



Mary Ward Catholic School

December 2024

School Information

Principal: Mr. A. Cardamone **Superintendent of Education:** Mr. D. Massi

Parish: Our Lady of the Scapular Church

Pastor: Fr. Gregory Schmidt **Associate Pastor:** Fr. Ronnie Tagnines

Website: <https://schools.niagaracatholic.ca/maryward/>

Location: 2999 Dorchester Road Niagara Falls, ON L2J 2Z9

Phone: 905-354-9221

Principal's Message

As we begin one of the busiest times of the year, the challenge will be to find the joy in all of our blessings, big and small. As a Mary Ward Family, we will prepare our hearts throughout the Advent season, through prayer, reflection and activities that bring to light the truest and most joyful blessing - the birth of Jesus. Each week, as we light the candle on the advent wreath, may the Lord's blessing come upon each and every one of us; may the candles' light be a reminder of Christ's promise and ever giving love.

Wishing you a blessed Christmas season.

Mr. A. Cardamone

Monthly Reflection

In the Gospel we hear the calling of Jesus' Apostle Matthew. Matthew was a tax collector and, just like now, tax collectors weren't especially popular. But this didn't stop Jesus from calling Matthew to be His disciple. Jesus saw the potential in him and this was enough for Matthew to leave his job and immediately begin following Jesus. Jesus sees the potential in each of us, despite the mistakes we make. By choosing to follow Jesus, we are turning away from sin and striving to become the saints He calls us to be.



Our Lady of the Scapular Parish News

Community Advent Mass & Family Mass

Mary Ward is hosting an Advent Community Mass at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, December, 3 at Our Lady of the Scapular Church. Our FIAT students and choirs have been busy preparing to make this a special mass for our families and friends. All students and their families are welcome to attend the evening mass at Our Lady of the Scapular Church. Afterward, there will be a Mary Ward social in the parish hall next to the church. All are invited to come for a Christmas sing-along and enjoy some "cookies and cocoa." We look forward to gathering together as a Mary Ward community as we all welcome the upcoming Christmas season.



Join us for our monthly mass at Our Lady of the Scapular Parish. Each month, two classes and our Faith In Action Team are invited to mass to deepen our faith and strengthen our triad connection - school, parish and home. This month, Mrs. Renda's class, Mr. Wallace's classes and our FIAT team are hosting the mass on Sunday, December 15 at 9:30 a.m. A reminder that attending mass is a fundamental aspect of Catholic life and as Catholics, we are asked to attend mass weekly and on holidays.

Christmas at Our Lady of the Scapular

Christmas Masses

Children's Mass - Dec. 24 @ 5pm

Christmas Eve - Dec. 24 @ 7:30pm

Midnight Mass - Dec. 25 @ 12am

Christmas Day - Dec. 25 @ 9:00am & 11:00am

New Years Masses

New Years Eve - Dec. 31 @ 5pm

New Years Day

9:00am & 11:00am

Family Advent Adventure & Parish Family Skate

Families are invited to join the Our Lady of Scapular community for 9:30 am Sunday mass on December 8th and then participate in the special **Family Advent Adventure** taking place in the church hall. This *Family Faith & Fun* event will feature special refreshments and activities for kids and their parents/guardians that will remind all involved that the birth of the baby Jesus is the reason for this Season!

A special **Parish Family Skate** will take place on Monday, December 30th from 2:30 -3:30 pm at the Gale's Centre (4171 Fourth Ave, Niagara Falls). Non-obligatory cash donations for the Our Lady of the Scapular's Society of St. Vincent De Paul will be collected at the event, should you choose. So, mark the date on your Christmas Break calendars!

Mary Ward Christmas Bazaar and Breakfast With Santa

Join us **Saturday, December 7, 2024** for the Mary Ward Breakfast with Santa and Christmas Bazaar.

We will be offering three separate seating times to accommodate all families. Seating times will take place at 9:30 am, 11:00 am and 12:30 pm. There will only be 96 seats available for each seating, so book your breakfast tickets early.

Breakfast will include pancakes and bacon with milk or coffee.

Tickets are \$7.50 each and can be purchased through School Cash Online. Santa will be joining us and photo opportunities will be made available.



Christmas shopping will be available through our many vendors at our Christmas Bazaar. Various vendors such as Norwex, Epicure, Portage Bakery, Sofia's Garden, The Sweet Guy, The Magical Dream Journey, Thirty One Totes, Fifth Avenue Jewelry and many more will be joining us.

The bazaar will be open to all!! Hope to see you there.

Christmas Activities

Joy Day will take place on Friday, December 6, 2024. Students will participate in Christmas activities. Activities may include Catholicity door decorating, singing, crafting and more. Popcorn will be sold for \$2 a bag. Students are encouraged to wear their Christmas pajamas to show their Christmas spirit!



Christmas Around the World - Throughout the weeks of December 9th thru 20th, students will hear announcements about Christmas traditions from around the world. Student Council will read information on morning announcements about how other cultures celebrate the holidays.

Red and Green Day will take place on Friday, December 20, 2024. Students can wear red or green clothing and are encouraged to accessorize for Christmas.

Mary Ward Christmas Angel Tree

Mary Ward's annual Christmas Angel Tree is back this holiday season. Students are asked to donate new toys, new games, or other items of interest for children. These items will be donated to Our Lady of Scapular Church in partnership with Project Share which provides Christmas baskets to needy children. The donated items can range from infant to young adult. Toiletries are also welcome. Thanking you in advance for your generosity in making a child's Christmas a special one. **All donations need to be at the school by December 13, 2024.**



Choir Fest

Under the guidance of Mr. Marrie, our Mary Ward Catholic School Choir has developed into an amazing group of singers. They will take their talents to the Seaway Mall on December, 9, 2024 at 12:00 p.m. to share their gifts of singing with others. All are welcome to attend.

School Closures

With the onset of winter and the approach of inclement weather it is a good time to review the routines of school closings. In the event of severe weather conditions, announcements to close the schools will be made on the board website and social media accounts. When transportation has been cancelled but the school remains open, we advise discretion when deciding whether or not your child should attend school. Parents must also provide transportation at dismissal if they choose to send their child to school.

Please refer to the Niagara Catholic School Board webpage, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook Accounts for information regarding school closures. Please also check your email for a school messenger message.

Bus Cancellations

On days when there are bus cancellations, parents/ guardians of students who normally ride the bus are to report, using the electronic Safe Arrival program, their child(ren) as absent if they are not sending them to school. It is only if schools are closed, by the Director of Education, due to inclement weather or any other reason that student absences do not need to be reported.

Teachers are to mark any student absent who is not in class as they normally would.

The system will then contact parents/guardians who have not reported their child as absent.

Please ensure if you do bring your child to school that arrangements are made for dismissal.

Students should know the plan for the end of the day. Thank you for your support.

Delta Bingo & Gaming

Mary Ward Catholic School would like to extend a big thank you to **Delta Bingo & Gaming on Drummond Rd.** for their contributions to our school fundraising initiatives. This could not be possible without the help of parent volunteers from our community. If anyone is interested in volunteering their time to help at Delta Bingo & Gaming, please contact Robyn Pearson at robynpearson@gmail.com

Elf - Live Performance

On Wednesday, December 11, students, staff and families of Mary Ward will attend the performance of Elf at the Greg Frewin Theatre. The musical is based on the popular film.

Buses depart Mary Ward at 9:30 a.m. The Musical production begins at 10:30 a.m. The production lasts approximately 2 hours with a scheduled intermission. Students will receive a popcorn and juice while at the theatre. Buses depart from the Greg Frewin Theatre at 12:45 p.m. Our buses return to Mary Ward at approximately 1:10 p.m.



Saint Paul High School Transition Activities - Grade 8 Day

On Friday, December 13, our Grade 8 students will travel to Saint Paul High School for Grade 8 Day! Students will visit from 9:30 -1:30 PM. Our future Patriots will enjoy the Saint Paul Roadshow and participate in Student Council activities. Students will also tour the building and get a small sample of the atmosphere and excitement they will experience next year.

French Immersion On-Line Open Pre-Registration For September 2025

The Niagara Catholic District School Board is proud to offer parents and students the opportunity to enroll in a French Immersion (FI) Program. This program is designed specifically for students whose first language is not French. French Immersion in the Niagara Catholic District School Board is an optional program.

All 5 French Immersion Catholic Elementary Schools will accept registrations for Grade 1 along with Kindergarten for September 2025. Listed below are the designated elementary schools that provide the French Immersion Program:

- Notre Dame Catholic Elementary, Niagara Falls – Begins in Kindergarten
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Elementary, Niagara Falls - Begins in Kindergarten
- Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Elementary, St. Catharines - Begins in Kindergarten
- Alexander Kuska Catholic Elementary, Welland – Begins in Kindergarten
- St. John Catholic Elementary, Beamsville – Begins in Kindergarten

Transportation

All students enrolled in the French Immersion Program will be provided with transportation to their local Family of Schools designated French Immersion School site in accordance with the Board's Transportation of Student Policy #500.2. Designated Family of Schools French Immersion schools can be located at the following link www.niagaracatholic.ca.

French Immersion On-line Open Pre-Registration

- On-line open pre-registration window for students new to French Immersion in September 2024: **Monday, January 13th, 2025 at 7:30 a.m. through to Friday, January 31st, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.**
- Pre-registrations outside of this window will not be considered.
- There are a limited number of spots available for students wishing to enter the French Immersion Program.
- Pre-registrations are on a first come, first serve basis. Each pre-registration will receive a time-stamp.
- Please visit www.niagaracatholic.ca and click the first thumbnail-Registration. Then, click the Let's get you registered! link at the bottom of the page.
- An account must be created first through edsembli CONNECT to access the registration forms. This account can be created ahead of time.

Selection Process

In accordance with the Board's Admission of Elementary and Secondary Students Policy #301.1, there are a limited number of spots available for students entering the program. Eligible spots will be determined on a first come, first serve basis for each elementary French Immersion school site. Applicants will receive notification by **Monday, March 3rd, 2025** to inform them if their children have been placed in the French Immersion program OR if their children have been placed on the

school's waitlist. Applicants who have not received notification by **March 3rd, 2025** are to contact the elementary French Immersion school site directly.

Alternate Lunch Days/Milk Program

Alternate lunch days and the milk program will continue in December! Milk will be available on every Tuesday and Thursday. There will be 2 alternate lunch days in December.

- ☒ December 6 - Pita Pit
- ☒ December 17 - Pizza lunch from Carmine's Pizzeria.

You can participate and place your orders using School Cash Online.



Eco-School News

GOOS Paper

This month, the ECO team will be promoting GOOS paper bins. GOOS stands for Good On One Side. GOOS paper is paper that has been used on one side, but is still blank and usable on the other side. Using GOOS paper means ensuring both sides of a piece of paper are used before it is recycled. Let's use paper responsibly!

Keeping the Thermostat Low - Cozy Sweater Day

On Monday, December 9th, Mary Ward will be promoting energy efficiency by keeping thermostats at a lower temperature with Cozy Sweater Day! Students will be encouraged to wear a cozy sweater. Uniform bottoms are required

Niagara Region Public Health

ROUTINE VACCINATION AND IMMUNIZATION

Protect your children from vaccine preventable diseases this school year by ensuring their routine vaccinations are up to date.

If your child missed their opportunity to receive any routine vaccine(s), it is important to get them back on schedule.

Learn more about the [vaccinations for children in school](#) and which vaccine(s) your child may need on our [website](#).

All vaccines for children under 18 years of age must be [reported to Public Health](#). Every time your child receives a vaccine, you must report it:

- [Online](#)
- Phone: 905-688-8248 or 1-888-505-6074 ext. 7425

*Please note, you **do not** need to report any COVID-19 or influenza (flu) vaccination details.*

HOLIDAY EXPECTATIONS

The holidays may be a difficult time for your child. A change in routine and different holiday expectations can be stressful and isolating. Here are some tips and resources to share with your child throughout the holiday season:

1. Validate Feelings: Let your child know it's okay not to feel happy during the holidays. Their thoughts and emotions are valid. Encourage open conversations about any concerns.
2. Find Quiet Relief: When things get overwhelming, suggest to your child that they find a quiet place to take a break. This can help alleviate anxious feelings.
3. Explore Support: Help your child discover available support services and guide them in accessing what they believe will be most beneficial.

For more information about the different services available for Youth in Niagara visit:

<https://www.niagararegion.ca/health/schools/youth-services.aspx>

DISCOVER THE BENEFITS OF YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY!

Looking for a safe and welcoming space to relax, learn, and connect? Libraries offer more than just books—they're a free resource for promoting mental wellbeing, accessing technology, and engaging with your community. Whether you're seeking a quiet spot to unwind, attending a workshop, or discovering new hobbies, your library has something for everyone. Visit your local library today!

Learn more about libraries in your area and the services they offer by visiting: [Public Libraries Niagara](#).

GIVING BACK

Supporting families in need during the holiday season is a wonderful way for the community to come together and make a positive impact. Here are some charities and organizations in the Niagara Region, or those that have a presence in the area, that you can consider supporting:

A charitable organization affiliated with your church

[St. Vincent de Paul](#)

[Community Care](#)

[Newark Neighbours](#)

[Salvation Army Community and Family Services](#)

[Pelham Cares](#)

[The HOPE Centre](#)

[Project SHARE](#)

[Grimsby Benevolent Fund](#)

[Port Care Reach Out Centre](#)

[Open Arms Mission](#)

[United Way Niagara](#)

[Niagara Nutrition Partners](#)



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