

Our Story ~ Our Journey



Joy and Hope

Advent is the season of joy and hope for all who follow Jesus. We must be careful not to lose sight of the true meaning of the season as the world around us hustles to buy and sell, to have parties and plan vacations.

Advent is a time to renew our life in Christ and to thank God for saving us in Jesus; it is a season for asking God to save all people and for praying for peace in the world.

During Advent, we are invited to prepare our hearts for the coming of the Lord – to wait in joyful hope for his return in glory at the end of time and to prepare for the annual celebration of his birth.

Lord Jesus, our brother and our Saviour,
come into our hearts with your love,
with your joy,
your hope,
and your peace.

Help us to reflect your love for all by
loving and serving all we meet.
Lord Jesus, come into our lives,
and share your gifts with all people.
Blessed are you, Lord Jesus,
forever and ever.
Amen!

National Liturgy Office,
Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

The Advent Wreath

This tradition helps us celebrate Our Lord's birth as well as helps to make our hearts truly ready to receive Him.

The wreath's symbolism of the advent (coming) of Light into the world is clear. The gradual lighting of the four candles, one on each Sunday of the Advent season, combined with the liturgical colours of the candles is symbolic. The circle of evergreen in which the candles are placed represents everlasting life.

As you and your family prepare, it is important to remember that each week has a particular focus:

Week 1 Hope - light one purple candle

Week 2 Faith - light two purple candles

Week 3 Joy - light two purple candles and one pink candle

Week 4 Love - light three purple candles and one pink candle

Christmas Day - light all candles and place a white candle in the middle-Jesus is born!

May the joy of Advent bring you peace.
I wish you all a blessed Advent season and a Merry Christmas.

Mrs. Leah Smith



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Brrrrrrrrrr!

Thank you in advance for dressing your child appropriately. In the event of inclement weather, Rock 95, Kool FM 107.5 or B101 will announce the bus/school cancellations on the radio and on morning news TV shows. We are in the **NORTH WEATHER ZONE.**



Safe Arrival

The following are the procedures for safe arrival on "snow days":

1. If buses are cancelled and your child takes the bus, you do NOT need to call the school.
2. If buses are cancelled and your child walks to school, it is at the discretion of the parent whether it is safe for the child to walk. If your child is a walker and is not going to attend school, it is the responsibility of the parent to call the school and report the absence. The safe arrival program is still in effect on snow days and it is crucial that you report your child absent if he/she is a walker.
3. If buses are cancelled in the morning, that means that they are cancelled in the afternoon as well.
4. The phone lines are extremely busy on snow days. Please leave a message on voice mail, or continue trying if the lines are busy.
5. Clothing - please wear appropriate clothing for the weather. Mitts, gloves, boots, hats and jackets are a must.

Please be aware that the lunch program will be canceled for that day. If your child is attending school you will need to provide a lunch for that day. Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation.

Severe Weather

Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board guidelines state that students are to stay inside the school when the temperature (with the wind chill) is minus 28 degrees Celsius or minus 25 without the wind chill.

I will monitor the weather forecasts from various sources and make the decision just prior to each recess. I recognize that these targets are quite cold and will therefore often keep students inside even if the triggers aren't reached (especially for our kindergarten students).

Simcoe Muskoka Health Unit

Do you sometimes worry about your kindergarten child's eating habits? Nutri-eSTEP can help! Check out www.smdhu.org/Nutri-eSTEP to answer simple questions to find out what's going well and get tailored tips to help keep your child healthy.

Nutri-eSTEP is a short questionnaire for parents of children aged three to five years. Discover recommendations for eating vegetables and fruits, vitamin and mineral supplementation, screen time and physical activity.

By helping your child eat healthy, move more and limit time spent sitting, you can make a difference to their lifelong health. Quick info is just a click away. Check out [Healthy is as easy as 1, 2, 3 fact sheet](#) to find tips and links to other parenting topics and information to keep your child healthy.



Our school is hosting a Christmas Food Drive. Thank you to those who have already donated. Please consider donating healthy and nutritious food items, such as:

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- Canned tuna or salmon in water
- Brown rice or whole grain pasta
- Breakfast cereals; whole grain, hot or cold
- Beans; canned, baked, kidney
- Canned vegetables and fruit
- Canned chicken or ham
- Whole grain crackers
- Iron fortified infant cereal

FOREST of READING 2018

Once again we have started the FOREST of READING PROGRAM at St. Bernard's. This is a great way for families to read and enjoy books together!



BLUE SPRUCE

The BLUE SPRUCE PROGRAM is for students in Kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2. Students in this Program listen to ten recently published Canadian children's picture books.

It is a very exciting time for everyone. After the titles are read, the children have the reward of becoming the judges in a province-wide voting event in April - where each child votes for the book that he/she likes the best!



SILVER BIRCH EXPRESS

The SILVER BIRCH EXPRESS PROGRAM is a list of nominated titles aimed at students in Grade 3, Grade 4, and Grade 5. It is a mixed list of Fiction and Non-Fiction titles. The

students in this Program listen to 5, 6, or 7 titles; and read and conference with Staff about any two of the three remaining titles before voting in April!

If families wish, these titles would make excellent stocking stuffers. Family reading experiences are strongly encouraged over the Christmas period for all grade levels. Please let the school know if you would like a list of these titles.



Forest Festival of Trees |

Learn More About the Forest of Reading

Do you love to read? Are you ready to make some noise for books? Do you want to meet your favourite authors and illustrators? Have you ever been to a "rock concert" for reading? This is your chance – be part of the largest literary event for young readers in Canada, the Festival of Trees! The Festival of Trees is Canada's largest literary event for young readers and is continuing to grow. It culminates in a two-day awards celebration for the school-aged and French-language programs of the Forest of Reading® in Toronto, with other satellite Festivals taking place across Ontario. More than 10,000 people attend the Festival in Toronto, which is co-presented by International Festival of Authors (IFOA), at the Harbourfront Centre.

What You Can Do At The Festival?

- Attend Award Ceremonies
- Get involved in Author/Illustrator Workshops
- Have Authors and Illustrators sign your books
- Take part in exciting activities and games
- Get excited for roving entertainment and vendors
- Win free prizes and books!
- Meet fellow young readers!
- Buy Forest of Reading books and merchandise

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Daily Interruptions

We have noticed an increase in parents dropping off items for our students during the school day. Research tells us that it takes students on average 23 minutes to re-focus on a task once they have been interrupted. This is lost learning time. We welcome families to leave items at the office (lunches, clothing, homework etc...) and we will call students down at a natural break in their schedule. Thanks for your cooperation in protecting the instructional time and keeping interruptions to an absolute minimum.

End of Day Pick-Up

Just a reminder that our school day officially ends at 3:15. Calling or picking up students in the minutes prior to this time is typically not possible. Students are in the halls getting ready for home, saying classroom prayers or are outside for Daily Physical Activity.

If you need your child to be picked up early, notes or calls to the school prior to 2:30 will enable us to be efficient in helping you. Last minute arrangements may mean that you will have to wait until the 3:15 bell to pick up your child.



There are still a number of items in our "Lost & Found." Please encourage your child to take a look to see if anything belongs to them. We will be donating all items not claimed to St. Vincent's at the church after Christmas.



Join us MONDAY, DECEMBER 11 at 6:30pm at St. Columbkille Parish for our Family Advent Mass and social to follow.

Upcoming Dates

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| Monday, Dec. 11 | - Second Week of Advent Celebration in the gym 9:10 (families welcome)
- Family Advent Mass at St. Columbkille 6:30pm |
| Thursday, Dec. 14 | - Wear purple or pink to remember the season of Advent |
| Friday, Dec. 15 | - Drama Presentation by PF Students |
| Monday, Dec. 18 | - Third Week of Advent Celebration in the gym 9:10 (families welcome) |
| Tuesday, Dec. 19 | - Christmas hat, toque and scarf day |
| Friday, Dec. 22 | - Advent Liturgy and Christmas Sing-a-long 2:00 (families welcome)
- Last day of school before the Christmas Holidays ~ Wear Red & Green |
| Monday, Jan. 8 | - Welcome Back! |
| Tuesday, Jan. 9 | - Blue Spruce Reading Program begins (Kindergarten – grade 2) |
| Tuesday, Jan. 23 | - Mass at the school 9:30 (Ms. Bochenek's class)
- Catholic School Community Council Meeting -6:30 in the library |
| Friday, Jan. 26 | - Knights of Columbus Free Throw Competition |