

ONE FAMILY,  
HOPE IN CHRIST

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## ST.FRANCIS XAVIER SCHOOL

### NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2021

As hard as it is to believe the first month of school is behind us, it is even harder to believe we still have nine months to go!

2021-22 was supposed to be much better than 2020-21. We were assured that we could look forward to a loosening of restrictions and a return to normalcy. Sadly, 2021 has brought with it different challenges with the emergence of the Delta variant which has complicated matters even further.

As a school, we made some decisions based on the optimism that things were getting better. Recent events have forced us to re-examine those decisions and to make the following changes:

- 1) One aspect of school life that I particularly missed last year was school assembly. It was a good time when the school was together to hear the Gospel and learn the message contained therein.  
However, I am hearing of a growing number of parents who are concerned about the possible spread of COVID-19 in the Assembly setting.  
To help allay that concern and in the interest of protecting our students, our Monday assemblies will be held as they were last school year, namely via Zoom from my Office. At least this is a familiar structure and everyone will know and remember how that will work.
- 2) At the beginning of the school year, we decided to try and make adjustments to our drop off and pick up procedures, hoping we could make the whole procedure run more smoothly. Experience has shown us otherwise and the result was more traffic congestion and frayed nerves as everyone was seemingly trying to come at once.

Starting Monday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, the Drop off and pick-up schedule will be as follows:

Drop Off Schedule:

Primary	Time	Intermediate
Kindergarten	8:30 am	Grade Four
Grade Two	8:34 am	Grade Six
Grade One	8:38 am	Grade Five
Grade Three	8:42 am	Grade Seven
Pick up		
Primary	Time	Intermediate
Kindergarten	3:30 pm	Grade Four
Grade Two	3:34 pm	Grade Six
Grade One	3:38 pm	Grade Five
Grade Three	3:42 pm	Grade Seven

\*Please note Wednesday times are one hour earlier.

Our goal is always to get all the students in their classrooms as quickly as possible.

After you have dropped off your child(ren) and they have been taken to their classroom, we ask your cooperation in leaving at your earliest convenience so other parents are able to park and safely drop off their child(ren).

Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation. I hope these changes help allay some of the concerns of parents in our community.

**News Update** – This morning (October 1<sup>st</sup>), Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry held a news conference announcing that students in Kindergarten to Grade Three are now required to wear a mask in school. This has not been a huge problem here at SFX as virtually every parent makes sure that their child(ren) have a mask properly worn for the day.

**October thoughts** - Thankfully, as we enter October, there are some familiar things that give us comfort; the explosion of colour as leaves turn in a kaleidoscope of glory and splendor, the cooler weather, the return of rain, and the beginning of school. We are reminded of the bright beauty that is nature in the Fall. The bright dark reds, the subtle yellow, and the warm brown of the trees give a touch of vibrancy to sustain us through the stark greys that can characterize winter.

Personally Fall is my favourite time of year. I love the crisp cool air, and the colours described above. At times we do not take the opportunity to truly appreciate what Fall has to

offer. It should be a time to marvel at the wonders of nature and the great gift that God gives each of us in the variety of God's creation.



October also gives us a special opportunity to follow the example of proclaiming Jesus given to us by Mary, Mother of Jesus. As October is a month dedicated to the Rosary and to Mary, we will be encouraging the children to be faithful to their devotions to Mary.

Mary is often called the first disciple of Christ in her devotion to him and her willingness to serve God by being the Mother of the Messiah. She truly was the first human to proclaim Christ. Mary was the first to open herself to the redemptive power of Jesus. When Mary accepted the call by God to bear Jesus into the world, she agreed to serve God in a way no one had ever done or will again. Her humility in taking on the incredible responsibility of being the Mother of the Son of God sets an example for us all.



As Mary says in Luke 1:46-48, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my Spirit rejoices in God my saviour, for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.” The Mysteries of the Rosary teach us that Mary was present at the major events in Jesus’ life and ministry and it had to be difficult as His Mother to give her only son over to be falsely accused and ultimately crucified to save sinners. However, she took upon herself all that with joy as she willingly took on the role of the Mother of God.

Our ‘Manner of the Month’ for October is to “Say YES to God” just as Mary said Yes when she found out that she was to be the Mother of Jesus. We need to pattern ourselves and our reaction to God when He asks something of us, no matter how big or how small. We need to follow God’s instructions and do as He asks so we can join Him in Heaven.

This month we prepare to celebrate All Saints’ Day (Nov. 1) and All Souls’ Day (Nov. 2). These holy days remind us of the gifts we have received from those who – by their example of faith and humility – have touched our lives. A Saint is a person who lived a holy life and is now in heaven. This month especially, and throughout the year, our students study about the lives of many well known and modern day saints. In learning about them, and modeling our lives after that person we also become a special friend of God. Our school song reminds us to pray to our patron saint St. Francis Xavier, and we ask him to help all of our students to live good lives in humble service to God and His people.

***Students’ illnesses*** – Parents are reminded to perform a simple health check (see attached sheet at the end of this newsletter) on your children. Please keep them home from school if they are exhibiting any symptoms listed.

***Lunches:*** If you are dropping lunches off for your children, please bring them to the office and they will be given to your child. This helps eliminate classroom disruptions. We encourage parents to make healthy choices for snacks and lunches, and hope that you will make the same choices on weekends as well. Please check product packaging for information regarding the nutritional value of food.

A reminder to all that in an attempt to reduce food scraps that wind up in the school garbage (a habit that is not environmentally friendly) we ask your cooperation to send your child’s lunch in a reusable container such as pictured below. The children will be taught in their classrooms to package up any leftovers and garbage from their lunch to take home for disposal.



Thank you!

**Parking/Traffic concerns:** Please practice courtesy and patience when dropping off or picking up your children. Please be aware of the example you are setting for your children, that even though there are rules to establish safety, they can be ignored for personal and selfish reasons. For the safety of all, I urge each parent to follow the rules of the road and to cooperate with the Parking Patrol Parents. Our goal is the safe and efficient drop off and pick up of our children.

We were fortunate that Vancouver City Hall saw the necessity of our request and granted our families the ability to park for up to 3 minutes along East 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. However, we must show we are worthy of such a privilege. We need to remember we are visitors in this area and we need to keep in mind the needs of our neighbours.



**Birthday treats:** Please inform your child's teacher if you plan on bringing some kind of special treat to your child's classroom to celebrate their birthday. It is generous of parents to bring such treats to share in the joy of their child's special day, but please also be respectful and mindful of the teacher's time. Also, parents must be aware that any food brought to share must be individually wrapped treats, such as muffins, cookies, etc.

**Allergy Aware!** - This year again we have students in our school that are highly allergic to peanuts and peanut products. Any exposure of any kind to peanut products can result in a serious medical situation. We have already asked the PTA to ensure that no snacks containing peanut products be sold during Hot Lunch days. We ask your complete cooperation in making sure that no such products are brought into the school. Realistically we cannot ensure every single snack is thoroughly peanut free, but we do ask you be aware of this situation and do your best to ensure the safety of all students.



**Reminder from the Office:** All parents are reminded to return their Walkathon forms by Tuesday, October 12<sup>th</sup>. Thank you.

**Green Tip of the Month:** Dispose grease, fats, and oils into your food waste bin (not down your drains or toilets.) Save your municipality millions of dollars (of your taxes!), unclogging hardened fat in pipes and sewers.



Sincere wishes for a very Happy Thanksgiving from the staff at St. Francis Xavier School.

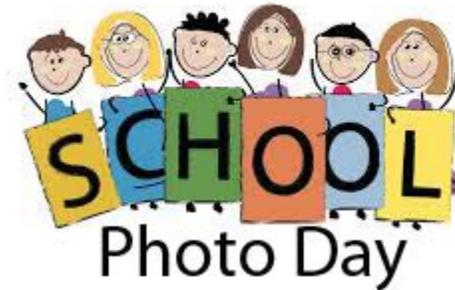
Yours truly,

Mr. Brian Fader

Principal

## Important Events in October

Thursday, October 7<sup>th</sup> – Individual Picture Day.



Friday, October 8<sup>th</sup> - Walkathon Day. Mass 9:00 am. Walkers receive snack in their classrooms after Mass before they leave. The order and approximate times are:

Kindergarten 10:15 am/Grade One 10:30 am/Grade Two 10:35 am/Grade Three 10:40 am/

Grade Four 10:45 am/Grade Five 10:50 am/Grade Six 10:55 am/Grade Seven 11:00 am.

Given it should take an hour for each grade to complete the route, students will be dismissed in the following order:

11:45 am -Kindergarten and Grade Four; 11:50 am Grade Two and Grade Six;

11:55 am Grade One and Grade Five; 12:00 pm Grade Three and Grade Seven.



Monday, October 12<sup>th</sup> – Thanksgiving Holiday. No School.



Tuesday, October 19<sup>th</sup> – Interim CSL reports to parents

Thursday, October 21st – Parent/Teacher Interviews; **no regular classes**

Friday, October 22nd – Provincial Professional Day; No School

Halloween Parade. To be determined. Details to follow!

