

St. Martin Catholic Elementary

MARCH 2025



School Information

Mr. J. Tornabuono - Principal

Mr. Y. Leheta - Vice Principal

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

Location: 18 Streamside Drive Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

Phone: 905-957-3032

Follow us on Twitter [@MustangsMartin](https://twitter.com/MustangsMartin)

Principal's Message

The greatest season of the year is upon us. We remember what Jesus the Lord had done for us – His infinite love – His commitment to righteousness – His mercy – His willingness to suffer pain and death. This He did in order to share with us the truth that we are precious and that therefore we will treat each other as precious. During this month of March we begin our journey through lent. This forty day period between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday is a time in which the church invites us to grow in self-awareness. It is a time for us to look at our lives and reflect on our weaknesses. It is a time of almsgiving, works of mercy and sacrifice. It is a time to grow in love, a time to resolve to build a positive relationship with God and our community.

In addition, I would like to thank staff, students, parents, guardians and families for contributing to the remarkable community of St. Martin Catholic School. Each month, we are continually reminded of how special this school remains and what a blessing it is to be part of this tremendous community.

J. Tornabuono



March Break

March break begins on Monday, March 10th to Friday, March 14th, 2025 inclusive. Students return to school on Monday, March 17th, 2025



Remember!

Important Dates

Please note the following dates:

- Shrove Tuesday - March 4
- Ash Wednesday March 5
- March Break - March 10-14
- St. Patrick's Day - March 17
- Gr. 3 Field Trip - March 18
- St. Joseph's Day - March 19
- First Day of Spring - March 20
- World Down Syndrome Day - March 21
- School Reconciliation Gr. 3-8 - March 25
- World Epilepsy Day - March 26

- Earth Hour - March 28



World Down Syndrome Day

On Thursday March 21st we will be recognizing World Down Syndrome Day (WDSB). World Down Syndrome Day (WDSB), is a global awareness day that has been officially observed by the United Nations since 2012. At St. Martin, we will participate in a “Rock Your Socks” event on Friday March 21st. This will help raise awareness of what Down Syndrome is, what it means to have Down Syndrome, and how people with Down Syndrome play a vital role in our lives and our communities. All St. Martin students and staff are encouraged to wear their most colourful socks.

World Epilepsy Day

What is Purple Day? Purple Day is an international grassroots effort dedicated to increasing awareness about epilepsy worldwide. On March 26th annually, people in countries around the world are invited to wear purple and host events in support of epilepsy awareness. All St. Martin students and staff are welcome and encouraged to wear a purple shirt on March 26.



Catholic School Council Meeting

Our next CSC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday April 9th at 5 pm. All St. Martin parent(s) are welcome to attend. A light dinner will be served for all those attending.

A special thank you goes to all of our parent volunteers that helped make the Glow Party such a great event. The students and staff appreciate everything that you do for our school.

Event Information

Screen Time & Social Media Presentation

When?

Wednesday, Apr 9, 2025, 06:00 PM

Screen Time and Social Media Safety with Jessica VanderWier

Join us for an insightful presentation with Jessica VanderWier, a Registered Psychotherapist, mom of 3, and founder of Nurtured First and Raising Families Therapy, a private therapy practice based in Beamsville. Jess holds a Master's Degree in Counselling Psychology and her approach to children is rooted in research on attachment as she helps families understand and respond to their children with gentleness and respect.

In her presentation, she'll explore the latest research on screen time, and social media safety. Learn practical strategies to set healthy boundaries, foster open conversations, and protect your child from potential online risks—all while supporting their emotional and mental health.

This is your chance to gain expert advice on:

- Keeping children safe online
- How to talk to children about social media and technology use
- How to set boundaries around screen time
- Tips for recognizing red flags and ensuring online safety



If time allows, there will be a Q&A at the end of the presentation for you to ask Jess about anything related to screen time, and social media safety.

Don't miss this opportunity to empower yourself and your child in today's digital world. We look forward to seeing you there!

All St. Martin Parent(s), Grandparent(s), & Guests are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Date: April 9, 2025

Time: 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

Location: St. Martin Catholic Elementary School

Eco Schools March

Every year and everywhere, at 8:30 pm on the last Saturday of March, millions of people across the world join in raising awareness of the nature crises facing our planet. This year Earth Hour is on Saturday, March 30th. Our school will be observing Earth Hour on Friday, March 22nd.



Earth Hour is not just a symbol of support – it's a catalyst for urgent change because Earth Hour is about more than 60 minutes. It's a movement for our future.



Library News

Boost Your Mood: Studies show that people who read for enjoyment are more likely to feel happy and confident.

Relax: Reading slows your heartbeat and relaxes your muscles. No wonder we fall asleep when we read before bed!

Discuss: Talking with peers about books you've read or are looking forward to reading creates a reading community.

Connect: Studies have found that reading fiction improves our capacity to understand what others are thinking and feeling, and

supports our understanding those are who different from ourselves.

St. Martin is proud to foster a love of reading with weekly library visits, daily book exchange opportunities and our library reading club.

Niagara Public Health -March

NEW Quit Vaping Program for Youth

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) is excited to launch [Youth-Vaping, Substance use, and Technology \(VAST\)](#).

Youth-VAST is a program for youth in Ontario who are using vaping, substances, or feel like technology is taking up too much of their time. This program brings together existing and new resources across CAMH to deliver virtual services directly to youth and their family.

- Program offered for youth ages 12-21 years.
- Appointments are offered virtually for youth all over Ontario
- Youth will be assigned a care coordinator to create a customized treatment plan
- Individuals can self-refer directly into this program, no physician referral required.

To refer, visit [Youth-VAST](#) to book an appointment or email youth.vast@camh.ca for more information.

World Sleep Day – March 14th

Sleep is important for physical and mental health, yet many children and youth just don't get enough. Lack of sleep may cause a number of health problems and have a big impact on your child's school performance, behaviour and mental health.

How much sleep does my child/youth need?

AGE

RECOMMENDED SLEEP

Ages 3-5 (Preschoolers)

10-13 hours per day

Age 6-12

9-12 hours per day

Ages 13-18

9-10 hours a night

Source: Recommended amount of sleep for pediatric populations, from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, 2016

Here are a few tips to consider that may help youth sleep better:

- **Limit naps** – some kids are really tired when they get home from school. A short nap can be helpful, but long naps can interfere with nighttime sleep. Consider keeping after school naps short, no more than 30-60 minutes.
- **Spend at least 1.5 hours outside during daylight hours** – natural light from outside helps set the body's internal clock. This is also important for helping a child's eyes develop properly and prevent nearsightedness.



- **Have an electronic curfew** – it can be helpful to have any electronic screens turned off 1-2 hours before bed. Avoiding screens will reduce blue light and help the brain produce melatonin, a hormone that controls the sleep-wake cycles.
- **Have a regular bedtime routine** – typical routines can include brushing teeth, having a bath or shower, putting on pajamas, going to the bedroom and doing relaxing activities such as reading, drawing, writing, or listening to calming music.

For more information, visit caringforkids.ca - healthy sleep

Source: <https://www.cheo.on.ca/en/resources-and-support/resources/P5643E.pdf>

Nutrition Month 2025

March is [Nutrition Month](#)! This annual campaign has been created by the [Dietitians of Canada](#) to highlight the importance of making informed food choices and developing both balanced eating and physical activity habits. Adults have a unique opportunity to help youth learn that healthy eating is more than the foods they eat. Below are some helpful resources to encourage healthy behaviours in children.

- [Building Healthy Eating Habits | Support Your Picky Eater](#)
- Visit unlockfood.ca for recipes, food allergies, [menu planners](#), and to find a Dietitian
- Check out this [free downloadable e-recipe](#) book from a previous Nutrition Month
- For more support around healthy eating, visit [Healthy eating for parents and children - Canada's Food Guide](#)



Blessed Trinity Corner

Blessed Trinity has reached the halfway point of the year with our students' completing exams and getting ready for the beginning of Semester 2. We also welcome back our new Principal, Mrs. Moscato, who was previously Vice-Principal a few years back. February also saw the end of some of our Winter sports seasons. Our Jr. Boys Basketball team had a very successful season falling just short of an NCAA championship with a close loss to Denis Morris. Other teams like our wrestling team are continuing with

play-offs with hopes of qualifying for SOSSA or even OFSAA championships.

Our BT students also began the course selection process for next year as our Grade 8's were completing the process. By now all grade 8 students attending BT next year will have submitted their course selections and paid their registration fee. Some one from our Student Services Department will be back in the next few weeks with Verification forms so students can confirm their course selections or make any changes.

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.

Standardized Dress Code

NIAGARA CATHOLIC Standardized Elementary Dress Code

Niagara Catholic has a standardized dress code for students in all of our Catholic elementary schools. All students wear navy blue bottoms and navy blue or white shirts.

OUR DRESS CODE COLOURS

Tops

At a minimum, every student is required to wear one of the following:

- Navy or white Oxford shirt (short or long sleeve) or;
- Navy or white collared shirt (short or long sleeve) or;
- School-designed spirit wear

The elementary standardized dress code shirt must be plain (no logos or advertising) and buttoned in a respectable manner. Visible t-shirts worn under the elementary standardized dress code top must be either navy blue or white.



Bottoms

- At a minimum, every student is required to wear one of the following:
- Navy sweat pants (Kindergarten - Grade 3) or;
- Navy pants (capri, cargo, denim, kobe or corduroy) or;
- Navy skirts, skirts or dresses or;
- Navy walking shorts.

Only knee-length shorts, skirts or dresses are permitted. All clothing must be in good repair. Grade 8 students have the option to wear grey secondary uniform pants.



Shoes

For health and safety reasons, running shoes with a full back and closed toe are the recommended footwear. Parents/guardians should provide a pair of indoor shoes for physical education and indoor wear. Socks must be worn with the elementary standardized dress code pants or shorts at all times.

Medications & Allergies

Regulations state that school personnel cannot administer any drugs, without written permission from the parent and a doctor. If there is a need for such medication, please contact the school to obtain the forms which must be filled out and signed by both the doctor and the parent. This record is required by School Board Regulations and must be kept on file. Please notify the school if medication distribution stops so that all medication can be returned to the family as soon as possible.

Please remember that St. Martin School is an Allergen Aware School. Please do not send products with nuts or nut traces with your child.



STUDENT ATTENDANCE and SAFE ARRIVAL

St. Martin Catholic School and all schools throughout Niagara Catholic use the Safe Arrival program to manage student attendance reporting. The Safe Arrival program reduces the time it takes to verify student attendance by making it easier for you to report your child's absence and easier for staff to respond to unexplained student absences. The Safe Arrival program allows parents to report their child's absence quickly and conveniently in one of three ways:

1) Use the SafeArrival website, <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca>. The first time you use the website, select Sign Up to create your account using your email address. After logging in, select the

Attendance tab to Report an Absence.

2) Using your mobile device, download and install the SchoolMessenger app from the Apple App Store or 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 on your mobile device please enable Push Notifications in the Settings area of the app. The document Using the SchoolMessenger app will give instructions for using the App.

3) The toll-free number 844-287-6287 will allow you to report your child absent without creating an account.



REMINDER- No single serve plastics available

Parents are reminded to ensure that their child(ren) have the required utensils needed to eat their snacks/lunches as well as a reusable water bottle they can fill at the hydration stations. We are no longer permitted to distribute plastic/styrofoam spoons, forks or cups to students that do not have them.



Maria Ruggi Dietsch

Maria is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters

