

September 2004  
Newsletter

**ST. MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

60 Willowbrook Drive  
Whitby  
(905) 430-8597



**NEWSLETTER  
SEPTEMBER 2004**

**Principal  
P. Cauley**

**Vice-Principal  
R. Chacko**

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to a new school year at St. Matthew the Evangelist Catholic School. I am very pleased to be Principal at this excellent school and look forward to an exciting year. I have been a Principal for ten years and prior to St. Matthew, I was at St. Paul Catholic School in Whitby.

Mrs. Reny Chacko will be the new Vice-Principal and she comes to us from Mother Teresa Catholic School in Ajax. As an administrative team, we will work to support students, staff, and the parent community in the many excellent programs and initiatives that take place at St. Matthew.

I know that the St. Matthew community will miss Mrs. Frost and Mrs. Richard. I thank them for their years of dedication and wish them well in their new assignments. We will also miss Mr. Richardson our Chief Custodian, Mrs. Kumentas and Mr. Consoli as they move on to new positions at other schools in the Board. We thank them for their excellent work at St. Matthew. We welcome our new Chief Custodian Mr. Mike Neufeld, Mr. Kevin McDonald, Mrs. Lori O'Donnell, Mrs. Margaret McDonald, Mrs. Ruth Lynk, Mrs. Ginnette Thomson and Ms. Lori Daniels. Mrs. Clack is on maternity leave and Mrs. Andrews will take her place.

As Principal, my focus will be to ensure the safety and well being of students, support the curriculum in the classroom as outlined by our Board and the Ministry of Education, and support the Catholic values and teaching through the Religion and Family Life Programs. I have always believed that a Principal and Vice-Principal need to be visible and therefore you can expect to see us in the hallways, classrooms, and schoolyard.

Once again, I express my delight at being Principal at St. Matthew. I ask for your support and understanding through these first weeks of transition.

Sincerely,  
*Paddy Cauley*

## VICE-PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



Dear Parents:

I am very excited about my placement at St. Matthew the Evangelist Catholic School. I previously served as Vice-Principal at Mother Teresa Catholic School in Ajax and at Fr. Joseph Venini Catholic School in Oshawa. I have already had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Cauley, Mrs. Frost and Mrs. Richard, and the staff and parent members of the Catholic School Council. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for the very warm welcome accorded to me and for all the assistance that they have rendered to help me ease into my new assignment here at St. Matthew the Evangelist Catholic School.

During the next few weeks I look forward to meeting all the members of our school community, especially the students. Plans are underway for providing stimulating and literacy-rich programs for your children and I am sure that with the partnership of home and school these programs will be very effective. *As it takes a whole village to raise a child,* so, if we work together we can achieve more.

I am eagerly awaiting our Curriculum Night at which time I hope to meet all returning families as well as those new to our community. Please feel free to share any concerns or questions you have regarding the education of our child and we will try to address these to the best of our ability. I pray that the school year 2004-2005 will bring many blessings upon each one of us so that we can grow in faith, caring and concern for each other.

God bless you and your families.

Sincerely  
R. Chacko

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We extend a warm welcome to all our students and their families returning to St. Matthew the Evangelist Catholic School for a new school year as well as to all our new students and their families. Hope you find your experience at St. Matthew's enjoyable and fruitful. We pray for all those families who have left our school community and we wish them continued success in their new school community. A very special welcome is extended to the following new staff members...

Mrs. Connie Andrews (SK)  
Ms. Lori O'Donnell (Gr. 2)  
Mrs. Ruth Lynk (Gr. 4) (0.5)  
Ms. Margaret MacDonald (Gr. 7)  
Mr. Kevin MacDonald (Gr. 8)  
Ms. Lori Daniels (Educational Assistant)  
Ms. Ginnette Thomson (FSL)  
Mr. Mike Neufeld (Chief Custodian)

Let us keep in our prayers all those members of staff who have moved to other schools...Mrs. Frost (Principal, St. Paul's Catholic School), Mrs. Richard (Vice-Principal, St. Patrick Catholic School), Mr. Consoli (St. Joseph's Catholic School), Mrs. Kumentas (St. Patrick Catholic School), Mr. Miles Richardson (St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School).



Congrats to Ms. Dos Santos (Grade 7) on her summer wedding. She is now Mrs. Stewart.



A big thank you to Mrs. Nestic (Head Secretary), Mrs. Cara (Secretary), Mr. Kirkham (Custodian) and Ms. Sladeczek (Custodian) for working hard during the summer to ensure that the school was ready for the first day of classes.

## SCHOOL HOURS AND SUPERVISION

8:30 am	Yard Supervision begins
8:45 am	Morning classes begin
10:15-10:30	Morning Recess
11:30 - 12:30 pm	Lunch
12:30 pm	Afternoon classes begin
2:00 - 2:10 pm	Afternoon Recess
3:10 pm	Bus Dismissal
3:15 pm	Dismissal for rest of school

## COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS



We will come together to celebrate our faith as a community several times during the school year. Parents/guardians are always welcome to participate with our students and staff in our school masses, liturgies and other services. Information will be sent home with the dates, times and locations of these special celebrations.

**Our first school/community Mass will take place on Tuesday, September 21, 2004 at 9:00 am in the school gymnasium. That day is also the feast day of St. Matthew. Please plan to join us!**

## **RELIGION AND FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION**

Our school is under the pastoral care of Holy Family Catholic Church . Our Parish Pastor is Fr. Reddy.

One of the purposes of a Catholic School is to foster an environment which will encourage the development of children as persons who can relate to Christ by living and growing in the Catholic faith.

Through the child's school life, he/she will be prepared for advancement through the Sacraments and according to the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church.

At this school, under the direction of Holy Family Catholic Church, the teachers work in collaboration with the parish priest and parents in preparing children specifically for the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. These sacraments are administered through the parish.

Born of the Spirit series is our formal Religion program for grades JK-8. Fully Alive is our Board's Family Life program, sponsored by the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops. It is compulsory for grades 1-8 and supplements the Religion program. Please look for ongoing communication from your child's teacher regarding each theme in the Family Life program.

## **SAFE ARRIVAL PROGRAM REPORTING ABSENCES/AUTOMATED PHONE SYSTEM**



As part of our Safe Arrival Program, contact will be made with the home or parent's place of work of any student whose absence is not explained. We

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would therefore appreciate receiving a phone call at the office if your child is going to be absent from school. To report your child's absence...

- Please call the school at 905-430-8597
- Leave a phone message in the Student Absence Mailbox (press 2) which is featured on our Automated Answer Service.
- Please do NOT leave student absence messages in the teacher's mailbox. Other non-urgent messages may be left in the teacher's mailbox.
- Press "0" if you need to transfer immediately to the Secretary.

Calling the school to report your child's absence will assist us in keeping calls to a minimum and avoiding unnecessary interruptions either at home or at your place of employment.

We remind you that regular attendance and punctuality are vital to your child's success in school.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are welcome and valued members of St. Matthew the Evangelist Catholic School community. Our volunteers do many useful things including assisting students in classrooms, working in the Library Information Centre, acting as chaperones on field trips, preparing learning materials for our students, serving on committees and participating in School Council activities and initiatives. If you are interested in volunteering please contact the school at (905)430-8597.

### **FAMILY INFORMATION FORMS**

A Family Information Form will be sent home with **every** student. This form lists each child's name, address, parent(s) names, phone numbers, emergency contacts, etc. It is a vital link between home and school especially in case of an emergency. Please fill out and/or update the form with current information if necessary. Each child's form must be returned to the school as soon as possible. Thank you.

## STUDENT AGENDAS

Students from grades 1-8 will be using St. Matthew the Evangelist Catholic School agendas. The use of agendas is an important part of the daily curriculum. This excellent teaching tool assists students in organizing their time, and keeping track of assignments, homework, etc. The agenda also serves as a valuable means of communication between home and school. Parents/guardians are encouraged to look regularly in the plastic pouch found at the front of the agendas for notes from your child's teacher and/or information from the school office.

Our school handbook is also included in your child's agenda. These pages contain important information about our school, including the Code of Behaviour, Mission Statements, etc.

Please send \$6.00 to your child's teacher by **Friday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2004** to cover the cost of the agendas.

## ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

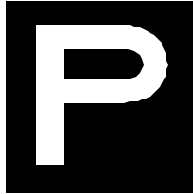


According to Board policy, the responsibility for administration of medication for students is primarily that of parents/guardians and they are encouraged to have this medication administered outside of school hours. In special cases where a student must have medication (this includes all inhalers, pain relievers, and prescription medicine) during regular school hours, an SS-18 Form : Administration of Oral Medication - Parent's Consent and Instructions must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian before medication is sent to school with the child. Forms that were completed last year expired in June and must be re-submitted.



These forms are available at the school office. All prescribed medication must be clearly marked with the child's name and have the qualified medical doctor's statement for prescribed use and instructions clearly stated.

### **PARKING**



There are two parking lots at St. Matthew the Evangelist Catholic School. If it is necessary for you to drive your child to school, please use the parking lot in the front only. Thank you for your cooperation.

### **FOOTWEAR**



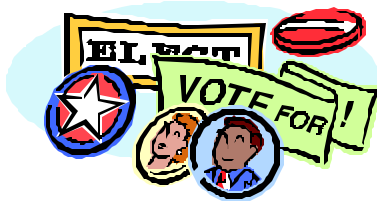
Please send a pair of indoor shoes for your child to wear at school. Having the childrens' outdoor shoes remain in the hallway will help us keep the dirt, water, snow, etc. outside the classrooms making them healthier and safer places for the children.

## MEET THE TEACHER BARBECUE



Meet the Teacher Barbecue has been scheduled for **Thursday, September 16, 2004 starting at 5:30 pm**. Please mark this date on your calendar. More information with regard to the actual format for the evening will be sent home closer to the date. We look forward to seeing you there!

## FIRST CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING AND ELECTIONS



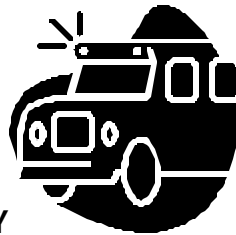
Our first Catholic School Council meeting for the year will be held on **Tuesday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2004 at 7:00 pm in the School Library**. At that meeting we will also be holding our elections. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Council or perhaps you may know of someone who has expressed an interest, please fill out the nomination forms attached to this newsletter and return them to the office by Friday, September 14, 2004. Thank you in advance for your involvement with the Catholic School Council.

## LUNCH HOUR

Lunch hour at our school is from 11:30 am – 12:30 pm. If your child normally stays at school for lunch, we need a written note from you each time he or she wishes to leave school property at lunch time. Thank you for your cooperation.

## VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

In the interest of safety, it is important that you remember to begin your visit to the school at the office. We need to know who is in the school at all times. If you wish to drop something off for your child during the school day, please bring it to the office and we will be happy to call your child to get it at break time. Both teachers and students need uninterrupted time for teaching and learning.



## SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

When riding a school bus, students must recognize that their safety is the highest priority. To ensure a safe bus ride, students are expected to be responsible for their behaviour and to be mindful of the following rules and considerations:

The student shall:

- Arrive at the bus stop at least 5 minutes before the pick-up time
- Obey the bus driver and bus monitors at all times
- Remain seated at all times
- Refrain from eating, drinking or littering on the bus or at bus stops
- Respect the property of the bus and other students on the bus
- Keep aisles clear and keep books and bags on their lap
- Equip skates with blade guards and/or carry them in a sports bag
- Show courtesy to the driver and other passengers

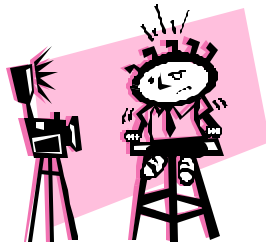
- Remain seated during a road emergency unless otherwise directed
- Be responsible to the Principal, or designate, of the school for their conduct
- Refrain from distracting the driver

If a pattern of bus misbehaviour emerges, parents will be notified and consequences will be applied. This action could include the removal of bus privileges. Students are not allowed to go on another bus for any reason.

### PARENT BULLETIN BOARD

A large bulletin board has been designated for information for parents. It is located in the main foyer. Notices and a variety of information will be posted there for parents.

### SCHOOL PICTURES



Picture Day is on **Thursday, October 7, 2004**. Please note this date in your calendar.

### PICKING UP STUDENTS PRIOR TO DISMISSAL TIME

We understand that there are times when you will be picking up your child prior to school dismissal. Please send a note with your child indicating that this is the case. Let the teacher or office know when you do pick up your child. If your child is in the yard, please introduce yourself to the staff member on duty before you take your child from the yard. If a family member or friend is picking up your child, you must send a note informing the teacher of this change.

## INTERNET USE AT SCHOOL

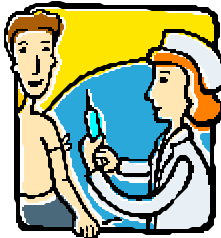
The school's internet system is intended to support research, teaching and learning. Access to it is a privilege that is not to be abused.

The Internet must not be used to attempt unauthorized access to systems software or data, nor to interfere with or disrupt network users, services or equipment.

Students will access ONLY those sites consistent with school assignments, and only when a teacher is present. The use of chat rooms or personal e-mail programs is not allowed. Personal software may not be installed on any school computer.

Your child's agenda contains a COMPUTER ACCESS POLICY. Please review this with your child and have them sign the copy in the agenda to ensure that they have read the document and understand its implications. Thank you!

## GRADE 7 HEPATITIS B CLINICS



Hepatitis B vaccinations will be administered to our Grade 7 students twice this year. The public health nurses from Durham Region Health Department will be conducting these clinics at the school and have booked dates at appropriate intervals. Students will be informed about the causes and dangers of Hepatitis B through a presentation prior to their vaccinations. Parent/Guardian consent forms and information will be forthcoming. Parent volunteers will be required to assist. If you are available, please call the school. The vaccines will be administered on the following dates:

**Clinic #1 - Thursday, October 28, 2004 (am)**

**Clinic #2 - Thursday, April 28, 2005 (am)**

## HEAD LICE (PEDICULOSIS)

In recent years, pediculosis has become more prevalent in our schools. It can however, be minimized with effective preventative procedures conducted both at home and at school. There are a few steps we would ask you to take on a regular basis. First, check your child's hair regularly for nits (eggs). Early detection makes getting rid of these pests easier. Secondly, if you discover that your child has head lice, please follow the treatment instructions very carefully. It is critical that your child be treated again 7-10 days following the first treatment, in order to significantly reduce the risk of re-infestation. In addition, it is very important that the school be notified when head lice are discovered so that we can check the other children from the classroom, and notify other parents. Head lice are a reality and are absolutely no reflection on personal hygiene habits. The cooperation of the home is essential in addressing this problem.

## STUDENT USE OF TELEPHONE

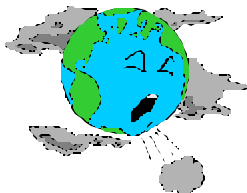


Students will only be allowed to use the telephone for emergency purposes. We get frequent situations where students have money to go out for lunch and do not have written permission. Students in this situation will not be allowed to use the telephone to get permission. Students will not be allowed to use the phone to obtain permission to visit friends, or make after school arrangements. We ask that these plans be made outside of school. In a school, the office and phone lines are extremely busy. If you need to get information to your child during the school day, we will be glad to deliver the message to them. Students will only be allowed to use the phone for important situations with the permission of their teacher, or the office staff.

## **ANAPHYLAXIS (SEVERE, LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGIES)**

There are children in our school that have allergies that can cause an anaphylactic reaction. An anaphylactic reaction is an allergic reaction so severe that it can cause death. The allergy is such that eating, touching, or inhaling even trace amounts of the allergen will trigger a life-threatening reaction. Emergency treatment involves an immediate drug injection (Epipen) followed by an emergency trip to the hospital. A letter will be sent home with students in classrooms with anaphylactic students and these classrooms will be designated "nut free." Please note that information concerning students with serious anaphylactic conditions has been forwarded to the new classroom teacher. We ask that parents of these students also contact the classroom teacher to update the teacher on any changes to the child's medical condition.

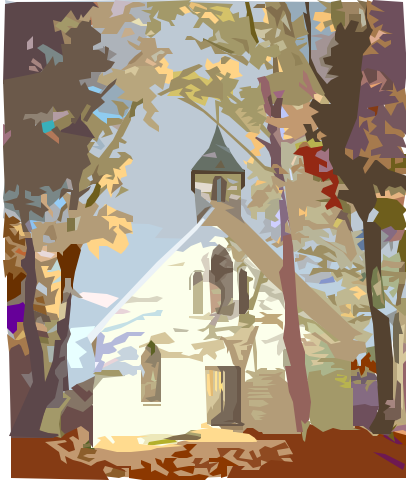
## **STUDENT ILLNESS AT SCHOOL**



In fairness to all, please do not send your child to school if there are definite signs of ill health in the morning. We have neither the facilities nor the personnel to care for children who are ill. Good health is necessary for effective learning.

Students who are ill at school should tell their classroom teacher immediately. It is important that students who are ill go home as soon as possible.

Our practice will be to call parents and ask that students either be picked up or given parental permission to go home or to their day care provider. For this reason, it is important that parents keep work and emergency numbers, including cell phone numbers current on the Family Information Form. Please contact the Secretary as soon as possible when changes need to be made on the form.



## On the Simplicity of Prayer....

I don't make a fuss  
when I need to pray.  
I don't stand on ceremony  
in any way.  
I just talk to Him  
as I would to a friend,  
with only one difference,  
Amen at the end.

Author Unknown