



St. Justin, Martyr Catholic School Year End Newsletter 2010

Summer Blessings

Congratulations to all our students for a year of hard work, dedication and commitment to learning. You, the students, have made the staff of St. Justin, Martyr very proud of your many accomplishments. Thanks to your tremendous efforts and the expertise of all our teachers and staff, our school was once again acknowledged by the *Fraser Institute* as one of the top schools in the Province of Ontario, achieving Distinction for Overall Academic Achievement. Our EQAO scores also continue to reflect excellence in both Grade 3 and Grade 6 tests.

To our grade 8 students, we wish you much love, happiness, good health and success as you begin the next step of your education. May the blessings of our friend, Jesus, be upon each and every one of you today, and through the summer months.

To the parents, we thank you for the countless hours you devote to your children in their quest for higher learning. We are grateful for the encouragement you provide for your children to be the best that they can be.

To our many parent volunteers, and especially to the members of the Catholic School Council, thank you for all your tremendous support of our efforts this year. Together we have learned from one another, supported one another and moved education to new heights. Every year we get better and better!

Farewell ~ With our Best Wishes

It is with very mixed feelings that we say *Good-Bye* and *God Bless* to several of our staff members: Ms. Russo, grade 5/6 PACE teacher, Ms. LaValle, Grade 5 PACE teacher, Ms. Greco, JK/SK teacher, Ms. Presta, Grade 7 teacher, Mr. Bouchard, French Teacher, Mrs. Mustachi, and Mrs. Sylvia Ceniti, Educational Assistants, Ms. Moreira, Phys Ed teacher, Ms. Scariot, Grade 8 teacher and Mr. Williams, Core Resource teacher. We say goodbye and send our best wishes to Mrs. Georgas, as she awaits the birth of her baby. Though we are sad to see these staff members leave, we know that what awaits them is filled with a wealth of possibilities.

To these marvelous people, we extend our warmest thoughts for success in their future endeavours. Thank you for leaving your wisdom and warmth with our students as lasting imprints. Good-bye to the families that are leaving St. Justin, Martyr this year. To our grade 8 graduates and the families who are moving from our community, we wish you God's blessings on your new journeys.

**School Begins
Tuesday, September
7th at 9:00 a.m.**

Special Information

- ☺ For bus transportation news for next year check the internet at www.schoolbuscity.com
- ☺ Class lists will be posted on Tuesday, Sept. 8, at the back of the school at 8:45.
- ☺ New registrations for next year can occur at the Board office during the summer by contacting the Admissions Office (416) 221-5050.
- ☺ Please return to our school in September any resources or textbooks that you may find at home.

Talent Show a Huge Success!

The school community was treated to wonderful day and evening performances of our Talent Show held June 23. Thirty-five student acts were featured along with a tribute to Canadian artists, performed by many of our staff members. The children were simply sensational in all the talents that they presented, and our staff members held everyone in laughter and huge applause for their high spirits and great sense of fun. A warm and special thank you to Mr. Iannelli for all his efforts in coordinating the "SHOW.

Track and Field – A Huge Success!

Congratulations to all the members of our Track and Field team who represented us so well at York University on June 10th. Our school placed 2nd overall which is a tremendous standing! The day was filled with great sportsmanship and many happy faces. Special thanks to all the staff members who coached our teams over this last month. Your efforts with our students were awesome.

Lost and Found

Our lost and found pile is huge! If you go searching you will discover there items of clothing for all seasons, lunch bags, playground equipment, running shoes, boots, umbrellas, etc. We will be sending the articles to a charitable organization next week so please feel free to drop in the school until June 30th to claim any items.

Year End and School Opening

Our teachers will be involved in staff meetings on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday of this last week of school. The school will then be closed until week of August 23. Class lists will be posted on the first day of school, September 7th, in the backyard of the school.

Busing for Next Year

For transportation information, please refer to the website www.schoolbuscity.com. This is the most up-to-date information on busing. We will not have any more information at the school about busing other than what you will find on this important website.

Agendas for September

As in the past, the school has pre-ordered standardized agendas for all students from Grades 1-8. They will be available to students on the first day of school. We ask that all students use these customized agendas as this will ensure accurate information going between home and school.

Enviro Update

We are so proud of the many enviro and greening initiatives we have supported this year. Our pilot project of collecting organic waste has been a huge success. We have been recognized as the school having the highest diversion rate of organic waste from the landfill. We recently were awarded a cheque for \$1500.00 from Powerstream for promoting the Board's Energy Champion program at the school. These funds will be used to support environmental projects at the school. We also were able to plant 3 shade trees on the school grounds with monies from environmental grants.

The Catholic School Council has offered their support with the Greening Initiatives and the beautification of the entrance to the school. More details will follow in September. Thank you to all custodial staff, students, staff members and parents that model and support the importance of "Doing the Green Thing", at school and at home.



St. Justin, Martyr Catholic School Council Final Reports

Our final Council report has been placed on our school website: www.sjmcouncil.com. We are very appreciative of all the efforts made by many parent volunteers to make our council an effective advisory committee, dedicated to supporting the students at St. Justin. Please take the time to read about the many initiatives that were undertaken by many parents donating both time and resources. Thank you!

And finally....

A very special thank you to our Catholic School Council and all the parent volunteers who have made this year such a success. The Council members have been instrumental in facilitating many exciting activities. Thanks to the generosity of parents in our community, all of our students have enjoyed countless events that have enriched the curriculum and the personal life of each child. As a staff, we are very grateful for your support of our endeavours, and for your kindness in providing your time to our school. God Bless You!

Reminder: our school newsletters will be able to be accessed through our school website www.sjmcouncil.com.



St. Justin, Martyr Parent Council Committee Reports Summary 2009/2010

Website

The council website's contribution of enhanced communication from the St. Justin Martyr Parent Council to the student and parent community has partnered with the school's green initiative successfully. This has proven to be one effective way to reduce the amount of paper used by making the newsletter available online. The promoting of the school newsletter on the website to the parent and student community has been marked by an increase in the number of visits also to the website. The number of visits to the website are on target to exceed the previous years.

Apparel

This year has been less active for apparel. The current apparel in navy blue with royal blue embroidery that continues to be the accepted choice of spirit wear. In the New Year we hope for new ideas of future creation of additional artwork for alternative wear to eventually come from designs created by the student community.

First Communion Luncheon

The First Communion Luncheon was held on June 1st, 2010 and was very successfully. Most of the grade twos came dressed in their Communion attire and they looked wonderful! After mass at church, we took class pictures in the gym. Crafts made by the children, were used to decorate. We served pizza, fruit, veggies, drinks and cake. Father Joe and Mrs. Reid attended from the parish. Honorable guests received signed thank-you cards and little flower pots from the children. The council budget was used for pizza and loot bags for the children. Each child received a pin and a personalized bookmark as a remembrance. Special thanks to all the parents that donated food and drinks and volunteered to serve. The children had a great time!

Fundraising

Our Fundraising Campaign in October 2009 was very successful. We exceeded our goal by collecting \$32,000 with an 89% participation rate. Each family was asked to donate \$90. There were 17 grand prizes and at least 50 smaller prizes. The profits from pizza night were used to purchase some of the grand prizes. The balance of the prizes came from families and local businesses. All the businesses that supported our school were recognized on the council web site. Each child in the family that returned an envelope received a ring pop. These were well received. An overwhelming 96% of our parents indicated that they would like to continue with the onetime donation in the future. We had lots of volunteers to tally the envelopes and give out the prizes. Thanks to all the parents and staff for making the campaign such a success. Our children benefit greatly from all the funds collected.

Hot Lunch Program

This year's hot lunch program was very prosperous and successful. A big part of it is owed to the amazing volunteer base we had this year. At the beginning, we tried to change some of the options so that the kids didn't get bored with having the same food items. As well, the idea was to have pre packaged lunches for the kids as we were facing the H1N1 issues. We introduced Boston Pizza and Harvey's into the program. In the second term we switched back to Pizza Nova. With the new policies about healthy eating in the schools being implemented from the Board in 2011, we have to change some of the items we have right now. We are looking for healthy options for the hot lunch program. Bringing in healthier options will result in higher costs for the food. So for next year, my wish is that the budget won't rely on the Hot Lunch program as much as it has this year as the profits will be lower. The program will still be used as a fundraising tool but not with as significant profits as in past years.

Study Group

Over the last couple of years, Study Group has evolved from how it used to run and near the end of the year there was some concern that it was no longer an effective tool for students or teachers. It was decided that Study Group would be put on hold until next year. We will review the program, make necessary changes and present it to the teachers in September for their feedback.

Graduation

Graduation once again changed venues this year and was held at Premier Banquet Hall. With the size of the graduating class, a bigger hall was needed. Due to increasing costs of the Graduation ceremony and related graduation items, it was determined that next year a committee would be created to look at streamlining the costs associated with Graduation.

Memory Book

We continued to use Canadian Yearbook Services for the book this year. We were given two deadlines: March 8, 2010 for the book cover and July 5, 2010 for the content. A total of 3 parent volunteers and over 25 students signed up to help. Ms. Lacy, several students and parents provided some wonderful pictures they took throughout the year for the committee's use.

Confirmation Luncheon

Ms. Knetsch the Principal began with an opening prayer. Guests and students were served lasagna, meat patties, fruit, vegetables, chips, nachos, and desserts (cake and nut-free cookies). On behalf of the students, Ms. Knetsch presented a gift voucher to the Parish representative at the end of the luncheon. The entire gym was utilized for this function. We had parents donating table cloths, cutlery, meat patties, vegetable and fruit platters, finger food, cookies and coffee. More than 10 parent volunteers were on site to help set up for the event, serve the food, and

clean up afterward. With all the generosity and help, we were able to come close to our budget of \$550.00.

Milk Program

The milk program continued to function this year with some concern for the amount of white milk that was being thrown out due to expiration. The Milk company requires that we order a certain amount but by the end of the school year, when milk consumption is declining, white milk (which has a shorter shelf life) is going bad and being thrown out. The end of May we introduced a new product to the milk program -- Arthur's Fruit Smoothies. They have generated great interest amongst the students and we will continue to offer them fruit drink option next year.

Pancake Tuesday

Due to health and safety regulations that prevented us from cooking pancakes in the school this year, we approached an outside company to cook and deliver nut-free pancakes to the school for Shrove Tuesday. This will become a yearly initiative.

Valentine Cake Raffle

We had a great number of donations of cake, cookies and goodies this year, 112 in total , more than any other year. We had a great group of about 25 volunteers who were busy selling tickets in the classroom, setting up the goodies in the gym, counting the money and finally handing out the treats to the winners. We raised \$1365 versus a goal of \$1200. A big Thank you to all who donated and all who volunteered to make this fun event another great success!

Caring and Sharing

We sponsored 25 families this year. Once again the SJM community was extremely generous with their donation of gifts, food, boxes, wrapping paper and food certificates for local stores. One very special family donated \$250 in food certificates. We had about 40 volunteers to help wrap the presents and bundle up the boxes. It was finished in record time before noon! A big Thank you to everybody who donated and volunteered their time. It's because of your kindness and generosity that 25 families had a happier Christmas. Way to go everyone!

Intermediate Dances

Two Intermediate dances were held this year and the proceeds from these dances went to help fund the cost of the Grade 8 Graduation. Grade 7 and 8 students from our school invited their friends from St. Monica's, St. Matthews, and John XXIII to join them for the dance. Both night were very successful and made a significant contribution to helping fund Graduation.

We saw another successful year at St. Justin, Martyr and a large part of this success was due to the parent volunteers and council members who consistently gave up their time to help run the many activities that go on throughout the school year. A huge "Thank you" for your time, your efforts and to your dedication to the school.

The Fundraising campaign at the beginning of each school year is our biggest commitment of time, people and resources. And it's success is what makes a large part of the extracurricular events and non-funded school items, possible.

From one off events such as the Welcome Back Pizza Night, Valentine Cake Raffle, Legacy Run, Intermediate Dances, Family Advent Mass, First Communion lunch and Teacher Appreciation Luncheon to volunteering in the classroom and on class trips, our volunteers are consistently enhancing the students' experience at SJM.

They continually strive to make a difference. In our efforts to provide a healthy lunch option for students, the Hot Lunch program tested a variety of vendors and food options and the Milk Program implemented Arthurs Fruit Smoothies as another healthy alternative to milk, for lunch. All the while, taking into consideration the fact that SJM is a green school, so recycling and producing less garbage are high on the priority list. Generating less paper was also a priority and our website saw a lot more use this year, as we sent less paper home with students and promoted the use of the website to obtain school-related information. Parents volunteers also helped manage the creation and selling of our school apparel.

Grade 8 is always a busy year and for a hundred or so of our students this year was no exception. With Confirmation, Graduation, school trips and the Memory Book, volunteers helped to organize or supervise all these events and fundraising made it possible to help subsidize the cost to the students.

Our commitment to faith is always present and our assisting 20 or so families in need at Christmas with our Caring and Sharing Program is only one of the many ways in which we gave back to the community.

For all of these things and so many more not mentioned, I want to personally thank everyone who helped out in any way, this year. We couldn't have done it without you! And for anyone else who is interested in finding out more about the parent council, please go to our website at www.sjmcouncil.com. Send an email with any questions you might have or come out to our first meeting next September, to get a better idea of what goes on. We are always looking for new members who are willing to get involved and make a difference.

Sincerely,

Leslie McConnell
SJM Parent Council