



April 2025



NIAGARA CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD 

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

As a Catholic School Community, we celebrate Easter and recognize it as the greatest feast of our Liturgical Year.

Easter is a time in which we recognize new birth, new beginnings and a sense of renewed salvation. Our Easter Season continues for fifty days after Easter Sunday, as we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and their followers, and the beginning of their Earthly ministry. This leads the way to our celebration of Pentecost.

Pentecost comes from the Greek language and it means 50th day. This is the day that we as Catholics, celebrate the birth of our Catholic Church. As Scripture tells us, this is the day Peter the Apostle baptized about 3,000 people into the Catholic Church and had become recognized as our first Pope.

As a Catholic School Community, we have a lot to celebrate as the power of the Holy Spirit lives in us each and every day. We continue to teach our children of this power and love of God as we prepare them to receive the sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation. These sacraments are a vital part of our faith, as they are both holy and visible signs instituted by Christ an invisible reality.

This is a most special and unique identity of both our Catholic faith and Catholic education that we so deeply cherish. As we continue our Easter journey to Pentecost, let us continue to be positive role models for our children, as we work together through Church, Home and School to strengthen the presence of God in all that we do.

We would like to extend a heartfelt congratulation to those students who will be receiving the Sacrament of First Holy Communion this month and those who received the Sacrament of Confirmation in February. In making these very special Sacraments, these young ladies and gentlemen receive Jesus and the Holy Spirit and continue on their journey in using their great gifts in their daily lives to spread the Word of God.

We extend our gratitude to each of our families for their continued participation in the Grimsby Benevolent Fund Lenten & Easter Food Drive. The response has been overwhelming! We thank everyone for being the hands and feet of Christ and helping to make Easter a little brighter for those in need in our community.

As we continue our Easter journey to Pentecost, may we be reminded that every Sunday is a commemoration of the Resurrection of Christ, which occurred on a Sunday.

When celebrating the Easter Season this year, we remind everyone to stay safe, be well and enjoy the time with their loved ones.

God bless!

Mr. D. Forte
Principal

APRIL - A MISSION OF JOY

"The Gospel will not go forward with boring, bitter evangelizers.

No. It will only go forward with joyful evangelizers, full of life." - Pope Francis

Our theme for the month of April focuses on the joy of discipleship. To truly live out our faith, we need to first find joy in Christ, our Lord. Only then, can we fully understand how wonderful it is to be a follower of Christ and inspire those around us to find their own joy in Christ! As Pope Francis says, to be joyful is to be full of life and that is how we should all go forward! May we take time, this month, to count the blessings that God has given us, which spark joy so that we can spread it to the ends of the Earth!

PENTECOST FAMILY PRAYER

For the Spirit of Peace that calms our mind and stills our life, we give you thanks.

For the Spirit of Love that touches hearts and reaches out, we give you thanks.

For the Spirit of Joy that lifts our soul and gives us faith we give you thanks.

For the Spirit of Power, that gift of grace for this your church, we give you thanks.

Amen.

ONLINE REGISTRATION

Online registration is open through [edsempi](https://edsempi.com). If your child is presently attending St. John, there is no need to re-register.

When you register, please remember to submit your child's Baptismal Certificate, Birth Certificate, and Proof of Address (current utility bill) in order to complete the registration.

In addition, please check the [Transportation Eligibility](#) section of the Niagara Student Transportation Services website to ensure that St. John is your child's home school, based on your current home address.

SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE

Supervision: 9:10 am
Entry Bell: 9:20 am
Recess/Nutrition Break: 10:50 am - 11:30 am
Recess/Nutrition Break: 1:30 pm - 2:10 pm
Dismissal: 3:30 pm

Families are invited to visit the ['Bell Times' section of the St. John Google Website](#) to access a full breakdown of our bell times for this school year.

We are proud to be a part of the Blessed Trinity Family of Schools



HAVE YOU MOVED OR ARE YOU MOVING?

To any families who have recently moved or will be moving in the near future, please confirm that St. John is your home school at portal.nsts.ca/eligibility. In keeping with Niagara Catholic's home school focus, we encourage all families to ensure that children are enrolled in their home school. This will allow students to establish and maintain meaningful relationships with other students who live in the heart of their community.

LENTEN & EASTER FOOD DRIVE FOR THE GRIMSBY BENEVOLENT FUND (GBF)

A sincere thank you is extended to all families within the St. John Catholic School Community for their very generous contributions to the Lenten & Easter Food Drive in support of the [Grimsby Benevolent Fund](#). As we are all aware, the holidays can be trying times for those in need, and it is amazing to see everyone be the hands and feet of Christ in our community. God bless! :)

EASTER WEEKEND

Please be advised that there will be no school on **Good Friday (Friday, April 18)**, as well as **Easter Monday (Monday, April 21)**. We wish everyone all of God's blessings over the Easter weekend. Enjoy the time safely with your loved ones! **Classes will resume on Tuesday, April 22.**

SCHOOL DANCE-A-THON FUNDRAISERS

On behalf of the St. John Student Council, thank you to everyone for their generous contributions toward our Dance-a-Thon school fundraisers! They continue to be a tremendous success and the students always have a lot of fun participating! We look forward to our final Dance-a-Thon in June! God bless! :)

EQAO DIGITALIZED ASSESSMENTS

EQAO assessments are required under the Education Quality and Accountability Office Act, 1996. The EQAO Assessments in Reading, Writing, and Math are for Grade 3 and Grade 6 students participating in grade-level curriculum learning. All students who are accessing the Ontario Curriculum are expected to participate in the assessments. Please know that the assessments will take place digitally, using school devices, starting in May. Parents will be kept apprised of specific administration dates for the digitalized assessments. Parents are invited to connect with their child's classroom teacher or our Educational Resource Teacher, Mrs. Cagnelli, if they have any questions regarding the EQAO assessments.

**Education Quality and
Accountability Office**

**ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH**

First Communion - Students in Grade 2 and other grades who are Roman Catholic will be receiving the Sacrament of First Holy Eucharist on **Saturday, April 26 at 11:00 am** at St. Joseph Catholic Parish.

Families are asked to please see our monthly calendar for information and details regarding daily Masses at St. Joseph Catholic Parish. In addition, further information regarding St. Joseph Parish, can be found by visiting the '[St. Joseph Catholic Parish Information Section](#)' of our [St. John Google Website](#).

The school also invites families to visit the [St. Joseph Catholic Parish Website](#) for additional information and details pertaining to the parish.

SAFE ARRIVAL SYSTEM

To report your child absent, please use any one of the methods listed below:

1. **SafeArrival Website:** Visit the website at <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca>. The first time you use the website, select **Sign Up** to create an account using your email address. After logging in, select the **Attendance** tab to report an absence.
2. **Personal Mobile Device:** Download and install the **SchoolMessenger app** from the Apple App Store, the Google Play Store, or from the links at <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca>. Use your new login information to access your account. Select **Attendance** to report an absence. If you would like to receive attendance notifications directly to your mobile device, please enable **Push Notifications** in the **Settings** section of the app. The document titled, [SchoolMessenger App Parent & Student User Guide](#) provides instructions for using the app.
3. **Standard Telephone:** The toll-free number **1-844-287-6287** will allow you to report your child absent without creating an account.

STUDENT ABSENCES & LATE ARRIVALS

It is essential that all student absences and late arrivals are called into the [Safe Arrival Program](#) by **8:30 am** via phone (1-844-287-6287), website or app. These are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You are also able to input future absences in advance if you are aware of an upcoming appointment or vacation. **Board and Ministry policy dictates that we must investigate any unreported absences. This can involve calls to places of employment, the emergency numbers provided to the school and, in some cases, the police.**



VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

School visitors continue to be restricted out of an abundance of care and consideration for the health, safety, and privacy of students and school staff. Essential items that must be dropped off are to be labelled clearly and can be placed on the cart to be retrieved by a designated staff member. On behalf of school staff, students, and families, thank you everyone for their ongoing cooperation with this very important matter.

INFORMATION FROM PUBLIC HEALTH

Families are encouraged to visit the '[Niagara Region Information](#)' section of the St. John Google Website for the most up-to-date information from Niagara Region Public Health.

STUDENTS DEMONSTRATING SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS

If a student becomes sick while at school, the identified emergency contact(s) on file will be called for immediate pick up. Parents and guardians of ill children are encouraged to contact Niagara Public Health and follow their advice. *Anyone who is sick should stay at home until their symptoms have resolved for 24 hours (48 hours for gastrointestinal symptoms).* We thank everyone for their ongoing cooperation regarding this very important health and safety matter.

NUT ANAPHYLAXIS

The entire school community is working hard to prevent accidental exposure to products that trigger life-threatening reactions. As a result, we continue to maintain a **PEANUT & NUT SAFE environment**. We would appreciate your cooperation in helping us keep St. John Catholic School safe, by making sure your children do not bring foods to school that may contain any traces of **peanuts** or **nuts**.

**MILK ANAPHYLAXIS**

Due to a number of students in our care who have a severe anaphylactic allergy to milk, it is asked that parents kindly refrain from sending milk to school with their child out of an abundance of care and consideration for the health and safety of these individuals. Thank you to everyone for their understanding of this very important health and safety matter

**PREVALENT MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

If your child has a prevalent medical condition that the school should be aware of and plan for, it is necessary to read the letter to families, and complete and/or update the applicable Plan of Care forms. All documents can be accessed in the '[Prevalent Medical Conditions](#)' section of the [St. John Google Website](#). Please click on the link to access the site and the necessary documents that pertain to your child's prevalent medical condition. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the school.

REMINDERS FOR ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Kiss n' Ride Drop-Off: In an effort to keep our students and staff members safe, families are reminded that when using the Kiss n' Ride drop-off, *drivers are asked to please remain in their vehicle* and have child(ren) exit the vehicle directly onto the sidewalk when it is safe to do so. Supervising staff will be present in the parking lot at 9:10 am. Parents are kindly asked to please drop their child(ren) off *between 9:10 and 9:20 am*. We thank you for your support as we strive to welcome our students onto school property in an efficient, yet safe manner.

Kiss n' Ride Pick-Up:

To reduce congestion in the Kiss n' Ride line and along King Street, Kiss n' Ride students will be dismissed from their classrooms at *3:25 pm*. Parents are asked to please be at the school in a timely manner so students can be dismissed efficiently and without causing disruption to the flow of traffic on King Street.

Park & Pick-Up/Drop-Off:

Families of children in car seats who need to park their vehicles and walk their children to the school sidewalk are asked to please be mindful of oncoming traffic, which includes busses and Kiss n' Ride vehicles. For their own safety, families are reminded of the importance of utilizing designated walkways to access the sidewalks. To avoid congestion in the parking lot and to prevent a back-up of vehicles onto King Street, Park & Pick-Up students will be dismissed from their classes at *3:25 pm*.

WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY

World Autism Awareness Day takes place on **April 2**. To continue to support this event, [Autism Ontario](#) is inviting all schools across Ontario to celebrate World Autism Awareness Day, together. St. John will be recognizing World Autism Awareness day by having classroom teachers lead activities that focus on acceptance of diversity and the lived experience of people who live with autism. We will also be flying the autism flag and saying a special prayer during morning announcements to help raise awareness and increase understanding and acceptance of people with autism around the world.



AutismONTARIO

ST. JOHN CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL
CSC CORNER

Welcome back to the CSC Corner!

The Catholic School Council is busy working behind the scenes on some exciting upcoming events.

Stay tuned to hear about our **Family Movie Night** happening this month. Last year we had a great turnout at Landmark Cinemas so we are looking forward to the event again this year.

We are also currently planning the **Family Fun Night** scheduled in June. This was an amazing event last year and we cannot wait for the fun night coming up. We are working on securing some raffle prizes for this event; if you know anyone who would like to contribute to this raffle, please let us know.

A friendly reminder about our ongoing fundraiser with **Niagara Fresh Market**, your local market that delivers right to your door. Don't forget to use the code **STJOHNS** to contribute to the fundraiser.

Please be advised that the next Catholic School Council Meeting will be held on **Tuesday, April 29, 2025 at 6:00 pm** in the school's Library Information Centre. We look forward to seeing our Catholic School Council members there! Please be advised that meeting agendas and minutes are posted to the [Niagara Catholic St. John website](https://www.niagaracatholicstjohns.ca).

If anyone has comments or feedback pertaining to Catholic School Council matters, please email Lynn Dudok at lynn.a.dudok@gmail.com or Breeann Staibano at breeann19@hotmail.com.

SUPPORTS FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH WITH
AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD)

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services has developed the Ontario Autism Program (OAP) to support children and youth who have a diagnosis of ASD confirmed by a qualified professional.

Services available through the OAP include:

- ✓ *Funding to purchase approved goods and services;*
- ✓ *Access to supports and programs for children and their families.*

Children and youth receive services and supports until the age of 18.

For further information, please visit the following website:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-autism-program>

If you have any questions, please reach out to our Educational Resource Teacher. Members of the Applied Behaviour Analysis Team from the Student Support Services Department are available to provide additional information.

'SchoolCash' ONLINE

The school encourages online payment for all fees and activities for students. It is our goal to be cashless.

As part of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, we are committed to providing a safe and efficient online environment in order to reduce the amount of cash and cheques coming into our school. Online payment users benefit from knowing students are not carrying cash to school which can be easily forgotten, misplaced or not handed in on time for important school activities and events. 'SchoolCash' Online is a secure and safe payment portal and is PCI compliant. Please join the many parents who have already registered and are enjoying the convenience of paying online. It takes less than five minutes to register. Please follow the online step-by-step instructions at <https://ncdsb.schoolcashionline.com> to begin receiving email notifications for events involving your child(ren).

Some of the added benefits enjoyed by using School Cash Online include:

- Having online access to digital receipts and a complete list of paid and unpaid items;
- The ability to pay by credit cards, including Visa, Mastercard, Visa Debit, and Mastercard Debit;
- The ability to preload funds into the School Cash Online wallet for future use;
- Receiving reminder emails, so payment due dates are not missed;
- One-time registration - students will automatically be moved between schools within our Board;
- Use of Google Translate in over 100 languages;
- Make an online donation and receive your tax receipt by email for donations \$20 or more;
- Parent Help Desk Support is available 24/7.

HAND WASHING GUIDELINES

1. Clean your hands to prevent the spread of germs and reduce your risk of getting sick. Wash your hands after:
 - coughing or sneezing
 - blowing your nose
 - using the washroom
 - playing with pets
 - playing outdoors
 - before preparing meals and eating
2. Use warm water and soap; lather and scrub for at least 20 seconds. Have children sing the ABC song, so they scrub for long enough. Alcohol-based sanitizers are safe for children and can be used when no dirt is present on their hands.



VETTING AND TRACKING

In keeping with Niagara Catholic's commitment to openness and transparency, the Board has established an extensive vetting process for its Governance Policies.

As part of the vetting process, Niagara Catholic students, parents, guardians, staff, Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (NCPIC), Diocese of St. Catharines, and members of the Niagara Catholic community are invited to submit their feedback.

Please visit the [Policies, Administrative Operational Procedures, Protocols, and Bylaws section of the Niagara Catholic website](#) for specific information on how to submit feedback for policies that are currently being vetted.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR PARENTS

Parents and students requiring technical assistance are encouraged to access the following support portal: <https://help.niagaracatholic.ca>. Niagara Catholic launched this platform for students and parents in an effort to provide technical support for issues relating to the Niagara Catholic Virtual Learning Environment (NCVLE), Niagara Catholic Parent Portal, Safe Arrival System, and more.

**NIAGARA CATHOLIC
RESPECTFUL INTERACTION FRAMEWORK**

St. John is rooted in Catholic and Christian values. Our goal is to create a safe, kind and loving environment for all who work, learn, and assist with our school community. Aggressive or hostile behaviour or language toward, staff, students, or our community helpers will not be tolerated. While we welcome feedback, concerns, and opinions it is the expectation that all staff, students, parents, guardians and community helpers communicate their needs and concerns with one another in a respectful and peaceful manner whether through email, on the phone or face-to-face. Adherence to this expectation is vital in order to create a cohesive and cooperative community that helps one another achieve success.

ST. JOHN GOOGLE WEBSITE

Families are invited to visit the St. John Google Website for daily information items. Please know that the school will send out a SchoolMessenger notification any time there are pertinent updates made to the site. Monthly newsletters and calendars will be embedded into the website as well, once finalized. The links will be shared in the SchoolMessenger notification that goes out to inform families.

Link to St. John Google site:

[St. John Catholic School Google Website.](#)

**SHROVE TUESDAY AT ST. JOHN**

A sincere thank you is extended to the members of the Knights of Columbus and Catholic Women's League (CWL) who were present at St. John on Shrove Tuesday to prepare and serve pancakes to students and staff in preparation for our Lenten journey of sacrifice. We thank the Knights and CWL members for all they do for our school and surrounding community as followers of Christ and for serving as such excellent role models for us all!

A special thank you is also extended to classroom teachers for exploring with students the meaning of the pancakes and what they symbolize, as well as the significance of this day in relation to our Catholic Faith.

The Knights and CWL members also shared how impressed they were with the good manners and politeness demonstrated by the students - a credit to both our wonderful parent community and committed staff!

An extra special thank you goes out to all our students for representing St. John Catholic School with pride and in such a positive way. We are very proud of each and every one of you!

God bless! We look forward to embarking on our Lenten journey together as a Catholic community!



ST. JOHN 'EcoSchools' INITIATIVE

At St. John Catholic School, we continue to remain active in our efforts to continue to fulfill our goals to serve as "Stewards of God's Earth". We continue to maintain our environmental efforts, nurture our students as both current and future environmental leaders, and reduce the ecological impact of our school. In the ['EcoSchools Information' section of the St. John Google Website](#), families will find any and all information pertaining to our 'EcoSchools' initiative, including monthly newsletters to promote ecological awareness in our school, homes, and community.

Families are advised of the following 'EcoSchools' events recognized throughout this month...

Waste-Free Lunch Wednesdays:

To continue with our ECO initiatives, we will promote Waste-Free Wednesday lunches. A waste-free lunch is one that contains reusable containers to pack your child's lunch and snacks. Although participation is optional, when we pack a waste-free lunch, we are helping the earth by reducing the use of plastic bags, wrappers and minimizing the amount of garbage.

National GOOS Paper Day (Thursday, April 3):

National GOOS Paper Day will be recognized and celebrated on **April 3**. **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. Throughout the school year, students have been learning about responsible paper use and promoting effective ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle paper. On this day of action, our students will get creative by designing recycled art using GOOS paper.

Earth Day 2025 (Tuesday, April 22):

Our world needs **transformational change**. It's time for the world to hold sectors accountable for their role in our environmental crisis while also calling for bold, creative, and innovative solutions. This will require action at all levels, from business and investment to city and national government.

That's where we all come in: As individuals, we individually yield real power and influence as consumers, voters, and members of a community that can unite for change.

Don't underestimate our power. When our voices and actions are united with thousands or millions of others around the world, we create a movement that is **inclusive, impactful, and impossible to ignore**.

The Earth Day 2025 theme is **Our Power, Our Planet**. Visit earthday.ca and earthday.org to find information on Earth Day events, activities, and what individuals and organizations can do to make a difference. For Earth Day, together, for everyone, everything, every day, let's **Unite Behind Renewable Energy!**

Leading up to April 22, students at St. John will be participating in various Earth Day activities, led by their classroom teachers and our 'EcoSchools' team members to learn about how they can continue to care of one of God's most precious gifts to us.

In addition, students and staff are encouraged to come to school on Earth Day wearing **blue** and **green** clothing items.

Thank you for your continued support of our ECO initiatives!

St. John Catholic School ECO Team

BLESSED TRINITY CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

Our Blessed Trinity staff and students earned a well-deserved March Break, and both are back refreshed and energized to tackle the rest of Semester 2. Our spring sports are getting revved up with tryouts and signups for boys' and girls' soccer, girls' rugby, boys' baseball, girls' softball, track and field and much more. For the first time ever Blessed Trinity will have a Girls Lacrosse team, proving again that there is something for everyone at BT. A reminder to our incoming Thunder to get involved once you get here.

April is another busy month at Blessed Trinity. Here are just a few of the events that will be taking place in April:

- ✓ *Celebrating Holy Week with a school Mass*
- ✓ *All student will be participating in the University of Waterloo Compass Survey*
- ✓ *We will officially reach the middle of Semester 2 and parents will be invited to make appointments for Parent/Teacher Conference night on April 24th*

Lastly, throughout the month of April, a member from our Student Services Department will be visiting the Grade 8 students with Course Verification forms to ensure students have selected the courses they want for Grade 9. This will be an opportunity for students to make any changes to their course selection.

Please contact Blessed Trinity – Mr. John Cino – 905-945-6706 Ext. 2330 or Mrs. Rose Bianco Ext. 2312, if any Grade 8 parent has any questions.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM (AP) AT BLESSED TRINITY**What is the Advanced Placement Program (AP)?**

Students in Advanced Placement courses study topics in greater depth with an opportunity to enhance learning. AP courses in Grade 12 are designed to give students the experience of intro-level post-secondary classes in high school and to provide the possibility of earning post-secondary credits.

What is my child's first step to prepare for the Grade 12 AP Courses?

Students in Grade 9 have the option to select certain Advanced Placement Preparatory (APP) courses. These courses are open to all students who are willing and academically prepared to accept the rigorous academic curriculum. APP courses in grades 9, 10, and 11 prepare students for the Grade 12 AP courses and exams.

The APP courses being offered for Grade 9 students at Blessed Trinity are:

Math - MTH1W AP Prep
English - ENL1D AP Prep
Science - SNC1D AP Prep
Geography - CGC1D AP Prep

For more information regarding AP Prep courses in Grade 9, please contact Mr. John Cino - 905-945-6706 Ext. 2330 or Mrs. Rose Bianco Ext. 2312.

