



St. Mary's School Newsletter

Vancouver, BC | September 2025



Living,
Celebrating, &
PROCLAIMING
OUR FAITH

“

*For the Spirit of God has given us
does not make us timid; instead,
his Spirit fills us with power, love,
and self-control. 2 Timothy 1:7*

”

PRINCIPAL'S NOTE



Dear Parents and Guardians,

It's wonderful to be back and see all the children excited for school. This past July, I had the privilege of participating in the 10th Anniversary CISVA Administrators' Association El Camino pilgrimage—a journey that was both deeply spiritual and unforgettable. Alongside a group of fellow administrators, we walked nearly 150km along the East Coast of Spain to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, home to the shrine of Saint James the Great. We visited countless churches, attended

Masses, and experienced moments of faith that continue to inspire and guide me as we begin this school year. The photo below shows me in front of the magnificent cathedral.

Starting September 8, I will be working remotely for about three weeks as I care for my mother post-surgery. You are welcome to email me with questions or concerns or to make a virtual appointment by contacting me at bkrivuzoff@stmary.bc.ca.

We welcome all new families to our St. Mary's community. I hope you form lasting friendships with other parents. May all students continue to grow in faith, virtue, and learning this year!

Brenda Krivuzoff
Principal

*El Camino
Pilgrimage in
Spain July 2025*



September 2025

New Beginnings

Virtue: Faith

- 1 Labour Day Holiday
- 2 School Re-opens 8:50-12:00,
Opening Prayer 9:15 (gym)
K Gradual entry begins
Grade 7 to Camp Zajac (2-5)
- 5 First Friday Mass 9:10
- 9 Meet the Teacher 6:30 (school)
Mandatory Meeting
- 10 School Mass 9:30
- 11 Kindergarten Parent Connections
1:00 (front entrance)
- 12 Back to School Family BBQ 5:00
- 15 Kindergarten First Full Day
- 17 Grade 4 Cheakamus (17-18)
- 19 Student Network Campaign
(Ambassadors chosen)
- 21 School Choir sings at 5:00pm
Mass
- 23 St. Mary's Invitational Cross-
Country Meet 10-2
South Memorial Park
- 24 Individual and Class Photos
- 26 Grade 6 Immunization Clinic 9:30
- 27 Walkathon Kickoff Assembly 2:15
- 29 Truth and Reconciliation Prayer
Service (Gr. 7) 2:15 Church
Orange Shirt Day Out-of-Uniform
- 30 National Day for Truth and
Reconciliation: School Closure



OUR THEME:

Radiance of Faith

Proclaiming the Faith: A Visual Invitation

This artwork serves as a visual meditation on Christ's command to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19), inviting viewers to reflect on their role in spreading the Gospel and embodying the Body of Christ.

Conceptual Framework: The Body of Christ and Spiritual Abstraction

This piece represents the universal and unifying nature of the Body of Christ (*Corpus Christi*), as described in 1 Corinthians 12:12-27. The abstraction of human figures, alludes to their spiritual essence; individuals transformed by grace into one cohesive body. Each figure is depicted with bursts of radiant color, symbolizing the unique gifts and talents bestowed upon them by God. These colors converge around the cross, illustrating the death of ego required to fully embrace Christ's light.

Liturgical Symbolism: Eucharistic Imagery and Apostolic Heritage

The central cross and fragmented circle evoke hands lifting the Eucharist, echoing the proclamation, "We proclaim your death, O Lord, until you come again" (1 Corinthians 11:26). The twelve abstracted figures nod to divine providence and the commissioning of the Twelve Apostles instructed by Christ to spread the Gospel to all nations.

Historical Context: Mosaics and Stained Glass in Christian Iconography

The fractured circular background pays homage to Christian mosaics and stained-glass art from its earliest Byzantine roots to today. These were created to visually communicate divine truths to the faithful, illuminating biblical narratives of humanity's relationship with God through Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Color Symbolism

Blue symbolizes divine illumination and is associated with the Virgin Mary's purity and

connection to God's light. Purple denotes penance, humility, and royalty; qualities embodied by Christ during His Passion.

Spiritual Vision: Proclaiming

Faith Through Fractured Unity in CISVA

In alignment with the mission of the Catholic Independent Schools of the Vancouver Archdiocese (CISVA) to "live, celebrate, and proclaim our faith" in partnership with home and parish, this artwork reflects the spiritual journey of proclaiming salvation amidst the challenges of a fragmented world. The circular, fractured design symbolizes humanity's diverse and imperfect efforts to spread the Gospel across cultures and nations. Yet, through Christ as the mediator, these fragments are reconciled into a unified whole, illustrating the transformative power of faith and the Church's mission. The twelve figures surrounding the cross represent the Apostles, commissioned by Christ to proclaim His message to all corners of the earth. The color bursts signify the unique gifts each individual brings to this shared mission.

Description by Tessa Sechay

“
May hope pass over
the whole world like a
great flame of faith
and love kindled in all
men and women of
goodwill.

”

Pope Leo XIV



Living,
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VIRTUE IN PRACTICE

Faith: Believing in God and All He Has Revealed

This year, St. Mary's will continue with "Virtues in Practice", a program for children in Kindergarten through Grade Seven which helps them to grow closer to Jesus by imitating His life and virtues. The entire school will focus on the same virtue each month. The overall theme for the year is "Faith: believing in God and all He has revealed." The Year of Faith is an opportunity to renew and develop the use of Catholic devotions such as Eucharistic Adoration, the Rosary, or Stations of the Cross as well as an opportunity to expand Catholic ministries and service projects.

The goal of Catholic Education is heaven, but knowledge alone will not get us there! "Virtues in Practice" will help our students to live out their faith in their everyday lives.



LEADERS IN ACTION

Our Student Network

The Student Network is our school's leadership team, giving students opportunities to represent St. Mary's in both formal and informal ways. Each year, five Grade 6 or 7 students are elected as Mentors, and every class from Grade 1-7 chooses two Ambassadors. Together, they form the Student Network. Our Student Network helps boost school spirit during fundraising events like the Walkathon and Book Fair, leads prayers at assemblies, and takes part in our Mother's Day Mass. Mentors also represent our school on social media and building community relations with Joyce Collingwood Community Centre, and representing our school during our No Stone Left Alone ceremony.

Students who join the Network grow in confidence, build public speaking skills, learn responsibility, and gain valuable experience interacting with others.

This year's Student Mentors are Carl Espiritu, Eoin Baily, Victoria Atelevich, Mischa Castro, and Amelia Ferreira.





BEYOND CLASSROOM BOUNDS

On June 28, St. Mary's Parish hosted its second Challenge Day—a fun-filled event celebrating fellowship, friendly competition, and community spirit. Our School Team, the spirited Red Team, was comprised of students, staff, and parents who all worked together with enthusiasm and heart. While we didn't reclaim our championship title from two years ago, we proudly secured third place and had a fantastic time doing it. A huge thank you to everyone who participated, and a special shout out to our dedicated team captain, Ms. Cagliuso, and co-captain, Mrs. Ryznar for their leadership and energy!



Grade 2 Butterfly release in June

Summer event with the Parish Challenge - June 28

St. Mary's Parish, on the Solemnity of Corpus Christi (June 21), held a Eucharistic Procession through the streets of Collingwood. Hundreds of parishioners joined our priests in this powerful witness to publicly proclaim our belief in Jesus' true presence in the Eucharist. As we carried Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament through the neighbouring streets, some of our Grade 6 and 7 band students, as well as some of our alumni, played beautifully reverent music on their instruments.



Wedding Bells are Ringing: Our school community extends heartfelt congratulations to Mrs. Tina Cipriano (née Perri) on her wedding day, August 16. We share in her joy and wish Tina and her husband, Gianni, a lifetime filled with love and happiness. In a beautiful moment of grace, the sun broke through just as she walked down the aisle to say "I do." Here is a picture of the bride and groom with some of our staff who were blessed to witness this special moment.





PARISH EDUCATION COMMITTEE (PEC)

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As summer draws to a close, we are delighted to welcome you and your children back to school. For those who may not know me, my name is Daniel Chou, and I have the privilege of serving as Chairperson and Treasurer of the Parish Education Committee (PEC). On behalf of the PEC, it is truly an honour to greet you as we embark on another wonderful school year together.

I am blessed to serve with a team of devoted individuals on the PEC, who share in the mission of proclaiming our faith and supporting Catholic education in our community. They are:

- **Anne Woo—Vice Chairperson, Delegate to CISVA**
- **Richelle Tapia—Secretary and Fundraising & Special Events**
- **Joy Ravina—Fundraising & Special Events**
- **Katrina Asaua—Parent Participation**
- **Liza Garcia—Parent Liason**
- **Ryan Raguero—Ad hoc member**

Guided by Father Joseph (the pastor), the PEC works with Principal Krivuzoff to ensure the ongoing success of the school. The collaborative role is to support the Principal as the educational leader, and together with the parish, the PEC is committed to helping our children grow in their faith.

The PEC's responsibilities range from ensuring students safety on walkways, co-ordination of groundskeeping to overseeing parent participation, and organizing multiple fundraising events throughout the year. None of these efforts would be possible without the generous support and involvement of our parents. Your participation and volunteer commitment are essential to the success of our fundraising events and to the continued growth and betterment of our school community. Events such as our **Back-to-School Barbecue on Sep 12** and the upcoming **Annual Walkathon on October 10** are wonderful opportunities to get involved, meet other families and contribute to meaningful initiatives that impact our school community. You are also reminded to frequently check the **OnVolunteer** portal for volunteer opportunities.

We strongly encourage all parents to take an active role in their children's school life. Your involvement makes our school such a warm, faith-filled and vibrant community.

Thank you, and we look forward to a great year ahead!

Warm regards,
Daniel Chou

JOIN OUR BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

We are delighted to offer the SAINTS Before & After School Club at St. Mary's School, providing convenient care with reasonable rates. Club registration is guaranteed.

We now have a dedicated ASC phone line: **604-428-0357**. Please use this number to contact club staff **between 3:00–6:00 pm on school days** if you will be late or if someone else will be picking up your child.

Please click on the updated link below for more information.

[September Registration Link](#)



STAFF RETREAT

Our vocation goes beyond passing on knowledge; we are called to form young people in wisdom, in faith, and in virtue. The classroom is not only a place of learning—it is a place of mission. Jesus is with us always, guiding and inspiring our work.



St. Mary's Staff at our annual Staff Retreat



2025 Retreat Team: Mrs. Vukasovic, Ms. Hodut, Mr. Pascua, Ms. Patro, Mr. Mogatas (bottom row), Mr. Quick, Mrs. Scodeller, Mrs. Burns (top row)



New Staff: Mme. Yin, Ms. Kriuchkovenko, Ms. Paccani, Mrs. Mustapic, Mr. Gabriele



STAFF RETREAT



Mrs. Mustapic with Mrs. Samija catching up.



Fr. Joseph shared a reflection with all of us, reminding us of our sacred mission as Catholic educators. This year's theme, *Proclaiming the Faith*, is not just an idea—it lies at the very heart of what it means to be a disciple. As St. Paul says, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news."



Celebrating Mass with Fr. Joseph.



Staff each placed a rose on the altar during the offertory.



Each month, classes will look at different Saints to explore, "How did THEY proclaim the Faith?"

Mr. Mogatas guides staff in a "Let Your Light Shine" craft, creating pieces for classroom prayer tables and centers.



WELCOME ABOARD

Mr. Gabriele

Hello St. Mary's,

My name is Mr. Gabriele, and I am thrilled to introduce myself as the new Physical Education teacher here at St Mary's. As a first-year gym teacher, I'm incredibly excited to begin this faith filled journey with such an awesome school community. My goal is to help students grow not only in their faith and physical abilities but also in their confidence, teamwork, and understanding of healthy, active living.

I'm passionate about creating a positive and inclusive environment where all students feel encouraged to try their best, support one another, and have fun through movement and sport. I'm looking forward to learning and growing alongside your children this year as we explore a wide range of physical activities together.

What to Expect in Phys. Ed This Fall

To kick off the school year, we'll be starting with a unit on cross country running. This will include learning proper stretching and warm-up routines, understanding the importance of cool-down and recovery techniques, and practicing endurance and pacing through distance running. We'll also spend time discussing healthy lifestyle habits like hydration, sleep, and nutrition that support physical activity and overall well-being.

In addition, we'll be introducing volleyball, which is one of the upcoming sports in our school athletics program. Students in the intermediate grades will develop their skills in bumping, setting, and spiking, while also learning the rules and strategies of the game through fun, skill-based activities and teamwork challenges. For our primary grades, we'll begin with the basics—focusing on hand-eye coordination, catching, and passing the ball—to lay a strong foundation in movement skills and confidence with the game.

I'm committed to making gym class a positive and engaging experience for all students, and I'm looking forward to cheering on their progress every step of the way.

Thank you for welcoming me into your school community. I'm excited for a fantastic year ahead!

God Bless,

Mr. Gabriele



“

I'm passionate about creating a positive and inclusive environment where all students feel encouraged to try their best...

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MEET THE TEACHER—SEPT. 7

This year only, we will be adjusting our Meet the Teacher evening on September 7. Parents will have an opportunity to meet their child's teacher(s) and hear about class goals, curriculum, field trips, expectations, volunteering opportunities, and more. Attendance is mandatory for at least one parent per family. This is a great way to connect with your child's learning journey and meet the teachers who will guide them this year.

Please go directly to your child's classroom at either 6:30pm OR 7:00pm for a 30-minutes overview of the year. Two identical talks are offered to accommodate families with more than one child. Parents only please, as there is no childminding.

Classroom Locations:

- Kindergartens V and M, Grade 1P, Grade 2 are downstairs
- Grades 1M, 3-7 are upstairs
- Grade 5LR are in the portable at the back of the school

Our Vice-Principals and specialist teachers will be available to welcome you at the school in the front and playground entrance and help parents find classrooms. The back parking lot will be open to park.

If you require additional time with your child's teacher, please contact them via email to arrange a separate appointment.

VOICES OF CHANGE

Collingwood Park has reopened after a complete redesign, featuring a new spray park (open until September 30), a zip line, and an upgraded climbing structure. Families may enjoy stopping by after school, and our students will continue to benefit from the park for PHE classes, running, and track practices.



9 Collingwood Park re-imagined.

What are you looking forward to this year?

"I'm looking forward to seeing my friends that are not back from vacation, and making new friends." Tanisha N. (6M)

"I'm Looking forward to fun events and improving my math skills." Shane (6L)

"I'm looking forward to Victoria." Kevin (5LR)

"I'm looking forward to skating." Angus (5LR)

"I'm looking forward to basketball and tennis." Luana (6L)

"I'm looking forward to badminton." Lara (6L)

All students will be participating in the "One Million Children" event and praying the Rosary for peace and unity in the world on Oct. 7th.

