

Dear Parents, Students and Friends of St. Augustine School:



December is always a very interesting month for us here at School: we conclude our first term of school with the distribution of First Term Reports, prepare for Parent Conferences and our Advent Evening of Prayer and Song, have a class host an Advent Assembly – and we wait...

The overall concept of *Waiting* is challenging for us all. With the pace that we all live in, it takes a certain kind of intention to really live in this moment – to be both fully present to how we are choosing to spend our time and resources, and at the same time, to be *watchful*. We hold dear these days of Advent – a waiting time – and see it as an opportunity to witness to the children and the families that we serve a spirit of prayerfulness, of kindness and generosity and of deep appreciation for all the gifts we have in our lives: our Faith, our families, our health and our futures.

These past five weeks have been brim-filled: students worked hard, had much success and have had their efforts recognized by their teachers. We look forward to our upcoming **Parent-Teacher Conferences** this coming Thursday afternoon and evening and Friday, where parents are encouraged to bring forth their own

set of affirmations or concerns. I am most grateful for the tremendous support that we receive from our parents in attending to their children's school and faith lives and we look forward to everyone's presence over these two days.

Gratitude abounds here: our Grade 4 mass was a prayerful welcome into the Advent season; we have had a tremendous response to the **Vancouver Food Bank Drive**, have received dozens of **mugs for the Hostel programme** and are beginning to see donations for the women at **Sancta Maria House**. At today's prayerful assembly hosted by the Grade 3's, we were reminded of our traditional collection for the **Oblate Kenyan Missions** within our Advent Concert on December 17.

It is true to say that many opportunities are presented to families at this Christmas time – by showing our children that we can all do something, we can all experience at a young age the joy of giving.

The coming week we have some exciting events to look forward to within the community: Grades 2/3/ 6/ and 7 are going skating tomorrow, and we are welcoming students and staff from Talmud Torah School to our school on Thursday morning, as they reach out to other schools to share gifts of their faith traditions with us. Students and Mr. Arntzen are working on perfecting the musical selections for our **Advent Evening of Song and Praise**. Members of our School choir will be performing at Stanley Park on Wednesday evening in addition to their public performance at Robson Square on Sunday afternoon. All these signs of God's goodness bless us – and we are grateful for each opportunity we have to move out into the community to share the Good News with others.

Next week, we'll be busy practicing for our Concert, having **Reconciliation** for our Grades 3-7 students on Thursday morning, hosting a Seniors' Luncheon at the Parish that noontime, and Family Grouping for our children here at School. Please be sure to join us for our annual **Christmas Sing Along** on Friday, December 19 at 10:50 am in the gym. It's a wonderful community event and all are welcome.

As our big new school rises up, know that our Parish is extremely blessed by the incredible generosity of time and treasure that was represented throughout the Fall Campaign. Together with the parish community, **over \$436,000** was donated – and such abundant generosity inspires us all. Thank you everyone!

Our next **NEWSLETTER** will come in January – in the meantime, know that every family is held in our daily prayers. May the love and peace of the Holy Family bless your family in the coming weeks as you wait, watch and prepare together.

(If you are staying in Vancouver over the Christmas holidays, be sure to check on Mass times for Christmas day and New Year's Day – both Holy Days of Obligation. Some Mass times may have changed since last year!)

Fondly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Quernadt', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Principal