

Pope Francis Catholic Elementary School

December 2025 Newsletter

Principal's Message

The Liturgical Year begins with the holy season of Advent on Sunday, November 30th. Advent is a time of joyful **HOPE**—a season where we prepare our hearts for Jesus, the Light of the World, to enter more deeply into our lives. Although Christ is always present with us, Advent invites us to pause, reflect on our blessings, and pray intentionally for those in need.



At Pope Francis Catholic Elementary School, our school community will embrace this sacred time through daily prayer, weekly Advent liturgies, and acts of service that reflect our call to be instruments of hope and compassion. Together, we will journey toward the celebration of Christ's birth, growing in faith as a new school family.

As we prepare our homes, our hearts, and our lives for the coming of Christ, my sincere hope is that this Advent season provides your family with moments of peace, reflection, and connection—opportunities to experience the true meaning of Christmas and to welcome Christ anew into our hearts.

On behalf of the Pope Francis staff, I wish each of you a blessed and joy-filled Christmas and a safe, happy New Year.

Kerri Lomax, Principal

School News and Announcements

★ School Bell Times

8:30 am - School Starts

10:10 am - 10:50 am - 1st Nutrition Break

12:30 pm - 1:10 pm - 2nd Nutrition Break

2:50 pm - School Dismissal



★ Attendance Reminder

It's important for students to arrive **on time** every day. School starts at **8:30 a.m.**, and any student who is late must **report to the office**. Regular attendance and punctuality help students stay on track with learning and build strong connections with teachers and peers.

We understand that challenges can arise. If your child is struggling with attendance or other concerns, please reach out , we're here to help.

★ Transportation Delays, Cancellations & School Closures

With winter weather approaching, we want to remind families how inclement weather impacts bus transportation and school operations. Student Transportation Services Brant Haldimand Norfolk (STSBHN) works with bus companies, meteorologists, and local municipal staff to review road and weather conditions before deciding whether to run, delay, or cancel buses.

Because our district covers a large area, closures may happen in specific zones rather than board-wide. **Pope Francis is located in Zone 2 (Haldimand County)**, so please check updates for our zone. When a zone is closed, all transportation, school buildings, childcare programs, and school activities in that zone are also closed.

STSBHN and BHNCDNB share all cancellations by **6:30 a.m.** on their websites, social media, the Chipmunk App, and local radio/TV stations. Families are encouraged to have a supervision plan in place for days when transportation is delayed or cancelled.

As always, families may decide whether they feel it is safe for their child to attend school when buses are running.

Upcoming Events and Important Dates

★ Pizza Days

December 4th

December 11th

December 18th



****Please note that pizza orders for January 2026 are DUE ON SCHOOL CASH ONLINE BY SUNDAY DECEMBER 28, 2025****

✦ **Advent Celebrations**

Advent Celebrations start on December 1, 2025 and will be lead by our Youth Leadership Team. Each Monday in December we will begin our day with an Advent Liturgy.

December 1 - Advent Liturgy- **Hope**

December 8 - Advent Liturgy - **Peace**

December 15 - Advent Liturgy - **Joy**

✦ **Colour House Activity** 🏠

We're excited to announce a Colour House Activity Day on **Friday, December 12, 2025!** Students are encouraged to wear their team colour to show their school spirit and support their House team.

✦ **Spirit Days** 🌲

Monday December 15th - Don't Be a Grinch Day: Dress in green or like a WHO from Whoville

Tuesday December 16th - Sweater Weather: Wear your ugly Christmas sweater.

Wednesday December 17th - Christmas Character: Dress up as your favourite Christmas character.

Thursday December 18th - Santa's Helpers: Wear Christmas accessories (Santa hats, reindeer headbands, elf ears, light-up necklaces or earrings)

Friday December 19th - Blizzard and Blankets: Wear pajamas, comfy clothes, slippers, robes etc.

✦ **Christmas Break**

Christmas break runs from **December 22, 2025 - January 4, 2026**. We look forward to seeing everyone back at school on **January 5, 2026**.

✦ **Grade 8 Parent Information Night - Assumption College**

Families of Grade 8 students are invited to attend an information session at **Assumption College** on **Wednesday, January 14, 2026**. This session will provide important details about the transition to high school and give parents an opportunity to ask questions and learn more about programs and supports available.

✦ **P.D. Days**

January 19, 2026

April 17, 2026

June 5, 2026

✦ **Term 1 Reports** - Monday February 2, 2026

✦ **Family Day** - Monday February 16, 2026

✦ **March Break** - March 16 - March 20, 2026

ONLINE KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION JAN 5 - FEB 20



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK
Catholic District School Board

catholiceducation.ca

😊 School Highlights

✦ The Junior Boys and Junior Girls basketball teams represented our school with exceptional skill and sportsmanship at the school board tournament.

Both teams played with heart, determination, and respect—truly embodying what it means to be positive role models within the Pope Francis community.

We are proud to share that the **Junior Girls** captured **1st place**, while the **Junior Boys** earned an impressive **2nd place** finish!

The coaches are extremely proud of every player for their dedication and teamwork.

Junior Boys MVP:

This award goes to a player who not only led our team on the court, but consistently demonstrated outstanding sportsmanship toward players from every school. Congratulations to **Jerry**!

Junior Girls MVP:

This award is presented to a player who displayed exceptional sportsmanship and encouraged her teammates to give their best effort in every game. Congratulations to **TK**!

Well done to all players on an excellent tournament! 🏀



!Reminders and Ongoing Initiatives

✦ Dogs on School Property Reminder

For the safety and comfort of all students, we kindly remind families that dogs are not permitted on school grounds, especially during dismissal times. We also ask that pets be kept a safe distance from school entrances and exits so that students feel safe and comfortable entering and

leaving the building. If you are walking your dog near the school, please ensure they are kept on a leash at all times. Thank you for your cooperation in helping us maintain a safe and welcoming environment for everyone.

★Community Outreach - Candy Cane Fundraiser

The Youth Leadership Team will be selling candy canes to help raise funds for a local charity. Candy canes will be sold every **WEDNESDAY** and **FRIDAY** from **December 1 - December 19th**. The cost to purchase a candy cane is **\$1.00** (with a limit of \$5.00 per purchase). The Youth Leadership team will be coming around to classrooms at the following break times: **First Break JK - Gr. 4** and **Second Break Gr.5 - 8**.

★Tree of Warmth

As we enter the colder months, our school community will once again be supporting families through our Tree of Warmth. If you have new or gently used mittens, hats, or scarves that you would like to donate, we invite you to place them on our Tree of Warmth in the front foyer of the school.

All donated winter items will be shared with children in need within our community. Thank you for helping us spread warmth, kindness, and care this season.

★Cash Online Donations

If you'd like to support our school, donations can be made directly through our **school website** by clicking the **"Make a Donation"** tab.

All contributions go toward enhancing programs, activities, and resources for our students. A **tax receipt** will be mailed to you for any donation received.

We truly appreciate the generosity of our school community — your support helps make great things possible for our students!

★Dress for the Weather

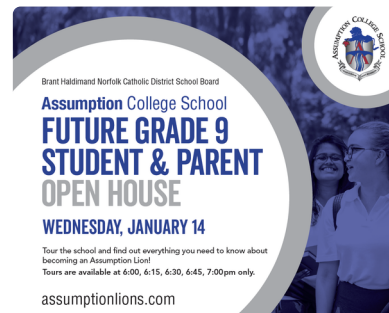
With colder temperatures on the way, please make sure your child(ren) are **dressed appropriately for outdoor play**. Students go outside for recess and outdoor learning **every day**, weather permitting.

Please send your child with a **warm winter coat, snow pants, boots, hat, mittens, and indoor shoes**. We also recommend **an extra set of clothes and an extra pair of mittens** in case items get wet during the day.

Being properly dressed helps children stay comfortable, focused, and ready to learn — even on chilly days!

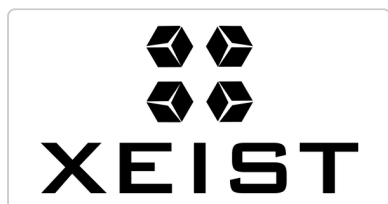
★Pope Francis Spirit Wear

We're excited to share that our Pope Francis spirit wear is now available to order! Families can browse a variety of clothing options designed to showcase our school pride, including hoodies, T-



shirts, and more. All items can be purchased directly through the online link below, making ordering quick and convenient

Wearing spirit wear is a great way for students to feel connected, show support for our school community, and celebrate what makes Pope Francis special.



Pope Francis School - Fan Store 2025

Online ordering for Pope Francis School - Fan Store 2025

🔗 pope-francis-school-fan-store.itemorder.com

📁 School Advisory Council

★ A Huge Thank You for Supporting Our MacMillan's Fundraiser!

We are thrilled to share that our recent MacMillan's fundraiser was a great success! Thanks to your incredible support, we raised **\$1,135.25 in profit** for our school community.



Order Pick-Up Details:

- **Date:** Thursday, December 4th
- **Delivery Time:** MacMillan's will arrive at the school at **9:30 AM**
- **Pick-Up Window:** **10:30 AM – 3:30 PM**

Please ensure all orders are picked up during this time. Unfortunately, the school cannot store any orders after 3:30 PM due to limited freezer space. If you are unable to pick up your order personally, kindly arrange for someone else to collect it on your behalf.

Important Notes:

- If **your child will be picking up the order**, please email your child's classroom teacher and CC Mrs. Reidy so we are aware.
- Boxes may be heavy, and there may be multiple boxes depending on how much was ordered under your child's name.
- If someone else is picking up for you, please email your child's classroom teacher and CC Mrs. Reidy with the name of the person collecting.
- **For verification, if a friend, neighbor, or family member is picking up for you, please send them an email they can show to volunteers so the order can be released.**
- Any thawed foods (except chicken tenders and frozen fruits) can be safely refrozen once thawed.

Thank you again for your support in making this fundraiser a success!

★Next SAC Meeting.....

The next School Advisory Council (SAC) meeting will be held on **Wednesday, January 21, 2026 at 6:00 PM in the library**. All parents and guardians are welcome to attend and share their ideas to

help support our school community

✦SAC - Volunteers Needed

Our **School Advisory Council (SAC)** plays an important role in supporting school initiatives, building community spirit, and helping to enhance the learning environment for all students.

We're always looking for **parents and guardians** who would like to get involved! Whether you can attend meetings, help with planning events, or lend a hand occasionally, your participation makes a big difference.

If you're interested in joining or learning more, please contact the school office — we'd love to have you be part of our team!

✦Parish News and Information

St. Patrick's Catholic Church

107 Orkney St. East

Caledonia ON

905-765-2729

Father Jerome Mascarenhas

Secretary: Suzanne Hunter



✦Mass Times:

Saturday @5pm

Sunday @8:30am or 10:30am

✦School-Wide Advent Reconciliation

Father will be visiting our school on **Thursday, December 4, 2025** to lead a school-wide Advent Reconciliation. This is a meaningful opportunity for students to reflect, prepare for the Advent season, and participate in this important tradition as a school community.

✦Children's Christmas Party

You are invited to Jesus' Birthday Party! Join us on **Sunday December 21, 2025** (after **10:30am** mass) at St. Patrick's Church in the church basement for treats, a visit from Santa and lots of fun!



Smore

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ry Christmas