



THE MESSENGER

THE VOICE OF ST. ALFRED CATHOLIC SCHOOL

The Saint Alfred Catholic School Community respects the uniqueness of all persons and enhances their potential. We are committed to promoting a love of learning and to creating an environment which fosters the lifelong development and spiritual growth of each person.

NEWSLETTER # 4
DECEMBER 2008

EVERY CHILD, A PROMISE

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AN ADVENT PRAYER

God our Father, through the prophets you have told us to get ready for Jesus:
You gave a baby, you chose Mary to be Jesus' mother
And Joseph to provide a home for them;
You called wise men from far away.
As we prepare to enjoy Jesus' birthday,
Make us ready to listen carefully to the Christmas story and
To make room for Jesus in our hearts.
Amen



The staff of St. Alfred School
Wish the families of our school community
A very Blessed and Holy Christmas Season.
May the spirit of Christmas fill your hearts with peace and joy.

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IN THIS NEWSLETTER:

- P.A. Days – Dec. 5
- Community Advent Mass – Dec. 11 @ 7 p.m.
- No Child Without Program
- Calendar of Events



Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board

Taoi lieau naay quan troing, xin nhoo ngooui chueyan doch.
Ta informacja jest wazna. Prosze zapoznaj sie z nia.

Esta informacion es importante. Por favor traducirla al espanol.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

In keeping with the traditions and customs of our faith, December is the month in which we celebrate Advent, the season of preparation. As we prepare for special visitors in our homes, schools and church, we also prepare spiritually for the coming of the greatest of visitors, the birth of our Savior, Jesus.

During this time of Advent, the traditions and customs of our faith invite us to prepare for the coming of Jesus. We give thanks for our many blessings and we are reminded of the most special gift of all, the gift of love. Let us share this gift of love with our families, friends and all who we meet this Advent Season. Let us prepare our hearts through daily prayer to receive the "Light of the World" on Christmas day.



Wishing you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Joyous New Year!

J. Tollis

HAPPY RETIREMENT AND WELCOME

It is with mixed emotions that we announce the retirement of our most valued Head Custodian, Mr. R. Vargas. We wish him all the very best as he begins this new journey in his life. He will be sadly missed by all.

Please join us in welcoming our new Head Custodian to St. Alfred School, Mr. A. Thomson. Mr. Thomson comes to us from Philip Pocock Secondary School and did work as an evening custodian here at St. Alfred School. Welcome back to St. Alfred.

FAITH ACTIVITIES

ADVENT FOOD DRIVE

With the beginning of Advent, St. Alfred students will be collecting non-perishable goods for the less fortunate. The Student Council along with Mrs. Tollis will be organizing a food and mitten drive again this year. The food drive will be accepting canned goods starting December 1 until December 12. Our mitten tree will be ready to accept new mittens, scarves, hats and socks as of December 1. All items are being donated to the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Thank you for your generosity and continued support.



ADVENT MASS INVITATION

All parents, students and staff are invited to participate in the St. Alfred Community Advent Mass at Sts. Martha and Mary's Church on Thursday, December 11 at 7:00 p.m. Students, including our School Choir, will be participants in the mass as we prepare for the coming of Christmas. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend our community celebration.

COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION

A reminder to parents and students who have not registered for the above sacraments, that they must meet with Father D'Souza and make the appropriate arrangements with the Church.

VIRTUE FOR DECEMBER: HOPE

We understand that both the world and its people are from God and so are essentially good. Furthermore, God has given us this Advent season year after year in order to focus our minds and hearts on the good all around us. When we look at the world through the eyes of God we see it becoming more and more like the reign of God that Jesus describes.

People of Hope...

- Keep up a positive attitude
- Can bounce back from tough situations
- Set and stick to their goals
- See the good in others even when they make mistakes
- Let others know that *they* are good people

SAFE SCHOOL INITIATIVES

COLD WEATHER EXPECTATIONS



As the month of December progresses, the colder weather is upon us. Students should dress appropriately in order to spend recesses and lunchtime outdoors. Parents, please outfit your children with hats, scarves, mitts, winter outerwear and boots. Where possible please put identification on your child's belongings. Students should have a pair of indoor shoes so that classrooms are kept clean and dry.

We strive to keep all students safe. Thank you for your co-operation.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

Our students and staff practice emergency procedures regularly. These procedures include the safe exit from the school building in the event of a fire, precautions and safety actions (lock down) in the event of a threat or intruder alert. In the event of an emergency where we must evacuate St. Alfred School site, our staff will take the students to St. Sofia School on Havenwood, north of Bloor St.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL PROCEDURES

There may be days during the upcoming winter months when inclement weather presents a potential safety hazard to our students. It is essential that parents discuss with their children the procedures that they wish them to follow to get home safely.

This discussion should include such directions as:

Taoli lieau naay quan troing, xin nhoo ngoooi chueyan doch.

Ta informacja jest wazna. Prosze zapoznaj sie z nia.

For students that do NOT take the school bus:

1. the best way to walk home;
2. with whom the child should walk;
3. where the child should go if there is no one at home;
4. how the child should seek help if wind and snow are so strong that they cannot see the way;

For students that DO take the bus:

It is a fact that bad weather may cause delays for student pick up at bus stops. Please ensure that your child has a safe place to go if the bus is late or does not arrive.

IF SCHOOL BUSES ARE CANCELLED IN THE MORNING DUE TO SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS, THEY WILL NOT RUN IN THE AFTERNOON EVEN IF THE WEATHER CONDITION IMPROVES.

In the event that buses are cancelled, please do not pick up other students from the bus stops and deliver them to school. If the bus does not arrive the child should return home for the day. If you bring your own children to school you are responsible for picking your children up from school by 3:15 p.m.

Ultimately, the parent decides what weather conditions are considered safe. It is always better to err on the side of caution than to take any risk.

Please be advised that we at the school do not have authority to close the school. The decision to send school buses home early and close the school is at the discretion of the Director of Education. Such announcements are broadcast on all local radio stations.

LITTERLESS AND HEALTHY LUNCHES

Recent research on children's eating habits in Canada shows that they are not eating enough vegetables and fruit or getting enough milk products to meet their recommended nutrient needs. At St. Alfred School, staff is proposing that we promote healthy eating habits among our students.

Students continue to be encouraged to bring healthy, litterless lunches to school. Staff will continue to ask students to bring all uneaten food and wrappers back home so parents are aware of what their children are eating. Pop and unhealthy foods will also be returned home with the students.

We are also asking parents to support our endeavours by not bringing in any Fast Food items such as MacDonal'd's, Burger King etc. If you wish your child to consume these meals, then parents are requested to take their children home for lunch.

NO CHILD WITHOUT

The Canadian MedicAlert Foundation has developed a free program to protect children living with chronic medical conditions, allergies or special needs. This program is called No Child Without. It was developed to ensure children across Canada from Junior Kindergarten up to their 14th birthday receive MedicAlert protection at no cost to the parent, school or Board of Education. The No Child Without program is fully funded by the Canadian

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Medic Alert Foundation in partnership with the Lions Clubs of Canada, a grant from the Government of Canada and by individuals, local businesses and corporations.

Please find attached to this newsletter a bar-coded brochure specific to St. Alfred School. After having reviewed the brochure, if you choose to have your child participate in the program, please follow the directions provided in the brochure. Visit www.nochildwithout.ca to learn more about the program.

PARKING LOT SAFETY

The entry, exit, and bus zone on school property must allow access to school buses and **need to be respected** in order to reduce traffic hazards to children. In the interest of safety, please **DO NOT PARK IN THE KISS IN RIDE LANE AND LEAVE YOUR CAR UNATTENDED, DO NOT PICK UP OR DROP OFF YOUR CHILD(REN) IN THE DRIVE THROUGH OR BUS LANE.**

Please use the Kiss and Ride appropriately and remember the safety of all the students.

PARKING

Parents are reminded that the parking lot on the south side of the school is closed to cars every morning between 8:30 and 8:45 a.m. and after school between 3:15 and 3:30 p.m. If you choose to park in this area, **the expectation is that you do not move your vehicle until all students/pedestrians and busses have cleared.** Please remember that we must ensure safety for all our students.

SAFETY AT SCHOOL

All parents are reminded that when they come to the school they **MUST** check into the office and pick up an identification pass or sticker before proceeding to any other area of the school, both indoors and outdoors. This request is made for the safety of all pupils.

Also, please understand that during instructional time, teachers are unavailable to meet with parents or to take phone calls. Please leave a message with the school secretary and your call will be returned promptly.

SNOW SAFETY

With the arrival of snow we have reminded all students that the snow stays on the ground! Students have been advised that there is to be no snowball throwing, rubbing snow in others' faces, kicking snow, breaking down snow forts, taking hats etc. Please discuss these behaviours with your child(ren).

STUDENT INFORMATION

It is important that we have up-to-date records of your address, phone numbers, and emergency contacts in the event that the school must contact you regarding your child. Please inform the office or your child's teacher if any information changes throughout the year.

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SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

Supervision begins at 8:30 a.m. Please do not bring/send your children to school earlier than this time. Given safety concerns, it is not a good idea to leave your children outside unattended as student supervision in the yard begins at 8:30 and not before. Please make other arrangements for the care of your children prior to 8:30 a.m.

SCHOOL EVENTS AND NEWS

CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL

Our next School Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 9, beginning at 7:15 p.m. All parents/guardians are welcome to attend.



CHOCOLATE FUNDRAISER

The Chocolate Fundraiser has now come to an end. Please return any unsold chocolates and money to the school as soon as possible. The proceeds from this event will enable our School Council to sponsor the “Artists and Scientists in the School” program. In past years, the School Council has help fund treats for play days, Track and Field, Terry Fox, student agendas, sacramental pins and cards, along with a contribution to the grade 8 graduation. A sincere thanks to our School Council: Mrs. A. Vercillo, Mrs. S. Barna, Mrs. G. Balawejder, Mrs. L. Johnson, Mrs. M. Skrinjar and Mrs. S. Vidovic who have spent countless mornings collecting chocolates and counting money. We could not have done this without them!

EXTENDED FRENCH – PARENT INFORMATION

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of grade 4 students who wish to enroll their child in a grade 5 Extended French program for September 2009 are invited to attend an information meeting at St. Thomas More Catholic School on January 27, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. The program as well as the process for registration will be shared at the meeting. Information will also be included with the first term report cards for all grade 4 students.

EQAO ASSESSMENT

Our grade 3 and 6 students were involved in the EQAO (Education Quality and Accountability Office) assessment of reading, writing and mathematics in May/June 2008. This assessment is one “snapshot” of the student’s performance based on their respective grade level expectations. The individual Grade 3 and 6 student EQAO results have been sent home with students currently in Grade 4 and 7.

**% Students Achieving the Provincial Standard
(Levels 3 & 4)**

Grade 3	Reading	Writing	Mathematics
School	65%	84%	78%
Board	65%	71%	68%
Province	61%	66%	68%

Grade 6	Reading	Writing	Mathematics
School	77%	75%	79%
Board	70%	72%	62%
Province	66%	67%	61%

Parents may wish to view student achievement information on the Board website at <http://www.dpcdsb.org/EQAO/> . The St. Alfred School Profile will also be posted on the above website.

STUDENT/PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Report cards will be sent home on Tuesday, December 2, 2008. Along with the report card, you will receive a confirmation time for your report card conference. This conference may include the student, the teacher and the parent/guardians.

During the first conference, the teachers would like to meet and speak with all parents to discuss the first term and set goals for the second term. Conferences for first term reports will be on December 4 from 3:30 to 8:45 pm and during the day on December 5.

Please call the office if you are unable to make your scheduled conference time.

REMINDERS

ATTENDANCE...LATE ARRIVALS

A reminder to parents and students that it is important that students arrive to school on time. Being consistently late interrupts the learning environment in the classroom, creates delays in the office and sets a poor example for those who arrive on time.

CHEQUES

Parents are asked to please write the name of their child on the front or back of any cheques that are issued to the school, especially if the parent’s last name is different from the child’s.

LOST AND FOUND

Students and parents are encouraged to check the Lost and Found Box for lost clothing. Items not claimed by December 19th will be donated to the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

The school will be closed for the Christmas Holidays beginning: **Monday, December 22nd, 2008 until Friday, January 2nd, 2009.** School resumes on **Monday, January 5th, 2009 at 8:45 a.m.**

