



St. Alexander – Newsletter



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*St. Alexander Catholic Elementary is proud to be part
of the Notre Dame Catholic Family of Schools*

JANUARY 2025

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

Called by Name: “Come, Follow Me”

In the Gospel of Matthew we hear Jesus teaching his disciples saying,

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed
are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my
account.
Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven”

Jesus called the disciples, as He calls each of us, to follow Him by living the Beatitudes. Jesus IS the Beatitudes. Looking at Him you see what it means to be poor in spirit, gentle and merciful, to mourn, to care for what is right, to be pure in heart, to make peace, and to be persecuted. This is why he has the right to say, “Come, follow me!” He does not simply say, “Do what I say.” He says, “Come, follow me!”

Happy New Year!!!!

As the Season of Advent comes to an end with the birth of our Saviour, I would like to welcome everyone back to the hustle and bustle of a continuing school year in 2025!

With the new year comes New Year’s resolutions. Many of us make resolutions in the new year with the intent to change something in our lives for the better. Throughout the month of January we focus on what it means to be courageous as Christians on a mission for Christ. Christian courage is the willingness to say and

do the right thing regardless of the cost. In this new year may we be resolved to stand up against that which contradicts our faith and find comfort in the support and unity of the Body of Christ, the Church.

I look forward to continuing our school Journey with our students and families into this new year.

Mr. Venzon

REPORTING STUDENT ABSENCE—BUS CANCELLATION

On days when there are bus cancellations and schools are open, parents/guardians of students who normally ride the bus should 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. The system will contact parents/guardians who have not reported their child as absent.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

As a reminder for families who are familiar with the process outlined in our *School Operations for Inclement Weather and Workplace Closure AOP* – and as information for those who are new to the school in Niagara or Niagara Catholic – the decision to cancel buses is made by Niagara Student Transportation Services very early in the morning, based on the current **and** forecast conditions to ensure students are safe throughout the day. NSTS makes its decision with bus companies and consults agencies such as Niagara Regional Police about whether buses are safe on the roads. They communicate the decision to the local school board directors of education, who decide whether to open schools or keep them closed for the day. Niagara Catholic communicates decisions about bus and/or school cancellations by 6 a.m. You will find the information in the following places:

- On the Board website – a red banner appears on the main page when buses and/or schools are cancelled
- The Board's [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) pages
- Local radio and TV stations and newspaper websites

Most often, buses are cancelled but schools remain open. If you choose to keep your child at home due to inclement weather, **you must report their absence using the appropriate code through Safe Arrival.** We advise parents that Niagara Region Public Health continues to caution against mixing cohorts, which means that we cannot put classrooms together this year to ensure proper supervision of students. If, for some reason, a school does not have adequate coverage in place to ensure the safety of students while at school, an individual school *may* be closed.

Please keep in mind that driving a car is much different than a bus, and even though roads seem fine to drivers in personal vehicles, the conditions (such as snow drifts) may make it impossible for school buses to navigate through neighbourhood streets, particularly if they are not ploughed.

As well, we remind families that buses can be cancelled if the temperature falls to a point where stop arms and other mechanical parts required for the safe operation of the vehicle may freeze. We understand that may be frustrating for parents on a bright, cold, snow-free day, but the safety of students is the top priority of the school bus companies, NSTS and Niagara Catholic and if the buses cannot operate safely due to the cold, transportation will be cancelled.

Living between two lakes can mean completely different weather in parts of Niagara. Occasionally, that leads to bus cancellations or school closures in one part of Niagara due to weather, while the rest of the region is unaffected. We encourage you to please check our website and social media feeds for accurate information to ensure that what you are reading online applies to you.

If the entire system is shut down, we will call, email and text your family using School Messenger by 6 a.m. to advise you it's a snow day. You do not need to report your child's absence from school, as schools are closed.

Although weather systems do blow through without warning, we usually have some idea that bad weather is coming and we encourage families to be prepared for this, especially if parents have to go to work while children are at home.

If your child is staying home due to a bus cancellation or a school closure, they will have the opportunity to participate in asynchronous learning from home. Click [here](#) for a link to for Primary, Junior, and Intermediate literacy, numeracy, and other subjects for students to keep up with work if that is what you choose to do. Please note that participating in this work is voluntary and should be considered as revising or reach-ahead work, rather than teacher-led new learning. Secondary students may also review any classroom work or reach-ahead where possible if they choose to do so.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at St. Alexander.

WINTER WEATHER

Going out for recess during the winter season will be a normal thing each day. In extreme weather cases, children will remain indoors. Proper attire must be worn, i.e., boots, gloves, hats, scarf, etc. As is always the case, it is important that we all emphasize the dangers of throwing snow in any form. Snow is lovely to look at, but while at school it should be left on the ground. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Please know we are always accepting registrations for our Kindergarten Program or for any grades in our school. Please feel free to pass this message along to other parents, friends or neighbours. You can visit our board website at <http://www.niagaracatholic.ca/> and click on JOIN US! REGISTER online. Please give us a call at St. Alexander Catholic if you have any questions - (905) 892-3841.

NOTRE DAME COLLEGE SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

Notre Dame will be having an Open House on January 14th, 2025 at 6:30 pm. We encourage you to come to the Open House and see all the amazing things that ND has to offer!!

ADVENT FOOD DRIVE

All the food items that were collected during the Advent Food Drive went towards helping Pelham Cares assist families in our community. Pelham Cares let us know that we collected over 810lbs of food for this Christmas Drive, and over 2000 lbs of food in our last 2 food drives! Way to go Huskies!!! Thank you to the Knights of Columbus for helping us organize the collection...and...A GIANT thank you goes out to all of you, the families of St. Alexander Catholic, for your overwhelming generosity!!!

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

A special thank you for helping to make our Christmas Concert a HUGE Success! Our grade 1-4 students, along with actors and actresses from multiple grades, put on a beautiful show and sounded like a choir of angels in front of hundreds of parents at the 2 shows on December 11th. Thanks goes out to all the teachers and support staff for helping to prepare the students by practicing songs and entering and exiting onto the risers. A special thank you to Mme. Timpano, Mr. Brisson, Mrs. Eller and Ms. Paraskevopoulos for all your extra work to make this a fantastic show for the students and families of St. Alexander!



CHRISTMAS CHOIRFEST

On December 13th, 2024 the St. Alexander Catholic School Choir, led by Ms. Paraskevopoulos and Mrs. Bartok, performed at the Seaway Mall in Welland. The choir sounded beautiful and they performed many songs.

Check out some pictures below of the choir spreading Christmas blessings!





Niagara Region Public Health - January 2025

Wintertime Well-Being

As the weather changes and days get shorter, many people, including children and youth, may feel more anxious, depressed, or tired. It's essential to be mindful of our emotional well-being. Beat the winter blues and check out these simple activities to boost your and your child's mood.

- [8 feel good tips to boost your mood](#)
- [100 Fun Activities to Boost Your Mood](#)
- [Stress relief activities for kids](#)

Help Keep the Classroom Germ Free – Stay Home When Sick



Respiratory viruses can spread in our community. Since many of these viruses can have similar symptoms, it can be hard to tell what you are infected with based on just symptoms alone.

If your child is sick, they should stay home from school until:

- They have no fever, without the use of fever reducing medication **and**
- Their symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours or 48 hours if they have nausea, vomiting and / or diarrhea **and**
- They don't develop any new symptoms

By keeping your child home when sick, you help prevent them from spreading whatever infection they have to others.

Snow Safety for Kids

Embrace the thrill of tobogganing this winter, but remember, safety comes first! Whether your child is racing down the slopes or enjoying a leisurely ride, follow these snow safety tips to make the most of winter adventures:

1. **Gear Up:** Wear appropriate winter gear such as gloves, and sturdy boots to provide protection from the cold.
2. **Choose Safe Hills:** Opt for designated tobogganing hills that are free from obstacles like trees, rocks, or traffic. Avoid hills with steep inclines or crowded areas.
3. **Follow Etiquette:** Be mindful of others on the hill. Encourage your child to wait their turn and choose a clear path to avoid collisions. Respect the space and safety of fellow tobogganers.
4. **Think Safety:** Help your child to sit facing forward on the toboggan with their feet first. Remind tobogganers to hold on firmly and avoid standing or kneeling during the ride.
5. **Stay Visible:** If tobogganing in the evening, ensure visibility. Wear bright colours and consider adding reflective elements to clothing.

Remember, tobogganing is all about having fun, but safety ensures that the enjoyment lasts throughout the winter season. So, bundle up, find a safe hill, and make lasting memories with your child and friends in the winter wonderland!

Visit [Niagara Families](#) for places your child can toboggan.

