



# St. Mary's Catholic School January 2024 Newsletter

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## Principal's Message



A baby boy born to wealthy parents named Giovanni di Pietro di Bernardone went on to become St. Francis of Assisi. He grew to become a handsome, high-spirited and popular young man with access to all the trappings a wealthy lifestyle provided in an Italian culture. Giovanni was generous and that generosity was not exactly appreciated by his father who's money he was giving away! He transitioned throughout his life in an increasingly spiritual manner, focusing on helping others and following in Christ's footsteps. He had an affinity for the Eucharist. He believed that animals and the environment were of God's creation and should be protected and respected. He worked tirelessly for the poor.

Giovanni never thought of himself as a particularly special person. This is evidenced by this quote, *"If God can work through me, he can work through anyone"*. This goes to show that change can happen to each of us at any time in our lives. That's a great reason not to be too quick to judge each other, we all make poor choices, we can all change. Therefore, patience and love matter - particularly with children. We are all a work in progress.

St. Francis is a model for what we teach at St. Mary's School. Our motto of "Take care of yourself, others, and St. Mary's" along with our classroom 'mission' works at Advent (explained in this newsletter by class) help students understand that we all can be 'in service' to others no matter what our age or status in society. The needs are great; all we have to do is look around us. Even the smallest act of kindness, can have a significant impact.

Too many people feel they cannot make a difference. St. Francis teaches us that it is okay to be human. No matter what we've done in life, we can always decide to do better.

Through the power of prayer and faith, we wish you all a blessed 2024!

It is with much excitement and honor, that St Mary's school will be receiving a beautiful art piece of St. Francis of Assisi. A very special grandparent has generously donated this item. We will reveal it at our Catholic Schools Week Monday morning assembly on February 5th. Stay tuned for more details regarding this event!

Vanessa Fer





## 1st Term Report Card Honours

**Congratulations to the following students:**

### ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

GRADE FOUR	GRADE FIVE	GRADE SIX
	Amelia Mondin	Aiden DaSilva
	Lily Tait	
	Somto Akabogu	

### HONOUR ROLL

GRADE FOUR	GRADE FIVE	GRADE SIX
Callie Baldwin	Hannah Gregory	Morgan Burke
	Kace Oberle	Kace Oberle

### EXCELLENCE OF EFFORT

GRADE FOUR	GRADE FIVE	GRADE SIX
Levi Akaeze		Morgan Burke
Declan DaSilva		Aiden DaSilva
Cameron Stanley		Rhett Magro
		Katia Maryniak

**Etransfer** is available for all tuition, fees, and financial transactions:

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### **Tuition rates for 2024-2025**

School Council will be setting these rates at the end of January. Re-registration will commence in February for grades 1-6. Kindergarten 2024 sign up registration is happening now.



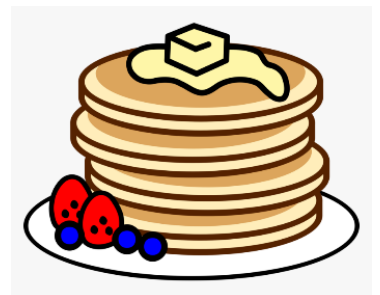
**New Families  
to St. Mary's School**

Einarson  
Tracey





# PSG Pancake Breakfast & PJ Day





# Advent Collection for Cranbrook Food Bank



Week #1 – Food Bank collection



Week #2 – Food Bank collection



Week #3 – Food Bank collection

Thanks to all students for participating in the Advent Collection for the Cranbrook Food Bank.

Total weight collected:



445 lbs

Children not picked up by 3:15 P.M. are brought inside to wait for parents...And according to 'policy', given an espresso & a new puppy! Students must be supervised by their parents if they wish to slide on the sliding hill after school.

All students with sleds must wear helmets even after school hours.



**A REMINDER TO  
PARENTS:  
Early Dismissal  
Friday, January 26th  
at 11:50 AM**



Please pray for  
anyone struggling  
with or supporting  
mental health issues.

### 'Snow' play expectations at school

As a brief summary, here are the expectations for 'taking care' of each other while outside playing in the snow:



- Do not throw snowballs at people or the building.
- Do not throw snow in other people's faces.
- We do not slide on crazy carpets or sleds in front of the school at any time.
- To slide on the sliding hill at lunch, children must have snow pants, mitts, hats, boots, and helmets.
- Only crazy carpets and saucers are allowed on our hill during school time.
- If children bring their own carpets and saucers to school, they must be stored outside. We do not have storage space for these items in the school. The school is not responsible for items left outside.
- No standing on sleds.
- Slide 'feet first'.
- No 'trains' using sleds for safety reasons.
- **Our property is used by the school until 5:30 PM daily. For safety reasons, children staying after school to slide on our hill after 3:15 PM MUST be supervised by a parent or guardian. The school does not provide supervision after 3:15 PM.**



### School Policy on our Sliding Hill

St. Mary's School has a school policy on the wearing of helmets during sliding activities. All students on the sliding hill **must be wearing a helmet** if they are on a sled. We do enforce this rule if the hill is icy, and students want to slide without a sled. Only crazy carpets and foam toboggans will be allowed. GT racers, tubes, skis, and any sleds **that are 'raised or have a steering wheel' or skis are disallowed as they** pose an additional safety risk. Although sliding on the hill will always pose a risk it is important that children be allowed to have fun outside while being as safe as possible. Please discuss this practice around safety with your children at home.

**We encourage students to have a helmet with a full, solid chin protection as opposed to a bicycle helmet.**

## St. Mary's PSG Update – January 2024



Happy New Year! St. Mary's PSG is wishing you blessings of health and joy as we embark on 2024. We have lots of exciting things planned in the coming months!

I want to begin by thanking all the parents for supporting our pre-Christmas fundraisers. The **annual school bake sale** was a great success – the children were thrilled with all the delicious treats and we managed **to raise \$437**. We also raised **\$1800 with the poinsettia and wreath fundraiser**. A huge shout-out to Jenna Simoes for all her hard work in organizing that fundraiser.

**Hot Lunch** for this month will be on **Friday, January 19th** and we will be serving **Booster Juice** and **Domino's Pizza**. Parents of Grade 1 students – if you can help serve, please arrive at the school kitchen at 12:10pm. We are usually done serving by 12:30pm.

PSG is planning a fun **Family Movie Night** taking place in the school gym on **Thursday, February 1st**. There will be popcorn to munch on, and families are encouraged to attend with sleeping bags, stuffed animals and lawn chairs!

PSG is also hoping to host a **School Tobogganing Night** with a bonfire to roast hot dogs and marshmallows. Dates are currently being sorted out but weather-willing we are hoping to go ahead with this event mid-February.

Similar to our Christmas Wreath & Poinsettia fundraiser, PSG will also be selling gorgeous spring flower baskets. Order forms will go out in a few weeks and delivery will be in mid-May. These make an awesome Mother's Day gift so stay tuned!

We will be hosting another **Starbucks PSG Morning Coffee Time** on **Friday, January 19th**. Please come join us for a chat and a cup of coffee before you head out on your day! Our next **PSG meeting** will be at St. Mary's on **Tuesday, January 16th at 6:30pm**. Hope to see you there!

**Courtney Magro**  
**PSG Chair**





## ***What does handwriting have to do with learning?*** ~ Source: "The Brain that Changes Itself" (Norman Doidge)

*In the age of technology it seems like everyone has an opinion on handwriting. So where do you stand in the current educational debate of the relevance, or lack thereof, for children learning to handwrite? Should we be teaching handwriting? Should everyone learn to handwrite or are there exceptions? Is an adult who cannot read handwriting literate or illiterate? If you cannot sign your name are you truly literate? There's more to it than meets the eye. Here is a bit of the history:*

*For hundreds of years educators recognized that children's brains had to be built up through exercises of increasing difficulty that strengthened brain functions. Up through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries a classical education often included rote memorization of long poems in foreign languages, which strengthened the auditory memory (hence thinking in language) and an almost fanatical attention to handwriting, which probably helped strengthen motor capacities and thus not only helped handwriting but added speed and fluency to reading and speaking.*

*Then in the 1960s educators dropped such traditional exercises from the curriculum, because they were too rigid, boring, and "not relevant." But the loss of these drills has been costly; they may have been the only opportunity that many students had to systematically exercise the brain function that gives us fluency and grace with symbols.*

*In the Lincoln-Douglas debates of 1858 the debaters would comfortably speak for an hour or more without notes, in extended memorized paragraphs; today many of the most learned among us, raised in our most elite schools since the 1960s, prefer the omnipresent PowerPoint presentation – the ultimate compensation for a weak premotor cortex.*

*So why does your child learn and apply handwriting in grades 3 - 6? We teach handwriting at St. Mary's for the reasons above, and also because the skill of reading handwriting is a component of being a literate person in today's society. Also, this may be the only time your child will learn handwriting in school. However, for some students, it is not appropriate to learn such a skill. Sometimes dysgraphia (extreme difficulty with handwriting) or particular learning disabilities will dictate that learning to handwrite is an exercise in frustration whereby the benefits are outweighed by the challenges. In these situations, we do not insist on a student learning to handwrite.*





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*"You're never too old, too wacky, too wild, to pick up a book and read to a child." Dr. Seuss*



### Save-On Foods

If you buy your groceries at Save-On Foods, please tell the cashier that you are from St. Mary's School and they will record your total sales in a binder. The school receives a percentage of all sales quarterly!

Thanks for supporting our school!

Kindergarten registration for **September 2024** is now open! Please call or email the school office to put your name on our list.

