



December 2023



St. Christopher Catholic Elementary School

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

D. Smolders, Principal

L. Forsyth-Sells, Superintendent of Schools

33 Woodrow St., St. Catharines, ON, L2P 2A1



STAY AWAKE (MATTHEW 24:42)



In the month of December we prepare to remember and celebrate the birth of Jesus. There are many ways throughout this season of Advent that we can come to know Jesus more fully. It is a time of great excitement and anticipation.

“Do not be afraid...I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day, in the city of David, a saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord.” (Luke 2:11)

Let us not be afraid this Advent season to get to know Jesus, not only as the baby in the manger, God made flesh, but also as our king and saviour!

The staff of St. Christopher Catholic Elementary School are grateful to every family for entrusting the precious gift of your children to us and we wish you all the peace, joy, and love of this most blessed season.

D. Smolders
Principal

MONTHLY PRAYER

This month's prayer will be Holy, Holy. It will be part of our morning announcements and you are encouraged to make this prayer part of your daily routine with your family.

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday - 5:00 pm

Sunday - 10:00 am

Pastor: Reverend Chad Grennan



Christmas Mass Schedule

5:00 pm & 10:00 pm - December 24, 2023

10:00 am - December 25, 2023

New Year's Mass Schedule

5:00 pm - December 31, 2023

10:00 am - January 1, 2024

If you are considering having your child baptized or would like them to make any other missed sacraments, please call the parish office at: 905-687-6971

ADVENT CELEBRATIONS

We have 3 liturgies scheduled as we prepare ourselves for the birth of Jesus. Each will take place at 9:30 am. The first two will be presented in our gymnasium and the third will take place at St. Thomas Aquinas Church. We would like to extend an invitation to any families to join us for these liturgies

Monday, December 4 - Presented by the Grade 1/2 classes

Monday, December 11 - Presented by the Kindergarten classes

Wednesday, December 20 - St. Thomas Aquinas Church



@st.christopherces

A LOOK AHEAD

- 4 - Joy Day
Advent Liturgy Week 1
- 7 - Grade 2 & 3 Students to Denis Morris High School
- 8 - Grade 1/2 Class Art Gallery Visit
Chile & Agave Hot Lunch Day
- 11 - Advent Liturgy Week 2
- 13 - Gingerbread Family Night
- 18 - Denis Morris in to Visit the Grade 8s
- 20 - Christmas Liturgy at St. Thomas Aquinas Church
- 21 - Out of Dress Code Day
Pizza Day
- 22 - Last Day of Classes before Christmas Break

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

We would like to congratulate the grade 7 and 8 students who received the sacrament of Confirmation on Sunday, November 27 at St. Thomas Aquinas Church. It was a very sacred service presided over by His Excellency Bishop G. Bergie. If you would like your child to receive any missed sacraments, please contact Father Chad at the church.

JOY DAY

Every year St. Christopher staff and students dedicate one day to decorate the classrooms, doors and hallways for the Christmas season. This year's Joy Day will be held on Monday, December 4, 2023. Students are encouraged to wear red and green on that day as we begin our journey to Christmas.

HOT FOOD DAYS

This month we will have two hot foods day options. The first will be on Friday, December 8 featuring a new option of quesadillas, burritos, sandwiches and nachos from Chile and Agave. Pizza Day for the month will happen on Thursday, December 21. All purchases for these days and any other trips or activities can be made on [School Cash Online](#).

FAMILY CHRISTMAS NIGHT

St. Christopher Catholic School Council is excited to be hosting the annual Family Christmas Night on Wednesday, December 13 from 5:30 - 7:30 pm. Please don't forget to order your gingerbread house kits by Wednesday, December 6. This is a great opportunity to join the school community in celebrating the Christmas season and meet other families within our school. We look forward to seeing you all there. Orders can be made online at: ncdsb.schoolcashionline.com

WINTER WEATHER

Please ensure that your child comes to school well prepared for all activities, especially outdoor recess. All children should have hats,

scarves, gloves, warm coats and boots. Please label your child's belongings as many have similar apparel and cannot always identify their belongings. Please be aware that we cannot honour parent requests for students to stay indoors at recess. For student safety all students will go outside together at 11:05-11:25 and 1:05-1:25. We follow any weather advisories from Environment Canada and the Niagara Catholic Extreme Heat/Extreme Cold Weather Protocol. Therefore, students will be outside **UNLESS** the temperature drops below -28°C with or without windchill or **IF** we are instructed to do so by Environment Canada.

Parents are also reminded that if bus transportation is **cancelled** in the morning, it also will be cancelled for the entire day. Children will not be picked up by bus at the end of the day. If you drive your child to school on a day that transportation is cancelled, it will be your responsibility to pick them up at the end of the day. **Any child staying home when transportation is cancelled will need to be reported to the Safe Arrival system.**

Please follow @niagaracatholic on twitter, instagram or facebook for weather related cancellation.

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 as the cooler weather approaches. **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



@st.christopherces

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.

We take student safety and privacy very seriously and only images of students for whom parents have given consent will be used on our social media account. If you would like to update your consent, please click [here](#) or contact the school to inquire about your current consent status.

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.

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.

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 STUDENTS

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



@st.christopherces

FRENCH IMMERSION OPEN REGISTRATION

The Niagara Catholic District School Board is proud to offer parents and students the opportunity to enroll in a French Immersion (FI) Program. The French Immersion 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. The entry point for September 2024 is either Kindergarten Year 1 or Grade 1, depending on the school site offering the program.

Listed below is the designated elementary school that provides the French Immersion Program in St. Catharines:

Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Elementary School, St. Catharines

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 15th, 2024 at 7:30 a.m. through to Friday, February 2nd, 2024 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.
- An account must be created first through Edsembli to access pre-registration forms.
- 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 French Immersion Registration banner

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 4th, 2024 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 4th, 2024 are to contact the elementary French Immersion school site directly.



@st.christopherces