

Dear Parents,

St. Mary's School, Ticonderoga

I hope that your Thanksgiving celebration was truly a celebration of "giving thanks", a time to be with family and friends.

Advent season begins December 1st. These days can be very busy and hectic. Advent is supposed to be a time for waiting, preparing and hoping. Too often my wait is spent in shopping lines and post offices; my preparing means rushing around to get cards addressed and gifts wrapped, and my major hope for the season, is that I get everything done in time for the big day. Probably not exactly what those wise folks had in mind when they set aside four weeks of preparation. Each year I tell myself, "This advent season will be different". Well, this year it actually will be different. We have to keep trying.

This weekend we light the first candle of our Advent wreath. An Advent wreath can help us get back the real "spirit" of the season. The Advent wreath reminds us that Jesus is the true source of joy in our lives.

The four candles remind us that good things take time and that waiting helps us to think about and appreciate God's gifts to us. As we light each candle, we should recall that Jesus said, "I am the light of the world, whoever follows me will not walk in Darkness". As we look forward and backward during this Advent season, let us pray to build a better world by becoming a people in the spirit of joy. Don't forget to come to the Advent Wreath making Sunday at 10 A.M. at St. Mary's Church. All supplies will be provided for \$10.00.

Basketball

Basketball season has begun. We are blessed to have two teams with volunteer coaches. Thank you to Mr. and Mrs. Leerkes, for their help coaching. Thank you to Mrs. Jebb for organizing practices, games, etc. Coach for 3-5 co-ed team is Mr. John Budwick.

Children's Choir

Again, this year St. Mary's would like a Children's Choir at the 4 P.M. Christmas Eve Mass, Monday, Dec. 24. We will practice for the most part during school hours starting Dec. 4th. We start singing at 3:15 P.M. sharp in the church on Christmas Eve! Mrs. Charboneau, Mrs. Arzberger and Mrs. Dreimiller will be in charge this year. Permission slips are attached. If there is anyone in the public school who would like to join us, let us know.

RADA knife orders are in. Please pick them up at school.

November 30 - Shop n Dine 5-8 P.M. throughout downtown Ticonderoga, Holiday Farmers Market, Raffles, and Horse Drawn Wagon Rides. St. Mary's School will have an open house with 106 Baskets on display. Come in and get your tickets. Refreshments will be served. Quilt Raffle tickets will be available and register for a door prize.

Dec. 2

1st Sunday of Advent.

Reconciliation/Faith Formation after 9 A.M. Mass for children and parents.

Confirmation Class 6:30-8:00 P.M.

Advent Wreath making 10:00 A.M. \$10.00 per wreath.

Dec. 3

1st Week of Advent service at 2:15.

Dec. 5

Sister Cindy will visit the school and talk about the Holy Childhood Missions.

- Dec. 6 **Feast of St. Nicholas** - Don't forget to put your shoes out the night before. St. Nick is sure to visit with candy treats.
- Dec. 7 **1st Friday Mass 9:00. All grades will attend.**
- Spaghetti Dinner/
Basket Raffle
Sat. Dec. 8** Mass is at 4:30 followed by the Spaghetti Dinner and Basket Raffle. We will serve from 5:00-6:30 (take-outs at 4:30). Adults – 12 and older are \$10, Students – 5-11 are \$5, 4 and under are free, Family rate \$30 for two parents + 2 or more paying kids. Raffle tickets will be on sale from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. tonight. The raffle will begin at 6:30. This has become a major fund-raiser for St. Mary's School. Can you help with set-up Friday afternoon at 1:00 or serving, cooking or clean-up on Saturday? Please let us know. **We need parents to bake brownies for dessert. Can you help with this? Call the school and let us know.*
- Feast of the Immaculate Conception**
- Dec. 9 **2nd Sunday of Advent**
- Dec. 10 **2nd Week of Advent** service at 2:15.
- Dec. 12 **Our Lady of Guadalupe Feast Day**
- Dec. 13 **Please help!** We will need help setting up the stage and risers at 8 A.M.
- Dec. 16 **3rd Sunday of Advent.** Reconciliation **Penance Service** is at 2 P.M. for students receiving First Reconciliation. Please attend 4:30 P.M. on Saturday or 9 A.M. Mass. **Confirmation Class** 6:30-8:00 P.M.
- Dec. 17 **3rd Week of Advent** service at 2:15.
- Dec. 18 **Christmas Program** will be presented tonight beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the school gym. Students need to be here at 6:15. Remember, we will be drawing 2, \$300 Winners' Cards tonight. Do you have your Winners' Cards sold? Did you buy a ticket? We will also draw the winners for the Christmas Raffle – Quilt, \$100, \$50 Stewart's Gas Card, \$50 Country Florist Gift Cert.
- Dec. 20 **Christmas Parties** in the classrooms.
Bridge Arts Ensemble will present three concerts: K-2, Old MacDonald Had a Band, 3-5, The Story of Babar, and 6-8, Music of the 60's. All are invited to attend.
- Dec. 21 **Breakfast with Santa** - We will begin serving at 7:15. Adults \$3.00. Students \$1.00.
Casual Dress Day. Early Dismissal 1:20.
- Dec. 22-Jan.1 **Christmas Vacation.** See you on Wednesday, January 2.
- Dec. 24, Mon. **Christmas Eve Mass, 4:00.** Our Children's Choir will sing beginning at 3:15 at St. Mary's Church. Dress-Up clothes for all choir members.
- Dec. 25 **Christmas Day Mass 9 A.M.**
- Jan. 2 **School Resumes**

Jan. 2

Little Caesar's Pizza Sale Begins. Order forms will be sent home. Please collect money at time of sale. Delivery will be in time for Super Bowl Sunday.!

Prayers - Please join our school in prayer for the Abare Family. Mrs. Tina Abare passed away suddenly Thursday. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her family.

Healthy Body, Healthy Mind – Recent studies have shown that children who are active and fit have better test scores than those who are less fit and inactive. Activity before school can help students perform better on tests in school. Each morning at 7:30 before school starts the students walk around the gym for 15 minutes to music. **Thank you** to those who have paid their supply fee and tuition. Letters will be sent home to families who applied for Tuition assistance. If you applied and do not receive a letter, please call the school. Remember each family needs to pay something each month. Nobody is free. Everyone needs to do his/her part. Only half have paid their supply fees due in September.

Thank you to all who helped out at the Craft Fair and Basket Raffle this year. We could not have done it without you. Thank you to Scott and Robin Hearburg for their generous donation. Thank you to Stewart's Inc. for donating gift certificates to our honor roll students. Thank you for selling RADA knives. Thank you to Mrs. Anne Charboneau for running this fund raiser and to Margy Pote for behind the scenes with the Basket Raffle. We can still order RADA knives and have some on hand. We also have dips for sale.

One of the greatest gifts we can give our children is the gift of time. If you ask a group of adults what meant the most to them growing up, you will often hear fond memories of people who "had time for them". Given the fast pace of today's society, what might be some ways that you can build just a little more family time into your lives?

These are just a few simple ways to show you care:

- 1) **The family meal** – Do everything you can to sit at the dinner table together. This can be a relaxed time when the family can talk about the day and just enjoy being together.
- 2) **Family traditions** – these need not be elaborate. Children look forward to coloring Easter eggs, making gingerbread houses, decorating the Christmas tree, lighting the Advent Wreath, or any other activities that the family does together routinely.
- 3) **Pull out the board games** – Even young children enjoy sitting around a board game and playing as a family. This is also a great opportunity to help your child learn to be a good sport and have fun whether winning or losing.
- 4) **Be around and ready to listen** – In order for children to want to talk with parents, it is important for the parent to be available. Whether riding in a car, sitting on a couch, or just hanging out together, it is important to create opportunities for children to share what's on their minds.
- 5) **Take a hike** – Enjoy a short hike as a family, or strap on those snow shoes and take a walk. This is a no-cost way not only to get healthier, but also to build family memories.

Your family may already be creating great memories with times together. If you are, know that you are giving your child an invaluable gift. The important thing is that parents understand that it is the little gifts, often free, that mean the most to children. Your time is a more precious gift to your child than you could ever imagine!

The faculty and staff at St. Mary's pray with you, that each of us will truly "make room" for Jesus in our hearts this Holy season. Have a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year!

CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS TO ALL

