch stones will be sold for a donation of \$125.** Duplicate stones will also be available, should you choose to want one for your own gardens, at a reduced amount. For this prayer garden to be built, it will require the participation of as many people as possible. Please share this information with your family and friends, as all are welcome to participate. Brochures are available at the school and at St. Francis Xavier Church. Thank you for your consideration and for your anticipated support.

Knights of Columbus - Council 7969 Chips for Charity

The St. Francis Knights are undertaking a fundraiser called "Chips for Charity" The chips will go towards discounts off of events at the Parish and monthly prizes. For each chip sold from our school, a portion will be returned to the school. More information will be sent home in a separate letter. Thank you for your support.

IMPORTANT WEATHER ALERT

"O the weather...!", We do live in Canada and we do have to expect the cold and the snow during the winter months. Ensure your child comes to school dressed for the elements. Students must come with boots for outside and runners/shoes for inside. Snow pants are a must if students go on the snow hills or make snow angels. **SNOWBALLS are a safety concern and will not be tolerated. Students who throw snowballs will be suspended.** The snow is beautiful and there are many other things to do with the snow!

REPORT CARDS



First term will be ending soon and report cards will be sent home on **February 10th**. Accept each challenge and put forth your very best effort. All students are encouraged to review their strengths and weaknesses with their parents and set goals to achieve academic success. Next steps and priorities must be set as a priority in order to achieve success.

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

This year 14 Christmas Hampers were prepared by our school community to assist families in need within our school board. Nine families generously supported an "adopted" family! Thank you for your compassion and giving nature. Thank you for your generous support for this endeavour. The amount of canned goods and gifts were overwhelming. All hampers were very well received and the families are so very appreciative of your support and prayers for their well being.

Thank you to the students and staff for their contribution to the Christmas Hampers. Thank you to the parents who purchased the gifts for the hampers from the class donations. We truly appreciate the efforts of the Catholic School Council and parent volunteers for gathering additional donations from the business community and helping to assemble and deliver the hampers. The Catholic School Council also dedicated a portion of their yearly Charitable Donation Funds to the purchase of gift cards for items for the hampers. We would also like to extend our gratitude to those families who donated gift cards.

A very special thank you to Mrs. Germana-Miller and Mrs. DeBellis for all the shopping, organization and making sure all hampers were complete. Thank you to Mrs. Matesa for delivering some of our Hampers.

CHRISTMAS TREE OF WARMTH

Thank you to the families that donated hats, mitts, & scarves for our Tree of Warmth. Once again, your generosity filled the tree and overflowed into boxes. The articles will be donated to people on the streets as we venture out in January with coats, hats and mittens for those in need.

GRADE 8 CHRISTMAS SALE

Thank you to all families who generously donated to the Christmas Craft Sale. It was a huge success. Congratulations to Katrina K., who won the Ipad Mini !

POSTER CONTEST

Congratulations to Serena R, Olivia C. Ethan C. and Olivia W. who were the winners of the Knights of Columbus poster contest on Drug and Substance Abuse. Their posters now move up to another level of competition. Congratulations and good luck!!

CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL

We will meet on **Monday January 19th at 6:00 pm** in our school library. All parents are welcome to join us. The Catholic School Council will begin the World's Finest Chocolate Bar Drive in February. More information will be sent home soon.

FAMILY LITERACY DAY



Family Literacy Day is a national initiative that promotes the importance of reading & learning together as a family. Every year, families across Canada are encouraged to take the time to celebrate the special day. In Hamilton, Family Literacy Day has evolved into a weeklong celebration called "Hamilton Families Read Week".

As a school, we will be participating in a "**Snuggle Up & Read**" event on **Tuesday, January 27th**. This day will also be our '**Pyjama Day**' and **students are invited to wear appropriate pj's, slippers, house coats for the day.**

On **Thursday January 29th**, we will have Dez Sargeant, a story teller at our school for the day!

P.A. DAY

Friday, January 23rd has been designated as a Professional Activity Day. There will be no school for students that day. Staff will be involved in activities throughout the day.

SYSTEM SCIENCE FAIR

Our students from grade 4 to grade 8 are working on Science Fair Projects which will be presented and marked in their classrooms. On Wednesday February 4th, during the afternoon we will have an open house for parents and grandparents to come and see the incredible science fair projects. The HWCDSB System Science Fair will be held on **Saturday February 28th** at Bishop Ryan High School. More information will be posted on this event and our open house.

INDOOR FOOTWEAR



In order to keep classrooms free of outside melted snow, mud and dirt and to provide footwear for outside in case the fire alarm rings, we request that the students bring a pair of "indoor" shoes that they will keep at school and wear during the school day. Shoes must be worn as a safety precaution.

In accordance with fire regulations, it is required that there be an "immediate and complete" evacuation of the entire building. There is no time to stop and put on boots or coats. If you have established the above footwear practice with your child, we can avoid an unpleasant experience for them (outside in stocking feet) in the case of an emergency.

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL PARKING CONCERNS

As we progress through this winter season, we can expect that parking spots will be lost to piles of snow. Please drive carefully through the parking lot and driveway. Please remember to exit the parking lot/driveway through the west exit. The Kiss & Ride is intended for students who can leave the car and go into the playground on their own. If you are intending on walking your children to the playground, please park your car in a designated spot, not in the drive way. There is **no** pick up in the driveway at the end of the day. This holds up the school bus.

The handicapped parking in the west lot is intended for parents that have the official signage in their vehicle. Please do not park in these designated spots or park your vehicle in such a way that the entrance to the spots is blocked.

ANAPHYLAXIS

Please remember that all products that are not nut safe can be life threatening to some of our students. Your cooperation in carefully selecting nut safe snacks for your child to bring to school is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your continued support.

Allergen Reminder

St. Clare of Assisi is a place where all children feel safe and have a sense of belonging. To ensure the safety and well being of all children, please note below important information from Anaphylaxis Canada:

- Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction that is rapid in onset and may cause death;*
- Signs and symptoms of a severe allergic reaction can occur within minutes of exposure to an allergen (a substance capable of causing an allergic reaction), and*
- Very small amounts of certain foods can cause severe reactions when eaten. This may happen if a person at risk touches an allergenic substance and then subsequently touches the mouth. Even a very small amount 'hidden' in a food or transferred to a serving utensil has the potential to cause a severe allergic reaction. Direct ingestion of an allergy-causing food poses the greatest risk for people with food allergies.*

Cooperation from parent and guardians in adhering to the guidelines below is most appreciated:

- There are students and staff at this school who are allergic to the following foods and items: Peanuts, eggs, and nuts;
- Parents will be advised of allergens specific to a classroom; please avoid bringing these allergens into the designated classroom;
- Reinforce hand-washing practices: wash hands before and after eating;
- Remind children not to share or trade food, food utensils, or food containers, and
- Please do NOT bring any homemade food products into the school; with permission, non-food items are permitted for various celebrations and special events and activities.

"No Child Without" Medic Alert Program

The Canadian Medic Alert® Foundation has developed a program to protect children living with chronic medical conditions, allergies or special needs. This program is called NO CHILD WITHOUT. It was developed to ensure children from JK up to their 14th birthday receive Medic Alert protection at no cost to the parent, school or board. The program is funded by corporate and local business sponsorships across Canada.

If you are a parent of a child with chronic medical conditions, allergies or special needs, please ask for a brochure in the office. The NO CHILD WITHOUT brochure explains the voluntary program. The form is sent directly to Medic Alert. There are no costs. All correspondence occurs directly between Medic Alert and the parent/guardian. The school and Board will receive monthly updates listing all medications, allergies and medical conditions of the participants, but no student names are printed.

Should you have any questions, feel free to speak with Mr. Agro or contact Medic Alert directly at www.medicalert.ca/nochildwithout.

HEAD LICE NEWS

Head lice are often present in school communities. Please help us prevent the likelihood of having head lice present in our school by checking your child's scalp once a week as you may catch it early and prevent the spread to other children via proper treatment. For more information regarding Head-Lice, please visit the Hamilton Public Health Website.

Alternatively you can e-mail: askCITY@hamilton.ca or Call: 905-546-CITY (2489)

MORNING SUPERVISION

Some children are arriving at school before supervision begins in the mornings, which is a concern for the safety of the children at St. Clare of Assisi School. Please **do not** send or drop off your children **BEFORE 8:20am**. **Supervision does not begin until 8:20** Please adhere to these times for your child's safety. All staff and supervisors are now wearing the yellow/orange safety vests so they are visible on the yard.

SAFE ARRIVAL PROGRAM

If your child is to be absent from school or will be late arriving, we ask that you please call the school. We would like to thank all parents who take the time to call as this helps our Safe Arrival Program function effectively. If you **do not** call, we will:

1. call home or cell phones
 2. call parents at work,
 3. call the emergency number and if successful contact is **not** made, the **Police** will be contacted.
- Please make sure we have up-to-date information in the office. Our telephone system allows you to leave a message directly with no chance of a busy signal. These messages are a high priority and they are retrieved on a regular basis.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

A reminder that when schools are closed or buses cancelled due to extreme weather conditions, details will be announced before 7:00 a.m. 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 or www.hwcdsb.ca

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 and our website 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 that do not run in the morning will not run for the rest of the day.

ADOPTION AND FOSTER INFORMATION NIGHT

Wednesday January 21st, 2015 - 7:00 p.m.
Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton, 735 King St. East

Upcoming Adoption and Foster Parent Information Night
Thursday February 5th, 2015 - 7:00 p.m.
St. Mary Catholic Secondary School, 200 Whitney Ave. Hamilton
For more information and to register call:
(Adoption) Jocelyn Jacobs at (905) 525-2012 ext. 3125
(Fostering) Katrina McMorrow at (905) 525-2012 ext. 3280
Visit our website at www.hamiltonccas.on.ca

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION FOR SEPTEMBER 2015

If you already have children in our school and will be registering a JK or SK student, *please fill out the form at the end of this newsletter* and return it to the office. We will send you a registration form which you can complete at home and bring in with the appropriate documents asap. This will help speed up the registration process. Children already registered at St. Clare in **JK** need not register for the SK program. For JK Children: They must be 4 years of age on or before December 31, 2015. For SK Children: They must be 5 years of age on or before December 31, 2015.

NOTICE FOR JK/SK REGISTRATION

YES, I have a child who will be entering JK in September 2015 or a **new SK** (*not having attended JK this year*). For JK, my child will be 4 years old by December 31, 2015 and for SK, they will be 5 years old by December 31, 2015. They have been baptized in a Roman Catholic Church. Please send home the necessary registration forms with:

Sibling's Name: _____ Teacher: _____

Name of Child to register for JK _____ Date of Birth: _____