

FATHER SERRA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

111 Sun Row Drive, Toronto, ON, M9P 3J3

416-393-5391

THE FATHER SERRA TIMES



Principal: Mr. F. Venditti
Admin. Assistant: Mrs. E. Barbaro
Superintendent: Mr. Paul Crawford

Vice Principal: Ms. O'Dowd
Secretary: Mrs. H. Dinner

January-February 2009

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Good-bye Mrs. Dinner:

Thank you and farewell to Mrs. Dinner. Mrs. Dinner will be the new secretary of St. Rita C.S. We thank her for the time she has been with us and wish her all the best in her new position.

And it's official....as of June 30, 2008 I will be retiring after 33 years with our school board. It has been my utmost pleasure to have served as your Prinicipal for the last 5 years.

I would like to acknowledge the many parents and mem-

bers of our school community who continue to provide support and participate in the many activities and events that benefit our students. The members of the Catholic School Advisory Councils throughout the years, and in particular the chairs of the committees, have been outstanding and instrumental in ensuring that our community continues to enjoy the many successful initiatives that have made Fr. Serra C.S. a renowned school in our board.

Thank you!

Angel Foundation:

We are pleased to announce that The Angel Foundation for Learning, the charitable organization devoted to assisting needy students within TCDSB schools, has approved our school's funding request in support of our grade 7/8 class trips during May, 2009.

Please visit the site if you would like to make a donation www.Angelfoundationforlearning.org.

TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEES 2009

WARDS

1. Joseph Martino	416-512-3401
2. Ann Andrachuk	416-512-3402
3. Sal Piccininni	416-512-3403
4. Mary Cicogna	416-512-3404
5. Maria Rizzo	416-512-3405
6. Rob Davis	416-512-3406
7. John Del Grande	416-512-3407
8. T.B.A.	416-512-3408
9. Catherine LeBlanc-Miller	416-512-3409
10. Barbara Poplawski	416-512-3410
11. Angela Kennedy	416-512-3411
12. Paul John Crawford	416-512-3412
James Dempsey, Student Trustee	416-512-3413

PORTABLE UPDATE

Dear Parents,

Our Instrumental Music classes have now been removed from the gym and are once again in the music portable. This portable is also shared by our Vocal Music teacher.

Ms. Bellisario's grade six class has now moved back into their original portable, however, prior to

the move the portable was given quite the "makeover". The wallboards and floor tiles were completely replaced. As well, the ceiling and windows were repaired. The portable is now in very good shape.

We are awaiting news about the next portable to arrive in the newly paved area of the

playground for Mr. Merenda's grade seven class. As you know the facilities department will be removing Mr. Merenda's original portable from the site. We anticipate that some of this work will be completed during the March Break.

Thank you for your patience with these issues.

JK REGISTRATION-2008-09

Please contact our school secretary Mrs. Barbaro for an appointment if you need to register for our Fall JK classes.

Our school has a limited number of spaces available and therefore, our first priority is to register students within our catchment area, and those

students who already have siblings in our school. Students outside the area will be placed on a waiting list. We thank you in advance.

Our Heartfelt Thanks



on Pancake Tuesday

Our annual Pancake Tuesday was filled with the sweet smell of pancakes throughout the halls of Fr. Serra C.S. Thank you to our Pancake Parent Committee for another enjoyable and festive day. As well, thank you to our CSAC for purchasing the batter for the pancakes from the Golden Griddle, Woodbridge.



CSAC UPDATE

Thank you to the many volunteers who have been working behind the scenes to help CSAC deliver programs to the students over the last two months. From the ever-popular Pancake Tuesday feasting and Pizza lunches, to coordinating authors' visits for the spring and preparing for the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Communion, and Confirmation, it takes a small but dedicated army to pull it together.

On February 25th, the Facilities Committee presented a delegation to the Toronto Catholic District School Board regarding the proposed addition. The committee pointed out a few design concerns and requested a second meeting with the Board members and architects. This meeting is expected sometime in March. We will keep you updated.

On Wednesday February 4, the students were entertained by storyteller Adwoa Badoe and musician drummer Fule Badoe. Together they run Afroculture, a group that is dedicated to promoting community building and to inspiring African cultural Arts and appreciation among all people. Students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8 participated in two presentations that involved storytelling, song and dance. Adwoa and Fule kept everyone engaged and interested, and by the end of each performance even some of the teachers were up dancing! It was a wonderful warm up on a cold day in February, and a great way to recognize African Heritage Month. The presentation was sponsored by your CSAC committee

And lastly, we thank you for taking the time to respond to the survey issued by the Uniform Committee. If you have not yet handed in your form we encourage you to do so as soon as possible so that tabulations can begin. We look forward to seeing the final results and will share them with you later in the spring.

Karen Lorencwicz

Shereen Persano

MARK YOUR CALENDARS 2008-09



Parent-Teacher Interviews:

Thurs. March 12th, 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Friday March 13th: 9:00-12:00 noon

March Break:

March 16th-20th

First Reconciliation (Confession)

Monday March 30th, 7:00 p.m. All Saints Parish.

Swim Meet at Olympium:

Saturday and Sunday, March 28th & 29th

Junior Boys Volleyball Tournament:

March 25th

Junior Girls Volleyball Tournament:

March 26th

First Communion:

Sat. May 2nd, 2:00 p.m.,



Confirmation Rehearsal:

Thursday April 16th: 7:00 p.m.

Confirmation:

Monday April 20th, 7:00 p.m.

Grade 8 Graduation:

Mon. June 22nd, 7:00 p.m.

All Saints Church



ATHLETIC/TEAM NEWS

Boys Basketball: The team displayed heart and determination at the Divisional Tournament on Feb. 10th. The team is congratulated for its accomplishment this season. Members were: Peter B., Brent C., Charles D., Lukas G., A.J. G., Jay M., Gianfranco M., Michael R., Eric T., Paul T., and Steven W. Thank you boys and the coaches: Mr. Rivera and Mr. Merenda

Girls Basketball: The team played well, showed sportsmanship and represented Fr. Serra very well at the Divisional Tournament. The team members were: Sierra L., Lauren S., Stephanie S., Julia M., Samantha P., Alessia P., Alexandra F., Nicole P., Valentina C., Alessia and Alessia M. Thank you girls and to the coaches: Mr. Cianfrini and Mr. Palmino

Father Serra Chess Club:

On Wednesday February 11th, four members of the Fr. Serra Chess Club represented our school at the Individual Girls' Chess Tournament held at Mrsgr. John Corrigan Catholic School. They participated in the tournament with six other schools from our region and got a chance to practice their skills and to enjoy some friendly competition. Representing Father Serra school were **Nicole M.-grade 2, Hayley P.-grade 3, Keelin F.-grade 4 and Olha Y.-grade 8.** All of the girls displayed strong skills and great sportsmanship. Special congratulations to **Hayley** who achieved a third place medal. Thank you to our coaches and parent volunteers who assist with not only the practices but driving the team members to the tournaments: **Ms. O'Dowd, Mr. Palmino, Mr. Olijnyk and Mrs. Zastawny.**

Hockey Team: The team played its first tournament on Feb. 24th at York U. The team played well and showed determination and spirit. The team won all 5 games and advances to Div. A for the next tournament. Team members are: Ryan M., Luke B., Jordan D., Angelo D., Gianfranco M., Christopher T., Frankie C., Alex T., A.J.G., Brent C., Eric T., Nicholas N., Paul T., Samantha P., Joseph O., Phillip P., Luke R. Thank you to our team and the coaches: Mr. Cianfrini and Mr. Gonano and the team assistant Daniel S.

Primary Soccer: House Leagues: The Primary Soccer House Leagues at recess are ongoing until March Break. All of the participants have been having fun because of this organized activity. We would like to thank all the teachers who have assisted with supervision and especially Mr. Farrell for organizing the league.

FEBRUARY WAS PSYCHOLOGY MONTH

The common dream that parents have for their children is that they will have a good and happy and successful life. In fact one of the best predictors of the children who will be successful is that they have *a caring adult in their life.* As parents we often think our role is to protect our children from experiencing physical and emotional pain. In fact our role is to be there for our children when they encounter difficulties or life treats them unfairly. Many of the most successful adults have had to overcome enormous challenges to achieve their dream. Often they acknowledge that it was their parents' love and the encouragement to dream that kept them focused on their goal.

Children who do best as adults are those who have learned that they will survive even when things are going badly. Psychologists call this quality **resilience.**

Each of these examples shows us that when we face disappointment in life it is best to come up with a new action, instead of staying stuck in an unhappy state. Your job as a parent is to encourage your child when he or she is stuck and cannot move forward.

How children feel about themselves is determined by the messages that constantly run through their mind. These messages may come from parents, teachers, sisters, brothers, and other children. When facing challenges, these messages will determine whether children feel good or bad about themselves, and their ability to overcome difficulties. For example:

A child who gets a low grade on a project or test

may have a message like this going through their mind: "I never get good marks. I am just dumb. I can never do anything right. Nobody likes me."

The **resilient** child will put things into perspective. A resilient child engages in **positive self-talk**, and may have a message like this going through her mind: "I got a bad mark on my project because I didn't spend enough time planning. Next time I will start earlier and get help from my Dad".

Help your children to develop resilience by helping them to change their negative messages into positive self-talk. You can do this by making a habit of helping your children to identify their good qualities and achievements. You can use one of two methods to do this.

Indirect Approach:

When your child is within listening range, tell your family and friends about his/her good qualities and achievements: "Marco is such a helpful child. He always helps his Dad with snow shovelling. And he is kind to his brother. When he has a job to complete at home or school, he just goes ahead and does it." Or, "Maria is such a thoughtful daughter. She baked cookies to celebrate her sister's birthday. She always reminds me of the things we need to buy for her school lunch. Her room is the tidiest in our house."

Direct Approach:

You may need this method if the indirect approach is not resulting in an increase in confidence. In the morning, let your child know that today you want her to pay attention to the things that go well. That evening, put aside ten minutes to discuss things

that went well in your child's day. If your child focuses on the bad things in her day, let her know there will be time to talk about that later. Your child might need help to come up with good things. You can ask your child: "Did you get to school on time? What fun thing did you do at recess? Did you help with the younger children on the bus?" Your job as a parent is to write down three to four things that went well for your child. This will be used later on to remind your child of positive qualities and achievements. For the next three weeks, pick one day a week to remind your child to pay attention to what is going well. By week four, your child will have learned to tune-in to positive experiences. You can use your notes to write a "story" that will be specific to your child.

For a younger child, it might look like this:

"I am a thoughtful person who remembers to share treats and fun things with my friends. I do great work in art class. When I get home, I am the one who always takes care of the cat."

For an older child or an adolescent the "story" might look like this:

"I am a sensitive person with two best friends. I care about them. They care about me. I always have my sports equipment ready to take to school, and I always put it away when I get home. I am the one in the family who plans the TV viewing so that we all get to watch our favourite programs. I love my family and they love me even though we sometimes get annoyed with each other."

A MESSAGE FROM FATHER VITO

LENT IS BEGINNING

Dear Friends,

On Wednesday, February 25th, the Church invited all believers to begin once again a season of renewal and commitment. We began Lent with the symbol of the ashes: a sign of renewal and rebirth. By placing this symbol on our forehead, we are expressing to everyone around us that we belong to Christ, we have been marked by the sign of the Cross at Baptism, and we continue to offer witness to his love in our desire to "Repent and Believe in the Gospel", words with which we are singed on Ash Wednesday.

The number "40" in Scripture is a sign of "renewal and formation". Year by year we are called to "renew and reform" during the 40 days of Lent. May this season of Lent enable us to deepen our knowledge of God's love and our desire to embrace the Gospel in word and deed.

May this journey lead us to the joy of "Resurrection" — the new life of Christ in us. Wishing you blessings of peace during this Lenten Season. I look forward to sharing with you and your family time for prayer and reflection, time for celebration and service.

With prayerful best wishes,

Fr. Vito Marziliano

Pastor



School Age Programs for children up to 12 years of age, at this school.

- Before School program—Breakfast served daily 7:30 a.m. to school start. \$29/wkly
- After School program — snacks served daily. School dismissal to 6:00 p.m.

Want to know more?

Meet with the PLASP staff at Father Serra or call the PLASP office at:

905-890-1711.

Visit our website: www.plasp.com



Student Leaders: We have some exciting news to share! All our hard work and dedication to raise funds to build a school in Sierra Leone have come to fruition. A Junior Secondary School in the Suduku-Yomandu Community has been running smoothly due to our gracious contribution. Children from neighbouring communities are flocking to the new school as it offers a better learning experience. The school provides daily education to over 70 students and is equipped with a teacher's office and four classrooms. Each classroom is outfitted with desks, a blackboard and the necessary educational textbooks. We hope that we can continue working with Free the Children in helping to provide the basic necessities for children overseas.

Printer Cartridges

Students are reminded to continue to bring in their used cartridges to support the Greentec recycling project. The box is located at the main entrance to the school.



Student Leaders:

Snack Shack continues to operate Monday, Wednesday and Friday during the lunch recess. We have offered milk and juice and will be monitoring the interest in either if we are going to continue to sell the drinks. We will also promote the selling Kernels Popcorn and will add other healthy snack items for the students to enjoy.

On January 20, 2009, a group of student leaders attended the ILITE Conference at Bishop Morroco/Thomas Merton Catholic Secondary School. The students were motivated and inspired by a number of speakers and also participated in workshops dealing with issues that youth face in our world.

The student leaders are working hard on preparing for the 1st Annual Multicultural Fair to be held on Thursday March 12, 2009. This year there will 10 countries represented and students from grades 3-8 will have an opportunity to visit the booths at a scheduled time throughout the day with their class. Parents are encouraged to visit the Fair during the Parent-Teacher Interviews on the evening of March 12th from 5-8 p.m.

Thank you again for supporting all of the student leaders activities.

M. Arbuthnot and D. Ciaravella