



## St. Mary's School Newsletter | February 2024



### NOTE FROM THE PRINCIPAL



#### *Dear Parents and Guardians,*

We are now at the school year's midpoint and approaching the season of Lent. Lent is 40 days devoted to spiritual growth, focusing on fasting, prayer, and almsgiving practices. It is an opportunity to create a deeper connection with God by making space in one's own heart for Him.

In keeping with the spirit of Lent, our school will participate in the Archdiocesan Vocations Office Mite-box program, where donations support seminarians in their journey to priesthood. Students are encouraged to pray for the seminarians and contribute to their mite-boxes throughout the Lenten period. The mite-boxes can be returned after Easter. Proceeds from the February Out-of-Uniform will support the Men's Shelter at St. Paul's Hospital. Thank you for your generosity.

Congratulations to our Grade 2 students on receiving their sacrament of Reconciliation last night. Each child received a beautiful cross as a sign of Jesus being with them all the time. We thank all our families for supporting their child(ren) on their faith journey. Regular Mass attendance is significant.

This month we celebrate Catholic Schools week! We thank you for choosing St. Mary's for your child(ren), and we wish you all a joyous Family Day holiday and a Happy Lunar New Year of the Dragon.

Yours sincerely,  
*Brenda Krivuzoff*  
Principal



*“ Let all that you  
do be done in  
Love. ”*

*1 Corinthians 16:14*



**LIVING,**  
Celebrating,  
and Proclaiming  
**OUR FAITH**

### Month at a Glance

- ◆ February 6 Grade 2 Reconciliation 6:30 church
- ◆ February 7 Notre Dame Senior Band Performs for K-7 students 9:00
- ◆ February 10 Lunar New Year of the Dragon
- ◆ February 12 -17 Catholic Schools Week
- ◆ February 13 Mardi Gras Pancake Breakfast 9:00-10:45
- ◆ February 14 Ash Wednesday Mass 9:30, Senior Choir & Grade 5 Choir members singing at 5:30 Mass
- ◆ February 14 Re-Registration packages due
- ◆ February 15 & 16 School Closure for Catholic Educators' Conference (no Before or After School Club)
- ◆ February 19 School Closure for Family Day holiday
- ◆ February 22 Notre Dame Elementary Choral Festival
- ◆ February 23 Honourable Minister Dix visiting Grade 5
- ◆ February 28 Anti-Bullying Day/Out-of-Uniform Day; staff and students can wear pink shirts and bring \$2 for the Men's Shelter, an RCAF Catholic Charity

#wearesaints smsaints604 smsaints60 smsaints604

Please download our School App on iTunes or Google Play Store



# DOMINICAN MONTHLY VIRTUE IN PRACTICE PROGRAM

## Year of Hope: Trusting in God's Loving Plan

This February in our Virtues program we continue with our overall theme of "Hope", which means "trusting in God's loving plan".

This month we will practice the virtue of "Cheerfulness: looking on the bright side". When we trust God with our lives, we can be cheerful - even in difficult situations. Practicing cheerfulness does not mean pretending everything is perfect all the time. Sometimes things are tough and not the way we would like them to be. But if we are filled with the joy of the Lord, a joy that nothing can take from us, we can see the good in the middle of difficulties. Jesus said, "I have said this to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have troubles; but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world."

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

Year of  
*Hope*

STUDY

"This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast."  
—Hebrews 6:19

"Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful."  
—Hebrews 10:23

HOPE is trusting in God's loving plan. Through the theological virtue of hope our hearts are set on the goal of heaven.

THE YEAR OF HOPE offers an opportunity to focus on study skills and vocations. We know that God designed each of us with gifts and talents to suit His plan for our lives, and that He expects us to do our part to increase the talents He has given us so that we are ready to answer His call.

## LENTEN INVITATION

During Lent, Catholic Christians are encouraged to pray, fast and give alms. One tangible way we can pray more is to attend Mass together on Fridays (when school is in session) - on Feb 23, March 1, and March 8. Families and older students are invited to gather together in the area behind the choir from 7:50 until the start of Mass at 8:00am. Staff supervision will be present and students will be accompanied to the playground when Mass is over at 8:30. Let us make every effort to draw closer to the Lord during this holy season.

## 40 YEARS SERVICE AWARD IN CISVA

Congratulations to Mrs. Maria Stokovac, who will be honored with a 40-year service award at the upcoming Catholic Educators' Conference next week. Mrs. Stokovac's career began at St. Andrew's, where she served as the kindergarten teacher for two years. She then dedicated five years to teaching Grades 1 and 2 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help. In 1990, Mrs. Stokovac joined St. Mary's School, where she taught Grade 3 for 17 years and then changed to Grade 5 until the present. She transitioned to part-time teaching after the birth of her second child. Mrs. Stokovac has enjoyed partnerships with Mrs. Brooks, Mrs. Ryznar and Mrs. Lewis.

In speaking with Mrs. Stokovac, she emphasized the school's remarkable sense of community and cherished her time connecting with families over the years. She witnessed the growth of the St. Mary's community during her employment and she eagerly awaits the completion of the new school building. Mrs. Stokovac has consistently demonstrated a solid commitment to her faith, inspiring staff and her students. She loves teaching her students about the saints.

The dedication and invaluable contributions of Mrs. Stokovac to St. Mary's School and the CISVA community are appreciated. We extend our congratulations to Mrs. Stokovac on this well-deserved recognition.



Mrs. Maria Stokovac Grade 5 Teacher



## LEARNING PATHWAYS

Kindergarten students enjoyed a fun and engaging field trip to Firehall No 5 on January 30. Parent and firefighter, Mr. Merrill, is training Ms. Vukasovic how to wear the proper equipment for fire safety. (middle)



*Having a blast at the Fire Hall*



*Mr. Merrill & Ms. Vukasovic*



*Posing beside the fire truck with our heroes*

## SHARING OUR TALENTS

### *A Visit from the Notre Dame Senior Band*

Senior band members performed five pieces for our enjoyment!



*Proud of our St. Mary's Alumni*



*Both Grade 7 classes performed pieces they have been working on*

*Band members featured their instruments in a solo*



## PHYSICAL & HEALTH EDUCATION (PHE) 23-24

We have had a great start to 2024 ! Our Grade 3 classes have been enjoying their swimming lessons. This is a vital life skill for all students. Thanks to all involved for making this run so smoothly every Monday.

The basketball season is in full swing. All our boys and girls are enjoying the season. We have had many successful and positive experiences at out games/tournaments for all involved. We also have our Grade 6/7 developmental basketball practices on Wednesday's and Thursday's at lunch. This allows everyone to develop new skills while being in a fun environment with fellow classmates and players.

PE classes have been enjoyable for all. We now look to February with a new PE block. I hope that all students have learned new skills and most importantly, had fun during our basketball block in PE.

Mr. Flynn.



*Grade 7 girls at the OLPH Tournament*



*Grade 7 boys at the St. Helen's Tournament*



*Grade 5 girls at the Holy Cross Tournament*

The regular basketball season is coming to an end next week. The results from league games will determine if our teams are going to playoffs.

Thank you to all the coaches, sponsors, referees, and supervisors at our games. Parents we appreciate your support with transportation to games and being present to cheer on the players.

## LIFE @ ST. MARY'S



Kindergarten Lunar New Year of the Dragon Lanterns. The dragon is a symbol of strength and good fortune in many Asian cultures



Grade 1 conquers the world and this puzzle!

## PRIMARY CHOIR

We have started our weekly practices for our Primary Choir again this month. All students in grades 2 and 3 are invited to join. We will be learning some exciting new songs for the St. Mary's Spring Festival on May 23 and we will also prepare to lead the music at our May school Mass. Practices are held on Tuesdays from 11:45-12:15 in the music annex. If you have any questions please contact Mrs. Ryznar [bryznar@stmary.bc.ca](mailto:bryznar@stmary.bc.ca)

## VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH THE LE FAMILY

Minh and the Le Family are part of the Walkway Safety Team. They have faithfully shown up for their shifts in the rain, snow and ice, helping to ensure our kids get to and from the school grounds safely. Thank you Minh for taking on the extra shifts when it was especially wet and cold and for always volunteering with a smile on those dark winter days. Your light is very much appreciated and felt.

Thank you again from the PEC - Parent Participation Program



Mr. & Mrs. Le (Minh/Thein Nguyen) and their son, Bao in Grade 4C)

## BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

Please use the February [Link](#) to register for regular or drop in club use.

Thank you for keeping your account up-to-date and providing notice for cancellations.