



**St. Benedict Catholic School**  
345 Blind Line, Orangeville, Ontario L9W 4X1  
Phone: (519) 942-5980 Fax: (519) 942-3849  
Website: [www.dpcdsb.org/BENED](http://www.dpcdsb.org/BENED)



## January 2012

Principal: M. Cockburn  
Vice Principal: G. Graci  
Secretary: A. Wasyliw

### **SERVING OUR COMMUNITY**

#### **SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

P. McMorrow  
905-890-1221

#### **TRUSTEE**

F. DiCosola  
905-951-8898

#### **ST. TIMOTHY CHURCH**

Fr. Sean Lee Lung  
519-941-2424

#### **ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Co-Chairs  
S. McNally and D. Chodowicz  
519-942-5980



### **QUOTE**

**“You’re not obligated to win.  
You’re obligated to keep trying  
to do the best you can every  
day.”**

**Marion Edelman**

### **A PRAYER TO LIVE LIFE MORE FULLY IN THE NEW YEAR**

We move too fast, God, and sometimes we see so little in our daily travels. Slow us down. Create in us a desire to pause.

Help us to pursue moments of contemplation. Help us to see in a deeper way, and to become more aware of what speaks to us of beauty and truth.

All of our ordinary moments are means of entering into a more significant relationship with you, God. In the midst of those very common happenings, you are ready to speak your word of love to us, if only we will recognize your presence.

Teach us how to enjoy being. Encourage us to be present to the gifts that are ours.

Grant us the courage to be ourselves. Help us to let go of being overly concerned about what others think of us or of how successful we are.

May our inner freedom be strengthened and our delight in life activated. Life is meant to be celebrated, enjoyed, delighted in and embraced in all its mystery.

Guide us to our inner child. Draw us to your playground of creation, God of life, so that we will live more fully.

Amen!

### **IMPORTANT DATES !!**

#### **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY DAYS**

**Monday, January 16 and Friday, February 3** are Professional Activity Days for staff. There will be no school for students on these days. These days are for assessment and evaluation of pupil progress and scheduled parent / student / teacher interviews.

#### **FAMILY DAY**

**Monday, February 20, 2012** is Family Day and there will be no school for students and staff. We hope that you enjoy the day with your family and loved ones.

#### **MARCH BREAK**

The March Break will be **Monday, March 12 to Friday, March 16**. Students and staff will return to school on Monday, March 19.

## ***FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK***

I would like to begin this New Year by wishing all of the members of our school community a very warm and sincere Happy New Year. I hope that all were able to conclude the Advent season with a restful, enjoyable and Holy Christmas holiday season.

As we begin this new calendar year, significant and concerted efforts continue here at St. Benedict Catholic School to implement a variety of focused school improvement initiatives and activities. Our school focus continues to be the successful implementation of high yield numeracy instruction strategies ( Three Part Math Lesson ) and guided practice and guided reading strategies. Staff professional development efforts are concentrated in this area.

We also continue to make our school community one of belonging, inclusivity, support and safety. Recent successes in this area were our amazing Christmas concert, our "Roots of Empathy" program in one of our grade 7 classes and our December school council bulletin board display. Our focus on a new virtue and anti bullying topic each month are also positive practices to help make our school a safe and caring environment for our students.

Please take the time to read the newsletter article "Helping Your Children with Reading and Writing." The suggestions are very relevant to our efforts here at school. Regular reading at home and setting aside time for reading each day are highly recommended.

As a parent, you can help your child experience success at school by reminding them to always read assignments and test questions carefully and to always write complete and detailed answers or responses. Continued encouragement and praise for your child's efforts are always helpful in promoting their success and achievement.

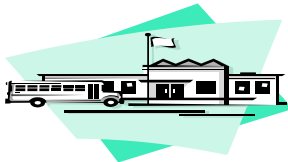
Thank you to all parents for your continued support of our efforts and goals here at St. Benedict Catholic School. I wish you and your families a very happy and prosperous New Year in 2012.

Sincerely,

M. Cockburn

## **SCHOOL COUNCIL**

Our next school council meeting will take place on Monday, February 6 at 7:00 p.m. Please consider participating in our very dedicated school council and help make important decisions and plans about your child's school and education.



## **IMPORTANT REMINDER REGARDING SEVERE FOOD ALLERGIES!**

Please be reminded that there are several pupils in our school with a severe life-threatening food allergy (anaphylaxis) to peanuts and nuts.

This is a medical condition that causes a severe reaction to certain allergens and can result in death within minutes.

Although this may or may not affect your child's class directly, **please send foods with your child to school that are free from peanuts or nut products.**

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in helping us make our school a safe and healthy environment for all.

## **KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION**

**Registration for the 2012-13 school year will be held on the following dates:**

**Monday, February 6, 2012 - 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.\***

*\*Snow Date: Tuesday, February 7, 2012 - 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.*

**Wednesday, Thursday & Friday, February 8, 9 & 10, 2012**

**9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.**

**1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

*Junior Kindergarten - Children must be 4 years old by Dec. 31, 2012.*

*Senior Kindergarten - Children must be 5 years old by Dec. 31, 2012.*

**Parents/Guardians should bring the following documents when registering their child:**

- Proof of age
- Original Catholic Baptismal Certificate of the Roman, Greek or Ukrainian Rite, for parent (one) and child ( if the child has not been baptized, a letter of counseling with the parish priest, to complete the process will be accepted)
- Updated immunization records
- Proof of Canadian citizenship or of Landed Immigrant status
- Proof of address ( utility bill, bank or credit card statement )
- For schools in Caledon and Dufferin County: emergency rural address numbers for identifying your property.

## SNOWBALLS

St. Benedict School has a strict rule of not permitting the throwing of snowballs. Students have been made aware of the importance of this rule in the preventing of injury to others. Students have been informed about the consequences of throwing snowballs and are reminded often! We do encourage our students to enjoy the snow in a safe manner. Please review with your children the dangers of throwing snowballs and the importance of preventing injury to other children.

## WELLINGTON-DUFFERIN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

[www.stwdsts.ca](http://www.stwdsts.ca) is the transportation services web site designed to help parents find bus information and to answer common transportation questions.

Is your child's bus late? A subscription service is now available that will notify via e-mail when your child(ren)'s bus has been cancelled or is delayed. The "**Bus Delays**" link allows you to view a list of reported bus delays with an estimate of how long each one is delayed.

The "**Cancellations-Closures**" link provides today's report on bus and taxi cancellations and school closures due to inclement weather. This service is active from November 1 to March 31. At all other times this report is only updated if inclement weather forces the cancellation of school buses or the closure of schools.

Checking the school board website at

[www.dpccsb.org](http://www.dpccsb.org) and listening to local radio and television networks is another excellent way to check on bus cancellations and school closures on inclement weather days.

## ATTENDANCE

### VERIFICATION PROGRAM!



**If your child is going to be absent from school, please call our office to report his/her absence before 8:30 a.m. on the day of the absence. You may call at any time and leave a message on the answering service. To leave an attendance message, please dial "4" when prompted.**

**519-942-5980**

## PREMIER'S AWARDS FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

The Premier's Awards for Teaching Excellence recognize outstanding educators and support staff. The awards are a great way to say thank you to the people who have made a difference in your children's lives. If you know someone extraordinary, please submit a nomination. Nominations are open until February 6, 2012.

Find out more at.

[www.ontario.ca/teachingawards](http://www.ontario.ca/teachingawards) or  
[facebook.com/ONteachingawards](https://www.facebook.com/ONteachingawards).

## BUS SAFETY

Maintaining safety on the bus is a shared responsibility. Students, parents, school staff and bus drivers are needed as partners to ensure the safe transporting of students to and from our school and while on field trips.

Students are reminded that food and drink are not permitted on the bus. Many children have food allergies and food creates a possible choking hazard. Students must also remain seated at all times when the bus is in motion and quiet voices are expected to minimize driver distraction.

## APPROPRIATE DRESS - COLD WEATHER

As cold winter weather is still likely this year, we ask that students dress appropriately; i.e. coats, gloves, mitts, boots etc.. If they are dressed warmly, they are better prepared to participate in outdoor activities during recess and noon hour.

**Please be advised that students are kept indoors at recess during the winter only when the weather conditions are extremely cold. (When the wind chill equivalent temperature is minus 25 degrees Celsius or lower, as per school Board policy.)**

**If you need to drop off additional winter clothing for your child, please make sure the items are correctly labeled.**

## TERM ONE STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTING

Please be reminded that during the current school year the student reporting process embraces a Progress Report, which was sent home in November, a Term 1 Report Card, to be sent home on Tuesday, January 31 and a Term 2 Report Card to go home at the end of June. Parent / student / teacher interviews will be scheduled for the evening of Thursday, February 2 and during the day of Friday, February 3. Parents will soon receive interview scheduling forms. There will not be report cards for junior and senior kindergarten students at this time of year, however interviews will be available for the parents of our kindergarten students.

## VIRTUES

In January we will celebrate the virtue of self-control. God has given us the ability to choose. We are able to control how we react to what happens around us. We may sometimes feel pressure from inside or from outside ourselves to react inappropriately to a situation. Through prayer and concentration, we can get better at controlling our reactions. We can get better at showing self-control. Self-control helps us to resist temptation to do something that we will regret. It helps us to resist the temptation to do something that will harm ourselves or others and is one of the marks of a spiritually mature person. When we all use self-control, we can be sure that our school will be a safe, caring and inclusive place to live and to learn.

### A person with self-control:

- **Is patient**
- **Knows how to wait his/her turn**
- **Can calm him/herself down and think before reacting to situations**
- **Knows how to avoid physical aggression (hitting, kicking, pushing, fighting etc.)**
- **Can think things through and do what is best for everyone**

### SAFE SCHOOLS FOCUS FOR JANUARY – Conflict is Inevitable; Bullying is Not

The key message in January is "*conflict is inevitable, bullying is not*". The grade specific activities provide opportunity for students to learn to differentiate bullying from the daily conflict situations everyone faces. Students also learn how to use an assertive form of communication known as "I-messages" to deal with conflict and prevent bullying.

Everyone faces conflict in daily life and through it can learn to negotiate and build relationships. Bullying is a form of violence that leaves no room for negotiation and seeks to tear others down rather than build relationships.

#### Tips for Parents:

- help your children apply the definition of bullying to determine if a situation is bullying or conflict;
- Does one person have more power than the other? Is the behaviour intentional / on purpose?*
- Does it keep happening? (Answering yes to these questions indicates bullying; answering no indicates conflict)*
- use teachable moments and 'what if' scenarios with your children to help them differentiate bullying and conflict
- talk with your children about the difference between being passive, aggressive or assertive
- encourage the use of assertive communication such as "I-messages" in your family.

## CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES A HUGE SUCCESS

Throughout the Advent / Christmas season students and staff contributed to our Christmas Food / Mitten / Scarf Drive as well as a collection for the local Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. A large quantity of food and many mittens and scarves were donated. The food / scarves and mittens were donated to the St. Vincent de Paul Society of St. Timothy Parish and distributed to needy families in Dufferin County.

Thank you sincerely to our student faith ambassadors and very dedicated staff for organizing and coordinating this very important community project. Many residents of our community have been helped and served because of your commitment and generosity.

Our Advent mass was a beautiful celebration of our faith as we prepared for the celebration of the birth of Jesus. Sincere thanks are extended to Fr. Sean for his ministry with our school community.

Our Christmas concert was also a huge success with "full house" audiences for the afternoon and evening performances. Certainly proves that the Christmas spirit is alive and well in our St. Benedict community. Sincere thanks are extended to all students, staff and parent council members who contributed to these successful showcases of talent and spirit.

## CHRISTMAS CANDY GRAMS !!

In December, Mrs. Harasiewicz's Grade 8 students transformed into elves and sold candy grams to the school for a fundraiser. We sold over 3400 candy-canes! The Grade 8 elves did a wonderful job and should be very proud of themselves for their professionalism, efficiency, and politeness. Special thanks goes out to Walmart, as well as Dianne Schuler and Zehrs for their generous donations of candycanes to our school.



## HELPING YOUR CHILDREN WITH READING AND WRITING

### HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD?

As a parent, you are your child's first and most important teacher. When you help your child learn to read, you are opening the door to a world of books and learning.

Reading aloud to children is the best way to get them interested in reading. Before long they will grow to love stories and books. Eventually they will want to read on their own.

With the help of parents, children can learn how to read and can practise reading until they can read for their own enjoyment. Then they will have a whole world of information and knowledge at their fingertips!

Reading can be a family activity. Spending time with word games, stories, and books will help your child to:

- gather information and learn about the world
- learn how stories and books work – that they have beginnings, endings, characters, and themes
- build a rich vocabulary by reading and talking about new words
- learn how to listen and how to think
- learn the sounds of language and language patterns
- fall in love with books

It's natural to want to compare your child's reading abilities with those of other children of the same age, but not all children develop reading skills at the same pace. What's important is that you are aware of your child's reading level so that you can choose books and activities that will help him or her improve.



## ROOTS OF EMPATHY

Gr. 7 students from St. Benedict School have been involved in the Roots of Empathy Program. The focus in the long term is to build capacity of the next generation for responsible citizenship and responsive parenting. In the short term, Roots of Empathy focuses on raising levels of empathy, resulting in more respectful and caring relationships and reduced levels of bullying and aggression. Part of our success is the universal nature of the program; all students are positively engaged instead of targeting those demonstrating bullying or aggressive behaviour.

Over the past few months, students in our Gr. 7 class have explored the following themes: emotional literacy, infant safety, attachment, inclusion and infant development. Together with their teacher, CYW and ERW, students have experienced guided observations of the loving relationship between baby Cruz and his mother. Students learned to identify and reflect on their own thoughts and feelings and those of others throughout the program. They are truly learning in the light of Christ by becoming caring, loving, empathetic and responsible people just as Jesus Christ was himself.

Photo removed from web version of newsletter.

As the children at St. Benedict follow the development of "their" Roots of Empathy baby, they develop new awareness and skills to last a lifetime.

## IMPORTANT DATES

JANUARY	16	- PA Day
	18	- School Mass @ 11:00 a.m. - Extended French Meeting for grade 4 parents @ St. Andrew School - 7:00 p.m.
	20	- Cookie Day - Spirit Day - Backwards Day
	25	- HPV - Grade 8 girls - Second dose - Ski Club
	27	- Rosary Apostolate
	31	- Progress Reports sent home
FEBRUARY	2	- Parent teacher interviews
	3	- PA DAY - Parent teacher interviews
	6 - 10	- Kindergarten Registration





