



## ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

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October 2, 2008

Issue 1



### PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

I would first like to thank all staff, students, parents and community members for making the first month at St. Mary's such a positive and happy one. Your help and support are truly appreciated.

We would like to thank all the parents for their patience in completing and returning the multitude of forms that were sent home in September.

During the month of October we hope and pray for a bountiful harvest, and thank God for all this goodness. We also keep in our prayers all families affected by this week's announcement from Volvo. Through our thoughts, words and actions let's continue to demonstrate that we truly are a Community of Caring.

### LITURGICAL EVENTS

Please continue to promote our school theme of, "What Would Jesus Do" with your children. This message reminds all of us that life is about making good choices and sometimes it is very difficult to make the right choice. Our theme encourages students to ask themselves when faced with difficult situations "What Would Jesus do"?

Thank you to our Grades 1/2 and 8 English classes for planning our October Thanksgiving Mass. Please join us for this celebration on **Thurs. October 9th at 9:30 a.m. at St. Peter's Church.** Parent and community friends are welcome to join us in any of our celebrations.

### OUTREACH PROJECTS

A huge thank-you to all students, staff and parents who supported us with their contribution to our first Outreach Project of the year — The Terry Fox Run. All funds raised will be forwarded to this very worthy organization.

Our second Outreach Project for the year will be the Thanksgiving Food Drive. All students are encouraged to donate imperishable food items to this worthwhile cause. Items can be brought to school from Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> to Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>.

### VIRTUES PROGRAMME

The Virtues programme is another way to help give students the knowledge and guidance they need to live their lives in the way Jesus would. Please check our monthly calendar for the virtue of the week.

### SPECIAL EVENTS

St Mary's Open House was held on September 18<sup>th</sup>. It was great to see many of you make the effort to attend. The benefit your children receive from seeing your interest in their school is immeasurable. The Scholastic Book Fair was also a huge success. Thanks to Mrs. Corriveau and Mrs. Good for organizing and overseeing this project. It is a great deal of work. Sales were wonderful with total sales of \$3854.3. We also received many books to compliment students' reading programs in the classroom and enhance the school library.

### IMPORTANT UPDATES

#### Safe & Healthy Schools

We continue to try to make St. Mary's as safe an environment as possible for all students. In an effort to address some unsafe situations a student arrival and departure procedure is being drafted. This will be sent home in the upcoming days. Please take careful note of our new procedures and we thank you for your cooperation in helping ensure the safety of all our children.

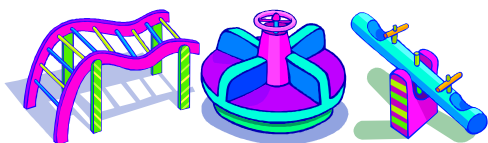
**Please Remember:** Any change in pick-up routine for your child must be indicated with a written note to the classroom teacher. The agenda can be utilized for this purpose. Phone calls to the office indicating changes should be only for family emergency situations.

A major area of focus in our school this year is to address and reduce the incidents where students may be bullied. Our philosophy is, “no child should ever go home hurt”. Please take time to read the information on bullying that will be sent home throughout the year and share the information with your child. A school Safe & Healthy School Committee will be formed to help ensure that St. Mary’s is a safe and healthy place for all. This is an extremely important committee as we all realize that unless a child feels safe and is healthy, learning is extremely difficult. This committee will be working on a number of initiatives this year.

We have begun to work on organizing a peer mediator/helper program in the school. Students from grade 7 and 8 will be selected to be in this group. The students who will be selected are students who show a high level of responsibility, tolerance, academic diligence and social skills. These students assume a leadership role in the school and provide services such as peer tutoring, orientation, relationship building, and playground leadership. The program will be initiated with special presentations on Bullying to all students in Gr. 7 and Gr. 8 in early October. Eventually, carefully selected students will be trained in a Peace Makers Program to work in our school.

### **PLAYGROUND ENHANCEMENT**

Saturday Oct. 25<sup>th</sup> from 8:00-12:00 a.m. has been set aside as a playground rejuvenation morning. It is recognized that students who have activities to keep them busy play more cooperatively and actively. An update on this work bee will be coming to you in the coming days. If you are interested in lending a hand this day your help would be greatly appreciated.



### **KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION CALLING ALL THREE YEAR OLDS**

In our interest to provide our students with the highest quality education, we are continue the process of registering children for kindergarten during the fall term, for children who will begin, or are considering, Junior or Senior Kindergarten in September 2009. Children who are 4 years of age by December 31, 2008 are eligible for Senior Kindergarten and those who are 3 years of age by December 31, 2008 are eligible for Junior Kindergarten. Registration will occur across the two counties during the month of November.

Our school’s registration date is **November 21st beginning at 1 p.m. Please contact the school if you have a child who is eligible for registration.**

### **Voluntary Aboriginal Self-Identification**

Local and provincial studies have identified a gap in levels of achievement between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. For this reason, the HPCDSB is developing a voluntary Self-Identification Policy to support the success of Aboriginal students. This new focus is part of the Ontario Ministry of Education’s new Aboriginal Education Strategy. Aboriginal is a term that refers to First Nations people, both status and no-status, Inuit and Metis. Parents will soon be given the opportunity to voluntarily identify their child as being Aboriginal (First Nations, Metis, or Inuit) heritage. Beginning in February 2009, a survey will be sent home with Report Cards along with an information brochure. Participation in this survey will be completely voluntary, and all personal information collected will be kept strictly confidential to respect the privacy of each Aboriginal student and family. If you have any further questions or would like to be a part of our Aboriginal Advisory Committee, contact your school principal.

### **STUDENT COUNCIL 08-09**

The new Student Council has been chosen for the 08-09 school year. We applaud these students for taking on leadership roles in our school:

Co-Presidents: **Jeff Gordon, Aja Hogan-Cann, and Damien DeBuono**

Classroom Representatives: **Jake L, Jakob W, Aiden G, Jamie H, Rachel B, Matthew M and Zane H.**

## SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The S.A.C. has met once this school year on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. At this meeting the year ahead was looked at, initiatives and projects looked at, and fundraising ideas discussed. Our second meeting will be held on October 20<sup>th</sup>. A special thank you is extended to all those who volunteered to serve their school community.

## IMPORTANT REMINDERS

### Indoor shoes

Now that fall is officially here, all students must have a second pair of shoes at school to use as inside shoes. Running shoes are best as they are necessary for gym class; also, if possible—if the soles of inside shoes could be light, it will help reduce scuff marks that black soled shoes produce. By doing this, we all help maintain the cleanliness of the school.

### Planners

Parents are reminded to check and initial their child's planners for homework and notes **every night**. This is one way to ensure that good communication exists between home and school. Thank you for your support in this matter.

### Head Lice Checks

Please continue to be vigilant in checking regularly your child's hair for head lice. This is an unpleasant reality of life but if head lice are caught in their initial stages, they are much easier to eliminate thus curbing the spread to other children.

**If you do detect head lice, please let the school office know so that we can notify other parents in the class. Be assured, that this is handled with confidentiality. If you require information on the treatment of head lice, please feel free to contact the school office or the Huron County Health Unit at 482 3416.**

## VOLUNTEERS ~ VOLUNTEERS ~ VOLUNTEERS



In early October the School Volunteers Forms will be sent to all parents. Volunteers can do any number of important tasks and are essential for an effectively run school. Please consider offering some time to this worthwhile endeavour.

## SPORTS UPDATE

Many of our students have been training faithfully for our Cross-Country Meets. Thus far our runners have taken part in the Maitland Run and the St. Anne's Eagles Invitational in Clinton. We had many outstanding finishes. All runners should be congratulated on their participation and great performances thus far. The system Cross Country Meet will be held on October 12th at Wildwood Conservation Area near St. Mary's, Ont.

The soccer season has also come to an end. Students from grades 5-8 took part in the system tournament that was held on September 24th in Goderich and Clinton. All teams played extremely well with some outstanding team results. Way to go Spartans! Special thanks to coaches, Mr. Holland, Mr. Baxter, Mr. O'Hara, Mr. Chisholm, Mr. Duncan, Mrs. Bedour, Mrs. Glazier and special thanks to Mrs. Lambert for helping to organize the day.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Please remember to check our school Website for weekly updates on upcoming events.

- October 9<sup>th</sup>** Thanksgiving School Mass at St. Peter's Church -9:30 a.m.
- October 15<sup>th</sup>** System Cross Country in Wildwood. Rain date: October 17th
- October 20<sup>th</sup>** SAC Meeting, 7 p.m.
- October 21<sup>st</sup>** Bus Evacuation p.m.
- October 25<sup>th</sup>** Playground Improvement Work Bee
- October 31<sup>st</sup>** Halloween fun afternoon from 1:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.; all students will be engaged in a number of Halloween activities here at the school. The teachers and Students Council will run the events. More information on this will be sent home.



## COMMUNITY NEWS

### Health Unit News

For a number of reasons, Health Units will no longer be offering flu clinics in the school but will be offering these clinics at several locations on several days in our local communities. The Health Unit still strongly recommends that anyone over 6 months of age be vaccinated against influenza. For more information contact the Health Unit at 482 3416 or see the attached flyer.

### Huron County Children's Aid

October is Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month. CAS welcomes our support as Children's Aid Societies across Ontario focus on the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

### Christmas Bureau Collection Week

Collection week will be late November/early December. The Bureau needs our school and communities' support to provide gifts of new clothing and new toys to brighten Christmas for over 1,000 disadvantaged Huron County Children.

### Canadian Parents For French

CPF is now accepting enrollments for Adult French Courses. Please contact Suzane Dorion @519-524-6244 or email [suzanedorion@yahoo.ca](mailto:suzanedorion@yahoo.ca) asap.

Invitation to All Parents: Come and see our executive meeting, you are invited to come and sit in! CPF brainstorm evening will be held at 152 Bayfield Rd. Goderich on Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> from 8:00-9:30 p.m. Event: CPF Youth Halloween dance is Oct. 24<sup>th</sup> 2008. In the upper hall of Memorial Arena in Goderich, from 7:30-10:00 pm. For all grades 6-8 only. Hope to see you there.



## SPARTAN CHEERS

**Cheers!** to all the families who came out for our School Open House. It was great to see so many people.

**Cheers!** to our school soccer teams for their outstanding play at our recent soccer tournaments.

**Cheers!** to all the parents and guardians for their patience and cooperation as we continue to alter procedures in order to try to make St. Mary's a safe and healthy place.

**Cheers!** to all those who took part and donated to our school Terry Fox Run.

**Cheers!** to all students, parents and staff for a wonderful first month of school.

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

St. Mary's is still looking for additional yard duty monitors for temporary or possible full time positions. This is a paid position for 1 and ½ hrs/day. If you are interested please forward your resume to the attention of Jackie Simpson.

## HURON-PERTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD UPDATE

The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board would like to remind parents about their school support designation. Please check your recent Property Assessment Notice, or with your landlord, to ensure you are registered as a separate school supporter. If not, please contact AnneMarie Nicholson at the Board Office 519-345-2440 or 1-800-265-8508. Every time you move please remember that your tax support does not automatically follow you when you relocate. Each and every time you move, it is essential that you re-declare yourself as a Catholic school supporter.