



St. Michael's School Newsletter

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR, FR. ROSSI

Dear students, dear parents of St. Michael's School:

Our school year has ended, a year unlike any we have experienced. I commend all of you for your courage and patience in dealing with all the challenges of the past months. I commend you especially for having faithfully observed all the restrictions that have kept us safe. I pray that in the Summer "staycation" you will keep safe by continuing to follow all the recommendations.

In the next few weeks we will have the 1st Communions and Confirmations, in a series of separate celebrations for small groups that allow us to stay within the government restrictions. It has been difficult to schedule these adequately; I thank you for your understanding. Please keep the 1st Communicants and the Confirmandi, and their families, in your prayers.

We don't know what the next school year will be like. Let us not be anxious; let us keep safe, and trust that God will see us through this trial.

I thank all of you, parents, teachers and staff, but in a special way I thank Mrs. Meisl, who has given of herself above and beyond during this year. And a prayer, many prayers, for Mrs. Kennedy, that she may be back in full health to lead us in the coming years.

God bless you all. Keep praying along with our live-streamed Masses, and may the day be near when we will all be able to worship together again.

Fr. Bernard Rossi

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL, MRS. KENNEDY

My Dearest St. Michael's School Community,

It is without reservation that I emphatically state how relieved I am that this school year has drawn to a close. It has been a year of great uncertainty and overwhelming challenges for both our community and for myself on a personal level. I have deeply missed the daily interactions with students, staff, and parents. Isolation has been described as a gift, a test of one's endurance, a means of building one's inner strength. As Christians, we recognize that true isolation is a false existence because even in the midst of all the uncertainty and challenges, there continues to be an unwavering truth that we are never alone because Jesus is our living hope and that He loves us and will never abandon us.

I am beyond thankful for the incredible support I have received over the last 10 months. Your thoughts and prayers have strengthened and sustained me during this most difficult time in my life.

I am deeply grateful to Mrs. Meisl who has done an incredible job at running the school while I have been away. We were so very fortunate to have the very best take the helm. Mrs. Meisl is a consummate professional and an extremely dedicated educator. For her to come out of a well-deserved retirement and oversee the school through such challenging times is admirable! I would like to thank MRS. MEISL FOR EVERYTHING SHE HAS DONE. I thank the staff for all their perseverance and unflagging commitment to the school. I know how hard this year has been on them. Thank you, dear parents, for supporting Mrs. Meisl and the staff.

I ask for your continued prayers. My intent is to return to my role as principal in some capacity in September. However, I am still waiting for medical clearance from my physician.

I congratulate all the students of St. Michael's School! I wish you all a very happy, safe, and enjoyable summer. To those families who are not returning to our school, you will continue to be in our prayers as you make your journey on to new places.

In closing, I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate Mrs. Cawker for her many years of dedicated service to Catholic Education and, in particular, for all her years of service at St. Michael's School.

Bravo Mrs. Cawker, Bravo.

God bless you all!
Mrs. C. Kennedy

"Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong." (1 Corinthians 16:13)

SCHOOL CLOSING MASS

Tomorrow, Friday, June 26th, Father Rossi will celebrate our final virtual School Mass at 9:00 a.m. We ask that all families "attend" this closing Mass. The link can be found by clicking <http://stmichaelsparish.ca/>. Hymns can be found on the school website.

At the end of Mass, join Father Rossi in praying:

Prayer for Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are in the Blessed Sacrament.

I love You above all things, and I long for You in my soul.

Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.

*As though You have already come, I embrace You and unite myself entirely to You;
never permit me to be separated from You.*

Amen

CONFIRMATION AND FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

We pray for our Grade 7 students who will be receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation and our Gr. 2 students receiving First Holy Communion in the summer. A heartfelt thanks to Mr. Salvino, Mrs. Gabriele and Mr. Da Silva for preparing their students.

The dates are as follows:

Confirmation

Tues, July 7 @ 7:00 p.m.

Wed. July 8 @ 7:00 p.m. (CCD)

Fri. July 10 @ 7:00 p.m.

Sun. June 12 @ 3:00 p.m.

First Holy Communion

Sat. July 18 @ 4:00 p.m.

Sun. July 19 @ 3:00 p.m. (CCD)

Sat. Aug 1 @ 4:00 p.m.

Sun. Aug 2 @ 3:00 p.m.

TUITION FEE PAYMENTS

A reminder that the first tuition payment for the 2020-2021 academic year is due on **August 1st** and the last tuition payment will be taken on **May 1st**. No payment is taken in June. Please remember that the first month's tuition (August 1st) is **non-refundable** if written notice of withdrawal for the upcoming school year is not received **prior to July 1st**.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

The PEC is in the process of finalizing parent participation hours for the 2019-2020 school year. To account for the decrease in parent participation opportunities after Spring Break as a result of COVID 19, **families who have completed 42 hours or more will have satisfied their participation obligation for the year.**

Families who have not completed the new minimum will be contacted by email regarding opportunities to fulfill their parent participation obligation over the summer months. There are still a number of essential tasks that require parent involvement:

- 1) Church Cleaning for the First Communion and Confirmation
- 2) General Maintenance
- 3) Audio Video Support for Mass streaming
- 4) Shrine Room Cleaning
- 5) Desk cleaning
- 6) Fundraising Support

As the health and safety of our families is a priority, we will be ensuring that any tasks will be performed in accordance with health and safety guidelines.

To ensure we have an accurate record of your participation hours to date, PLEASE ensure that you have submitted all of your hours by Friday, June 26th, 2020.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

As a follow-up to the After School Club Survey that was sent out in January, the results of the survey demonstrated a significant interest in an After School program at St. Michael's. In light of COVID 19, it is not feasible at this time to implement an After School Club. However, the PEC is currently looking into an alternative option for parents to consider for the fall. There is a new After School Program being run by SFU that is to be offered on the former Carver Christian High School grounds (just behind St. Michael's). The PEC will communicate further details as they become available.

PARENT ASSOCIATION NEWS RE: HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

Although we are not sure if we can begin the Hot Lunch program right away in September, the PA is making plans to make ordering more efficient for future Hot Lunches. This summer we are looking to move our lunch program online and are looking for parents who are able to help with this project. These hours count towards your participation hours.

Please email Sarah at sme.parentassociation@gmail.com if you would like to volunteer.

We also thank all the parents who volunteered with the Parent Association this year in Hot Lunch, Side Tuesday, Mardi Gras, Pancake Breakfast and more! The children and staff have really enjoyed all these events! It was a successful and fun school year and, even though it was short due to COVID-19, we were able to raise over \$10,000 to help the school and students in the future.

Special thanks also to our PA Chair, Mrs. Sarah Golding, for all her work to help organize and implement so many programs which help build our school community.

SEPTEMBER SCHOOL OPENING

We are sorry that we are not able to give you definitive news at this time in regard to how school will "look" in September. The Ministry of Education will continue to consult with the Provincial Health Officer, and schools will be informed of their decision later in August.

We are currently in Stage 3 where students in Kindergarten- Grade 5 attend two days a week at 50% capacity and students in Grade 6-7 attend one day per week. Ideally, the hope is that we return to a level of normalcy, either a Stage 1 (K-Gr. 12 five days per week) or Stage 2 (K- Gr. 7 five days per week and Grades 8-12 two days per week).

If we are able to operate at either a Stage 1 or Stage 2, the first day of school will be **Tuesday, September 8th at 8:45 a.m.** Students will be **dismissed at 12:00 noon** that day.

KINDERGARTEN SCHEDULE

Under the proviso that we are operating under a normal schedule again, Kindergarten students will have a gradual entry schedule as follows:

September 9th First day for Kindergarten students from 8:45 a.m.—11:00 a.m.

September 10th & September 11th No regular Kindergarten classes. (Kindergarten assessment)

September 14th All K's 8:45 a.m. –1:00 p.m.

September 15th All Kindergarten students 8:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

September 16th All Kindergarten students 8:45 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

September 17th Kindergarten begins full day

BC SUMMER READING CLUB GOES ONLINE

A reminder to sign up for the BC Summer Reading Club (BC SRC). For 30 years, this club has helped motivate children to continue reading and learning during the summer months. This is a free program and children ages 5-14 register through their local public library

This year, there is the option for readers to participate online, so that families have access even if they aren't able to visit their local public library in-person. Some of the exciting new, online features that have been added this year include:

* Kids can earn digital badges for reaching their reading goals as well as a certificate of completion (and in some communities, a medal) for finishing the program.

* A dashboard for parents/guardians to track their kids' reading progress and the digital badges they've earned.

* Weekly stay-at-home activity packages.

* Live events and video demonstrations including hands-on crafts and experiments.

This year's theme is "Explore Our Universe" featuring illustrations by B.C. artist Bambi Edlund. All reading counts – kids can read whatever they want, in whatever language they feel most comfortable. They can also listen to someone else read or tell stories.

Online registration began **June 15** at the **BC Summer Reading Club website**. Participants can also visit their local library to register and learn more about the BC SRC programs being offered in their community.

Here are your local library websites:

Burnaby <https://www.bpl.bc.ca/kids/kids-events-and-programs/summer-reading-club>

New West <https://www.nwpl.ca/youth/summerreading/>

Coquitlam <https://coqlibrary.ca/src>

Happy reading!

SCHOOL SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

The Provincial Health Services Authority, together with the BC Centre for Disease Control, has published the following bulletin for parents.

If you would like more information please go to <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>

Why are schools restarting in-class instruction?

- ✓ Schools provide many benefits, including spaces for healthy eating, exercise and connecting with others.
- ✓ Children and youth are less likely than adults to catch or spread COVID-19.
- ✓ These benefits help the mental well-being of students. □
- ✓ In-person classes give access to education for students, especially those who need extra support.
- ✓ There are no extra risks in schools than in other public spaces.
- ✓ Resuming in-class instruction gives access to childcare for parents who need to work.

What's the risk of COVID-19 for children and youth?

Very few children get sick from COVID-19. In BC, children and youth have had much lower rates of COVID-19 than adults. If children do get sick with COVID-19, they tend to have mild symptoms. Parents should focus on preventing the spread of COVID-19 between other adults.

Some children may have a higher chance of more serious symptoms if they get COVID-19. This includes children under 1 year of age, those with weakened immune systems and those with pre-existing lung conditions. Check with your healthcare provider if you have concerns.

You can learn more about COVID-19 at <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>. You can check your symptoms using the self-assessment tool at <https://bc.thrive.health/>



How can I protect my child(ren) and others from COVID-19?

Stay home if you or your children are sick

- ❖ Check in with your children daily for symptoms of COVID-19.
- ❖ Teach them about common COVID-19 symptoms.
- ❖ Get tested if you or your child have symptoms.
- ❖ Keep your child connected on-line with friends and teachers if they are sick.

Practice prevention before and after school

- ❖ Adults should keep 2 metres from others when dropping off and picking up.
- ❖ Drop off your child(ren) at sites assigned by staff. Don't go into the school if possible.
- ❖ After school, spend time with friends outdoors instead of at home or inside.
- ❖ Everyone should wash their hands before they leave and after they get home. Clean personal items such as mobile phones, backpacks, water bottles and lunch containers before and after school or other outings.

Teach children about prevention at school

- ❖ Wash hands often. Before and after play, going outside, eating, using the washroom, blowing their nose or touching shared things like toys, phones or computers.
- ❖ Be aware that some hand sanitizers may not be safe for children and youth. Read labels carefully.
- ❖ Encourage children to avoid physical contact. This is more important than keeping 2 metres apart.
- ❖ Teach children about keeping their hands below their shoulders, so they don't touch their face.
- ❖ Cover coughs and sneezes with their elbow or tissue. Put tissues straight in the garbage.
- ❖ It is usually not recommended that children wear masks as it may lead to increased touching of the face. Masks are not necessary in schools where other safety measures are implemented. However, some parents may choose to allow their child to wear a mask. Respect others' choices to wear or not wear a mask.
- ❖ If an older child wants to wear a mask, show them how to do so safely. http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID19_SurgicalMaskPoster.pdf
- ❖ Avoid sharing food, drinks, unwashed utensils, etc..
- ❖ Don't bring toys to school. Teach children about prevention at school

Be open and honest with kids and teens

- ❖ Listen to children who might be worried about going back.
- ❖ Let them ask questions.
- ❖ Maintain familiar activities like mealtimes and outdoor exercise.
- ❖ Focus on positive behaviours like hand washing.
- ❖ Help children realize that they can do a lot to protect themselves and others.
- ❖ Encourage children to recognize, prevent and talk about COVID-19 stigma.

HEARTFELT THANKS!

Words cannot express my thanks and gratitude for the enormous privilege of having been able to serve the St. Michael's School community this past year. It has truly been a blessing to spend time with your wonderful children and the amazing St. Michael's staff. Thank you to all the parents for your support, kindness, and encouragement! May God bless you and have a relaxing, safe summer. Mrs. Meisl

A Summer Prayer....

"Let us put ourselves into the hands of the Lord and pray that God will bless us and our families during the wonderful months of summer.

May we all help make our home a place of relaxation, joy, love, peace and safety.

May we be generous and considerate, not thinking only about ourselves, but helping others enjoy the blessings of summertime.

Lord God, Creator of all things, guide our steps and strengthen our hearts, during these months of summer and vacation days.

Grant us refreshment of mind and body.

We ask this through Christ our Lord."

Amen