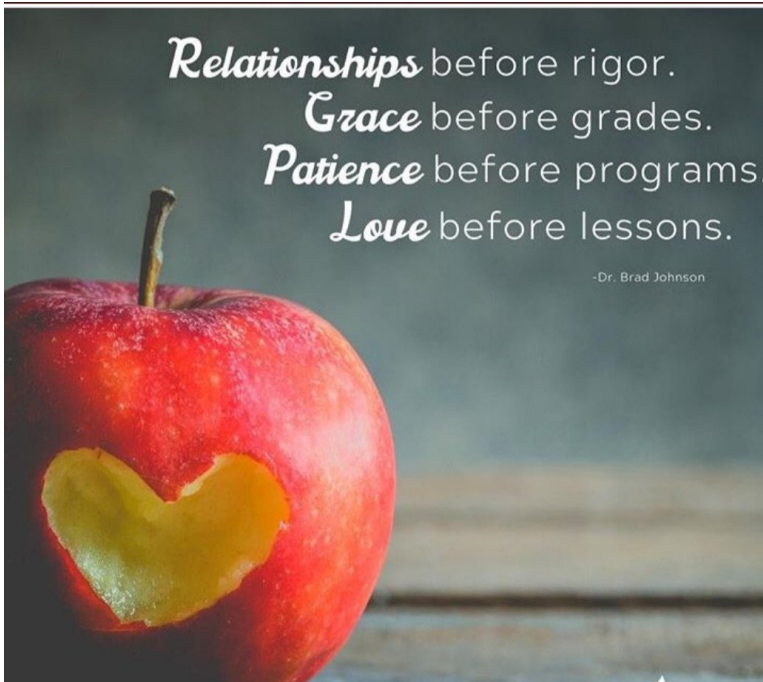




ST. JEROME JOURNAL

SEPTEMBER 2020 FALL NEWSLETTER

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MANE EVENTS:

First Day of School: Staggered Entry
FDK-Friday, September 11th
Grades 1-3-Thursday, September 10th
Grades 7-8-Monday, September 14th
Grades 4-6-Tuesday, September 15th

Catholic School Council: Further
Information to follow

St. Jerome Feast Day: September 30

Curriculum Night-TBD
Picture Day-TBD
Thanksgiving-October 12
Re-Entry-November 16

Next issue of St. Jerome Journal:
December 2020

WELCOME BACK!

BY MS. ROCCA PRINCIPAL

As the new principal of St. Jerome CES, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the 2020-2021 school year. Along with our talented teachers and exceptional support staff we look forward to sharing this educational journey with your children. We especially welcome new families to our school community as we work together to build relationships as well as strengthen the bonds with families who continue to call St. Jerome their home.

We are all eager to begin this new school year with hope, patience, faith and well being. We look upon the year as a time to grow together despite the challenges we may face. As a partnership we will strive to provide our children with the optimal support they need to meet their potential in achieving academic and personal successes.

Communication and collaboration are essential components in creating a vibrant school community. I invite you to visit our school website regularly, follow us on twitter and look to our quarterly school newsletters. This would also be an ideal time for parents who are considering becoming part of our Catholic School Council to join our team. In the following weeks, I will be inviting all parents and guardians to complete a brief online school survey. This will be instrumental in helping to shape future vision and direction for our school. It is with great enthusiasm that I welcome our students back to their school.

Although, it is a very unique start to the school year, it is with our collective optimism and unity that will make this year a great one!

Be Courageous, be strong, be everything in love. *1 Corinthians 16: 13-14*

COVID-19 and Our School

Our school year will be unlike any other we have experienced in our lifetime. Many safety measures have been put in place to ensure a safe return to school for our staff and students. To help inform parents with the new procedures, we have created an information guide which will hopefully address any of your questions and/or concerns. It will also be an excellent tool to share with your child(ren) to help familiarize them with the new changes before their first day.

Upon arrival in the morning and during pick up in the afternoon, parents are asked to keep the kiss and ride loop moving steadily (not to park). Parents are to drop off their children and **not to gather by the fence or gateway to wait for the morning bell with their children.**

The kiss n ride loop will experience greater than normal traffic since some students who would have regularly taken the bus for transportation may not do so at this time and are being driven instead.

Please slow down, be extra vigilant for the safety of our children. For pick up, you may consider arranging for your child to walk and meet at a location outside the kiss and ride in order to avoid the congestion. Please be mindful of our neighbours and not block their driveways or block the entrance of the school as we have buses that will need to access this entrance. Give yourself extra time and patience during our drop off and pick up times.

We love our parents and all they do for our school, but at this time parents are not permitted inside the building. If you are having to pick up your child during the day you will be asked to wait inside our mini foyer. Otherwise, appointments will need to be made. You may contact the school to make those arrangements.

Students are to attend for the full day. If you are picking up your child during the school day for any reason, he/she is to remain home for the remainder of the day. Hot lunch and/or dropping off a lunch are not permitted. Please pack a full lunch/snack for your child each day.



Please ensure that each day you are taking the COVID-19 child assessment prior to your child attending.. This is a crucial monitoring tool that will help us control/track any spread. **Please do not send your child to school if they are sick.** If your child is exhibiting any symptoms at school, they will be sent to an isolation room where they will be monitored and a parent will be called to pick up immediately. Please know this in advance.

Our school team has worked diligently to prepare for this school year. In a short time we have been able to accomplish much even if it was, and continues to be a time of uncertainty. Your child's class assignment has been reviewed and careful thought and consideration has been given to balance a variety of factors. If you feel that your child's class placement is not preferred or ideal, unfortunately, **changes will not be addressed at this time.** This will be your child's placement and we will continue to support your child in every way to make their learning experience positive and successful. We will be looking at class placements again at the next re-entry point. Please note that the next re-entry point for parents to switch from remote learning to in person instruction or visa versa is **November 16th.** This decision will need to be directed to the office by **November 1st** in order for the necessary restructuring to take place.

We would like to continue to have open communication and invite you to check the YCDSB and St. Jerome websites on a regular basis and if you haven't already please join us on Twitter.

Thank you for your continued understanding, patience and cooperation.

Our 2020/2021 School Structure

- Kindergarten 2 classes
- Grade 1 1 class
- Grades 1/2 1 class
- Grade 2/3 1 class
- Grade 3 1 class
- Grade 4 1 class
- Grade 4/5 1 class
- Grade 5/6 1 class
- Grade 5 1 class
- Grade 6 2 classes
- Grade 7 2 classes
- Grades 7/8 1 class
- Grade 8 2 classes



Important Medical Information

Please remember to update all emergency procedures and medical information. This includes forms for asthma,

epipens, diabetic management forms, prescription and nonprescription medication. Medication cannot be administered by the school staff unless directed by a doctor and an "Administration of a Prescription Medication" form has been completed and signed by the parent and family doctor. If your child requires medication (prescribed by a physician), please notify the school and complete the necessary S16 form (available upon request).

All medication must be sent to the office for safekeeping.

In our school, there are students with potentially life threatening forms of allergic reactions called anaphylaxis. Due to the severity of allergies in schools, parents are asked to ensure that lunches do not contain peanut or nut products. Also, please refrain from bringing in treats such as cakes, donuts, cookies for birthdays and other celebrations because of the risks associated with these products for students with severe allergies.

Students with anaphylaxis are required to bring in TWO EPI PENS: one EPI PEN for their person and one for the office ASAP. Along with this, appropriate forms are to be filled out and returned to school immediately.

*S16 and S16a can be obtained in the office.

Safe Student Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures

If a parent wishes to walk their child(ren) to the schoolyard the morning they may do so. Parents will need to drop off and not wait for the morning bell to ring or gather with other parents. When picking up your child to walk home, please arrive closest to the time of the bell and wait while exercising physical distancing with other parents. If you are driving and want to pick up your child from the doors or fence area, you will need to park your vehicle in the parking lot. **Please do not park or leave your car unattended in the Kiss and Ride Loop.** Parents are to share this information with family members who is dropping off or picking up their child(ren). We ask that you please use the SJE Kiss and Ride located on the North side of the school for student drop/pick-off. The bus loop must remain for school transportation ONLY between 8:10am-8:40 am and 2:50 pm - 3pm. We also ask that you refrain from parking in the YMCA before and after school parking lot on the South-West side of the school. We thank you for your cooperation in keeping our children safe.

Busing Information

For information on bus routes, stop locations, times, late arrivals, cancellation, eligibility, registering a complaint, safety and general information, please contact the York Region Student Transportation Services School Bus Information Line at 1-877-330-3001, accessible 24 hours a day or visit the STSYR website. Another useful site for school bus information is www.schoolbuscity.com. Students will be assigned seating on the bus. This will be shared with parents prior to their child's first day of school.

Absences & Lates

To support student learning, it is important that your child arrives to school on time and prepared for their day. Please ensure that your child is ready by 8:25 a.m. when the bells rings, or prior to this time when supervision begins at 8:10 a.m.. It is an important for students to exercise time management skills and to be classroom ready with their materials and belongings. This will also minimize disruptions to classes already in session. Your cooperation in modelling the importance of this is greatly appreciated. If your child is late, he/she will need to enter using the front door and sign in using a booklet located outside the office doors,

If your child is absent or late (even on the first day of school), please call our **Safe Arrival Line at 1-855-856-7862**, or visit the website, **www.go.schoolmessenger.ca**. All absences and lates must be reported through this system. School staff will be directing all calls to the Safe Arrival Line.



Student Agendas

This year, students in the **primary** and **junior** grades will be using student specific agendas. This agenda will assist students in developing daily organizational skills, track homework and provide another method of ongoing communication between the home and school. The agenda will also be useful in helping to keep parents/guardians informed of homework, tests, and events. It will allow parents/guardians the ability to assist their children in achieving their goals by monitoring the completion of their work and providing guidance and encouragement. All students from Gr. 1 to 6 will receive an agenda for \$8.00 each. Please make cheques payable to St.Jerome or cash payments are also accepted. Please have your child deliver this payment to their classroom teacher (labelled and sealed) by Friday, September 18th.

This year, students in the **intermediate** grades will need to source their own style of agenda for planning, organizing and tracking their daily homework and assignments. It is essential for these students to begin considering what individual style works best for them as they begin to personalize their learning skills in preparation for secondary school. Please discuss with your grade 7 and/or 8 child(ren) what they prefer and look for in an agenda (it could be a digital tool or a booklet style format). It is critical that this is established at the onset of the school year and continued on throughout. It is an ideal opportunity for students to take ownership and develop a greater sense of the time management/organizational style that suits them best. While back to school supply shopping, this would be an important item topic to discuss with your intermediate child(ren).

Monthly Catholic Virtues

In celebration of our continued faith development, each month we are proud to acknowledge students who demonstrate specific attributes of the Catholic Virtue we are highlighting. Our virtues are as follows:

- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| • SEPTEMBER | COURAGE |
| • OCTOBER | COMPASSION |
| • NOVEMBER | JUSTICE |
| • DECEMBER | HOPE |
| • JANUARY | UNITY |
| • FEBRUARY | WISDOM |
| • MARCH | PERSEVERANCE |
| • APRIL | REVERENCE |
| • MAY | RESPONSIBILITY |
| • JUNE | INTEGRITY |



Prayer of Courage for Parents and Guardians

During the month of September we celebrate the virtue of courage. It is also one of our school's founding words of *Knowledge, Faith, and Courage*. It is with hope that the following is a prayer provides you with inspiration and peace as we begin this new school year together.

Dear Lord,
Thank you for the gift of our children.
Help us to set boundaries for them,
and yet encourage them to explore.
Give us the strength and courage to
treat each day as a fresh start.
As our children prepare to start a new
year, may Confidence be their
foundation, may Grace be their guide
and may Hope be their compass
toward a bright future.
May they face each day with positivity
knowing that no matter what comes
their way, they do not have to face it
alone.
May our children come to know you,
the one true God, and Jesus Christ,
whom you have sent.
May your Holy Spirit help them to
grow in faith, hope, and love, so they
may know peace, truth, and goodness.
May their ears hear your voice.
May their eyes see your presence in all
things.
May their lips proclaim your word.
May their hearts be your dwelling
place.
May their hands do works of charity.
May their feet walk in the way of Jesus
Christ, your Son and our Lord.
Amen



EarlyOn Centre

The EarlyOn Centre offers a free, high quality drop in program for families and children from birth to 6 years of age. This is an opportunity for parents to experience time interacting through play alongside their child and with other children and parents. It also provide parents with the chance to connect with childcare professionals for parenting tips and advice.

The EarlyOn Centre will resume its programming located in the kindergarten wing of our school. For more information about the program, times, alternate locations and updates on the recent Covid-19 protocols, please visit the Ministry of Ontario website www.ontario.ca/page/find/earlyon-child-and-family-centre

School Dress Code & Spirit Wear

St. Jerome continues to be an Appropriate Dress Code school. Please make sure to read Policy 219A Elementary Dress Code for information on appropriate dress.

Please stay tuned for information regarding our next spirit wear launch.



Catholic School Council

Our Catholic School Council is a parent committee that works in partnership with the school to bring new and fresh ideas to the lives of students. Our CSC also participates in fundraising efforts to provide our students with opportunities throughout the year to stimulate and nurture all the students at St. Jerome Catholic School.

Further information regarding the St. Jerome Catholic School Council will be provided.

Mental Health & Well Being

The mental health and well being of your child is important to us all. For resources, support and further information on this topic please refer to the following YCDSB site: <https://www.ycdsb.ca/mental-health>. You are also invited to follow their Twitter site for current updates @YCDSB_MH.

Knight of Columbus Essay Contest Grade 8

Students who are in grade 8 are invited to take part in this essay contest presented by the Knights of Columbus. It is a valuable experience in preparation for high school and an excellent opportunity for students to express their faith in challenging times.

Certificates and prizes will be awarded! Further information and timelines could be found at www.kofc.org/essay

2020-2021 Essay Topic: In an essay of 500-750 words, discuss how trusting in God during a difficult time has helped you or someone you know find the strength and hope to endure it. Consider especially those times when it was a challenge to understand why something was happening. Consider also sharing any lessons about faith and hope you or someone you know may have learned from this experience."

Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy"
(1 Peter 1:8).



Stay Paw-sitive!

Please refer to a previous email that was sent to parents and guardians regarding the details of this activity.

Each child has been invited to create a paw print. It is an opportunity for students to see the positivity in themselves, their ability to accept change, and the importance of exercising a growth mindset. It is also hoped that this fun and creative exercise will help them reconnect with their school community and provide support for one another through their peer inspired messages.

Please have your child deliver their "Stay Paw-sitive" paw print to their classroom teacher on their return to school and we will display them throughout the school.

Thank you for having your child participate in this activity. We look forward to receiving them!



Electronic Devices

Students are encouraged to bring an electronic device to school to support their learning in the classroom. Devices such as a tablet, chromebook or laptop would ensure your child is accessing their own personal device. Students who are not able to bring in an electronic device will be given one to borrow in class. Once shared, the devices will be sanitized. Students bringing an electronic device are to carry this device to and from school for safekeeping. Please note that a cell phone is not considered to be a device used in class. Any cell phones brought to school need to be turned off and put away out of sight. They are not to be used at recess or any time during the school day. Teachers will be providing further instruction on the appropriate use of technology in the classroom. They will also be distributing the form, "Acceptable Use of Information Technology Agreement" which will need to be signed.



Remote Learners



Further information will be provided regarding remote learning. I wanted to send a message to those students who will not be returning to St. Jerome this September. Although, students will be learning from afar and joining other classrooms virtually, we want them to know that St. Jerome will always be their home school. We look forward to the day when we could all be together once again in our school. In the meantime, please continue to visit our school website and follow our happenings on Twitter. Continue to strive for excellence and do your best in all you set out to learn. I look forward to meeting you soon in person and remember **Knowledge, Faith and Courage** can go a very long way!

~Ms. Rocca