



## **Weekend Update: Sunday, December 17, 2023**

Today marks the lighting of the third candle on our Advent Wreaths. This candle represents JOY as the light grows brighter and the time closer to the coming of the baby Jesus. As we are past the halfway mark in our Advent journey, we continue to take time during the “busy”ness of the season and preparations for Christmas, to make room in our hearts and homes for Jesus. At school we continue to encourage kind and charitable behaviour fostering hope, peace, and joy in our community. This includes our sock and Christmas food drive, as well as taking the time to ensure we act with kindness and empathy throughout the school day. We want to thank all those who have donated to these outreach opportunities, as well as donations to provide some extra Christmas cheer to families in our community in need.

Last week we were pleased to once again welcome the Morning Star School Rosary volunteers to lead the classes in the praying of the rosary, focused on the joyful mysteries. Some feedback I received from the volunteers after they left included reflections of hearing students singing one of the songs as they transitioned to the next activity in the hallways of the school. Seeing the students respond so favourably certainly made their day.

Last week we also continued to see all our clubs, groups, and teams (old and new) hard at work during recess. Mr. Galbraith’s class, along with our CYW (Ms. Donaher) also took time for PALS training, and we are eager to get this program running in the new year. We also received the equipment order that was placed a while ago so that all classes will have appropriate sports equipment to be able to bring outside for recess each day. We remind our students daily that the recess time is meant for exercise, fresh air, and fun! While we know we have many competitive athletes at our school, no world championships are being won during Lunch Recess.

Once again, I want to thank all the families who purchased cookie dough during our Terra Cotta Cookie Dough Drop fundraiser. This fundraiser made close to \$1100.00 for our school. All the dough was picked up last Monday afternoon and we hope that some yummy cookies were consumed during this rainy weekend! Thank you also to everyone who purchased Spirit Wear. We look forward to the delivery of the T-shirts and sweaters in the new year.

As we enter the final week of the school year prior to the Christmas break and new calendar year, we are all eagerly anticipating our Mercy Magic Community Christmas event on Thursday evening. You do not need to have purchased a Gingerbread house to come and share some festive cheer. We will have music and a visit from a very special guest (all the way from the North Pole) prior to X-Movement’s presentation beginning at 6:30. We hope to see you all there! If you did purchase a Gingerbread house, they will be ready at 5:00 for families to come and create! Throughout the week we are also excited to have X-Movement back at the school. Each class will have an opportunity to work with them from Tuesday to Thursday throughout the week.

We also remind students that it is Christmas Spirit Week brought to us by the Youth Faith Ambassadors. Please see later in the Weekend Update for the details of each day which include fun Christmas accessories, red and green day, and of course pyjama day! The week ahead promises to be a fun, spirited week. We look forward to bringing lots of JOY during this third week of Advent to Our Lady of Mercy School!

*Leslie Marchand, MEd*

## **December's Virtue of the Month: Hope**

*May the God of hope fill you with joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy*

*Spirit. (Rom. 15:13)*

God helps us to work for a more peaceful world even when we feel discouraged.

### **Staff Directory:**

Leslie Marchand	Principal
Serita Pereira	Head Secretary
Jennifer Cahill	FDK Teacher
Hui Zhang	DECE (LTO)
Heather Maxwell	Grade 1 Teacher
Caroline Loiacono	Grade 2/3 Teacher
Trish Fang	Grade 3/4 Teacher
John Galbraith	Grade 5 French Immersion Teacher
Michelle Murphy	Grade 5/6 Teacher
Colleen Dougherty	Grade 6 French Immersion Teacher
David MacSporran	Grade 6/7 French Immersion Teacher
Gianni Protomanni	Grade 7 Teacher
Madeleine Hinterhoeller	Grade 7/8 French Immersion Teacher
Paola D'Agostino	Grade 8 Teacher
Sara Petrucci	SERC Teacher/Planning Time
Elaine Romaniuk	Sanctuary Program Teacher
Katie Box	Special Education Teacher/ESL
Heather Langley	Core French/ Planning Time Teacher
Mena Pandullo	Teacher Librarian/Planning Time
Lyla Colavecchia	Planning Time Teacher (LTO) (Every other Friday)
Lia Pedroso	Planning Time Teacher (LTO) (Every other Thursday)
Ashley Galvao	Education Resource Worker
Sylvia Caruso	Education Resource Worker (Sanctuary)
Kellie Donaher	CYW (Mon, Wed, and alternating Friday's)
Jamie Brassard	CYW Sanctuary Program (Tues, Thurs, and alternating Friday's)
Maria Papadogianis	Social Worker (Wednesday)
Margaret Russ	MHSW (Sanctuary)
Jason Kotsopoulos	School Psychologist
Cheryl Suh	Speech and Language Pathologist
Tony DiRenzo	Head Custodian
Lynce Buhian	Night Custodian



### **Christmas Spirit Week:**

Our Youth Faith Ambassadors have been busy as elves planning our Christmas Spirit Week. Here is the theme for each day this week:

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Christmas Accessories Day	Silly Sock Day	Cozy Sweater Day	Christmas Colours Day	Pyjama Day

### **Christmas Market: Tuesday, December 12, 2023**

Thank you to our Catholic School Council members and parent volunteers for the AWESOME return of our Christmas market! We hope that all our students had fun doing some shopping at school for Christmas! This market is an immense amount of work, and we are very grateful to the parents who work so hard preparing, organizing, and wrapping up this fun event!

### **Mercy Magic Community Christmas Event!**

Don't forget about our Community Christmas event on Thursday of this week. The doors will open at 5:00 for families who can get their Gingerbread houses and begin creating their masterpieces. Our special Guest will be at the school from 5:30-6:30 and then X-Movement will bring us some extra Christmas cheer from 6:00-7:30. We look forward to seeing everyone there!

We have a few extra Gingerbread houses available for sale. If you didn't get a chance to purchase one, this may be your chance. Please contact the school for more information if you are interested.

### **Allergens:**

I know that it is a fun time of year to think about bringing sweet treats for your children and their classmates. We ask that if you want to send little tokens for Christmas for classmates that they are non-food items such as pencils, bookmarks etc... As a reminder, we have many students in our school with severe, life-threatening, allergies.

Please continue to make sure you are sending your children to school each day with lunches and snacks that are free from allergens including **Nuts, Tree nuts, Pumpkin, and Seafood**. We have many children in our school who have serious allergies to these allergens, some of whom are airborne allergies.

### **Dress for the weather!**

To ensure the comfort of all our students when they are outside for the 70 minutes of recess each day, please ensure students come to school dressed for the weather. Students will be required to have separate shoes for outdoor play as the wet and snowy weather comes to ensure that classrooms stay dry.

### **Non-Essential Items at School**

Just as a reminder, we ask that students refrain from bringing non-essential items to school like toys, and trading cards. These items can be a distraction from learning and can also create conflict between students if they go missing. I thank you all for supporting this from home.



### **Cellphone Communication**

This is just a reminder that cell phone communication is not permitted during the school day. If you need to connect with your children, please contact the school and we will support this communication. Students responding to text messages on their phones during class time provides a significant distraction from learning.

We understand that many children have phones to let their parents know that they have arrived at school safely; the recommendation is that they inform you they are present, and then put their phones away.

We also remind parents and students that taking pictures, and recording video of students or teachers during the school day is prohibited, ESPECIALLY when there is no consent.

### **Kiss and Ride:**



Thank you to all our families who pick-up and drop-off students in cars each day for your patience and cooperation in ensuring that the Kiss and Ride moves well. As a reminder, please ensure you do not park your car in the Kiss and Ride lanes. If you are going to get out of your car to pick up your children, please ensure you park in a proper parking space. Kindergarten parents are reminded that you can pick up your children as early as 3:00 to help with parking. Parents are also asked NOT to stop your car at the entry of the parking lot as this severely backs up traffic onto Glen Erin. Please take the extra moment to make your way to allow your children to enter the vehicle along the boulevard, this is the safest!

### **Student Attendance**

Ensuring that students are present in school is a major factor predicting success and achievement. It is also an obligation under the Education Act that parents send their children to school. We thank you for ensuring that your children regularly attend. If your child is going to be absent for some time, please continue to reach out to the school and classroom teacher to discuss.

### **Reporting Student Absences**

Student absences should be reported by parents/guardians for each student in our school through the Safe Arrival system in School Messenger. There are three ways to access the program:

Web: [www.go.schoolmessenger.ca](http://www.go.schoolmessenger.ca)

App: SchoolMessenger

Phone: 1-844-435-3440 (toll free)

***Student absences not reported will trigger phone calls to confirm the absence each morning. If you need assistance, please contact the school.***

## Student Lunches



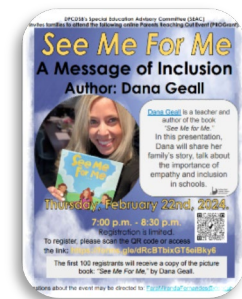
Please make sure your children come to school with their lunch. Our intermediate students (grade 7 and 8 only) may bring a note to sign-out for lunch. Please ensure the note is dated with the appropriate date. Students can then go out to eat but are asked to not bring food or drinks back to school. Students will not be able to go back to their class until the bell rings again at 12:56 to signal the start of our afternoon classes.

## Catholic School Council

The Catholic School Council is excited and looking forward to our Mercy Magic Community Christmas event on Thursday, December 21<sup>st</sup> from 5:00 to 7:30. Aside from decorating Gingerbread houses, families will be able to enjoy the ambience with Christmas carols, and the school choir, along with a VERY SPECIAL GUEST!! (You won't want to forget your cameras). Then, our students will share all the moves they learned throughout the week with X-Movement. We look forward to seeing everyone there! Thank you to the Catholic School Council for supporting this event.

## SEAC Parents Reaching Out Event “See Me For Me, A Message of Inclusion” Information

The following Parents Reaching Out Event (PROGrant) is hosted by DPCDSB's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). All families of students within DPCDSB are invited to participate in this online session hosted by Author, Dana Geall and the Special Education and Learning Services Department. The focus of the session will highlight Dana's picture book entitled, “See Me For Me,” which is based on her personal and lived experience as a mother of triplets born with Cerebral Palsy. Dana will discuss the importance of equity, inclusion, and acceptance of all students as important members within our communities.



**Location:** Microsoft Teams Online Meeting Platform

**Date:** Thursday, February 22, 2024.

**Time:** 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

**Registration:** Participants are asked to self-register using the [link](#) or QR code by **Thursday, February 8, 2024.**

A virtual meeting invitation will be forwarded to registered participants.



## News from Merciful Redeemer Parish:

Please remember to visit the Parish website <https://mercifulredeemermi.archtoronto.org> for all the latest information including the weekly bulletin.



**Upcoming Events:**

Please click on the following link to access the 2023-2024 School year calendar: [2023-2024 School Year Calendar](#)

**Monday, December 18, 2023**

Christmas Accessories Day

Advent Liturgy during morning Announcements

**Tuesday, December 19, 2023**

Silly Sock Day

X-Movement

**Wednesday, December 20, 2023**

Cozy Sweater Day

X-Movement

**Thursday, December 21, 2023**

Christmas Colours Day

X-Movement

Mercy Magic Community Christmas Event! 5:00-7:30

**Friday, December 22, 2023**

Last day of school before Christmas vacation!

Pyjama Day

School Christmas Sing-a-long @ 10:40

**Monday, January 8, 2024**

Welcome back to school!

**Tuesday, January 16, 2023**

Grade 5 Trip to Queen's Park

**Wednesday, January 17, 2023**

Intermediate Overnight Trip: Information Meeting @ 6:30 PM

