



March 2025



# St. Christopher Catholic Elementary School

Proud member of the Denis Morris Catholic High School Family of Schools

D. Smolders, Acting Principal

L. Forsyth-Sells, Superintendent of Schools  
33 Woodrow St., St. Catharines, ON, L2P 2A1



## KNOWING GOD DURING LENT

Jesus doesn't need any help to remember your name. Jesus called Mary Magdalene by name and he calls us by name to spread the good news of the Kingdom of God through our witness at home, at school, at work, in church, at the grocery store and even in traffic. When you are all by yourself and are looking for someone to help, Jesus will come to you and provide for all your needs. Don't get discouraged. God, the master of the whole universe is mindful of you and all that you need in life. Just keep trusting Him and He will surely work miracles for you.

During this time of Lent, you can also work to meet God. As was outlined in the Gospel of Matthew, we are asked to do 3 things to prepare for the resurrection of Jesus: Prayer, Almsgiving, Fasting

**D. Smolders**  
Principal

## ST. THOMAS AQUINAS MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday - 5:00 pm  
Sunday - 10:00 am

Pastor: Reverend Chad Grennan



## A LOOK AHEAD

Mar 4: Shrove Tuesday  
5: Ash Wednesday  
Grad Photos  
9: Daylight Savings Time Begins  
10-14: March Break  
21: Colourful Socks for Down Syndrome Awareness  
26: Dental Screening  
27: Pizza Day  
28: Out of Dress Code Day

## MONTHLY PRAYER

I confess to almighty God, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned through my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do; through my fault, through my

fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sister, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

## SHROVE TUESDAY

On Tuesday, March 4 members of the Catholic School Council will be distributing pancakes and syrup to students as a snack. This tradition dates back many years and harkens back to when families would remove oils, fats, and other rich foods from their houses to eliminate the temptation they may feel during their Lenten fast.

## ASH WEDNESDAY

To mark the start of Lent, Fr. Chad will distribute ashes at the school on Wednesday, March 5, 2024. The season of Lent marks the 40 days prior to Easter and our focus as Catholics is on: Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving. The ashes are an outward sign of our faith to others.

## MARCH BREAK

This year's March break will begin after school on Friday, March 7. Students will return to school on Monday, March 17. We wish all of you a fun, relaxing and safe break. We look forward to the students' return after the break.

## GRAD PHOTOS

Lifetouch will be in the school on Wednesday, March 5 to take graduation photos of our grade 8 students. Students are asked to wear a collared, buttoned-up shirt. Boys are asked to also wear a tie. Extra ties will be available on the day as well.

## WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY

World Down Syndrome Day is Friday, March 21. St. Christopher CES invites all staff and students to wear colourful socks on March 21st as part of the #LotsOfSocks campaign to raise awareness about Down syndrome, and how people with Down syndrome play a vital role in our lives and our school communities.

### HOT LUNCH DAYS

We have scheduled our next pizza day for Thursday, March 27. Orders will be made through <https://ncdsb.schoolcashionline.com/>. No cash orders or late orders will be accepted.

We cannot provide any refunds for students who are away on the hot lunch day. Also, please do not contact the food establishments to place your child's late order.

### DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME

Daylight savings time begins on Sunday, March 9. Be sure to set your clocks forward by one hour before going to bed on Saturday, March 9.

### DELTA BINGO

Once again we want to take this opportunity to thank Delta Bingo, school staff, and community members who volunteer their time during a two hour shift each month this year. We have started to receive our revenue share disbursement. As of now, over \$5000 has been donated to St. Christopher CES. Some of the money was used in the last month to offset the cost of field trips and has already been set aside for future excursions. We continue to thank Delta Bingo and the Ontario Charitable Gaming Association for their generous support of our school community.

If you would like to support our school by volunteering 2 hours of your time during our school's block, please contact the office for more information.

### PARKING LOT SAFETY

Please drive with caution in the parking lot and near the school. We have many students who are being dropped off and picked up at the same time. They are all at varying places on their learning journey and may not always remember to look both ways before stepping out into traffic. Please exercise extra caution when driving in the school parking lot.

### ON TIME ARRIVAL

This is a reminder that school begins at **8:35 am** each day. We have noticed a number of students who are regularly late. The opening routines and morning lessons are an important part of setting the tone for students for the remainder of the day.

We would greatly appreciate your cooperation in ensuring that your child arrives at school on time each day and staff are on duty at 8:20 am.

### EXTRA CLOTHES

It is always a good idea for students in all grades to have an extra set of clothes in their backpack/cubby/locker in the event of a spill or an accident. In the winter months students tend to play much more on their hands and knees or may step in a small puddle of water when transitioning from outdoor to indoor footwear.

### SPIRIT WEAR ORDERS

Big Bear Spirit Wear, a board approved supplier for spirit wear items, offers a wide range of dress-code approved items through their online store at: <https://www.bigbearspiritwear.com/>. Students are allowed to wear the spirit wear items to school and these are a worthwhile purchase to show off your school pride. **Please label all clothing items that come to school so that we can return all misplaced items to the correct person.**

### ANAPHYLAXIS

St. Christopher Catholic Elementary School promotes a healthy, allergy aware environment for the safety of our children. Parents are requested to not pack any foods that contain or may contain nut or peanut products in their children's lunch. Please give our children with anaphylaxis the same consideration that you would wish for your child's protection.

If you have a child with anaphylaxis to any allergens, please contact the office immediately so that we can work together to keep your child(ren) safe.

**Additionally, at no time are students allowed to share food amongst themselves. This includes during special event days, such as birthdays and Halloween.** We respect and want to adhere to the dietary choices each family makes for their own child/ren. If your child comes to school with food items to distribute to classmates, they will be held in the office and sent back home with your child at the end of the day. We greatly support your cooperation with this.

### MEDICATIONS IN SCHOOL

Parents should be aware of the strict guidelines established by the Niagara Catholic District School Board for medication in schools.

1. The medication must be in the container prepared by the pharmacist and the label must include: the name of the doctor, student and the name and strength of the medication.
2. The school must have a written request from the physician indicating the frequency and dosage of the prescribed medication (this form is available at the school).
3. Deliver prescribed medication directly to the school office. Please do not send them with the child.

### FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM

St. Christopher Catholic Elementary School can be found on Instagram **@st.christopherces**. Please follow us to see what fun and exciting things your children are getting up to while at school.

### CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

The Niagara Catholic District School Board recognizes concussions as a serious injury which requires appropriate follow-up measures to reduce the risk of potential additional injury. Concussion awareness, prevention, identification and management are a priority for the Board. The implementation of the Board's Concussion Administrative Operational

Procedures is another important step in creating healthier schools in the Niagara Catholic District School Board

If staff, in communication with the school principal, suspects head trauma or a concussion might be possible based on signs and symptoms reported by the student, they are required to complete the appropriate documentation, call home and send home a copy of the documentation.

Medical doctors and nurse practitioners are the only healthcare professionals in Canada with licensed training and expertise to diagnose a concussion; therefore, all students with suspected concussions should undergo evaluation by one of these professionals.

### **SCHOOL CASH ONLINE**

St. Christopher continues to move forward using the School Cash Online System and we require all families to make online payments for their children when paying for things like pizza days, field trips, etc. If you have not already done so, please register for an account at: <https://ncdsb.schoolcashionline.com/>

### **DONATIONS TO THE SCHOOL**

Parents and guardians who would like to make a financial donation to support the many learning and extra curricular activities happening each day at St. Christopher Catholic elementary school are able to do so at any time through <https://ncdsb.schoolcashionline.com/>. Once logged in, you will see a button in the top menu that says Make a Donation. By clicking here, you are able to select the donation amount and the Destination (St. Christopher CES). Once submitted, you will be immediately sent an official receipt for tax purposes.

### **ABSENT/LATE/EARLY DISMISSAL**

The Safe arrival program is aimed at verifying the location and safety of each child in our school. Parents are asked to report their child's absences, lates, or early dismissals before the start of school. The system will call you repeatedly if your child is not present in school once the bell rings.

Absences and lates can be quickly and conveniently reported in one of three ways:

1. Through the School Messenger App available through the Android or iOS app store.
2. By calling the automated telephone system at 1-844- 287-6287 through which absences can be reported.
3. By logging into the website: [go.schoolmessenger.ca](http://go.schoolmessenger.ca)

