



St. Michael's School Newsletter

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Our Virtue focus for December – Hope

During the month of December, we celebrate the virtue of **Hope**. We believe that God comes to us as a real human who can show us the way of life. God has given us the Advent season year after year in order to focus our minds and our hearts on the good all around us.

A hopeful person is....

† Optimistic

† inspired and inspires others

† one who sees the good in the world

Sometimes in life, bad things happen to us that we cannot explain. During these times we tend to get mad at God for putting us through so much pain. We forget God is always there for us and He does not want to hurt us. When you feel sad and alone, remember to never lose **HOPE**, pray to Jesus and things will get better.

Let us pray for the grace and courage to be people of hope, people who can see, participate in and contribute to God's goodness emerging around us. Amen

If you're In Instagram, you can follow us at @stmichaelsbby

A MESSAGE FROM MRS. KENNEDY

As it was for the Magi during the very first Christmas, Advent is a time of hope as we await the coming of our saviour Jesus. It is important that we take time to reflect and give thanks for the many blessings bestowed upon us, and to pray for those who are struggling or in need.

As Principal of our school, I count myself fortunate to be part of the St. Michael's community with its caring and supportive members who live out the gospel message in their daily lives. On a safe-keeping note before Christmas vacation begins, I want to remind each of you not to become "sleepy Christians" as Pope Francis refers to those who fail to remain vigilant. In this case I am asking everyone to continue following COVID protocols to stay safe and keep others safe over the holidays.

Let us also be reminded that vigilance is an important aspect of Christian life because "it prevents one's spirituality from becoming mediocre and lazy."

Pope Francis said the "secret to being vigilant is prayer," which "keeps the lamp of the heart lit." During Advent, he said, people should make a habit of praying, "Come, Lord Jesus," especially when they find their "enthusiasm has cooled down."

Prayer reawakens the soul from slumber and focuses it on what matters, on the purpose of existence," the pope said. "Even during our busiest days, we must not neglect prayer."

We are truly grateful for your generosity and Christian Spirit in all that you do. Thank you to all our families for your service, your many donations, and gifts and for your commitment to St. Michael's Parish and School.

The Staff and I wish all of you a joyful, safe and healthy Christmas and a blessed New Year. We thank all of you for your commitment to the school and for all your support.

Love, Mrs. Kennedy and see you in 2022!

NON-UNIFORM DAY: CHRISTMAS DAY!

Today, December 16, let's go Christmas Crazy! Wear your ugly Christmas sweater, tinsel scarves, elf shoes, striped tights, Santa hats and all the red and green you can find to show our Christmas spirit. Please bring a minimum donation of \$2. Students who bring a monetary donation AND an item for the St. Michael's food bank will be entered into a draw for a small prize!

DESK CLEAN-UP

All students are asked to bring in a large, sturdy bag **TODAY**. Students will be cleaning out their desks and bringing all items home for the holidays as the janitors need to move the furniture in order to give the classrooms a thorough cleaning and to polish the floors. Students must return the items to school after the holidays.

LIBRARY BOOKS

A reminder to please return ALL library books by tomorrow. We will check books out again in the new year.

CHRISTMAS BREAK

Students will be dismissed for the Christmas holidays **tomorrow, December 17th at 12:00 noon**. **Thank you for making arrangements to have your child(ren) picked up at that time.** School will reopen on **Tuesday, January 4th, 2022.**

VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT PERFORMANCE

The virtual Christmas concert will be available by the end of this week. The YouTube will be emailed to parents through school-wide email (allparents@smeschool.ca).

JANUARY HOT LUNCH

Please place your orders for January's hot lunch dates as soon as possible – <https://sme.hotlunches.net>. **January lunch orders must be paid for by TOMORROW, December 17, before the Christmas Break.**

PA HOT LUNCH COORDINATOR POSITION

Our long time Hot Lunch & Side Dish Coordinators are graduating this school year. We are looking for parents to learn and take over these roles within the Parent Association. If you are interested, please contact the PA chair Sarah Golding at sme.parentassociation@gmail.com.

Without parents being part of the PA we cannot provide and hold the many fundraisers and events we traditionally do.

PARENT PARTICIPATION HOURS WEBSITE UPDATE

The School Parent Participation Hours Tracking Website is open now for submitting hours that have been completed and new participation hours. All participation hours submissions will be done manually by the parent at this time.

Video instructions are available once you login to the website and will be accessible at any time on the website.

Please contact our Participation Tracking System Support team at participationhours@gmail.com if you haven't received the welcome email or technical support.

10 PARENT PARTICIPATION HOURS DEADLINE - FEBRUARY 28, 2022

This is a reminder that 10 Parent Participation Hours will be due by end of day on February 28th, 2022. The parent participation hours must be submitted to the school's Parent Participation Website by the due date (February 28th, 2022).

CHRISTMAS MASS - IT HELP NEEDED

Attend Christmas Mass and participate in IT Technical Support parent! The participation is available on the Christmas Day (4 Masses). Please send an email to participationhours@gmail.com to sign up.

PARENT PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES

Following Parent Participation Categories need your help! Please contact ParticipationHours@gmail.com to sign up!

- **CHRISTMAS MASS IT TECHNICAL SUPPORT (Christmas Day)**
 - **AUCTION** (Significant participation hours available!)
 - **Yard Supervision** (Monday Afternoon)
 - **Crossing Guard Supervision**
 - **Church Organist**

Please contact our Participation Tracking System Support team at participationhours@gmail.com if you haven't received the welcome email or technical support.

PICK UP SUNDAY OFFERING ENVELOPES

Dear Parents, the church collection envelopes can be picked up from the church. Please pick up your envelopes.

STUDENT ABSENCES

A reminder that student absences should be reported to the office **no later than** 9:00 am each weekday morning. If you leave a message on our voicemail, please indicate the reason your child is absent. If we do not receive your call, we will call your home, your workplace or an emergency contact number. Please let us know if any of your contact telephone numbers change. Timely reporting of your child's absence helps us to save valuable time and ensures the safety of each and every student at St. Michael's School.

Any extended absence, i.e. family vacation, requires parents to complete a "Leave of Absence" form. These forms are available from the office and are also on our website under 'downloads'.

We are required to keep very accurate records of student attendance as a condition of our funding. As such, it is vital that notes are sent to explain any absenteeism. On your child's return to school, an absentee note stating the nature of the absence, dates of the absence, full name and grade of the student and parent signature is required. A note sent by email is acceptable **BUT** must include a signature. Even if your child was absent for part of the day to attend an appointment, a signed note must be sent to the school. **Calling the school secretary and/or emailing the teacher to let them know your child is away is great, HOWEVER, we ALSO REQUIRE A SIGNED NOTE EXPLAINING THE ABSENT.** We thank you for your cooperation in submitting notes promptly!

AUCTION UPDATE

The annual Auction is St. Michael's School's largest fundraiser of the year, and we're gearing up for another great event. Stay tuned for the unveiling of this year's theme!

It's beginning to look a lot like...the perfect time to buy donations!

Black Friday is over, but Boxing Day is coming up soon, and sales have already started. It's the perfect opportunity to get great deals on cool items you can donate to the Auction.

Some popular donation ideas are:

- Electronics
- Bottles of wine and fine spirits
- New items that can be sold
- Hotel and spa gift cards
- Sports tickets
- Gift cards in denominations of \$25, \$50, and \$100

If you're eyeing an item that's out of your budget, team up with friends or fellow parents so you can all pitch in and get something awesome!

Details about where you can drop off donations will be provided soon.
Check out the Facebook page for all the latest info:
<https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelsauction/>

WINTER WEATHER CONDITIONS

With the cold days of winter upon us, please remind your child(ren) to wear clothing appropriate for the weather, **(i.e. boots, warm jacket, mitts, toques)**. If weather conditions are reasonable, students will go outside to get some fresh air during recess and lunch breaks.

In the event of inclement weather, such as snow, tune in to **CKNW AM 980 on the radio** for information regarding any school closure. Information can also be found on their web site, www.cknw.com or on our website www.stmichaelschool.ca. In the case of inclement weather in the morning, closures are usually reported every ten to fifteen minutes.

You will receive an email to let you know if the school is closed.

Please do not tie up the school and parish telephone lines by trying to call these offices. The radio station WILL NOT announce if the school is open; therefore, if you DO NOT hear the name of the school then the school is open. Likewise, if you do not receive an email from your school administration email allparents@smeschool.ca then the school is open.

All emails will be made by 8:00 am.

As traveling conditions vary depending on where you live, please use your own judgment regarding sending your child(ren) to school. The staff, however, will always work to keep the school open when safety is not in question.

Thought of the week...

Christmas Eve at St. Michael's!!

It was the night before Christmas when all through the halls
Not a person was stirring, unlike at the malls
The classrooms were empty, the lights were all out
St. Michael's was silent, no one was about

The students were snoozing, asleep, tucked in tight
Dreaming of Jesus to be born that same night
Their parents all wrapping the last-minute toys
To celebrate Christmas with their sweet girls and boys

When out on the playing field, low and behold
A chorus of staff in fine voice, it was told
Were singing in unison, yes, singing in prayer
Of a babe to be born, that soon would be here

The air was so still as their voices arose
To the heavens above in magnificent prose
A hymn for a baby to be born in a manger
In a place far away, hidden from danger

Mary and Joseph who took such great care

Would deliver a saviour for every child here
Here at St. Michael's and throughout all the earth
He'd come down from heaven, for us at his birth

To spread the good news, to show us the way
To guide us on earth, how to live everyday
With faith and with hope, how to treat one another
To live as he would, as sister and brother

The sound of them singing, out there in the night
In devout adoration, what a wonderful sight
The stars were all shining and gave such a glow
On the choir so fervent in their song down below

They suddenly stopped in their chorus a' raising
For a single bright star interrupted their praising
Shining so bright it stunned them in wonder
They knew at that moment from there and from yonder

The miracle of Christmas was finally here
The king of all kings for us did appear
As a babe in a faraway, poor manger stall
To lead and to save us, staff, students and all.

~ Rosie Bird