



**St. Joseph's Catholic
High School
School News
November 2011**

A Message from the Principal

This newsletter corresponds with the mid-term reports for Semester 1 and is our first formal communication with the entire community since the opening of school in September. That seems like such a long time ago since so much has happened.

For the most part, this year has been like so many others at St. Joseph's. There were lots of activities to help keep students engaged, welcoming of new grade nines, agricultural days, success and challenge in the classroom.

We opened the school with the completion of the addition and renovation to the building. There are still some outstanding issues but students seem to be settling in nicely. Bishop Fabbro and a number of special guests were here on September 20 to celebrate the blessing and rededication of the rejuvenated school. During the celebration, we honoured our past by acknowledging the presence of two of the Sisters of St. Joseph, the order who founded the school in 1929. We also looked forward to our future through the cabinet displays in the lobby. If you are in the school, please take a minute to admire the beautiful painting by our own Angela Murcia. You will be truly amazed.

The highlight of the athletic year so far would have to be Chris Taylor. Chris was our sole representative at OFSAA Cross Country

Championships in Ottawa. This senior runner did very well finishing second among runners from our WOSSA association at the meet. Chris may have been inspired by the memory of James Young, one of our volunteer coaches who passed away at the end of the summer. Jim was in his nineties and coached up to the end of last season. The kind of dedication that Chris shows mirrors the dedication that was shown by Jim throughout his rich life.

Another highlight of the year has been the presence of a number of our elementary feeder school students at St. Joseph's on two occasions. On October 14 students enjoyed some hospitality, musical entertainment and a junior football game courtesy of our school. On November 2, grade eight students were here for an orientation session to help in the transition to high school. At St. Joseph's, we feel that it is extremely important that families and children commit to continuing their Catholic education through high school. Perhaps more than ever in their lives, young people need the support and inspiration of a Catholic education during the period of adolescence and young adulthood. We look forward to more of these bridging opportunities throughout the year and in welcoming all of them as permanent members of our community next fall.

On behalf of the staff, I am grateful to the families of the community for their cooperation, support and feedback. As the first teachers of your children, we rely on your continued involvement in their

education. If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please contact the school. If you don't know how to get hold of anyone in the building, you can call me, Peter Cassidy, Principal at 519-675-4434 ext. 26001 or send me an e-mail at pcassidy@office.ldc.sb.on.ca and I will redirect your message.

Dances

One disappointment of this year was the cancellation of our first school dance. I feel very sorry for the Student Council who did a lot of work in preparing for the event. In order to create a more positive tone at school dances, I have insisted that students refrain from a dance style known as grinding, which is a highly sexualized form of dance that is common to many popular music videos. I have further required students to obtain specific permission to participate in dances and to present their parents with a letter outlining our concerns. This has understandably deterred students from coming to the first dance.

As Principal and in speaking with other staff and students, this form of dance is completely unacceptable to the values that we are trying to impart to our students. Dances are great opportunities for students to develop positive socialization skills and we look forward to that for our students. Over the years, St. Joseph's has had many memorable dances that have served to boost school spirit, create positive experiences for our students and support the activities of Student Council.

I am hopeful that students will be more interested in the Christmas Semi-formal and that parents will be able to talk to their children about my concerns. As staff, we have been dealing with this issue for a number of years and are asking for support from parents. As always, if there are questions or concerns, please call the principal.

Student Awards

On Wednesday, October 5, we held our annual Student Awards Ceremony. In preparing for the event, two students were left off of the list of recipients and were presented with their awards at our October school Mass. Congratulations to Janelle Barned and Rebecca Reichmann who received Grade Nine Honours. As Principal, I wish to extend my congratulations and apologies to these two students and further wish to thank them and their families for their grace in the face of this oversight.

OFSAA Recognition

I wish to draw your attention to this note from a recent edition of the OFSAA bulletin relating to our Boys Soccer team. It speaks for itself.

Amazingly, St. Joseph's HS (WOSSAA) was named the winners of the Team Sportsmanship Banner for the third year. The committee and OFSAA thank the school, and in particular the coaches, for leading by example and being role models for all schools.

Congratulations and thanks to Mr. K and Mr. O

ATTENDANCE

Please call the attendance office before 8:30 a.m. if your son/daughter will be late or absent from school on any given day. **519-675-4434 Extension: 9**

Cooperative Education Report

Coop is alive and well at St. Joe's as 26 students are out gaining valuable experience in various placements around St. Thomas and surrounding area. Some of the occupations that students are "trying out" would include veterinarian technologist, teaching assistant, physiotherapy assistant, YMCA youth program assistant, day care assistant, computer support worker, nursing assistant, painting assistant, and plumbing/heating assistant, to name a few!

Semester two has a full class of 30 students who will be interviewed in December to make Mr. Westaway aware of their intentions for their Cooperative Education placement. After a two week pre-employment session at the beginning of Semester two, these students will officially start their placements February 21/2012.

At this point I would like to share with you an exciting Cooperative Education opportunity that St. Joseph's Catholic High School student Simran Aulakh is experiencing. Simran is participating in a specialized Coop program entitled "Partners in Experiential Learning". This program places senior level students who demonstrate promise of future accomplishments in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine in a research based placement. PEL Coop students will experience and contribute to the work of the research environment and be educated about academic pathways to careers in health research

Simran is working with Dr. Kathleen Surry at the London Regional Cancer Program at Victoria Hospital. Dr. Surry is a medical physicist who specializes in radiation treatment for cancer patients. Simran has been actively involved in two ongoing studies for gynaecological cancer treatment. Her duties include both research and clinical experience. Simran is a very bright and energetic student who is gaining valuable medical knowledge, along with practical "hands on" experience in this field. It is

also imperative to tell you that she is a great ambassador for St. Joseph's Catholic High School!

Any students, who are interested in the PEL course, should speak to their teachers in their specific subject of expertise, and speak to Mr. Westaway before the end of the school year. This is a competitive program, that involves paperwork and a formal interview process, so don't be shy, let us know if you would like a chance for this tremendous learning experience.

Greg Westaway

Cooperative Education Coordinator

Math News – November 2011

Math Help!

We have started up "After School Math Help" on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:00 to 4:00 in room 182. If there are any students interested, we are still taking registrations. If there are any parents interested on behalf of your child, we are still taking registrations. Attendance is mandatory and recorded! This program will continue until exams. Please see Mr. Sibley or talk to your math teacher for more information.

Math Contests are coming!

The first math contest of the year is on Tuesday, November 22nd. These are the Canadian Senior (gr. 11 / 12) and Intermediate (gr. 9 / 10) Mathematics Contests. Please see anyone in the Math Department if you are interested. You do not have to be currently enrolled in a math course to write any of the contests. The remainder of the contests occur in either February or April.

M. Hardy

GUIDANCE NEWS

Getting to Know Your Guidance Counselor

Students at St. Joseph's have been divided between the two Guidance counsellors according to the first initial of their last name.

Mrs. Jennifer Boin (A-L) Mr. Al Quaglia (M-Z)

College/University Update

For students wishing to attend College or University Next year, the process began early in September with liaison officers from Colleges and Universities coming into our school on an ongoing basis. Promoting their post-secondary institution and making students aware of life on their campus gives the students the background they need to investigate the prospective school on their own. This procedure places increased responsibility on the student to be informed. As always, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they have the prerequisite courses for programs to which they apply. It is recommended that the students involve their parents in this process. The following presentations took place for potential graduating students to attend:

- ❖ The University Information Program was hosted by Arthur Voaden on Thursday October 6, 2011 for all potential University-bound students. The students had the opportunity to meet with liaison officials from all Ontario universities.
- ❖ Our own University Application assembly was held on Tuesday October 11, 2011 for all students who intend on applying for university in September 2012. All aspects of the process were discussed.
- ❖ The advantage of completing the application on-line is students will have direct access to their application so that changes can be made at any time up to the date of Wednesday January 11, 2012.

- ❖ A College Information Program was held at Fanshawe College (London) on October 19, 2011 for College-bound students. Liaison officials from all Ontario colleges were present with displays and pamphlets.
- ❖ Our own College Application Assembly was held here at our school on Thursday, October 13, 2011 for all students who plan to attend College in September 2012. All aspects of the process were discussed. Similar to University applications, students are strongly encouraged to do so since it will give them direct access to their application on-line. The due date for College Application submissions is February 1, 2012.

Are you Scholarship Material?

Most universities and colleges have scholarships and entrance awards for which an application is NOT required. However, there are a wide variety of scholarships for which applications are necessary. For these scholarships, students must submit additional information such as community service involvement, extra-curricular activities, personal profiles, references, an essay and, possibly proof of financial need. Generally, the greater the value of the scholarship, the more work is involved in winning it.

In an effort to advise students about upcoming scholarships, posters are put up on the guidance bulletin board, information is provided via the morning announcements (a hard copy is posted on the guidance office door) and photocopies of the applications may be picked up in the guidance office. A scholarship file drawer (available to students at any time) provides information on scholarships that come up during the year. We also

have a list of websites with financial aid and scholarship information as well as publications that are updated annually.

All Grade 11 and 12 course marks are recorded permanently on the student transcript, including failing marks. Also, students who drop a Grade 11 or 12 course after the due date for both semester 1 and semester 2 courses will have a “W” for withdrawal and a mark recorded. The due date is recorded as of the **5th day** after the distribution of the mid-term report card to all students. These marks will be forwarded to Colleges and/or Universities and may be used to determine admission.

School policy states students must carry a full timetable until they have successfully completed **24 credits**.

The Five Day Study Plan:

Guidance Advise to Improving Your Academic Performance

Each day, review your notes and the work that you did in each class that day. On the second day review that day’s work and the work from the day before. Add on a day’s review each day until you have five days of work which you are reviewing. Then set aside studying the initial day’s work. By spending minutes a day reviewing the last five days of lessons, you will have less to study for at test time and your grades will improve.

GRADE NINE STUDENTS

The counsellors have met with the Grade Nine students to discuss ways of making their first year in high school a successful one. They were introduced to the services available to them and were encouraged to begin taking more responsibility for their education and their future.

Entering Grad 9 marks a huge transition in the life of our young people. Students in their first year of high school could potentially have 8 different teachers. This fact alone can make it difficult for students to keep organized and on top of program expectations. Parents also find this transition difficult. For this reason, we offer the following suggestions:

- ❖ Ask about school every day.
- ❖ Help your son/daughter keep organized by encouraging them to use their planners daily.
- ❖ Call the school with any concerns or questions your son/daughter’s Guidance Counselor will always be there for advice.
- ❖ Students should be doing some type of homework every night. Reviewing new materials, working on long-term assignments and even reading every night, count as homework.
- ❖ Review your child’s progress on their Learning Skills. Research has shown that students who develop good work habits, learn to work cooperatively with other students, are well organized, develop good independent study skills, and are able to take initiative, are more likely to be successful than those without these skills. This section of the Report Card will give you insight into your child’s development in this important area of learning.
- ❖ Attend Parent-Teacher Interview nights whenever possible. Even if the teacher has not requested an appointment, you may request one to get a better understanding of how your child is doing in school.



Cross Country 2011

Cross country had over 55 students participate. There was a great representation of grade nines deciding to put forth the courage and fortitude it takes to compete at running.

Junior Girls captured the team gold medal at TRI County with Chelsey McGuiggan(3rd), Sarah Wheeler (6th), Christina Timmons (8th) Emmalee Murray (14th) and Dani Baker's (16th) finishes counting toward this award.

Other top ten Tri County individual finishers include Chris Taylor(2nd) in Senior Boys, and Josh Brown (7th) and Adi Wordini (10th) in the Midget Boys race.

The headline of the year belonged to Chris Taylor. He ended a three year dry spell of the school attending OFSAA by nabbing the third and final spot in the WOSSA championships. Chris travelled to Ottawa to represent St. Joseph's with 249 other top

senior males. He is only the fourth individual in the history of the school to make it to the Ontario finals.

100km Club

As a way for all members of our community to maintain or improve their fitness we will be offering a walking/ running club called the 100km Club. We will meet at 2:45 every Tuesday and Thursday. Any distance covered on these days will be recorded. When an individual's walking/running distances accumulates to 100km the member will receive a free t-shirt declaring their 100km accomplishment. For anyone committed to Math help or Band practice there will be an opportunity to run/walk at 4:00pm these days as well. Thank you to Mr.K who will be leading this group.

It should be noted that no experience is required and all fitness levels are welcomed.



Girls Basketball

The Girls Basketball teams have tremendous seasons this year.

The senior team finished the regular season with a 9-1 record finishing first overall. The Rams were also impressive on the tournament circuit winning the Woodstock WCI Tournament and the Olympia Sports Camp Tournament as well as placing well at Stratford and MTS to finish with a tournament record of 11-3. The keys to the season have been ferocious defence and hard work. The girls are looking forward to challenging for the WOSSA crown Nov 17th.

The junior team could only be described as raw at the beginning of this season. They starting building from the ground up and managed to surprise many teams along the way finishing with a regular season record of 7-3. The girls had strong performances at tournaments and have built a good base for next year's teams.

The highlight of the season for both teams had to be the trip to Huntsville. The teams had a great opportunity to bond while playing some fantastic basketball. Players enjoyed team building exercises like rock climbing, high ropes, zip lines, Minute To Win It competitions, Skit Night and cabin life. It was a great experience and a good time was had by all.

The Rams would like to thank Mr. Gary Clarke, Ms. Devin Clarke and Ms. Lindsay Clarke for volunteering their time to coach the Jr. Team this year.

Mr. D. Fox



CANADIAN AND WORLD STUDIES DEPARTMENT NEWS

World War 1 Education Day

On Friday, October 7, 2011 Miss Cupello's and Mrs. Johnston's Grade 10 History classes took part in World War I Education Day at Fanshawe Pioneer Village. Having taken students to the village before for this experience, it did not disappoint. Students travelled en masse to various stations set up to review WWI topics by presenters who delivered their information in character. Particularly memorable was the opportunity to carry sandbags into the trenches while observing camouflaged snipers armed with Ross rifles. While all presenters engaged our students, many students were impressed by the military chaplain who described the devastating loss of his son, finding his burial site while being fired upon by Germans, and then giving him a proper religious burial.

New this session were two presentations organized by Ian Raven of the Elgin Military Museum. The first session was a weapons display of real WWI pistols, rifles, and machine guns from the museum, as well as a monologue delivered by the father of a young man from Dutton, Ontario who lost his life in WWI. Teachers were thankful to take away photocopies of his death certificate, photo of his grave, and a letter home to use as primary source material in their teaching in the future.

Organizers were determined not just to deliver the program in an informative and creative way, but to get students active. As the day concluded, students participated in a barbed wire crawl, a grenade attack, went to battle school, and joined in a group assault with eight other schools at Vimy Ridge. The events of the day are sure to be a memorable experience consolidating material from the first unit of the course.

Extraordinary Canadians and Grade 10 History

On November 7th, students from St. Joseph's Catholic High School, in association with other students from Elgin County, had the great pleasure of attending the Extraordinary Canadians Author Meet-and-Greet made possible by The Estate of Dorothy Fay Palmer and Penguin Canada. The event was held at the St. Thomas Golf and Country Club and in attendance were four authors who contributed to the Extraordinary Canadians Series. More specifically, series editor and author John Ralston Saul, Nino Ricci, and Charles Foran were present and discussed their works with students. A complete set of the series was donated to each school in Elgin County and students who attended also had the chance to receive an autographed book from one of these acclaimed authors. We are very thankful to have had the opportunity to participate in this memorable event.

Grade 12 Sociology

The Grade 12 Sociology course entitled, Individuals and Families in a Diverse Society, provides students with an opportunity to learn about the challenges associated with the family life cycle. In addition, a lot of time is spent discussing strategies that can be used to overcome the obstacles people encounter on life's journey. An important dimension of personal growth involves spiritual development and it is for this reason, Father John Jasica presented to this Grade 12 class on two separate occasions. During his first visit, he discussed the challenges associated with developing one's faith in young adulthood and the second talk focused on the topic of marriage. Students found the discussions to be engaging and practical.