



St. Michael's School Newsletter

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FROM OUR PASTOR, FATHER ROSSI

Dear Parents and Students of St. Michael's School:

It's not often that I communicate with you through the school newsletter, but extraordinary circumstances sometimes call for extraordinary means.

This is a stressful and painful time, a time of anxiety and fear, for ourselves and our loved ones. There is so much uncertainty about the future. We are confronted with a threat we cannot even identify, let alone control. Of special concern are the families of Grade Two and Grade Seven students who are preparing for their First Holy Communion and their Confirmation. Please continue to help the children in their preparation. Mrs. Meisl and the teachers will continue to guide and assist, as always. I can assure you that we will celebrate those Sacraments as soon as it becomes possible.

Through all this we cannot lose confidence in God. We must absolutely observe all the rules and take all necessary precautions. And we must turn wholeheartedly to God, who loves us, imploring His merciful intervention to avert this plague. Now is a time for fervent prayer. A good opportunity is offered us in the daily Liturgies, where we can join in spirit with the celebrations which are live-streamed (albeit sometimes with glitches) from St. Michael's church. Greater closeness to God will also bring greater charity, prompting us to look out for one another, to reach out to our neighbour in need. May the present trial help us to grow into a true family of faith and mutual love. And let us not forget to thank God for the generous and dedicated service of Mrs. Meisl and the school staff.

I love you. I miss you. I pray for you. Please pray for me.

Father Bernard Rossi

*Father Rossi is always available to speak with parents about any spiritual or personal matters, especially during this period of great stress and anxiety. Please reach out to him at aldemar@shaw.ca at any time during the next weeks/months if you require any help, be it financial or otherwise. Be assured that your needs are dealt with in strict confidence.

ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH

We remind parents to frequently check the St. Michael's Parish website <http://stmichaelsparish.ca/> for updates including the latest Parish Bulletin. The website has a link to the daily 8:00 a.m. Mass as well as the Sunday Mass. The church is also open for prayer from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. During this time of uncertainty, it is very reassuring to see and hear Father Rossi celebrating Mass, and we encourage you to view the livestream with your children. Just because we are unable to attend church at the moment, does not mean we should distance ourselves from God. In fact, it is quite the opposite. We now have more need than ever to make time with God a priority.

HOLY WEEK

Next week is the most solemn and glorious week. It is the pinnacle of the liturgical year. Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday this Sunday and ends with the Sacred Triduum: Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. Although they are three days, liturgically it is only one day. The Triduum recounts the last three days of Jesus' life on earth and the events of his passion and resurrection.

Despite not being able to physically attend the services in church, we hope you will make this week holy by joining in the live-streamed Masses and services, and participating in special family prayer celebrations and activities that the teachers will provide.

FREE SPIRITUAL RESOURCES

Salt and Light TV is available free of charge to all cable TV subscribers through to May 1, 2020.

The Magnificat Magazine is offering this publication free, online at <https://us.magnificat.net/free>.

Living with Christ is offering free prayer resources and downloads of the daily Mass texts at

<https://livingwithchrist.ca/>

SUNDAY OFFERING

It is now possible to make your regular offertory gift online, either by credit card or direct debit. On the RCAV <https://rcav.org/> homepage, under the heading of "Sunday Offering", click to give online. From the drop-down box of parishes, select St. Michael's. Alternatively, and for any special collections, you may use Canada Post to mail your gift to the parish.

OUR VIRTUE FOCUS FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL....LOVE

Although we are not able to develop this virtue with our students at school, we encourage you to focus on and practice the theme of "Love" at home. This theme is particularly appropriate at this time as we've seen how much our world, our communities and our families are in need of love. Ask your child(ren) to give you examples of people showing love to others. How can he/she be more loving in their everyday interactions with parents and siblings at home?

Jesus is always with us and we should always try to remember His most important lesson, the lesson of love, because love is not about us – it is about looking out for the good of others.

*"Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive."
~Dalai Lama*

**A loving person...
† wants the best for others
† is willing to make sacrifices for the good of others
† knows that we are all lovable
† prays for others.**

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR PARENTS ON THE FRONT LINES!

Speaking of people who demonstrate the virtue of love, we thank all our parents who are considered essential service workers, particularly those parents working in health care (hospitals) and as emergency responders. We appreciate the many sacrifices you are making to keep us safe and healthy. A reminder to those ESWs to contact cmeisl@smeschool.ca asap if you have unaddressed child care needs.

PICK UP OF STUDENTS' SCHOOL SUPPLIES

An email with instructions was sent out yesterday. One adult/family is to come to school during the following times **tomorrow, Friday, April 3rd**, to pick up a bag prepared by the child's classroom teacher.

Families whose **last names begins** with:

A-C between 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

D-K between 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

L-Q between 10:00 a.m.- 11:00 a.m.

R-Z between 11:00 a.m.- 12:00 noon

(e.g. Smith would pick up between 11 am. and noon)

Park in the lower parking lot only.

If you must bring your child(ren), they are either to remain in your car if they are old enough or parents are to please park their car in the stalls closest to the school. A staff member will be a runner and get your supplies for you so that your children do not remain unattended.

Staff members will be present to direct parents and ensure physical distancing measures are maintained. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and patience.

UPDATED SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY AND CONSENT FORM

In light of changes in the delivery of learning to our students due to COVID-19, Mr. DaSilva has sent home a revised School Technology Acceptable Use Policy and the SME Student's Computer Contract. Please read both documents with your child and i.) sign and return both forms to the school on Friday or ii) email your consent directly to the classroom teacher as Mr. DaSilva has instructed.

Thank you for giving consent **no later than Friday, April 3rd**, so that teachers can begin their online learning with their students.

AUCTION

In light of COVID-19, many school activities and programs have been cancelled or postponed. Our annual Parish Auction is, unfortunately, one of these events which has been affected. An email has been sent directly to all parents from the Auction Committee explaining various changes which have had to be made.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

We know that several families have outstanding Parent Participation hours at this stage of the year and recognize that there are families who obtain the bulk of their hours by assisting with the Auction. The PEC will continue to review options and alternatives and will communicate these with you in the coming weeks.

HOT LUNCH

Families will be reimbursed for all Hot Lunches cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak. There are **two options** to have this money refunded. 1.) The Parents Association can write you a cheque for the amount to be reimbursed or 2.) You may choose to donate the outstanding amount which will be used to assist families who are experiencing financial difficulties during COVID-19 and have requested tuition assistance.

If you choose option 2, please email Mrs. Florescu, our PEC treasurer at maddalenaflorescu@gmail.com by April 10th, and she will redirect your donation to assist those families, otherwise the P.A. will send you a cheque.

ANNIE JR.

It will break our hearts if we have to cancel the spring production of Annie Jr. which was scheduled for May 11th and 12th. The students and lead teachers, Ms. M. Alberti and Ms. A. Alberti, have been working incredibly hard and the production is almost $\frac{3}{4}$ complete. The teachers are still hoping that, by some miracle, we will be able to return to school, even if only for a short time. In order to respect the amount of work our students have put into preparing for this musical, the teachers would propose a plan for showcasing the students' talents in some way. This is, of course, dependent on directives from the Ministry of Health, and we do not have any more details to offer at this time.

But we're hoping and singing "The sun will come out tomorrow"!

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS

Our Grade 7 Confirmation and Grade 2 First Holy Communion events have been postponed until it is safe to gather in larger groups again. We ask you to pray for these students who will be continuing their preparation with their teachers.

GYM LIGHTS

When you come to the gym tomorrow, you'll be impressed by how bright it is! Over Spring Break, a team of parents replaced all the light fixtures. We thank them for their hard work to get these lights installed. They make a huge difference!

IN CLOSING.....

This has been the strangest week back to school for everyone! We truly appreciate and understand that your job as parents is not an easy one trying to juggle working from home, having the children around all day, supervising and/or helping with school assignments, and dealing with many other challenges that are impacting your lives.

The teachers are all reaching out to their families this week in an effort to establish a new and different connection with you and the children they teach. For some, this new way won't be too difficult; for others it will cause stress. Your teacher is here for you. It just takes an email to let him/her know that the work is too much/too little, that you are having a hard time juggling school work when as there is more than 1 child in your family, that it is difficult to make a regular schedule for your child, etc.

We ask that you try and not worry. There are so many important things you have to deal with and, while we hope that learning continues, we are very aware that it might look very different at your house.

We love you, we love your children, and we will always try to help you make the best of this situation.

Thought of the week...

Dr. Seuss in Covid-19 Times

I will teach you in a room,
I will teach you how to Zoom.
I will teach you in your house,
I will teach you with a mouse.
I will teach you here and there,
I will teach you because I care.
So just do your very best,
And do not worry about the rest!