

Enlightening Minds, Enriching Lives

St. Germaine Family Newsletter

December, 2020

Advent, 2020
Pay Attention: Good News of Great Joy!

IMPORTANT Calendar Change December 22, 2020 11:30 dismissal

Our school calendar originally listed Tuesday, December 22nd as a full school day. Teachers and students usually plan their classroom Christmas Parties for the last day of school before the Christmas Break.

Unfortunately, due to the COVID pandemic, we need to curtail the classroom parties. We are unable to have the parent volunteers to help with the festivities, we are not allowed to share food treats, and wearing masks and social distancing puts a real “damper” on the FUN.

For this reason, we will dismiss at 11:30 on Tuesday, December 22. This will allow families some extra time for preparations for the holiday. No Eafter-school Extended Day will be available.

Father Cabala will video our Advent/Christmas Mass so that the students and teachers will be able to watch it together that morning. The link will also be placed on the parish website: <http://www.ourladyatstgermaine.org/>

The parish theme for Advent is perhaps unusual for our COVID times. We certainly understand the beginning of the phrase: “Pay Attention.” As a result of this pandemic, we have a heightened awareness of everything that is going on around us. We are more aware of our interactions with family, friends and even strangers. We are paying attention to all of the procedures designed to protect our health. We are even paying attention to how we wash our hands! (20 seconds with soap and water—get in between those fingers!) The scripture readings for Advent call us to pay attention to the beginnings of our salvation—the birth of Jesus, the Messiah.



During this Advent season, take some time to pray together as a family. The Angelus, which is reprinted on the last page of this newsletter is a wonderful Advent prayer. It reminds us of the angle Gabriel's message to Mary. It was traditionally said three times a day: at six o'clock in the morning, noon and six o'clock in the evening. You might want to use it as a family prayer as you sit down to dinner.

Students also recently brought home our annual Advent calendar. It contains suggestions for acts of kindness and gratitude. Many people are feeling isolated during this holiday season. As a family, how can you help someone “stay connected” and feel your love and support? Think of spending some time each week writing a card to a family member, friend, or neighbor. Think of how much it would mean to someone who might be lonely.

Planning for Remote Learning January 4-19, 2021

We are working to develop plans for our “remote learning” sessions for the two weeks after Christmas. We are planning that the teachers will conduct on-line instructional segments each day from about 9:00 until about 12:30. The segments will be conducted on ZOOM, YouTube, or Google Meets. Student attendance will be taken and it is our expectation that all students will be prompt to the sessions and will participate in the activities. They will last approximately 25 minutes and cover all of the major curricular areas. Teachers will make assignments for students to work on during the afternoon. Specials, like PE, Music, art, and Spanish will also be included in the offerings. After a short lunch break, the teachers will be available to work with individual students, answer email questions, and provide feedback on completed assignments from 1:15 to 2:30. We are currently finalizing the timetable which will detail all of the times a student will be expected to be present on-line.

We hope that the schedules will provide a consistent structure for the remote learning days. We'll need your patience and support as we work thru the procedures and make modifications to maximize learning.

You will receive copies of the schedule and expectations during the coming weeks so that you can help us prepare for an efficient remote learning experience.

The school has entered a pilot program with IXL, a well-known platform for learning activities in most of the areas of the curriculum. The available lessons are very skill focused and will allow the teachers to provide additional resources for you during the remote learning time. During December, the teachers will be practicing with the students so that they can log in and navigate to the appropriate activities. We will also provide links to the archdiocese “eSchool” learning platform that will contain lessons that students can also use. The “**Basic Math Fact Challenge**” described elsewhere in this newsletter, will also provide an important activity for our math students.

School Calendar Revision

There were several changes to the school calendar based on an increase in the number of professional development days for teachers required by the State Board of Education. We sent a revised copy to you with your child's report card. We're attaching another copy to the email version of the newsletter in case you missed the copy. Calendar entries are also available on the school website: stgermaineschool.com

Guidance Regarding Student Illness and Absence

It's been a challenge navigating the directions concerning student illness/absence. We are following the guidance we receive from the Office of Catholic Schools and are communicating with them when we have concerns.

Here is the latest guidance we have received from the Office of Catholic Schools:

- 1 A doctor's note is required for individuals who develop COVID-19-like symptoms but are diagnosed by a doctor or health care provider as having another illness. The individual must have a note from the provider indicating a specific alternate diagnosis if the individual wants to return prior to a complete 10 day isolation. If the individual chooses not to get an alternate diagnosis confirmed in writing then the individual must meet the criteria for returning as a COVID-19 positive case
- 2 A doctor's note is not required for individuals who are:
 - a. COVID-19 positive . For the individual to return to school he or she must have remained home for 10 days, no fever for 24 hours (without medication) ,and a general reduction of other symptoms by 75% or more
 - b. Sent home because of a single COVID-19 like symptom, but whose symptom dissipates within 24 hours. These individuals may return to school if symptoms have dissipated and they have not been exposed to any sick individual. If symptoms have not dissipated with 24 hours. See #1 above
 - c. Quarantined, but not symptomatic, due to a COVID exposure. Individuals may return to school if they have been quarantined for 14 days and not developed symptoms of Covid-19 during that time.



The Germazing Mighty Ducks continue to do a stellar job! The Christmas items (Christmas CASH, and multiple gift cards) make great “stocking stuffers. The Ducks are always looking for suggestions for prizes, so please let them know if you have an idea. One new addition to the prizes are DUCK BUCKS which you can use when you bid on items.

Our deepest thanks to the Duck Team for all their hard work. They have been able to make significant contributions to the school budget in addition to providing items for the teacher “wish-lists.” Recently, they were able to purchase updated touch-screen laptops for the teachers. The touch screens make completing the school report cards much easier. Everyone is so grateful.

Morning Arrival

Thanks for your cooperation as we work to provide safe procedures for morning arrival. We are trying to keep traffic flowing smoothly.

In general, we are trying to allow 8 drop off spots in the lot. I've been out in the morning helping(?) to direct the flow of traffic. (I'm also getting my 10,000 fit-bit steps!) Several thoughts went into developing the procedure:

We wanted to be sure that students getting out on the passenger side of the car are safe—so we are leaving an empty space between each car. I've been using orange traffic cones to block off these blank spots.

We are trying to have cars pull to the front spot so that they can drive directly into the aisle without having to back up.

It seems that the best way to exit the parking lot is thru the northeast driveway—just as we normally do at dismissal. Parishioners arriving for morning Mass make traffic thru the driveway to 98th Street difficult.

If you are planning to park your car and walk with your students to the door, please park to the east of the spaces we are using for quick drop offs. This will allow for a quick turn over of cars in the 8 drop off spaces.

Hopefully we can get a pattern that works—if you have suggestions to improve the process, please let me know.

Looking Ahead. . .

Since we will need to curtail so many of our usual Christmas activities this year, we're planning a number of fun activities to prepare us for Christmas. The activities are optional—so please do not feel you have to go out to purchase items for the day.



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| 12/8 | (Tuesday) “ | Red and Green Day—wear red or green clothing/accessories |
| 12/11 | (Friday) | Tree Topper Day—wear Santa, elf, reindeer hats or holiday headbands |
| 12/15 | (Tuesday) | Light Up the Holidays—wear favorite accessories—light-up necklaces, garland, jewelry |
| 12/18 | (Friday) | Crazy/Ugly Sweater or Socks Day—wear a prize-winning ugly Christmas sweater or Christmas themed socks |
| 12/21 | (Monday) | Polar Express Day—wear comfy, cozy PJ's and watch the great movie with your class. |
| 12/22 | (Tuesday) | Remember we will dismiss at 11:30 since we will be unable to have our usual class room parties. No after-school Extended Day. |

Manna Special Orders for the Holidays

If you are planning to place a “special” holiday order for Manna certificates, all orders need to be in the school office by Monday, December 7th at 10:00 a.m.

Regular vendor certificates will be available as long as supplies last. Please make your purchases of regular vendors before December 18th.



We know that on-line ordering is now one of the easiest ways to finish your Christmas shopping.

When you are on-line at Amazon, please consider using the Amazon Smile site. By logging in and selecting St. Germaine School as your preferred charity, Amazon will make a rebate to the school based on your purchase amount.

The process is relatively easy and it will help us to build up our fundraising efforts.

EFFORT RECOGNITION ROLL

First Trimester
November, 2020

GRADE EIGHT

Paul Baker
Elysia Gonzalez
Madison McKatherine
Natalie Pedroza

Maureen Curran
Emily Griggs
John Newark
Matthew Rahn

Rorey Donnelly
Grace Kearns
Daniel O'Shea
Kaitlyn Wainwright

GRADE SEVEN

William Bautista
Owen Hayes
Noah McNeela
Hannah Missey
Madilyn Schmit

Hector Castillo
Allison Lai
Kristen Mikutis
Colin Nye
Carys Umecker

Julianna Gamboa
Hannah McNeela
Benjamin Miller
Juan Padilla
Grace Zolna

GRADE SIX

Abigail Daley
Julia Hawkshaw
Kim Victoria

Quinn Daley
Avery Shipman

Ashley Garza
Adilene Urbina

GRADE FIVE

Benjamin Bautista
Elena D'Souza

Natalie Bridgeman
Nathan Miller
Luke Zolna

Flynn Daley
Ryan O'Shea

Do You Hear the Bells?



We recently brought the carillon bells from Our Lady of Loretto Church to a new home at Our Lady of St. Germaine Parish. They represent a lovely addition that reminds us of the history our two parishes and the promise of our future together.

Church bells for ages have been a way to call the faithful to worship and to mark the hours of prayer for the community. The Liturgy of the Hours, the official daily prayer of the Church, focuses on the recitations of scriptural psalms seven times throughout the day. In ages past, many of the faithful were not able to read or write. That made participation in the “Divine Office” nearly impossible for them.

To simplify the prayer times for the common people, Christians have traditionally prayed “The Angelus” at fixed hours of the day. Six o’clock in the morning, noon, and six o’clock in the evening have been the appointed times for this prayer. Church bells were rung to call the people to participate.

Artist Jean Francois Millet painted “The Angelus” (1857) as a tribute to simple people of prayer. The prayer itself reminds us of Gabriel’s ANNUNCIATION to Mary that she was to be the mother of Jesus.

When you hear the bells from Our Lady at St. Germaine, won’t you join us for this prayerful tradition?

The Angelus

Vl. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary,

Rl. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary...

Vl. Behold the handmaid of the Lord,

Rl. Be it done unto me according to your Word.

Hail Mary...

Vl. And the Word was made flesh,

Rl. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary...

Vl. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God,

Rl. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts: that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an Angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

“Basic Math Fact” Challenge

We’re excited to announce our Basic Math Facts Challenge! During Decembe and January, we’re asking that all students make learning their basic addition/subtraction and multiplication/division facts “by heart.”

Students who are fluent with the basic facts—automatic recall and accuracy—do more complex math computations more easily.

Each student received a packet of materials for their grade that outlined some procedures and identified the facts they should work on.

Recently, all the students (Grades 1-8) took a two minute time test in addition and/or multiplication. The scores showed a good level of accuracy. The automatic recall of the facts can use some work, though. Please help us to build up automtica recall speed by working on the flashcard or “fact triangle” activities—especially during the after-Christmas remote learning time. We’ll all take another two-minute timing when we get back to school in January to note the improvement.

We’ll have a number of prizes as a part of the challenge:

Participation—students who complete and return a practice calendar with at least 20 practice days, will be entered into a drawing. We’ll award five cards: \$25 Amazon Gift card, two \$10 Target cards, and two \$10 Burger King cards

Speed students who increase their “speed” score by at least 25% will receive a prize

Accuracy students who score a 90% or better accuracy rate will also receive a prize.

We actually had some students who completed all of the items on the time test with 100% accuracy already. Those students will be included in the participation, speed and accuracy prizes when we take the second test.