

Rejoice

It's different here!

The Director's Newsletter

Volume 6 • Issue 5
January 2010



In Celebration of Prayer and Music

Classroom curriculums expand at St. James

*"If you have faith when you pray,
you will be given whatever you ask
for."*

~ Matthew 21:22

Sharing traditions, growing faith

It takes a village to raise a child, according to the African proverb. At St. James School in Seaforth, instructing students in the rich traditions of the Catholic church has similarly become a community affair.

With the help of the Rosary Apostolate, a group of volunteers from neighbouring St. James Parish, students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 are enjoying monthly visits that deepen their understanding of the significance of Rosary Prayer.

"This special group of parishioners comes once each month to visit all of our classes and deliver a specified program of half-hour lessons that are beautifully geared towards each age group," explains Ms. Joanne Lombardi, the Principal at St. James School. "It's a great association with St. James Parish, and a wonderful extension of our existing religion program."

Starting in JK, students begin their Rosary instruction with an introduction to Mary as the mother of Jesus, while learning to honour Mary specifically with the "Hail Mary" prayer. By the senior grades students are praying the full Rosary Prayer, having learned about the different decades and the significance of each.

"In modern society, it can be hard to keep our rich traditions alive," reflects

Ms. Lombardi. "This program is a wonderful way to introduce students to the Rosary through a variety of dedicated parishioners."

St. James students will come together to celebrate their growing prayer knowledge at services to be held in May – which is of course, the month of Mary.



Connecting students through music

St. James teacher Mrs. Christa Ducharme knows it takes more than traditional instruction to hold the attention of today's wired kids. That's why her music classes have evolved to incorporate bells, blogs, and even a few garbage cans.

"Music is about having fun – I spend a lot of time on the floor," laughs Mrs. Ducharme. Her kinetic style, while unconventional, has been wildly effective at capturing the attention of students.

St. James third graders have been learning how to play the bells by following

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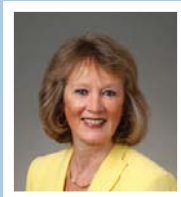
*The Giving Tree, Holy
Name of Mary School*

*Celebrating Babies of
2009*

*Canada's Outstanding
Principal Award*

From The Director

Dear Members of the Huron Perth community:



This year we are very excited to celebrate Catholic Education through our theme...*"Rejoicing in Hope"*. You will notice through these monthly newsletters very clear examples and activities that are rooted in this theme of hope and celebration, as well as people's stories of experiences and achievements.

In reflecting over our first five months of this school year, we are very proud of our mission and our focus on continuing to give our students a solid foundation for life - one that we know enables them to achieve their full spiritual, academic, physical and emotional potential.

In the Huron-Perth Catholic DSB, we are blessed to have a staff that is committed to Catholic education and who play an integral role in the development of the whole person.

The Ontario Catholic Curriculum is our guide - infused with the Gospel values of Jesus Christ in a faith-based environment. Our students experience Catholic education with a distinct emphasis on social justice and service to the less fortunate - we are very passionate about our call to serve!

Our work with parents, parishes, community partners is critical for ensuring the supports are in place for our students to grow in their success.

And we are proud of the home, school and parish working together to educate mind, body and spirit.

In closing, continue to lead the way and to uphold our vision -

*Faith and Learning...
Celebrating the Journey*

*God Bless,
Martha Dutrizac
Director of Education*

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a colour-coded musical score. Shortly before Christmas, Mrs. Ducharme challenged them with a Baroque classic, Johann Pachelbel's *Cannon in D*.

"They responded well. You could have heard a pin drop at the concert," she recalls.

"I was surprised at how nice it sounded," remarked Tony, a third grade student. Students plan to follow up their performance with a rendition of "O Canada" in time for the Winter Olympics.

Under Mrs. Ducharme's instruction, intermediate students are branching out into xylophone and choral instruction, as well as taking on some unusual drums.

"We rotate through three different sizes of buckets, from the small Home Depot pails to large plastic garbage bins. The kids know which drums they play according to the musical notation and use regular wooden drumsticks," she explains. "We bring our musical groups together at assemblies throughout the year, and have also incorporated their performances into school Masses."

Ms. Ducharme keeps her senior

students likewise engaged by combining what's relevant to them - contemporary music and the internet.

"There's a music video posted on our class blog each week. We watch it, and then write about how it relates to what we're doing in class," explains Nikki, a seventh grade student.

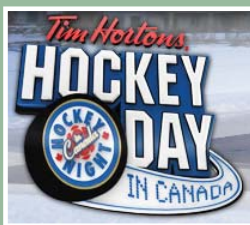
"Afterwards, we can look at everyone's answers and see if we agree or disagree," adds classmate Brianna.

"They are a very reflective group," says Mrs. Ducharme of her Grade 7 and 8's. "Each week, I learn more about them and their musical tastes as they build personal ideas about music into their responses."

To see the students' online musical blog, visit stjamesmusicmusings.blogspot.com.



St. Joseph's School, Stratford Gears Up for Hockey Day in Canada



Stratford, Ontario will be hosting this year's Hockey Day in Canada event during the week of January 25th. Across the city of Stratford, wall to wall events will be taking place to celebrate our favourite Canadian sport, and this hockey spirit was clearly palpable at St. Joseph's School in Stratford. Thanks to the incredible Student Council a

number of events took place in the community to work up the students' enthusiasm for the big event. Students participated in "Hockey Day" which encouraged them to wear their favourite jersey, play friendly games of hockey with one another, decorate hockey sticks, develop a school-wide cheer and enjoy hot chocolate, just to name a few of the activities.



The Giving Tree

Fostering outreach at Holy Name in St. Marys



“Children, you show love for others by truly helping them, and not merely by talking about it.” ~ 1 John 3:18

At Holy Name of Mary School in St. Marys, each year begins with a project known as “The Giving Tree”.

As part of the school’s commitment to mission outreach, students in JK through Grade 8 celebrate Advent by raising funds which are used to purchase gifts for less fortunate children within their own community. This tradition, along with the accompanying food drive, has been carried on at Holy Name for as long as anyone can remember.

“Each class is asked to come up with their own means of raising money, so that together they can purchase an age-appropriate gift for a girl or a boy,” explains Mrs. Verwer, the Holy Name librarian and administrator of the program.

“The students decide as a class what gifts they would like to give.

One class always spends their money on brand new books, but there’s just a whole menagerie of gifts that are donated.”

Teachers are responsible for purchasing the gift that their class selects and in some senior classes, students accompany their teachers on the shopping trip. Classes are invited to place their purchases by the Advent wreath at a celebration that

takes place each Monday morning throughout the season. The gifts are later displayed beside the Christmas tree.

“They’re so proud bringing their donations up to the wreath. It’s really fun to see,” says Mrs. Verwer. “We amass quite a large variety of gifts, which are displayed through the entire length of Advent.”

“The key is getting students involved in the process, so they can see how they are able to make a difference in the lives of others,” explains Mr. Haber, the principal at Holy Name.

As Christmas approaches, the gifts are collected by the St. Marys chapter of the Salvation Army, who wrap and distribute them to local families in need. By keeping the donations local, Mr. Haber hopes his students will understand that there is need in their own community, and likewise, opportunities to help.

Yet giving locally is only one aspect of the school’s outreach effort.

At various points throughout the year, Holy Name launches projects in support of the Terry Fox Foundation and the United Way. They team up with other Huron-Perth schools to support the annual St. Michael CSS Poverty Awareness Trip to the Dominican Republic; this project in particular has allowed a number of Holy Name graduates to live out their faith by serving others. Last year, they also supported Ryan’s Well -- a Canadian-based organization that provides safe water and sanitation projects across the developing world.

“We live the Gospel through our actions, not just our words,” reflects Mr. Haber. “As educators, we do that to impart to the young people in our care that they can get involved in living the Gospel in their own lives.”

As fresh needs present themselves, so do opportunities for the Holy Name community to make a difference. Alongside many in Huron-Perth, the students are currently embarking on their next project: an effort which together with the diocese and school board, will offer relief for those affected by the recent earthquake in Haiti.



Welcome Graduates of 2027!

Adorable smiling faces and giggles were seen and heard throughout the Board Office last week as the Board hosted its annual “Baby Day”. Baby Day is held every January for babies born the previous year to mothers who are employees of the Board who are currently on maternity leave. Director of Education Martha Dutrizac welcomed our future graduates of 2027!



Oh Baby!

The Board would like to congratulate all employees who have had new babies born in 2009. We look forward to welcoming your babies through our school doors in 2013 and educating them through to their high school graduation in 2027!



Henry Drennan, born November 13, son of Bart and Jessica Drennan, teachers at St. Michael CSS, Stratford.



Ethan McConnell, born July 31, son of Natalie McConnell, teacher at St. Mary’s, Listowel.



Sydney Van Dongen-Miles, born August 22, daughter of Kristi Van Dongen, teacher at Our Lady of Mount Carmel.



Ethan Skillen, born August 2, son of Rachel Skillen, teacher at St. Anne’s CSS, Clinton.



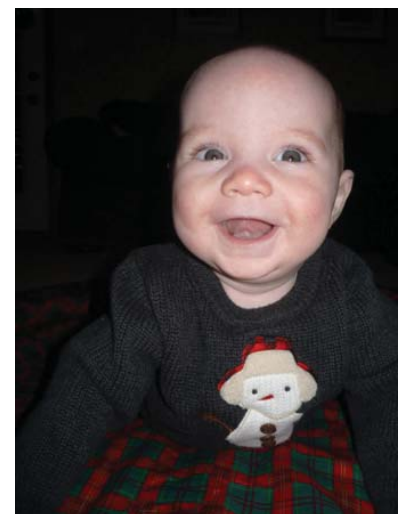
Owen Brooks, born October 26, son of Melanie Brooks, teacher at St. Ambrose, Stratford.



Annika Brickman, born December 5, daughter of Andria Brickman, teacher at St. Columban.



Leighton Lichti, born January 23, daughter of Nancy Lichti, teacher at Jeanne Sauvé, Stratford.



Simon Kramers, born June 12, son of Karen Kramers, teacher at St. James, Seaforth.



Carter Miller, born October 9, son of Julie Miller, educational assistant at Precious Blood, Exeter.



Wyatt George, born September 8, son of Heather George, teacher at St. Boniface, Zurich.



Sebastian Voros, born July 24, son of Renita Roxburgh, vice principal at St. Michael CSS, Stratford, and Joe Voros, teacher at St. Michael.



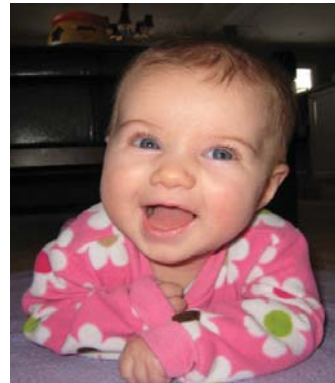
Corryn D'Hondt, born April 22, daughter of Paul D'Hondt, teacher at St. Michael CSS, Stratford.



Teresa Schuster, born January 3, daughter of Angela Schuster, teacher at St. Ambrose, Stratford.



Fritzen Morgan, born August 26, son of Anita Morgan, educational assistant at St. Joseph's, Clinton.



Maren Marshall, born September 21, daughter of Lindsay Marshall, teacher at St. Anne's CSS, Clinton.



Rachel Lupton, born May 29, daughter of Marianne Lupton, educational assistant at St. Ambrose, Stratford.



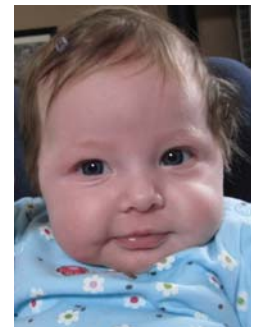
Cody Cowan, born May 12, son of Denise DeJong, secretary at the Board Office, Dublin.



Connor Gilbert, born January 22, son of Cary Gilbert, teacher at St. Boniface, Zurich.



Jacob Meadows, born October 6, son of Christine Meadows, teacher at St. Ambrose, Stratford.



Avery Glavin, born October 17, daughter of Nicole Glavin, teacher at St. Anne's CSS, Clinton.

...but Jesus said, 'Let the little children alone, and do not stop them from coming to me; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of Heaven belongs.'

Matthew 19:14

Listowel Students Learn About the Trades



OYAP (Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program) Project Leader Tim Martens recently visited the Grade 7 class at St. Mary's School in Listowel. He led the students through the completion of a woodworking project as he highlighted the trades as a potential pathway for students as they enter highschool. He encouraged students to find what they are passionate about and explore what it might take to follow their passion into a career.

Canada's Outstanding Principals Award Recipients 2010

Huron-Perth Catholic is pleased to announce that one of this year's 32 exceptional leaders in education from across the country is Joanne Lombardi, (pictured below, second from right), Principal at St. James School in Seaforth. This award is presented annually by The Learning Partnership, a national not-for-profit organization that has championed public education in Canada since 1993. The award is presented to principals who have made a measureable difference in the lives of their students and their own local communities.

Joanne is a talented and dedicated curriculum leader who strives to mentor her staff to support achievement in a meaningful and relevant way. She is an inspirational team leader who performs with diligence, confidence, respect, organization and demonstrates a passion for learning. Joanne openly lives her belief that all students deserve the best from all the adults in their world, and in doing so, clearly reflects our Catholic values in all she does. Congratulations Joanne on your notable achievement.

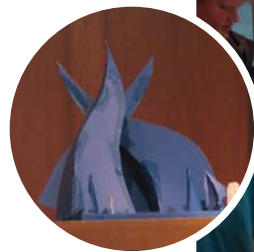


SHSM Visual Arts Trip

Visual Arts students from St. Michael CSS in Stratford recently visited the Design Exchange, Canada's premier national and international design institute in Toronto. The focus of the morning was architecture and design. Beginning with an Experiential tour of the Design Exchange's annual design competition, students viewed a guided discussion of the winning entries from professional designer solutions to numerous varied design challenges. The second guided tour exposed students to the historical Toronto Stock Exchange building's renovation into the present Design Exchange. All students were then challenged in a training workshop. Here a comprehensive presentation and interactive discussion of contemporary Canadian and International architecture lead into a group design challenge. Each group used the design process to solve the form and function demands of originating a 3D model for the entrance to a particular set of criteria for a library, a concert hall, a school, and a bank.

Next stop was the Art Gallery of Ontario where students took part in the Experiential tour titled "Art and Architecture".

The final stop took the students to Conestoga College, Doon Campus, which included a tour of the Design studios and student facilities. An indepth presentation was given by instructors of their Graphic Design, Advertising, Visual Merchandising, and Interior Decorating programs providing students with valued facts to consider in their post secondary destination decisions.



Congratulations!

...to Elizabeth Rodostianos, teacher at St. Anne's CSS, Clinton, on the birth of her son Johannes.

...to Crystal Brennan-Yeo, teacher at St. Anne's CSS, Clinton, on the birth of her daughter Alexa.

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Martha Dutrizac
Director of Education

From the Special Education Department at St. Michael CSS, Stratford

The St. Mike's Special Education Department offers a very effective strategy to ensure that all students reserve the tools and supports they need to succeed. The "Learning Lab" is a classroom where students may go to receive help and support from teachers. The Lab has become a vibrant, well-used, and welcoming place for *all* of our students to work.

Here is what some St. Mike's students have to say about the Learning Lab:

Bryan (5th year) - "I come in here 4-5 times per week to catch up on tests and to get help from an EA or a teacher with scribing for tests. Next year, I plan to go to college for graphic arts or horticulture."

Scott (4th year) - "I come into the Learning Lab when I am behind on my work and to get assistance with assignments. I like to use the computers and there is always help available."

Heidi (4th year) - "I use the Learning Lab a few times every week to work on projects and/or to ask for help from teachers. It is a very welcoming place in the school."

Upcoming Events

Feb. 1	Professional Development Day Faith Development for elementary school staff
Feb. 3	Applause Awards - Huron
Feb. 10	Applause Awards - Perth
Feb. 14	Valentine's Day
Feb. 15	Family Day Holiday
Feb. 17	Ash Wednesday
Feb. 21	First Sunday of Lent
Feb. 22	Board Meeting
Mar. 1	Professional Development Day

DIRECTOR'S NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is prepared by Elaine DeCorte at the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board. To keep the system informed of the latest news within your school and community, forward details about any activities and achievements by both staff and students to Elaine for inclusion in upcoming issues of the Director's Newsletter. The Director's Newsletter is distributed monthly to parents, staff and the wider community, and is posted on the Board's website at:

www.huronperthcatholic.ca

