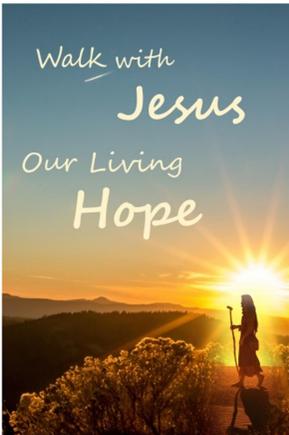


September, 2020
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Sept./Oct. Newsletter



*Do not fear,
for I am with
you, do not
be afraid, for
I am your
God; I will
strengthen
you, I will
help you, I
will uphold
you with my
victorious
right hand.
Isaiah 41:10*

Dear Parents,

After the deluge of information that I have sent to you over the last few weeks, I decided to combine our newsletters for September and October into one communication. I hope that you are all still well and are settling into the routines of this extraordinary school year. We have made a very good start to the year and we are endeavouring to get used to the new routines as well. Throughout these first weeks of school, I have

found the strength and resilience of your children to be remarkable; they have taken on the new protocols with a positive attitude and a simple acknowledgement that this is the way things will happen for now. I thank you for the preparation of your children to return to school with the confidence to know that they are able to look after themselves and to make good decisions to keep themselves safe. I truly

appreciate all of the work that you have done to prepare your children to return to school safely and I thank you for all of your support of our safety protocols. It has not been easy for any of us and I am so grateful to you, your children and, of course, to our staff, for the courage that all of you have shown in diving into the deep end of this school year. Rest assured that we at St. Joseph's are doing our absolute best to maintain safety in our school every day.

Prayers

Please keep in your prayers the families of Mrs. Fader and Mrs. Symington. Mrs. Fader's mother passed away during the summer at the age of 99. Mrs. Symington's husband passed away at the end of August after a sudden and brief illness. May their souls and all the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

Thank you!

Special thanks to Father Martin for his commitment to making our school look beautiful! In addition to having our gym painted in the spring, he also arranged to have the exterior of our school painted and new signage installed. Thank you to our families who did the painting! We are so happy to have Father Martin as our pastor and we are grateful for all of the support that he gives to our school.

Important Dates:

October

9 – Noon Dismissal

19 - Fall Colour Day

30 – Halloween

Costume Day

Halloween

Students may come to school in their Halloween costumes on Friday, October 30. We do not allow costumes which may be frightening to the younger students. In addition, we do not allow the following items: play weapons, frightening or gory masks, or costumes which indicate violence. Unfortunately, this year, students will not be able to bring treats or other items to share with their classmates.

Walkathon

Our walkathon this year will look a little bit different. Instead of holding it on one day, we will be having a Walkathon Week! More information will follow soon. We are looking forward to making this a tremendous fundraiser this year! Although we will not be holding our walkathon on October 9, the students will be dismissed at 12:00 noon on that day. There will be NO Afterschool Club.

Tuition

This year, we have instituted automatic withdrawal of tuition. If you are currently paying cash and would like to change to have the tuition payments taken from your bank account automatically each month, please contact the school office to make the necessary arrangements.

Due to the extraordinary circumstances of this school year and our inability to offer the same opportunities for parent participation that we have in the past, the Parish Education Committee has made the decision to reduce the number of participation hours required for each family to 30 instead of

Welcome!

We welcome two new Education Assistants to our St. Joseph's community this year. Mrs. Barbara di Fluri and Mrs. Christina Primerano will be working in our primary grades. We are very pleased to have them at our school and are looking forward to working with them!

Participation

the usual 50 hours. As stated in the registration package, families who raise more than the minimum \$250.00 in fundraising may apply those excess funds to the participation hours at a rate of \$14.00 per hour. Please note that this change will only be in effect for this school year. Parents will

Fall Colour Day

On October 19, we will have a Colour Day to raise funds for the Holy Childhood Association, which supports the needs of children in developing nations. In exchange for a minimum \$2.00 donation, the students may wear autumn colours (orange, yellow, brown, red) instead of their uniforms. Happy Fall!

continue to sign up for opportunities and to log their participation hours using the *OnVolunteers* system. Please note that every 30 minutes of traffic supervision yields one hour of participation. New families will be contacted soon with a username and password to use.

Reminders for Daily Life at St. Joseph's School

Since we were not able to hold our usual meeting in September, please see below some general reminders about St. Joseph's. The details of these items can be found in your parent handbook.

Uniform

Please ensure that your children are wearing the appropriate uniform to school each day.

Running shoes or shoes that have any coloured markings (including white) on them are not allowed as part of the uniform. I recognize that, in the rush to get ready for school this year, there may not have been time to get the different parts of the uniform, but please purchase the correct clothing as soon as possible. It is lovely to see the students wearing their uniforms with pride.

In addition, please ensure that your children have appropriate clothing for all types of weather. As dictated by the Provincial Health Officer, we will be having the students spend time outside as much as possible this year. Even if it is raining lightly, the students will be outside for breaks and for their Daily Physical Activity. Please

make sure that your children have the proper coats and shoes to remain dry and warm.

Afterschool Club

Our Afterschool Club has begun. You are able to register your child for any number of days per week or to have them attend on a drop-in basis. Please let the office know by phone or email if you would like to have your child attend. Please note that the students will not be able to use the toys and activities that we have used in the past. They will need to bring their own activities to use, such as books to read, their own small toys, puzzles, or activity books. We have paper for drawing, and so the students may bring their own drawing tools, such as crayons or markers. We are able to give the students pre-packaged snacks, such as granola bars and juice boxes, or they may bring their own snacks. The students will be

following the same rules of hand sanitizing as they do during the regular school day.

There is a fee for attendance in this club: \$5.00 per hour is the drop-in rate (\$10.00 for two hours); discounted rates are available when students register for a full month at a time. Please note that students who remain in the school yard after supervision has ended will be sent to the Afterschool Club and the parents will be charged the drop-in fee for the day. Students who are waiting for a sibling who has a sports practice or other event must be picked up at 3:00pm or go to the Afterschool Club.

Nut allergies

We are a Nut Aware school. Please do not send nuts of any kind or products that contain nuts with your children to school (including nut butter or Nutella sandwiches) as we have several students and staff with nut allergies.

The students are not permitted to share food at any time. Thank you for your attention to keeping everyone in our school community safe.

Parking/Traffic

Please find attached a map of the traffic system at St. Joseph's. We have a one-way system to facilitate drop-off and to avoid unsafe situations on Fleming Street. Please drive east on 15th Avenue, south on Fleming, and then you may turn either east or west bound on 18th Avenue.

Please note that our drop-off and pick-up zones are located on 15th Avenue, and not on Fleming Street. It is very narrow at the front of our school and we do not want to have people stopping to drop off their children, as it is not safe. If you have young children, please park away from the school or on 15th Avenue and walk them to the playground.

Parents should park on 15th Avenue in the designated area, and **NOT** in the drop-off zone or on Fleming Street where there is Resident Only Parking. Please respect our neighbours and do not park across driveways.

Please do not make unsafe turns, such as U-turns or 3-point turns in driveways, including the school driveway, as you will not be able to see small children behind you.

Also, please note that driving onto our parking lot between the hours of **7:30am** and **5:00pm** is not allowed. This area is the main thoroughfare for people entering our school and it is the playground for our intermediate students. Thank you for maintaining the safety of everyone in our community.

PE

The students will be having PE regularly. Please ensure that your child wears his or her PE uniform under the school uniform to facilitate the changing

of clothes. The students will not be permitted to change in the washrooms. Please ensure that all items of clothing are labelled with your child's name. The kindergarten students will only be wearing running shoes with their uniforms for PE at this point in time.

Lunches

We encourage the students to bring healthy lunches with them to school in the morning. If you must drop off lunch for your child, please place it on the table inside the front door. Fast food lunches are not permitted and the school is a pop-free zone. Please inform your child that you will be bringing lunch for them, as we will not be delivering the food to them. In addition, if you are going to bring lunch, please make sure that it is at the school by 12:00 noon, as the classes will be eating at different times this year. The school will not be providing forks or spoons for the children who forget them at home.

Visitors

Please be reminded that part of our protocol is to limit the number of visitors to the school. Parents are only allowed to enter the school if they need to go to the school office. They are not permitted to go into the hallways or classrooms. If you need to see a teacher, please email to make an appointment and the teacher will make arrangements for a meeting.

Communication

We are endeavouring to communicate with you mainly by email or telephone, in order to minimize our use of paper. Please make sure that the school office has your current contact information, including phone numbers, address and email. Also, if your child is sick or if there is another emergency, we will need to contact you by phone immediately; please make sure that we have your correct phone number on file. Notices and information will also be posted on our school

website at www.saintjosephschool.ca.

Each of the teachers has a school email for the purpose of communicating with you, and you are welcome to contact them in this manner as well. We ask that you confine your communications to business hours on the weekdays.

School Website

Our school website is www.saintjosephschool.ca. On it, you will be able to access the yearly calendar, school newsletters, announcements and COVID-19 updates. In addition, in the event of a school closure due to weather or an emergency, a banner will be posted on the home page.

Absences

If your child is going to be late or away, please call or email the office (604-872-5715; stjosephsvancouver@telus.net). Notes are required for all absences upon return to school, as we must account for every day

Absences Cont'd

that the children are in school. Emailed absentee notes are acceptable.

Personal Electronic Devices

Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to: cell phones, portable internet devices, handheld entertainment systems, digital or film cameras, audio or video recorders, etc. Students are not permitted to use personal electronic devices on school property or at school events and they will be taken away for a period of time if this rule is not followed. If a student has a phone for security purposes, it must be turned off and remain in the student's school bag. If you need to get a message to your child, please call the school office.

Social Media

Parents must **not** post photos which include children other than

their own on social networking sites (such as Facebook, Instagram, etc.). Parents are also responsible for ensuring that their children do not post or send photos of other students. St. Joseph's School takes no responsibility for personal photos.

Homework

Homework is not meant to be an arduous task that breaks down family life, but is meant to reinforce skills and to support independent learning. If your child is having difficulty with the assigned work or is spending large amounts of time completing the assignments, please contact your child's teacher. In addition to assigned homework, all students must **read** or **be read to** every night for a minimum of 20 minutes.

Fundraising

Every family is responsible for a minimum of \$250 in fundraising profits. *Profits* means the net amount the school receives from any sale we may sponsor. Many

families can exceed their family goal during our Walkathon, since 100% of the money that is brought in is credited to family fundraising accounts. Families receive a tax receipt for walkathon donations. Any family exceeding the \$250 fundraising goal may apply extra funds to their participation hours at \$14.00 for each participation hour.

Shopeasy

The Shop-easy program is a great way to meet your family's fundraising goal by purchasing grocery and gas coupons. This program has no added cost to your family. Coupons are purchased at face value and the school receives a discount from the establishment you frequent. For example, if you buy a card for \$100 for the Superstore, you can buy \$100 worth of groceries, and the school receives \$5.00 back, which is credited to your fundraising account. We have a variety of gift cards available regularly,

including: Superstore, Safeway, Save-On/Price Smart, T&T Supermarket, Victoria 88 Supermarket, Chevron, Esso, Petro Canada, Starbucks, Shoppers Drug Mart, London Drugs and Walmart. We are also able to order from many more merchants (including restaurants and clothing stores) with some notice.

This year, we ask that you phone or email Mrs. Oye with your order. Then she and Mrs. Symington can prepare the cards you need and they will contact you for pick-up and payment. Please do not drop in to the office to buy gift cards as we are trying to keep our office staff safe.

Tax receipts

Tax receipts are issued in February for the amount of the tuition that is designated for religious instruction. The amount of tuition which is eligible to be deducted is based on a calculation of the school's religious instructional expenses, which is confirmed by

Tax receipts Cont'd

an annual review. Tax receipts are issued to the individual(s) who actually paid the tuition.

Emergency Preparedness

We have an Earthquake Early Warning System in our school to give us more preparation time in the event of an earthquake. We conduct earthquake, fire and lockdown drills throughout the year with the students in order to give them the skills to stay safe in an emergency.

