



# St. Mark School Newsletter

## October 2022

St. Mark Catholic Elementary School  
240 Autumn Hill Cres.  
Kitchener, ON, N2N 1K8  
Phone: (519) 743-4682

*"Growing in skill, wisdom and strength."*

### Our Mission Statement

*St. Mark Catholic Elementary School, with home, Church, and community, is committed to nurturing the growth and future success of faith-centered individuals through the pursuit of academic excellence, Catholic values, and respect for all.*

### IMPORTANT DATES

**International Walk to School Month**  
October

**Dwarfism Awareness & Acceptance Month**  
October

**National Custodial & Maintenance Worker Day**  
Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>

**World Teachers Day**  
Wednesday, October 5<sup>th</sup>

**School Picture Day**  
at St. Mark School  
Wednesday, October 5<sup>th</sup>

**Walk to School Day**  
Thursday, October 6<sup>th</sup>

**Thanksgiving Mass at St. Mark Church**  
Thursday, October 6<sup>th</sup>  
(9:30 am)

**Thanksgiving Day**  
Monday, October 10<sup>th</sup>

**Early Childhood Educators Day**  
Tuesday, October 18<sup>th</sup>

**National Bus Drivers Day**  
Wednesday, October 19<sup>th</sup>

### PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

It is hard to believe we have completed a month of school already. Please be sure to check out the important dates on our calendar for the months of October and November.

The **Autumnal Equinox 2022** occurred on Thursday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9:03 pm EST; the first day of fall arrived as it always does. Once again, we are richly blessed with all the beauty the autumn season offers.

Our school community is very blessed to have a **School Council** that is committed to working together to make the school the best it can be. I would like to extend a sincere thanks to the members of our School Council who so generously give of their time, and for their commitment to the students, staff, and parents of our school community. Please continue your support of this group and their endeavors this year. There is more information about our School Council in this School Newsletter for your perusal and information. Please note School Council is now being referred to as **Catholic School Advisory Council (CSAC)**. We encourage you to check the school website for more information about CSAC activities.

We are [once again] planning to have our students attend Mass at St. Mark Church throughout the school year. We look forward to working and celebrating with Father Roque who is new to St. Mark Parish. More information about our **Liturgical Calendar** for this school year is outlined in the October Newsletter.

We are all very thankful for our school community and the students we serve. I would like to wish everyone a very joyful Thanksgiving. Please take some time to give thanks for the many blessings we have.

**Happy Thanksgiving!!** Enjoy this beautiful time of the year.

Mr. Lankowski  
Principal

**Grade 1&1/2 Trip to the Benjamin Tree Farm Pumpkin Patch**

Wednesday, October 19<sup>th</sup>  
(9:30-11:30 am)

**Canada Library Workers Day**  
Friday, October 21<sup>st</sup>

**Professional Development Day**  
Monday, October 24<sup>th</sup>  
(Full Day)

**Grade 7 Hep B1/HPV1 Meningococcal Vaccination**  
Tuesday, October 25<sup>th</sup>

**Halloween & Halloween Theme Day at St. Mark School**  
Monday, October 31<sup>st</sup>

**NOVEMBER AT A GLANCE**

**The Feast of All Saints**  
Tuesday, November 1<sup>st</sup>

**Grade 4 Bible Celebration**  
Thursday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>  
(2:15 pm)

**Veterans' Week**  
November 5<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>

**Catholic School Advisory Council Meeting**  
Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup>  
(7:00 pm)

**Remembrance Day**  
Friday, November 11<sup>th</sup>

**Professional Development Day**  
Friday, November 18<sup>th</sup>

**Bullying Awareness & Prevention Week**  
November 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>

**Progress Report Distribution Day**  
Monday, November 21<sup>st</sup>

**Parent-Teacher Interviews**  
Thursday, November 24<sup>th</sup>  
(3:30-9:00 pm)

**SCHOOL PICTURE DAY**

Individual and class **School Pictures** will be taken on **Wednesday, October 5<sup>th</sup>** for all students JK to Grade 8. If you do not wish to have your child's picture taken with his/her class, please contact your child's teacher no later than Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup>. Please try to avoid appointments on that day.

**CATHOLIC SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL NEWS**

Our **Catholic School Advisory Council (CSAC)** met virtually for the first time this year on Thursday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 pm. Our CSAC Executive, Parent & Staff members are as follows:

Chair: Emily Hartlen  
Vice-Chair: Diana Darcey  
Secretary: Sarah Demaiter

Parents:  
Catherine McCaffery, Elizabeth Searam, Krysti O'Kelly, Michelle Proctor, Paula Jacobs, Geraldine Doerr, Claudine Newman, Joe Preis, Chetna Tomar, Claudia Brown, Jennifer Grogan

Principal: Gary Lankowski

Catholic School Advisory Council Meetings, 2022-2023 are scheduled as follows:

Thursday, September 22, 2022, at 7:00 pm  
Thursday, November 10, 2022, at 7:00 pm  
Thursday, January 26, 2023, at 7:00 pm  
Thursday, March 30, 2023, at 7:00 pm  
Thursday, May 11, 2023, at 7:00 pm

Parents/guardians and citizens are all welcome to attend either virtually or in-person as these are public meetings. More information about CSAC activity is forthcoming and will be included in subsequent school newsletters.

**TERRY FOX WALK FOR CANCER RESEARCH**

Thank you to our students, staff, and families for their participation in our annual **Terry Fox Run**, and for the kind donations to the Terry Fox Foundation for Cancer Research. Our **Terry Fox Assembly** is on Friday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm. Funds raised for the Terry Fox Walk for Cancer Research will be published in our *November Newsletter*.

**SCHOOL AGENDAS & FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL FORMS**

All students from grades 1–8 have received a **student agenda** for the 2022-2023 school year. Parents are requested to pay **\$5.50** per agenda using **School Cash Online**. Please contact Mr. Lankowski should your family require financial support with the agendas. Also, please complete all forms on School Cash Online at your earliest convenience.

### LITURGICAL CALENDAR 2022-2023

- October • 6 Opening/Thanksgiving Mass at St. Mark Church (9:30 am)
- November • 3 Grade 4 Bible Celebration at St. Mark School (2:15 pm)  
• 11 Remembrance Day Ceremony at St. Mark School (10:40 am)  
• 25 Advent Penitential Service at St. Mark School (1:15 pm)
- December • 15 Advent Mass at St. Mark Church (9:30 am)  
• 25 **CHRISTMAS DAY**
- February • 15 Mount Mary Retreat for Grade 8 Students (Feb 15-17)  
• 16 Mass at Mount Mary w/t Grade 8 Students & Staff (4:30 pm)  
• 22 Ash Wednesday Mass at St. Mark School with Deacon Phil (9:00 am)
- March • 9 Lenten Reconciliations at St. Mark School (1:15 pm)
- April • 7 Good Friday  
• 9 **EASTER SUNDAY**  
• 25 **Feast Day of St. Mark**  
• 30 Education Week Sunday Mass at St. Mark Church (11:30 am)
- June • 22 Year End School Mass at St. Mark Church (9:30 am)  
• 27 Grade 8 Graduation Celebration at St. Mark School (6:00 pm)

### SAFE ARRIVAL TO SCHOOL

The school day begins at 8:55 am. Teachers and other staff members begin supervising the school yard at 8:40 am. **Please do not send your child/children to school before 8:40 am, since they would be unsupervised on the school yard – unless your child is enrolled in the Extended Day Program.** If this is difficult for you, please make daycare arrangements for your child/children. Thank you for your cooperation in this important matter.

Also, this is just a gentle reminder that if your child is sick or will be late coming to school, you **MUST CALL THE SCHOOL AT (519) 743-4682** and inform us of the absence. Please also provide for us a reason for absence. Thank you for helping to keep our students' safe.

### PARKING REMINDER FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Thank you to all parents, guardians and caregivers who have been following the rules for dropping your children at school and picking them up at the end of classes. The safety of your children remains the priority for everyone at St. Mark School.

A continued reminder to those who may not be following our guidelines:

Parents/Guardians are not to be using the school parking lots to pick up their child/children between 8:40 am & 3:40 pm; Parents/Guardians who have a child enrolled in the Extended Day Program can use the parking lot from 7:00 am – 8:40 am and 3:40 pm – 6:00 pm

Parents/Guardians are not to be parking in the handicapped space unless they have a permit or the principal's permission to do so.

Parents/Guardians are not to be parking in the school zone on Autumn Hill Crescent; we encourage parents to park on the school side of Autumn Hill Crescent when dropping their child/children off to school – again, not in the school zone; a city Bi-Law Officer will issue tickets to those who do not comply. When students are dropped-off they are not to be walking through the parking lot on their own – students need to use the sidewalks. **Parents are to stay on the city sidewalks when dropping off/picking up their children.**

Together, let's make our school the safest place for our students.

#### HEALTH & WELFARE

There are students and staff in the school who have extreme allergies to peanuts and related products such as peanut butter and oil, as well as other nuts and nut products (cashews, pistachios etc.) For some, the allergies are so severe that consumption or even exposure to a nut product (e.g., smell) could be **life threatening**. Prevention is the best approach and, therefore, we ask families to refrain from sending nuts and nut products to school with the students. **Please instruct your child never to share their lunch and recess snacks.**

#### PEANUT BUTTER SUBSTITUTES

There is a new product marketed as *School Safe Soy Butter Spread*; a food product that looks, smells, and tastes like real peanut butter (but isn't real peanut butter), This product **will not** be permitted in a school, as it places administrators, staff, and volunteers in a position of having to decide definitively if the product is – or is not – real peanut butter. Board staff members are not qualified food experts and are in no position to make such decisions – particularly where exposure to real peanut butter can be life threatening to someone with a severe allergy.

#### NEWS FROM OUR LIBRARY LEARNING COMMONS

There are plenty of books about Thanksgiving and loads of SPOOOOOKY BOOKS for Halloween, so check out the display in the Library Learning Commons. Can't find what you're looking for? Ask Ms. Najjar or check out the online catalogue at <https://library.wcdsb.ca/?config=148#section=home>.

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving and a Happy Halloween!!



Ms. Najjar  
St Mark School  
Library Learning Commons

### **STRONG START PROGRAM**

Join us in helping young children reach their potential. As a Strong Start® volunteer, you can expect to make a meaningful and lasting difference in the life of a child. Play short games and activities with children in senior kindergarten and grades 1 and 2 to help them practise their early literacy skills. Attend two, 2-hour training sessions prior to working one-on-one with a child in a local school. Once trained, the minimum time commitment to work with one child is 30 minutes, once a week for a 10-week period. Please contact the school at (519) 743-4682 if you are interested.

### **NUTRITIONAL FREE DAYS**

We can have ten days throughout the school year when we can lower our nutritional guard to include foods of minimum nutritional value.

Our **Nutritional Free Days** in October 2022 will include the following:

- Monday, October 31<sup>st</sup> – **Halloween Theme Day** (*more information is forthcoming*)

A schedule of Nutritional Free Days for the entire school year is forthcoming and will be included in the *November Newsletter*.