



St. Jerome Journal

February 2011

Message from the Principal

February is the month of love, when we celebrate the feast of St. Valentine. But who was St. Valentine? There was a priest named Valentine who lived in Rome in the third century.



He was put in prison because he helped some Christians who were going to be executed. While in prison he healed the chief jailor's daughter and they became friends. According to legend, Valentine left a farewell note for her before his own execution. The note was signed *"from your Valentine"* And so began a tradition of sending cards and presents to loved ones. What better way to show your love than our "Have a Heart Campaign"? Purchasing a balloon bouquet for your child will help another child in need. All bouquets will be delivered to your home by St. Jerome Staff. Thank you for your support!

Prayer

Love is Patient and Kind,
It doesn't envy or Boast and it's never proud,
Love is not rude or selfish,
It doesn't get angry easily or keep track of wrongs.
Love doesn't delight in bad things
But it rejoices in the truth.
Love always protects, trusts, hopes and perseveres. Love never fails.
--- St. Paul to the Corinthians

128 Woods Street
Kirkland Lake, ON
P2N 2S4
705 567 5800
705 567 5838 Fax

Karen MacGregor,
Principal

Caroline Harvey,
Secretary

Glenn Sheculski,
Director of Education
877-422-9322

James Michaud,
Superintendent
877-422-9322

Steve Malciw,
Trustee
705 643 2172

Rick Brassard,
Trustee
705 544 8055

Fr. Wayne Mills,
Pastor
Holy Name of Jesus Church
705 567 3932

We are on the web: <http://www.ncdsb.on.ca/>

February's virtue is Temperance (Self-Control).

What is Temperance?

Temperance is one of the four cardinal virtues. The Catholic Encyclopedia notes, "temperance" is concerned with what is difficult for a person, not in so far as the person is a rational being precisely, but rather in so far as she/he is an animal." It is the control of the desire for pleasure. In this sense, it corresponds to fortitude, which restrains our fears, physical as well as spiritual. St. Thomas Aquinas ranked temperance as the fourth of the cardinal virtues, because it serves prudence, justice and fortitude. The moderation of our desires is essential to acting rightly (prudence), giving each one their (justice), and standing strong in the face of adversity (fortitude). Temperance is the virtue which attempts to overcome the human condition that "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mark 14:38)

Temperance is defined as the righteous habit which makes a person govern their natural appetite for pleasures of the senses in accordance with the norm prescribed by reason. In one sense temperance may be regarded as a characteristic of all the moral virtues; the moderation it enjoins is central to each of them. Thus it is the virtue that controls the yearning for pleasures and delights which most powerfully attract the human heart.

Lates

A number of our students continue to arrive late daily. In some instances, it is the same students arriving after 8:45 a.m. without parental accompaniment. This is a safety concern for us. Any student arriving after 8:45 am is considered late and should be accompanied by an adult. Please make every effort to have your child/ren at school on time. When a child is late, they not only miss opening prayer and the anthem, but they also miss valuable teaching time. Late arrivals cause disruption to the other students and also to the teacher who may have already begun his/her lessons for the day. Developing good work habits and time management skills can maximize a child's learning potential. Let's work together to develop these skills!



Public Speaking

Our school recently held a Public Speaking Competition and we would like to congratulate all the students who took part. Our first place winner was Brennan Goulding, second place went to Molly McCormack, third place to Kaytlyn Julien and fourth to Breanna Renaud. Brennan will go on to the municipal level competition on Wednesday, February 2nd at 7:00 p.m. at the Royal Canadian Legion Hall, Branch 87.

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Have a Heart Campaign

We are asking that parents purchase a **Valentine Balloon Bouquet** for their child/ren that will



be delivered directly to your home at no charge! **(For St. Jerome School families only – That is one delivery per household).** The bouquets will be available for **\$ 5.00** and only pre-orders will be taken. All orders will need to be placed by **February 4th, 2011**. All the proceeds raised will go towards the purchase of urostomy supplies that Aiden requires at school. Please listen to your heart and help this family in need.

Subway Lunch

As part of our Healthy Foods awareness program we are offering a Subway Lunch to our students on



Wednesday, February 16th. Please make sure that you have completed and turned in your order form.

Soup Lunch

As part of our Healthy Foods awareness program we are offering a Soup Lunch to our students on Wednesday, February 23rd. The soup of the day is: Chicken Noodle. Please make sure that you have completed and turned in your order form.

Junior Kindergarten Registration

Registration for the 2010-11 school year are ongoing and we welcome anyone interested in registering their child to call the school or drop by anytime.

Junior Kindergarten - Children must be 4 years old by Dec. 31, 2011

Parents/Guardians should bring the following documents when registering their child:



- ☐ proof of age
- ☐ original Catholic Baptismal Certificate
- ☐ Immunization Record
- ☐ Health Card

Please spread the word...

Interested in making a bit of extra money? Needed - Lunchtime Supervisors!!

Work from 11:40 a.m. - 12:40 p.m. Perform supervisory duties in the lunchroom and in the school yard. Work is available on a weekly basis or once or twice a week. If you are interested, please call the office at 567-5800 for further details.

Cold Weather Dress

A reminder to all parents that students should come to school prepared to play outside in snowy and cold weather. A hat, mitts, snow pants and boots are required for all students. Should the temperature fall below -20° with the wind chill, students will remain inside.



Report Cards go Home February 16th – Parent / Teacher Interviews

Parents will notice significant changes in the new provincial report card going home February 16th, 2011. The six new learning skills and work habits have been placed ahead of the section for reporting our students' achievement of the curriculum expectations. Classroom teachers at St. Jerome have been setting aside time to teach these explicitly to students. This is also part of our School Improvement Plan. During the month of February we will be concentrating on "Self Regulation" which aligns nicely with our monthly virtue of "Temperance" (Self Control).

Parent-Teacher Interviews will be held on the evening of Wednesday, February 23rd from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Interview request forms will be sent home with the report cards. Please ensure these forms are returned to the school office by February 18th so that times can be scheduled and parents/guardians notified.

Tips for Parent Teacher Interviews

Parent teacher interviews are held at the end of term 1 when report cards are sent home. They are opportunities for parents and teachers to talk together about how to help each child succeed and be happy at school. **Your form to book an interview will be included with your child's report card.** Interviews are short, 15 minutes, so it is best to prepare before the interview to make the best use of that short time.

PREPARE

Read your child's report card. Make notes about your questions and concerns. Talk to your child about the report. Is she/he happy with her/his progress? Was she/he surprised by any comments on the report? Ask the child to predict what the teacher is going to tell you. Then, ask what she/he would like you to discuss with the teacher.

ASK QUESTIONS

Arrive on time. Bring your child's report card and your list of questions with a notepad and pen to make notes. Jotting down notes as you go along is a good way to jog your memory later. Parent teacher interviews are strictly confidential, so share personal information that might be affecting your child's progress or behaviour at school (e.g. family illness, job search, new baby). This information will help the teacher understand your child

better. Every parent wants to hear how wonderful his/her child is - and the teacher should tell you about your child's special skills and achievements. But one of the main functions of the interview is to point out areas where your child has room to develop. Resist the urge to be defensive and work with the teacher to look at ways that you can support your child's learning at home. Strive to keep the lines of communication open and friendly. Relax!

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Before you say goodbye, find out the best way to follow-up with the teacher. Schedule another meeting, if necessary or find out the best time to call the teacher. Review any decisions you have made together. Once you are home, talk to your child about the meeting. Be sure to pass on praise - yours and the teacher's - before bringing up any issues of concern. Follow-up on anything your child talked about before the meeting, Talk about how you and the teacher are going to help with the things that need to be improved.

Great Questions to Ask the Teacher

- ✓ *Is my child working up to his ability?*
- ✓ *What are my child's strengths and weaknesses?*
- ✓ *Is there anything we can do at home to reinforce the skills that you are working on in the classroom?*
- ✓ *How much time should my child be spending on his homework?*
- ✓ *What can I do to help develop my child's weak areas?*
- ✓ *Are there any activities that I can participate that will help my child?*
- ✓ *How can I help at home?*
- ✓ *What are my child's academic talents?*
- ✓ *How is my child's participation and classwork being evaluated?*
- ✓ *What is my child like in class?*
- ✓ *What is my child's learning style?*
- ✓ *How does my child interact with the other children?*
- ✓ *Is there anything I can share with you about my child and what he/she is like at home?*
- ✓ *What skills will my child be expected to master this year in key subjects such as Language and Numeracy?*
- ✓ *What is the best way to contact you if I have more questions or concerns?*

School Improvement Plan

More on Learning Goals & Success Criteria

How will we help students be successful?

Assessment for Learning strategies help to set targets for students and define quality work and behaviours. Involving students in the assessment process helps each student understand how he or she will be assessed so he or she can monitor his or her own progress over time.

1) **Setting and Sharing Learning Goals:**

Learning goals are translations of curriculum expectations into student friendly, plain language. Stated in terms of 'I know...', 'I can...' these learning goals are shared with students at the beginning of a class or a series of tasks. They form the basis for future discussion with the teacher as well as lay the foundation for metacognition and self assessment.

2) **Describing Quality:**

Understanding what quality evidence looks like is a vital aspect of the assessment process. Co-constructing criteria in relation to evidence of learning (e.g. products, processes, or collections of evidence) engages students in the assessment process and allows them to make connections with their own work and what quality work or exemplary learning behaviours look like. Using samples helps students co-construct criteria to support their learning. Clear criteria that describes quality and success helps students self-monitor and see ways to make improvements. This process scaffolds students' learning. The criteria become the foundation for ongoing feedback as well as self and peer assessment. Teachers may decide to use the criteria as a list, in T-chart form, or construct a rubric that describes levels of quality.

3) **Descriptive, Specific and Timely Feedback:**

The co-constructed criteria is shared and understood by all members of the class. The responsibility of providing feedback is no longer solely on the shoulders of the educator. The criteria or rubric coupled with questions can assist teachers to create a cycle of timely feedback. Peers can help each other because they understand what success looks like and can use the language of the criteria to support peer and self assessment. In this way, self assessment becomes feedback for learning - an integral part of the learning process.

4) **Self and Peer Assessment Leading to Goal Setting:**

*Assessment for Learning is a cyclical process. When a student reflects back on the learning goal(s) and compares his or her work or behaviours to the criteria, identifying areas for improvement and setting goals become a natural process of learning. This reflective or metacognitive process is considered assessment **as** learning.*