

Catholic Elementary School
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www.stjerome.ecsd.net



Website: www.stjerome.ecsd.net

DECEMBER 2008 NEWSLETTER

Message from the Administration

Dear Parents/Guardians,

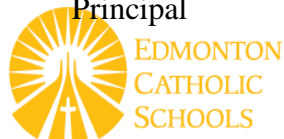
We have been blessed with wonderful weather for the month of November and the students have enjoyed their time outside without having to bundle up in their winter clothing. However, we all know that this weather will not last and that we will soon be needing to dress warmer in December. It was also a month in which the students worked very hard in their studies both in class and on their fieldtrips. November was a time to share and celebrate the students' learning accomplishments with their parents, as the report cards were sent home, and culminated with the report card conferences. We extend a thank you to the many parents who were able to join us for report card conferences. We thank you for your commitment and dedication to your children's education and for taking time to share, discuss and support the learning in our school community.

As we head into December we look forward to celebrating the first coming of Christ and anticipating his second coming through our Advent celebrations. During this liturgical season of Advent we are undertaking a number of social justice initiatives here at the school as this is a time of year when many less fortunate families and people are in need of assistance. We welcome your support in these endeavours.

We wish you all a blessed Christmas and joyous new year.

Sincerely,

Mr. G. Antonakis
Principal



Mr. W. Kowalchuk
Assistant Principal



A SCIENCE ACADEMY

Looking Back

November started out as an opportunity for the students and staff to dress western for a week in support of the Canadian Finals Rodeo held in our city.

We had a wonderful Remembrance Day celebration organized by Mrs. Stelmaschuk and Ms Roy. The students were very respectful during this celebration. We would like give a special thank you to Mr. Villeneuve for taking the time to come and speak to the students during this celebration. Your speech and presence in military uniform had a very profound affect.

November was also the conclusion of our first term and the students received their first report card this year. Parents and students were able to celebrate their successes by joining us during the parent/student/teacher conferences.

Advent Celebration

As we enter into the liturgical season of Advent, we will be celebrating the 1st week of Advent on Monday, December 1, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. in the gym. Please join us in song, prayer and light.



Charitable Activities For Advent

Advent is a time for preparation, prayer and generosity. St. Jerome has chosen three separate charitable acts for this season of Advent. They are:

1. Food Bank Donations:

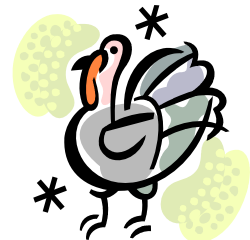
We are collecting non-perishable food items which will be donated to the food bank. We are accepting donations up to December 19th upon which time they will be delivered to the Edmonton Food Bank.

2. Toiletries:

We will be collecting toiletries and placing them on and around an undecorated Christmas tree located in the front foyer of the school. Items may include: shampoo, soap, tooth brushes, tooth paste, deodorant, Q-tips, razors, combs and brushes etc. These items will be distributed to the Marion Centre and the Youth Emergency Shelter. We will be collecting toiletries up to December 19th.

3. Turkey Drive:

In supporting the CBC Radio annual "Turkey Drive" we are collecting money for the purchase of turkeys which will then be taken to CBC Radio. If all students (130) and staff (22) contribute \$5.00 we would be able to raise



\$760.00 which would buy approximately 38 turkeys. All contributions are welcome. For all contributions regardless of amount we will be placing a “turkey ornament” with the name of the contributing family on our Christmas Tree.

By participating in at least one of these charitable acts we can all make a difference in our community.

Christmas Concert

St. Jerome will be performing a Christmas Concert this year for students in Kindergarten to Grade 6 on Thursday, December 18th. We will be having an afternoon performance at **2:00 p.m.** on Thursday, December 18th and an evening performance at **7:00 p.m.** in the gym on Thursday, December 18th. Both performances are identical.



As our gym capacity is limited to 300 people as per the fire regulations, we would ask that grandparents and other family members please attend the afternoon performance at 2:00 p.m. and the **parents attend the evening performance.**

Change of Dismissal

As written in our agenda book calendar dates we will be exchanging our early dismissal prior to each major holiday throughout the year.

Our dismissal times for Christmas will be as follows:

- **Thursday, December 18th -- 3:21 p.m.**
- **Friday, December 19th – 11:50 a.m.**
- **Students will return to class on Monday, January 5th, 2009.**

We wish you a restful and joyous Christmas season!

Cancellation of Bussing

Our transportation system has an excellent record for service. However, given the possible extremes of Edmonton weather and the potential for unexpected mechanical difficulties, it is impossible to guarantee buses will run on time or at all. A route can take 50% longer in adverse weather conditions. Parents are advised that if a bus does not arrive within twenty minutes of its scheduled time, they are to assume the bus is not

coming. Parents must ensure that their child knows to return home or to a pre-selected location and the parents must make alternate arrangements to get their child to school.

Parents should also ensure that:

- ♦ children are supervised at the bus stop
- ♦ children have a place to go in the event the bus does not arrive
- ♦ children have alternate arrangements for getting to school should the bus not arrive
- ♦ children are suitably clothed to withstand weather extremes

In the event that school transportation must be cancelled due to inclement weather conditions, please note that the following radio stations will carry announcements:

RADIO STATIONS

CHED/CHQT/CISN/JOE FM
CFRN 1260/THE BEAR/CFMG
CFCW
CBC
CHFA (CBC Fr.)
MAGIC 99

AM 930 CJCA
SHINE FM
MIX 96 (96 X)
K-97
CKER

TV STATIONS

CITY TV CFRN TV GLOBAL TV CBC TV

Every effort will be made to have messages broadcast commencing no later than 6:30 a.m.

Cold Weather Policy

As we move closer to the winter season and the colder weather, we would like to communicate the following guidelines to you:

- * **Extreme weather conditions** are when air temperature and wind-chill factors are below -20 degrees C. At this temperature, unprotected skin can freeze in one minute.
- * Students will have recess indoors only during extreme weather conditions.
- * Entry doors are unlocked in the morning, and students may enter if conditions are extreme.
- * AMA Crossing Patrols will **NOT** be out in extreme conditions.



- * Students should come to school dressed appropriately to be outside (winter coat, snow pants, winter boots, toque, scarf, and warm winter gloves).

Entrances

With the onset of snow it is important that we help to keep our school clean. We ask that all students please use their assigned entrance and exit doors to the school when arriving at school and when going home. In addition, it is important that the students remove their outdoor shoes/boots upon entering the school and they not wear their outdoor footwear in the hallways when they are leaving for the day or going to after school care. This will help to reduce the congestion in the hallways as well as limit the amount of water/snow and dirt brought into the school.

Uniforms

St. Jerome Science Academy is unique not only as a science academy, but also for its dress code as a uniform school. In keeping the tradition of being a uniform school it is important that we continue to come to school with navy blue bottoms and white tops. Navy blue tops can be worn over white tops. Please note that jeans are not part of the dress code here at St. Jerome. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Visiting During School Hours

Safety at St. Jerome is very important and as such only the front entrance door is unlocked throughout the entire day. Anyone entering the school is asked to stop in at the office first. If you are bringing a lunch for your child or some school work which was left at home, please drop them off at the office and we will ensure that they are given to your child at an appropriate time of the day. Thank you for your cooperation.

School Council News

News From the Parent Council

Wow! Here we are, moving into December and where's the snow?

Thank you to all the parents who came to November's meeting. You were an important part of the decision making for a large portion of this year's spending! Also thanks goes out to Debbie Sellers who has continued to keep the books in order so we could make those spending decisions! **We are still looking for a parent/guardian from St. Jerome, who is interested in taking on the Treasurer's position for the 2008/09 year.** As this is Mrs. Seller's last year with the school, it would be good to have a new treasurer in place while she is still here as a valuable resource and mentor. If you are interested or know someone who is, please contact me at 780-477-2649 or come to our December potluck to learn more about the position.

Another thanks goes out to Nadine McGuigan and Chantelle Dozorec, who are now working together as Uniform Coordinators. If you are in need of uniforms or have questions please continue to contact Mrs. Dozorec at 780-477-5181 until Mrs. McGuigan is more familiar with the role.

Our hot lunches this year are being organized by parent council volunteers. Thanks to Debbie Sellers and to Lori Downer for organizing orders, handling monies, etc. **We are in need of parents who are able to give ½ hour to 45 minutes on the hot lunch days and help give the lunches out to the students. If you are able to help out occasionally or even on a onetime basis please contact the school at 479-5847 or myself at 477-2649. Thank you in advance!** Thank you to Jodi Loner who has organized the November pizza lunch!

We will be having a free workshop day for parents and guardians of St Jerome in early 2009. Please stay tuned for topics and dates!

All parents, guardians and staff are invited to attend the December Potluck meeting on Wednesday, December 17th at 630pm. It is a great way to enjoy visiting, enjoy food and get just a little bit of business done in the meantime. I hope to see many of you there.

At this time I would like to wish everyone an Advent season filled with joy, peace and the anticipation of the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus- The Reason for the Season!

Merry Christmas!

Rose

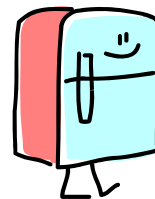
780-477-2649

St.Alphonsus Parish News

Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation will take place on Tuesday, December 2, 2008 at St. Alphonsus Church.

Refrigerator Repair

We would like to extend a thank you to Mr. Dozorec who volunteered his time and knowledge to repair the snack program refrigerator.



SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Growing in the

SPIRIT

EDMONTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



Dear Parents/Guardians:

December 2008

"Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord."

(Luke 2: 9-11)

The birth of Jesus Christ, in a stable, witnessed by shepherds, heralded the beginning of a new world. It is a time when God came to be with us and created a reign of peace and goodwill. The birth of Christ brought a message of hope that continues to inspire all of us today.

This Christmas, as we enjoy the benefits of the progress and achievement that our school district and community have shown, let us renew our commitment to one another, especially to those among us who are struggling and for whom a helping hand could make a difference. The central message of Christmas has always been one of peace and goodwill. By renewing our commitment to one another we will truly experience the true meaning of this holy season.

Here are a few highlights of the past month. "Setting the Direction for Special Education in Alberta" is a major project to create a new framework for students with special education needs. You can provide valuable input into this provincial initiative by completing the on-line consultation survey which is available at www.settingthedirection.alberta.ca.

Construction has begun on our new schools in south Terwillegar, Rutherford and The Hamptons; our new high school in Terwillegar is in the design process. The modernization of St. Francis Xavier High School is nearing completion and the construction of the St. Francis Xavier Sports Centre, a joint initiative with the City of Edmonton, will begin in December. These building projects provide our school community with much needed room to accommodate the growth we are experiencing and to provide students with world-class facilities.

Edmonton Catholic Schools 2007-2008 Annual Education Results Report is a review and celebration of the last school year. This report details the wide variety of programming in our school district and discusses the successes and areas of growth we have experienced. It will be available on-line after December 9th at www.ecsd.net.

Please accept my sincerest wishes for a joyful and restful Christmas, filled with the blessing and love of those around you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joan Carr".

Joan Carr
Superintendent

To Parents and Guardians
from Archbishop Smith

A Christmas Message

Advent allows us to prepare for a life changing encounter with Jesus Christ at Christmas. By personally entering our world through Jesus' birth, God has fully revealed his inexhaustible goodness, grace, and love for us. "The kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news" (Mark 1:15). This is truly good news in its highest form because rather than information it is God inviting us to relationship. Entering into this relationship with Jesus Christ transforms and changes us, for in him we discover that God is our Father who loves us more than we ever thought possible and that we can become his children. This Advent may all of us prayerfully consider the magnitude of Christmas and order our lives accordingly, so that we may experience the moment "when the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Saviour appeared..." through which he saved us "not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit... poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that... we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:4-7).

Yours sincerely in Christ,

✠Richard W. Smith
Archbishop of Edmonton

Vehicle Idling Awareness Campaign

The Board of Trustees has approved an Anti-Idling Awareness Campaign for this school year. As part of this awareness campaign, we have produced posters that will be displayed in all schools in our District. In addition, teachers will be discussing the effects of idling vehicles on the environment and we are inviting you to join us by turning off your vehicle when you are sitting in it. Here is some information on vehicle idling that will be shared with students:

- There are 40 hazardous air pollutants released in engine exhaust that are associated with increased illness and even death. (source: Climate Change Central)
- The by-products from the combustion of fossil fuels decrease lung function, cause asthma, increased respiratory, cancer and cardiovascular deaths. (Source: Climate Change Central).
- A notable public health concern is the fine particulate matter found in air contaminants. The primary source of this fine particulate matter is vehicle exhaust.
- The World Health Organization has identified diesel fuel exhaust as a known or probable carcinogen.
- Vehicle idling wastes fuel, money and also increases unnecessary vehicle wear.
- If every citizen in Alberta with a registered vehicle decreases idling by five minutes per day, green house gas emissions in our province would drop by 302 thousand tons a year and would equal a savings of 125M litres of fuel – more than \$146 M at today's rates.

Edmonton Catholic Schools is committed to ongoing efforts to promote health awareness for our students, staff and families. Our Vehicle Idling Awareness Campaign complements the City of Edmonton's Idling Awareness Campaign.