



ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Lighting the Way ~ Rejoicing in Our Journey

<http://www.st-clair.net>

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL

CRUSADER NEWS

Principal: Jeanne Girard

Director of Education: Dan Parr
Superintendent: Deb Crawford

Board Chair :J VanHeck
Trustee: B. Rumble



October2017

ISSUE: II

PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL



Thank you to the parents who expressed an interest in sitting on School Council. This year our Parent Council Members will be: Mary Reid, Jenny Lane and Amy Finn. If you forgot to send in your response and would like to join us, you are welcome to come out to our next **Parent Council Meeting** which will be on **Wednesday, October 25, 2017 at 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm.**

Any parent is welcome to come out and see what School Council is all about. This is not an "exclusive club". We welcome ideas and especially volunteers to assist with events. Many of the things that happen at school cannot happen without the generous support and hours from our volunteers! Please consider getting involved in your child's school in some small way! We value your input and always strive to provide quality experiences for our school community.

YARD DUTY SUPERVISOR WANTED

Yard Duty Supervisors are needed for the Lunch Hour at St. Joseph Catholic School. We have an immediate opening for a full time Yard Duty Supervisor and openings for someone to cover occasional days. If you or anyone you know is interested, please call the office for more details regarding hours, pay and necessary paperwork. Individuals do not have to have children at this school in order to apply for the job. This is a great opportunity to get outside and spend some time getting to know our wonderful students!

25-35 Raleigh Street Chatham Ontario N7M2M6

Phone: (519) 354-4642

Fax: (519) 354-4643



Field Trip to the Thamesville CORN MAIZE - Oct 30

Students in FDK through Grade 8 will be visiting the Thamesville Corn Maize. According to the "Corn Cops" St. Joseph is one of their favourite visiting schools and they could not wait for us to return! We are proud of all of our students and how they conduct themselves while off of school property. Students are learning that no matter where they are, they represent their Catholic School. Consents with the date and time will be sent home and the trip should be paid for online for your convenience. There is room on the bus for chaperones, and no cost for our chaperones. If you plan on attending to help out and take a group, please let your child's teacher know. If you have any questions about online payment, please call Mrs. Van Praet in the office.

School Wellness Committee - Our School Wellness Committee will be participating in a conference that creates awareness for School Wellness. We thank our students and staff representative for stepping up to create a positive school environment for all.

No Act of kindness no matter how small is ever wasted. Aesop

Kindness in words creates confidence.

Kindness in thinking creates profoundness.

Kindness in giving creates love. Lao Tzu

A warm smile is the universal language of kindness.

William Arthur Ward

"Tenderness and kindness are not signs of weakness and despair, but manifestations of strength and resolution." Kahlil Gibran

Gratitude

A sense of gratitude can benefit children (and adults) in a variety of ways. It can decrease stress and has other important emotional health benefits. A person who is grateful tends to spend less time comparing him or herself with others and feeling envious. There is evidence that suggests that grateful young adolescents (ages 11-13), compared to their less grateful counterparts, are happier and more optimistic, have better social support, are more satisfied with their school, family, community, friends, and themselves, and give more emotional support to others. It has also been found that grateful teens (ages 14-19) are more satisfied with their lives, use their strengths to better their community, are more engaged in their schoolwork and hobbies, have higher grades, and are less envious, depressed, and materialistic. It also helps people, especially children, step into someone else's shoes and realize that another person did something nice for them even though he or she didn't have to. It improves the development of empathy which allows us to put ourselves in someone else's "shoes" and try to understand how they may feel. We want our children to be able to relate to other people's feelings and to feel a sense of belonging in their classrooms and community. Cultivating a sense of gratefulness goes a long way toward this goal.

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL

As a school family, everyone will be spending time writing a gratitude each day. Students of been given a gift of a Gratitude Journal that is their own and unique and different than the "regular school work books." Our goal is to assist students in reflecting on all of the blessings they have in their lives. Gratitude is an emotion similar to appreciation that most people are familiar with. What many people do not know is that gratitude plays an important role in several historical movements, and that gratitude is now becoming an important part of psychology research, and especially **positive psychology research**.

How you can help at home?

- 1. Model and teach gratitude:** Our children want to be like us. We provide the blueprint for what to say and what to do and in what contexts. Expressing gratitude through words, writing, and small gifts or acts of reciprocity are all ways to teach children how to become grateful. This helps kids think gratefully.
- 2. Spend time with your kids and be mindful when with them:** Another way to spell love is T-I-M-E. Believe it or not, children and, yes, even adolescents, like being with their parents. Giving a child a lot of quality time with you teaches them the language of love—life's greatest gift. Savor every moment together, big and small, and rid yourself of distractions at such times, including your smartphone. Being mindful helps you maintain empathy toward a child, and this provides important modeling of empathy, the most important emotion for developing gratitude and moral behavior. It will also give you and your child a heightened sense of appreciation for the things both of you love and for your relationship.
- 3. Support your child's autonomy.** Using an authoritative or democratic parenting style, which is firm, yet flexible, supports children's autonomy. This will enhance family relationships, improve the atmosphere at home, and help bring out their strengths and talents, all good for making grateful kids. By taking ownership over their skills and talents and being responsible for developing them, children gain things to appreciate in life and make it easier to attract support from others, thus inviting gratitude into their daily life. Also, limiting children's media consumption and guiding them to use media in prosocial ways protects them from commercial influences that discourage the development of the authenticity, self-development, and social interaction necessary to grow into positive, purposeful, grateful individuals.
- 4. Use kids' strengths to fuel gratitude.** After you've identified your children's top strengths and you know their unique strengths profile, you should encourage and help them to use those strengths whenever possible. Not only does this open up opportunities for others to contribute to the things your children love, but it also enables your children to strengthen their ability to be helpful and cooperative toward others, which will make them more grateful. To directly promote gratitude, encourage and help your children to use their strengths to thank and be kind to others.
- 5. Help focus and support kids to achieve intrinsic goals.** It's very easy for people, especially youth, to pursue extrinsic—or materialistic—goals such as desiring or having possessions that show wealth, status, or convey a certain image. This usually leads to less fulfilling social relationships and forecloses prospects for developing deep connections with others and genuine gratitude. It's our job to steer them away from pursuing extrinsic goals and toward pursuing intrinsic goals, such as engaging in activities that provide community, affiliation, and growth. Not only will successfully achieving these goals fulfill children's fundamental human needs of competency, belongingness, and autonomy, but their personal development, happiness, success, and gratitude depend on it. To amplify their gratitude even more, remember to savor their accomplishments with them along the way, and encourage them to thank those who've helped them meet their goals.
- 6. Encourage helping others and nurturing relationships.** Helping others and being generous are two key ingredients for making grateful kids. When children lend a hand, especially while using their strengths, they feel more connected to those they're helping, which helps them to develop and nurture friendships and social relationships. A great way to do this is by teaching them through your actions that other people matter and that tending to relationships should be a priority. To help children strengthen their relationships, you should encourage them to be thoughtful of others, to thank others regularly, and to be cooperative, helpful, and giving.
- 7. Help kids find what matters to them.** Having a sense of purpose in life gives youth a compass for creating a meaningful life. As adults, it's our job to help kids discover their passions and to find a path to purpose that resonates with them—with their values, interests, and dreams. This starts with feeding their interests in the social issues they care about and pushing them to learn as much as they can about those issues and discover ways they can make a difference. The deepest sense of gratitude in life comes from connecting to a bigger picture, to an issue that matters to others and doing things that contribute to society down the road.



PHYSICAL LITERACY

Students will be participating in Physical Literacy daily, immediately following morning announcements. Why we are doing this... "Physical literacy is the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life." The International Physical Literacy Association, May 2014

Physical activity is a lot more fun when we're physically literate. If we want children to be active for life, they need to develop physical literacy at a young age. Just as learning the alphabet is necessary

to read, the development of fundamental movement skills and fundamental sport skills is critical if children are to feel good about physical activity. The ABCs - Agility, Balance, Coordination and Speed are the four skills that underpin physical literacy. Physical Literacy is the mastering of fundamental movement skills and fundamental sport skills that permit a child to read their environment and make appropriate decisions, allowing them to move confidently and with control in a wide range of physical activity situations. It supports long-term participation and performance to the best of one's ability. The website: physicalliteracy.ca offers access to a wide range of resources that can help people become physically literate.

Physical Literacy is the cornerstone of both participation and excellence in physical activity and sport. Ideally, physical literacy is developed prior to the adolescent growth spurt. It has been adopted as the foundation of the Sport for Life concept in Canada. Children should learn fundamental movement skills and fundamental sport skills in each of the four basic environments:

ON THE GROUND - as the basis for most games, sports, dance and physical activities.

IN THE WATER - as the basis for all aquatic activities.

ON SNOW AND ICE - as the basis for all winter sliding activities.

IN THE AIR - basis for gymnastics, diving and other aerial activities.





ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC
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October School Newsletter Insert

As parents/guardians, it is important that you understand and support the role of the principal and Board staff as it relates to classroom organization in your school.

As you may be aware, the provincial government regulates the number of students in classrooms. In elementary schools, class-size caps are set by provincial directive for individual grades; and, in addition, a system-wide average must be maintained across the entire district. Therefore, classroom loadings in your school have to be viewed from a system perspective, not just at the local level. It is also important to note that provincial funding is tied to compliance with this regulation. In other words, if we don't meet the provincial directive there is a financial penalty, which affects our Board – and by extension, our students.

The result of this directive is that combined grades are common across the system and across the province, as a means of ensuring that boards are compliant with the provincial regulation. Unfortunately, there is a common perception among parents that combined grades are detrimental to learning; or, that it is a reflection of students' abilities – that is, in a Grade 2-3 split, the Grade 2s are above average learners and the Grade 3s are below average. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Every classroom in every school meets the needs of every student, whether it is a combined grade or a straight grade. Further, a great deal of time and effort goes into decisions which determine the loading of classrooms. These decisions are ultimately made by the principal, in consultation with Board administrative staff, and preliminary class lists are developed over the summer. However, occasionally one or two new students on the first day of school can push a class size over the threshold, which creates a domino effect that can impact every grade in the school. Sometimes, because of the mandatory system-wide averages, enrolment issues at another school in the district can have an effect on the classroom organization at your school.

When large-scale classroom reorganizations occur, the principal and teaching staff make every effort to accommodate the changes with as little disruption as possible. Students changing classrooms are always given a warm welcome by their new teacher and their new classmates.

Thank you again, for understanding and supporting the efforts of your principal and the school staff, in this important matter. It is our commitment to you that, although we must always strive to meet this provincial regulation, we will always do so having regard for the best interests of our students and staff.

Have a great school year!

Sincerely,

Dan Parr

Director of Education

Focus on Faith – October School Newsletter Insert

The secret to happiness is to live moment by moment and to thank God for what He is sending us each day in His Goodness
St. Gianna Beretta Molla

It is appropriate to highlight this quote from St. Gianna during the month of October, when Canada celebrates **Thanksgiving**. Gratitude is a great theme in our faith. The word *Eucharist* means “Thanksgiving” and so, every Mass we celebrate is a testament to the value of GRATITUDE.

When we live a life of gratitude, we start realizing that we have what we need and become content with what we have. When we do this, we need less, consume less and waste less. It is an essential value if we are to care for the earth and her inhabitants. Cultivating gratitude can help to shape the values of Institutions, schools and families.

One of the goals found in our Board’s Strategic Plan shows this value on an institutional level:
We all care for God’s creation by managing and reducing our carbon footprint in measurable ways.

On a school level, one might see the influence of gratitude in:

- Prayers for creation*
- An environment club/ Good Neighbour Program*
- A food drive to feed neighbours.*

On a family level, this value can be seen in these actions:

- Providing garbage free lunches*
- Buying modest amounts of clothing*
- Repairing items rather than replacing them*
- Not buying the latest technology just because*

On a parish level, this is seen in ways that include:

- Celebration of mass*
- St. Vincent De Paul Clubs*
- Catholic Women’s League and Knights of Columbus efforts.*

Gratitude is an essential value of our faith and therefore part of the culture of our schools each day and month. Every day is Thanksgiving for a person or community of faith. Let’s try to remember that when we celebrate Thanksgiving this year.

God bless your celebrations.

Margaret Palmer, System Chaplaincy Leader

CHATHAM CATHOLIC FAMILY OF PARISHES

Follow-up of Parish Mission DVD Series	Sept. 27, Oct. 4,11,18,25, Nov. 1 at 6:30 p.m. at Blessed Sacrament Church Hall
SAY/YES Mass	Oct. 22, 9:30 a.m. at Blessed Sacrament Church and 11:30 a.m. at St. Agnes Any Gr. 1-8 student interested in helping at Mass to do readings, usher, gift bear, etc. please contact Mike McPherson at 519-352-9483
Sacramental Preparation	Thank you to all the families who registered for First Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation. Start praying and working hard to get ready for your Sacraments!
Confirmation Commitment	Congratulations to all the grade eights and their families who attended the Confirmation Commitment ceremony. Let’s pray for all these students.
Weekend Masses Wishing all families a Happy Thanksgiving Weekend!	Please join the parish families at Sunday Mass: Blessed Sacrament: Sat. 7:00 p.m.; Sun. 9:30 a.m. St. Agnes: Sat. 5:00 p.m. Sun. 11:30 a.m. St. Joseph: Sun. 8:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. St. Ursula: Sat. 5:00 p.m. Sun. 9:30 a.m. Our Lady of Victory: Sat. 5:00 p.m. Sun. 9:30 a.m.
Baptism	Any families who are interested in having their children receive the Sacrament of Baptism, please contact Colleen Keane at 519-352-8530